

In memoriam Viktor Greschik who was born 125 years ago  
(1862-1946)

By

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The botanist VIKTOR GRESCHIK was an outstanding expert of the flora of "Upper Hungary", especially of the High Tatras. He was a teacher, a local historian and an editor of a newspaper, too.

GRESCHIK was born on 29th March, 1862 in Lőcse (now Levoča in Czechoslovakia). He was the descendant of a German "Zipser" family in the "Upper Hungary" in those days. From his childhood he was keenly interested in natural history, especially in plants and he was a very keen gardener. GRESCHIK first went to school in his native town Lőcse, later on in Igló (now Spišská Nová Ves in Czechoslovakia) and in Szepeshely (Spišská Kapitula now belongs to Spišské Podhradie in Czechoslovakia). He graduated from teacher's training college in the latter town in 1882. He first taught in Késmárk (now Kežmarok in Czechoslovakia), in the Roman Catholic Elementary School for 5 years (1882-1887). During this time he studied the local flora around the town and the flora of the High Tatras. In the meantime he already exchanged specimens with several foreign collectors, in this way he could considerably enrich his collection with foreign materials.

In the beginning his interest turned to lichens and mosses, after this he was first of all interested in fungi. In addition, he collected data on the effects of medicinal plants for more than 60 years. By this time he started to collect books for his subsequently large and valuable library, first of all by purchasing the famous mycological literature of his day. From 1887 onwards he taught in Lőcse, later on to become director of the school (1901-1914), which he left only to retire.

As a well-known botanist - working with lichens, mosses, fungi and flowering plants - he had an active professional contact with many of the leading Hungarian botanists, to mention some of them: Dr. N. FILARSZKY, Dr. V. BORBÁS, Dr. L. SIMONKAI, Dr. I. GYÖRFFY, Dr. E. Gy. NYÁRÁDY, Dr. L. HOLLÓS etc. GRESCHIK had contacts nearly all over the world: Dr. V. REICHARDT in Wien, Dr. F. PAX in Breslau (now Wrocław, with whom he went on collecting trips), Dr. G. BRESADOLA in Trento, Dr. P. MAGNUS, Dr. P. SYDOW and Dr. E. KÖHNE in Berlin, Dr. J. RÖLL in Darmstadt, Dr. O.G. BLOMBERG in Uppsala, Dr. P. A. SACCARDO in Padova, Dr. M. C. COOKE in London, Dr. J. GILLET in Paris, Dr. F. ARNOLD in Munich, Dr. K. HEGETSCHWEILER in Zurich, Dr. J. S. DEICHMANN BRANTH in Copenhagen, Dr. M. WORONIN and Dr. A. FAMINTZIN in Leningrad, Dr. W. TIEHOMIROW in Moscow, Dr. W. SAPOSHNIKOFF in Tomsk, Dr. C. G. LLOYD in Cincinnati, Dr. J. HATCH in San Francisco, Dr. J. FOWLER in Kingston, Dr. Y. SANCHEZ in Domingo (the Philippines) etc.

Acknowledging GRESCHIK's botanical activity, new fungi species were named after him by the leading authority on fungi at that time, the world-famous abbot G. BRESADOLA: *Polyporus Greschikii*, the current valid name being *Antrodia xantha* (Fr. ex Fr.) Ryv. 1973 (syn. *Poria greschikii*); *Corticium Greschikii*, the current valid name being *Fibricium rude* (P. Karst.) Jülich 1974 and *Cytospora Greschikii*. A new moss species was also named after him

by J. RÖLL, the leading moss specialist at that time: *Andreaea Greschikii*, the current valid name being *Andreaea nivalis* Hook f. *greschikii*. The locus classicus is on the peak of "Jég-völgyi csucs" (Ladovy štít) in the High Tatras. His several collecting trips resulted in discovering lichens, fungi, mosses and flowering plant species which had been unknown in the High Tatras until that time.

GRESCHIK's several publications appeared in Hungarian, German, French, English, Russian and American scientific journals. At the end of the 19th century GRESCHIK attended the congress of the Russian naturalists in St. Petersburg (now Leningrad) upon the invitation of the Russian duke of Voroncov-Daskov. He became acquainted with him in the High Tatras during a botanical trip. In 1910 he was invited to participate in the East-Siberian natural history expedition. It was a great pity that he was bound to sick-bed because of his spreading ear trouble. He underwent an operation in Budapest. Upon the invitation of scientific societies he delivered lectures in Hamburg at the North-German Botanical Congress. In Berlin he spoke about mushrooms and toadstools.

According to his contemporaries he bequeathed a rich herbarium - mostly of material from Slovakia, Hungary, Poland and the Soviet Union - and a library consisting of eight thousand volumes. This material together with his other local historical collections was called the "Greschik Museum" at that time. GRESCHIK donated his herbarium and his valuable library to the secondary school in Lőcse with the intention of the collection remaining in his native town. He bequeathed the duplicate materials of his collection to the episcopal teacher's training college in Szepeshely, to the Museum of the Carpathians in Poprad, to the Tatra Museum in Felka, to the Lutheran secondary school in Igló and to the Roman Catholic Elementary School in Késmárk.

The largest part of his herbarium can now be found in the Botanical Institute of the Komenský University and in the Biological Institute and Museum of the Slovak Academy of Sciences in Bratislava. Several hundred items from his collections can be found in the lichen-, fungus-, moss-, and flowering plant herbaria of the Botanical Department of the Hungarian Natural History Museum in Budapest as well. Most of this material originated from GRESCHIK's *exsiccata* appearing in three languages (Latin, Hungarian, German): *Mycotheca*-, *Bryotheca*-, *Lichenotheca carpathica continens lichenes lucusque cognitos in montibus Tatrae Magnae et in territorio scepusii crescentes* - Leutschovie, J. Th. REISS 1894.

GRESCHIK also wrote several local historical and ethnographical works, dealing with the history of "Upper Hungary - Zips", especially the interesting history of Lőcse and its relics of history of arts. He was the editor of the local newspaper "Szepesi Hirnök - Zipser Bote". In 1924 he retired from teaching but he continued his collecting trips to enlarge his herbarium. GRESCHIK died during botanical work on 11th August, 1946.

Czechoslovakia keeps GRESCHIK's memory green by commemorating him in some articles. Some ethnographical relics from his collection are exhibited in Levoča in the "Zipser Museum".

According to his contemporaries V. GRESCHIK was a noble-minded, hard-working man with a creative mind, a person who was interested in, and doing several things. He was a genial person, a skilful raconteur with good humour. GRESCHIK belonged to those pioneers who studied Nature in their spare time and devoted financial means to studying scientific problems besides their main occupation.

VIKTOR GRESCHIK had three sons, the eldest was Dr. JENŐ GRESCHIK, an ornithologist and anatomist, the second was Dr. ERNŐ GRESCHIK, a physician who studied American leaf bugs besides his work, and the youngest was ANDOR GRESCHIK, a chemist. The writer of this commemoration is V. GRESCHIK's great-grandson.

#### A LIST OF VIKTOR GRESCHIK's PUBLICATIONS WITHOUT CLAIM FOR COMPLETENESS

- 1883: Über Zwergobst baumzucht. - Karpathen Post Nr. 12, Késmárk.  
--- Etwas über Mohnbau. - Karpathen Post Nr. 18, Késmárk.  
1884: Koniferen welche den Winter in der Zips mit und ohne Decke aushalten. - Karpathen Post Nrs 6, 7, 8, Késmárk.  
--- Beitrag zur Moos- und Flechtenflora der Zips. - Zipser Bote Nrs 6, 7, 8, 9, Lőcse.  
1885: Der Rőtling (*Lactarius deliciosus* Fv.) und seine Varietäten. - Karpathen Post Nr. 31, Késmárk.

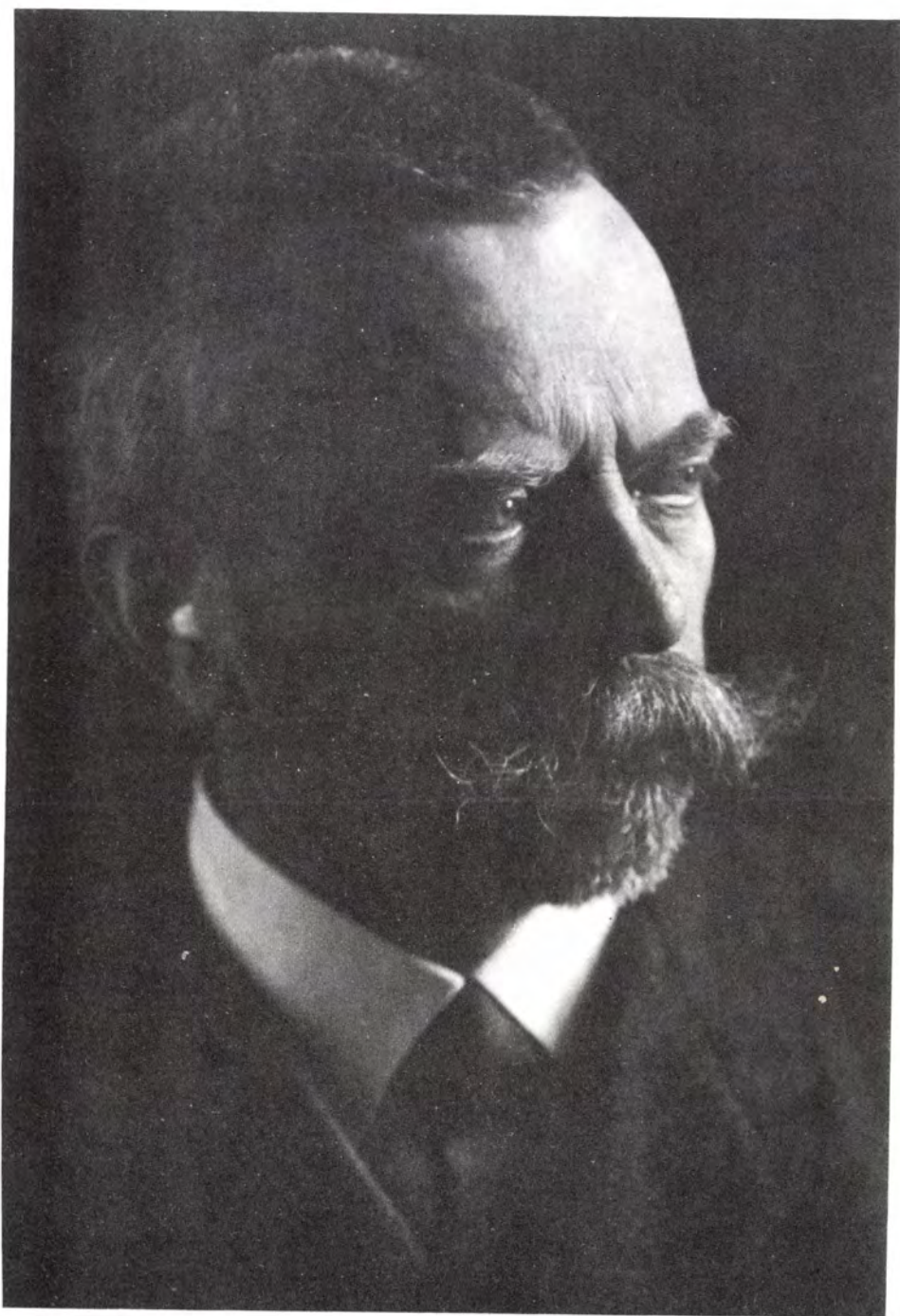
- 1885: A tavaszi gombákról. [Fungi in spring]. - Szepesi Hirnök Nr. 15.  
 1886: Beitrag zur Flechtenflora Zipsens. - Zipser Bote Nr. 2, Lőcse.  
 --- Ein alter Baum in Leutschau. - Zipser Bote Nr. 48, Lőcse.  
 --- Das Gehölz - ein botanische Excursion. - Karpathen Post Nr. 25, Késmárk.  
 1887: Die Zipsenflora in Frühlingsschmuck. - Karpathen Post Nrs 23, 24, Késmárk.  
 --- Essbare und giftige Pilze in der Zips. - Zipser Bote Nrs 25, 26, Lőcse.  
 --- Die Hängeflechte (*Picea excelsa* DC. var. *pendula* Cass.) von Leutschau. - Zipser Bote Nr. 31.  
 1888: Adatok Szepes vármegye gombavirányaéhoz. [Data to the flora of fungi in "Szepes" county]. - Szepesi Évkönyv. Szepesváralja.  
 --- Uj adatok Szepes vármegye gombavirányaéhoz. [New data to the flora of fungi in "Szepes" county]. - Szepesi Emlékkönyv. p. 110-121.  
 1889: Zipser volkstümliche Pflanzennamens. - Zipser Bote Nrs 12, 19, Lőcse.  
 1890: Die wilden Rosen Leutschau's - Ein Beitrag zur Zipsen Rhodologie. - Zipser Bote Nr. 45, Lőcse.  
 1891: Champignons de la Hongrie. - Revue Mycologique, Tanlose.  
 --- Botanische Excursion auf das "Gehölz" (1060 m.) bei Rissdorf im Zipser Komitate in Ungarn. - D. Bot. Monats. 9: 101-103.  
 1892: De fungis esculentis et venenosis. - Oenipontinum, F. Ranach.  
 1897: Das versteinerte Holz in der St. Jakobikirche zu Leutschau. - Zipser Bote Nr. 34, Lőcse.  
 1898: A Magas Tatra szarvasgombái. (Die Trüffel der Hohen Tatra). - Magyarországi Kárpátgyűjtés Évkönyve (Jahrbuch des ungarischen Kárpáthen-Vereins, Igló) 25: 95-109.  
 1906: Die Morcheln. - Zipser Bote Nr. 21, Lőcse.  
 1907: Az ehetséges és vad gombákról. [The mushrooms and the wild fungi]. - Szepesi Hirnök Nrs 36, 37, Lőcse.  
 1908: Outlines of Tatra Fungology. - Detroit, Lachmand.  
 1910: Jedovite huby z Tatranskej flory. - Vencek, Minsk.  
 1911: Dendrologicky pridavek z Tatrach. - Vencek, Minsk.  
 1915: A szepesi flóra mint eledel. [The flora of "Szepes" as food]. - Szepesi Hirnök Nrs 32, 33, 34, Lőcse.  
 1932: Obst- und Waldfrüchte der Hohen Tatra und ihre Verwertung. - Turistik und Alpinismus Nrs 47, 48, 49, Késmárk.

GRESCHIK was the editor of the newspaper "Szepesi Hirnök - Zipser Bote" for several years, a few examples of his articles not in the botanical theme which appeared in this paper: Von unehrlichen Leuten - Der Scharfrichter von Leutschau - Die entführte Braut - Das Kreuz auf der St. Jakobikirche - Die Belagerung von Leutschau 1683 - Alte Zipser Handwerke und Gewerbe - Zipser Studentleben im 18. Jahrhundert - Utazás a Szepességen 100 évvel ezelőtt [Travel in the "Szepesség" 100 years ago] etc. In the newspaper "Vencek" appeared: Bajus, Havran, Janko, Parymucha a Vdovec spišské zbojnik etc.

#### REVIEWS FROM VIKTOR GRESCHIK

- B., I. (1921): A szepesmegyei levéltárnoki állás [Archivist post in "Szepes" county]. - Szepesi Lapok 1921. ápr. 19., Igló.  
 Hrabovec, I. (1966): Viktor Greschik. - Vysoké Tatry, 2: 6.  
 Viktor Greschik's biographical notes in M. S. p. 1-10.  
 The biographer remains anonymous. He or she was most probably one of GRESCHIK's contemporaries.

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**Viktor Greschik 1862–1946**