

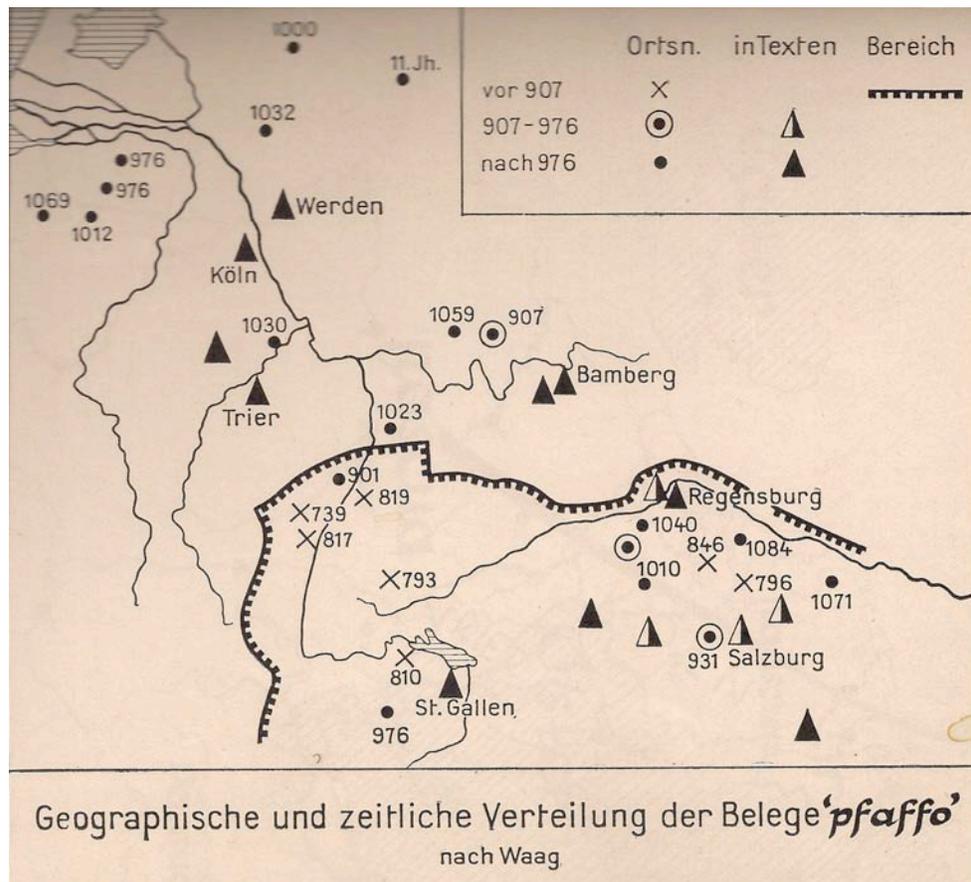
## On Latin loanwords in OHG

This sheet should provide a little more on the chronology and a bit on the geography of Latin loanwords, following a suggestion by Martin Durrell. A good overview with more detail is Splett (2000), but I'll draw primarily here on the classic work of Frings, maybe because he has lots of cool maps.

You can usually guess dates of borrowing from sound changes: Material borrowed early participated in the Second Sound Shift while late borrowings did not.

For **terminology related to Christianity**, Frings distinguishes five layers, beginning with words ultimately from Greek which came into the Rhine and Danube areas very early from Latin, by the 4th c. and across much of Europe (typically shared between German and French, for instance). These include *pentecoste*, German *Pfingsten* and French *pentecôte* as well as *kyriakon*, German *Kirche* (where French *église* is from another term, *ecclesia*).

A second layer from the 5th c. was specifically associated with Arianism, a kind of Christianity associated with the Goths, illustrated by *Pfaffe* (see the map). Other words show clear regional distributions in the modern language like *Samstag*, *sambaztag* from a Greek form *sambata*, ultimately from Hebrew *Sabbat*.



Beyond that are later loans and the layers are of less direct interest for us. The third layer he ties to the Anglo-Saxon missions, around 700, which includes *Ostern* related to *easter*. His fourth layer is from the Frankish Mission (6-7th c.) and the fifth around 700, when he sees the ‘Verdeutschung christlicher Begriffe’, with a contrast created between northern and southern German, where the former follows Anglo-Saxon. The north, he notes, shows forms related to Dutch *ootmoed* for *humilitas* while the south has relatives of *Demut*.

Geographically, a key pattern for him is that present-day France, the Rhineland, the Netherlands and England are similar, where and near where the Romans dominated, as shown here:



In secular vocabulary, he sees similar chronology and geography. Early loans include ancestors of German *Pfeil*, *Zoll*, *Anker*, *kaufen*, as well as lots of wine-related terminology and so on. Later words, religious and non, don't show the Second Sound Shift, e.g. *Tinte*, *Becken*, *Fenster*, *Priester* (by way of French). These typically appear from the 8th c. onward.

Just as interesting are items that didn't spread far. *Unio* 'onion' survives in some western dialects, like Trier *ünn*, with cognates in English *onion* and French *oignon*.

## References

Frings, Theodor. 1957. *Grundlegung einer Geschichte der deutschen Sprache*. Halle: Niemeyer.  
 Splett, Jochen. 2000. (See references *A History of German*.)