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PREFACE

Yet another year of important paremiological and paremiographical activities has passed, as can readily be seen from the two annual bibliographies at the end of this new *Proverbium* volume. Proverb collections continue to be published in considerable numbers, and there is also an impressive amount of interpretive scholarship taking place throughout the world. Paremiology and paremiography are holding their own next to the larger field of phraseology and phraseography. While there appear to be numerous meetings emphasizing linguistic approaches to phraseology, paremiologists also have their smaller symposia that concentrate on proverbial matters. For example, a most successful international conference took place at Vilnius, Lithuania, in early March of 2004, and there was also a fruitful symposium at Burlington, Vermont, in late March on the *Netherlandish Proverbs* (1559) painting of Pieter Bruegel the Elder and the copies that his son Pieter Brueghel the Younger made in the first quarter of the seventeenth century. Essay volumes for both international meetings are now in preparation with papers by some of the leading colleagues in the field.

Once again it is my sad duty to announce that we have lost one of the giants in proverb studies. As my obituary in this volume explains, Demetrios Loukatos was not only the leading Greek paremiologist, but he was one of the founders of modern paremiology, serving on the editorial board of the old *Proverbium* and also of the new *Proverbium* yearbook. He was, of course, also a very good friend of Archer Taylor and Matti Kuusi, and he was a frequent contributor to both *Proverbium* publications.

With the loss of Demetrios Loukatos, the time has certainly come to take another look at the members of the editorial board of *Proverbium: Yearbook of International Proverb Scholarship*. Shirley L. Arora (Los Angeles), Alan Dundes (Berkeley), Arvo Krikmann (Tartu), Lutz Röhrich (Freiburg), and Vilmos Voigt

(Budapest) have been consultants for many years and naturally they will continue to be of invaluable help for years to come. But we will add four new board members at this time, namely Peter Grzybek (Graz), Gyula Paczolay (Veszprém), Julia Sevilla Muñoz (Madrid), and Kwesi Yankah (Legon). They bring a vast amount of expertise to the editorial board, and it is of great importance to have them serve international proverb scholarship in this significant role.

The future of *Proverbium* looks as bright as ever. We are doing well financially due to a slow but steady increase in paying subscribers, both individuals and libraries. The College of Arts and Sciences and the University Bookstore of the University of Vermont have always supported *Proverbium* with major annual funds. There are also individual subscribers who make considerable annual contributions, and this institutional as well as personal generosity make the yearly publication of *Proverbium* possible.

The wish remains, however, that we could increase the number of subscriptions. While we print 300 copies each year, we do in fact only have 239 subscriptions. My dear colleague and friend Dennis Mahoney, *Proverbium* subscriber since the beginning, suggested that Janet Sobieski as managing editor and I as editor might give a statistical survey of the 46 countries that receive the yearbook each year. The numbers are quite revealing, and it is our hope that scholars in the various countries will now try to solicit more subscriptions. Here is the list with the number representing the amount of copies mailed to the particular country:

- 89 United States
- 36 Germany
- 8 England, Finland
- 7 Japan, Spain, Switzerland
- 6 Canada, France
- 5 Austria, India, Netherlands
- 4 Hungary, Italy, Nigeria
- 3 Denmark
- 2 Belgium, Greece, Iran, Northern Ireland, Poland

- 1 Australia, Bulgaria, Columbia, Croatia, Georgia, Ghana, Honduras, Ireland, Israel, Kenya, Lesotho, Lithuania, Malta, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Singapore, Slovak Republic, South Africa, Sweden, Tanzania, Zambia

While it is not surprising that many subscribers (especially libraries) are from the United States, it is also good to see that Germany and other European countries as Austria, Denmark, England, Finland, France, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, and Switzerland are well represented. The same is true for Canada, Japan, and Nigeria (with a number of other African countries receiving single issues). But there are also definite problems. South America is very poorly represented, and so are Russia and many other Eastern European countries. No volumes go to China, and there are many other countries not having a single library subscription! We used to send more volumes to Russia, Romania, and other countries, but somehow subscriptions have stopped or our packages are returned. When a package does come back it always represents a major disappointment for us, not only because of the loss of the considerable postage expense, but also because it is a subscription lost.

It has always been the policy to send *Proverbium* free of charge to those scholars and students who for whatever reason cannot pay for a subscription. Of the 239 subscriptions, about 60 volumes or 25% reach the subscribers (individuals and libraries) free of charge. This is a promise I made to Matti Kuusi when I took over *Proverbium* as editor in 1984. I have all intentions to continue this policy of sending *Proverbium* free of charge if necessary. There is then no reason not to subscribe because of financial concerns! But please get scholars and libraries to contact us so that we can mail *Proverbium* to them.

In any case, I hope that Dennis Mahoney is correct in his suggestion that the statistics listed above might get individual scholars to help us obtain additional subscriptions. We should at least try to reach the magic number of 300 subscriptions. Let us all work together to reach this reasonable goal. *Proverbium* is an important

international publication, and we must do our best to get it to more libraries and individuals worldwide. As I plead for your help, I also thank you for your continuous support and look forward to receiving your manuscripts for publication.

This report is not meant to be alarmingly pessimistic. There is no doubt in my mind that *Proverbium* will survive as long as I can count on the support that we receive at this moment. I am committed financially to make *Proverbium* continue and thrive, and as we all know, money really isn't everything. We simply want to distribute *Proverbium* as widely as we possibly can. It contains some of the very best proverb scholarship, and it is important that its pages reach scholars and students everywhere.

In addition to my own work and commitment, there are three wonderful colleagues and friends who make *Proverbium* possible through their labor and help, namely Galit Hasan-Rokem as associate editor, Janet Sobieski as managing editor, and Hope Greenberg as production editor. I could not ask for better colleagues, and I thank all three of them for their dedication and diligence. It also is always a pleasure to work with Queen City Printers of Burlington, Vermont, who do a superb job in printing the hefty volumes. Finally, I want to acknowledge once again the financial support of the College of Arts and Sciences and the University Bookstore of the University of Vermont. Shirley L. Arora, Alan Dundes, and Karl-Ludwig Selig made special donations to help out, and with such good will and trust in *Proverbium* we will most certainly publish many more volumes in the years to come, hopefully serving an increasing number of countries and their proverb scholars.

Wolfgang Mieder