

Old English and the lexicography of Old High German

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If you consult dictionaries of Old High German, it might happen that you encounter English entries side by side with the expected German ones. This might be somewhat surprising, because these dictionaries are supposed to concentrate on German vocabulary. On the other hand it is not unusual to encounter English entries in dictionaries of modern German, like the words *Know-how* or *Container*. These modern words are lexical borrowings from a foreign language, which have been adopted by the native speakers, whereas the Old English words in Old High German are generally not borrowings. They are rather linguistic remains of eighth century Anglo-Saxon scholars such as Boniface and Willibrord, who came as missionaries and educators to the German speaking Frankish Empire.

In this lecture I will focus on how Old English affected the early German written record and on the difficulties of its lexicographical description. First I will outline how Old English and Old High German occur side by side and how they interfere with one another in the medieval continental transmission. In the second part I will speak more generally on Old High German dictionaries and how they handle Old English words or Old High German words influenced by Old English. In the last part I will demonstrate some methods of the Leipzig Old High German Dictionary in dealing with these phenomena.

Let's start with the question to what extend Old English is important for the transmission of Old High German. Soon after their own conversion to Christianity by Irish and Scottish monks in the sixth and seventh centuries, English missionaries came to the continent to christianize German people.¹ In order to mediate the knowledge of religious and scientific Latin texts, they brought their favorite books and their craft of bookmaking with them to continental Europe.² Christianity was very attractive at that time and Charlemagne invited the best Anglo-Saxon teachers such as Aelkwin to Germany. In order to transmit the required skills like writing and reading and understanding Latin texts it was necessary to use not only Latin but also the Vernacular.

¹ Arnold Angenendt: Die Christianisierung Nordwesteuropas, in: 799. Kunst und Kultur der Karolingerzeit. Karl der Große und Papst Leo III. in Paderborn. Vol. 2: Katalog der Ausstellung Paderborn 1999. Ed. Christoph Stiegemann, Matthias Wemhoff. Mainz, pp. 420-433.

² Hans Sauer (Hrsg.): Angelsächsisches Erbe in München. Anglo-Saxon Heritage in Munich. Frankfurt am Main 2005.

The influence of Anglo-Saxon missionary work on religious, political and cultural life was immense. We will limit ourselves to the linguistic phenomena, starting with the writing system. The missionaries imported the English style of handwriting to the continent. It was practised in the scriptoria of the newly founded monasteries until the middle of the ninth century side by side with the Carolingian minuscule.³ In the Carolingian empire the Insular script was used for Latin and English religious books, but also for vernacular writings such as the Old Saxon and the Frankish baptismal vows.

German scribes who were accustomed to the Continental script and who were only up to a certain degree trained in the Insular tradition, made mistakes, sometimes systematically, when they used manuscripts written by Anglo-Saxon hands. Typically some letters in insular script with descenders such as *f*, *r* or *s* have been misunderstood for similarly looking letters in Carolingian script.⁴ Insular *s* can be mistaken for *f* and *r*, *f* is often read as *s* or *p*, and *r* can be mixed up with *n*, *ri*, *f* and *s*.

Another Insular feature which caused trouble to the German scribes are Runic letters from the Anglo-Saxon *futhorc*.⁵ Even in texts written in Carolingian minuscule one encounters Anglo-Saxon runes to render sounds which couldn't be represented by the Latin alphabet. The *wynn* rune, usually substituted by *uu* in Carolingian script, appears for example in the Hildebrandslied as a *p*-like letter with a macron instead of *uu* in *uuer sin fater uuari* 'who his father would be'. It could be mistaken for a real *p* in the Continental script. The *thorn* rune used for example in the recipes of Fulda normally represents a dental fricative. But when it loses its ascender, it can be misinterpreted as a *p*.

Traces of the Anglo-Saxon presence are not only encountered in running Old German texts, they are even much more frequent in the transmission of glosses.⁶ Glosses are single words or small groups of words, which have been added secondarily to a Latin text to explain a difficult word by a more familiar synonymous one. Normally these are Latin as well, but gradually they also become vernacular. It is no coincidence that the earliest German words are glosses in manuscripts, written in scriptoria of monasteries founded by Anglo-Saxon missionaries. This

³ Herrad Spilling: Angelsächsische Schrift in Fulda, in: Von der Klosterbibliothek zur Landesbibliothek. Beiträge zum zweihundertjährigen Bestehen der Hessischen Landesbibliothek Fulda. Ed. Artur Brall. Stuttgart 1978, pp. 46-97.

⁴ Wolfgang Keller: Angelsächsische Schrift, in: Reallexikon der germanischen Altertumskunde. Ed. Johannes Hoops. Straßburg, vol. 1 (1911-1913), pp. 8-103; M. Tangl: Deutsche Schrift, in: *ibid.*, pp. 394-402.

⁵ Wilhelm Braune. Althochdeutsche Grammatik I. 15. Aufl. Bearb. von Ingo Reiffenstein. Tübingen 2004, § 7,1.

⁶ Rolf Bergmann: Die Anfänge volkssprachiger Glossierung in kontinentalgermanischen Dialekten, in: Die althochdeutsche und altsächsische Glossographie. Ed. Rolf Bergmann, Stefanie Stricker, 2 vols. Berlin, New York 2009, vol. 1, pp. 1538-1541.

is the case in scriptoria such as Echternach or Köln already in the first half of the 8th century, in Würzburg, Fulda, Freising, Regensburg and St. Gallen since the middle of the 8th century. The so called Augsburg Gospels from Echternach, written in the first half of the 8th century in insular script, contain thirteen OE glosses as well as twenty-three OHG ones.⁷ All of them are considered to be of roughly the same date and they are spread all over the text. The glosses are not written in ink, but they are so-called dry-point glosses scratched into the parchment. Again, this particular writing technique was imported from the British Isles. One gloss, the word *sanan*, is still doubtful. It might be Old English as well as Old High German, however it is unattested elsewhere in both languages. It probably is the equivalent to Latin *comminabantur* in the Gospel of Marc 10,48, where the disciples censured and reproved the blind beggar, that he should not speak to Jesus. One hypothesis is that it belongs to OHG *sahhan*, which means 'to resist'.⁸ In this case the *n* is to be interpreted as an *h* with a short ascender, which is attested as an insular peculiarity. But the infinitive doesn't correspond to the grammatical form of the assumed Latin word *comminabantur*, an imperfect third person plural.

A particularly important source for the mixture of languages are glossaries. Glossaries are collections of words, usually lists of glosses. They were indispensable for the study of the Latin texts. Consequently they were often copied, and in the course of time Latin interpretations have been complemented or replaced by vernacular ones. In the course of compiling and copying, the content and language of the glossaries underwent changes, either intentionally or unintentionally: sometimes they were improved, but sometimes they got worse by misreadings, misspellings or other misunderstandings.

The earliest example of a continental glossary containing Old English and Old High German is the so-called Leiden glossary, written about 800 in St. Gall in insular minuscule.⁹ This manuscript is in fact a collection of glossaries to different texts (to books of the Bible,

⁷ Dáibhí Ó Cróinín: The Old Irish and Old English Glosses in Echternach Manuscripts (With an Appendix on Old Breton Glosses), in: Die Abtei Echternach 698-1998. Ed. Michele C. Ferrari et al. Luxemburg 1999, pp. 85-101; Elvira Glaser / Claudine Moulin-Fankhänel: Die althochdeutsche Überlieferung in Echternacher Handschriften, in: *ibid.*, pp. 103-121. Elvira Glaser: Addenda und Corrigenda zu den althochdeutschen Griffelglossen aus Echternach, in: *Grammatica Ianua Artium. Festschrift für Rolf Bergmann zum 60. Geburtstag.* Ed. Elvira Glaser, Michael Schläfer. Heidelberg 1997, pp. 3-20.

⁸ Althochdeutscher und altsächsischer Glossenwortschatz. Ed. Rudolf Schützeichel. Vol. 8, Tübingen 2004, p. 24.

⁹ P. Plazidus Glogger: Das Leidener Glossar Cod. Voss. lat. 4^o 69. Augsburg 1901. 1907. 1908 (Programm des Kgl. humanistischen Gymnasiums St. Stephan in Augsburg zum Schlusse des Schuljahres 1900/01. 1906/07. 1907/08).; W. M. Lindsay: The Corpus, Épinial, Erfurt and Leyden Glossaries. Oxford 1921.; J. D. Pheifer: Early Anglo-Saxon glossaries and the school of Canterbury. In: *Anglo-Saxon England* 16 (1987), p. 17-44; Bernhard Bischoff [et al.]: The Épinial, Erfurt, Werden, and Corpus Glossaries. Copenhagen 1988 (Early English Manuscripts in Facsimile 22).

patristic texts, saints' lives) and it is related to many other glossarial collections, which constitute a whole family of manuscripts. Apparently the Leiden glossary contained originally only Latin interpretations. It is important to notice that vernacular words could be specially marked, maybe in order to detect them more easily among the mostly Latin interpretations. This could be done in different ways, all of which in turn provoked misunderstandings and disfigurements of words in subsequent copies. One method was to write a long horizontal stroke above the word. In the previously mentioned Leiden Glossary we find a long horizontal stroke over the OE word *madmas*, accusative plural of *maðum* 'gift'. This kind of marking is used only at the beginning of the Leiden Glossary, later on the stroke is replaced by a *v*-like sign, as can be seen in the following example: *pilosi incubi monstri .i[dem] m^venae* 'hairies, demons, monsters, nightmares'. Over the *m* of what should be OE *merae* is written a *v*, which is interpreted as *vernacule* 'in the native language'. (The word *menae* is itself an example of the misreading of an insular *r*, which resembles an *n*.) This *v* is often misunderstood as *y*. Other markings of vernacular glosses are the letter *s*, the letter *f* and the letter *t*. The letter *s* stands for *saxonice* 'Anglo-Saxon'. The letter *f* might originally have been an *s* for 'saxonice' which was mistakenly read as *f*, but later on it was probably reinterpreted as *francice*. The letter *t* stands for *teodisce*, which, although etymologically related to "Deutsch", German, is first attested in Anglo-Saxon¹⁰ and means the same as *v* or *s*, as to say 'of the people, vernacular'.

In the following example, the first Erfurt glossary, which is a glossary in alphabetical order, only seven glosses amongst the Latin and the approximately 1100 Old English ones, can be identified as German.¹¹ In six instances Old English glosses have been adapted to German by graphical-phonetical changes of the same word. For example the English gloss *maanful* becomes german *meinfo*. The seventh instance could perhaps be interpreted as a substitution of an unknown Old English word by a better known German one: The Latin adverb *adrogantissimae* 'arrogant', written with an *-ae* instead of *-e* at the end, is translated by an adjective *gelplih*, whereas another version of the first Erfurt glossary, the so-called Epinal-glossary, shows a lexical variant, namely the OE adverb *uulanclicae*. The adjective *gelplih* could be German, as there exist other relatives of the stem *gelp* but it could also be English with graphical-phonetical adaptations, as there is an adjective *gilplic* in Old English.

¹⁰ Ingo Reiffenstein: *theodiscus* in althochdeutschen Glossen, in: *Grammatica Ianua Artium*, op. cit., pp. 71-84.

¹¹ Heinrich Tiefenbach: Zu den althochdeutschen Glossen im altenglischen Erfurter Glossar. In: *Language and Civilization. A Concerted Profusion of Essays and Studies in Honour of Otto Hietsch*. Ed. Claudia Blank. Vol. 1. Frankfurt (Main), Bern, New York, Paris 1992, pp. 114-123.

After this overview of juxtaposition and intermixing of Old English and Old High German, I hope it has become clear, why Old High German lexicography must take the Old English transmission into consideration. Unfortunately it does this in a way that is neither systematic nor easy to describe: not all OHG dictionaries include OE words and those that do, do this according to diverging parameters.

Some dictionaries strictly limit their source-material to those German dialects which underwent the Second Consonant Shift. These are dialects of central and upper German in the middle and in the South of the German speaking area of the Carolingian empire. They leave aside Low German and Low Franconian and therefore implicitly Old English as well. This is the case with the one volume dictionary of OHG texts by Rudolf Schützeichel (first edition 1969)¹², with the Old High German Dictionary of word-families by Jochen Splett (1993)¹³ and with the still ongoing Etymological Dictionary of Old High German by Albert L. Lloyd, Otto Springer and Rosemarie Lühr (1989ff.).¹⁴ As far as the last-mentioned dictionary is concerned, it goes without saying that Old English is naturally included in the etymological discussion of the words treated. Five dictionaries are containing Old English vocabulary up to a certain degree. These are the Old High German Sprachschatz by Graff (1834-42)¹⁵, the ongoing Old High German Dictionary of Leipzig founded by Karg-Gasterstädt and Frings (1952ff.)¹⁶, the Old High German Dictionary of the Glosses by Starck and Wells (1972-1990)¹⁷, the Chronological Dictionary for the eighth and for the ninth Century by Seebold (2001 and 2009)¹⁸, and the Old High German and Old Saxon Vocabulary of Glosses by Schützeichel (2004)¹⁹. As it is very difficult to define the boundaries, the dictionary user who

¹² Rudolf Schützeichel, *Althochdeutsches Wörterbuch*, Tübingen ¹1969, ²1974, ³1981, ⁴1989, ⁵1995, ⁶2006.

¹³ Jochen Splett, *Althochdeutsches Wörterbuch. Analyse der Wortfamilienstrukturen des Althochdeutschen, zugleich Grundlegung einer zukünftigen Strukturgeschichte des deutschen Wortschatzes*. Vol. I,1: Einleitung. Wortfamilien A–L. Vol. I,2: Wortfamilien M–Z. Einzeleinträge. Bd. II: Präfixwörter. Suffixwörter. Alphabetischer Index, Berlin / New York 1993.

¹⁴ Albert L. Lloyd / Otto Springer, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Althochdeutschen*. Vol. 1: *a – bezzisto* (1988), vol. 2 (von Albert L. Lloyd, Rosemarie Lühr, Otto Springer†): *bî – ezso* (1998), vol. 3 (von Albert L. Lloyd, Rosemarie Lühr): *fadum – fûstslag* (2007), vol. 4 (von Albert L. Lloyd, Rosemarie Lühr): *gâba – hylare* (2009), Göttingen, Zürich.

¹⁵ Eberhard G. Graff, *Althochdeutscher Sprachschatz oder Wörterbuch der althochdeutschen Sprache*. 6 vols. Berlin 1834–1842.

¹⁶ Elisabeth Karg-Gasterstädt / Theodor Frings, *Althochdeutsches Wörterbuch. Auf Grund der von E. von Steinmeyer hinterlassenen Sammlungen im Auftrag der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig*. Vol. 1: A – B (1952–1968), Vol. 2 (Ed. Rudolf Große): C – D (1970–1997), Vol. 3 (Ed. Rudolf Große): E – F (1971–1985), Vol. 4 (Ed. Rudolf Große): G – J (1986–2002), Vol. 5 (Ed. Gotthard Lerchner, Hans Ulrich Schmid): K – L (2002–2009), Vol. 6, 2ff. (Ed. Hans Ulrich Schmid): M – N, Leipzig.

¹⁷ Taylor Starck / John C. Wells, *Althochdeutsches Glossenwörterbuch (mit Stellennachweis zu sämtlichen gedruckten althochdeutschen und verwandten Glossen)*, Heidelberg 1972–1990.

¹⁸ Elmar Seebold, *Chronologisches Wörterbuch des deutschen Wortschatzes*. [Vol. 1:] *Der Wortschatz des 8. Jahrhunderts (und früherer Quellen)*, Berlin, New York 2001; Vol. 2: *Der Wortschatz des 9. Jahrhunderts*, Berlin, New York 2008.

¹⁹ *Althochdeutscher und altsächsischer Glossenwortschatz*. Ed. Rudolf Schützeichel. 12 Bde. Tübingen 2004.

wants to know if and to what extent OE material is taken into consideration, is forced to consult the relevant introductory chapters of the different dictionaries like the preface and the list of manuscripts or he has to make some random samples in the dictionaries themselves.

What kind of lexicographical problems does an Old High German dictionary face when it includes OE material? The lexicographer is forced to integrate a second object language into structures which are orientated and established according to the first object language. This causes several organizing problems.

First the dictionary-maker has to decide, whether he systematically creates separate entries for the OE records, or if he only does so for words that are unrelated to OHG words, whereas he subsumes the others under the appropriate OHG entries. I will give an example from the letter M: In the Dictionary of glosses by Starck/Wells the OHG entry *mâen*, a weak verb meaning 'to mow', is followed by three OE entries: the adjective *mære* 'wellknown, famous', the noun *mæst* 'the mast' and the noun *mæw* which means 'seagull'. This Dictionary of glosses always lists OE occurrences with identifiable OE word forms under OE headwords even if there exists an appropriate OHG headword as well. In this it differs from the Old High German Dictionary of Leipzig. There, the OE attestations of *mære* and *mæst* are treated within the OHG entries *mâri* and *mast*, they have no separate entries of their own. The OE entry *mæw* remains, since the word is not attested in OHG sources. In order to indicate that they are not OHG, the OE entries in both dictionaries are enclosed within square brackets. The Glossenwortschatz of Schützeichel chooses a different approach: it separates all OE entries from the OHG ones and collects them in a special chapter titled "Old English Words" in the last volume of the publication.

Another problem, especially for alphabetically organised dictionaries, is: How should OE entries with their special spellings be arranged into the alphabetical order of OHG, where some graphemes or combinations of graphemes do not exist? How to treat *h* and *w* preserved before *l* and *r*, how to treat the ligature ash <æ> or the fricative eth <ð>/<ḥ>? In order to classify these graphemes, special rules for the alphabetical order have to be established.

And what is to be done, when OE entries and their etymological-morphological cognates get separated from related OHG entries? Ideally such relations should be made visible by providing cross-references.

After these remarks concerning the handling of Old English within the Old High German lexicography I would like to illustrate some particular problems the Leipzig Old High German Dictionary is facing with the OE material.

The Old High German Dictionary aims to be a comprehensive referencebook of the earliest German language. Therefore it collects all attested spellings under a normalized headword and gives for each of them phonetical, grammatical, semantical, and syntactical information with regard to their specific contexts. A selection of contexts is quoted to illustrate the range of meanings and applications of the word. As a consequence of this method the Dictionary is bound to include and treat the OE material with the same degree of thoroughness as the OHG vocabulary.

As I said earlier, the marking of vernacular words by signs or letters leads to distortions that complicate a lexicographical interpretation and sometimes make it impossible. This is the case with the bird-name present-day German *Möwe*, a feminine noun meaning 'seagull'. The word *Möwe* is no doubt an onomatopoetic formation developed from a verb for the yelling of the seagulls, *mauen*, a verb that usually means the 'meowing of the cats'. According to the etymological dictionaries this is an originally Low German word that was borrowed into High German not before the 15th century. However, the older Dictionaries like Bosworth-Tollers Anglo-Saxon Dictionary²⁰ and Graffs Althochdeutscher Sprachschatz²¹ include occurrences of this word already in the early German transmission. Who is right then? The Old English word *mæw*, a masculine noun, is attested in glossaries as a translation of Latin *larus* in the list of bird-names in Leviticus 11,16. It is rendered in nine different spellings in the manuscripts. The spelling *meu* in two manuscripts from the 9th century is surely Anglo-Saxon as it is also attested in Insular manuscripts. In one instance this form *meu* is marked with a superscribed *s* for *saxonice*. In the form *mea*, transmitted in the Codex Carlsr. 231 from the tenth century, the letter *s* has first been accidentally inserted into the word and subsequently erased and rewritten above the middle letter *e*. The spellings *smea*, *m^ssa* and *mersa* are clearly misspellings, in which the marker *s* for *saxonice* has been inserted into the word in different positions. In three 9th or 10th century manuscripts we encounter a seventh spelling *meum* with an *-m* in the ending. The *m* could be the marking of an accusative either through comparison with the Latin lemma *larum* or because of the accusativus-cum-infinitivo-construction. The same form is already attested in the OE glossary with names of birds and

²⁰ Joseph Bosworth-Toller, An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary based on the manuscript collections of the late Joseph Bosworth. Ed. and enlarged by T. Northcote Toller. 4 parts. Oxford 1898. Reprinted London 1929. 1954, p. 664.

²¹ E. G. Graff, Althochdeutscher Sprachschatz oder Wörterbuch der althochdeutschen Sprache. Berlin 1836, vol. 2, p. 653.

animals in Cod. 913 from St. Gall, that was written about 780. The text is as follows: *larum hragra Adrianus dicit meum esse*: "*larum* [the nominative would be *larus*] is a heron. Hadrianus says it is a seagull". The eighth spelling is *meū* with a short stroke above the *u*. The form could be developed out of earlier *meum*, in which case the short stroke would be an abbreviation for *m*, or it could be a shortened long stroke marking originally a vernacular word. The last spelling *meh* with a *h* in the ending is transmitted in a Codex from Regensburg from the 9th century. It is the most important one, because it has been taken as evidence for the existence of the word in German. The context, in which the word occurs is: *larum meh in diutisco dicitur* '(the word) *larum* is called meh in vernacular'. *Diutisco* does not mean 'German' as one believed in the past. Now if *meh* is not German this would be an indication for Anglo-Saxon influence on this codex, which has so far not been observed. But how to explain the *h*? In the previously mentioned OE glossary in the St. Gall manuscript, the Latin lemma *larum* is explained a second time with obviously the same word: *larum meu vel meg* 'larum : seagull or seagull'. What happened? If we assume an analogy with OE *brēw*, meaning 'eyelid, eyebrow', and its variant *brēg* (just as *breág*, *brég*, *brégh*, *bréhg*) the first form ending with a diphthong *eu* could be considered as West-Saxonian. The second one could be an Anglish variant according to Verner's law. Now the spelling *meg* of the edition is not entirely correct, it must be *megh*: The internet-facsimile of the St. Gall manuscript shows that yogh is followed by the abbreviation ^h for *h*, a spelling which is also attested for OE *brēg*. Thus *meh* could be explained as a scribal misspelling of original *megh*.

All these early records of the word 'seagull' belong to the Anglo-Saxon tradition. Therefore they cannot be taken as evidence for the existence of the word in German continental dialects. From the viewpoint of historical lexicography it is remarkable that the word has disappeared in New English and was replaced by *seagull*, whereas it entered New High German as a late loan word from the Low German Dialects.

My second example deals with the problem of lemmatizing: In the last fascicule of the Old High German dictionary we encountered three attestations for a conceivable entry OHG *mâgmord*, two spellings *magmordum* with an *f* in superscript to mark vernacular language and one spelling *magmordrum* without such a marking. All three occurrences concern the same context in the world-history of Paulus Orosius (Pauli Orosii historiarum adversum paganos libri VII). The word translates piece by piece lat. *parricidium* as well as *parrenticidium* which both mean "the action of killing a near relative such as father or mother". In all three occurrences the first element *mag* is to be identified as German *mâg* 'a relative', the English

form would have a long *ae* (*mæg-*). The second element *mordum* can be both German and English, but *mordrum* is definitely no German form. Provided that *r* is not a misinterpreted *s* for *saxonice* and erroneously copied into the word, *mordrum* reflects a different stem, which only exists in English. So we have a hybrid formation. Now the question is, how to manage this problem on the level of the headword-structure. First: To which headword spelling could the attested spellings be normalized? And second: Should all three occurrences be defined in one single entry? Or would it be necessary to write two articles, an Old High German and an Old English one? The decision taken by the Leipzig Old High German dictionary is to write a single article with two headwords: OHG *mâgmord* and also OE *mægmordor*, with a questionmark at Old English. Please pay attention to the morphological section of *mâgmord*: the form coming from the Schlettstadt codex which led to the second headword, stands in a separate paragraph with the following prelude: "*Taken from OE mægmordor with Germanization of the first element, probably misspelled*".

My last example demonstrates how new words can originate from alterations in the process of copying. In Old English there exists the word *dopfugal* meaning 'waterfowl, diver'. This bird name renders Latin *mergulus*. The Old High German dictionary project also has records for the OE entry *dopfugel*, which were published in the second volume, but additionally there are cross-references to the entry *tûhfogal*, which is still unpublished. Why? German copyists have misunderstood the first element, the verb *dop*, and they have reinterpreted it as the verb *tûhhan*, which has the same meaning as *to dop*. Thus they altered OE *dopfugal* into OHG *tûhfogal*. Whether *tûhfogal* was ever a common bird name in Old High German or if it merely existed on parchment, must await further research.

As we have seen, some Old High German dictionaries deal with OE words, but only in so far as they are attested in continental sources related to the transmission of Old High German. I hope I could give you some idea of the difficulties caused by Anglo-Saxon influence on early written German tradition that the historical lexicographer is confronted with but also of its importance for the history of German culture and language.