

WOLFGANG MIEDER

PREFACE

It is always a special pleasure to dedicate a new volume of *Proverbiium* as a “Festschrift” to a valued and dear paremiological friend. This year it is my pleasure and honor to publish the thirty-sixth volume of our yearbook in recognition of the scholarly accomplishments of my good friend Prof. Dr. Siegfried Neumann on the occasion of his eighty-fifth birthday on April 5, 2019. As the former director of the Wossidlo Folklore Archive and as Professor of Folklore at the University of Rostock in Germany he gained an international reputation as a scholar of folk narratives and as a paremiologist. In order to celebrate his special birthday, three of his closest friends have contributed papers to this volume. Since Siegfried Neumann’s publications have been in German for several decades, these essays are also written in the German language. There is a contribution by his former student Susanne Hose as well as a paper from his successor Christoph Schmitt. The third article is an epistolary tribute to Siegfried Neumann by me. Our letters over the past several decades are proof positive that friendships are of great importance among scholars. I have always looked at paremiologists as an international family of proverb scholars, and Siegfried Neumann has been like an older brother to me. He is basically ten years older than I, and I can say with much thankfulness that I have learned so much from this wonderful friend. He certainly has influenced paremiological and paremiographical scholarship, and all of us can join him in celebrating his big birthday!

In addition to the papers honoring Siegfried Neumann, this volume includes articles by scholars from around the world, that is from Africa, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Spain, and the United States. This is once

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again a clear indication that *Proverbium* is an international scholarly venture, publishing articles in English, French, German, and Spanish primarily. This particular volume is a bit heavy on German papers, but it can also happen that we have more papers in other languages. Our attempt will always be to be as international, interdisciplinary, and polyglot as humanly possible. We also want to serve as many countries and continents as possible.

Keeping up our international subscriptions continues to be a concern. We honestly could use more subscribers, especially since libraries are ever more cancelling print journals and yearbooks. It might well happen in a few years that our *Proverbium* cannot be published in print as a handsome book of 544 pages any longer. The printing expense is very high, and the postage is basically unaffordable. But not to worry, for the few years that are left to me as editor of *Proverbium* we will continue with printed volumes. However, I have the feeling that *Proverbium* might have to go to online publishing eventually. Having turned 75 this year, the time has come to think about the future of *Proverbium*. Unfortunately, I shall not be able to go on forever as age creeps up on me. But I think that I have a couple or so years left in me.

As always, I would like to close this short preface with a sincere statement of appreciation. I thank all of you, individuals and libraries, for your continued support of *Proverbium* by sending us your manuscripts, paying for subscriptions, and making financial donations to our yearbook. Special thanks go once again to my associate editor Galit Hasan-Rokem, my managing editor Brian Minier, and my production editor Hope Greenberg. The *Proverbium* volumes could not appear without their help and support. I also wish to thank my friends at Queen City Printers of Burlington, Vermont, for producing such handsome volumes. Much appreciation is also due Dean William Falls of the College of Arts and Sciences and our bookstore manager Jay Menninger at the University of Vermont as well as my former German and Russian student Dr. Douglas Smith and his wife Stephanie from Seattle, Washington, for their generous support. What fortune for our *Proverbium* to have such good friends to keep us afloat for years to come.

Wolfgang Mieder