Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Religion

# Martin Luther, Bible Translation, and the German Language

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Subject: Christianity, The Reformation Online Publication Date: Mar 2017
DOI: 10.1093/acrefore/9780199340378.013.382

## Summary and Keywords

In the history of the German language, hardly any other author's linguistic work is as closely associated with the German language as Martin Luther's. From the start, Luther as a linguistic event became the embodiment of German culture and was even elevated as the birth of the language itself; his style was emulated by some, scorned by others. Luther forces one to take a position, even on linguistic terms. The Bible is at the heart of the argument, being the most important work of Luther's translation. However, it is only one particular type of text in the general work of the reformer. The role that the Bible plays both on its own and in connection with Luther's other works, as well as the traditions Luther drew on and the way he worked with language, will be examined within the matrix of Early New High German, with all its peculiarities.

Keywords: Martin Luther, Luther's language, Early New High German, Bible translation, sacred language, polemics, mysticism

# Introduction

In 1767, Johann Gottfried Herder praised the reformer Martin Luther with the words “He is the one who awakened and unbound the German language, a sleeping giant; […] Through his reformation, he lifted up an entire nation to thinking and feeling.”[1] Thomas Mann (1945) had a completely different viewpoint. For him, Luther is “a gigantic incarnation of German essence”; “His choleric-brutish manner, the scolding, spewing, raging, the appalling robustness, linked with sensitive depth of feeling and the most severe superstition in demons” almost caused his “instinctive repulsion.”[2] Gerhard Ebeling puts succinctly what these two perspectives on Luther can only suggest, “that every era rewrites their understanding of such an epochal linguistic event as represented by Luther.”[3] The status of Luther as a “national” figure throughout 500 years of Reformation reception is equally complex. For some, Luther is Doctor Hyperbolicus (Erasmus of Rotterdam),[4] an unscrupulous zealot, rebel, and peasant agitator (Jerome Emser 1525),[5] the “scum of humanity” (Heinrich Denifle 1906),[6] even a “psychotic” (Paul Reiter 1937);[7] his language is “brutish,” the “jargon of the seething lower class” (Arno Schirokauer 1957).[8] For others, he is a guardian spirit of freedom (Johann Gottlieb Fichte 1793),[9] a philosopher of the Enlightenment and bearer of light,[10] the founder of the “German cultural nation” (Gerhard Ritter 1925),[11] and even “the father” of the German language (see already Johann Walther 1564).[12] Klopstock’s ode “The German Bible” (1784) turns him into a saint, who forms “the language of the fatherland” “into the language of angels and men.”[13] Whoever wants to discuss Luther, be it with laity or experts, deals time and again with varying perspectives, with exaltations or demonizations, instrumentalizations, myths, and legends. This is especially true for the topic of “Luther and the German language.”[14] The following ideas have dominated the discourse up to the present:

1. Luther created the German language.
2. Luther helped the Germans establish linguistic unity.
3. The language of Luther’s Bible translation is itself the unified language.
4. Luther is unique in his linguistic power, or precisely the opposite: he observed how real people talked (*aufs Maul geschaut*), including that in his Bible translation. Hence, his writing was “plebian” and “brutish.”

To some extent, these theses are already misleading in their presuppositions. Moreover, they are not uncommonly motivated by “confessional” ideology. Therefore, it is worthwhile to use them as a guide for the following discussion, which will cover Luther’s writing and translating in Early New High German (ENHG) and his influence on the subsequent New High German (NHG) as well as his (linguistic) historical reception.

The historical linguistic evaluation of Luther is closely connected to the general examination of the emergence of New High German in the history of language. Consequently, it is useful to take a look at general theories concerning the German language and its terminological traditions, including, for example, linguistic unity

(*sprachliche Einheit*), unified language (*Einigungssprache*), and common language (*Gemeinsprache*). The expression *Luther's language*, used almost like a buzzword, comes into consideration in particular.[15] Does the term mean Luther's individual use of language, the Reformation's use of language as political and social discourse involving many different actors, or even Early New High German as a comprehensive language system with certain norms of speech in the period between 1350 and 1650? If *Luther's language* refers to his idiolect, then one must speak accurately of his *use* of language. Luther's language is then examined as the individual use of an already existing ENHG language *system*, without the existing system thereby being changed. As such, his language and writing present at the most a model for other speakers and thus a certain norm. In addition, the origin must be the subject of inquiry, since some language phenomena are characterized as genuinely belonging to Luther's language, even though they do not trace back to Luther's own writing so much as they result from the practice of printing in Wittenberg in its development of media. In fact, Luther is often regarded as the embodiment of Reformation speech, even though he is also "only" a participant in a wider discourse. Admittedly, he essentially launched and led this discourse, but he not only actively shaped it through his speaking and promulgating, he also passively participated in it. In other words, the reformer did not always drive developments proactively; developments had an impact on him as well. This applies to orthography as well as to wide-ranging positions with regard to content. The question of authorship also includes the—secretly performed—identification of Luther's independent writing, that is, writing without a precedent, with his written translations, which despite any distinct achievement of the reformer nevertheless always remain translations and must be related back to a certain, for the most part sacred, biblical source text.

Luther's role as a translator of the Bible and his role as an independent author cannot be considered separately from each other. His use of language can only be investigated within the context of an examination of Early New High German, with all its varieties, taking into account the language system as well as language norms.[16] The basis for this discussion involves all of Luther's writings (Weimarer Ausgabe), secondary philological compilations such as the Göttingen Bible archive, in which biblical texts of Luther's contemporaries and precursors are laid out in interlinear comparison to the Luther Bible, and not least, ENHG literature as reconstituted with the corpus of sources and lexicographic interpretations in the dictionary of Early New High German (Frühneuhochdeutsches Wörterbuch, or FWB).

# Luther as a Creator of the German Language and Early New High German

The four ideas presented above describing Luther's role in relation to the German language not only reveal something about his construction of language, but also implicitly disclose underlying historical perspectives on the German language of the 16th century. The first thesis in particular, "Luther created the German language,"[17] is based on two presuppositions. First, it is thereby assumed that German did not exist *before* Luther.[18] Second, it suggests that a single person could manage to create a language as a kind of "act of creation." Both implications point to certain ideological backgrounds. The notion of an individual creator is bound to notions of genius as well as the idealistic concept of personality from the 19th century. But this is hardly tenable in terms of theories of language change. Language change has many causes; the creation of an entire language system cannot be the individual achievement of one person, even if a person of comparable importance as Luther was quite capable of becoming a catalyst, pioneer, and spokesman in many respects. Herder's claim that Luther *unbound*, *awakened*, or, as early as Justus Jonas in 1543, *brought* the German language *to light* again,[19] presents another perspective, in which Luther is represented not as *creator* but as *reviver*. The German language is portrayed as having been "held captive," "sleeping," or even "buried," but in any case as already existent. What these authors understand as "language," especially as ENHG language, remains unclear.

In most cases, reference is made to a leading variety of high German, which begins to evolve over the course of verticalization (in other words, a hierarchical arrangement of the different varieties/vertical shift)[20] in the 16th century as the so-called *unified language*, *high-level language*, *national language*, or *literary language*, which either was not yet present in the idealized state described by Herder and other authors, or existed in a *bound* or *imprisoned* state in Luther's times. This leading variety became the matrix by which all other modes in which the German language existed were measured, also drawing on those varieties that worked quite well up into the 16th century. ENHG, which was formed out of a plurality of different and yet equal varieties existing alongside one another without an overarching standard variety, is portrayed as deficient. In negative terms, it is said: German was divided geographically into dialects and regional written languages (*Schreibsprachen*), which hindered understanding; it excluded—from a sociological perspective—the dialect-speaking layers of society from participating in socioeconomic development. From a critical-linguistic perspective, it had neither a common graphology, a common morphological inflection, a common lexicon with fairly well-defined unities, nor a syntactical set of rules marked by a grammatical, stylistic shapeliness with a clear logic free of exceptions. The image of a nearly chaotic state of language with communicative restrictions dominates the discourse. Additionally, a literary canon holding together the whole language community was missing. Even if one might not have been entirely aware of these assumptions, a unified language constructed

and idealized as the antithesis, with regularity and the ability to create commonality, calls for a great personality who can correct these supposed deficiencies. Werner Besch's special turn of phrasing also fits this view: "He [Luther] got a trans-regional German written language off the ground. With his German-language Bible, he broke through regional language barriers."[21] The new construction of language, today called high, written, educated, cultural, as well as national language, is thought of (or idealized) as tending to be free of dialect and socially equalizing, uniform orthographically and morphologically.[22] It is idealized as being relatively strictly regulated lexically and syntactically, and it is also viewed, on the whole, as being appropriate for all audiences as a written language (that is, not as a spoken language), moving toward being well formed grammatically, stylistically, and logically. It is also normed with respect to some types of text. Its pragmatic omnivalence corresponds to what is termed as its general functionality for all contexts and situations. After a longer period of verticalization—its elevation in prestige above the other varieties alongside their simultaneous devaluation, the culmination, and the climax of the language's development was its perfect elaboration in the leading texts of the learned world and in the literature of the classical period. The fact that centuries-long efforts of language development by language critics, grammarians, and lexicographers preceded this development tends to be obscured, particularly when it comes to the role of Luther. But this is not significant in the discourse on culture and the making of a sense of values. It is more essential that the value of German thus moved toward a cultural-national token of identification or rather a program of self-understanding for the educated classes.

In fact, such arguments are based on the knowledge that: first, German as a language system was dynamically changing since the Old High German period. Second, from the Middle High German period on, it was increasingly recognized as a means of identification for a developing community of a certain large group of people designating themselves as German speaking. And third, it is distinguished by a continually expanding diversity of spoken and written varieties, including literary and professional ones. Even considering that Latin still dominated the written forms of communication, 16th-century German already made available all the functional variants and varieties a society like the late medieval one required. To be sure, the dialect was the oral linguistic norm, but it was accepted very differently in a linguistic world without an overarching leading variety than was its later successor in the vertically aligned system of NHG. Designating it as an impediment to development and communication in the ENHG period with its regional diversity is merely projecting a modern circumstance on the past. Johannes Erben sums up the current state of research by considering the syntactical conditions. "It is to be noted as a fundamentally important result of research up to now that in ENHG fewer regional differences persist than individual and functional-stylistic differences in the creation and expansion of syntactical complexes."[23] The regionally differing lower aspects of language systems (phonemes, forms) are not what led to the emergence of a NHG literary language. Rather, it is those aspects that adapted well to media and writing and as such were able to gain a transregional audience. Erben then continues, "Therefore, one cannot talk so much of progressive regions, as of progressive genres, which for

example include pamphlets and professional prose.” Also, certificates and legal texts were “particularly advantageous for the emergence and operation of especially complicated hypotactic structures.”[24] It is evident that such increasing textualization, connected to an environment that was becoming more public and therefore was more concerned about the role of social discipline while being socially disciplined at the same time, led to a revolution of media due to the possibilities of cheaper paper production and the groundbreaking discovery of printing. The beginning of ENHG had marked the “parallel, autochthonous initiation of a vernacular literacy in all parts of the language area.”[25] From 1330 on, an increased German-language practice of issuing certificates can be observed in the chancellery of Ludwig of Bavaria; in fact, the Mainz Imperial Peace of 1235 shows relatively few dialectal traces.[26] Theological reform efforts, as they were initiated with the work of popular piety and laity piety by the Vienna circle (for example, Heinrich of Langenstein, Ulrich of Pottenstein) or with mysticism (Meister Eckart, Suso, Tauler) also advanced German-language literacy. Yet, it is not only the vernacular of the text that is significant (which generally reveal their authors’ origin), but also the increasing textualization of life in general. It generally promotes the formation of text types oriented toward writing, particularly in law, where there is an increasing need for notation and recording and which is inseparable from administration that increasingly develops the need for documentation and regulation in all aspects of the everyday world (e.g., police ordinances, mendicant ordinances). Although it cannot be concluded with perfect certainty whether or not Paracelsus held his lectures in German, one does see an increasing trend toward German-language scholarship and a derivative education of the laity (e.g., in everyday natural scientific or medical literature). ENHG literature, to which the most important works of Sebastian Brant belong (“The Ship of Fools” [“Das Narrenschiff”]), was increasingly differentiated into sacred and secular writing, into fictional writing over against a fact-documenting and fact-setting historiography, which served historical self-understanding. In particular, a widely active culture of debate contributed to a slowly forming prepolitical public life, which, without the culture of writing, would have been limited only to various regions and thus ineffective. Citizens of newly established and quickly growing cities most often advanced this widespread development with their diverging desires for piety beneficial to their salvation, regulated administration, verifiable juridification, socially established communities. Socially established communities would range politically from medieval territorialization up to the formation of the nation-state and linguistically present the ideal of a unified language as the goal. Thus, at least two partly contrary movements are observable: one leads to a vernacular literacy with a view to an overarching leading variety including a unified graphology, morphology, and syntax. It consists of a media-based verticalization of the ENHG spectrum of varieties from a genuinely oral culture to an increasingly script-based culture, in turn affecting orality.[27] In contrast, the second movement leads to social differentiation (i.e., social discipline through regulatory types of text, the influence of script in everyday life), textual differentiation (e.g., professionalization, laity, and expert discourse), and medial differentiation (publicly oriented writing versus private writing). At the beginning, this movement was also only slightly disrupted by the different regional locations of its writers. Both movements not only began, as the examples show, long

before Luther, but also build on an existing readiness in his contemporaries to understand and cooperate of his contemporaries. ENHG fulfilled its communicative role with its pluricentric structure of spoken and written dialectical character without major difficulties; significantly the difficulties of understanding were rarely discussed by contemporaries. Such difficulties certainly did not exist to the extent supposed in the wake of linguistic geographical paradigms and its theses closely associated with the German unified language.

# Luther as the Originator of Linguistic Unity

The second thesis concerns the idealization of the language as a unified language. This thesis implies that, although Luther "splintered" Germany confessionally, he also enabled it "over the course of time to achieve linguistic unity."[28] This position entails a view of the language in which the appeal to Luther for "confessional self-assurance" is made, and a view of Luther's Bible translation as an "affirmative refuge" for all German speakers.[29] The topos of Luther found here cultivates the ideology of a unity dominated by a Protestant language culture with the reformer as its founder. In that light, Jacob Grimm wrote in the preface to his "German Grammar" in 1819, "In effect, one can call modern German the Protestant dialect, whose free-breathing nature has already unconsciously overwhelmed poets and authors of the Catholic faith."[30] The question is whether and how widely this linguistic-cultural unity is actually advanced as a result of Protestant overpowering in the Catholic regions. The chasm between the Protestant north and the Catholic south took as many centuries as the linguistic reality that the composite *unified language* is more an ideologeme than a phenomenon of reality. Once again, it treats High German as a target based on writing that is not spatially or temporally bound, nor bound by situation, group, or strata. The so-called *unified language* shows its contradictory boundaries with this reduction as it does not encompass the diversity of varieties within a natural language like German—neither the dialects, nor the sociolects, nor the vernacular or even the full spectrum of orality; instead, it reduces this diversity to its variants with an overarching function. Moreover, the term *unified language* misrepresents the fact that every overarching pattern itself has a sociolectal dimension. Even today its mastery is limited to certain educated classes (as well as to other spatial groups). Furthermore, the ideology of a unified language usually conceals the long-prevailing linguistic-geographical paradigm and the notion that the NHG literary language originated through a targeted decrease of variants from a certain privileged dialect area, namely the East Middle German language area. Regarding Luther as a person, one then assumes he was so successful linguistically because he could have built on a presumed East Middle German language with a geographically intermediate position between Low German and High German in his writing. It is said really to have been his "birth advantage" to stem from the centrally located linguistic-geographical position between the north and south. "A Luther in Kiel or Constance would have struggled linguistically and probably would have failed."[31] Luther's favorable starting position, as well as the linguistic-geographical

explanation of the emergence of the NHG literary language as a whole, is based on the hybridizing course of settlement of Eastern colonization (*Ostkolonisation*) in this area. The confluence of various settlement streams would have led not only to new transregional dialect regions (upper Saxon, Thuringian, Silesian), but also to an overall process of equalization, which was focused in the central German region, that is, particularly Thuringia/upper Saxon regions, the area where Luther would only have had to capture the linguistic elements of the chancellery as well as the elements pertaining to the educated class of an elevated stratum of society. His advantage consisted in that he grew up in Thuringia and lived in this area of transition to the low German regions all his life (Magdeburg, Mansfeld, and Wittenberg). On the whole, his language could hence be seen as a linguistic equalizing among Upper German, Middle German, and Lower German.[32] This possible thesis of a merging regional and transregional language usage neglects the fact that there was also a process of equalization in the southern German region (e.g., the Augsburg printers).[33] It also creates a universal explanatory model from a kind of locational advantage, and it is put into perspective by the fundamental question about the role of media in the development of standard language. How can a leading variety based on conceptual literacy be liberated from a language form characterized by systematic orality? Cultivation of language and criticism of language, movements in lexicography and grammars toward codification, in short the whole societal work of language toward a leading variety, had bearing on a literary language, not on oral variants of German.[34]

# Language of the Bible as Unified Language

The question is what kind of written text could be considered as the basis for the development of a literary language? Luther's translation of the Bible (between 1522 and 1534) receives particular attention. Hence, we have the thesis: "The Bible […] is the vehicle of the great unification movement in literary vocabulary. With the Bible, together with hymns and the catechism, Luther's impact on language by his own work transcends all regional barriers in the hearts and mouths of the congregations."[35] This is a linguistic-geographically motivated statement based on the assumption that Luther deliberately chose the words for his Bible translation while thinking from the position of his central placement between Low German and High German. Hence it is first necessary to consider what constitutes the language of the Bible translation, how it differs from other ENHG varieties, how it is chosen, and how it is derived from which variants. Secondly, the more comprehensive, both textual-linguistic and media-related question should be considered: to what extent can this particular form of language of the Bible be exemplary for the NHG literary language? Two theses guide the following remarks.

First: Luther's interest did not primarily pertain to the question of the geographic origin of his chosen lexical units, that is, whether he should use the southern German verb *gleichsnen* or the earlier East Middle German *heucheln* or whether *fett* versus *feist*, *Hügel*

versus *Bühel*, or *Lippe* versus *Lefze* would have prevailed for geographical or dialect reasons. Significantly, there are several variants found in Luther's work itself. His selection criteria are not motivated linguistic-geographically for the sake of balance or equalization, but are shaped semantically, communicatively, and pragmatically.

Second: In fact, Luther's translation of the Bible was actually of great importance for the development of a German that was relevant for society, trade, and education as well as for a European consozium of all Protestants (in other words, a community of compliant semantics). It became the matrix by which not only the Catholic revision of the Bible had to be processed and measured, but also all subsequent translations since that time as well. Significantly, modern revisions of the Bible always come back to Luther's original text as well. His translation, however, cannot be a model for the NHG literary language. In conformity with its stylistic and textual-linguistic localization, we find in it a hitherto unrivaled sacred language with special linguistic identifiers, whose historical continuation can lead at most to subsequent homiletic, theological, or devotional texts, but hardly to the broader development of a NHG standard language.

Luther's undisputed accomplishment of translation and the identity-establishing, group-founding, and meaningful effect of his Bible are reflected in the rapid pace of its dissemination. It is assumed that around "1533 there was a copy in every tenth household, around 1546 in every 2.5 household." Up to the 18th century, it was probably "the only book in most protestant families."[36] During his stay at the Wartburg, Luther had translated the New Testament into German based on the Vulgate and the Novum Testamentum of Erasmus in only eleven weeks. After a few weeks, the first 3,000 copies were already sold out.[37] The first complete Bible from 1534 also found a great market immediately. The holy scriptures, up to now only accessible to a small circle of experts versed in Latin and Greek, became available for (almost) everyone. Although there were German translations and other biblical texts already before Luther (thirteen prints of the so-called Mentelbibel), these were founded on other translational and narratological requirements. Moreover, they were not embedded in a larger program of theological and ecclesiastical reform. Luther's translation was part of such a program, and understandable in contrast to the previous translations: the reformer had increasingly detached himself from the usual word-for-word translation as well as from the Latin and Greek syntax of his models and sought a "freer[…], *mutatis mutandis* translation."[38] By way of illustration, a short segment from 1 Corinthians 13 from the Mentelbibel printed in 1466 can be compared with the corresponding Luther translation. Johann Mentel's (Strasbourg 1466) translation reads, "Die lieb geuiel nye. Es sey das die weyssagungen werden verúppigt: es sey das die zungen aufhorent: es sey das die wissenheit werde verwust. Wann wir erkennen vom tail: vnd weyssagen vom tail. Wann so das kumpt das do ist durnechtig: so wirt verúppigt das daz do ist vom tail. Do ich was ein lútzler ich rett als ein lútzler." Luther translates the same verses (1545) as "Die Liebe wird nicht müde / Es müssen auffhören die Weissagungen / vnd auffhören die Sprachen / vnd das Erkentnis wird auch auffhören. Denn vnser wissen ist stückwerck / (Marg.: Wiewol wir im glauben alles haben / vnd erkennen was Gott ist / vnd vns gibt / So ist doch dasselbige erkennen noch stückwerck / vnd vnuolkomen gegen der zukünfftigen klarheit)." The differences

between the two versions can be found on all system levels. While one can simply read off the Luther text, Mentel's translation is difficult to understand without knowledge of the passage from Corinthians. Its vocabulary is partially outdated or regionally shaped, the word and phrase positions follow the Latin pattern closely, conjunctions are ambiguous, the synonymity relationships employed are obscure and disrupt the rhythm of the text, the spelling has many variations. But Luther's translation not only is more understandable for lexical and grammatical reasons, but also impressed contemporaries with its special language style; Jerome Emser (according to Luther) even seems to admit, "he admits that my German is sweet and good."[39] Ultimately, his style is even imitated on the Catholic side. Justifiably, Luther complains in the "Open Letter on Translating" about Jerome Emser's "plagiarism"; Emser sold the New Testament he translated "under his name."[40] But, privately, he is pleased, and he "had to laugh about the great wisdom, that my New Testament is so horridly blasphemous, condemned, and forbidden, because it went out under my name; but now it must be read, because it went out under another name." The success of the Luther Bible therefore comes from the fact that Luther undertook the translation in spite of an increasing church opposition against translating the holy scriptures, and that he did it in an understandable language based on the motives that came from the larger program of the Reformation, thus making the result actually available for everyone. In this way, he implements the pragmatic, necessary conditions without which the evangelical priesthood of all believers would be impossible.[41]

Thus, Luther's success is based on the method of his translation. Luther translated with a deliberate orientation toward the German target language, and so "he commanded and ingeniously used the whole keyboard of the language system of his target language, from the morphemes to the textual level."[42] He always kept his readers in mind, so that he worked toward the accuracy of the translation not with mere functionality of representation in mind, but rather with a pragmatic end of communication with everyone, namely for all his German readers and not only for a small, elite group. Thus he deliberately acts as both a philologically and theologically faithful translator, as well as a preacher, teacher, and practical theologian.[43] His program of translation was oriented to the Protestant message "that we would bring them to the light" (ibid). He saw the evangelical truth as a discarded good, which now was to be lifted up, and, even more importantly, it was necessary to act in accordance with it. Finally, he was so convinced of his translation work that he could say, "The German language" most certainly has "a better Bible than the Latin language; I appeal to the reader" (*"die deutsche sprach" habe gewisslich "eyn bessere Bibel denn die latinische sprache, des beruff ich mich auff die leser"*).[44] As such, his translation activity cannot be separated from his reformatory work as a program of religious and social change. Even his Bible translation is a statement of Reformation theology, which is shown most impressively in the much discussed example of *sola fide*. In the "Open Letter on Translating," he explains, "Also habe ich hie Roma. 3. fast wol gewist, das ym Lateinischen und krigischen text das wort 'solum' nicht stehet, und hetten mich solchs die papisten nicht dürffen leren. War ists. Dise vier buchstaben s o l a stehen nicht drinnen, welche buchstaben die Eselskopff ansehen, wie die kue ein new

thor."[45] He continues, "Sehen aber nicht, das gleichwol die meinung des text ynn sich hat, und wo mans wil klar und gewaltiglich verteutschen, so gehoret es hinein, denn ich habe deutsch, nicht lateinisch noch kriegisch reden wollen, da ich teutsch zu reden ym dolmetzschen furgenomen hatte." The particle *nur*, which the theologian and preacher deliberately inserts here, including the twofold emphasis of reformation theology—*sola fide, sola scriptura*, reveals his reformation-theological way of explicitly intervening in the text,[46] which, however, he does not implement secretly or covertly, but rather openly justifies again and again (for example, in the "Open Letter on Translating").

A Hebrew, Latin, and Greek version, and moreover older and contemporary versions of the biblical text or from parts of the Bible, were available to Luther in the daily practice of his translation work. Thus, first, on the lexical level, he had to consider the (partial) synonyms/alternants of the German originals in terms of their usefulness, because they are distinguished geographically, stylistically, and semantically (also owing to polysemy/ambiguity). Second, he had to consider the expressions in their original source languages (Hebrew, Greek, or Latin) and match these with possible suitable semantic and pragmatic German translation equivalents. The systematic ambiguity of lexical signs must have further increased the complexity of the translation task. In any case, it can be assumed that several target-language options were available in a variety of cases.[47] The Göttingen Bible Archive makes it possible to compare Luther's decisions with the word choice from earlier and later translations or Bible texts, respectively. Said archive holds the following corpus: Luther's translations (including all variants from various reprints), the Gospel Book of Matthew of Beheim (1343), the prophets' translation of Claus Cranc (mid-14th century), various prints of the so-called Mentel-Bible 1466ff., the Worms translation of the prophets (Ludwig Hätzer and Hans Denck 1527), the New Testament of Jerome Emser (1527), the first Zurich full Bible (printed by Christoph Froschauer in 1530), and finally the first complete Catholic Bible by Johannes Dietenberger (1534) and the second by Johannes Eck (1537).[48] The structure of the archive follows an intentional interlinear principle: the text of the initial translation is presented for the whole Bible, from Genesis 1 to Revelation; for the New Testament, for example, it would be the printing from September 1522. Every morphological, lexical, and syntactical variant from all other texts in the corpus are listed—interlineally.

In Genesis 1:1 and 2, Luther's translation reads, "*Am Anfang schuff Gott Himel vnd erden; Vnd die Erde war wüst und leer / vnd es war finster auff der Tieffe / Vnd der Geist Gottes schwebet auff dem Wasser*." The other texts of the corpus vary with respect to the expressions, "*Anfang* / beginning," "*wüst* / desolate," "*leer* / empty," "*Tiefe* / deep," "*Geist* / spirit," and "*schweben* / hover." Even in 1528, Luther translated the Latin original "*Geist*" with "wind." He built on the etymological motivation of the Latin *spiritus*, which is derived from *spirare* "to breathe, to blow [wind]" and also compares the Spirit of God with "breath." But as early as 1524, he wavered between dt. *Wind*/engl. *wind* and dt. *Geist* /engl. *spirit*. Hence WA 24:27b, 15f. (1523/24, printed version 1527) reads, "Where the deep was, there was still no light, but the wind or spirit of God hovered on the water. In Hebrew, wind and spirit are both a name, and no matter how you take it: if it does mean wind, then it is what the wind weaves in the deep as it always does, If, however, you want

to call it a spirit, you can do it as well, as I cannot locate it. But it would be fine if it meant ghost; you could understand that God took the creatures he made, as a hen takes an egg under itself and broods over the chick. But I would rather let it stand that it means a wind, because I want the three persons of the godhead to be shown here here orderly after each other" (*"wo die tieffe war, da war noch kein liecht, sondern der wind odder geist Gottes schwebet auff dem wasser. Ynn der Ebreischen sprache ist wind und geist gleich ein name, und magst es hie nemen wie du wilt: Wenn es ein wind heyst, so ists das, das die lufft untereinander her webet auff der tieffe, wie sie pfleget, Wiltu es aber ein geist heyssen, so magstu es auch thun, denn ich weys es nicht eben zu orttern, Aber fein were es, das es geist hiesse, so kund mans also verstehen, das Gott die Creatur, die er geschaffen hatte, unter sich genomen habe, wie eine henne ein eye unter sich nympt und das hunlin ausbrut. Doch ich wil es lieber also lassen bleiben, das es ein wind heysse, Denn ich wolt gerne, das die drey Person ynn der Gottheit hie ordentlich nach einander angezeyget wurden"*).[49] In the end, a decision in favor of "spirit" followed. This process is also observable in other expressions and their partial synonyms. The word "*anfang*" (beginning) highlights the relevance of activity based on *fahen/fangen* (to catch) and thus connects to the concept of a creator more strongly than does the variant *angang*, which meant something more like an event. As such, neither does it fit the original *principium*, which is derived from *capere*, itself requiring the clear motive of a *capientum*, an actor, to do the action. It is said that the earth was *inanis et vacua*, which is a double form Luther renders as *wüst und leer*. In this tradition, one can see a desperate search to make a designation for something that does not yet exist at all. Other translators struggled as well, resorting to the adjectives *eitel* (Mentel, Eck), *zierdlos* (Dietenberger), and *unnütz* (Mentel), thus attempting to provide orientation for something that still entirely lacks orientation. In this respect, *wüst* is probably better than the ambiguous term *eitel* used by Johannes Eck. It is remarkable that, apart from a few exceptions, the problem of linguistic geography never arises.

In summary: when Luther was translating the Bible, he did not primarily think about communication problems based on dialectal differences. If at all existent, communicative barriers due to dialects were only peripheral in the 16th century. He rather thought, which expression will most likely portray the truth, and with which expression am I most likely able to proclaim it? With several examples, O. Reichmann shows that Luther deliberately approached his translation work with reformation-theological purposes in mind, instead of putting the philological first with a view to the functionality of the representation. Luther's translation is not just linguistic work on a generic text, but rather a part of Reformation efforts of persuasion, with a clearly articulated obligation for the faithful to act regarding the most important text of Christianity. Considering such a translation agenda, linguistic-geographic motivations in selecting the mode of expression seem very likely to be secondary considerations. As a matter of fact, in the study of biblical lexicography mentioned above, O. Reichmann[50] shows that it "is almost striking how rarely the lists of synonyms reflect geographical differences."[51] "The real challenge of the translator," he writes, "did not pertain to the (essentially resolved) question: how do I create a text well understood in all linguistic areas (in the regional horizontal sense,

less the socially vertical sense, that is: related to all classes)? The question of translation must have been articulated differently, namely: how do I (as the contemporary translator) manage to deliver the content of a lexical term, which I have interpreted in a certain way and which therefore is ‘accurate’ to me, per source-text passage so that its textual pinnacle (esp. the text) is not only represented as maximally correct (corresponding to the original interpretation of the content), but that I—understanding translation as cultural action/behavior—also address the recipients and their expectations, so that they generally respond to my actions, or even react according to my intentions (which would be the argument of action)?” *(“geradezu schlagend [ist], wie selten die Synonymenlisten räumliche Differenzen spiegeln”…“Die eigentliche Herausforderung des Übersetzers bestand demnach nicht in der (im Wesentlichen gelösten) Frage: Wie schaffe ich einen Text, der in allen Worträumen (im landschaftlich horizontalen, weniger sozial vertikalen Sinne) reibungslos verstanden wird? […] Die Übersetzerfrage muss anders gelautet haben, nämlich: Wie schaffe ich (= der zeitgenössische Übersetzer) es, den (nach meinem Verständnis) in einer bestimmten Weise interpretierten und für mich dann ʻgenauenʼ Inhalt eines lexikalischen Ausdrucks pro ausgangssprachliche Textstelle […] so umzusetzen, dass seine inhaltliche Spitze (bzw. der Text) nicht nur maximal richtig (der Vorlageninterpretation inhaltlich entsprechend) wiedergegeben wird, sondern dass ich—beim Verständnis des Übersetzens als kulturellen Handelns—die Rezipienten und ihre Erwartungen zusätzlich so anspreche, dass sie auf meine Handlungen überhaupt oder gar im Sinne meiner Absichten reagieren (das wäre das Handlungsargument)?”*) According to this perspective, the value of translating the Bible does not lie in the formation of German as a unified language, but rather in its role as an important instrument in the confessional struggle for evangelical truth.

At the same time, the Bible as a holy text must satisfy different functions. First, it must be understandable; however, it must also remain identifiable as the biblical text and thus as a sacred authoritative text. These claims are the cornerstones in the assessment of the biblical language. It is not the spoken language or the dialect of the common man in the marketplace, as one could misunderstand Luther’s statement in the “Open Letter.”[52] “One must ask the mother in every house, the children in the alleyways, the common man in the marketplace, to see the manner in which they speak and then translate it, so that they understand and notice that someone is speaking German with them” *(“man mus die mutter jhm hause, die kinder auff der gassen, den gemeinen man auff dem marckt drumb fragen, und den selbigen auff das maul sehen, wie sie reden, und darnach dolmetzschen, so verstehen sie es den und mercken, das man Deutsch mit jn redet”*). Luther never wanted to speak exactly like the Wittenberg market woman speaking Low German or the common man (“*nach dem Munde*”)—in neither the literal nor figurative sense.[53] “Luther’s popular style of translation so close to everyday life” should not be mistaken for ordinary speech or confused as “banalization or profanation of the biblical text.”[54] It has nothing to do with “plebian elements” of “cowshed and bar” or with the “jargon of the barmy underclass” that Schirokauer accuses Luther of.[55]

In her research on the language of Luther's Bible, Birgit Stolt[56] shows that his language is far from everyday language, but is instead characterized by a distinct use of sacred language. The sacredness of the text is already given by the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin originals; Luther further emphasizes this sacredness by certain German-linguistic means.[57] Hence, he specifically works on rhythmization, using parataxis for the parallelization or juxtaposition, and semantic Hebraisms on purpose for sacred disassociation.[58] Therefore the biblical language does not correspond to the everyday language at all. From the Luther Bible onward, Stolt continues, there have been "German signals of understanding," "which indicate to the recipient of the text that a salvation-historical event is being rendered."[59] These signals include formal introductions, formulas such as "And it came to pass, however" (*es begab sich aber*)," deictic insertions like the ritual "See" (*siehe*) in encounters with the divine (as a "prophetic type of vision"[60]) and in the angelic appearances, formulaic sequences, certain *verba dicendi*, etc. Sacred texts like the Bible are particularly characterized by their content, which readers receive as holy, salvation-historical, or as sanctifying; they connect everyday experience to the divine world and thus transcend the existentially threatening death. According to Stolt, the biblical text is a text used for "missionary, exegetical, catechetical, cultic" purposes in answering "questions dealing with the human existence," "to which science does not have an answer: questions about life and death, about origin and the meaning of creation and life, about good and evil, right and wrong, guilt and reconciliation."[61] Texts with sacred language purport to proclaim absolute truth and commitment, and they are shaped by universal, timeless, fitting statements in their stylistic characteristics. Their basic stylistic device is the myth as well as speaking and thinking in images. The Bible in particular also comes to life from the archaic environment of its Hebrew original, something to which Luther repeatedly points with respect.[62] "The Greeks have very good and charming words, but not maxims […] The Hebrew language is perhaps simple to some, but majestic and magnificent, poor and few of words, but much is behind it, so that no one can imitate it" (*"Die Griechen haben wol gute und liebliche Worte, aber nicht Sentenz. […] Die ebräische Sprache ist fuer andern wol einfältig, aber majestätisch und herrlich, schlecht und wenig von Worten, aber da viel hinter ist; also, daß ihr es keine nachthun kann"*) Respect for the realism of the translation's original source as well as his own sensitivity for his reader's or hearer's religious *conditio humana* can be found in Luther's commentaries over and over again: "The Hebrew word (Abba), which means (as he himself explains): dear father, is the calling as a little child […], babbling from more childlike confidence (*einfeltiger*), and calling him 'Ab, Ab. […] Such a childlike word (*einfeltig*) also claims faith in God through the Holy Spirit, but from a deep heart and with unspeakable groaning, particularly, when one is struggling and in distress."[63] (*"Das Ebreische wort (Abba), welches heisst (wie er selbs deutet): Lieber Vater, ist das ruffen wie ein junges Kindlin, […], aus einfeltiger, kindlicher zuversicht mit seinem Vater lallet und jm ruffet Ab, Ab […] Solch einfeltig, kindlich wort redet auch der Glaube zu Gott durch den heiligen Geist, aber aus tieffem hertzen und […] mit unaussprechlichem seuffzen, sonderlich, wenn er in kampff und noten ist"*) Luther observes the language of believers (*"[schaut] aufs Maul"*) by observing their emotions without ever losing sight of the sacredness of the object. This is also true with respect to the translation of the

agrarian day-to-day world of the biblical characters. This translation not only grants that archaic and time-spanning means of using rhetorical devices are specifically and pointedly connected (Luther 1545; Ps. 23:1: “The Lord is my shepherd”), but also is often the site of pictorial, visionary speech: (“I shall not want/he makes me lie down in green pastures / And leads me beside still waters,” ibid.). Luther targeted special structural aspects, including rhythm,[64] to generate a particular form of poetry. Its expressiveness and memorability is almost proverbial and often becomes proverbial indeed. The focus is set on various aspects of the content by a certain division in topic/theme, adding to this kind of poetry.[65] But despite all narrative and partly poetic ease in parataxis, the Bible text remains exalted linguistically and abstracted from the situation.

According to this argument, the biblical language formed so artfully over the breaking of centuries-old traditions in the biblical sacred language could not have become a rhetorical model of language for an everyday NHG literary language with its different functional variants oriented in other directions (e.g., professional language, legal language, newspaper languages), even if certain individual lexemes might have contributed to the general balancing of vocabulary. As a rhetorical model, it exerted an influence, however, on all subsequent theological and liturgical textual traditions. As Christian Gueintz said in 1645, “in brief, Luther is surely the originator of the German language in matters of the church / [while] the imperial recesses is the ledger in secular matters” (*“kurtz: Lutherus ist billich der Deutschen Sprache in Kirchen Sachen Urheber / die ReichsAbschiede in weltlichen Dingen die Haubtbucher”*).[66] Therefore, Luther’s Bible translation is neither the result nor the starting point of a general overall linguistic and certainly not a linguistic-geographical process of equalization based on a foundation of regional East Middle German, which then eventually led to a national unification of the German people. Luther was not concerned about the equalization of positions, but about evangelical truth. To no small extent, the communicative success of the Bible translation is based on the sacredness of the Bible, and its dissemination related to its mediation by recipients. One could also say that it is based on the truth claims of the biblical source, reflected in a certain style not transferable to other types of texts. Every sentence translated by Luther not only represents a semantic, stylistic, or rhetorical statement, but also is a statement of Reformation theology, requiring the recipients to take up a position and thus divided Catholics and Protestants. With each Reformation statement, furthermore, another element was added to form a communicative protestant consozium, which has changed the confessional world down to the present day, independently of the individual languages. The mark of this consozium is a confessional-theological semantic running across linguistic and national boundaries. Luther’s translation of the Bible cannot contribute to a unification in terms of a national language; there was no affinity between Luther’s language, understood as sacred language, and high, particularly literary, language of the modern age.

# Luther’s Power of Speech—Linguistic Genius or Brutish Ruffian?

Luther is one of the authors to whom particular attention has been devoted in the linguistic historiography of the German language. Research has mostly focused on the graphic level, and the phonetic level associated with it, as well as inflectional morphology, but less on word formation and lexicology, and still less on syntax or rhetoric, even though it is claimed again and again.[67] First of all, studies attribute great linguistic power of expression to Luther, a skillful ability to play with all registers of German and the strategic use of all available linguistic media, but he would not have become an innovator within the language *system*, that is, the entire inventory and system of rules for Early New High German. His particular contribution, however, was his being a role model as a person of prestige and authority, whereby he paved the way for certain systematic possibilities in the norm of the language or even made a breakthrough. This corresponds to his real concern, which was theological in nature.

The work handed down by Luther is quantitatively impressive. The Weimar edition includes 127 volumes with 80 volumes of “works,” 6 volumes of “table talk,” 15 volumes of the “Bible,” and 18 volumes of “letters.” The reformer had at his disposal an astonishingly wide range of text types, which included devotional, didactic, informational, instructional, socially binding, and agitating texts. Each of these types of text has its own genre-specific requirements for the writer and the reader. They are established at various linguistic levels (graphology, morphology, word formation, syntax) as well as at the level of stylistics and rhetoric; they have to be measured by the common norms of the time. That means if one wants to make a claim about Luther’s role in the German language, one should take his complete work as the basis of study and not an individual type of text (e.g., the Bible as a translated text). Additionally, his linguistic and literary embedding should be considered.

Even at the beginning of his publishing, Luther wrote about his graphemics: “because I did not have the time earlier to observe what the printer used as images, letters, ink or paper, and it has never happened to me, I did not foresee that someone would want such a thing from me”[68] (*“dan ich furwar die zeyt nit hab, das ich müge sehen, was der Drucker für bild, buchstaben, tindten odder papyr nympt, und ist mir vor nie geschehn, habs mich auch nit fursehen, das man von mir solchs begerend wurd”*). But the more important the correct reception of his writings became for the excommunicated reformer, the more vigorously he emerged as an editor. When criticism of the printers became obviously necessary, he complained primarily about the distortion of his wording, by which he was measured theologically as well as politically (“Preamble and Admonition to the Printers”).[69] Inevitably, however, he also worked toward strengthening an orthographically more consistent form of his printing. A development from strong variation in the beginning due to his disinterest toward an increasing interest in regularity can be observed that was exercised by exerting influence upon the printers and

their self-interest. This development specifically in graphemics is considered a boost of quality not only to graphology, but also to language in general. But first, Luther's involvement in this relative standardization on the graphological level remains relatively low[70]; instead it was the editors, copy editors, and the actual printers who had an effect on standardization. Second, while these interventions did present a certain model for subsequent printing, Luther can hardly be taken as the starting point of the development from widely varying graphology to a strict orthography, not least because later regularization was influenced by its own (e.g., enlightened or national-cultural) ideological motives typical of its time. Inflectional morphology and studies on syntax can be characterized in a similar way. On the whole, Luther stands within a general process of language development, also observable in many contemporary writings and authors. On the syntactical level, the avoidance of double negation, a moderate hypotaxis with one to three dependent clauses, the final position of the finite verb, and the incorporation of moderate parenthetical formation[71] can be found in Luther's work; this, however, corresponds to the general development. As Erben claims, Luther "stands in the middle, not at the beginning, of the tradition as it pertains to the syntactical features of his language as well as the phonetic-inflectional and lexical characteristics."[72]

"For each speaking subject, language is an ability to speak, knowledge of how people speak in a particular community and according to a particular tradition."[73] Inquiring into the traditions of Luther's speech, one finds the traditional ancient and biblical texts in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, the Patristics (especially Augustine), and the textual traditions of scholasticism, of philosophy and literature of Greco-Roman antiquity, of the medieval period, and not least of humanism. In terms of the German language, Luther stands in the tradition of popular preaching (Bertold of Regensburg, David of Augsburg) and particularly of mysticism (Tauler, Suso). Finally, the whole of literature, even professional, literary, agitating, social-critique, societal, and administrative linguistic (etc.) literature, has to be taken as formative for tradition.

Based on the evidence in Table Talk from 1532,[74] Luther at least thinks himself to be oriented by the pattern of writing based on the Saxon chancellery, "I speak according to the Saxon chancellery—*quam mutuantur omnes principes Germaniae. Maximilianus et Fridericus totum imperium iam ad certam formam loquendi perduxerunt* (from which all nobility of Germany borrows. Maximilian and Frederick thus led the whole empire to a certain manner of speaking)—which contracts all language." This statement belongs among Luther's most frequently quoted self-reports. However, comparing the language of legal administration and the chancellery with biblical language or even polemical publications casts doubt on this claim. Moreover, it is unclear whether he means speaking or writing.

Praise of the electoral chancellery is qualified by the fact that Luther still sharply critiques the chancellery language in the preface to the Bible: "No one cares about speaking proper German, particularly the Lord Chancellor and the lousy preachers, and the puppet writers, who it seems, must have the power to change the German language and give us new words daily, […]" (*"Es achtet auch niemant recht deutsch zu reden,*

*sonderlich der herrn Canceleyen vnd die lumpen prediger, vnd puppen schreyber, die sich lassen duncken, sie haben macht deutsche sprach zu endern vnd tichten vns teglich newe wortter, Behertzigen, behendigen, ersprieslich, erschlieslich vnd der gleichen, ia lieber man, es ist wol bethoret vnd ernarret dazu,"* WA B 8, 20ff.). Justus Jonas even argued that Luther did not learn from the chancellery, but the chancellery from Luther: "The chancellery even learned the proper writing and speaking of German partly from him, since he brought forth the German language right again" (*"Es haben auch die Cantzleien zum teil von im gelernet recht deudsch schreiben und reden, denn er hat die Deudsche sprach wider recht herfür gebracht"*).[75] One can agree with Josten that Luther in no way emphasizes the exemplary character of the Saxon chancellery's language with its loanwords and its complex style still strongly dependent on Latin, but intended political homage for the electoral princes.

In contrast to the language of the chancellery, Luther was certainly demonstrably influenced by mysticism. In 1518, he had translated the "Theologia Germanica," a work of edification literature from the 14th century, into German. If one takes the popular definition of mysticism "in its basic insight," that "every person can experience God for himself directly and without the mediation of the church,"[76] then one can say Luther made this principle as part of the Reformation program. "In the preaching of Johannes Tauler, put into the German language, I find (says Luther) more perfect and right theology, than in all of the standard schools" (*"Inn den predigten Johannis Tauleri, ynn deutscher sprach geschrieben, find ich (spricht Luther) mehr lautter und gegrundter Theologie, denn ynn allenn aller hohen schulen"*).[77] In fact, the language of mysticism left deep marks on Luther's semantics. Even in reviewing a few lines of the Early New High German dictionary, it is remarkable how often Luther stands in the tradition of the mystics, mainly Tauler or Suso. He popularized words like "*Eindruck, Einbildung, Einfluß, Einfall, einleuchten, verzücken, anschaulich, einleuchten, unbegreiflich, wesentlich*"[78] or employed patterns of word formation used by mystics, like taking prefix verbs with *durch-*, *ein-*, and *in-* and then creating a semantic specific to Reformation. The prefix *durch-* (in the sense of "wholly, completely affecting a given thing like the soul") appears in forms such as (a brief selection) *durcharbeiten*, *durchbeissen*, *durchbösen*, *durchfeuern*, *durchgeiste(r)n*, *durchgiften*, *durchgöttern*, *durchgüten*, *durchhöhlen*, *durchlaufen*, *durchläutern*, *durchlesen*, *durchleuchten*, *durchleuchtig*, *durchmartern*, *durchsalzen*, *durchsäuern*, *durchschauen*, *durchschlagen*, *durchteufeln*, *durchwandeln*, *durchwandern*, *durchwülen*, *durchwürzt*, *durchzuckern*, and so on.

In contrast to the mystics, Luther uses this vocabulary specifically for everyday use to illustrate his theological principles. Often enough, it was first necessary to make theology and religion in their basic concepts vivid, comprehensible, and even expressible for the faithful. The metaphorical dimension of words formed with *durch-* demonstrates Luther's pastoral as well as linguistic concern to show vividly the inner experiences of the faithful as they begin to fully understand their own existence on a theological level. And yet, he also used ordinary words as theological metaphors, like *teig*, *tönen*, *treiben*, *treibzettel*,

*durstig*, *grundsuppe*, *grünen*, *stopfen*, or *laufen* (engl. e.g., dough, ring, chase, thirsty, flourish, fill, run).

In this way, what has been taken from tradition and then applied to the discourse in a new semantic and new pragmatic way had a linguistic future. Expressions like *gottesfreund*, *gelassenheit*, *gerechtigkeit*, *gotlos*, *grund*, *grundlos*, *gnadenwerk*, *innigkeit*, *lust*, *meditieren*, *trostlos* (engl. friend of god, serenity, justice, wicked, reason/bottom, for no reason/bottomless, work of grace, intimacy, lust/joy, meditate, dreary), and many others prove this point. "Work of grace" (*Gnadenwerk*) is an especially clear example for lexical formation of tradition. Meister Eckhart put it explicitly in the tradition of Augustine, irrespective of the language shift from Latin to German: "Augustine says that a work of grace which God accomplishes, when he converts a sinner […], that is greater than if God created a new world" (*"Augustînus sprichet, daz ein gnâdenwerk, daz got würket, als daz er einen sünder bekêret […], daz ist grœzer, dan daz got eine niuwe werlt geschüefe"*).[79] It may have been picked up by Luther from Eckhart's reading and programmatically recontextualized in Protestant discourse. In terms of Reformation theology, Luther sets it in opposition to *gesetzwerk*/"work of the law": "If we confess that our works are nothing, rather we must have our Lord God's work of grace, his favor, goodness, and compassion" (*"Wenn (= denn) wir […] bekennen, das unsere werck nichts sind, sondern wir mussen unsers Herrngotts gnadenwercke, seine gunst, gute und barmhertzigkeit haben"*).[80]

As the example of mysticism makes clear, Luther uses all the registers of language available. At the systemic level, he grasps what is possible, but then skillfully extends it in a stylistically and communicatively appealing way for his recipients, thus shaping the relationships in such a way that he could become a model for others. Language and theology thus can hardly be separated. In 1549, Johannes Cochlaeus, one of Luther's leading Catholic opponents, had to admit, "Miraculously, Luther's New Testament was reproduced by the printers, so that even the cobbler, even women and other simple lay people, who had only halfway learned to read German, read it very eagerly, as though it were the fount of all truth."[81] Cochlaeus' statement cannot be read as doubting the Bible as the fount of all truth, but rather shows how aware people were of the Reformation semantics contained in the Luther translation and how much they thought of it as heretical. It seemed all the more alarming to the Catholics that "Luther's followers carried the book with them" and "learned it by heart." "As a result, they have acquired so much dogmatic knowledge within a few months, that they dare to argue matters of faith and the gospel, not only with Catholic laity, but also with priests and monks, even with theological masters and doctors" (ibid.).

It was mainly the treatises of 1520 in which Luther reinterpreted the semantics of "The Guiding Principles of the Ancient Church" in Protestant terms. Even the titles of his significant works between 1518 and 1525 reveal what was at the heart of his struggle for definitions:[82] "The Sermon on Indulgences and Grace," "On the Freedom of the Christian," "On Good Works," and "De Servo Arbitrio." The redefinition took place through contextual reevaluation of whole "ranks of concepts," so that the papal church

was “ousted” from its dominant conceptual systems, and its use of language was denounced along with its theological conceptual system as an adulteration of the truth. The struggle over the right evangelical truth had begun. He purposely employed expressions to which he gave a new semantic meaning and that cast doubt on the teaching of his Catholic opponents: *lügende*, *legende*, *deuterei*, *deutler*, *dicht*, *triegerei*, *dünkel*, *dünken*. Yet not just any random expression was at the heart of this linguistic semantization and persuasive effort, but rather it dealt with the core of the doctrine that determined Christianity: *christ*, *christlich*, *christenmensch*, *evangelisch*, *Geist*, *Gerechtigkeit*, *Glaube*, *Gnade*, *Rechtfertigung*, *Sünde*, *Buße*, *Vergebung*, *gute Werke*, or *Freiheit*. When Luther developed his understanding of evangelical *freedom* in the “Freedom Treatise” (1520) and made it the core of his theology, a shibboleth as it were for believers or unbelievers, Protestants or non-Protestants, in a very modern sense, he formed the pragmatic-sociopolitical act of filling and fixing a term with meaning and concepts related to one’s denomination.[83] The same applies to the range of word formation for *grace*, which became an effective identification of Protestants (cf. *gnadenpredigt*, *gnadenreich*, *gnadenstul*, *gnadentron*, *gnadenwal*, *gnadenwort*, *gnädig*, etc.), while, from the Catholic perspective, it became a word of defamation for Protestants (cf. *gnadheinz*). It is clear that this act cannot do without corresponding polemics. Luther was famous, perhaps also notorious, for his polemic creativity. His reservoir of group-forming keywords and expressions to evaluate his confessional opponents can only be covered briefly: *antichrist*, *bapstesel*, *bapstketzer*, *eselfurzbapst*, *erznarr*, *erzteufel*, *erzunglaubiger*, *erzheuchler*, *götzenpfaff*, *schwarmgeist*. Apart from personal attacks, fo example, on Dr. Eck as Dreck (engl. dirt), or on George, Duke of Saxony, and Heinrich of Braunschweig as “Hans Worst” (engl. sausage), and so on,[84] he systematically used polemic expressions like *papist*, *papistisch*, *päbstler*, *pfaffe*, *pfaffheit*, and others against the supporters of the Pope and the Catholic understanding of the priestly office.

Luther also used the re-semantization of Catholic cult objects as a means against his religious opponents. Perhaps the most well-known example is the noun *Götze*. Before the Reformation, it still neutrally denoted the wooden statue of a saint, and only after Luther did it change to “an unchristian God, an idol.” A unit resembling a prefixoid, it became an effective polemical assault against the veneration of saints of the Catholic Church in a whole list of words: *götzenaltar*, *götzenanschlag*, *götzengrube*, *götzenbild*, *götzendiener*, *götzendienst*, *götzengeschlecht*, *götzenhirte*, *götzenkalb*, *götzenkirche*, *götzenknecht*, *götzenland*, *götzenlerer*, *götzenopfer*, *götzenpfaffe*, *götzenmacher*, *götzenhaus*, *götzentempel*, *götzenwerk*, and so on. The list of words formed with *Mensch*- as the prefix constitutes a similar example. In fact, Luther used the means of composition for word formation quite intensively. To be sure, his enthusiasm for word formation is a part of an impetus in this period begun independently of him, but his prestige, together with the polemical clout of his word formation, had a groundbreaking effect and became a prestigious model.[85]

However, Luther was famous not only because of his creative use of metaphors or patterns of word formation. His proverbs[86] and turns of phrase are still partly in use today. Luther thus provided the discourse with its keywords and semantics.[87] This way of disputing, however, did not come from his translation of the Bible but from the other types of text, with which he had stimulated the discussion: his program and pamphlets relevant to sociopolitical discourse, his theological tract literature, his sermons (of which around 2,000 have remained), and later from organizational and administrative texts (including the church ordinances), his teaching texts (e.g., the catechisms, but the fables as well), and not least his hymns. Positively put, Luther affected subsequent theologians with his theological texts, formed the song culture with his thirty-seven hymns (which Hahn claims are a "compendium of salvation history"),[88] and also shaped the Protestant doctrine of faith with his teaching texts such as the catechism. However, furthermore, with his agitating texts, pamphlets, and treatises, he played a major role in the development of a public culture of communication and discussion with expanding types of texts, a development that, as one possible thesis suggests, was continued in the rhetoric used in Paul's church (the parliament established in the course of the 1848 revolution).[89]

The claim that Luther's use of language is offensively brutish[90] must be examined in the context of the types of texts he used. In reality, Luther does transgress certain aesthetic boundaries for today's reader in his polemic. Particularly when it came to religious disputes, he deliberately employed insults, course phrases, scatology, or dehumanizing metaphors: "Dear Pope, someone should shit all over you and set you in the sun and let you dry out again."[91] Or, "[that] I might take him for a farting ass or God's enemy with a good conscience. He cannot take me for an ass, since he knows that I am well-versed in God's special grace in the Scriptures" (*[dass] ich mit gutem gewissen jnen fur einen Fartzesel und Gottes feind halten mag. Mich kann er nicht fur einen esel halten, denn er weiß, das ich von Gottes sonder gnaden gelerter bin in der Schrifft*").[92] But such language is not unusual for the period or for the types of text that Luther used. Peter von Polenz explicitly points out that this manner of writing was "less plebian than academic."[93] Furthermore, Luther knew how to differentiate. When it comes to religious questions, he writes in the style of the corresponding subject genre: theologically in theological discussions, didactically in teaching texts, pastorally in pastoral texts, devotionally in devotional literature, poetically in songs, comfortingly and empathetically in letters of consolation. When he becomes political, he campaigns effectively, using all the rhetorical devices available to him in the style of the period. His political and literary work fits to the types of text and also uses the humanist elements of style practiced in the Latin debate culture. "In the pamphlet literature," says Peter von Polenz, "the beginnings of political word usage can be seen, on one hand, with an abundance of personal, pejorative designations, which the media of the Reformation developed from the humanistic personal polemic […]; on the other hand, it can been seen with the terms of ideological directions and activities as well as with keywords and flagwords following the friend/enemy schema. Thus the basic arsenal of modern political vocabulary was established."[94] Luther as a language event was an important part of the Reformation societal event;

many people supported it and were responsible for it both linguistically as well as religiously. But that he contributed to it in a special way as a powerfully eloquent protagonist is undisputable.

It was significant that Luther drew on the German language and not on the Latin language in all types of text he employed. Luther very consciously expanded his circle of recipients from experts and specialists to all believers and thus consequently and effectively utilized all media opportunities at his disposal. He was the model giving the written norm for all types of text he served. Luther's church ordinances served as a model for later church ordinances, his devotional books (for example postils) were groundbreaking for an entire generation of Protestant devotional books, his hymns encouraged more hymnic literature, his pamphlet polemic resulted in new pamphlets, and so on. His speech, his themes, and his direction of impact were responded to by both opponents and supporters in the confessional struggle. It is in the nature of language and of dialogue, especially in controversial dialogue, that everything said is altered in speaking and developed further. Luther's special accomplishment was to give people a discourse, an issue, that concerned them directly and existentially, in the language they understood, in the confidence that they knew how to deal with it. Luther's power and linguistic skill in installing, coining, and driving this discourse caused a world-historical chain of events with far-reaching social and cultural upheaval. His main weapon was the printed word. The printing of books and widely effective writtenness paved the way for a slowly forming prepolitical public sphere, which without a culture of writing would have been regionally limited, and ineffective. Conversely, it is also true that a common culture of writing cannot be developed without an issue concerning all involved and motivating a new social construction of sense, nor can it be developed without the ensuing exchange, the common act of responding to each other, albeit with differing opinions. Luther not only gave this issue to the ENHG public life, he also made it the key issue.

Luther's treatises have especially "had a great effect as an event stimulating media history."[95] With the diversity of his types of text, Luther strengthened existing German linguistic traditions, while shaping and establishing other new traditions (e.g., Protestant hymns). Being the one who initiated the Reformation and presented an example of a particular language, he was the linguistic model for the language of theology for German-speaking scholarship as well as for the language of pastoral care and ecclesiastical administration. However, since these had to be sociopolitically renegotiated, he and others who participated in the Reformation discourse together established a political and social culture of debate and literature. In the end, his methods of theological re-semantization and filling a term with a particular Protestant meaning were so successful that the Protestant semantic became a meaningful, identity-forming, and community-establishing marker of a confessional consozium across national borders. Moreover, the traces of this semantic have continued to the present day.

So, was Luther a linguistic genius? He himself would have surely rejected this description. In his view, Melanchthon had greater language skills. He himself only owned the theological issue, the evangelical truth, not more and, however, not less. In chalk on

the table he said: “substance and words—Philip (Melanchthon); words without substance Erasmus; substance without words Luther; neither substance nor words Karlstadt” (“*Scripsit creta in mensa: Res et verba, res et verba Philippus, verba sine rebus Erasmus, res sine verbis Lutherus, neque res neque verba Carlstadius*”).[96] Despite his critical self-reflection, perhaps it is more appropriate not to call Luther a linguistic genius in the sense of rhetoric, but rather to call him a powerful and eloquent communicator of his evangelical truth.

# Review of the Literature and a Perspective on Future Research

From a quantitative point of view, the German-linguistic historical literature on Martin Luther and his textual work is larger than the literature on any other significant personality in the German language. The emphasis is on the so-called smaller aspects of language (phonetics, writing, and forms, as well as on lexis) rather than on the larger aspects (syntax and text), more on the linguistic features than on the language system, more on the expressive side than on the content side (semantic) of circumstances, more on the looking-forward and thus teleologically interpreted aspects than on the aspects related to the past, and more on the phenomena addressed in isolation than on their functionality.[97]

The focus of future research may be indicated by this survey: starting from the fact that texts are the essential form of language, research should proceed centered around Luther's textual spectrum in its full breadth and its manifold configurations. A textual typology would be required, thus a description of form related to textual genre as well as a semantic related to textual genre, the latter as a semantic of content as well as a semantic of action. For Luther acts within a certain linguistic world. The presentation of the textual functions, "formation of content and communication of content," offers the possibility of a special emphasis—on one hand laid on the constitution of Lutheran-Reformation content (e.g., from the mystical traditions or in contrast to it) that is happening in the texts (to be thought of as a process), and on the other hand on its functionalization within the scope of contemporary receptivity (expectations of reception). The designated framework also offers opportunities for particular aspects. For example, one might discuss a concentration designed to be more focused on oral and written aspects, on text compositions used in sacred or perhaps agitating ways, but always on Luther dealing with and taking advantage of the media opportunities of his time. The specific mediality of the Reformation and all of its texts should particularly be considered. Moreover, a comprehensive representation and analysis of Luther's linguistic-reflexive expressions, not only those in the "Open Letter to Translators," would be of great interest. What understanding of language is behind statements like this? "It is not the word of speech but the word of life, quae possunt stare in vita et morte contra peccatum."[98] What theological and linguistic-philosophical implications does the packing metaphor in the following quote have? "Das wyr das Euangelion nicht wol werden erhallten on die sprachen. Die sprachen sind die scheyden, darynn dis messer des geysts stickt. Sie sind der schreyn, darynnen man dis kleinod tregt."[99] Naturally, the tradition of earlier Luther research can be continued. It should, however, generally be placed in the scholarly frame of reference suggested here, if it does not want to lose connection to the interests of today's recipients for linguistic-historical and historical research.

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(2.) Thomas Mann, “Deutschland und die Deutschen,” in *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 11 (1945), 1132f. Fischer: Frankfurt

(3.) Gerhard Ebeling, *Luther: Einführung in sein Denken*, 4th ed. (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 1981), 12–13.

(4.) Erasmus von Rotterdam, *Hyperaspistes Liber 2*, quoted from Cornelis Augustijn, *Erasmus—der Humanist als Theologe und Kirchenreformer* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 277.

(5.) Jerome Emser, "Wie Luther in seinen Büchern zum Aufruhr getrieben hat" (1525), in Flugschriften der Bauernkriegszeit. Bearb. von Christel Laufer [u.a.], eds. Laube, Adolf/ Hans Werner Seiffert (Hrsg.) (Berlin: Akademie der Wissenschaften der DDR, 1975), 358.

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(8.) Arno Schirokauer, "Frühneuhochdeutsch," in *Ders., Germanistische Studien*, ed. Fritz Strich. (Hamburg: Hauswedell, 1957), 311–393, here 207. [reprint in: Wegera, Klaus-Peter and Sandra Waldenberger (ed.). *Die Entstehung der neuhochdeutschen Schriftsprache*, 169–224].

(9.) Johann Gottlieb Fichte, "Beitrag zur Berichtigung der Urtheile des Publicums über die französische Revolution," in *Gesamtausgabe der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, eds. Reinhard Lauth et al. vol. 1 (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 1962–2012), 255.

(10.) Christian Senkel, *Patriotismus und Protestantismus: Konfessionelle Semantik im nationalen Diskurs zwischen 1749 und 1813* (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2015), 91, 95.

(11.) Gerhard Ritter, *Luther: Gestalt und Symbol* (München: Bruckmann, 1925), 151. Quoted from Johann Baptist Müller, ed., *Die Deutschen und Luther: Texte zur Geschichte und Wirkung* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1983), 105–110; see also 157, 158, 174–177, 201, 202.

(12.) See Dirk Josten, *Sprachvorbild und Sprachnorm im Urteil des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts: Sprachlandschaftliche Prioritäten. Sprachautoritäten. Sprachimmanente Argumentation* (Bern: Lang, 1976), 106.

(13.) Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock, *Oden*, ed. Karl Ludwig Schneider (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1966), 110.

(14.) Josten offers a survey of the 16th and 17th centuries. Ibid., 105f.

(15.) Gerhard and Rudolf Große Kettmann, *Wittenberg: Sprache und Kultur in der Reformationszeit* (Frankfurt: Lang, 2008), 143.

(16.) See Johannes Erben, “Luther und die neuhochdeutsche Schriftsprache,” in *Wortgeschichte1*, 3d ed., eds. Friedrich Maurer and Heinz Rupp (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1974), 507–581; Joachim Schildt, “Zum Verständnis der Luthersprache,” in *Martin Luther: Studienausgabe*, ed. Hans-Ulrich Delius (Berlin: Evangelische Verlags-Anstalt, 1979), 13–29; Herbert Wolf, *Martin Luther: Eine Einführung in germanistische Luther-Studien* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1980); Herbert Wolf, *Germanistische Luther-Bibliographie: Martin Luthers deutsches Sprachschaffen im Spiegel des internationalen Schrifttums der Jahre 1880–1980* (Heidelberg, Germany: C. Winter, 1985); Herbert Wolf, *Luthers Deutsch: Sprachliche Leistung und Wirkung* (Frankfurt: Lang, 1996); Erwin Arndt and Gisela Brandt, *Luther und die deutsche Sprache*, 2d ed. (Leipzig: Bibliograph. Inst., 1987); Werner Besch, “Die Rolle Luthers für die deutsche Sprachgeschichte,” *Sprachgeschichte* 2 (2000): 1713–1745; and Oskar Reichmann, “Lexikalische Varianten im frühneuhochdeutschen Bibelwortschatz und die neuhochdeutsche Schriftsprache: Fakten und Reflexionen,” in *Frühneuhochdeutsch: Aufgaben und Probleme seiner linguistischen Beschreibung*, eds. Anja Lobenstein-Reichmann and Oskar Reichmann (Hildesheim: Olms, 2011), 383–478.

(17.) Even readable on the official homepage for Luther: http://www.luther.de/kontext/sprache.html.

(18.) See (2005): “Luther’s translation of the Bible as a creation of language […] We have at least to do it with stops along the way to the language which Luther created.” Johannes Brockhoff, “Es begann in Wittenberg—Martin Luthers Bedeutung für die deutsche Sprache und Literatur,” in *Literarische Orte—Orte der Literatur*, eds. Hans-Herbert Wintgens and Gerard Oppermann (Hildesheim: Univ.-Verl., 2005), 37–43, here 39.

(19.) Zwo Tröstliche Predigt Uber der Leich Doct: Martini Luther zu Eissleben den XIX. und XX. Februarii gethan, Wittemberg, 1546 [Digitalisat der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek: BSB VD16 J 899] von Justus Jonas. Blatt 8/Avr.

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(26.) Ibid., 1515.

(27.) See Reichmann, “Zur Vertikalisierung des Varientätenspektrums”; and Reichmann, “Die Entstehung der neuhochdeutschen Schriftsprache.”

(28.) Werner Besch, “Die Rolle Luthers für die deutsche Sprachgeschichte,” 1714.

(29.) Christian Senkel, *Patriotismus und Protestantismus*, 89.

(30.) Jacob Grimm, *Deutsche Grammatik*, ed. Wilhelm Scherer (Hildesheim: Olms, 1987), xi.

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(32.) Joachim Schildt, “Zum Verständnis der Luthersprache,” 15.

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(35.) Werner Besch, “Die Rolle Luthers für die deutsche Sprachgeschichte,” 1724; also Georg Buchwald, *400 Jahre deutsche Lutherbibel: zum Gedenkjahr der Bibelübersetzung D. Martin Luthers (1534–1934)* (Stuttgart: Steinkopf, 1934).

(36.) Peter von Polenz, *Deutsche Sprachgeschichte vom Spätmittelalter bis zur Gegenwart*, vol. 1, 2d ed. (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2000), 235; see also Rudolf Bentzinger and Gerhard Kettmann, “Zu Luthers Stellung im Sprachschaffen seiner Zeit” (1983), reprinted in Herbert Wolf, Luthers Deutsch. Sprachliche Leistung und Wirkung. Frankfurt a. M. 1996. (Dokumentation Germanistischer Forschung 2), 201–214; and Herbert Wolf, Martin Luther. Eine Einführung in germanistische Luther-Studien. Stuttgart, 1980. (SM 193), 151ff.

(37.) Herbert Wolf, *Martin Luther*, 139.

(38.) Peter von Polenz, *Deutsche Sprachgeschichte vom Spätmittelalter bis zur Gegenwart*, 231.

(39.) WA 30/II:632, 16. See above.

(40.) WA 30/II:632, 18f. (1529/30).

(41.) See also his remarks WA 15:27ff. (1524): “To the mayor and city councilmen in various cities of German countries.”

(42.) Oskar Reichmann, “Lexikalische Varianten im frühneuhochdeutschen Bibelwortschatz und die neuhochdeutsche Schriftsprache,” 428.

(43.) See Oskar Reichmann, “Lexikalische Varianten im frühneuhochdeutschen Bibelwortschatz und die neuhochdeutsche Schriftsprache,” 429ff.

(44.) Luther, WA B 8:33ff.

(45.) WA 30/II:636, 31f. (1530).

(46.) Oskar Reichmann, “Lexikalische Varianten im frühneuhochdeutschen Bibelwortschatz und die neuhochdeutsche Schriftsprache,” 428–432.

(47.) See Andreas Gardt, “Die Übersetzungstheorie Martin Luthers”; Hermann Gelhaus, *Der Streit um Luthers Bibelverdeutschung im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert: Mit der Identifizierung Friedrich Traubs* (Tübingen, Germany: Niemeyer, 1989); Herbert Wolf, *Martin Luther*; Herbert Wolf, *Luthers Deutsch*, 1996; and Oskar Reichmann, “Lexikalische Varianten im frühneuhochdeutschen Bibelwortschatz und die neuhochdeutsche Schriftsprache,” 401ff.

(48.) For the classification of German Bible translations, see Stefan Sonderegger, “Geschichte deutschsprachiger Bibelübersetzungen in Grundzügen,” *Sprachgeschichte* 1 (1998): 270.

(49.) See also WA 47:29, 17 (1538).

(50.) Oskar Reichmann, “Lexikalische Varianten im frühneuhochdeutschen Bibelwortschatz und die neuhochdeutsche Schriftsprache,” 417.

(51.) See also Karl-Heinz Musseleck, *Untersuchungen zur Sprache katholischer Bibelübersetzungen der Reformationszeit* (Heidelberg, Germany: Winter 1981), 184, 250.

(52.) WA 30/II:637, 18f.

(53.) Birgit Stolt, “Luther, die Bibel und das menschliche Herz,” in *Muttersprache 94, 1983/84,* 10.

(54.) Peter von Polenz, *Deutsche Sprachgeschichte vom Spätmittelalter bis zur Gegenwart*, 233 with reference to Stolt.

(55.) Schirokauer, “Frühneuhochdeutsch,” 214.

(56.) Birgit Stolt, “Sakralsprache—zu Luthers Zeit und heute,” in *Kommunikation und Sprache in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung bis zum Neuhochdeutschen:*

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(57.) Peter von Polenz, *Deutsche Sprachgeschichte vom Spätmittelalter bis zur Gegenwart*, 233.

(58.) Frédéric Hartweg, "Luthers Stellung in der sprachlichen Entwicklung. Versuch einer Bilanz," in *Martin Luther (1517–1526)* (Strasbourg: Presses Univ. de Strasbourg, 2001), 276–296, here 285f.

(59.) Birgit Stolt, "Sakralsprache—zu Luthers Zeit und heute," 122.

(60.) Birgit Stolt, "Erzählstrukturen der Bibel und die Problematik ihrer Übersetzung," in *Akten des 6. Internationalen Germanistenkongresses Basel* (Bern: Lang, 1980), 312–321, here 312.

(61.) Birgit Stolt, "Sakralsprache—zu Luthers Zeit und heute," 114.

(62.) E.g., WA TR 1:524, 16 (1530).

(63.) WA 22:138, 20f. (1544).

(64.) See Birgit Stolt, "Die Bedeutung der Interpunktion für die Analyse von Martin Luthers Syntax," in *Deutsche Sprachgeschichte: Grundlagen, Methoden, Perspektiven: Festschrift für Johannes Erben zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Werner Besch. (Frankfurt: Lang, 1990), 167–180.

(65.) See also Johannes Erben, "Luther und die neuhochdeutsche Schriftsprache," 528ff.

(66.) Christian Gueintz, "Die deutsche Rechtschreibung," Halle 1645, A II b f.; quoted in: Josten, Dirk. *Sprachvorbild und Sprachnorm im Urteil des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts: Sprachlandschaftliche Prioritäten. Sprachautoritäten. Sprachimmanente Argumentation* (Bern: Lang, 1976), 148.

(67.) See Heinrich Bach, *Handbuch der Luthersprache* (Copenhagen, 1985); Herbert Wolf, *Martin Luther*; Werner Besch, "Die Rolle Luthers für die deutsche Sprachgeschichte"; Peter von Polenz, *Deutsche Sprachgeschichte vom Spätmittelalter bis zur Gegenwart*, vol. 1, 250; in brief, Joachim Schildt, "Zum Verständnis der Luthersprache," 18–28; and Herbert Wolf, *Martin Luther*, 29–45.

(68.) WA 6:82, 12 (1520).

(69.) WA 17/II:3 (1525).

(70.) Frédéric Hartweg, "Luthers Stellung in der sprachlichen Entwicklung," 291.

(71.) Johannes Erben, *Grundzüge einer Syntax der Sprache Luthers* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1954), 165; and Frédéric Hartweg, “Luthers Stellung in der sprachlichen Entwicklung,” 291.

(72.) Johannes Erben, *Grundzüge einer Syntax der Sprache Luthers*, 166.

(73.) Eugenio Coseriu, *Synchronie, Diachronie und Geschichte: Das Problem des Sprachwandels*. (Munich: Fink, 1974), 49.

(74.) WA TR 2:639, 18 (1530).

(75.) Zwo Tröstliche Predigt Uber der Leich Doct. Martini Luther zu Eissleben den XIX. und XX. Februarii gethan, Wittemberg, 1546 [Digitalisat der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek: BSB VD16 J 899] by Justus Jonas. Blatt 8/Avr.

(76.) Hans-Joachim Solms, “Soziokulturelle Voraussetzungen und Sprachraum des Frühneuhochdeutschen,” 1519.

(77.) WA 8:10, 289 (1521/22).

(78.) Polenz I, 234.

(79.) Meister Eckharts, *Sermons*, ed. and trans. Josef Quint. 1st; Vol. 2 (Stuttgart: Kohlahammer 1958; 1971) see: Vol. 2, 241, 9.

(80.) WA 16:256, 33 (1524–1527).

(81.) Quoted according to Herbert Wolf, *Martin Luther*, 24.

(82.) Peter von Polenz, *Deutsche Sprachgeschichte vom Spätmittelalter bis zur Gegenwart*, 237.

(83.) Anja Lobenstein-Reichmann, *Freiheit bei Martin Luther: Lexikographische Textanalyse als Methode historischer Semantik* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1998).

(84.) Anja Lobenstein-Reichmann, *Sprachliche Ausgrenzung im späten Mittelalter und in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2013), 51ff.

(85.) Anja Lobenstein-Reichmann, “Wortbildung bei Martin Luther,” in *Sprachwandel und Gesellschaftswandel—Wurzeln des heutigen Deutsch*, eds. Klaus Mattheier and Haruo Nitta (Munich: Iudicium, 2004), 69–97.

(86.) Anja Lobenstein-Reichmann, “Sprichwörter,” in *Das Luther-Lexikon*, eds. Volker Leppin and Gury Schneider-Ludorff (Regensburg: Bückle & Böhm, 2014), 655–657.

(87.) The teacher Michael Neander from Nordhausen recommended those who must preach in German: “Wird er ein Prediger, da man deutsch predigen vnd sich an gewisse

wort vnd fürnehmlich an die herrliche Version Reverendi viri Lutheri gewenen mus, kann er sie deutsch brauchen” (zit. nach Josten, ibid., 105).

(88.) Gerhard Hahn, *Evangelium als literarische Anweisung: Zu Luthers Stellung in der Geschichte des deutschen kirchlichen Liedes* (München: Artemis Verlag, 1981), 17.

(89.) See also Peter von Polenz, *Deutsche Sprachgeschichte vom Spätmittelalter bis zur Gegenwart*, 229.

(90.) See Arno Schirokauer, “Frühneuhochdeutsch,” 206–217.

(91.) WA 47:292, 40 (1537).

(92.) WA 54:273, 8 (1545).

(93.) Polenz, *Deutsche Sprachgeschichte vom Spätmittelalter bis zur Gegenwart*, 238.

(94.) Polenz, *Deutsche Sprachgeschichte vom Spätmittelalter bis zur Gegenwart*, 245.

(95.) Ibid., 237.

(96.) WA TR 6:221, no. 6835.

(97.) See the bibliographical information in Herbert Wolf, *Germanistische Luther-Bibliographie: Martin Luthers deutsches Sprachschaffen im Spiegel des internationalen Schrifttums der Jahre 1880–1980* (Heidelberg, Germany: C. Winter, 1985); additionally: Besch,“Die Rolle Luthers für die deutsche Sprachgeschichte”; Polenz, *Deutsche Sprachgeschichte vom Spätmittelalter bis zur Gegenwart*, 250; one can find the level of language still best summarized in Schildt, “Zum Verständnis der Luthersprache,” 18–28; and Wolf, *Martin Luther*, 29–45. For a general history of language see Polenz, *Deutsche Sprachgeschichte vom Spätmittelalter bis zur Gegenwart*.

(98.) WA 36:131, 21.

(99.) WA 15:39 (1524).

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