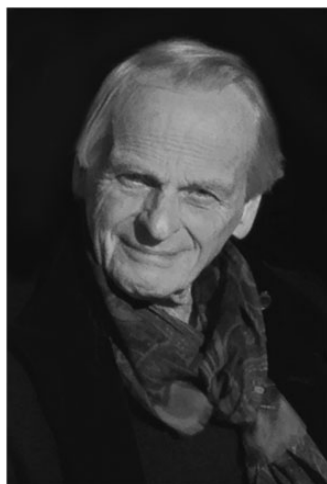


OBITUARY

Herbert Ernst Wiegand

08 January 1936 – 03 January 2018



EURALEX and the international lexicographic community lost a prolific and respected colleague and friend with the passing away of Professor Herbert Ernst Wiegand on 3 January 2018.

Wiegand had a longstanding relation with EURALEX. As a participant in the LEX'eter '83 conference in Exeter that hailed the establishment of the new lexicographic association, he was one of the founding members of EURALEX. At this conference he delivered the paper 'On the Structure and Contents of a General Theory of Lexicography', which was published in Reinhard Hartmann's *LEX'eter '83 Proceedings*, the first volume of the new series *Lexicographica Series Maior*, co-founded by Wiegand. Another contribution within the EURALEX domain was his keynote paper entitled 'Wissen, Wissensrepräsentation und Printwörterbücher' at

EURALEX 2000, the Ninth EURALEX International Congress, held in Stuttgart. Already with his 1983 paper, Wiegand clearly indicated the direction and emphasis of his continued metalexigraphic research: establishing and improving a general theory of lexicography. His 487 publications during the period 1967–2017 bear witness of his consistent and continuous dedication to the aims of exploring and explicating the nature and extent of lexicography as an independent scientific discipline, directed at its own practice that should lead to the introduction and fostering of the cultural practice of dictionary use.

Many fellow scholars regarded Wiegand's theoretical work as highly abstract. However, Wiegand always worked from the practice to the theory, and the terminology he introduced and his highly detailed discussions of structures and processes in lexicography can all be linked to questions and issues that he identified in real dictionaries – and for which he wanted to provide solutions and scientific explanations. His theory was there to be put to practice by lexicographers in order to enhance the quality of their dictionaries.

Wiegand realised the significance of the dictionary user. Any successful lexicographer has to identify the target user group of the envisaged dictionary and work with the needs

and reference skills of these users in mind. Wiegand argued that lexicographers and metalexicographers should pay much more attention to identifying their users instead of assuming that they know who the users are and what needs they have. His reference to the user as the *bekannte Unbekannte* (the familiar stranger) underlined the need that he saw. In a sound theoretical way his magnum opus, the authoritative *Wörterbuchforschung* (1998), gave clear guidelines regarding the study of dictionary use, the methodology to be employed, and ways and means to determine and address some of the needs of real dictionary users.

Many scholars in the field of metalexicography associate Herbert Ernst Wiegand with dictionary structures, thanks to his comprehensive study of this component of metalexicography. Besides complementing existing academic discussions of a number of structures in his unique and scientifically based way, he identified a vast number of structures that no other lexicographer had recognised prior to his introduction of these structures. His focus on dictionary structures yet again emphasised the approach of seeing lexicography as an independent discipline, even though overlapping significantly with other disciplines, notably linguistics. The study of dictionary structures shifts the research focus from the contents of dictionaries to their role as containers of the contents. Wiegand's work regarding, among others, macrostructures, microstructures, access structures, addressing structures, article structures and data distribution structures shed new light on an integral part of lexicography. Although Wiegand focused his research in lexicography primarily on printed dictionaries – and he explicitly stated that in a number of his publications – the transfer from printed to online dictionaries has already benefitted substantially from these structures. With minor adaptations, most of them can be employed in the planning and compilation of online dictionaries. Many aspects of his theory are not medium-specific and still form the basis of a general theory of lexicography that also underlies online lexicographic products.

In spite of the extensive work he had done in developing his theory, Wiegand was never entirely satisfied with the extent of what he had achieved, because he felt he still had a lot of work to do. Shortly before his death he told me that there remain a number of gaps in his theory that he still wanted to fill. Unfortunately, he did not have the opportunity to do that. Fellow lexicographers will probably not be able to identify these gaps, but we are acutely aware of the massive gap left by Wiegand's death.

Wiegand's primary research, in which he introduced innovative perspectives and results, was complemented by work that gave the scholarly community access to literature in the broad field of theoretical lexicography. His five-volume *Internationale Bibliographie zur germanistischen Lexikographie und Wörterbuchforschung*, with a comprehensive index presented in the fifth volume can be regarded as the most significant bibliography of lexicography. Although this bibliography primarily provides German references, it also includes references from English, the Nordic, Romance, and other languages. This bibliography will remain a valuable source of reference for future lexicographic researchers.

The commitment Herbert Ernst Wiegand showed to his broad field of research is also witnessed by his major contribution as editor and co-editor of academic journals and book series. Of special interest for members of EURALEX is his role in founding the annual journal *Lexicographica. International Annual for Lexicography/Revue Internationale de Lexicographie/Internationales Jahrbuch der Lexicographie*, as well as the book series

Lexicographica. Series Maior. Along with Stefan Schierholz he initiated the *Wörterbücher zur Sprach- und Kommunikationswissenschaft*, a project that is currently continuing its successful start. Wiegand was also co-editor of the *Zeitschrift für germanistische Linguistik* and the book series *Reihe Germanistische Linguistik*.

Following informal discussions with colleagues from other disciplines, Wiegand had realised the need for a comprehensive series of handbooks covering the diverse subdisciplines within the broad domain of linguistics. Consequently, in 1982, he embarked on the project to plan and publish the authoritative series *Handbücher zur Sprach- und Kommunikationswissenschaft/Handbooks of Linguistics and Communication Science*. Up to 2017, no less than 43 different subfields have been treated in 101 volumes of this series. Wiegand was co-editor and editor of this series of textbooks that reflects the state-of-the-art of linguistics and communication science. For lexicography, the volumes 5.1-5.3 (1989-1991), as well as the supplementary volume 5.4 *Dictionaries. An International Encyclopedia of Lexicography. Supplementary Volume: Recent Developments with Focus on Electronic and Computational Lexicography* (2013) cover the treatment of a wide-ranging and representative number of topics.

Herbert Ernst Wiegand excelled in face-to-face lexicographic discussions. He favoured meetings with fewer participants where everyone could actively participate in critical discussions. To promote such opportunities, he founded the Heidelberg Lexicographic Colloquium and co-founded the International Copenhagen Colloquium, as well as the Colloquium on Lexicography and Dictionary Research, bi-annually hosted in Eastern Europe. Colleagues acknowledged Wiegand's preference for smaller colloquia by arranging colloquia in his honour for his sixtieth and eightieth birthday in Heidelberg and Erlangen respectively. Further and formal acknowledgement for his work came in the form of a Festschrift *Sprache im Alltag*, presented to him on his sixty-fifth birthday, a special commemorative Austrian postage stamp on his seventieth birthday and honorary doctorates from the Aarhus School of Business, University of Sofia and Stellenbosch University.

Standardisation of lexicographic terminology was important to Wiegand, and as a metalexigrapher he also wanted to put his theory to practice. This resulted in one of his last major endeavours – his work as leading editor of the *Wörterbuch zur Lexikographie und Wörterbuchforschung/Dictionary of Lexicography and Dictionary Research*. The first volume of this four-volume project was published in 2010, and the second in 2017. In this dictionary, lexicographic terms are presented in German as the source language. The treatment is complemented by a list of translation equivalents for Afrikaans, Bulgarian, English, French, Hungarian, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, and Russian. Wiegand dedicated a lot of time, effort, and intellectual innovation to this project that kept him involved up to the very last days of his life – ably assisted by his wife Cornelia. Four days before his death, in our last telephone conversation, he discussed the future of this project with me and gave some instructions regarding the continuation of the work.

Work was not Wiegand's only interest. He dedicated his book *Wörterbuchforschung* to his wife, the late Marianne, for always reminding him that the actual world starts beyond his study. Outside his study Wiegand was a skilled horseman, a keen tennis player, an experienced skier and qualified skiing instructor. Few people know that he was a first class dancer who also published a book on dancing. His hobby to grow roses taught him to distinguish between flowers and thorns – and he applied that knowledge also in his academic work and research projects.

Prof Franz Josef Hausmann referred to Wiegand as the ‘Herbert von Karajan of Metalexigraphy’. Herbert Ernst Wiegand conducted the structures of dictionaries, the items in the dictionaries and the intricate relations between theory and practice in an exemplary and unequalled way.

Lexicography has lost its Von Karajan, but the music of the lexicographic orchestra he conducted will not fade away.

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