

Review article
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Mieder, Wolfgang. *International Bibliography of Paremiology and Phraseology (2008-2022)*. Osijek: Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Osijek, 2023, 699 p. ISBN 978-953-314-194-7, (eBook) <https://naklada.ffos.hr/casopisi/proverbium/supplement>

The publication of another bibliography volume of proverb studies by Dr. Wolfgang Mieder is a great event, but not a surprise. He published his first bibliography volume in 1982, *International Proverb Scholarship: An Annotated Bibliography*, each item with a paragraph of annotation. He then added additional volumes in 1990 and 1993, each with annotations, published with dark green covers. (These older books are treasures because of Mieder's annotations.) He produced an updated volume in 2001, a light green cover, with index words instead of annotations. Then in 2009, de Gruyter published his two-volume work with burgundy bindings, each entry marked for certain key words. With a large index, these two volumes are incredibly useful, but expensive.

He is known for his annual bibliographical collections published in each year's volume of *Proverbium*, each containing over 300 entries. In 2023, Mieder combined the listings of proverb publications from the 2008-2022 *Proverbium* listing and has produced an updated bibliography volume, distributed with the 2023 volume of *Proverbium*. A simple examination of this volume shows that 262 items were written by Mieder, plus additional items he co-authored with others. For most of us, 262 publications about proverbs are more than we hope to do in our lifetime. The volume contains 6,364 serially numbered entries. As scholars use this bibliography, these serial numbers are useful

as we study a subject and note the entry numbers of each entry that we think may be relevant.

This new volume is different from its predecessors in some important ways. The first and major difference is that it is *freely* available on the Web. Free access to this book is a huge advantage for students and scholars who do not have access to the previous expensive books. Second, this new bibliography is also different from his previous volumes because articles are not marked with thematic words and there is no index of any type. Third, the PDF form of the book is entirely searchable, so readers can do creative searches on their own. Fourth, the bibliography includes proverb-related publications written in a wider variety of languages. In past bibliography volumes, almost all of the entries were written in European languages. This volume has more entries written in non-European languages, and entries written in a wider variety of non-European languages, such as Malayalam of India and Arabic. There are even 15 entries published in the Turkish language journal *Milli Folklor*.

This review examines the contents and format of the book itself. But the book was not intended to be used only as a paper book. Therefore, this review also examines some of the possibilities that this digital format now allows.

The title includes the dates “2008-2022”, referring to the dates of his annual bibliographies in each volume of *Proverbium*. The bibliography contains a number of items that were published previous to 2008, but these are included here if they had not been included in the 2009 two-volume bibliography. For example, when he prepared his 2009 two-volume bibliography, Mieder had not yet discovered the following item from 1999, so he included it in this volume:

5380 Siemens, Ruth Derksen. “Quilt as Text and Text as Quilt: The Influence of Genre [Proverbs] in the Mennonite Girls Home of Vancouver (1930-1960).” *Journal of Mennonite Studies*, 17 (1999), 118-129. With 2 illustrations.

Note that the previous entry includes not only the usual facts of publication, but also adds the useful information that the article includes two illustrations.

Mieder has continued a useful pattern that he began in his earliest bibliographies: he lists not only the page numbers of each article or chapter, but he also lists the total number of pages for books that are listed. This allows readers to estimate the amount of data and its importance to their research:

4973 Rodríguez Valle, Nieves. 'Los refranes del "Quijote": Poética cervantina.' México, D.F.: Colegio de México, Centro de Estudios Lingüísticos y Literarios, 2014. 426 pp

Using this new bibliography is different than using the previous paper volumes, in some ways easier, in some ways harder. Just like the previous volumes, the items are entered alphabetically by author's name. This enables a reader to find in one place all the entries by an author. (The reader can also search to see if the author is listed as a second author of some other items.) I am interested in the spread of proverbs over wide areas, so I searched for "areal". This took me to a number of entries, some by Elisabeth Piirainen. She had published some other items about "areal" spread of proverbs, but because those items did not include the words in searches, I did not find them in my keyword search. But because all of the entries by Elisabeth Piirainen were grouped together, I found more items on the topic, even though they did not contain the keyword I was using.

Since many of the entries are not written in English, readers will have to be alert to find entries written in other languages. For example, a reader thinking only in English would search for "Russia", expecting to find examples about the country and the language. However, if the user keys "Russi", they will also find additional articles about Russian proverbs written in German with the word "russischer".

I searched for the English word "gender" and found 64 items. I searched also for other gender-linked words, such as "woman", "women", "female", "male", "masculine". Then I searched in other languages and found more matches, e.g. "femme", "frau", "mujer". When using keywords to search, it is often useful to omit the final letters of words since suffixes will vary. For example, by searching for the "masculin", I found the English words "masculine" and "masculinity", as well as Spanish "masculino" and "masculinas". I searched for "wellerism" and found 26

matches, but searching for “weller” found one more, a Polish article that spelled the word “welleryzmy”.

Similarly, I wanted to know how many entries studied the “paremiological minimum”. There were nine matches for the English phrase “paremiological minimum”. But when I searched for only “minim”, there were over 30 matches, because authors writing in other languages about the “paremiological minimum” generally use some form of the Latin-based word “minimum”, but use an adjective from the language in which they are writing, e.g. “paremiološkega minimum”, “paremiološkog minimuma”, “parömisehe Minimum”, “minimum parémiologique”, “mínimo paremiolóxico”, “mínimo paremiológico”, “minimum paremiologiczne”, “minimum parémiologique”.

Scholars can also use this book to study trends in proverb scholarship. For example, in Mieder’s 1990 bibliographical volume, the index did not include “gender”. In his 2009 two-volume bibliography, there were over 230 proverbs indexed under “gender”, 2.3% of the total proverbs in the collection. In this volume, I identified 225 proverb entries that touch on gender using such keywords as “woman”, “women”, “femme”, “feminin“, “frau”, “mujer”, or “masculin”. These 230 proverbs are 3.5% of the total collection (and there will be other proverbs that touch on gender issues, even if they do not use one of these words in the title). We should realize that these numbers are not exact, but it does show that since 2009, there has been an increase in the number of studies of gender in relation to proverbs. The bibliography in digital form allows readers to study such topics.

The volume has no index identifying the relevant country for an entry. However, Mieder has helpfully inserted country names in some entries. For example, he helpfully inserted “Ethiopia” in the following entry:

1898 Gebeyehu, Tsegaye Abie. “The Negative Representation of Women in the Language of Awngi [Ethiopia] Proverbs.” *International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews*, 6, no. 2 (2019), 479-490.

It is interesting to note that searching for “Bible”, “Biblical”, “Biblia”, “Bibel” I found over 60 matches. In addition, there are additional items about the book of Proverbs in the Bible, and a

few that used “sermon”, “priest”, etc. In contrast, searching for “Koran” and “Quran”, “Qur’an”, only one entry title mentioned the Koran/Qur’an, a 346-page book:

3979 Mohamed, Yomna Y. *A Linguistic Study of Selected Proverbs in the Glorious Qur’an and their Translations into English*. Saarbrücken: Lambert Academic Publishing, 2017. 346 pp.

In addition to this item, there are two entries that mention “Hadith” and three that mention “Islam”. Searching for “Mulla”, “Molla”, “Mosque”, “Islam” found no entries. Certainly, additional entries would be identified as linked to Islam by reading the actual content of the items listed. I am sure there are more publications about proverbs in Islamic contexts, but it is clearly an area for more studies of proverbs.

This book will be used frequently by proverb scholars around the world, very senior scholars and students who are just beginning to study proverbs. It is a gift to us all from Wolfgang Mieder.

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