

Professor Zoltán Gombocz

In Dr. Zoltán Gombocz, Professor of Hungarian Linguistics in Budapest University, Hungary, has lost one of the finest combinations of Hungarian and Western culture.

A peculiar many-sidedness characterized his whole scientific activity. His researches comprised all the fields of Hungarian linguistics—phonetics, sound history, accident, syntax, and word history. The results of his labours are concentrated in two comprehensive works, the *Etymological Dictionary of the Hungarian Language*, which, in collaboration with his friend Professor John Melich, he began to compile in 1914, and which, though still unfinished, is the most exhaustive dictionary of its kind, and in his famous monograph on Bulgaro-Turkish Loan-words in Hungarian, published in Vol. xxx of the *Mémoires de la Société Finno-Ugrienne*. The latter work threw a new light on the prehistoric wanderings of the Hungarians and on the main problem of Hungarian folk-lore, the genesis of the Attila legend.

His amazing mastery of languages and his exhaustive bibliographic knowledge enabled him to make himself familiar with all the results of foreign methodology and to apply these results to the particular problems of Hungarian linguistics. But he did even more than that: he supplemented these results with researches of his own dealt with in his "Linguistic Methodology" (*Nyelvtörténeti módszertan*, 1922) and in his "Semasiology" (*Jelentés*, 1926), as well as in a number of important articles and presidential addresses. Although his whole—purely psychological—philosophy of language is based upon the functionalism of the Geneva school (Saussure, Bally, Vendryès), he remained open to other foreign influences too. He was, of course, deeply interested in English linguistics in the work of phoneticians like Miss Soames and Daniel Jones, and in the methodological researches of Otto Jespersen, some of whose views he discussed in the very last article written by him ("Funkcionális nyelvszemlélet" = "Functional Aspects of Linguistics" in *Magyar Nyelv*, 1934).

It was in his inaugural address at the Eötvös College in October, 1914, that he summed up his creed when he said that "in the life of every scientist there is one decisive moment, when the sacred enthusiasm of the search for truth gets possession of his mind". And his paramount significance consists, not only in his undying scientific achievements, but also in that noble and generous educational activity of his which aroused this sacred enthusiasm in two generations of young Hungarian scholars.

STEPHEN ULLMANN.