

BESPREK

[0917] **Guus Kroonen**, *Etymological Dictionary of Proto-Germanic* (Leiden Indo-European Etymological Dictionary Series, edited by A. Lubotsky, vol. 11). Leiden/ Boston (2013), Brill, xlii + 794 pp. ISBN 789004183407.

In the *Preface* to a recent etymological dictionary of Frisian – Volkert Faltings’ outstanding *Etymologisches Wörterbuch der friesischen Adjektiva* (2010; henceforth EWFA) which was intended as an addition of sorts to Frank Heidermanns’ *Etymologisches Wörterbuch der germanischen Primäradjektiva* (1993; henceforth EWGP) that contained only very little Frisian evidence – the author states that ‘diese stiefmütterlich anmutende Behandlung des Friesischen’ is symptomatic for most etymological dictionaries. Although admitting that this is primarily due both to the fact that a comprehensive Old Frisian dictionary was still wanting and to the extremely complicated dialect situation (‘dialektale Zersplitterung’) of modern Frisian, Faltings emphasizes the great value of Frisian evidence for etymological research (p. vii): ‘Zweifellos könnte das Friesische als kleinster Zweig des Germanischen zur lexikographischen Kodierung des germanischen Grundwortschatzes (...) deutlich mehr beitragen, als man bislang von ihm gefordert hat (...). Gerade in der geographischen Randlage des Friesischen ist viel altertümliches germanisches (...) Wortgut bewahrt geblieben, das nicht nur zur Etymologie der germanischen Adjektiva ganz Hervorragendes zu leisten imstande ist’ (p. vii-viii).

The first opportunity to test whether the international etymological community is receptive of Faltings’ statement is Guus Kroonen’s 2013 *Etymological Dictionary of Proto-Germanic* (henceforth EDPG). The EDPG is the eleventh volume in the Leiden *Indo-European Etymological Dictionary* (IEED) project that set off in 2005 with Boutkan/Siebinga’s *Old Frisian Etymological Dictionary* (OFED)¹ and is intended to eventually replace the outdated ‘Pokorny’ (J. Pokorny, *Indogermanisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch*, 1959). An etymological dictionary of Proto-Germanic is a tremendous progress and a wonderful development in Germanic studies. Bearing in mind that Kroonen managed to compile this vast dictionary in no more than two years (having been collecting material in the

1. The OFED was (critically) reviewed by Elmar Seebold (in *Us Wurk* 54 (2005), pp. 202-205), Anatoly Liberman (in *Trefwoord* (2006) (<http://www.fryske-akademy.nl/nl/fryske-akademy/utjeften/trefwoord/jaargang-2006/old-frisian-etymological-dictionary/>); Anne Tjerk Popkema (in *Amsterdamer Beiträge zur älteren Germanistik* 63 (2007), S. 291-296).

previous years; *Preface*, p. vii), one stands in awe of the enormous amount of effort and dedication he must have invested in his work.

The EDPG consists of some 40 introductory pages and a main dictionary part of some 600 pages; the closing section contains a 35-page list of references and a 165-page *Index* of cognate forms, subdivided into 30 Germanic, 66 other Indo-European and 26 non IE-related languages. Such an elaborate *Index* is a great advantage to the dictionary, although it is somewhat unfortunate that the accessibility of the *Index*, and therefore of the dictionary as a whole, is diminished by the fact that both a table of contents on the *Index* and page headers indicating the languages on display on a specific page are wanting. This makes finding a specific word in a Germanic language in the *Index* a tedious procedure. Since in the first volume of the IEED series (the aforementioned OFED) such a table of contents was present, it is my hope that for future volumes the IEED editors will return to their initial set-up of the index part.

As for the dictionary part of the EDPG: the microstructure of the entries (see the *Note on the Structure of the Entries*, p. xiii) consists of, firstly, the Proto-Germanic reconstruction of a word in bold, followed by its grammatical category and its reconstructed Proto-Germanic meaning, which by lack of a methodology for semantic reconstruction should be taken as an ‘indication of the author’s intuition’. Secondly, Germanic cognates and their meanings are listed and information on their distribution is provided; the sequence of the main Germanic dialect groups in this part is: EGerm, NGerm, WGerm (and their respective dialects). The Proto-Germanic reconstruction and its linguistic evidence is followed by a discussion of the word’s etymology, which may also contain internal Germanic derivations. It is especially in these closing sections to the entries that Kroonen has attempted to implement specific advances in Germanic and IE studies.

Now that a brief description of the EDPG and its set-up has been given, I shall focus on what will be of special interest to readers of *Us Wurk* and on what is the main goal of this review: establishing to what extent Frisian evidence has been used. I have compared the total number of reflexes listed in the ‘Frisian’ part of the *Index* (pp. 679-703) to that of other WGerm languages. The *Index* contains approx. 900 OFris reflexes, 111 ModWFris reflexes, 22 ModEFris and also 22 ModNFris reflexes, rendering a total sum of just over a thousand Frisian reflexes, with the ratio “Old/Middle vs Modern” being approx. 6:1. How does this compare to other West-Germanic languages? The approximate numbers are listed in the table below:

ODu/MDu vs ModDu	=	1100 vs 1400 (ratio 3:4)
OHG/MHG vs ModHG	=	3000 vs 1600 (ratio 2:1)
OEng/MEng vs ModEngl	=	2400 vs 1000 (ratio 5:2)
OSax/MLG vs ModLG	=	1400 vs 50 (ratio 28:1)
(OFris/ModFris (W/E/N) ²	=	900 vs 150 (ratio 6:1)

2. Middle West Frisian (1550-1800; alternatively referred to by Frisian scholars as Early Modern West Frisian) seems to have been omitted completely or is at least not men-

Understandably, etymologists are inclined to look at older evidence of a certain language, which will account for the fact that for most languages in the table, the ratio is in favour of the older stages. Still, the modern evidence is quite strong for the first three languages. Striking in the table is the exceptionally small number of cognate forms for Modern West, East and North Frisian – as well as for Modern Low German, for that matter. Obviously, Kroonen has not used the modern Frisian evidence to the extent he has used most other WGerm languages. Actually, Kroonen admits so himself in the *Preface* when he states that ‘there was not enough time to add modern Frisian’ (p. vii) – which calls Faltings’ remark on the ‘stiefmütterlich anmutende Behandlung’ of Frisian to mind.

As mentioned, Kroonen has written (partially rewritten) the dictionary in no more than two years. He will have been forced to choose between languages – a matter of ‘killing your darlings’ no doubt. Unfortunately, Kroonen does not comment on the criteria he has used for deciding which languages to focus on. I am certain he does not doubt the value modern Frisian has for etymological research³ and Kroonen must be fully aware of the relative neglect Frisian has had to endure in the history of comparative Germanic linguistics, which already in 1979 caused Horst Haider Munske to designate Frisian studies as the ‘Mauerblümchen’ of Germanic studies. At any rate, poor accessibility of Old Frisian cannot have presented Kroonen with any problems, since in 2008 the vast majority of Old Frisian lexemes have been inventoried and made accessible by way of Hofmann/Popkema’s *Altfriesisches Handwörterbuch* (AFHW) and as a result, the total number of Old Frisian reflexes (some 900 in the EDPG) is fair – though still strongly running behind the other WGerm languages. Good accessibility through an overarching dictionary does not hold, however, for Modern Frisian, in all its wonderful dialectal diversity. Although these dialects are accessible thanks to a multitude of smaller and larger dictionaries, it is exactly this multitude which confronts scholars with a problem, as Faltings rightfully pointed out – especially if

tioned anywhere. This is understandable since it is not readily accessible. That is to say, it is, but the international linguistic community simply does not know it is. However, in the last decade, the Fryske Akademy in Ljouwert/Leeuwarden has put much effort in developing and filling the so-called “Integrated Frisian Language Database” (<http://tdb.fryske-akademy.eu/tdb/index-en.html>). Unfortunately, the outdated and somewhat idiosyncratic set-up of the database makes it very user-unfriendly, even for experts.

3. That the Frisian dialects have much to offer for etymological research has been shown by Jarich Hoekstra in a still ongoing series of etymological articles in *Us Wurk* over the last decade or so (2004-...) as well as in his review of the first volume of the EWN (J. Hoekstra, ‘It Frysk yn it nije *Etymologisch Woordenboek van het Nederlands: de kâns fersitten*’. In *Us Wurk* 53 (2004), pp. 144-160). In this elaborate review Hoekstra fiercely criticizes the way in which Frisian evidence has been treated in the first volume of the EWN. He also discusses what useful information for unclear etymologies especially North Frisian evidence might have provided (pp. 149-150) and lists what important work on Frisian etymology has already been done (pp. 157-158).

a comprehensive dictionary in which several dialects are represented, is lacking. This certainly applies to North Frisian and East Frisian: North Frisian is an umbrella term for eight surviving dialects (as well as two that have not survived) for which an overarching dictionary has been a desideratum for decades. And even though the only EFris dialect to survive to the present day – Saterlandic Frisian – is well accessible with several dictionaries, other (former) EFris dialects can only be unlocked with separate, not very well-known lexicographical and philological works. For modern (that is, post-1800) West Frisian the situation is much better, the language having been described comprehensively in the monumental *Wurdboek fan de Fryske Taal* (WFT) This 25-volume dictionary is the West Frisian counterpart of the Dutch *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal*, the English *Oxford English Dictionary* or the German *Deutsches Wörterbuch* ('Grimm's dictionary') and is equally well accessible since it was brought online in 2010.⁴

In an elaborate review of the first volume of M. Philippa e.a., *Etymologisch Woordenboek van het Nederlands* (EWN),⁵ Jarich Hoekstra discussed what useful information for unclear etymologies especially North Frisian evidence might have provided and also listed what important work on Frisian etymology has already been done in the past. Now I am not an etymologist nor do I have much expertise in etymological methods, so I could not possibly comment on the extent to which Frisian evidence would have contributed to the quality of Kroonen's Proto-Germanic reconstructions. However, it is not a long stretch to suppose that casting a keen eye on Frisian would have enlarged the total number of Proto-Germanic lexemes and provided a sharper picture of their geographical distribution.

In order to get an idea of the extent to which Frisian evidence that was readily available has made it to the EDPG, I have taken the study on Frisian etymology published closest to the point in time at which Kroonen must still have been able to process new material: the aforementioned 2010 dictionary by Volkert Faltings, on Frisian adjectives: the EWFA. I have inventoried the entries in a section (the letter *K*) of the EWFA to see which ones were included in Kroonen's EDPG. The total number of adjectives beginning with *K*- in the EWFA is 25. Of these, twelve are absent in Heidermanns' dictionary on Proto-Germanic adjectives (the EWGP) to which the EWFA is an addition of sorts (which, by the way, immediately goes to show how valuable the EWFA actually is). The adjectives absent in the EWGP are: *kalja*- ('frierend'), *kanka*- ('verdreht, verwirrt'), *kapja*- ('hübsch anzusehen'), *kausi*- ('wählerisch'), *kitala*- ('kitzelich'), *klunga*- ('zusammengebalt'), *kraunja*- ('klagend, murrend'), *krûsa*- ('kraus'), *kâmja*- ('kläglich'), *kwaka*- ('schwach'), *kwauda*- ('schlecht, böse'), *kwiwra*- ('lebendig'). All of these adjectives are equally absent from the EDPG. Of the remaining thirteen *K*-adjectives in Faltings' EWFA that Heidermanns also processed in his EWGP, ten are present in Kroonen's EDPG while three are not. The latter are: *klama*- ('zusammenhaltend,

4. <http://wft.inl.nl>.

5. Cf. note 3.

steil'), *klôka-* ('aufbrechend') and *krausa-* ('auserlesen'). Since Kroonen has not elaborated on the criteria he used for selecting the entries, one can only speculate as to why these adjectives – fifteen out of 25 – which he could easily have taken from Faltings' EWFA, did not make it to the EDPG. One might suspect that the fact that many of these only show limited distribution (Frisian, Ingvaemonic, West Germanic) has something to do with it, but, on the other hand, words that show an equally limited distribution were nevertheless included in the EDPG (cf. *rukjan-*, 'to chew the cud, ruminate', which only shows ContWGERM reflexes, or *ridra-*, 'penis' which only shows NGERM reflexes). Perhaps Kroonen did make use of Heidermanns' EWPG to expand his list of Proto-Germanic lemmata or to gain a clearer picture of their geographical distribution, but failed to use Faltings' elaborate addition to Heidermanns' EWGP to the same ends – even though the EWFA is listed in the *References*.

At this point it should be noted that the EDPG explicitly is not intended as a comprehensive Proto-Germanic lexicon nor does it aim at offering an exhaustive inventory of all known cognates; it 'rather attempts to establish the most important evidence on which the Proto-Germanic reconstruction is based' (*Preface*, p. vii). Therefore, the dictionary is to be taken 'as a mission statement regarding the reconstruction of Proto-Germanic'.

Of course, even in this case, the author did make choices on what evidence he would or would not use. However, since we are not informed of his criteria in this regard, we can only guess as to why some languages were treated more extensively than others, in this case: why Frisian was more neglected than other Germanic languages. As mentioned above, Kroonen only had limited time at his disposal. Anyone in the modern academic field should be sympathetic to the fact that relatively young scholars such as Kroonen are under tremendous pressure of delivering on a tight schedule. Due to this pressure, they cannot be expected to be fully comprehensive in their studies and are therefore forced to make unpopular decisions. Yet at the same time, Faltings' remark with which he politely exonerates authors of etymological dictionaries of partially neglecting Frisian evidence – it is tricky and not very well accessible – is growing less and less valid, not in the least precisely because of the dictionary in which Faltings expresses this exoneration. His work as well as Hoekstra's recent work and past work by scholars such as Löfstedt, Spenter and Århammar, the much improved accessibility of Old Frisian via the AFHW and of Modern West Frisian via the online WFT – all this makes it less and less acceptable from a scientific point of view to neglect Frisian material in comparative linguistics, of which etymological research is an important branch. It is about time that the international linguistic community starts recognizing the value of Frisian dialects for comparative linguistics. Frisian should no longer be the designated darling to kill.

A.T. Popkema
Groningen

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List of dictionary abbreviations

- AFHW** D. Hofmann/A.T. Popkema. *Altfriesisches Handwörterbuch*. Heidelberg, 2008.
- EDPG** G. Kroonen, *Etymological Dictionary of Proto-Germanic*. Leiden/Boston, 2013.
- EWFA** V.F. Faltings, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch der friesischen Adjektiva*. Berlin/New York, 2010.
- EWGP** Frank Heidermanns, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch der germanischen Primäradjektiva*. Berlin/New York, 1993.
- EWN** M. Philippa e.a., *Etymologisch Woordenboek van het Nederlands* (4 vols.). Leiden, 2003-2009.
- OFED** D. Boutkan/S. Siebinga, *Old Frisian Etymological Dictionary*. Leiden/Boston, 2005.
- WFT** P. Boersma e.a., *Wurdboek fan de Fryske Taal/Woordenboek der Friese taal* (25 vols.), Ljouwert/Leeuwarden, 1984-2010. Also at: [http:// wft.inl.nl](http://wft.inl.nl)