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In memoriam Victor A. Tcherikover (1894-1958)

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IN MEMORIAM
VICTOR A. TCHERIKOVER (1894—1958)

On January 17th, 1958, passed away Victor A. Tcherikover, Professor of Ancient History and the Head of the Department of History of the University of Jerusalem. Tcherikover was born in Russia in 1894, and after having graduated in the University of Moscow, he went to the University of Berlin for further historical studies; there he had the advantage of being a pupil of Ed. Meyer and U. Wilcken. By the last-named scholar he was first drawn into the field of Hellenistic history and papyrology, subjects for which he maintained his enthusiasm to the end of his life. In 1925 he obtained his Doctor's degree and in 1927 his first book, *Die hellenistischen Städtegründungen*, was published, a work by which he won a wide reputation. In 1925 he went to Jerusalem and was appointed instructor in Ancient History in the recently founded Hebrew University. Thus he became the pioneer of teaching and research in Ancient History and Classics in Jerusalem. In 1947 he was appointed to the chair of Ancient History at the Hebrew University. As a teacher and lecturer he was second to none in the Hebrew University being endowed with outstanding talent to communicate his knowledge and to inspire his pupils with a love for the subjects he himself enjoyed. As a man he was kind — hearted and friendly to all who came in personal contact with him.

Tcherikover had wide historical interests and as an University teacher he used to lecture on almost all periods of Greek and Roman antiquity, but his written contribution since 1927 was chiefly confined to research in Jewish history in the Hellenistic and early Roman age. Above all he strove to understand and explain the impact of Hellenistic civilization on the East and its consequences for the Jews both in Palestine and in the Diaspora. He published over many years both in Hebrew and in English a long series of articles dealing with various aspects of Jewish history in the Hellenistic and Roman period. Among them: *Third Bk. of Maccabees*

as a historical source of Augustus' time, *Zion X Jerusalem* 1945 (in Hebrew), *Antiochia in Jerusalem* Y. N. Eptein Jubilee book Jerusalem 1950 (in Hebrew), *Was Jerusalem a Greek Polis under the Procurators?* (*Palestinian studies presented to Prof. M. Schwabe*), Jerusalem 1951 (in Hebrew), *Jewish Apologetic literature reconsidered* (*Eos XLVIII*, 3 = *Symbolae R. Taubenschlag dedicatae III* Warsaw 1957) His main achievement in that field is his book *The Jews and the Greeks in the Hellenistic Period*, a clear detailed and admirably written study which was issued in Hebrew in 1930; a second and largely revised edition as well as an English translation which will make this important work available for the scholarly world at large were completed by Tcherikover shortly before his death and will appear soon.

Tcherikover early grasped the importance of papyrology for the study of Jewish-Hellenistic history. His first paper connected with papyrology proper was his *Palestine under the Ptolemies* (*Mizraim* 1937 p. 9—90), a lucid study of the Zenon papyri relating to Palestine. His other papyrological contributions comprise: *Jewish religious influence in the Adler papyri?* (*Harvard Theological Review*, v. 35 (1) 1942), *Syntaxis and laographia*, (*Journal of Juristic Papyrology* v. IV 1950), *The Sambathions*, (*Scripta Hierosolymitana*, v. I); *Studies in Classics and Jewish Hellenism* 1954.

About 25 years ago Tcherikover formulated his big scheme of mustering all the papyrological evidence bearing on Jews and Judaism, and publishing a *Corpus* of Jewish papyri and ostraca. With indefatigable energy he commenced his work in the field of papyri, marshalling all the scattered evidence and commenting upon it. This undertaking gave birth at first to a book on *The Jews in Egypt in the Hellenistic-Roman age in the light of the papyri*, 1945 (in Hebrew with an English summary). Encouraged by the success of this book, Tcherikover continued his big enterprise energetically sided by his pupil and friend, A. Fuks. The first volume of the *Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum* was published in Oxford in 1957. It contains the invaluable historical *Prolegomena* and all the Ptolemaic papyri and ostraca which have any direct connection with the Jews according to the objective criteria established by Tcherikover himself. To every document included there is attached a meticulous bibliography and a commentary putting the document in its proper historical context. The second volume (to be published in 1959) will contain all the documents relating to

the early Roman period, the main sections being: "Legal documents of Alexandria in the age of Augustus", "The Jewish question in Roman Alexandria", "The Jewish revolt under Trajan". The material accumulated for the third volume is in an advanced state to be ready for the press within a year or so.

The *Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum* rounds off a life rich in scholarly achievement and constitutes a lasting memorial to Victor Tcherikover.

[The Hebrew University, Jerusalem]

Menahem Stern

Geboren in dem vorangehenden Jahrgang ist Victor Tcherikover, ein ausserordentlich vielseitiges Genie. Er war der Mann der die russische Wissenschaft in der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts zu dem Höhepunkt ihrer Entwicklung brachte. Er war der Mann der die russische Wissenschaft in der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts zu dem Höhepunkt ihrer Entwicklung brachte. Er war der Mann der die russische Wissenschaft in der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts zu dem Höhepunkt ihrer Entwicklung brachte.

Victor Tcherikover wurde am 22. April 1881 in Zwickau (Sachsen) als Sohn eines Industriellen geboren. Sein Studium der Rechte führte ihn an die Universitäten Göttingen, Berlin, Freiburg im Breisgau und Leipzig. Besondere Beachtung hat auch die Leipziger Mittelschule gewonnen, in dessen Seminar Krüger seit 1902 hauptsächlich auf dem Gebiet der juristischen Papyrologie wirkte. Weiteren Anreiz an seiner rechtshistorischen Ausbildung hatten Heinrich Stobbe und Ulrich Wilke. Schon mit seiner ersten Arbeit gelang Krüger der grosse Fortschritt: „Ermittlung der Urkundenformen auf Grund der griechisch-ägyptischen Papyri“ erschien nach Überwindung grosser Schwierigkeiten 1919 im Verlag von G. Teubner (Leipzig) und Berlin. Das Manuskript lag bereits am 22. Juli 1913 der Leipziger Juristenfakultät als Habilitationsschrift vor, seine Drucklegung war bis zum letzten Augenblick verzögert, als der Kriegsausbruch und der Verkauf seiner Wohnung zum Heere eine Verzögerung der Publikation erzwangen. Es ist beachtenswert für jeden Gelehrten, der Jahrzehnte später schmerzlich für den Platz seiner Überreste in wissenschaftlichen Leben zu kämpfen hatte, als politische Verhältnisse und Kriegserlebnisse jede wissenschaftliche Arbeit zu vertieren drohten, dass er schon