



Alexander Nekam died on June 1, 1982 in Houston, Texas.

He was born in Budapest, Hungary, on October 10, 1905.

He received a Doctor of Laws degree *sub auspiciis gubernatoris* (summa cum laude) from the University of Budapest in 1928. He also studied in Paris and at the London School of Economics, then came to the United States for two years, from 1929 to 1931, to study at Harvard University Law School, where, in 1931, he received an S.J.D. His thesis was published by Harvard University Press in 1938 under the title, *The Personality Conception of the Legal Entity*; it was reprinted in 1972.

From 1931 to 1934 Nekam worked at the law courts in Budapest. After taking the bar exams, he became, in 1934, a member of the Department of International Law of the Hungarian Ministry of Justice, where he remained until 1939. During these years a long essay of his on American criminal justice and a series of his articles on judicial assistance in the United States were published. From 1939 to 1941 he worked in the Prime Minister's Office and from 1941 to 1947 in the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

From 1942 to 1945 he taught International Law at the Institute for Foreign Affairs in Budapest. After coming to the United States permanently in August 1949, he spent one year as Lecturer in Law at Harvard University Law School. From 1950 to 1952 he studied at Yale University Law School, where he received his L.L.B. in 1952 and was elected to the Order of the Coif. He taught at Boston College Law School as an Associate Professor from 1952 to 1956, becoming an American citizen in 1955. He spent the year 1956-1957 at Yale Law School as Senior Fellow and Visiting Lecturer. He gave a course there in conflicts and a seminar in comparative law.

In 1957 Nekam was appointed Professor of Law at Northwestern University Law School. His main research interests were the emergence and development of the conflicts-of-law approach, conflicts sensitivities in African

customary law, and the emotional basis of legal values. He twice received grants to do field work in East Africa. In 1964, supported by a faculty research grant from Northwestern's Program of African Studies, he spent the summer in Uganda. In 1966, supported by another grant from the Program of African Studies and also by a grant from the Social Science Research Council, Nekam returned to Uganda for eight months, working mostly in Karamoja and West Nile.

He was interested in finding out whether courts and communities of a customary type showed sensitivities to foreign (in Uganda, British) values; he wanted to study the role foreign values played in customary law. On his second trip he also looked for the presence of a conflicts type of orientation in intertribal situations in which tribes had had varying amounts of contact with one another. On February 28, 1966 Professor Nekam delivered the Melville J. Herskovits Memorial Lecture at Edinburgh University; the topic was "Experiences in African Customary Law."

In September 1966, after his extended stay in Uganda, Nekam resumed his teaching at Northwestern Law School. At various times he taught courses in debtor-creditor relations, in conflict of laws, and in family law, and seminars in jurisprudence, African law, and international business transactions. In the summers of 1968 and 1972 he received faculty research grants for research and writing in the field of conflicts. In the fall of 1972 he taught, together with Professor John Moore, a course on legal theory, through Northwestern's Department of Philosophy.

In 1974 Nekam retired and was appointed professor emeritus.