

Hans Sauer *in memoriam*



Hans lecturing

Hans Sauer was born on 9 September 1946 in Ingoldstadt, Bavaria, and died of a stroke on 31 May 2022 in Stockdorf. He is survived by his dear wife Gabriele (Gabi) and two sons, Robert and Georg, and by two grandchildren. He studied at Munich University (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität), proceeding from the *Magister artium* to the doctorate (1978) and the *Habilitation* (1986). Both theses were published: *Theodulfi Capitula in England*, 1978; *Nominalkomposita im Frühmittelenglischen* [Nominal compounds in Early Middle English], 1992. He taught at Munich, first as a lecturer (1975-89), then as a full professor (1997-2012). In the years between his stints at Munich, he held posts as a professor at Würzburg University (1989-93) and as chair at the Technical University of Dresden (1993-97). After retiring from Munich, he returned as an emeritus to Würzburg (2012-16). He remained active in the supervision of doctoral students at Munich until shortly before his death.

Hans Sauer was one of the world's leading authorities in the history of the English language. His range extended from the earliest Old English documents to late Old English, Middle English, and Early Modern English, with extensions into modern American English and dialects such as Pidgin and Creole. His lexical explorations have drawn him into areas such as plant names, animal names, names for persons, time concepts, and words for emotions. He also contributed to translation theory. His most recent work involved binomials (expressions involving fixed pairs joined by “and” or “or” in which the order is irreversible). Although primarily a linguist, Hans forayed into the world of English literature, with articles on *Beowulf* and the *Canterbury Tales*. His work even took him beyond the manuscript and printed page, as witnessed by his articles on film. If there is such a thing as “the compleat philologist,” Hans Sauer merited that appellation. In addition to his five self- and collaboratively-authored books, six edited books, and sixty articles, Hans contributed enormously to English philological studies by editing several conference proceedings; serving as editor for twenty-two years of *Anglia*, a prestigious German periodical devoted to Old and Middle English studies, as well as *Anglia-Reihe* (monograph series); and serving as co-editor, then editor of the medieval English section of *Lexikon des Mittelalters*. These positions represent only a part of the collaborative efforts Hans made to promote English philological studies in Europe and throughout the world. He lectured widely in Europe, North America, and Japan. He was often invited as a guest professor in Poland and the Czech Republic. In North America he was a “regular” at the International Congress for Medieval Studies at Kalamazoo. He was also a consultant to the Dictionary of Old English at the University of Toronto, and was engaged with North American scholars working at the DOE to produce a new edition of the Épinal-Erfurt glossary, which was one of his specializations.

Hans Sauer was an Honorary Member of the International Society of Early Medieval Studies (formerly the International Society of Anglo-Saxon Studies), and he will be long remembered for his organization of the Society's Congress in Munich in 2005. He was honoured with a Commemorative Medal from the Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University, Brno (Czech Republic) in 2013, and with a Fellowship in the Ager Academy of Arts and Sciences (Norway) in Norway in 2016. He was a general editor of the series *Middle English Texts* and he has also been a foreign member of the Polish Academy of Science since 2017. In 2011 he received a two-volume festschrift with contributions by colleagues and students from Europe and North America. He was to receive a second festschrift, which was to commemorate his 75th birthday. The volume will proceed as a *Gedenkschrift* [memorial volume].



(clockwise: Michael Herren, Hans, Toni Healey, Gabi Sauer, and Dáibhí Ó Croínín)
Hans partying

Hans, as we all knew him, made a substantial and lasting contribution to the Épinal-Erfurt Glossary Editing Project. He was a *Gutachter* for Michael Herren's Humboldt grant, which initiated Hans and Michael's collaboration on the project and led to the publication of "[Towards a New Edition of the Épinal-Erfurt Glossary: A Sample](#)" (*The Journal of Medieval Latin* 26), which will shortly be available "open access" on the Project's website. He continued as an official collaborator, contributing his prestige to the securing of successive SSHRC Insight Grants in aid of the project and critically reviewing and correcting the work as it progressed letter by letter.



(with Brigitte Bulitta, Director of the Dictionary Project) Hans studying a manuscript

Hans will be sorely missed in Toronto by the current and past editors of the DOE, the team members of the Épinal-Erfurt Glossary Editing Project, and by faculty and students who teach, study, and research Old and Middle English language and literature and the history of the English language.

-Michael Herren