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In memoriam Jacob J. Rabinowitz (1899-1960)

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IN MEMORIAM JACOB J. RABINOWITZ
(1899—1960)

On January 10, 1960, after a short illness passed away Jacob J. Rabinowitz, Professor of Jewish Law at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. We have lost one of our prominent associates, a scholar of outstanding merit, who had devoted over twenty years to the history of Jewish Law and its relation to other legal systems of Antiquity and the Middle Ages.

Professor Rabinowitz was born in Russia in 1899. He graduated from a secondary school in Kiev. In 1924 he came to the United States and pursued his studies in New York. In 1930 he received a M. A. from Columbia University, and in 1937 his doctor's degree from the New York Law School. Until 1942 he had been engaged in private practice of law. In the period 1942—1949 professor Rabinowitz was on the legal staff of the Department of Investigation of the City of New York. In 1950 he was appointed lecturer in Jewish law at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and two years later became Associate Professor at the same University.

Born into a family of rabbis he received a thorough Talmudic training and acquired a perfect knowledge of many oriental languages. After having graduated from the law school he devoted himself entirely to the study of Jewish law. Beginning with the year 1941 he began to publish his numerous essays in various periodicals. Professor Rabinowitz also undertook the difficult and tiresome task of the English translation of the *Book of Civil Laws* by Maimonides and published it in 1949 in the *Yale Judaica Series*. In 1956 there appeared his major work: *Jewish Law, its Influence on the Development of Legal Institutions*. In this work Rabinowitz attempted to prove that the Jewish law had influenced the development of various legal institutions in the Antiquity as well as in the Middle Ages. He devoted much attention to the question of the reception of the legal formulae from the cuneiform and Biblical laws by other legal systems. According to his opinion those formulae were studied and defined by many specialists. They most certainly determined the formularies used in drawing up various legal acts.

Professor Rabinowitz placed a special emphasis on juristic papyrology. His essay *Studies in Legal History*, and the article *Miscellanea Papyrologica*, published in the *JJP*, are devoted to the problems of this science.

Untimely and unexpected death interrupted his work on a second book on the history of Jewish law.

[Warsaw]

Henryk Kupiszewski

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