

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ROMAN LAW

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INTRODUCTION

This Dictionary has several purposes: to explain technical Roman legal terms, to translate and elucidate those Latin words which have a specific connotation when used in a juristic context or in connection with a legal institution or question, and to provide a brief picture of Roman legal institutions and sources as a sort of a first introduction to them.

The objectives of the work, not the juristic character of available Latin writings, therefore, determined the inclusion or exclusion of any single word or phrase. Since the Dictionary is not intended to be a complete Latin-English dictionary for all words which occur in the writings of the Roman jurists or in the various codifications of Roman law, the reader must consult a general Latin-English lexicon for ordinary words that have no specific meaning in law or juristic language. In this respect, as in others, the present work differs fundamentally from Heumann's *Handlexikon zu den Quellen des römischen Rechts* (in the excellent edition by Emil Seckel, 1907). On the other hand, numerous entries concern words and phrases which occur only in non-juristic sources, literary writings or inscriptions, but which must, nevertheless, receive attention if the Dictionary is truly to survey all fields of the vast province of Roman law; private, criminal, public, administrative, sacral, and military law, taxation, etc. Many entries, furthermore, deal with Latin terms of medieval or modern coinage, unknown to the ancient Romans, but now widely accepted in the Romanistic literature.

All the more important entries are encyclopedic as well as lexicographical. That is to say, an attempt has been made in each case to depict as succinctly as possible, the historical development of the legal institution or term it defines, the use of certain words in the language of the jurists or the imperial chancery, and particular attention has been given to important substantial changes from early law to classical law and again in the reforms of Justinian. Additional matter is indicated by cross-references, printed in small capitals. Analogous terms and institutions are also noted by small capitals, sometimes in the body of the text, sometimes at the end of an entry. (As a matter of course, with a few exceptions, every Latin word used to explain or illustrate a term has its own entry even when that fact is not specifically indicated by the use of small capitals.) Synonyms and antonyms are indicated in many entries.

Considerable attention has been given to the sources themselves. A large number of entries are devoted to them, ranging in time from the archaic regal ordinances (the *leges regiae*) to Justinian's codification, and, in more limited measure, to post-Justinian Byzantine and medieval writings and collections of laws. Basic definitions, legal rules of fundamental importance, and characteristic utterances of the jurists are given in literal translations within quotation marks, followed by a citation of the pertinent source. Titles of the Institutes, Digest and Justinian's Code or Novels that deal *ex professo* with a specific topic are noted at the end of the