

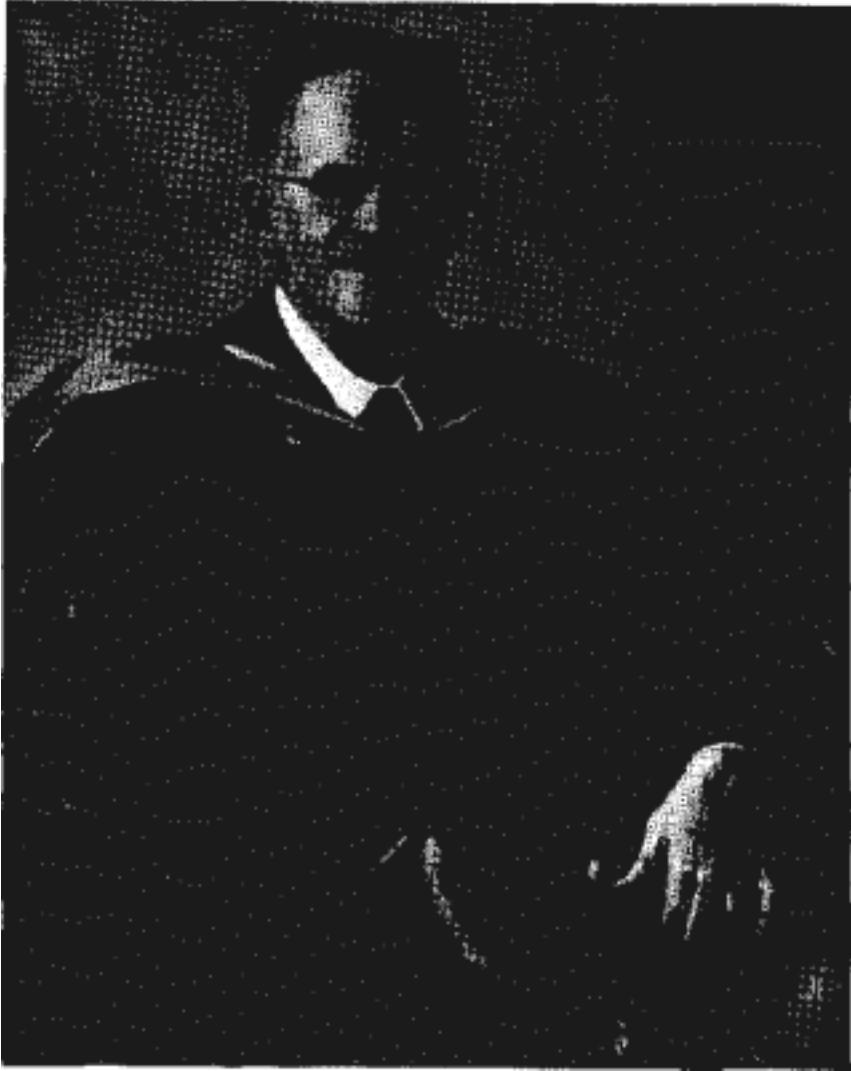
A. E. ZUCKER

(1890-1971)

For the third time in the short span of two years, our Society and the German Department of the University of Maryland had to take leave of a man whose work and life indelibly mark past and present achievements of these two institutions. Individually and collectively—Dieter Cunz, Augustus J. Prahel and A. E. Zucker—eminent scholars and administrators gave shape and direction to the Society and to the Department in the difficult years before, during and after the Second World War. Professor Zucker was in a sense teacher, guide and mentor of his two younger colleagues. Both were led by him into the fruitful field of German-American studies and it was no doubt his own enthusiasm for the great heritage of the German Forty-Eighters that inspired Cunz and Prahel in their research into the brightest chapter of the German contribution to American life. No time in recent history could have been more propitious for the study of the democratic movements of the Forty-Eighters than the post-1945 era when the Germans in Europe were groping for a light that would lead them out of the darkness. Zucker and his friends shared the faith and hope that a nation which produced the leaders of 1848 would also be capable of building a strong democracy out of the shambles left by tyranny. Unlike his two friends, Ad Zucker was American-born but reared in the German-American climate of the pre-World War I Midwest. Throughout his lifetime, he combined the best of the two cultures. In his research and scholarship there was enough of German perfection to let him excel while his relations with peers and with students were marked by the warm, easy-going friendliness so common in midwestern America.

Adolf Zucker was born October 26, 1890 in Fort Wayne, Indiana, where he received his early schooling at Concordia College. He earned his A. B. from the University of Illinois in 1912 and his M. A. a year later from the same institution. He had chosen as his specialty Germanic Languages and Literatures, but his historical and literary interests ranged over a much wider field, as his later publications were to show. In 1917, under the aegis of Professor Marion Dexter Learned, he completed his doctoral dissertation dealing with Robert Reitzel, the editor of the Detroit German language weekly *Der arme Teufel*.

After completing his formal schooling he accepted a position for the academic year 1917-1918 as instructor at Tsing Hua College in China and for five years thereafter was assistant professor of Com-



(Courtesy: University of Maryland)

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Painting by Colonel James P. Wharton

position and Literature at Peking Union Medical College. Here Dr. Zucker's interest in comparative studies first became manifest, for he introduced his students not only to English authors and works, but to the western literary tradition from the Greek Epic and Drama to George B. Shaw. No textbook existed for this purpose, however; it was left for Dr. Zucker to produce one. The four volume anthology entitled *Western Literature* was published in China (Shanghai, 1922). Zucker at that early date stressed his purpose "to free the readers from the bigotry of isolation and the prejudice of ignorance." The plan of the book consisted of one work for each of the thirty-two weeks of the school year. Each of the four volumes had eight works and each selection was presented with an eight to ten page introduction which was to lead the student to an appreciation of the work. The anthology passed through a number of editions and was even used at the University of Maryland after 1924.

Another outgrowth of Professor Zucker's stay in China was his book, *The Chinese Theater*, published by Little, Brown & Co. in Boston in 1925. It is one of the first studies which provides an insight into the Chinese stage and its differences as well as similarities to the European theater tradition. With his thorough knowledge of Greek and Elizabethan theater and his firsthand observations of the Chinese theater, Professor Zucker's book is still quite readable today and provides interesting parallels to the dramatic arts as practiced in China since the Cultural Revolution.

Three years after the Maryland State College of Agriculture became the University of Maryland in 1923, Professor Zucker became Professor and Head of the Foreign Language Department. In 1929 he published a book which was to become his best known work: *Ibsen, The Master Builder*. (Henry Holt, New York) It was translated into several languages and highly acclaimed by critics. When one views the breadth of knowledge which Professor Zucker manifests in his first two books, it is not surprising that his courses in Comparative Literature were considered a "must" for many a student of the humanities at the University of Maryland.

In 1935, Dr. Zucker left College Park to serve for two years as Head of the German Department at the University of North Carolina and subsequently for one year at Indiana University in the same capacity. But the familiar surroundings in Maryland beckoned again and in 1938 he accepted the position as Head of the Department of Foreign Languages, a post he was to hold until his retirement in 1961.

It is almost impossible to do justice to the diversity of Dr. Zucker's interests and scholarly pursuits. They virtually spanned three continents. In his youth he had completed his formal schooling with studies at the Sorbonne and at the universities of Berlin and Munich. In later years he was to renew these European contacts. At the end of World War II he served for two years as Textbook Censor with the Allied Control Council in Germany, lectured in 1947 at several German universities and was chosen in 1949 as America's representative to the bi-centennial of Goethe's birth in Frankfurt. Soon, in 1950 he returned to Germany and served for a year as Director of the European

Theater of University College in Heidelberg. It is indicative of Dr. Zucker's life-long interest in comparative studies that in 1958 he should represent the University of Maryland at the Conference of Oriental Classics held at Columbia.

The Society for the History of the Germans in Maryland, naturally, is most grateful for the scholar's life on account of his far-reaching influence on the study of German-American history. He was instrumental in paving the way for the major project of the Society, *The Maryland Germans* by Dieter Cunz. From 1940 until 1956 he was the First Vice President, from 1956 until 1962 the President of our Society. Earlier he had served as Director of Research of the Carl Schurz Memorial Foundation in Philadelphia during a time when it was at its height of scholarship and research. Zucker's activities at the Foundation are gratefully remembered by countless intellectual refugees from Central Europe for whom he found worthy projects that launched them into new careers in the United States.

Among his own writings on *Americana Germanica*—and they are numerous—two volumes have become classics in the field. In 1950 he edited and partly authored the remarkable collection of essays and biographies *The Forty-Eighters* for Columbia University Press. The impending bi-centennial of the American Revolution was anticipated by A. E. Zucker when he devoted his spare time of several years to the first comprehensive study of the German peasant boy who became Major General of the American army, Johannes Kalb. The results were published in book form by the University of North Carolina Press in 1966 under the title *General De Kalb, Lafayette's Mentor*. Separating facts from fiction, Zucker made a significant contribution to the history of the American army of revolutionary days.

In a recent tribute to A. E. Zucker, Otto H. Franke, who succeeded him as President of the Society, stressed the personal qualities of his predecessor. Striking for all who knew him in the intimate circle of friends was his keen and international sense of humor. It became evident in public when he introduced the guest speakers at our meetings. He demanded meticulous scholarship from the lecturers but abhorred the *tierische Ernst* that prevails in so many historical gatherings.

Few of his friends really noticed when he retired officially from the University of Maryland in 1961 and became Emeritus Professor. Several years of a very active life followed. In 1966/7 he was visiting professor of German at Southern Illinois University. Only a prolonged illness could force him to curtail and finally give up his many duties and pursuits. He died on May 13, 1971. Today Dr. Zucker's portrait hangs at the entrance of the German Department of the University of Maryland. He is wearing his doctoral robes and the *Bundesverdienstkreuz*, a decoration he received in recognition of his contributions to German culture and scholarship in the United States.

WALTER KNOCHE and KLAUS WUST