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The fifty fourth volume of *Acta Ethnographica Hungarica* has been thematically dedicated to humour. According to the authors, it grew from seven panels and plenary lectures on humour research presented at the first international “Humour and Linguistics/Folklore” symposium, September 14-16, 2007, in Szekszárd, Hungary. Although there were more than a hundred researchers who presented their papers at the conference, this issue of *Acta Ethnographica Hungarica* contains fifteen papers selected by the editorial board of Gábor Barna. According to the guest editors of this issue, Anna T. Litovkina and Péter Barta, its value lies not only in the diversity of the selected papers, but in the fact that they had been written in English, Russian, French and German by linguists, phraseologists, paremiologists and humour researchers. Authors who have published in this volume are Péter Barta, Christie Davies, Oleg Fedoszov, Judit Hidasi, Outi Lauhakangas, Anna T. Litovkina, Nancy C. McEntire, David Stanley, Vilmos Voigt, Adrienn Haas, Judit Hahn, Hrisztalina Hrisztova-Gotthardt, Liisi Laineste, Piret Voolaid, Grzegorz Szpila, Lesya Stavvtskaya, Csaba Mészáros, Katalin Vargha and Joseph Laure. The editors have emphasized the fact that all authors publish in two or more languages and that they covered the topic of humour from the general linguistic, contrastive linguistic, sociolinguistic, paremiological and cultural aspect. A further volume which can be thematically added to this one on the national basis, according to the editors, is the Hungarian issue of selected papers of the First Hungarian Interdisciplinary Humour Conference *Ezerarcú humor (Thousand Faces of Humour)* edited by Margit Daczi, Anna T. Litovkina and Péter Barta. The re-

view of this publication has been written by Judit Hahn and can be read in this issue of *Acta Ethnographica Hungarica*, pp. 257-259.

If we take a closer look at the papers in this present issue, we can see that they had been divided into four sections. The first section contains four papers connected to the topic of jokes, followed by the paremiological section with five papers. Three articles on tales make up the folklore section, whereas the last section contains papers in Russian. This review will focus on papers dealing with humour from the paremiological point of view.

The five articles in the section on proverbs have been published by six authors. Members of the International Research Group for Folklore and Linguistics Barta, T. Litovkina, Hrisztova-Gotthardt and Vargha submitted two papers in French and German, which present some of the aspects of the results of huge international research on anti-proverbs. The papers deal with different kinds of transformations which can be observed if examining anti-proverbs. The research was conducted on a French, Hungarian, English, German and Russian corpus. The article in French entitled *Polysémie, homonymie et homophonie dans les proverbes détournés – avec des exemples Français, Hongrois, Anglais, Allemands et Russes* (pp. 63-75) elaborates on aspects of polysemy, homonymy and homophony, whereas the paper in German *Paronomasie oder wie ein Sprichwort zum Antispruchwort wird* (pp. 77-94) deals exclusively with paronomasia. It is interesting to note that the authors, while introducing the topic of anti-proverbs, covered almost all the European terms in use and therefore listed the most frequent variations for proverb alterations: anti(-)proverbe, faux proverbe, perverbe, proverbe déformé, proverbe dérivé, proverbe détourné, proverbe modifié, proverbe perverti, proverbe tordu, pseudo proverbe (p. 64). The final choice, however, fell to Wolfgang Mieder's definition PROVERB DÉTOURNÉ or ANTISPRICHWORT.

The first paper concludes that as far as the languages in question are concerned, there is no significant distinction noticed in the usage of polysemy or homonymy as the process of transforming traditional proverbs to anti-proverbs. Homophony, however, is more frequently used in phonetic languages like Hungarian, German or Russian. Homonymy/polysemy is used as fre-

quently as paronomasia, which, according to the results of the research presented in the second paper by these authors, uses similar ways to transform traditional proverbs into anti-proverbs in all the languages covered by the scope of the paper. Some of the interesting anti-proverbs that the authors list in order to exemplify the different modification processes in English and German are *Kleider machen Bräute*, *A fool and his money are soon partying*, *Pissen ist Macht*, *Take it or leave it*, *Steter Tropfen höhlt das Bein*, *Lightning never strikes twice*, *Ohne Eis kein Preis*, *Let sleeping gods lie* (pp. 77-94).

Outi Lauhakangas in her paper *Humour and Functions of Proverbs in Social Interaction* (pp. 95-103) addresses proverbs from the socio-psychological point of view and considers them a special form of strategy used in everyday speech, as they have a humorous element connected to the emotional tensions (p. 96). She lists an example from the Finnish dialect, where humour is connected to the proverb in a typical communicative situation in which the two parties talk, but not communicate: *Good morning. – An axe handle.* (p. 99). In his paper entitled *Humour as a Tool in Communicating Proverbial Wisdom in Polish Graffiti* (pp. 105-114), Grzegorz Szpila concentrates on the proverbs in Polish graffiti. He conducted research on a corpus of a hundred paremic structures from the last decade, which he collected from the Polish internet pages. The authors of the graffiti, while using modified proverbs, question their message and in most cases achieve a humorous effect (p. 106). Some of the examples which are mentioned in the paper are *As you work you will give to a church collection*, *Every spray has its customs* and *The still student makes use of two cheat sheets* (pp. 105-114). The section on proverbs ends with the paper by Vilmos Voigt *Are there humorous proverb texts?* (pp. 115-121), who is questioning the existence of humorous proverbs and is trying to answer the question how can we estimate the degree of humour in some proverbs. According to his opinion, the notion and the meaning of humour is not clear, particularly the label of "wittiness", due to the fact that the majority of humorous proverbs cannot be considered funny.

Even though the topic of this issue of *Acta Ethnographica Hungarica* is humour, after reading the volume it can be stated that the contributions in the field of paremiology raise not only

the reader's interest, but contain valuable information for further research in this area. Therefore I can heartily recommend this issue not only to scholars, linguists and folklorists, but to anyone who would like to dive deeper into the proverbial lore of several European nations and find out to which extent and if there is a note of humour attached.

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