

In Memoriam
Winfred P. Lehmann
1916 – 2007

Winfred P. Lehmann, Louann and Larry Temple Centennial Professor Emeritus in the Humanities at the University of Texas at Austin, died on August 1, 2007, in Austin, Texas. Author of over 50 books and special issues of journals as well as 250 scholarly articles, Lehmann was a well-respected Indo-Europeanist and Germanicist, as well as a pioneer in the field of machine translation.

Born in Surprise, Nebraska, on June 23, 1916, he earned a B.A. in Humanities at Northwestern College in Watertown, Wisconsin in 1936, and went on to receive an M.A. in 1938 and a Ph.D. in 1941, both in Germanic Linguistics at the University of Wisconsin. His wife, Ruth Preston Miller Lehmann, who died in 2000, was also a distinguished historical linguist. Early in his career, during World War II, he served in the U.S. Army Signal Corps as Officer-in-Charge of the Japanese Language School and Japanese instructor. Following the war, he became Assistant Professor in the Department of German at Washington University, and was recruited in 1949 to the University of Texas as an Associate Professor of Germanic Linguistics. After his promotion to Full Professor in 1951, he served as Chair of that department from 1953-1964, while at the same time directing the Program in Linguistics. He was largely responsible for developing that program into the Department of Linguistics at the University of Texas, and served as its first Chair, from 1964-1972. He was thus responsible for launching two extremely successful departments at the University.

Lehmann's international renown is clearly to be recognized in his awards, appointments, and offices. Recipient of a Fulbright Research Fellowship to Norway in 1950-1951 and a Guggenheim Fellowship from 1972-73, he also served as Director of the Georgetown English Language Program in Ankara, Turkey in 1955-6, as Chairman of the Linguistics Delegation to the People's Republic of China in 1974, and as

Co-Chairman of the Commission on Humanities and Social Sciences to the People's Republic of China in 1981. He was elected President of the Association for Computational Linguistics in 1964; in addition, he is the only person to have served as both the President of the Linguistic Society of America, in 1973, and the Modern Language Association of America, in 1987.

On the occasion of his retirement in 1986, scholars from the Soviet Union, Western Europe, and the U.S. gathered at the University of Texas to honor him at an IREX Conference on Linguistic Reconstruction. The volume which grew from this conference, *Reconstructing Languages and Cultures*, 1992, edited by Edgar C. Polomé and Werner Winter, points to the impact that Lehmann's work had on the field of Indo-European and historical linguistics world-wide. Lehmann was also honored by two other Festschriften, in 1977 and in 1999.

One of Lehmann's special achievements was the establishment of the Linguistics Research Center at the University of Texas at Austin, for which he served as Director from 1961 until his death. The LRC was at the forefront of software development for machine translation; it eventually also became an important clearing house for historical linguistic and Indo-European documents and resources.

Among the most well-known of Lehmann's books on Indo-European and historical linguistics are the following: *Proto-Indo-European Phonology* (1952), *Historical Linguistics* (1962) (3rd ed. 1992), *A Reader in Nineteenth-Century Historical Indo-European Linguistics* (1967), *Proto-Indo-European Syntax* (1974), *A Gothic Etymological Dictionary* (1986), *Theoretical Bases of Indo-European Linguistics* (1993), and *Pre-Indo-European* (2002). Across his career, Lehmann's work centered around such crucial issues as the sorting out of the archaic strata of Proto-Indo-European from the innovative layers, the use of typology to inform reconstruction, and the enhancement of classical models of linguistic analysis by means of new approaches, such as those developed by Soviet and Russian scholars. All of these factors helped shape the direction of his most recent work, which focused upon his claim, following Klimov (1977) and Gamkrelidze and Ivanov (G & I) (1984, 1995), that Pre-Indo-European was active/stative in alignment, rather than nominative/accusative. With Gamkrelidze and Ivanov, Lehmann accounted for the fact that the IE middle

and perfect paradigms resemble the Hittite *hi*-conjugation by claiming that an ancient stative ancestor existed for all three. In his most recent book (2002), he assembled extensive data from the nominal and verbal systems, from the lexicon, phonology, and syntax of the ancient IE languages, to argue that remnants of this archaic active / stative alignment persisted in a number of locations. This book and other recent works argue what an active, engaged Indo-Europeanist Lehmann remained, to the end of his life.

For his former students and colleagues, the loss of this energetic teacher and supportive mentor is particularly painful. Professor Lehmann was remarkably generous with his time, and made every effort to ensure the success of his students. From 1951 to 1986 he directed approximately fifty doctoral dissertations, and served on the committees of many others. He respected his students, and expected much from them, asking them, for example, to help translate some of the nineteenth-century Indo-European treatises or work on several entries for the Gothic dictionary. In other words, he engaged his students deeply in the real work of historical linguistics. His energy was boundless and legendary—even after his retirement, he would still dash up the five flights of stairs to the Linguistics Department in Calhoun Hall, refusing to take an elevator. That energy—so evident in his publication record, his commitment to program-building and scholarly leadership, his active mentoring of his students—will be sorely missed by all who knew him and admired him.

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