



WOLFGANG MIEDER

ARVO KRIKMANN: MASTER FOLKLORIST AND
PAREMIOLOGIST

Laudatio on His Seventy-Fifth Birthday
(July 21, 2014)

In the scholarly world of international folkloristics, the Estonian folklorist and academician Arvo Krikmann, born on July 21, 1939, in the village of Pudivere in the small Baltic country of Estonia, has earned himself a distinguished seat in the hall of fame. He is indeed an internationally renowned scholar of the major genres of verbal folklore, notably jokes, riddles, and proverbs. He excelled as a student at Tartu University, finishing his studies with a published final thesis on *Tähelepanekuid eesti rahvanaljandite struktuurist* (Some Notes on the Structure of Estonian Folk Humor) in 1963. From 1962-1969 he worked as a researcher and senior researcher at the Literary Museum in Tartu, from 1970-1972 he took postgraduate courses, from 1973-1993 he worked as a junior and senior researcher at the Institute of Language and Literature, from 1994-2000 he was employed as a head researcher at the Institute of Estonian Language, and since 2000 as a senior researcher at the Estonian Literary Museum at Tartu. Having gained much acclaim for his superb folkloristic scholarship, he became professor extraordinary in 1992 at Tartu University and in 1997 he received the high honor of being named a member of the Estonian Academy of Sciences. Among his many other honors are: member in the Finnish Literature Society (1979), member of the editorial board of *Proverbium* (1984), National Science Prize (1999), Cultural Endowment of Estonia Annual Award (2000 and 2004), member of the Academia Scientiarum et Artium Europaea (2003), Baltic Assembly Prize for Science (2004), and honorary member of the International Society for Folk Narrative Research (2005).

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As a polyglot folklorist applying comparative and interdisciplinary methodologies, he has gained international recognition as a humor scholar who deals with his subject matter from a theoretical point of view. His special research interests are concerned with culture and society, and he approaches his erudite investigations primarily from the point of view of folklore, humor, linguistics, paremiology, philology, semantics, and semiotics. His many studies on jokes and riddles are informed by a keen concern for the issues of ethnicity and stereotypes being expressed in them. In addition, Arvo Krikmann has also pioneered the geographical distribution of various folklore genres, making ample use of modern computer technologies to map the appearance and density of their variants as they have been recorded in different regions. His publications and lectures on these topics in Estonian, Russian, and perfect English are scholarly milestones with an undeniable influence on Baltic, European, and global scholarship.

This is not to say that he is not also a great archivist and compiler, as can be seen from his magisterial collection of Estonian riddles. But as far as paremiography is concerned, it was Arvo Krikmann and Ingrid Sarv who assembled the Estonian national treasure of proverbs in their monumental Estonian proverb collection *Eesti vanasõnad* (1980-1988) in five massive volumes. It represents one of the best and most complete collections of a national corpus of proverbs which has served as a model for other large collections of different languages. Naturally Arvo Krikmann and Ingrid Sarv were also part of the international team of paremiologists who, under the direction of Matti Kuusi at Helsinki, put together the phenomenal comparative proverb collection *Proverbia septentrionalia. 900 Balto-Finnic Proverb Types with Russian, Baltic, German and Scandinavian Parallels* (1985). Much of this work was done without the help of sophisticated computer programs, and when I proudly show my students such volumes, I always tell them to imagine the labor that went into these compilations! There is no doubt that Arvo Krikmann's name will forever be associated with study of Estonian proverbs and their relationship to other Baltic, Finnic, Germanic, and Slavic languages.

Arvo Krikmann shares his paremiographical fame with such great scholars as Grigorii L'vovich Permiakov, Matti Kuusi, Archer Taylor, Bartlett Jere Whiting, Démétrios Loukatos,

Kazys Grigas, Lutz Röhrich, and others, all of whom have left behind major proverb collections. But he also joins such renowned paremiographers as Gyula Paczolay, Frantisek Cermak, and many others who are still at work on the national and international compilations of proverbs. Of course, these scholars and many more, among them Valerii Mokienko, Julia Sevilla Muñoz, Charles Clay Doyle, Outi Lauhakangas, Peter Grzybek, Richard Honeck, Anna T. Litovkina, Shirley L. Arora, are all also involved in paremiology, i.e., the scientific study of proverbs that goes beyond the necessary and invaluable work of collecting and registering them. It is as a theoretical paremiologist where Arvo Krikmann has made his mark on the international scene, publishing major papers on the linguistic aspects of proverbs. His seminal monograph *On Denotative Indefiniteness of Proverbs* (1974) and its sequel *Some Additional Aspects of Semantic Indefiniteness of Proverbs* (1974) represent milestones in the semantic and semiotic study of proverbs. Of course, Krikmann has also made major contributions to the study of metaphors in proverbs, their geographical distribution, their variants, their classification, their structure, their syntax, and their significance as preformulated pieces of traditional wisdom. While many of these significant papers have been published in his native Estonian tongue or in Russian, his major findings have also appeared in English, reaching students and scholars of proverbs around the globe

It was one of my great honors to invite Arvo Krikmann to publish eight of his invaluable paremiological contributions as volume 29 of the Supplement Series of *Proverbium: Yearbook of International Proverb Scholarship* on the occasion of his seventieth birthday. This book with the title *Proverb Semantics. Studies in Structure, Logic, and Metaphor* (Burlington, Vermont: The University of Vermont, 2009) with its 312 pages is one of the most valuable publications on proverbs for the present and future generations of paremiologists. It contains his best research, and it belongs to a set of books that every paremiologist ought to read and possess.

About twenty years ago, in 1993 to be precise, Arvo Krikmann and I began to correspond with each other about our work, he at Tartu, Estonia, and I thousands of miles away at Burlington, Vermont. Our friendship began by way of letters and then also through our meetings at international conferences in Vilnius

(Lithuania), Tartu (Estonia), and Tavira (Portugal). Even though by now we could skype, we still prefer writing letters to each other. I miss getting envelopes with stamps on them, but we have realized that modern e-mail is the way to communicate. But not to worry! I have every letter nicely printed out with over 500 pages altogether. These epistles are a great record of our lasting friendship, and it is always a special pleasure for me when I find a communication from Arvo Krikmann on my computer screen. Our friendship has grown ever stronger over the years, including our wives and families as well as pets. And once in a while we meet somewhere in Europe at a folklore or paremiology conference. And then I receive a strong bear-hug from my friend who towers over me not only in physical size. Actually, friendships like the one between Arvo Krikmann and me make all of our labors worthwhile. To know that there are friends who share our scholarly interests and passions adds life and purpose to scholarly work. It all would be rather meaningless if we could not share the joys of our scholarship with kindred souls.

Be that as it may, it is with much delight that this thirty-first volume of *Proverbium* is dedicated as a *Festschrift* to Arvo Krikmann, one of the truly great paremiologists of the modern age. Paremiologists from everywhere wish him the very best on his seventy-fifth birthday, and we all hope that he will continue his paremiological work for many happy, healthy, and fruitful years. For me personally it is “wonderful” (my friend will smile at my use of this adjective, since he told me that I use it a lot) to grow old together with Arvo Krikmann. We both hope that we have exciting years of scholarship ahead of us, and as I conclude these remarks, I promise him that I will do my best to meet up with him at least once a year somewhere in Europe.

Ad multos annos, dear friend Arvo, from all of your paremiological friends who have the greatest admiration and respect for your invaluable contributions to international paremiology.

*Arvo Krikmann's Major Paremiographical and
Paremiological Publications*

There is no need to list all of the folklore publications by Arvo Krikmann that have appeared between 1963 and now. Karin Maria Rooleid edited such a bibliography on the occasion of Krikmann's seventieth birthday five years ago: *Arvo Krikmann. Bibliograafia 1963-2009* (Tartu: Eesti Kirjandusmuuseumi folkloristika osakond, 2009), 55 pp. See also Mari Sarv, "On the Life and Work of Academician Arvo Krikmann on His 70th Birthday." *Folklore* (Tartu), 43 (2009), 143-148. What is listed here are the books and articles that are contained in the International Proverb Archives at the University of Vermont, at Burlington, Vermont (USA).

1. "Keelestatistikat eesti vanasonadest." *Emakeele Seltsi Astaraamat*, 13 (1967), 127-154.
2. "Zur Problematik der Metasprache als Ausdruck der Bedeutungsstreuung der Sprichwörter." *Proverbium*, no. 17 (1971), 624-626.
3. *On Denotative Indefiniteness of Proverbs*. Tallinn: Academy of Sciences of the Estonian SSR, Institute of Language and Literature, 1974. 48 pp. Also in *Proverbium*, 1 (1984), 47-91; and also in Arvo Krikmann, *Proverb Semantics. Studies in Structure, Logic, and Metaphor*. Ed. Wolfgang Mieder. Burlington, Vermont: The University of Vermont, 2009. 15-50.
4. *Some Additional Aspects of Semantic Indefiniteness of Proverbs*. Tallinn: Academy of Sciences of the Estonian SSR, Institute of Language and Literature, 1974. 35 pp. Also in *Proverbium*, 2 (1985), 58-85; and also in Arvo Krikmann, *Proverb Semantics. Studies in Structure, Logic, and Metaphor*. Ed. Wolfgang Mieder. Burlington, Vermont: The University of Vermont, 2009. 51-77.
5. "Some Difficulties Arising at Semantic Classifying of Proverbs." *Proverbium*, no. 23 (1974), 865-879; and also in Arvo Krikmann, *Proverb Semantics. Studies in Structure, Logic, and Metaphor*. Ed. Wolfgang Mieder. Burlington, Vermont: The University of Vermont, 2009. 79-94.

6. "Vanasõnateksti denotatiivsest määramatusest." *Keel ja Kirjandus*, 17 (1974), 22-29 and 93-98.
7. "Eesti vanasonade teaduslik väljaanne käsikirjas valminud." *Keel ja Kirjandus*, 19 (1976), 541-547 (with Ingrid Sarv).
8. "Zametki k stat'e Vil'mosha Foita 'Voprosy obshchei teorii poslovits'." *Acta Ethnographica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, 26 (1977), 174-179.
9. "Folkloristliku kartograafia töömailt. Eskiis hobuse ja härja geograafiast." *Keel ja Kirjandus*, 21 (1978), 665-674.
10. "Nenotorye aspekty semanitcheskoi neopredelennosti poslovitsy." *Paremiologicheskii Sbornik*. Ed. Grigorii L'vovich Permiakov. Moskva: Nauka, 1978. 82-104.
11. "Some Aspects of Proverb Distribution." *Symposium on Mathematical Processing of Cartographic Data, Tallinn, December 18-19, 1979*. Ed. G. M. Remmel. Tallinn: Academy of Sciences of the Estonian SSR, 1979. 28-44.
12. *Eesti vanasõnad. 1-5000*. Tallinn: "Eesti Raamat", 1980. I, 910 pp. (with Ingrid Sarv).
13. *Towards the Typology of Estonian Folklore Regions*. Tallinn: Academy of Sciences of the Estonian SSR, Division of Social Sciences, 1980. 14 pp.
14. *Meri andab. meri ottab. Valimik lahemaa vanasõnu*. Tallinn: Valgus, 1981. 116 pp.
15. *Eesti vanasõnad. 5001-10000*. Tallinn: "Eesti Raamat", 1983. II, 866 pp. (with Ingrid Sarv).
16. "1001 Frage zur logischen Struktur der Sprichwörter." *Semitische Studien zum Sprichwort. Simple Forms Reconsidered I*. Eds. Peter Grzybek and Wolfgang Eismann. Tübingen: Gunter Narr, 1984. 387-408.
17. "Grigorii Permjakovi folkloristlikust pärandist." *Keel ja Kirjandus*, 27, no. 6 (1984), 364-366.
18. "Opyt ob'iasneniia nekotorykh semanticheskikh mekhanizmov poslovitsy." *Paremiologicheskie issledovaniia*. Ed. Grigorii L'vovich Permiakov. Moskva: Nauka, 1984. 149-178. Also in French as "Mécanismes sémantiques" de

l'annoncé proverbiale." *Tel grain tel pain. Poétique de la sagesse populaire*. Ed. G.L. Permiakov. Moscou: Éditions du Progrès, 1988. 82-113.

19. "Paremiologicheskie publikatsii 1975-nachala 1982." *Paremiologicheskie issledovaniia*. Ed. Grigorii L'vovich Permiakov. Moskva: Nauka, 1984. 300-318. Also in French as "Publications parémiologiques soviétiques (1975-début 1982)." *Tel grain tel pain. Poétique de la sagesse populaire*. Ed. G.L. Permiakov. Moscou: Éditions du Progrès, 1988. 364-378. (with Grigorii L'vovich Permiakov and Anatolii Mikhailovich Bushui).
20. *Vanasõnaraamat*. Tallinn: Kirjastus "Eesti Raamat", 1984. 624 pp. (with A. Hussar and Ingrid Sarv).
21. *Eesti vanasõnad. 10001-15140*. Tallinn: "Eesti Raamat", 1985. III, 911 pp. (with Ingrid Sarv).
22. *Proverbia septentrionalia. 900 Balto-Finnic Proverb Types with Russian, Baltic, German and Scandinavian Parallels*. Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 1985. 451 pp. (editor in chief Matti Kuusi; in cooperation with Marje Joalaid, Elsa Kokare, Arvo Krikmann, Kari Laukkanen, Pentti Leino, Vaina Mälk, and Ingrid Sarv).
23. *Some Statistics on Baltic-Finnic Proverbs*. Tallinn: Academy of Sciences of the Estonian SSR, Division of Social Sciences, 1985. 53 pp.
24. "Vanasõnaparoodiatest." *Keel ja Kirjandus*, 28 (1985), 474-483. With 4 illustrations.
25. *Eestonskie poslovitsy. 1-15140*. Tallinn: "Eesti Raamat", 1986. V,1, 400 pp. (with Ingrid Sarv).
26. *Paremiologicheskie eksperimenty G.L. Permiakova*. Tallin: Akademiia Nauk Estonskoi SSR Otdelenie Obshchestvennykh Nauk, 1986. 58 pp. Also in *Malye formy fol'klora: Sbornik statei pamiati G.L. Permiakova*. Eds. E.M. Melemunskii et al. Moskva: Izdatel'skaia Firma, 1995. 338-382.
27. *Estnische Sprichwörter. 1-15140*. Tallinn: "Eesti Raamat", 1987. V,2, 438 pp. (with Ingrid Sarv).

28. *Eesti vanasõnad. Lisad*. Tallinn: "Eesti Raamat", 1988. IV, 530 pp. (with Ingrid Sarv).
29. "Fraseoloogilisi elemente Georg Mülleri jutlustes." *Keel ja Kirjandus*, 35, no. 3 (1992), 144-150.
30. "Härjamari, vähirasv (Zoohübriididest ja -absurdidest paröömikas)." *Keel ja Kirjandus*, 35, no. 11 (1992), 667-682.
31. "Suure Ahela Metafoor - võti või muukraud vanasõnade semantikasse?" *Keel ja Kirjandus*, 37, no. 2 (1994), 93-98. With 2 illustrations.
32. "The Great Chain Metaphor: An Open Sesame for Proverb Semantics?" *Proverbium*, 11 (1994), 117-124. Also in *Folklore* (Tartu), 1 (1996), 74-83; and in Arvo Krikmann, *Proverb Semantics. Studies in Structure, Logic, and Metaphor*. Ed. Wolfgang Mieder. Burlington, Vermont: The University of Vermont, 2009. 95-103.
33. "Piibel kui ütluste allikas." *Keel ja Kirjandus*, 39, no. 5 (1996), 289-301.
34. "The Tartu Research Group of Paremiology." *Folklore* (Tartu), 2 (1996), 87-115 (with Ingrid Sarv). With 1 illustration. Also in *Proverbium*, 13 (1996), 111-133.
35. "Retoorilise, modaalse, loogilise ja suntaktilise plaani seostest eesti vanasõnades." *Keel ja Kirjandus*, 40, no. 4 (1997), 232-244; 40, no. 5 (1997), 327-343; 40, no. 6 (1997), 384-393 and 432. Also in English as "On the Relationships of the Rhetorical, Modal, Logical, and Syntactic Planes in Estonian Proverbs." *Folklore* (Tartu), 6 (January 1998), 99-129; 8 (December 1998), 51-99; and 9 (December 1998), 71-96; and also again in Arvo Krikmann, *Proverb Semantics. Studies in Structure, Logic, and Metaphor*. Ed. Wolfgang Mieder. Burlington, Vermont: The University of Vermont, 2009. 105-205. With 4 maps.
36. *Sissevaateid folkloori lühivormidesse. I. Põhimõisteid, žanrisuhteid, üldprobleeme*. [Insights into the Short Forms of Folklore (Mainly Proverbs and Riddles). I. Basic Concepts, Interrelations, General Problems]. Tartu: Tartu Ülikooli Kirjastus, 1997. 307 pp. With 95 maps.

37. "Matti Kuusi and the Project of Baltic-Finnic Proverbs." *De Proverbio. An Electronic Journal of International Proverb Studies*, 4, no. 1 (1998), 10 pp. (with Pekka Hakamies).
38. "Vanasõnad loomade identiteedist (Tüpoloogilisi memuaare)." *Mäetagused*, 12 (1999), 52-86.
39. "Finnic Paremiology: Past, Present, Future." *Congressus Nonus Internationalis Fenno-Ugristarum 7.-13.8.2000 Tartu*. Eds. Anu Nurk, Triinu Palo, and Tõnu Seilenthal. Tartu: Ülikool, 2000. I, 77-92.
40. "Proverbs on Animal Identity: Typological Memoirs." *Folklore* (Tartu), 17 (2001), 7-84. Also in Arvo Krikmann, *Proverb Semantics. Studies in Structure, Logic, and Metaphor*. Ed. Wolfgang Mieder. Burlington, Vermont: The University of Vermont, 2009. 207-246.
41. "Vklad sovremennoi teorii metafory v paremiologiiu." *Tautosakos Darbai / Folklore Studies* (Vilnius), 15 (22) (2001), 17-92 (English summary pp. 84-92).
42. "Kaasaegse metafooriteoria panus parömioloogiasse [The Contribution of Contemporary Theory of Metaphor to Paremiology]." *Reetor*, 1 (2003), 52-144.
43. "The Monograph *Lithuanian Proverbs* by Kazys Grigas and Its Significance to the Paremiological Research." *Tautosakos Darbai / Folklore Studies* (Vilnius), 30 (2005), 23-42 (review article). With 11 maps.
44. "'Digging One's Own Grave.'" *Folklore* (Tartu), 35 (2007), 53-60. Also in Arvo Krikmann, *Proverb Semantics. Studies in Structure, Logic, and Metaphor*. Ed. Wolfgang Mieder. Burlington, Vermont: The University of Vermont, 2009. 301-309.
45. "Imagery of Proverbs: The Great Chain of Being as the Background of Personificatory and Depersonificatory Metaphors in Proverbs and Elsewhere." *Proceedings of the First Interdisciplinary Colloquium on Proverbs, 5th to 12th November 2007, at Tavira, Portugal*. Eds. Rui J.B. Soares and Outi Lauhakangas. Tavira: Tipografia Tavirense, 2008. 29-68. Also in Arvo Krikmann, *Proverb Semantics. Studies in*

- Structure, Logic, and Metaphor*. Ed. Wolfgang Mieder. Burlington, Vermont: The University of Vermont, 2009. 247-300. With 7 illustrations.
46. "Balto-Finnic Proverb Lore as a Mirror of Folkloric, Ethnic and Linguistic Relationships." *Proceedings of the Second Interdisciplinary Colloquium on Proverbs, 9th to 16th November 2008, at Tavira, Portugal*. Eds. Rui J.B. Soares and Outi Lauhakangas. Tavira: Tipografia Tavirense, 2009. 247-275. With 17 maps and numerous diagrams.
47. *Proverb Semantics. Studies in Structure, Logic, and Metaphor*. Ed. Wolfgang Mieder. Burlington, Vermont: The University of Vermont, 2009. 320 pp.
48. "Metaphor vs. Joke? Figurativeness vs. Funniness?" *Proceedings of the Third Interdisciplinary Colloquium on Proverbs, 8th to 15th November 2009, at Tavira, Portugal*. Eds. Rui J.B. Soares and Outi Lauhakangas. Tavira: Tipografia Tavirense, 2010. 300-309.
49. "An Attempt at Multidimensional Structural Classification of American Proverbs." *Proceedings of the Fourth Interdisciplinary Colloquium on Proverbs, 7th to 14th November 2010, at Tavira, Portugal*. Eds. Rui J.B. Soares and Outi Lauhakangas. Tavira: Tipografia Tavirense, 2011. 231-245.
50. Krikmann, Arvo. "The Problem of 'Motivating Power' of Proverbs." *Proceedings of the Sixth Interdisciplinary Colloquium on Proverbs, 4th to 11th November 2012, at Tavira, Portugal*. Eds. Rui J.B. Soares and Outi Lauhakangas. Tavira: Tipografia Tavirense, 2013. 459-468.

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