

PROVERBIUM

Yearbook of International Proverb Scholarship



33:2016

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WOLFGANG MIEDER

PREFACE

Another year has passed by quickly, and it is with much pleasure and excitement that I can present the thirty-third volume of *Proverbiu*m to the international community of proverb scholars. As has been the case for many years, this volume once again contains 544 pages of exciting articles, book reviews, and bibliographies that attest to the keen interest in proverbial matters throughout the world. My attempt to keep this *Yearbook of International Proverb Scholarship* as interdisciplinary and multicultural as possible can be seen throughout its many pages. The contributing scholars reside in such different countries as Australia, Croatia, Germany, Nigeria, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovenia, Spain, and the United States, with the many proverb examples coming from such varied languages as English, French, German, Malay, Romanian, Slovenian, Spanish, and Yoruba. All of this is a clear indication that paremiology is indeed a global undertaking.

The subject matters of the articles in this volume are truly multifaceted, dealing with such theoretical topics as anti-proverbs, genre definition, and the paremiological optimum. Several articles address literary topics, others deal with the problems of proverb translation and equivalence, and there are also linguocultural studies looking at proverbs from different cultures and languages relating to food and happiness. Of course, the question of the fascinating role that proverbs play in the modern world is also raised, showing the incredible importance of new proverbs in Africa as well as the United States and elsewhere. This leads me to the plea of collecting and publishing new proverbs. Most extant proverb collections pay very little attention to modern proverbs that came into being in the twentieth century and that are created now and spread quickly and widely by way of the media and the internet. This is true for modern proverbs in

individual languages and also for those proverbs that are part of English as the *lingua franca* of the interconnected modern world.

Speaking of modern times, I think we are all aware of the fact that many libraries and scholars as well are reluctant to purchase journals and yearbooks due to the expense, the lack of space, and the fact that ever more scholarly publications are available electronically. Luckily I have received only very few cancellations of *Proverbium* subscriptions. However, there have also not really been any additional standing orders for our yearbook either. Be that as it may, *Proverbium* will continue to be published in print. All volumes are also available online, with the most recent volume being added to the electronic database one year after its original print publication. But it behooves all of us to spread the good word about *Proverbium* so that we have enough subscriptions to pay for the printing and steadily rising postage costs.

In this regard I would like to express my thanks to all individual subscribers and libraries for their loyal support of *Proverbium*. My sincere gratitude also goes to my friends Shirley L. Arora (Point Arena, California), Jerry and Traudi Jacobson (New York, New York) as well as Douglas and Stephanie Smith (Seattle, Washington) for their very generous financial support. I also wish to thank William Falls, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Vermont, and Jay Menninger, Manager of the University of Vermont Bookstore, for once again providing substantial subventions.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the untiring dedication and much-appreciated help of the Associate Editor Galit Hasan-Rokem from the Hebrew University at Jerusalem as well as the Production Editor Hope Greenberg and the Managing Editor Brian Minier who both work with me here at the University of Vermont. We are a great and supportive team, and together we thank all subscribers and readers for letting us produce yet another volume of *Proverbium* in the service of international paremiology.

Wolfgang Mieder

MELITA ALEKSA VARGA AND DARKO MATOVAC

KROATISCHE SPRICHWÖRTER IM TEST

Abstract: The present paper discusses the results of a vast survey conducted in Croatia, in which Croatian proverbs were tested. The list of 105 proverbs included in the questionnaire was compiled in several steps and filtered according to previous research done in the field. The questionnaire was filled out by 867 informants from every major Croatian region, aged from 14 to 87. Although there are also different possibilities and methods to gather information about the familiarity and usage of proverbs, we opted to test the familiarity of proverbs by asking the informants to fill out the first logical half of it. The present paper therefore discusses the results of the survey analysed according to gender, age, and educational degree of the informants.

Keywords: Croatian proverbs, survey, familiarity of proverbs, Croatian paremiological minimum, questionnaire, statistics

1. Einführung

Betrachtet man die zeitgenössischen wissenschaftlichen Arbeiten zur kroatischen Parömiologie, kann man feststellen, dass sich die Mehrheit der Texte mit den Fragen zum Gebrauch der Sprichwörter auseinandersetzt. Der neuste Beitrag zur kroatischen Parömiographie stammte unseres Wissens von Željka Matulina (2012),¹ die über die Verwendung von Sprichwörtern in kroatischen, bosnischen, serbischen und deutschen Printmedien einen Bericht verfasste. Es mag auch überraschen, dass im Bereich der Sprichwörteransammlungen in Kroatien heutzutage nur kleine Fortschritte dokumentiert wurden. Die Wiederbelebung der kroatischen Parömiographie sollte daher dringend beginnen. Das Ziel dieser Arbeit ist, die bisherigen wertvollen Ergebnisse parömiologischer Forschungen in Kroatien einen Schritt weiter zu bringen und zu versuchen, dem Grobziel, nämlich dem Bestimmen eines kroatischen parömiologischen Minimums, näher zu kommen.

2. Zu den bisherigen Sammlungen und Untersuchungen des kroatischen Sprichwortgutes

Kroatische Sprichwörter wurden am meisten in den Sammlungen mit Redensarten aus dem 19. und 20. Jahrhundert dokumentiert, präziser gesagt von 1846 bis 1987. In diesen Werken sind sämtliche Sprichwörter zu finden, die im Rahmen einer von Peter Grzybek geleiteten Studie in den neunziger Jahren des 20. Jahrhunderts extrahiert und analysiert wurden.² Die u.W. zuletzt veröffentlichte Sammlung *Hrvatske narodne poslovice* (Meheš 2007) enthält sowohl Sprichwörter als auch sprichwörtliche Redensarten ohne weitere für parömiologische Sammlungen übliche und erforderliche Angaben und kann daher nicht als eine zuverlässige Quelle des modernen Sprichwortgutes betrachtet werden.

Peter Grzybeks Analyse der Sprichwortsammlungen aus dem 19. und 20. Jahrhundert hat gezeigt, dass heutzutage nur 134 Belege als bekannt markiert wurden, die anderen wären veraltet oder obsolet (vgl. Grzybek (1996)³).

3. Studie zur Bekanntheit kroatischer Sprichwörter

Wenn man die Sprichwörter eines Landes zu sammeln versucht, stößt man, wie gewöhnlich, auf einige Problemstellen. Das erste Problem bezieht sich auf das Definieren des Begriffs Sprichwort, das zweite auf die Bestimmung vom Umfang des kroatischen Sprichwortgutes.

Da das Ziel dieser Arbeit nicht ist, den Begriff Sprichwort zu bestimmen, werden wir uns im Rahmen dieses Beitrags auf die Definition von Hrisztova-Gotthardt (2010: 25) verlassen. Sie behauptet nämlich, Sprichwörter seien

relativ kurze, fest geprägte abgeschlossene Sätze, die oft auf bestimmten syntaktischen Modellen aufbauen, sich unterschiedlicher Stilfiguren bedienen und ihre Aussage(n) meist in metaphorischer Form zum Ausdruck bringen. Sie sprechen Lebensweisheiten, -regeln und -auffassungen aus und erfüllen heutzutage im Unterschied zu den früheren Zeiten neben ihrer dominierenden didaktischen Funktion auch zahlreiche pragmatische Funktionen. Sprichwörter sind im Kreise einer Sprach- beziehungsweise Kulturgemeinschaft allgemein bekannt, gelten allerdings nicht als absolute Wahrheiten.

Wenn wir weiterhin das kroatische Sprichwortgut zu bestimmen versuchen, dürfen wir nicht Peter Grzybeks (1993) Gedanken vernachlässigen:

Darüber hinaus kann aus heutiger Sicht keinerlei zuverlässige Aussage darüber gemacht werden, ob die in den entsprechenden Sammlungen enthaltenen Texte in den jeweiligen Kulturen jemals in Gebrauch waren; denn es ist sehr wohl möglich, dass Sprichwörter zu einer bestimmten Zeit ‚einfach‘ aus dem Lateinischen (oder einer anderen Sprache) in die jeweilige Landessprache übersetzt und auf diese Weise zum vermeintlich indigenen kulturellen Bestandteil (einer) (Sprichwort-)Kultur wurden, ohne jemals tatsächlich in dieser Kultur im Gebrauch verankert gewesen zu sein. (Grzybek 1993: 86)

Es sollten daher nicht nur sämtliche in diversen Sammlungen verzeichneten kroatischen Sprichwörter getestet werden, sondern auch solche Sprichwörter, die in der kroatischen Sprache, auf dem Gebiet Kroatiens noch heutzutage im Gebrauch sind. Uns interessiert auch, welche Sprichwörter den meisten Sprechern verschiedener Altersgruppen bekannt sind und welche Sprichwörter, und zwar in welcher Form, heute noch verwendet werden. Bei der Planung unserer Untersuchung sind wir daher von František Čermák (2003) und Peter Ďurčo (2014) Erfahrungen ausgegangen. Čermák (2003, zitiert nach Ďurčo, 2014) hat Schindlers (1993, zitiert nach Ďurčo, 2014) Methode bei der Erhebung von Daten in seiner Untersuchung kritisiert. Bei der Bestimmung des parömiologischen Minimums der tschechischen Sprache hat Čermák mit einem eigenen Korpus von Sprichwörtern gearbeitet, wonach die 243 Sprichwörter im tschechischen Nationalkorpus getestet wurden (vgl. Ďurčo 2014). Weiterhin hat er bei der Fragebogenerstellung geraten, die erste Hälfte des Sprichwortes wegen der Linearität unserer Sprachen auszulassen. Ähnlich wie Čermák hat Ďurčo die deutschen Sprichwörter zuerst in einem Kompetenztest, korreliert mit korpusbasierten Untersuchungen zur Vorkommenshäufigkeit der Sprichwörter geprüft (vgl. Ďurčo 2104).⁴ Bei der Planung der Untersuchung in Kroatien haben wir daher die korpusbasierten Methoden zusammen mit der Methode von Belegerhebung aus den bisher veröffentlichten Sammlungen verwendet. Wir haben uns auf die Vorarbeiten von Grzybek (vgl. Grzybek 1993,

1996, 1997a, 1997b) verlassen und ein Testkorpus erstellt. Dieses wurde pilotiert, wonach eine Liste mit 105 Sprichwörtern entstand, die von 867 Probanden aus verschiedenen Gebieten Kroatiens ausgefüllt wurde (Anhang, Tabelle 1).⁵

3.1. *Zum Testkorpus der kroatischen Sprichwörtern*

Das Erstellen eines Korpus, das zu den weiteren Untersuchungszwecken genutzt wird, wurde in vier Schritten gemacht, da wir uns auf die Behauptung von Grzybek (1997) verlassen haben: „die wesentlichen parömiologischen Quellen sollten berücksichtigt werden, zusammen mit den zusätzlichen Analysen zu aktuellen Sprichwortverwendungen“ (Grzybek 1997: 151).

Der erste Schritt bestand aus dem Kompilieren von Sprichwörtern aus früheren Studien und Untersuchungen zum kroatischen Sprichwortgut. Alle veröffentlichten Befunde von den Grzybek Studien wurden daher noch einmal von uns im Rahmen dieser Studie gefiltert, sodass nur Sprichwörter unserem Testkorpus hinzugefügt werden. Das Testkorpus verfügte schon über eine Liste sowohl von Sprichwörtern aus neueren Kompilationen (Mario Meheš (2007) *Hrvatske narodne poslovice*) als auch von Belegen aus Internetquellen, die von 2008 bis 2013 gesammelt wurden. Die Sprichwörter aus dem Testkorpus wurden in einem zweiten Schritt mit den drei verfügbaren kroatischen Korpora korreliert: *Hrvatski nacionalni korpus*⁶ (Kroatisches Nationalkorpus, mit 216,8 Millionen Token), *Hrvatska jezična riznica*⁷ (Korpus des Instituts für die kroatische Sprache und Sprachwissenschaft, mehr als 100 Millionen Token) und hrWaC⁸ (Webkorpus der kroatischen Sprache mit mehr als 1.9 Milliarden Token). In den drei Korpora haben wir nach den Sprichwörtern bzw. Sprichwortvarianten gesucht. Da wir davon ausgegangen sind, dass Sprichwörter primär in der gesprochenen Sprache erscheinen, haben wir letztendlich unsere Belege nach der Vorkommenshäufigkeit im hrWaC Korpus überprüft.⁹ Insgesamt gab es 239 Sprichwörter, aus denen später eine Pilotliste mit 207 am häufigsten erschienenen Sprichwörtern entstand.

3.2. *Zum Erstellen des Fragebogens*

In einem weiteren, vierten Schritt der Untersuchung wurde die Pilotliste mit 207 Sprichwörtern in Form von einem Online Pilotfragebogen mit 21 Versuchspersonen, Sprachwissenschaftlern aus Ost-, Nord- und Westkroatiens getestet, die bei jedem Sprichwort

markieren sollten, ob sie es kennen, nicht kennen, oder in einer anderen Form kennen. Der Grund dafür lag in der Tatsache, dass es einfach unmöglich wäre, von den Probanden zu verlangen, dass sie zu 207 Sprichwörtern den ersten, logischen Teil eintragen. Danach entstand letztendlich ein Fragebogen mit 105 Belegen, der an Probanden in ganz Kroatien verteilt wurde. Der Fragebogen bestand aus zwei Teilen. Im ersten Teil sollten die Probanden ihre Metadaten eintragen. Obwohl die ganze Untersuchung anonym verlaufen ist, sollten sie zum Zweck der späteren Analysen Angaben zu ihrem Alter, Wohngebiet, Geburtsort, Muttersprache und Schulausbildung eintragen. Im zweiten Teil des Fragebogens sollten sie die erste Hälfte des Sprichwortes ergänzen. Sie wurden gebeten, im Falle, dass sie das Sprichwort nicht kennen, ein X auf der Linie zu schreiben. Bei der Auswertung der Ergebnisse hatten wir daher folgende Merkmale: *richtig, falsch, nicht bekannt, unbeantwortet, eine andere Form angegeben*. Als richtig haben wir solche Elemente kodiert, die der vorgesehenen, zu ergänzenden Form entsprachen. Wenn es orthographische Fehler gab oder solche kleineren morphologischen oder syntaktischen Varianten, bei denen die originelle Form des Sprichwortes doch erhalten blieb, haben wir das Sprichwort als richtig markiert. Die eindeutig falschen Varianten laut einer vorläufigen Analyse wären entweder Antisprichwörter oder völlig falsch angegebene erste Teile der Sprichwörter, was das Thema einer späteren Untersuchung sein wird. Es wäre nämlich interessant zu beobachten, wie die meisten Jugendlichen beispielsweise statt der Form *Ne možeš imati i ovce i novce* [Du kannst nicht die Schafe und das Geld haben, im Sinne von *Du kannst dir nicht beide gegenwärtige Dinge erschaffen*] die Phrase der heutzutage in den Medien oft erschienenen Werbung für den Mobilfunkbetreiber *Tele 2* hinzugefügt haben. Viele Probanden haben einfach *Tele 2- i ovce i novce* geschrieben, das in den Medien bekannte Antisprichwort, mit dem Schaf Gregor im Vordergrund (Bild 1).

Als *eine andere Form angegeben* haben wir solche Sprichwörter markiert, bei denen es sich um wesentliche Unterschiede zu dem erwarteten Teil handelte. In diesem Sinne ging es um regional gefärbte Varianten des Sprichwortes, die im Rahmen von anderen zukünftigen Arbeiten behandelt werden.



Bild 1. Werbung für den kroatischen Mobilfunkbetreiber Tele 2.,
Quelle: http://bruketa-zinic.com/wp/wpcontent/uploads/2011/05/crna_ovca_revealer_excerpt.jpg

4. Auswertung der Ergebnisse

4.1. Allgemeine Angaben zu den Probanden

Der Fragebogen wurde von 867 Probanden ausgefüllt. Da es sich hier um eine Pilotuntersuchung handelt, war das Muster nicht repräsentativ. Daher können hier keine endgültigen Schlüsse gezogen werden. Wir haben aber versucht, alle vier Gebiete Kroatiens in dieser Untersuchung zu berücksichtigen, sodass wir Probanden aus dem Osten (Osijek, Vinkovci), Norden (Zagorje), aus Zentralkroatien (Zagreb) und Dalmatien (Zadar) befragt haben. Wir haben auch versucht, in einem erforderlichen Anteil sowohl Männer als auch Frauen miteinzubeziehen, von 867 Probanden gab es 340 Männer und 527 Frauen. Die Altersspanne unserer Probanden lag zwischen 14 und 87 Jahren. In der Tabelle 1 ist die Anzahl der Versuchspersonen nach unseren Testgruppen zu sehen, je nach Geschlecht.

Tabelle 1: Anzahl der männlichen und weiblichen Probanden je nach der Testgruppe

Bezeichnung	männlich	weiblich	zusammen
Juristische Fakultät Osijek	2	36	38
Philosophische Fakultät Osijek	34	69	103
Kultur- und Bildungszentrum der Ungarn in Kroatien, Osijek	13	11	24

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Pädagogische Fakultät Osijek	4	92	96
Agronomische Fakultät Osijek	47	32	79
Gewerbliche Mittelschule in Osijek	80	3	83
Weitere erwachsene Probanden aus Osijek	21	54	75
Gewerbliche Mittelschule Vinkovci	66	86	152
Allgemeines Gymnasium Osijek	34	50	84
Seniorenheim Ksaver, Zagreb	11	41	52
Weitere erwachsene Probanden aus Zagorje	3	20	23
Medizinische Fakultät Osijek	8	12	20
Elektrotechnische Fakultät Osijek	13	2	15
Philosophische Fakultät Zadar	4	19	23
Insgesamt	340	527	867

In diesem Muster gab es 568 Jugendliche im Alter bis 20 Jahren, 133 im Alter von 21-30 Jahren, 38 im Alter von 31-40, 41 im Alter von 41-50, 25 im Alter von 51-60, 9 im Alter von 61-70 und 43 Probanden waren älter als 71 Jahre alt. Wenn wir die Altersgruppen nach den Kategorien der Entwicklungspsychologie des Menschen von Geburt bis Lebensende neu definieren (vgl. Berk 2008), kommen wir zu homogeneren Gruppen nach Alter (578 Adoleszenten, 171 Versuchspersonen im frühen Erwachsenenalter, 66 im mittleren Erwachsenenalter, und 52 im späten Erwachsenenalter), wie in der Tabelle 2 veranschaulicht wird. Alle weiteren Untersuchungen im Rahmen dieser Arbeit werden anhand dieser Einteilung durchgeführt.

Tabelle 2: Anzahl der Probanden nach den Altersstufen aus Berk (2008)

Altersgruppe (Jahre)	Männer	Frauen	insgesamt
Adoleszenz: 11-20	260	318	578
Frühes Erwachsenenalter: 21-40	54	117	171
Mittleres Erwachsenenalter: 41-60	15	51	66
Spätes Erwachsenenalter: 61->	11	41	52
Insgesamt	340	527	867

Nach dem Bildungsgrad gab es 332 Probanden, die über einen Grundschulabschluss verfügen, davon besuchen aber 330 z. Z. die Mittelschule. Von den 419 Probanden, die die Mittelschule beendet haben, gibt es 362 die z. Z. eine Universität besuchen. Von den 84 Versuchspersonen, die einen Hochschulabschluss haben, gibt es 15, die jetzt ihr Doktorstudium absolvieren. Insgesamt haben 857 Probanden Angaben zu ihrem Schulabschluss gegeben.

4.2. Bekanntheit der Sprichwörter je nach Geschlecht

Generell gesehen, gab es unter den Probanden mehr Frauen als Männer. Uns hat aber interessiert, in welchem Anteil Männer die Sprichwörter kennen (im Vergleich zu den Männern, die den ersten Teil des Sprichwortes ergänzt haben), und in welchem Anteil Frauen (im Vergleich zu den Frauen, die den ersten Teil des Sprichwortes ergänzt haben). Von den Sprichwörtern im Allgemeinen ist das meist bekannte Sprichwort *Sto ljudi, sto ćudi*. [Hundert Leute, hundert Gemütsarten.], das von 99,20% der Probanden richtig ergänzt wurde. Andere bekannte Sprichwörter, d.h. solche Belege, bei denen der Prozentsatz der richtigen Antworten über 98% liegt sind *Bolje išta, nego ništa*. [Besser etwas, als nichts.] 98,93%, *Ruka ruku mije*. [Eine Hand wäscht die andere.] 98,32%, *Kakav otac, takav sin*. [Wie der Vater, so der Sohn.] 98,31%, *Tko pjeva, zlo ne misli*. [Wer singt, denkt nichts Böses.] 98,29%, *Bolje ikad, nego nikad*. [Besser irgendwann, als nie.] 98,19%, *Tko laže, taj i krade*. [Wer lügt, der stiehlt auch.] 98,14%, *Sve se vraća sve se plaća*. [Alles kommt zurück, alles wird bezahlt.] 98,8%, *Svaki lonac ima svoj poklopac*. [Jeder Topf hat seinen Deckel.] 98,05%. Die wenigsten Probanden haben die Sprichwörter *Za svađu je potrebno dvoje*. [Zum Streiten braucht man zwei], mit einem Prozentanteil von 21,54% und *Zapleo se kao pile u kućine*. [Er hat sich verfangen, wie ein Küken in der Hede] mit dem Prozentsatz von 38,41% beantwortet. Es gibt sieben Sprichwörter, deren Bekanntheit unter 50% liegt, nämlich *Na mucu se poznaju junaci*. [Beim Leiden erkennt man die Helden.] 49,26%, *Kud svi Turci tu i mali Mujo*. [Wo alle Türken (hingehen), da (geht) der kleine Mujo auch (hin).] 48,96%, *Slika govori više od riječi*. [Das Bild sagt mehr als Wörter.] 47,03%, *Nevolja nikad ne dolazi sama*. [Das Unglück kommt nie allein.] 45,18%, *Pala mu je sjekira u med*. [Seine Axt ist in den Honig gefallen.]

43,38%, *Batina ima dva kraja*. [Der Knüppel hat zwei Enden.] 42,78%, *Zapleo se kao pile u kućine*. [Er hat sich verfangen, wie ein Küken in der Hede.] 38,41%. Bei allen diesen Sprichwörtern haben Frauen den höheren Richtigkeitsgrad erreicht (Tabelle 3).

Tabelle 3: Bekanntheit der Sprichwörter nach dem Geschlecht

Sprichwort	Wortwörtliche Übersetzung	Männer	Frauen	insgesamt
Sto ljudi, sto ćudi.	Hundert Leute, hundert Gemütsarten.	35,15%	64,06%	99,20%
Bolje išta, nego ništa.	Besser etwas, als nichts.	37,89%	61,05%	98,93%
Ruka ruku mije.	Eine Hand wäscht die andere.	35,94%	62,38%	98,32%
Kakav otac, takav sin.	Wie der Vater, so der Sohn.	36,91%	61,40%	98,31%
Tko pjeva, zlo ne misli.	Wer singt, denkt nichts Böses.	37,16%	61,12%	98,29%
Bolje ikad, nego nikad.	Besser irgendwann, als nie.	36,94%	61,25%	98,19%
Tko laže, taj i krade.	Wer lügt, der stiehlt auch.	37,10%	61,04%	98,14%
Sve se vraća sve se plaća.	Alles kommt zurück, alles wird bezahlt.	34,91%	63,17%	98,08%
Svaki lonac ima svoj poklopac.	Jeder Topf hat seinen Deckel.	34,76%	63,29%	98,05%
Na muci se poznaju junaci.	Beim Leiden erkennt man die Helden.	17,36%	31,90%	49,26%
Kud svi Turci tu i mali Mujo.	Wo alle Türken (hingehen), da (geht) der kleine Mujo auch (hin).	15,63%	33,33%	48,96%
Slika govori više od riječi.	Das Bild spricht mehr als Wörter.	11,45%	35,58%	47,03%
Nevolja nikad ne dolazi sama.	Das Unglück kommt nie allein.	11,96%	33,21%	45,18%
Pala mu je sjekira u med.	Seine Axt ist in den Honig gefallen.	15,15%	28,23%	43,38%
Batina ima dva kraja.	Der Knüppel hat zwei Enden.	11,81%	30,97%	42,78%
Zapleo se kao pile u kućine.	Er hat sich verfangen, wie ein Küken in der Hede.	11,59%	26,81%	38,41%

Wenn man aber die Sprichwörter einzeln betrachtet, um zu sehen, wie viele von den Männern und Frauen, die das Sprichwort kennen, das Sprichwort auch richtig ergänzt haben, sehen wir, dass es keine signifikanten Unterschiede gibt. Das Sprichwort *Sto ljudi, sto ćudi*. [Hundert Leute, hundert Gemütsarten.] z.B. kannten 98,88% aller Männer, aber auch 99,38% aller Frauen. Beim am schlechtesten abgeschnittenen Sprichwort *Za svađu je potrebno dvoje*. [Zum Streiten braucht man zwei] gaben 17,34% aller männlichen und 23,84% aller weiblichen Probanden die richtige Antwort. Es lässt sich daraus schließen, dass es keinen Unterschied in Bezug auf die Bekanntheit der Sprichwörter zwischen Männern und Frauen gibt.

4.3. Bekanntheit der Sprichwörter je nach Alter

Um die Bekanntheit der Sprichwörter je nach Alter zu untersuchen, haben wir im PSPP einen Chi-Quadrat-Test durchgeführt. Ein signifikanter Unterschied mit $p < 0,05$ hat sich bei 60 Sprichwörtern erwiesen, die in der Tabelle 4 zu lesen sind, was darauf hinweist, dass die Bekanntheit von Sprichwörtern doch vom Alter abhängt.

Tabelle 4: Signifikante Unterschiede in der Bekanntheit der Sprichwörter je nach Alter

Sprichwort	Wortwörtliche Übersetzung	Chi-Quadrat
Bolje išta, nego ništa.	Besser etwas, als nichts.	$\chi^2(12, N=842)=36,4, p=,000$
Krv nije voda.	Blut ist nicht Wasser.	$\chi^2(12, N=797)=36,4, p=,000$
Sve se može kad se hoće.	Man kann alles, wenn man es will.	$\chi^2(12, N=802)=41,7 p=,000$
Jabuka ne pada daleko od stabla.	Der Apfel fällt nicht weit vom Stamm.	$\chi^2(12, N=814)=156,42, p=,000$
S kim si, takav si.	Mit wem du bist, so bist du.	$\chi^2(12, N=823)=160,75, p=,000$
Na mucu se poznaju junaci.	Beim Leiden erkennt man die Helden.	$\chi^2(12, N=743)=101,39, p=,000$
Daleko od očiju, daleko od srca.	Weit von den Augen, weit vom Herzen.	$\chi^2(12, N=641)=35,13, p=,000$
Odielo ne čini čovjeka.	Der Anzug macht den Menschen nicht.	$\chi^2(12, N=752)=32,34 p=,001$
Čovjek je čovjeku vuk.	Der Mensch ist dem anderen ein Wolf.	$\chi^2(12, N=467)=34,35, p=,001$

Tko ne riskira, ne profitira.	Wer nichts riskiert, profitiert nicht.	c2(12, N=745)=53,29, p=,000
Tko se zadnji smije, najslade se smije.	Wer zuletzt lacht, lacht am süßesten.	c2(12, N=818)=32,91, p=,001
Neće grom u kopri-ve.	Der Blitz will nicht in Brennessel. (Der Blitz schlägt nicht in die Brennessel ein.)	c2(12, N=775)=61,66, p=,000
Tko rano rani, dvije sreće grabi.	Wer früh aufsteht, der greift zwei Glücke.	c2(12, N=824)=26,89, p=,008
Kud svi Turci tu i mali Mujo.	Wo alle Türken (hingehen), da (geht) der kleine Mujo auch (hin).	c2(12, N=672)=61,86, p=,000
Ne možeš imati i ovce i novce.	Du kannst nicht die Schafe und das Geld haben.	c2(12, N=595)=32,6, p=,001
Tko radi, ne boji se gladi.	Wer arbeitet, fürchtet den Hunger nicht.	c2(12, N=680)=26,34, p=,010
Tko će kome, ako ne svoj svome.	Wer will an irgendjemanden, wenn nicht sein an Seine.	c2(12, N=716)=22,85, p=0,029
Ne diraj lava dok spava.	Wecke den Löwen nicht, während er schläft.	c2(12, N=812)=36,3, p=,000
Sto ljudi, sto ćudi.	Hundert Leute, hundert Gemütsarten.	c2(12, N=745)=16,19, p=0,013
Tresla se brda, rodio se miš.	Die Berge rüttelten, eine Maus wurde geboren.	c2(12, N=505)=59,03, p=,000
Pala mu je sjekira u med.	Seine Axt ist in den Honig gefallen.	c2(12, N=627)=119,7, p=,000
U svakom žitu ima kukolja.	In jedem Weizen gibt es Raden.	c2(12, N=341)=27,57, p=,006
Oteto-prokleta.	Gestohlen-verdammt.	c2(12, N=418)=42,38, p=,000
Tko tebe kamenom, ti njega kruhom.	Wer dich mit Steinen (bewirft), (bewerfe) du ihn mit Brot (zurück).	c2(12, N=791)=21,75, p=,040
Ljubav ide kroz želudac.	Liebe geht durch den Magen.	c2(12, N=694)=22,3, p=0,034
Sit gladnom ne vjeruje.	Der Gesättigte glaubt nicht dem Hungerigen.	c2(12, N=519)=57,29, p=,000
Poslije kiše dolazi sunce.	Nach dem Regen kommt die Sonne.	c2(21, N=665)=38,58, p=,000
Dok mačke nema, miševi kolo vode.	Während die Katze nicht da ist, tanzen die Mäuse im Kreis.	c2(12, N=701)=128,41, p=,000

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U strahu su velike oči.	In der Angst sind große Augen.	c2(12, N=478)=52,62, p=,000
U radu je spas.	In Arbeit ist die Rettung.	c2(12, N=639)=87,23, p=,000
Besposlen pop i jariće krsti.	Der arbeitslose Priester tauft auch die Zieglein.	c2(12, N=249)=22,71, p=,030
Batina je iz raja izašla.	Der Knüppel ist aus dem Paradies gekommen.	c2(12, N=620)=37,78, p=,000
Bez alata nema zanata.	Ohne Werkzeug gibt es kein Gewerbe.	c2(12, N=564)=27,32, p=,0007
Svatko nosi svoj križ.	Jeder trägt sein Kreuz.	c2(12, N=715)=85,55, p=,000
Nevolja nikad ne dolazi sama.	Das Unglück kommt nie alleine.	c2(12, N=560)=84,15, p=,000
Za svađu je potrebno dvoje.	Zum Streiten braucht man zwei.	c2(12, N=701)=113,15, p=,000
Zrno do zrna pogača, kamen do kamena palača.	Korn für Korn, Brötchen, Stein für Stein, Palast.	c2(12, N=460)=54,69 p=,000
Tko prvi, njegova djevojka.	Wer zuerst, bekommt das Mädel.	c2(12, N=654)=79,7, p=0,000
Batina ima dva kraja.	Der Knüppel hat zwei Enden.	c2(12, N=381)=111,86, p=,000
Bolje grob, nego rob.	Besser der Graben, als ein Sklave (zu sein).	c2(12, N=437)=23,56, p=0,023
Ni luk jeo, ni luk mirisao.	(er hat) Nicht mal die Zwiebel gegessen, nicht mal die Zwiebel gerochen.	c2(12, N=266)=29,98, p=0,0003
Gdje čeljad nije bijesna, kuća nije tjesna.	Wo Hausgenossen nicht wütend sind, ist das Haus nicht eng.	c2(12, N=500)=23,28, p=,025
Dva loša ubiše Miloša.	Zwei Böse töteten Milos.	c2(12, N=409)=24,24, P=,019
Prvo skoči pa reci: "hop"!	Zuerst hüpf, dann sag: "Hopp"!	c2(12, N=644)=25,88, p=,011
Tko pod drugim jamu kopa, sam u nju pada.	Wer dem anderen eine Grube gräbt, fällt selbst hinein.	c2(12, N=752)=40,43 p=,000
Složna braća kuću grade.	Vereinte Brüder bauen das Haus.	c2(12, N=439)=23,47, p=,024
Papir trpi sve.	Papier leidet alles. Papier erleidet alles.	c2(12, N=220)=103,95, p=,000
Što se babi htilo, to se babi snilo.	Was das alte Weib wollte, brachte das alte Weib hinter.	c2(12, N=386)=54,45, p=,000

Tko umije, njemu dvije.	Wer es kann, bekommt zwei.	c2(12, N=191)=57,18, p=,000
Vrč ide na vodu dok se ne razbije.	Der Krug geht zum Wasser, bis er bricht.	c2(12, N=179)=67,79, p=,000
Svugdje je lijepo, ali kod kuće je najbolje.	Überall ist es schön, aber zu Hause ist es am Schönsten.	c2(12, N=642)=65,23, p=,000
Martin u Zagreb, Martin iz Zagreba.	Martin nach Zagreb, Martin aus Zagreb.	c2(12, N=289)=34,5, p=,001
Sila Boga ne moli.	Die Not bittet Gott nicht.	c2(12, N=297)=61, p=0,000
Slika govori više od riječi.	Das Bild spricht mehr als Wörter.	c2(12, N=489)=32,01, p=,001
Pomozi sirotu na svoju sramotu.	Hilf dem Armen, zu deiner Schande.	c2(12, N=364)=60,64, p=,000
Ako laže koza, ne laže rog.	Wenn die Ziege lügt, lügt nicht das Horn.	c2(12, N=193)=29,08, p=,0004
Čovjek snuje, a Bog određuje.	Der Mensch träumt, der Gott bestimmt.	c2(12, N=302)=46,59, p=,000
Nova metla dobro mete.	Der neue Besen kehrt gut.	c2(12, N=228)=68,46, p=,000
Svaka sila za vremena.	Jede Notwendigkeit zur gegebenen Zeit.	c2(12, N=96)=31,65, p=,000
Zapleo se kao pile u kućine.	Er hat sich verfangen, wie ein Küken in der Hede.	c2(12, N=138)=61,26, p=,000

Probanden im späten Erwachsenenalter kannten mehr Sprichwörter als Probanden in anderen Altersgruppen. Es ist aber interessant zu beobachten, dass bei einigen Sprichwörtern Jugendliche unter 30 Jahren im Anteil von 41,67% bis sogar 79,30% die falsche Antwort gegeben haben, zum Beispiel: *Neće grom u koprive*. [Der Blitz will nicht in Brennessel. (Der Blitz schlägt nicht in die Brennessel ein.)] c2(12, N=775)=61,66, p=,000, *Ne možeš imati i ovce i novce*. [Du kannst nicht die Schafe und das Geld haben.] c2(12, N=595)=32,6, p=,001, *Oteto-prokleta*. [Gestohlen-verdammt.] c2(12, N=418)=42,38, p=,000, *U strahu su velike oči*. [In der Angst sind große Augen.] c2(12, N=478)=52,62, p=,000, *U radu je spas*. [In Arbeit ist die Rettung.] c2(12, N=639)=87,23, p=,000, *Za svađu je potrebno dvoje*. [Zum Streiten braucht man zwei.] c2(12, N=701)=113,15, p=,000, *Batina ima dva kraja*. [Der Knüppel hat zwei Enden.] c2(12, N=381)=111,86, p=,000, *Tko pod drugom jamu kopa, sam u nju pada*. [Wer unter dem anderen die Grube gräbt, fällt selbst hinein.] c2(12, N=752)=40,43 p=,000,

Tko umije, njemu dvije. [Wer es kann, bekommt zwei.] $c2(12, N=191)=57,18, p=,000$, *Ako laže koza, ne laže rog.* [Wenn die Ziege lügt, lügt nicht das Horn.] $c2(12, N=193)=29,08, p=,0004$, *Zapleo se kao pile u kućine.* [Er hat sich verfangen, wie ein Küken in der Hede.] $c2(12, N=138)=61,26, p=,000$. Es lässt sich vermuten, dass diese Sprichwörter unter den Jugendlichen heutzutage in Form von Antisprichwörtern bekannter sind, was im Rahmen von weiteren Untersuchungen erforscht wird.

Es ist auch interessant zu beobachten, dass nur 96 Probanden den ersten Teil des am schlechtesten abgeschnittenen Sprichworts, *Svaka sila za vremena.* [Jede Notwendigkeit zur gegebenen Zeit.] $c2(12, N=96)=31,65, p=,000$, ergänzt haben. Von denen waren es 20 Jugendliche unter 30, die zu 86,98% die falsche Antwort gegeben haben. Weitere Sprichwörter mit einem geringen Anteil an Antworten sind: *Tko umije, njemu dvije.* [Wer es kann, bekommt zwei.] $c2(12, N=191)=57,18, p=,000$ und *Ako laže koza, ne laže rog.* [Wenn die Ziege lügt, lügt nicht das Horn.] $c2(12, N=193)=29,08, p=,0004$.

Aus diesen Ergebnissen lässt sich schließen, dass eine Popularisierung der kroatischen Sprichwörter unter den Jugendlichen erstrebenswert wäre.

4.4. Bekanntheit der Sprichwörter je nach der Bildungsstufe

Die Ergebnisse des Chi-Quadrat-Tests zeigen, dass es hinsichtlich der Bildungsstufe bei nur 36 Sprichwörtern von 105 einen signifikanten Unterschied gibt (Anhang, Tabelle 2).

Eine weitere Analyse der Sprichwörter mit dem signifikanten Unterschied hat gezeigt, dass bei 11 Sprichwörtern Probanden mit einem höheren Abschluss die größte Richtigkeitsrate hatten:

Sila Boga ne moli. [Die Not bittet Gott nicht.] $c2(12, N=295)=26,41, p=,009$, *Pomozi sirotu na svoju sramotu.* [Hilf dem Armen, zu deiner Schande.] $c2(12, N=361)=28,76, p=,004$, *Nova metla dobro mete.* [Der neue Besen kehrt gut.] $c2(12, N=225)=40,45, p=,000$, *Svaka sila za vremena.* [Jede Notwendigkeit, zur gegebenen Zeit.] $c2(12, N=95)=17,31, p=,008$, *Zapleo se kao pile u kućine.* [Er hat sich verfangen, wie ein Küken in der Hede.] $c2(12, N=137)=32,77, p=,000$, *Papir trpi sve.* [Papier erleidet alles.] $c2(12, N=219)=72,83, p=,000$, *Batina ima dva kraja.* [Der Knüppel hat zwei Enden.] $c2(12, N=378)=38,96, p=,000$, *Dva loša ubiše Miloša.* [Zwei Böse töteten Miloš.] $c2(12,$

$N=404$)=34,40, $p=,001$, *Tiha voda brege dere*. [Stetes Wasser höhlt Berge.] $c2(12, N=327)=23,98$, $p=,020$, *Vrč ide na vodu dok se ne razbije*. [Der Krug geht zum Wasser, bis er bricht.] $c2(12, N=177)=22,26$, $p=,035$, *Ni luk jeo, ni luk mirisao*. [(er hat) Nicht mal die Zwiebel gegessen, nicht mal die Zwiebel gerochen.] $c2(12, N=265)=36,33$, $p=,000$. Wenn man aber diese Belege näher betrachtet, kann man feststellen, dass es sich hier um Sprichwörter mit einer bereits geringen Anzahl an Antworten im Allgemeinen handelt. Genauer gesagt, solche Sprichwörter, die im Allgemeinen nicht bekannt sind, kennen mehr Leute mit höherem Abschluss, da sie vermutlich in der Literatur oder auf höheren Bildungsstufen im häufigeren Gebrauch sind.

4.5. Allgemeine Bekanntheit der Sprichwörter

Bei der Auswertung der Ergebnisse haben wir die Angaben in der Datenbank revidiert, und auch solche Sprichwörter, bei denen es sich nicht um völlig richtige Einträge handelte, als richtig akzeptiert. Hier war wichtig zu sehen, ob die Sprichwörter den 867 Probanden in Kroatien bekannt sind, entweder in der von uns angegebenen Form oder in einer regional gefärbten Form. An den Ergebnissen kann man sehen, dass bei 13 Sprichwörtern der Bekanntheitsgrad über 90% liegt, 16 Sprichwörter sind in der Spanne von 80% bis 90% bekannt, 21 Sprichwörter zwischen 70% und 80%, 14 Sprichwörter zwischen 60% und 70%, 10 Sprichwörter zwischen 50% und 60%, 15 Sprichwörter zwischen 30% und 50% und bei 16 Sprichwörtern liegt der Bekanntheitsgrad unter 30% (Anhang, Tabelle 3).

5. Schlussfolgerung

Während der Analyse der oben angeführten Ergebnisse haben sich einige weitere Fragen ergeben. Zum einen, ob sich die Kenntnis der Sprichwörter durch ihr Miteinbeziehen in das Curriculum des Faches Kroatische Sprache in den oberen Bildungsstufen verbessern würde und daher zu besseren Resultaten unter den Jugendlichen führen könnte. Zum zweiten, ob wir anhand dieser Daten weitere Schlüsse hinsichtlich der Bestimmung des kroatischen parämiologischen Minimums ziehen könnten, indem wir die Bekanntheitsgrenze über 60% setzen und behaupten, dass es insgesamt 64 Sprichwörter gibt, die zum kroatischen parämiologischen Minimum gehören? Und was wäre mit dem parämiologischen Optimum?

Sicherlich werden diese und ähnliche Fragen im Rahmen von anderen Studien an diesem Korpus beantwortet.

Anmerkungen:

¹ Željka Matulina (2012). Die Verwendung von Sprichwörtern in kroatischen, bosnischen, serbischen und deutschen Printmedien. In Kathrin Steyer (ed.) *Sprichwörter multilingual*. Tübingen: Narr Verlag, 227-258.

² Peter Grzybek hat im Rahmen seiner Studie folgende Sammlungen durchgearbeitet: Bonifačić, Rožin, Nikola (1963) *Narodne drame, poslovice i zagonetke*. In *Pet stoljeća hrvatske književnosti*. Vol 27, Zagreb: 211-259, Daničić Gjuro (1871). *Poslovice*. Zagreb, Divjak Milan (1987). *Ličke poslovice*. *Narodna mudrost Like*. Novi sad, Ilić Luka [Oriovčanin]. (1846). *Poslovice*. In: *Narodni slavonski običaji*. Zagreb. 214-252, Kekez, Josip (1986). *Svaki je kamen da se kuća gradi*. *Hrvatske poslovice skupljene u naše dane po književnim i jezikoslovnim djelima nastalima od 12. do 19. stoljeća*. Zagreb, Lang Milan (1914). Samobor: Fraze i poslovice. *Zbornik za narodni običaj i običaje južnih Slavena XIX*. 283-306, Peteh Miran, Marija Duš (1987). *Poslovice i zagonetke za najmlađe*. *Priručnik za odgajatelje u dječjim vrtićima*. Zagreb, 37-42, Skarpa, Vicko Juraj (1909). *Hrvatske narodne poslovice*. Šibenik, Stojanović, Mijat (1866). *Sbirka narodnih posloviceah, riečih i izrazah*. Zagreb (vgl. Grzybek 1997).

³ Das Ziel der komplexeren Studie zur Bekanntheit kroatischer Sprichwörter war die kroatischen Sprichwörter, Redensarten und Idiome mit einer Testgruppe von einigen Probanden zu überprüfen. Das Hauptziel dabei war es, solche Sprichwörter aufzulisten, die alle Probanden (im zweiten Teil gab es 16 Versuchspersonen) als bekannt bezeichnet haben. Sein experimentelles Korpus beinhaltete alle kroatischen Sprichwortsammlungen, die zu der Zeit veröffentlicht wurden.

⁴ Đurčos Untersuchungen haben festgestellt, dass die täglich genutzten (allgemeineingebrauchlichen???) / die in der gesprochenen Sprache geläufigen???) Sprichwörter nicht den gleichen Status in schriftlicher Sprache haben (vgl. Đurčo 2014), was wir auch bei der Zusammenstellung unseres Korpus berücksichtigt haben.

⁵ Eine weitere Analyse der Sprichwörter in unserem Korpus hat festgestellt, dass nur 60 Sprichwörter ihre Äquivalente in deutscher Sprache haben, 8 davon sind mit partieller Äquivalenz und ein Sprichwort ist in seiner antonymischen Gegenform dargestellt. Alle diese Daten sind in der Tabelle im Anhang zu lesen.

⁶ <http://nlp.ffzg.hr/resources/corpora/hrwac/>, 25. August 2014

⁷ <http://riznica.ihjj.hr/index.hr.html>, 25. August 2014

⁸ <http://nlp.ffzg.hr/resources/corpora/hrwac/>, 25. August 2014

⁹ Da HrWaC ein solches Korpus ist, das im Internet veröffentlichte Texte von der .hr Domäne enthält, wäre unseres Wissens nach genau dieses Korpus das größte kroatische Korpus, mit den der gesprochenen Sprache am nahestehen stehenden Texten von Blogs und Foren.

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Anhang:**Tabelle 1: Sprichwörter mit ihren deutschen Äquivalenten:**

Sprichwort	Wortwörtliche Übersetzung	Deutsches Äquivalent	Art von Äquivalenz
Sila Boga ne moli.	Die Not bittet Gott nicht.	Not kennt kein Gebot.	
Na mucu se poznaju junaci.	Beim Leiden erkennt man die Helden.	In der Not erkennt man die wahren Helden.	partielle Äquivalenz
Bolje ikad, nego nikad.	Besser irgendwann, als nie.	Besser spät als nie.	partielle Äquivalenz
Složna braća kuću grade.	Vereinte Brüder bauen das Haus.	Einigkeit macht stark.	partielle Äquivalenz
Ispeci pa reci.	Zuerst backe, dann sage.	Erst denken, dann reden.	partielle Äquivalenz
Bez muke nema nauke.	Ohne Fleiss keine Lehre.	Ohne Fleiß kein Preis.	partielle Äquivalenz
Tko prvi, njegova djevojka.	Wer zuerst, bekommt das Mädcl.	Wer zuerst kommt, mahlt zuerst.	partielle Äquivalenz
Odijelo ne čini čovjeka.	Der Anzug macht den Menschen nicht.	Kleider machen Leute.	Antonym
Svi putovi/putevi vode u Rim.	Alle Wege führen nach Rom.	Alle Wege führen nach Rom.	
Svaka sila za vremena.	Jede Notwendigkeit, zur gegebenen Zeit.	Alles zu seiner Zeit.	
U strahu su velike oči.	In der Angst sind große Augen.	Angst hat große Augen.	
U radu je spas.	In Arbeit ist die Rettung.	Arbeit macht frei.	
Poslije kiše dolazi sunce.	Nach dem Regen kommt die Sonne.	Auf Regen kommt Sonnenschein.	
Daleko od očiju, daleko od srca.	Weit von den Augen, weit vom Herzen.	Aus den Augen, aus dem Sinn.	
Krv nije voda.	Blut ist nicht Wasser.	Blut ist dicker als Wasser.	
Jabuka ne pada daleko od stabla.	Der Apfel fällt nicht weit vom Stamm.	Der Apfel fällt nicht weit vom Stamm.	
Riba smrdi od glave.	Der Fisch stinkt vom Kopf.	Der Fisch stinkt vom Kopf her.	
Tko rano rani, dvije sreće grabi.	Wer früh aufsteht, der greift zwei Glücke.	Der frühe Vogel fängt den Wurm. /Morgenstund hat Gold im Mund.	
Pametniji popušta.	Der Klügere gibt nach.	Der Klügere gibt nach.	

Vrč ide na vodu dok se ne razbije.	Der Krug geht zum Wasser, bis er bricht.	Der Krug geht solange zum Brunnen, bis er bricht.
Čovjek snuje, a Bog određuje.	Der Mensch träumt, der Gott bestimmt.	Der Mensch denkt, Gott lenkt.
Čovjek je čovjeku vuk.	Der Mensch ist dem anderen ein Wolf.	Der Mensch ist des Menschen Wolf.
Sit gladnom ne vjeruje.	Der Gesättigte glaubt nicht dem Hungrigen.	Der Satte glaubt dem Hungrigen nicht.
Vuk dlaku mijenja, ali ćud nikada.	Der Wolf verändert sein Fell, aber sein Wesen nie.	Die Katze lässt das Mäusen nicht.
Slika govori više od riječi.	Das Bild spricht mehr als Wörter.	Ein Bild sagt mehr aus tausend Wörter.
Nevolja nikad ne dolazi sama.	Das Unglück kommt nie alleine.	Ein Unglück kommt selten allein.
Ruka ruku mije.	Eine Hand wäscht die andere.	Eine Hand wäscht die andere.
Jedna lasta ne čini proljeće.	Eine Schwalbe macht keinen Frühling.	Eine Schwalbe macht noch keinen Sommer.
Nije zlato sve što sjaja.	Nicht alles ist Gold was scheint.	Es ist nicht alles Gold, was glänzt.
Svakog gosta tri dana dosta.	Jeden Gast ist es drei Tage genug. Jeder Gast, für drei Tage genug.	Fische und Gäste stinken nach drei Tagen.
Tko visoko leti, nisko pada.	Wer hoch fliegt, fällt niedrig.	Hochmut kommt vor dem Fall.
Pas koji laje, ne grize.	Der Hund, der bellt, beisst nicht.	Hunde, die bellen, beißen nicht.
U zdravom tijelu zdrav duh.	Im gesunden Körper gesunde Seele.	In einem gesunden Körper wohnt ein gesunder Geist.
Dok mačke nema, miševi kolo vode.	Während die Katze nicht da ist, tanzen die Mäuse im Kreis.	Ist die Katze aus dem Haus, tanzen die Mäuse auf dem Tisch.
Svatko je kovač svoje sreće.	Jeder ist seines Glücks Schmied.	Jeder ist seines Glücks Schmied.
Svaki lonac ima svoj poklopac.	Jeder Topf hat seinen Deckel.	Jeder Topf finden seinen Deckel.
Svatko nosi svoj križ.	Jeder trägt sein Kreuz.	Jeder trägt sein eigenes Kreuz.
Ljubav ide kroz želudac.	Liebe geht durch den Magen.	Liebe geht durch den Magen.
Bolje išta, nego ništa.	Besser etwas, als nichts.	Lieber den Spatz in der Hand als die Taube auf dem Dach.
U laži su kratke noge.	In der Lüge sind kurze Beine.	Lügen haben kurze Beine.
Nova metla dobro mete.	Der neue Besen kehrt gut.	Neue Besen kehren gut.

Papir trpi sve.	Papier leidet alles. Papier erleidet alles.	Papier ist geduldig.
Čistoća je pola zdravlja.	Sauberkeit ist halb Gesundheit.	Sauberheit ist die halbe Gesundheit.
Tiha voda brege dere.	Stetes Wasser höhlt Berge.	Steter Tropfen höhlt den Stein.
Bolje spriječiti, nego liječiti.	Besser vorbeugen, als heilen zu müssen.	Vorbeugen ist besser als heilen.
Tko tebe kameron, ti njega kruhom.	Wer dich mit Steinen (bewirft), (bewerfe) du ihn mit Brot (zurück).	Wenn dich jemand mit Steinen bewirft, musst du mit Rosen zurückwerfen.
Tko pod drugim jamu kopa, sam u nju pada.	Wer unter dem anderen die Grube gräbt, fällt selbst hinein.	Wer anderen eine Grube gräbt, fällt selbst hinein.
Tko laže, taj i krade.	Wer lügt, der stiehlt auch.	Wer lügt, der stiehlt(, wer stiehlt, der lügt).
Nema kruha bez motike.	Es gibt kein Brot ohne Hacke.	Wer nicht arbeitet, soll auch nicht essen.
Tko ne riskira, ne profitira.	Wer nichts riskiert, profitiert nicht.	Wer nicht wagt, der nicht gewinnt.
Tko se zadnji smije, najslade se smije.	Wer zuletzt lacht, lacht am süßesten.	Wer zuletzt lacht, lacht am besten.
Tko nema u glavi, ima u nogama.	Wer es nicht im Kopf hat, hat es in den Beinen.	Wer's nicht im Kopf hat, hat's in den Beinen.
Kakav otac, takav sin.	Wie der Vater, so der Sohn.	Wie der Vater, so der Sohn.
Kako došlo, tako prošlo	Wie gekommen so gegangen.	Wie gewonnen, so zerronnen.
Sve se može kad se hoće.	Man kann alles, wenn man es will.	Wo ist Wille ist, ist auch ein Weg.
Gdje ima dima ima i vatre.	Wo es Rauch gibt, gibt es auch Feuer.	Wo Rauch ist, ist auch Feuer.
S kim si, takav si.	Mit wem du bist, so bist du.	Zeig mir deine Freunde und ich sag dir, wer du bist.
Vrijeme je novac.	Zeit ist Geld.	Zeit ist Geld.
Svugdje je lijepo, ali kod kuće je najbolje.	Überall ist es schön, aber zu Hause ist es am Schönsten.	Zu Hause ist es doch am schönsten.
Za svađu je potrebno dvoje.	Zum Streiten braucht man zwei.	Zum Streiten gehören immer zwei.

Tabelle 2: Sprichwörter mit dem signifikanten Unterschied je nach der Bildungsstufe

Sprichwort	Wortwörtliche Übersetzung	Chi-Quadrat
Krv nije voda.	Blut ist nicht Wasser.	$\chi^2(12, N=788)=21,73$, $p=.041$
Jabuka ne pada daleko od stabla.	Der Apfel fällt nicht weit vom Stamm.	$\chi^2(12, N=804)=50,38$, $p=.000$
S kim si, takav si.	Mit wem du bist, so bist du.	$\chi^2(12, N=813)=74,19$, $p=.000$
Na muci se poznaju junaci.	Beim Leiden erkennt man die Helden.	$\chi^2(12, N=733)=147,44$, $p=.000$
Daleko od očiju, daleko od srca.	Weit von den Augen, weit vom Herzen.	$\chi^2(12, N=634)=56,39$, $p=.000$
Odišlo ne čini čovjeka.	Der Anzug macht den Menschen nicht.	$\chi^2(12, N=743)=55,09$, $p=.000$
Čovjek je čovjeku vuk.	Der Mensch ist dem anderen ein Wolf.	$\chi^2(12, N=462)=68,61$, $p=.000$
Po jutru se dan poznaje.	Am Morgen erkennt man den Tag.	$\chi^2(12, N=698)=27,75$, $p=.006$
Uzdaj se u se i u svoje kljuse.	Vertraue dir selbst und deinem Gaul.	$\chi^2(12, N=657)=25,98$, $p=.011$
Neće grom u koprive.	Der Blitz will nicht in Brennessel. (Der Blitz schlägt nicht in die Brennessel ein.)	$\chi^2(12, N=769)=51,86$, $p=.000$
Kud svi Turci tu i mali Mujo.	Wo alle Türken (hingehen), da (geht) der kleine Mujo auch (hin).	$\chi^2(12, N=666)=68,50$, $p=.000$
Ne diraj lava dok spava.	Wecke den Löwen nicht, während er schläft.	$\chi^2(12, N=806)=28,53$, $p=.005$
Tresla se brda, rodio se miš.	Die Berge rüttelten, eine Maus wurde geboren.	$\chi^2(12, N=501)=23,23$, $p=.026$
Pala mu je sjekira u med.	Seine Axt ist in den Honig gefallen.	$\chi^2(12, N=622)=114,00$, $p=.000$
Oteto-prokleta.	Gestohlen-verdammt.	$\chi^2(12, N=412)=21,47$, $p=.044$
Poslije kiše dolazi sunce.	Nach dem Regen kommt die Sonne.	$\chi^2(12, N=659)=40,24$, $p=.000$
Dok mačke nema, miševi kolo vode.	Während die Katze nicht da ist, tanzen die Mäuse im Kreis.	$\chi^2(12, N=696)=118,79$, $p=.000$
U strahu su velike oči.	In der Angst sind große Augen.	$\chi^2(12, N=475)=31,07$, $p=.002$
U radu je spas.	In Arbeit ist die Rettung.	$\chi^2(12, N=635)=66,59$, $p=.000$

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Nevolja nikad ne dolazi sama.	Das Unglück kommt nie alleine.	c2(12, N=554)=55,27, p=,000
Za svađu je potrebno dvoje.	Zum Streiten braucht man zwei.	c2(12, N=695)=87,84, p=,000
Zrno do zrna pogača, kamen do kamena palača.	Korn für Korn, Brötchen, Stein für Stein, Palast.	c2(12, N=456)=66,06, p=,000
Tko prvi, njegova djevojka.	Wer zuerst, bekommt das Mädcl.	c2(12, N=649)=26,71, p=,009
Batina ima dva kraja.	Der Knüppel hat zwei Enden.	c2(12, N=378)=38,96, p=,000
Ni luk jeo, ni luk mirisao.	(er hat) Nicht mal die Zwiebel gegessen, nicht mal die Zwiebel gerochen.	c2(12, N=265)=36,33, p=,000
Dva loša ubiše Miloša.	Zwei Bösen töteten Milos.	c2(12, N=404)=34,40, p=,001
Prvo skoči pa reci: "hop"!	Zuerst hüpf, dann sag: "Hopp"!	c2(12, N=638)=33,14, p=,001
Tiha voda brege dere.	Stetes Wasser höhlt Berge.	c2(12, N=327)=23,98, p=,020
Papir trpi sve.	Papier leidet alles. Papier erleidet alles.	c2(12, N=219)=72,83, p=,000
Što se babi htulo, to se babi snilo.	Was das alte Weib wollte, brachte das alte Weib hinter.	c2(12, N=383)=57,75, p=,000
Vrč ide na vodu dok se ne razbije.	Der Krug geht zum Wasser, bis er bricht.	c2(12, N=177)=22,26, p=,035
Sila Boga ne moli.	Die Not bittet Gott nicht.	c2(12, N=295)=26,41, p=,009
Pomozi sirotu na svoju sramotu.	Hilf dem Armen, zu deiner Schande.	c2(12, N=361)=28,76, p=,004
Nova metla dobro mete.	Der neue Besen kehrt gut.	c2(12, N=225)=40,45, p=,000
Svaka sila za vremena.	Jede Notwendigkeit, zur gegebenen Zeit.	c2(12, N=95)=17,31, p=,008
Zapleo se kao pile u kućine.	Er hat sich verfangen, wie ein Küken in der Hede.	c2(12, N=137)=32,77, p=,000

Tabelle 3: Bekanntheit der Sprichwörter im Allgemeinen

Sprichwort	Wortwörtliche Übersetzung	Richtig (N)	%	Falsch (N)	%
Bolje išta, nego ništa.	Besser etwas, als nichts.	834	96,19	33	3,81
Kakav otac, takav sin.	Wie der Vater, so der Sohn.	820	94,58	47	5,42
Bolje ikad, nego nikad.	Besser irgendwann, als nie.	818	94,35	49	5,65
Bolje spriječiti, nego liječiti.	Besser vorbeugen, als heilen zu müssen.	812	93,66	55	6,34
Tko rano rani, dvije sreće grabi.	Wer früh aufsteht, der greift zwei Glücks.	809	93,31	58	6,69
Tko pjeva, zlo ne misli.	Wer singt, denkt nichts Böses.	805	92,85	62	7,15
Tko visoko leti, nisko pada.	Wer hoch fliegt, fällt niedrig.	803	92,62	64	7,38
Ispeci pa reci.	Zuerst backe, dann sage.	796	91,81	71	8,19
U laži su kratke noge.	In der Lüge sind kurze Beine.	794	91,58	73	8,42
Kud puklo, da puklo.	Wo es brechen mag, möge es brechen.	790	91,12	77	8,88
Sve se može kad se hoće.	Man kann alles, wenn man es will.	789	91,00	78	9,00
Tko se zadnji smije, najslade se smije.	Wer zuletzt lacht, lacht am süßesten.	787	90,77	80	9,23
Bez muke nema nauke.	Ohne Fleiss keine Lehre.	782	90,20	85	9,80
Gdje ima dima ima i vatre.	Wo es Rauch gibt, gibt es auch Feuer.	779	89,85	88	10,15
Krv nije voda.	Blut ist nicht Wasser.	777	89,62	90	10,38
Svaki lonac ima svoj poklopac.	Jeder Topf hat seinen Deckel.	771	88,93	96	11,07
Jabuka ne pada daleko od stabla.	Der Apfel fällt nicht weit vom Stamm.	770	88,81	97	11,19
Ne diraj lava dok spava.	Wecke den Löwen nicht, während er schläft.	770	88,81	97	11,19
Sve se vraća sve se plaća.	Alles kommt zurück, alles wird bezahlt.	767	88,47	100	11,53
Nije zlato sve što sja.	Nicht alles ist Gold was scheint.	760	87,66	107	12,34
Tko tebe kamenom, ti njega kruhom.	Wer dich mit Steinen (bewirft), (bewerfe) du ihn mit Brot (zurück).	759	87,54	108	12,46

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Sto ljudi, sto ćudi.	Hundert Leute, hundert Gemütsarten.	748	86,27	119	13,73
U zdravom tijelu zdrav duh.	Im gesunden Körper gesunde Seele.	742	85,58	125	14,42
Tko laže, taj i krade.	Wer lügt, der stiehlt auch.	741	85,47	126	14,53
Neće grom u koprive.	Der Blitz will nicht in Brennessel. (Der Blitz schlägt nicht in die Brennessel ein.)	728	83,97	139	16,03
Vuk dlaku mijenja, ali ćud nikada.	Der Wolf verändert sein Fell, aber sein Wesen nie.	724	83,51	143	16,49
Tko nema u glavi, ima u nogama.	Wer es nicht im Kopf hat, hat es in den Beinen.	724	83,51	143	16,49
Pametniji popušta.	Der Klügere gibt nach.	721	83,16	146	16,84
Ruka ruku mije.	Eine Hand wäscht die andere.	706	81,43	161	18,57
Strpljen – spašen.	Geduldig-gerettet.	691	79,70	176	20,30
Svi putovi/putevi vode u Rim.	Alle Wege führen nach Rom.	690	79,58	177	20,42
Svatko nosi svoj križ.	Jeder trägt sein Kreuz.	689	79,47	178	20,53
Po jutru se dan poznaje.	Am Morgen erkennt man den Tag.	689	79,47	178	20,53
Svaka ptica svome jatu leti.	Jeder Vogel fliegt zu seinem Schwarm.	687	79,24	180	20,76
Odišlo ne čini ćovjeka.	Der Anzug macht den Menschen nicht.	683	78,78	184	21,22
Svakog gosta tri dana dosta.	Jeder Gast, für drei Tage genug.	680	78,43	187	21,57
Tko ne riskira, ne profitira.	Wer nichts riskiert, profitiert nicht.	672	77,51	195	22,49
Svatko je kovač svoje sreće.	Jeder ist seines Glücks Schmied.	671	77,39	196	22,61
Ljubav ide kroz želudac.	Liebe geht durch den Magen.	660	76,12	207	23,88
Novac kvari ljude.	Geld verdirbt Leute. Geld verdirbt die Menschen.	659	76,01	208	23,99
Tko će kome, ako ne svoj svome.	Wer will an irgendjemanden, wenn nicht sein an Seine.	658	75,89	209	24,11
Vrijeme je novac.	Zeit ist Geld.	658	75,89	209	24,11
Tko radi, ne boji se gladi.	Wer arbeitet, fürchtet den Hunger nicht.	658	75,89	209	24,11
Dok mačke nema,	Während die Katze nicht	648	74,74	219	25,26

miševi kolo vode.	da ist, tanzen die Mäuse im Kreis.					
Tko prvi, njegova djevojka.	Wer zuerst, bekommt das Mädel.	640	73,82	227	26,18	
Čist račun, duga ljubav.	Saubere Rechnung, lange Liebe.	631	72,78	236	27,22	
Jutro je pametnije od večeri.	Morgen ist klüger, als der Vorabend.	626	72,20	241	27,80	
Koliko ljudi, toliko ćudi.	Wie viele Menschen, so viele Gemütsarten.	623	71,86	244	28,14	
Pas koji laje, ne grize.	Der Hund, der bellt, beisst nicht.	616	71,05	251	28,95	
Jedna lasta ne čini proljeće.	Eine Schwalbe macht keinen Frühling.	609	70,24	258	29,76	
Tko pod drugim jamu kopa, sam u nju pada.	Wer unter dem anderen die Grube gräbt, fällt selbst hinein.	604	69,67	263	30,33	
Svugdje je lijepo, ali kod kuće je najbolje.	Überall ist es schön, aber zu Hause ist es am Schönsten.	600	69,20	267	30,80	
Svakog gosta tri dana dosta.	Jeder Gast, für drei Tage genug.	600	69,20	267	30,80	
Daleko od očiju, daleko od srca.	Weit von den Augen, weit vom Herzen.	593	68,40	274	31,60	
Batina je iz raja izašla.	Der Knüppel ist aus dem Paradies gekommen.	591	68,17	276	31,83	
Uzdaj se u se i u svoje kljuse.	Vertraue dir selbst und deinem Gaul.	591	68,17	276	31,83	
S kim si, takav si.	Mit wem du bist, so bist du.	582	67,13	285	32,87	
Kako došlo, tako prošlo.	Wie gekommen so vergangen.	554	63,90	313	36,10	
Dobar glas daleko se čuje.	Gute Stimme hört man weit.	550	63,44	317	36,56	
Stara koka, dobra juha.	Alte Henne, gute Suppe.	539	62,17	328	37,83	
Prvo skoči pa reci: "hop"!	Zuerst hüpf, dann sag: "Hopp"!	536	61,82	331	38,18	
Bolje vrabac u ruci, nego golub na grani.	Besser ein Spatz in der Hand, als ein Taube am Ast.	534	61,59	333	38,41	
Poslije kiše dolazi sunce.	Nach dem Regen kommt die Sonne.	530	61,13	337	38,87	
Obećanje ludom radovanje.	Versprechen, dem Narren seine Freude.	527	60,78	340	39,22	
Pala mu je sjekira u	Seine Axt ist in den Honig	497	57,32	370	42,68	

med.	gefallen.					
Bez alata nema zanata.	Ohne Werkzeug gibt es kein Gewerbe.	494	56,98	373	43,02	
Nevolja nikad ne dolazi sama.	Das Unglück kommt nie alleine.	481	55,48	386	44,52	
Tiha voda brege dere.	Stetes Wasser höhlt Berge.	474	54,67	393	45,33	
Tresla se brda, rodio se miš.	Die Berge rüttelten, eine Maus wurde geboren.	469	54,09	398	45,91	
Sit gladnom ne vjeruje.	Der Gesättigte glaubt nicht dem Hungrigen.	468	53,98	399	46,02	
Čovjek je čovjeku vuk.	Der Mensch ist dem ande- ren ein Wolf.	454	52,36	413	47,64	
Čistoća je pola zdravlja.	Sauberkeit ist halb Ge- sundheit.	446	51,44	421	48,56	
Nema kruha bez motike.	Es gibt kein Brot ohne Hache.	445	51,33	422	48,67	
Gdje čeljad nije bijesna, kuća nije tijesna.	Wo Hausgenossen nicht wütend sind, ist das Haus nicht eng.	435	50,17	432	49,83	
Na mucu se poznaju junaci.	Beim Leiden erkennt man die Helden.	411	47,40	456	52,60	
Zrno do zrna pogača, kamen do kamena palača.	Korn für Korn, Brötchen, Stein für Stein, Palast.	407	46,94	460	53,06	
Bolje grob, nego rob.	Besser der Graben, als ein Sklave (zu sein).	397	45,79	470	54,21	
Složna braća kuću grade.	Vereinte Brüder bauen das Haus.	386	44,52	481	55,48	
Kud svi Turci tu i mali Mujo.	Wo alle Türken (hingehen), da (geht) der kleine Mujo auch (hin).	377	43,48	490	56,52	
Ne možeš imati i ovce i novce.	Du kannst nicht die Schafe und das Geld haben.	368	42,45	499	57,55	
U radu je spas.	In Arbeit ist die Rettung.	359	41,41	508	58,59	
Trla baba lan, da joj prođe dan.	Das alte Weib reibte Leinen, damit ihr Tag verging.	345	39,79	522	60,21	
Oteto-prokleta.	Gestohlen-verdammt.	327	37,72	540	62,28	
U strahu su velike oči.	In der Angst sind große Augen.	314	36,22	553	63,78	
Riba smrdi od glave.	Der Fisch stinkt vom Kopf.	302	34,83	565	65,17	
Žena drži tri kuta kuće.	Die Frau hält drei Ecken vom Haus.	283	32,64	584	67,36	

Hvali more, drž se kraja.	Gelobe das Meer, halte dich am Rand fest.	269	31,03	598	68,97
U svakom žitu ima kukolja.	In jedem Weizen gibt es Raden.	265	30,57	602	69,43
Martin u Zagreb, Martin iz Zagreba.	Martin nach Zagreb, Martin aus Zagreb.	262	30,22	605	69,78
Dva loša ubiše Miloša.	Zwei Bösen töteten Milos.	255	29,41	612	70,59
Pomozi sirotu na svoju sramotu.	Hilf dem Armen, zu deiner Schande.	248	28,60	619	71,40
Slika govori više od riječi.	Das Bild spricht mehr als Wörter.	243	28,03	624	71,97
Čovjek snuje, a Bog određuje.	Der Mensch träumt, der Gott bestimmt.	242	27,91	625	72,09
Što se babi htilo, to se babi snilo.	Was das alte Weib wollte, brachte das alte Weib hinunter.	232	26,76	635	73,24
Ni luk jeo, ni luk mirisao.	(er hat) Nicht mal die Zwiebel gegessen, nicht mal die Zwiebel gerochen.	232	26,76	635	73,24
Besposlen pop i jariće krsti.	Der arbeitslose Priester tauft auch die Zieglein.	216	24,91	651	75,09
Za svađu je potrebno dvoje.	Zum Streiten braucht man zwei.	213	24,57	654	75,43
Batina ima dva kraja.	Der Knüppel hat zwei Enden.	204	23,53	663	76,47
Sila Boga ne moli.	Die Not bittet Gott nicht.	184	21,22	683	78,78
Papir trpi sve.	Papier leidet alles. Papier erleidet alles.	160	18,45	707	81,55
Nova metla dobro mete.	Der neue Besen kehrt gut.	133	15,34	734	84,66
Vrč ide na vodu dok se ne razbije.	Der Krug geht zum Wasser, bis er bricht.	132	15,22	735	84,78
Ako laže koza, ne laže rog.	Wenn die Ziege lügt, lügt nicht das Horn.	128	14,76	739	85,24
Zapleo se kao pile u kućine.	Er hat sich verfangen, wie ein Küken in der Hede.	109	12,57	758	87,43
Tko umije, njemu dvije.	Wer es kann, bekommt zwei.	105	12,11	762	87,89
Svaka sila za vremena.	Jede Notwendigkeit, zur gegebenen Zeit.	57	6,57	810	93,43

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DEVIL IN WOLF'S CLOTHING: VARIATIONS ON THE
THEME OF "SPEAK OF THE WOLF / DEVIL AND HE AP-
PEARS"

Abstract: The proverb *Speak of the wolf* (or: *of the devil*) and *he will appear* leads back to early folk belief that uttering the name of a demon could serve to summon it. Correspondences of the proverb exist in a large variety of languages in an abundant morpho-syntactic and lexical variability. Especially the parallelism of WOLF and DEVIL raises questions that can be answered only within a wide range of cultural contexts such as folklore, mythology, symbolism, tabooing of names, Christian exegesis, fairy tales and literature, among other things.

Keywords: concepts of WOLF and DEVIL, etymology, folk belief, symbolism, taboos, widespread proverb type

1. Introduction to the problem and objective

Although the attitude towards demons and devil (including the wolf as a demonic figure) has changed during the last centuries, languages have conserved numerous idioms and proverbs containing the concept and the manifestation of the devil. In most cases, the real background (danger for animals and humans) is already forgotten, yet it survives verbally in everyday speech.

The subject of this paper is a proverb type which is characterized by several peculiarities: its wide distribution in European languages and far beyond, its rich variability in these languages, dialects and earlier stages of languages and especially by the parallelism of the concepts WOLF and DEVIL, interchangeable in several cases, as in English: *Speak of the wolf and he will appear* with the analogous version, currently more common in English, *Speak of the devil and he will appear*.

A broad set of linguistic and cultural issues arises from the number of variants in many languages, ranging from "When one speaks of the wolf, one sees the tail/the horns" (French) or

“Mention the devil, and if his head does not appear, his tail does” (Spanish) to “Where a wolf is mentioned he walks at the back of the garden” (Hungarian), “If you talk about a tiger, it will appear” (Korean), or even “Talk about the angel, and here comes the priest” (Yiddish). Despite the significant morpho-syntactic and lexical differences the figurative meaning of all of the countless variants can roughly be formulated as ‘said aloud when a person just mentioned enters the area of those conversing unexpectedly’. There may be subtle pragmatic differences among the many versions (e.g. a rather ironic or jocular usage in current languages, connotative differences between expressions using DEVIL or ANGEL), but they can for now be set aside.

Several earlier studies have been devoted to this proverb type. All of them connected it with the well-known Latin proverb *Lupus in fabula* and emphasized its wide dissemination (see section 2 below). Despite these studies we feel disposed to turn to this subject again and discuss some of the peculiarities in more detail, now with the help of a much larger data set. The objectives of this study are, firstly, the presentation of the expressions we collected from many languages and, subsequently, the discussion of our data from various linguistic and cultural perspectives. We will present ours in a way that the parallelism of the concepts WOLF and DEVIL becomes apparent. This will be followed by an analysis of certain morpho-syntactic features (patterns) and lexical peculiarities. The examination of the lexical structure, i.e. the literal meaning of the expressions will go into the variation of the underlying images and ideas that manifest themselves in our proverb type.

The parallelism of WOLF and DEVIL is another unresolved point of discussion. The question of why both concepts can be equated in one proverb type cannot be answered on the basis of the linguistic data alone, but would require far-reaching studies on the concepts WOLF and DEVIL, relating to culture and the history of ideas. The wide range of cultural codes connected with both concepts (folklore, mythology, symbolism, tabooing of names, Christianity, literature, etc.) can be touched on here only briefly.

2. *State of the art*

The proverb type considered here has drawn the attention of several scholars. Three studies come mainly from the Romance languages. Cornette (1931/32) quotes a variety of instances from dialects spoken in Italy, France, Switzerland (Swiss French), Luxembourg, Belgium and the Netherlands. Starting from the conception of DEVIL as a bad spirit in folk belief, the author shows how the blending of the sayings using WOLF (preferred in French dialects) with those using DEVIL (preferred in Dutch dialects) came about due to areal contacts in certain regions.

The following Spanish study by Lozano Baudón (Buenos Aires, 1967) connects our proverb type with an entirely different, though comparable set of proverbial sayings, such as Spanish *En mentando al ruin de Roma/al rey de Roma/al Papa luego asoma* ‘Mentioning the ruin of Rome/the king of Rome/the Pope then it/he is nearby’. Our proverb is related to the figurative meaning (‘said when a person spoken about appears unexpectedly’) and the concepts of the EVIL which can be verbalized (like by WOLF and DEVIL) by ‘the ruins of Rome’, ‘the king of Rome’ or even ‘the Pope’, based on special historical events and trends of the time.¹

The third article, written in Catalan, follows here directly. According to Forcadas (1977), the proverb *Lupus in fabula* and its variants can be found in a large number of European languages and also outside of Europe. The author cites a wealth of further evidences containing RUIN and/or ROME, in the first place from the languages spoken on the Iberian Peninsula (e.g. Spanish *Al ruin, cuando lo mientan, luego lo encuntran*, Galician *Ende falando do ruín en Roma, axiña asoma*) as well as other languages, and points to the commonalities between the RUIN- and the WOLF- and DEVIL-expressions. (For the sake of space we cannot dwell on the RUIN-expressions in more detail.)

Except for Mori’s (2010) study on the development of the English *talk of the devil*, most other studies dealing with our proverb type concentrate on the Latin *Lupus in fabula*, especially its etymology (Quitard 1842; Grimm 1865; Otto 1890: 199–201; Abbott 1956). Let us summarize their results. The etymology of the Latin *Lupus in fabula* is closely connected with the question of how to interpret the term *fabula* (~ *fabulor* ‘to talk, speak’). The Latin word has several meanings, such as ‘1. a talk, conversation,² 2. a thing said, account, 3. a fiction, tale, fable, 4. a leg-

end, myth, 5. a play, drama'. The different sources – strengthened by the variant *Lupus in sermone* (~ *sermo* 'anything that one says, speech, talk') – support the first meaning, thus the idiom can be translated as 'the wolf in the talk, the wolf mentioned', and not 'the wolf in the fable'.

This etymology was already discussed by Quitard (1842), and has often been repeated ever since. Otto (1890) lists a dozen of idioms containing *lupus* with the relevant Latin and Greek texts, and Abbott (1956) gives a new summary of the whole literature again. Some authors simply repeat these sources, others stick to the erroneous etymology.³ In our case, *Lupus in fabula* can be a false friend as well: according to an old belief, to mention the wolf was prohibited due to taboo (cf. German *I keep silence, the wolf is not far away from me*). Thus the proverb was used to prevent the speaker from inconveniences (Otto 1890).⁴

3. The data: an overview

As already mentioned, evidences of our proverb type are abundant – not only in terms of their spatial extent, i.e. their spread into many languages, but also from a historical and diachronic perspective. The proverb has been recorded since ancient times. The Greek sophist Zenobios (ca. 4th–3rd c. BC) included it in his "Collection of Proverbs in three Books". The entry in Erasmus of Rotterdam's famous "Adagia" (ii viii 4), *Etiam si lupi meminisses*, provides information on its use by classical writers: "*Εἰ καὶ λύκον ἐμνήσθης*, If you had even mentioned a wolf (we must supply, he would have appeared). For use when the man of whom we were speaking unexpectedly appears." (Erasmus Coll.W. 34, 51)

Correspondences of the proverb have abounded in the European vernacular languages since the Middle Ages. Two evidences in the popular Medieval Latin proverb collection "Fecunda Ratis", finished ca. 1023, show its circulation in early medieval times: *It lupus inter oues, cum sermo ceditur inde* "The wolf goes among the sheep when the conversation targets to him" (1, 10) and: *Aure lupi uisa non longe est credere caudam* "When the wolf's ear has shown, one must not think that the tail is far away" (1, 193). The "Thesaurus Proverbiorum Medii Aevi" (TPMA 13, 172–174) lists a number of examples for Germanic and Romance languages, in two main versions: "Speak of the wolf, then he comes" and "He

who speaks of the wolf sees already its tail". The earliest Hungarian proverb collection from 1598 also has an evidence: *farkast emlegetnek, kert meget kullog* "the wolf is mentioned, he lags behind the garden" (Decsi 4.5.2.3).

All these early collections merely report versions with WOLF. Parallels with DEVIL appear only much later in proverb collections and dictionaries. A wealth of examples can be found in Karl Friedrich Wander's "Deutsches Sprichwörter-Lexikon" from 1867; these are distributed equally to those with WOLF (Vol. 5: 365–371) and those with DEVIL (Vol. 4: 1091, 1099, 1129). The literature referred to in section 2 as well as idiom and proverb dictionaries of current languages show a rich variety; here WOLF and DEVIL occur in about the same frequency, along with some other concepts.⁵ For all these examples, however, it remains unclear whether they are currently known by the speakers or whether they are obsolete.

In the following, we present the data which we collected through surveys with competent speakers of many European languages. The starting point is the project "Widespread Idioms in Europe and Beyond" which has access to figurative multiword expressions (mainly idioms) from 78 European and 20 non-European languages.⁶ We present the data as reported by our respondents. Most expressions are currently still in circulation in the language communities. In order to show the doublets of WOLF and DEVIL, however, we present some outdated versions as well (cf. French, Spanish, Latvian, Czech). Most languages use only the elliptic form, i.e. the first element of the compound sentence (*Speak of the devil*), while the second part (often given in brackets in our documentation below) remains unspoken. The majority of the data we will analyze in section 4 comes from this collection. For some other examples, reference is made to the cited literature.

We group the collected proverbs according to the underlying concepts: (1) WOLF and DEVIL, (2) other ANIMALS, (3) MYTHICAL BEINGS and (4) SUN.

1. WOLF AND DEVIL

Indo-European Languages in Europe

Germanic Languages

- Swe. ***när man talar om fan, dansar han i farstun*** “when one talks of DEVIL, he dances in the vestibule”
- Dan. ***når man taler om Fanden, kommer han*** “when one talks of the DEVIL, he will come”
- Eng. ***speak/talk of the devil (and he will appear) / speak/talk of the wolf (and it will appear / talk of the wolf and his tail appears, etc.***
- NFris. ***wan ham faan a düüwel snaaket, do komt'r*** “when one talks of a DEVIL, so he comes”
- WFris. ***as men fan de duvel praat, is er tichteby*** “when one speaks of the DEVIL, he is nearby” / ***as men fan de duvel praat, trapet men him op de sturt*** “when one speaks of the DEVIL, one steps on his tail”
- Du. ***als je van de duivel spreekt, trap je hem op zijn start*** “if you speak of the DEVIL, you will step on his tail” / (Belgium) ***als je van de duivel spreekt, zie je zijn staart*** “if you speak of the DEVIL, you will see his tail”
- Ger. ***wenn man vom Teufel spricht, kommt er*** “when one talks of the DEVIL, he comes”
- Lux. ***wann een vum Däiwele schwetzt, dann kënnt en*** “when one talks of the DEVIL, then he comes”
- LGer. ***wann'm van de Düüwel küürt, dann is he de all of schickt 'n old Wief*** “when one speaks of the DEVIL, then he is there already or he sends an old wife” / ***wenn's van de Düüwele küürs, dann sitt he all up't Heck*** “when you speak of the DEVIL, then he sits already on the entrance gate”

Celtic Languages

- Bre. ***pa vez komzet eus ar bleiz e vez gwelet e lost a-bell pe a-dost*** “when talking about the WOLF, one sees the tail from near or far”

Romance Languages

- Fr. ***quand on parle du loup, (on voit sa/la queue)*** “when one speaks of the WOLF (one sees its/the tail)” / ***quand on parle du diable, (on voit sa queue)*** “when one speaks of the DEVIL (one sees his tail)”
- Rm. ***sch'ins discurra dal diavel (muss'el las cornas)*** “when one speaks of the DEVIL (he shows the horns)”

- Fri. *si fevele dal diaul (e a rivin i cuars)* “when one speaks of the DEVIL (and he shows the horns)”
- It. *si parla del diavolo e ne vedi spuntare la coda/le corna* “speak of the DEVIL and not to see the tail/the horns sprouting”
- Sp. *hablate del lobo, (y veréis su pelleja)* “you talk of the WOLF (and you’ll see its fur)” / *mienta al diablo, y si no asoma la cabeza, asomará el rabo* (dated) “mention the DEVIL, and if the head does not appear, the tail will”
- Cat. *qui del llop parla, prop li surt* “who speaks of the WOLF, it comes out near to him”
- Mir. *fala-se no diabr (o i el aparece)* “speak of the DEVIL (and he will appear)”
- Port. *falar no diabo e ele a aparecer* “speak of the DEVIL and he will appear” / *falando do Diabo (apareceu o rabo)* “speaking of the DEVIL (his tail appears)” / *falai no lobo, ver-lhe-eis a pele* “speak of the WOLF, see its fur”
- Rom. *vorbești de lup și lupul la ușă* “speak of the WOLF and the WOLF is at the door”
- Aro. *noi ti luplu, nās laldupā ushe* “speak of the WOLF and it is behind the door”

Baltic Languages

- Ltv. *kā velnu piesauc, tā viņš ir klāt* “when you mention the DEVIL, he arrives” / *kā vilku piemin, tā vilks klāt* “when you speak of the WOLF, he arrives”
- Lith. *vilką minime – vilkas keliu bėga* “we mention the WOLF – the WOLF runs the way”

Slavonic Languages

- Russ. *помяни чёрта (, он и появится)* “mention the DEVIL (and he appears)”
- Ukr. *про вовка помова, а вовк у хату* “speak of the WOLF, and the WOLF is at the house”
- Cz. *my o čertu a čert za dveřmi* “we speak about the DEVIL and the DEVIL is behind the door” / *my o vlku a vlk za humny* “we speak about the WOLF and the WOLF is at the backyard/the sheepfold”
- Slk. *my o čertu a čert za dvermi* “we speak about the DEVIL and the DEVIL is behind the door”
- Pol. *o wilku mowa (, a wilk tuż tuż)* “speak of the WOLF (and the WOLF is nearby)”
- Kash. *ò wilkù mòwa, a wilk za dwiérzama* “speak of the WOLF and the WOLF is behind the doors”

- LSorb. *gaž wó wjelku powědaš, njejo daloko* “when you speak of the WOLF it is not far”
- Slo. *mi o volku* (, *volk iz gozda*) “we speak about the WOLF (the WOLF comes from the forest)”
- Cr. *mi o vuku, a vuk na vrata* “we speak about the WOLF and the WOLF is at the door”
- Bos. *mi o vuku a vuk na vrata* “we speak about the WOLF and the WOLF is at the door”
- Mont. *mi o vuku, vuk na vrata* “we speak of the WOLF, the WOLF is at the door”
- Sr. *mi o vuku* (, *vuk na vrata*) “we speak about the WOLF (the WOLF is at the door)”
- Mac. *nije za volkom* (*volkom na vrata*) “we speak about the WOLF (the WOLF is at the door)”
- Bulg. *говорим за вълка, а той – в кошарата* “speak of the WOLF, and he is at the cattle-pen”
- Albanian *fol për ujkun, ujku pas/në derë* “speak of the WOLF, the WOLF is behind/at the door”

Finno-Ugric Languages in Europe

- Hung. *farkast emlegetnek, s a kert alatt jár/kullog* “the WOLF is mentioned, and it walks/lags at the back of the garden”
- Fi. *kun susi mainitaan, se liikkuu puutarhan ympärillä* (dated) “when one mentions the WOLF, it moves around the garden”
- Est. *kus hundist räägid, seal ta on* “speak of the WOLF, there he is”

Turkic languages in Europe

- Kar. *bioriu üčiuñ siožliav, ja bioriu bunda* “to speak about the WOLF and the WOLF is here”
- Basque *otsoa aipatu, otsoa agertu* “the WOLF mentioned, the WOLF appeared” / *otsoa aipatu eta otsoa atean* “mention the WOLF and it appears at the door”

Esperanto *se vi parolas pri la Diablo (li certe aperos/venos)* “when you speak of the DEVIL (he certainly appears/comes)”

2. ANIMALS

- Lux. *wann ee vum Fuuss schwätzt, ass de Schwanz net wäit dervun* “when one talks of the FOX, the tail is not far away”
- Ger. *wenn man den Esel nennt, so kommt er gerennt* “when one names the DONKEY he comes running”

- Gk. *κατά φωνή κι ο γάιδαρος* “by voice/speak also the DONKEY”
 Hung. *emlegetett szamár (megjelenik)* “mentioned DONKEY (appears)”

3. MYTHICAL BEINGS

- Swe. *när man talar om trollen (så står de i farstun)* “when one speaks of the TROLL (so he stands in the vestibule)”
 Yid. *az men redt fun der malekh, kumt der galekh* “when one talks about the ANGEL, here comes the priest”
 Ice. *oft kemur illur Þá/Begar um er rætt* “often comes EVIL when referred to”
 Fi. *siinä paha missä mainitaan* “there is the EVIL where s/he is mentioned”

4. SUN

- Nor. (Bokmål) *når man snakker om sola, så skiner den* / (Nynorsk) *når ein snakkar om sola, så skin ho* “when one talks about SUN so it shines”
 Swe. *när man talar om solen, så skiner den* “when one talks about the SUN so it shines”
 Da. *når man taler om solen, så skinner den* “when one talks about the SUN so it shines”

4. Linguistic interpretation

4.1 Analysis of the most significant morpho-syntactic features

The proverb consists of a main clause and a clause: if the wolf is mentioned, then it appears (logically symbolized as $p \supset q$). All the possible morpho-syntactic versions of the proverbs containing WOLF or DEVIL are shown on the chart below:

WOLF	DEVIL
<i>When one speaks of the wolf...</i> Fr.	<i>When one speaks of the devil...</i>
<i>When you speak of the wolf...</i> Ltv., Slo.	WFrisk., LGer., Rm., NFrisk., Sp.
<i>When one mentions the wolf...</i> Fi.	<i>When one talks of the devil...</i>
<i>he arrives</i> Ltv.	Ger., Lux.
<i>it isn't far</i> LSorb.	<i>When you mention the devil...</i>
<i>one sees its/the tail</i> Fr.	Ltv.
<i>it moves around the garden</i> Fi.	<i>so he comes</i> Ger.
	<i>then he comes</i> Lux.
	<i>then he is there already or he</i>

	<p><i>sends an old wife</i> LGer. <i>he arrives</i> Ltv. <i>(he certainly comes/appears)</i> Esp. <i>he is nearby</i> WFris. <i>then he sits already on the</i> entrance gate LGer. <i>(one sees its/the tail)</i> Fr. <i>one steps on his tail</i> WFris. <i>(and he shows the horns)</i> Fri.</p>
<p><i>When talking about the wolf... one sees the tail from near or far</i> Bret.</p>	<p><i>When talking of the devil... he will come</i> Da. <i>he dances in the vestibule</i> Swe. Speaking of the devil... <i>(his tail appears)</i> Port.</p>
	<p><i>If you speak of the devil... you will see his tail</i> Du.</p>
<p>Speak of the wolf... Eng., Port., Rom., Arom., Ukr., Pol., Kash., Bulg., Alb., Est. We speak about/of the wolf... Cz., Cr., Slo. Talk of the wolf... Eng. You talk of the wolf... Sp. We mention the wolf... Lith. <i>The wolf is mentioned...</i> Hung. <i>Mention the wolf...</i> Bas. <i>Wolf mentioned...</i> Bas. <i>wolf appeared</i> Bas. <i>and it will appear</i> Eng. <i>the wolf runs the way</i> Lith. there he is Est. <i>(and the wolf is nearby)</i> Pol. <i>(the wolf comes from the forest)</i> Slo. <i>it walks/lags at the back of the</i> garden Hung. <i>and the wolf is at the sheepfold</i> Cz.</p>	<p>Speak of the devil... Eng., It., Mir., Port. We speak about the devil... Cz., Slk. Talk of the devil... Eng. Mention the devil... Sp., Russ. <i>(and he appears) / will ap- pear</i> Russ., Eng., Port., Mir. <i>and the devil is behind the</i> door Cz., Slk. <i>and not to see the horns/the</i> tail sprouting It. <i>and if the head does not ap- pear, the tail will</i> Sp.</p>

<p><i>and he's at the cattle-pen</i> Bulg. <i>and the wolf is at the house</i> Ukr. <i>and the wolf is at the door</i> Rom., Cr., Bos., Mont. <i>and it is behind the door</i> Arom. <i>and it appears at the door</i> Bas. <i>and the wolf is behind the doors</i> Kash. <i>the wolf is at/behind the door</i> Alb. <i>(the wolf is at the door)</i> Sr., Mac. <i>and his tail appears</i> Eng. <i>(you'll see its fur)</i> Sp. <i>see it fur</i> Port.</p>	
<p><i>To speak of the wolf...</i> <i>and the wolf is there</i> Kar.</p>	
<p><i>Who speaks of the wolf...</i> <i>it comes out near to him</i> Cat.</p>	

As we see, there is a great variety of syntactic possibilities: indicative, conditional and imperative moods can be equally used as synonyms (*we speak about the devil and the devil is behind the door; if you speak of the devil, you'll step on his tail; speak of the devil and he will appear*). Instead of the if-clauses preference is usually given to the when-clauses (*when one speaks of the devil, he is nearby*). Some minor patterns also include sentences with subordinating conjunctions (*there is evil where s/he is mentioned*), with relative pronouns (*who speaks of the wolf, it comes out near to him*) and the comparative structure (*the devil is never nearer than when we are talking of him*). Since proverbs often come down to the present through several centuries, their structure may keep the archaic features of the given languages. The lack of conjunctions, which is highly characteristic of the Slavonic languages, creates an informal, unconnected type of discourse (*we speak of the wolf, [therefore] the wolf is at the door*).

Rarer used versions of the proverb follow the same patterns as mentioned before. The chart below shows those containing words different than WOLF or DEVIL:

Animals	Mythical beings	Sun
<p><i>When one talks of the fox...</i> Lux.</p> <p><i>When one names the donkey... he comes running</i> Ger.</p>	<p><i>When one speaks of the troll...</i> (so he stands in the vestibule) Swe.</p> <p><i>When one talks about the angel... here comes the priest</i> Yid.</p> <p><i>Often comes evil... when referred to</i> Icel.</p> <p><i>There is the evil... where s/he is mentioned</i> Fin.</p>	<p><i>When one talks about the sun... so it shines</i> Nor., Swe., Dan.</p>
<p><i>Mentioned donkey (appears)</i> Hung.</p> <p><i>by voice/speech also the donkey</i> Gk.</p>		

4.2. Examination of the lexical structures

On the whole, in many cases WOLF and DEVIL can be exchanged with each other, the meaning will not suffer. Instead of WOLF and DEVIL, some idioms contain other animals (DONKEY,⁷ FOX, TIGER, LION)⁸ and mythical beings (ANGEL, TROLL, EVIL). Cao Cao, a Chinese warlord and chancellor of the Eastern Han Dynasty (155–220) is also immortalized in a proverb: *shuō cáo cāo, cáo cāo dào* “Speak of Cao Cao and Cao Cao arrives”. Vietnamese has borrowed it as *Vừa nhắc Tào Tháo, Tào Tháo tới* “Speak of Tào Tháo and he appears immediately”.

The WOLF⁹ is primary, the DEVIL is its secondary adaptation. Parallels of the proverb in the European languages have manifested themselves most clearly since the Middle Ages. (In some languages the wolf has turned into the devil, cf. the semantic

change in Czech *vlk* 'wolf' → 'devil'.) Quickly and easily does 'wolf' become 'evil' through metaphoric extension as well.

The WOLF and the DEVIL share many common features, such as turning up uninvited, often at the door, as large as life or just showing the tail (*pars pro toto* principle). Apart from this, they have their specialities: WOLF can also be known by his fur; as a predator he comes out of the forest, walks by the stack into the garden, or hangs around the sheepfold or the cattle-pen, until he arrives at man's house. All these elements are peculiar to the particular languages, yet if we put them together one by one, they build up the above-mentioned route of the wolf from his natural habitat to man's house:¹⁰

forest (the wolf's dwelling place) → stack (in the fields unbound by hedges) → sheepfold, cattle-pen (domestic animals) → pit (for vegetables, meat, etc.) → house (man's dwelling place).

The wolf can often become a taboo word; in Russian it is also called *чёрный* 'the black one', *шут* 'clown', *окаяшка* 'the damned one' (Vlasova 1995: 340–358); the Ukrainians of the Carpathians call the wolf *котюха* 'large cat/dog', *неситий* 'insatiable', *сироманец* 'the grey one', *звірь* 'beast' or *песик* 'doggy' (cf. Smal-Stocki 1950). The Hungarian language has not preserved the original name for wolf; today only *farkas* (< *farok* 'tail') is used, which itself is a taboo word meaning 'the taily one'.

There has been a marked tendency to avoid naming evil demons since ancient times.¹¹ "One thing especially is to be noted at this point: the name and the thing are intimately connected. The true name is a part of the thing, and uttering it brings the evil thing to the spot. This belief was formerly general European [...]. The Finns and Lapps do not name the bear, the wolf, the fox, and the lynx, by their real names lest they come and ravage their herds" (Flom 1925: 407, 409). The avoidance of uttering the name of the wolf may depend on the time of the day (among the Belorussians and Macedonians).

5. Cultural interpretation

5.1. Wolf

The wolf is one of the primary dangerous wild carnivores with whom the Eurasian Indo-European-speaking people had to

deal, and it is important also as an image or symbol. Indo-European divinities with lupine associations are quite frequent: the wolfish aspect of Apollo connects him both to death and to fertilizing and life-giving powers; mythic representations of the wolf make the animal both a monstrous enemy of humankind and a nurturing mother-beast such as *Lupa* who suckled Romulus and Remus (Plutarch, “Romulus” 4).

Werewolf or man-wolf activity may not be simply solitary (cf. the widely-recurring belief in nightroaming bands or confraternities of lycanthropes who abjure the laws of society): these bands have also been connected to the German *Wilde Jagd* (Wild Hunt) or *Wutende Heer* (Wuodan’s Army), legendary affiliates of Death and the Devil. Instances of bloodthirsty and destructive werewolf bands are also known in the Iranian sources and in Baltic and Slavic folklore.

In a “historical” saga such as that of Egil Skallagrimson, the wolf not only seems to be a family totem (the family’s patriarch named Kveld-Olfr or Evening Wolf; Egil himself as *ulfgrar* ‘wolf-gray’), it is also associated with the god Óðinn. In literary works of antiquity WOLF is seen more as a robber than as a thief. Being the enemy of almost all other animals, it has a panic effect.¹² The wolf is also cunning and superior, cf. the Old Greek compound *λύκοφύλια* ‘false friendship’.

In folk beliefs the wolf is closely connected with witches (cf. Latin *lupula* ‘witch’ < *lupus* ‘wolf’); they often appear in the shape of a wolf or ride on a wolf. The story of the wolf’s birth is to be found in Bulgarian, Macedonian, Polish and Serbian etiological legends. According to them, the wolf was created out of clay or wood by the devil (or, rarely, by the shepherds themselves). But the devil was unable to resurrect him, so he had to ask for God’s help. The wolf attacked the devil, who could hardly take refuge on a tree. Since then he has been lame. Often is this story directly related to the creation of snakes.¹³ Due to this chthonic symbolism, the wolf is intimately connected with the netherworld, and thus with the devil himself. In some places *wolf* is the name of the vampire (Gura 1996: 121–159).

The wolf was also thought a ghost animal whose very gaze could strike people speechless. This has led to further figurative expressions (see Pappas 2008; Grimm 1865: 215). The Greek idiom *λύκον ιδεῖν* “to see a wolf” means ‘to be struck dumb’ as

was believed of any one of whom a wolf got the first look (Platon “Republic”, 336). The expression *κάλος λύκος* ‘nice wolf’ can often be found on drinking cups as well. In ancient Greece wolves were important emblems (cf. Autolykos, grandfather of Homer; the cult of Zeus Lykaios who becomes a wolf and a human being; transition/dialectical binaries between human and animal, alive and dead, civilized and barbarian, male – female, etc.).

The equation of *wolf* and *prostitute* persisted into the 12th century, but by Elizabethan times wolves had become primarily symbolic of male lust. The specific use of *wolf* for “sexually aggressive male” first was recorded in 1847. In Slavonic wedding songs the wolf often has erotic connotations as well (Smal-Stocki 1950).

The Chinese also had a celestial wolf (the star Sirius) which carried out the duty of the watchman outside the Heavenly Palace (the Great Bear). Its polar character made them attribute the wolf to the north. As the watchman’s role has replaced the animal’s ferocious aspect, in some areas of Japan, wolves are invoked to protect the people against other wild animals.

The wolf

FOLKLORE, MYTHOLOGY totem ancestor, fierce, cunning, thief, glutton, sees in the dark, netherworld, bad omen		
SYMBOLISM fertility, day and night, destruction, sexual lust, in sheep’s skin		TABOO taily (animal), dog, cat, gray one, beast, master
METAWOLFOSIS man, shepherd, werewolf, witch, devil	CHRISTIANITY wolf ↔ sheep, dog (Domini canis)	ORIGIN created by demon, devil or speech act
ART Romulus and Remus	LITERATURE Little Red Riding-Hood, The Jungle Book	

5.2. *Devil*

“In folklore the devil is one of the most important and most popular figures. He appears in all the various kinds of folk tradition, in legends, folk beliefs, tales, Christian legends, jokes, anecdotes, folk plays, proverbs and sayings, and in folk customs” (Röhrich 1970: 23).¹⁴ Fairy tales also abound in devils (Bettelheim 1977). In Christianity Satan is seen as an adversary of God, but only in the monotheistic religions of the West with an analogy in Buddhism as the eastern religion of salvation.

The belief in the devil was widespread in earlier times; it can be found until today in various cultural domains, in literature, art, music (rock music is full of demonic, satanic allusions), also in cinema movies (cf. the scene with the wolves in *Dr. Zhivago* [Chapter 14], and many more). The 15–18th centuries produced a plethora of novels and stage plays concerning the devil (cf. Röhrich 1970: 22f).

There are three reasons for the existence of the devil: 1. the evil in the world should be explained (Judaism, Christianity and Islam); 2. Satan is the unsaved man (cf. the 7th Prayer request); 3. the necessity of the existence of Satan. It is the deceptive mirror image of the one God (cf. the temptation of Jesus in which Satan wants to be worshiped instead of God). In the New Testament his existence is taken for granted. Christ came to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8). For educated people, the devil is now an inner imagination which should be driven out of their heads.

Throughout the centuries people (heretics, witches) have been demonized. In the course of 500 years, the Satan increased in power, rose to the opponent of God. In the Old Testament he was only of marginal significance; later in many places, he became also identified with the serpent of paradise (Theißen 2011). WOLF in the New Testament (and Christian exegeses) belongs in the context of the largely elaborated SHEPHERD metaphor: Jesus as the shepherd, pastor, who cares of the flock of sheep – the wolf being their worst enemy; it is primarily the diabolical enemy that threatens the flock of the faithful. The connecting link between wolf and devil can be found here (see “Wolf” in HWA 9, 720: wolf is the creation of an evil demon).

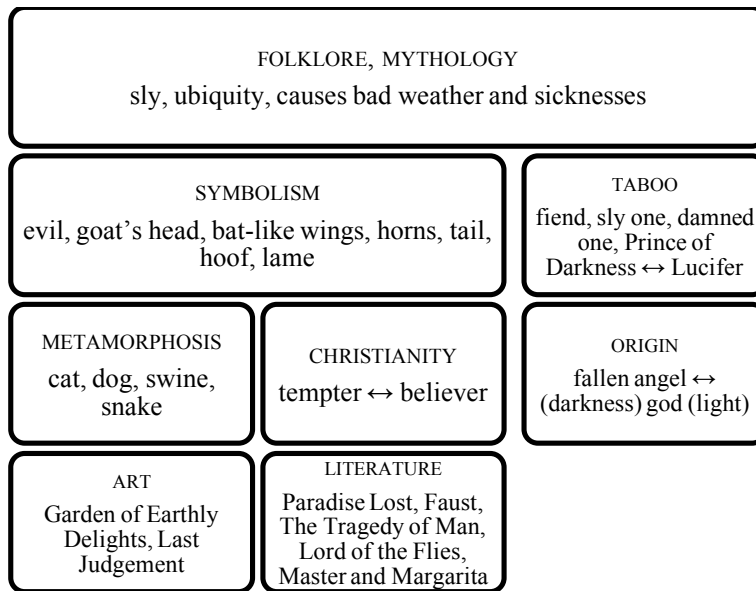
“Pope Gregory the Great [ca. 540–604] made the parable [of the good shepherd] the subject of a sermon delivered to the peo-

ple in the Basilica of St. Peter the second Sunday after Easter. He gave an extended exposition of the mercenary who usurped the place of the pastor and sought only material rewards, and of the various devices by which the wolf, the devil, destroyed the minds and souls of the flock” (Coffman 1936: 102).

The devil’s attributes come primarily from those of Charu, the Etruscan demon of the underworld. To these were added physical features of the goat, horns, legs, tail, making resemble the Greek god of nature Pan – portrayed with horse’s hooves or with one hoof and one human foot (symbolizing his divided nature); wings of a bat, a second face (Biedermann 1994: 387–389). Horse hoof has been popular since the 15th century (Röhrich 1970: 23).

The German folk literature is extremely rich in stories about the devil, and Goethe had a vast material to draw from, making use of the speak-of-the-devil belief (Woods 1959).

The devil



6. Outlook

Only some issues connected to the widespread proverb type “speak of the wolf/devil”, so rich in variants, have been touched upon here briefly. A far more extensive study should be devoted to this topic. We tried to show how – in the course of history – the “modern” devil-type of the proverb evolved from the older wolf-type which leads us to an archaic world of imagination. The wolf was the worst enemy of pastoral peoples; it has been demonized since the earliest times of human history. The wolf was thought to be a ghost animal which caused panic and whose very gaze could leave people speechless. He who spoke about the wolf would conjure disaster. It is these demonic abilities which allowed the devil to be equated with the wolf, a fact which manifests itself in similarities between both beings in various codes of culture, throughout the cultural history of Europe – non-European parallels have also been identified. Thus, alluding to the widespread idiom a wolf in sheep’s clothing, we may speak of a “devil in wolf’s clothing”, as the title of this article suggests.

Notes

¹Cf. also Turkish *iyi adam lafinin üstüne gelirmiş* “speak of a good person and s/he will appear”.

²Cf. *fabula est* ‘they say’, *sine fabula esse* ‘to have good reputation [not to be talked about]’.

³In his novel “The Monastery” (1820) Walter Scott uses the expression in a different way, either deliberately or mistakenly referring to the Aesopian fable “The Wolf and the Lamb”: “Lupus in fabula,” answered the Abbot, scornfully. “The wolf accused the sheep of muddying the stream when he drank in it above her – but it served as a pretext for devouring her” (Scott 2010: 541).

⁴Hungarian also has a synonymous proverb *Ne fessd az ördögöt a falra, mert megjelenik* “Don’t paint the devil on the wall because he appears”.

⁵For English alone we found variants such as *who speaks of the wolf sees his tail; when one speaks of the wolf, one sees its tail; talk of the wolf, and his tail appears; to mention the wolf’s name is to see the same* and: *talk of the devil and his imp appears; think of the devil and he’s looking over your shoulder; the devil is never nearer than when we are talking of him; speak of the devil and you are sure to see his horns*; cf. also *speak of an angel and you hear the rustle of his wings* or *speak of angels and you will hear their wings*. Most of them seem to be outdated.

⁶See Piirainen (2012; forthcoming) for more detail.

⁷Also Heb. *m’dabrim ‘al ha-khamor, ve-hinei* “talking about the donkey, and here it comes”.

⁸In some Asian languages there are variants with TIGER and LION as well, cf. Kor. *ho-rang-i-do je mal-ha-myeon on-da* “if you talk about the tiger, it will appear”, AlgAr. *oudhkour esbe' yahdef* “mention the lion and he will appear”. Both animals are associated with physical strength, power and military prowess. The tiger is popular in the myth and fable of India and China, and was adopted by Buddhism as a symbol of the power of the Buddhist faith. For the role of the tiger in Korean folk beliefs see Balázs (2012).

⁹Very often languages do not make any distinction between the different species of the Canidae. Dogs, wolves, jackals, coyotes or foxes may be called equally in the self-same language, or the original Indo-European root may develop entirely diverse meanings in different languages, cf. IE. **ul(o)p-* > Skt. *lopāśa* ‘1. fox, 2. jackal, 3. a similar animal’ ~ Av. *urupis* ‘dog’ ~ Hit. *ulip(pa)na* ‘wolf’ ~ Khot. *rrūvāsa* ‘jackal’ ~ Lat. *volpes* ‘fox’. Dogs and wolves may play the same mythological role.

¹⁰Medieval English villages consisted of a toft, a small yard or garden immediately surrounding the house, and of a croft, a larger area used by the tenant for growing crops or keeping a few animals. German woodland villages were often but one street wide, with fields stretching out towards the forest on either side.

¹¹Cf. article “Wolf” in: HWA 9: 716–794, esp. 782f, as well as the articles by Flom 1925, H. E. Allen 1935, 1936, Smal-Stocki 1950, and Ward 1987. For the interweaving of cultural semiotics and figurative language see also Dobrovolskij/Pirainen 1999, 2005: 335–343 and Idström/Pirainen 2012.

¹²Cf. Ovid “Ars amatoria” 1, 118: “As doves flee the eagle, in a frightened crowd, / as the new-born lamb runs from the hostile wolf: / so they fled in panic from the lawless men, / and not one showed the color she had before” (translated by A. S. Kline).

¹³Cf. Bulgarian *zad*, Serbian *zadina* ‘snake’ → ‘wolf’.

¹⁴About illegal, pagan devil-worship in Chaucer’s time, fairy tales, pranks with the devil see Raben (1950). For devil in Old English literature see R. E. Woolf (1953).

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Abbreviations

Alb. = Albanian, AlgAr. = Algerian Arabic, Arom. = Aromanian, Bas. = Basque, Bos. = Bosnian, Bret. = Breton, Bulg. = Bulgarian, Cat. = Catalan, Cr. = Croatian, Cz. = Czech, Da. = Danish, Du. = Dutch, Eng. = English, Esp. = Esperanto, Est. = Estonian, Fi. = Finnish, Fr. = French, Fri. = Friulian, Ger. = German, Gk. = Greek, Heb. = Hebrew, Hung. = Hungarian, Icel. = Icelandic,

IE. = Indo-European, It. = Italian, Kar. = Karaim, Kash. = Kashubian, Khot. = Khotanese, Kor. = Korean, Lat. = Latin, LGer. = Low German, LSorb. = Lower Sorbian, Lith. = Lithuanian, Ltv. = Latvian, Lux. = Luxembourgish, Mac. = Macedonian, Mir. = Mirandese, Mont. = Montenegrin, NFris. = North Frisian, Nor. = Norwegian, Pol. = Polish, Port. = Portuguese, Rm. = Romansh, Rom. = Romanian, Russ. = Russian, Skt. = Sanskrit, Slk. = Slovak, Slo. = Slovene, Sp. = Spanish, Sr. = Serbian, Swe. = Swedish, Ukr. = Ukrainian, WFr. = West Frisian, Yid. = Yiddish

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VULGAR TYPOLOGIES, SOCIAL EQUILIBRIUM, AND
MORAL ETHICS IN YORUBA PROVERBS

Abstract: Proverbs are essential tools of elucidating and expounding social issues. They express the innate principles and ethics of any given society. Among the Yoruba of south-western Nigeria, proverbs occupy a strategic place among other orature forms, as the warehouse of indigenous knowledge. This paper examines the representation of vulgarism in Yoruba culture by analyzing twenty-five purposively selected proverbs sourced mainly from the researcher's collections as a paremiographer and as a member of the Yoruba ethnic and linguistic group, as well as from existing secondary sources. The selected proverbs are chosen because they harp on the act of sex and direct reference to coition or the sexual organs. Hence, vulgar archetypes are examples of didactic aesthetics, moral education and sexuality consciousness among the Yoruba, in a unique way.

Keywords: African, culture, didacticism, education, ethics, morality, obscenity, proverbs, (sex)uality, society, vulgarism, Yoruba

Introduction

Sexuality has been addressed by several scholars of African studies generally and Yoruba studies in particular. There seems to be a consensus as to the fact that, unlike western societies, the Yoruba of Western Nigeria are diplomatic and polite when the issue of human sexuality is concerned. As a society essentially driven by oral tradition in view of the absence of written tradition, several oral forms have been identified as sites for expressions for gender related issues generally. However, there is a robust body of scholarship on the presence of vulgar African proverbs in general, and Yoruba proverbs in particular. Such studies include Olajubu (1972) and Ojoade (1983). While the studies underscore the significance of the vulgar and sexual proverbs in Yoruba culture, they actually did not classify the proverbs along functional paradigms. Recent studies on the subject of vulgarism in Yoruba proverbs have been concerned with the relationship between the sexual

expressions and gender perception among the Yoruba on the one hand, and the linguistic cum discourse significance of the same, on the other (Asiyanbola, 2007; Fakoya, 2007; Oloruntoba-Oju, 2011). Fakoya (2007) further suggests that Yoruba sexual proverbs signpost the disposition of the fact that the Yoruba associate with disseminating sexuality education. Though Yusuf (1996; 1996) acknowledges the presence of these vulgar archetypes, his studies are mainly concerned with sexist perceptions and misogynous tendencies of the sexual expressions. Also, Yusuf and Methangwane (2003) as well as Amuyunzu-Nyamongo M *et al* (2005) make a case for the relationship between vulgar expressions and the penetration of social vices as well as the continued spread of HIV/AIDS in most African indigenous societies. Hence, this study reveals the paradoxical ethical values of this corpus and also demonstrates their continued relevance in contemporary society, thereby filling a critical lacuna identified in existing scholarship.

African proverbs, according to Makinde (1986: 2) , “being accumulated treasure, serve as a way of looking at things differently, as they draw on observations, knowledge, and the wisdom of ancestors who use short, witty phrases that could be transmitted from generation to generation”. With this in mind, an understanding of the centrality of proverbs as purveyors of indigenous epistemology is clear. It is essential to cast another look at these propositions, with a view to locating the presence of vulgarism among the Yoruba, as being quintessential to the socio-epistemological and ethical constructs of the larger issue of sexuality. It should be noted that while proverbs with sexual tones are fairly common, the vulgar types are not common as everyday conversational features. The reason for this lies in the Yoruba perception of sex as sacred and dignifying, which is central to blissful family life and humanistic continuities and genealogical survival. Since the Yoruba hardly approve of everyday use of these types of proverbs, vulgar proverbs therefore become scarce and are only come across when there is a need to drum home strong moral and ethical messages.

Therefore, vulgarism in Yoruba proverbs is necessitated by circumstantial beckoning and expediency. In consonance with Barber’s (1987:3) observation, “Art forms characteristically condense experience and are expressive on different levels. We thus get the opportunity to see refracted the complexity and ambiguity

of real thought in practice, not artificially extrapolated". In effect, vulgarity comes across as a device of reconstructing human experience in Yoruba proverbs, and as a tool for morality and didacticism.

The corpus of vulgar proverbs that constitute the data in this study clearly and directly express human sexuality and also evince coital relationships between male and female gender. They are similar to Ojoade's (1983:20) classifications of obscenity especially in the way they assist the Yoruba in "looking for the most appropriate vehicle in conveying a message ... merely aiming at directness, frankness and starkness". In other words, the notion of vulgarism is culture specific, as some ideas are metaphorically more pungent than the others.

The Nature of Proverbs

The place of proverbs in verbal communication is well-researched. Several definitions have clearly established proverbs as an important repository of knowledge which seeks to affirm the truth of existence, while serving a social end (Egblewogbe, 1980; Mieder, 1989 [qtd. in Yusuf, 1997]; Yusuf, 1997). The importance of proverbs as a window of probing existential or universal truths therefore lies in their intrinsic capacity for conveying well-thought ideas and capturing the essence of knowledge dissemination. Among Africans particularly, proverbs occupy a strategic position given the pre-literate nature of indigenous African societies. In particular, among the Yoruba of south-western Nigeria, proverbs are regarded as a cherished form through which the worldview, philosophy, and knowledge transfer across generation lie. The use of proverbs among the Yoruba, especially among elders, in everyday discourse ensures the sustenance, understanding and dissemination of traditional values.

It is within this broad construct of proverbs serving as window to indigenous epistemology that this study is located. The fact that there is a need to understand the Yoruba concept of nudity beyond its social tag of immorality is therefore the motivation for this study. The study hinges its argument on the fact that, as a people who value social order and encourage moral ethical conducts, the presence of vulgar typologies in a proverbial corpus is not likely to be an isolated case of cultural contradiction. Hence, in this study, the value of vulgar proverbs and presence of obscene imagery in

proverbs are classified along the utilitarian values of such. This, of course, suggests a paradoxical relationship but nevertheless, the proverbs either as sources of moral and didactic directions, or as a window of understanding sexuality consciousness and sex education, clearly justify their strategic deployments. This is in line with Olatunji's (1984) observation about African proverbs being social charters used to praise what the society considers to be virtues and to condemn bad practices.

“The Naked Truth”

This study seeks to establish the value of vulgar Yoruba proverbs in relation to the achievement of public order and enshrinement of positive ethical regimes in indigenous Yoruba society. The study attempts to foreground the expediency and strategic essence of vulgarism as a paradox for ethical standards and as site for enhancement of social normalcy. This is against the backdrop that previous studies have not focused exclusively on the potential of vulgarism as catalyst for positive value creation. Thus, vulgarism is not indicative of moral perversion or sexual extremity, but a catalyst for deepening sexuality consciousness among the Yoruba.

Contestations and theorizing on the subject of sexualities are diverse and multidimensional. This is understandable given the importance of human sexualities to the global concern on AIDS and HIV/AIDS (Caldwell, J. C. et al, 1989; Yusuf & Methangwane, 2003). While human sexuality is an imperative that cannot be ignored, it is also symbolic along the Freudian perspective. However, the question of a distinct African sexuality has been largely contested. This is against the backdrop of the culturally-bound understanding of the issues by scholars of African studies (Olajubu, 1993). Viewed from the perspective of the emotional or sensual representations, this paper aligns with African scholars that sexuality is domiciled and conditioned in the marriage institution in Africa. Beyond these propositions, many anthropologists have confirmed the existence of queer sexualities in many indigenous African societies and these are well documented (Murray, 2011).

This study however bases its interrogation on the vulgar trope within the position that, in Yoruba culture, sex and sexuality is an appendage of marriage (Lawuyi, 1987; Alaba, 2004). Scholars have also suggested that the gender theorizings lack the capacity

to confer a sexuality epistemology on Africa, denouncing such as borrowed and heavily Western (Oloruntoba-Oju, 2011; Bakare and Yusuf, 2003).

Therefore, one is guided by the culture-specific principles which place sexualities in Yoruba culture within the marriage institution, and the fact that, sex, though fundamental, is culturally defined among the Yoruba. This however does not imply that the Yoruba culture is bereft of cultural spaces and productions where the female gender and their male folk engage in sexual discourses or erotic poetry, given the examples of Oke-Ibadan festival (Salawu, 2011) and other cultural sites of erotic and sexual representations like nuptial poetry and popular music. In fact, according to Ajibade (2005: 104):

Repressed emotional feelings that border on the sexual is reserved until the time of marriage, during which the women have the poetic license to express their sexual desires and emotional feelings. They can mention the sexual organs of both male and female without any restriction. They can also talk about sexual intercourse without any form of social sanction.

The above not only clearly shows that not only are vulgar expressions well represented in Yoruba orature, they are accorded a special place within the worldview. After all, the marriage institution which is the domain of sex places emphases on the same as legitimate and indispensable. It therefore means that sex, and by extension, vulgarism, does not derive its legitimacy from marriage, but from the intrinsic nature of human beings which craves and derives maximum pleasure in sex.

In the light of the foregoing, the next section is devoted to the analyses of twenty-five purposively selected proverbs which instantiate vulgar typologies, exhibiting obscenities and sexual imageries. These proverbs are analyzed based on their categorizations at ensuring moral sanity and social equilibrium on the one hand, and sex/sexuality consciousness and education, on the other.

Analyses

This research is based on an analysis of twenty-five purposively-selected sexually explicit Yoruba proverbs and sayings. The proverbs are drawn from primary and secondary sources. The

primary sources of the proverbs are the researchers' own collections of Yoruba proverbs and familiarity as an adept user of proverbs while the secondary sources are from existing collections such as Owomoyela (1973), Ojoade (1983), and Sheba (2009). The proverbs are translated from Yoruba to English and a contextual analysis of the proverbs is undertaken. The study situates the analysis on the theoretical presumption that hitherto the relationship between vulgar proverbs and sexuality discourse among the Yoruba have been largely confined to extended metaphors within the cosmology, while the attention seems not to have been on the utility value of vulgar archetypes of didactic and sexuality education and consciousness types.

Didactic Corpus

It is indubitable that the presence of sex-related constructions is strategic though the mention of sex, especially the vulgar types, elicits offensive reactions from the public. Actually, in everyday discourse, such are not expected as they are seen to violate the law of decency and decorum. However, when such are employed, they seek to correct social vices and serve moral ends. After all, sex is an important anvil which ensures existential continuity on the one hand, and is an important avenue for self-actualization and pleasure, on the other. To support this further is the fact that in Africa, "sex is a worldly activity like work or eating and drinking" (Caldwell et al., 1989: 203).

- 1) *Eni to tori obo kan ku, igba o gun orii re*
(Whoever kills himself because of one vagina, two hundred would trample on his grave)
- 2) *Bi obo ba baje, ti olobo lo n da*
(When the vagina is spoilt, it becomes the problem of the owner)
- 3) *Oju oloko ni obo ti niyi, apoti loninkan n fi ti e se*
(It is the penis that values the vagina, to the woman, it is a mere seat)
- 4) *Omode fi ikanju sun oorun, obodi opo seyin*
(A young child rushes sex, the vagina ends up wasting)

- 5) *Asese-dobo majesin, o n ye ori oko wo lona oko*
(When a man first fucks, he goes to examine the tip of his penis on the way to a farm)

In the examples above, several didactic lessons are expressed. While (1) advocates the need for caution in human aspiration, the importance of moral chastity is advocated in (2). Proverb (3) expresses the ephemeral nature of life as it communizes the female private organ, while the moral codes of patience and existential emptiness are emphasized in (4) and (5). These show that the use of these vulgar expressions does not in any way point to any indecent or foul use of language; rather they are deployed with a view to putting across moral messages. Of course, to cite Lawuyi (1987: 227):

To the Yoruba – that is speaking of the generality – sexual urge and need is as natural as any of the other living requirements such as food and breathing. Sexual relation between men and women is not tabooed.

In addition to the above, the Yoruba also employ vulgar proverbs to deepen the need to appreciate nature or broadly speaking, understand human biological constitution in a very clear and explicit way. Below are examples:

- 6) *Ibi ti oko eni bam o, ni a n do aya eni*
(One fucks one's wife within the capacity of his penis)
- 7) *Won fun e ni obo do, o ni ko nirun, se obo ni o fe do ni abi irun?*
(You are given a vagina, you are complaining that it is not hairy, do you want to fuck vagina or hair?)
- 8) *Omode ti o n gunmu ti inu e dun, o gbagbe pe nnkan ti o maa le ohun kuro ni ile baba ohun ni ohunrawo le*
(A child is excited that she has started growing breasts, she forgets that that is the beginning of her eventual sentence from her father's life)
- 9) *Adunmadeeke, oyin popotan, oun ti baba n je ti ko gbodo fun omo je.*
(Sweet experience not felt in the cheeks, something the father cannot share with the son)

- 10) *Aje kan ko le gboju titi, ko yo ido idi e je*
 (No matter how wicked a witch is, she cannot descend on
 her own clitoris)

The above proverbs indicate a myriad of issues that are intrinsically not related to the act of sex. Rather, they are extended metaphors with underlining meanings which are germane for the continued sustenance of the society. For instance, the essence of human physiognomy, and anatomical imperatives are enshrined in (6), (7), (8), and (10) with direct references to the reality of puberty in (7) and (8), while (10) explains in a vulgar way, the structure of the female urino-genital system which makes it impossible for the clitoris to be dismembered. This, in a way, contradicts the claim of Olajubu (1972:1) that,

To the Yoruba, sex has a sacred function. It is regarded as a solemn act that should be performed with all modesty and secrecy. The sexual organs are not things to joke about or mention loosely. It is *isokuso* ("indecent talk") to mention them casually or with the intention of arousing immoral sexual feelings. Children, in particular, are strictly forbidden from playing with or talking about sex or playing with or talking about the sex organs. Such talk would be regarded as *isokuso*, and such act *isekuse* (indecent act).

In other words, the use of these proverbs explicates the reality of human physiology. Also, proverbs (6), (8), and (9) orchestrate the importance of marriage as a revered institution while (9) particularly explains the importance of sex on the one hand, and the disposition of the Yoruba to immorality or incest tendencies on the other. The fact is that these proverbs function in extra-literary ways to underscore basic fundamental issues in the society.

Vulgarity is also used among the Yoruba to paint scenarios in a vivid way that the message would not be lost on the listener. While the direct reference to the act of coition may be overbearing, the discernment of the crux of the matter is always a given. The following examples can be considered:

- 11) *Ma do mi, ma do iyale mi, obo eni laa fowo mu*
 (In a polygamous home, there can never be an agreement
 on sexual abstinence among rivals)

- 12) *Bi oloko nla ba n ban i sun, gbingbin laa gbin*
(When a man with a big penis is fucking one, it is better to groan)
- 13) *Loju odoko, bii ko si wa lewe*
(To the adulterous, she wants to remain ever young)
- 14) *Atanni do ki i tan ni do ju eekan soso lo*
(You can only trick someone to have sex once)
- 15) *Asewo ti o baa maa kole, obo e a jin*
(If a prostitute wants to build a house through prostitution, her vagina would be deep)

From the above, it could be deduced that vulgar proverbs add value to life and contribute immensely to the restoration of order and maintenance of social equilibrium. Though they may sound sarcastic, they express self-evident truths about human life. The need for alertness as to one's situation is metaphorically conveyed in proverb (14). Also, the fact that prostitution is considered an immoral self-destructive engagement comes across clearly in proverbs (13) and (15). Proverb (11) shows the unpredictability or unreliable nature of humans through the use of the polygamy allusion depicting the need for anyone not to be over-dependent on human assurances. Proverbs (12) and (15) foreground the need for tolerance and enduring spirit as human tribulations do not last forever.

In all, proverbs 1-15 exemplify the appreciation of human complexities and situations and also express the value of vulgar proverbs in helping to shape morality and drawing attention to acts of social pervasion. The obscene sexual contents and references are a strategy of literary foregrounding by attempting to paradoxically uncovering underlying truths in the proverbs.

Sex Education and Sexuality Consciousness

Sexuality among the Yoruba is an important factor of self-awareness, and identity formation and self-realization. In several Yoruba art forms, the knowledge of self is made clear through a reference not just to gender stereotypes, but also that which is associated with feminine attributes and masculinity. Several vulgar proverbs therefore serve as sites for the expression of the impera-

tives of sexuality consciousness and sex education. The following examples are illustrative:

- 16) *Bi oko ba ri obo, a po t i enu e*
(When the vagina sights the penis, it emits whatever is in its mouth)
- 17) *A ki i loyun sinu, ka fi obo tore*
(One does not give out one's vagina during pregnancy)
- 18) *Toko-tobo lo n sise oko Ido*
(Both the vagina and the penis should work together for success on Ido's farm). (Asiyanbola, 2007: 76)
- 19) *Obo ni ohun gbogbo loun le fi jeri oko, sugbon bi ti obo ko*
(Vagina says it can vouch for the penis in everything but not when it comes to the matter of Vagina) (Sheba, 2009, quoted by Oloruntoba-Oju, 2009: 20)
- 20) "*Ko moju, ko mora, bi oloko nla*"
(He is as shameless as a man with a big penis)

In the above, proverbs (16) and (17) are sources of sex education graciously passed across to express certain truths in relation to female gynaecology on the importance of the vagina as the outlet for sex and child bearing towards ensuring procreation. Also, proverb (16) captures the idea of foreplay or sensation and, of course, forms of sensation or ejaculation during sex. The need for cooperation is advocated, between both genders for social harmony in (18), affirming the binary theory of complementarity among the Yoruba (Ilesanmi, 2004). The personification present in (19) is a way of eulogizing maleness or male-power. An interesting dimension to sexuality consciousness or sex education is the way proverb (20) expresses the myth surrounding the size of male genitalia as a window towards lampooning male promiscuity.

The point deducible from the above is that, beyond their so-called offensive nature and obscene contents, vulgar proverbs are indeed creative pathways of enshrining sex education and sexual consciousness. The references to biological processes and truisms attest to the extra-literary value of the proverbs, especially as a source of sexuality education complementing formal pedagogical situations. Therefore, once the context of use is appropriate, then

the vulgar proverbs can be better appreciated. As Fakoya (2007: 5) rightly observes:

It may seem as if proverbs which contain mentions of sex organs are not permitted in much Yorùbá discourse. No, this is not true by any means. Adults are generally adept at using such expressions – but not without corresponding situational constraints.

There are also several expressions among witty sayings among the Yoruba which possess vulgar attributes. For instance, a man regarded as “*ogbori obo jeje*” (one who vouches during intercourse), is not a deliberate vulgar expression, but rather a call to discipline and self-control. Also, a female counterpart regarded as “*olobo ko mo o ko*” (one whose vagina does not know how to say no), also shows the disposition towards promiscuity. To consider someone *olobo werepe* (someone with itchy vagina) or *oloko doro* (someone with odd penis) in everyday discourse among the Yoruba clearly indicate the fact that, the society abhors indecent sexual conduct. Even in modern day Yoruba society, there are numerous admonitions such as:

- 21) *kinikan lo n gbeyin ma domi niso*
(Continue fucking me must result in something)
- 22) *omo to bam o owo gba, a mo oko do*
(If a girl knows how to collect money, she should be prepared for sex)
- 23) *asunkaka ki I gba ofe*
(When someone agrees to sex, it is usually not for free)
- 24) *isiro loko dido*
(Adultery carries a cost)
- 25) *melo la fe do ninu obo, ti a o ni ki ile ma mo*
(No matter how long you last while fucking the vagina remains inexhaustible)

In effect, the use of these expressions remains relevant in sounding moral caveats and ensuring discipline and ethical conducts, especially among the youth generation. Hence, the value of vulgar proverbs and obscene expressions lies in the way they can be seen as representing naked truth among the attitude of the Yoruba. This

clearly indicates that the proverbial sayings exude capacity to foreground the need to stamp out sexual immorality.

Conclusion

This study has shown that the deployment of vulgar expressions in Yoruba proverbs is an age-long strategy of maintaining social equilibrium and enforcing morality. The sampled vulgar proverbs, though may come across as vulgar on the surface level of meaning, they are indicative of a deeper level of signification directed at guiding the society and creating moral templates from everyday experience that people can easily relate to. They therefore do not represent any obscene extremity among the Yoruba people. Rather, they are employed with a view to expounding the importance the Yoruba accord sex, human genitalia, the coital act of sex and lovemaking as ingredients of sustaining life and regeneration. This implies that Yoruba sexuality does not exist primarily for idyllic fantasies but it is geared towards ensuring continuity and sanity, especially through procreation. This is in agreement with the view expressed by Chege (1993: 186) that sex is,

the channel through which individual and community life was renewed and also the conduit for mystical good and ill. It was always a highly charged act, believed to pollute as well as capable of cleansing pollution. The same act thus contained both potential goodness and danger, depending on the circumstances.

In other words, this study is inclined towards the didactic and functional potentials of the isolated vulgar proverbs. This study draws its significance from the fact that the selected proverbs are direct renditions of sexual imagery, provoking coital experiences explicitly along the way. Unlike previous attention by scholars like Dare (2005) to downplay the presence and pronounced imagery of sex and sexual relations, the study extends the submissions of Olajubu (1973) by not just itemizing vulgar proverbs, but also by foregrounding vulgarism as a vehicle for promoting social equilibrium and ethical principles.

This study offers an inspiring perspective to African sexuality discourse by contending that the presence of vulgar typologies indicates the notions of sexuality among the Yoruba people as being an imperative that should exist in the subconscious, and ulti-

mately guiding the associated principles of sexual relationships. Furthermore, there is also a subtle element of pedagogical significance given the relevance of this corpus to sex and sexuality education. This departs from earlier studies of Yoruba proverbs that are holistic considerations of sexualities mainly within the larger picture of gender relations and social constructions of assumed ethical dictates.

The presence of vulgar typologies in Yoruba sexual proverbs enables a balanced and panoramic understanding of issues of sex, especially in marriage, which interestingly is polygamous among the Yoruba. As pointed out by Ojoade (1983: 12):

Yoruba using these proverbs is simply looking for the most appropriate vehicle to convey his message, his point, and his ideas in a forceful way; he is merely aiming at directness, frankness and starkness. In a word, he just likes to call a spade a spade, and there are no really dirty words.

The foregoing is akin to what Osofisan (2009: 1) refers to as "full disclosure and unrestrained loquacity in post-military Nigerian literature". To differ from Salawu's (2011: 39) declaration that, "in the Yoruba culture, and presumably in most other cultures of Africa, open discussion of sex and its sensation by women is an anathema". Vulgarism thus is seen to function in the interplay of ethical conduct, peaceful co-existence and moral obligations among partners. This explains why "queer sexualities" like homosexuality, lesbianism, gay culture and incest are hardly represented in Yoruba sexual metaphors. (Oloruntoba-Oju, 2011). Thus, the question of sexuality in Yoruba culture, as espoused in the cultural productions, is a product of social-cultural definition, which is domiciled in indigenous approach to the question of morality and ethical conducts. Hence, vulgar typologies exist, not to indicate any inclination to indecency, but to demonstrate that sexually explicit expressions can also serve multifarious ends. This is clearly evident in the universality of their propositions at metaphorical and epistemological levels.

The overall proposition obviously is towards an epistemology of African sexuality which is outside the purview of this paper. However, given the evidences gleaned from the selected proverbs, it is indubitable that the Yoruba, like most cultures of the world, parade an understanding of human sexuality. In essence, the sensi-

tive nature of verbal expressions link sexuality and instantiate that there is a culturally-bound configuration of sensualities, eroticism, and effusions of coition-related metaphors. It is indeed worthwhile to situate the imperatives of a domesticated sexuality construct within the overall thematic issue of African sexualities which is fast gaining attention in critical discourse. Thus, an understanding of the notion of vulgarity in African verbal culture, exemplified in this study with Yoruba proverbs, offers viable insight on the all-important subject of sexuality in Africa. In particular is its relevance to the engagement of such issues as HIV/AIDS, Rape, Female Genital Mutilation, and the like. Hence, the claim by Dare (2005: 90) that “not only is sex a subject severely restricted in public discourse, lexical choices in direct reference to sex and sexual organs are allowed to feature only in periphrastic and euphemistic terms”, hardly represents an objective assessment of the disposition of the Yoruba in this connection. This is very much unlike Alaba (2004: 9) who acknowledges the legitimacy of vulgar typologies by declaring that “occasionally, of course, such as in certain festival chants and songs and in proverbs or aphorisms what is called obscene language is employed for literary/aesthetic effects”.

The study contends that vulgarity in Yoruba verbal culture exists to serve various purposes, some of which have been enumerated. Hence, attempts at expunging the so-called obscene or vulgar stereotypes would amount to undermining an inclusive or holistic study of folklore. Such exclusions, which could take forms of euphemism or total expunging, results in a folklore study that makes, as Berry (1961: 2) puts it, “our records not nearly so representative as they might have been”.

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PROVERBS AND MODERNITY: TAKING THE PROVERBS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF THE ELDERS

Abstract: Proverbs have usually been considered the preserve of the elders in the society because they are seen as the repository of the wisdom of the race. However, the creativity that comes with the youthful incursion into proverbial expression is not considered a serious communicative occurrence in Nigeria. This paper thus investigates the use of proverbs as a sign of communicative creativity by the youth as well as linguistic dynamism. Ethnographic and linguistic instruments were employed in investigating different proverbs from a Nigerian language, Yoruba. The original proverbs and their post-proverbial forms were presented and the essence of modern adaptation as a feature of linguistic dynamism as well as communicative creativity were presented. It is argued that this linguistic posturing exposes the communicative dynamism that exists in Nigerian languages to fit into the postmodern context and relevance of proverbs in the twenty-first century world of the Nigerian society.

Keywords: Proverbs, Post-proverbials, Youths, Communicative creativity, Modernity, Linguistic dynamism.

Introduction

Proverbs have been variously described by scholars. However, the most poignant seems to be their description as an encapsulation of the wisdom of elders within the race of humans (Mieder, 1997; Soares, 2010). A Yoruba proverb actually asserts this in unequivocal terms by saying: *Enu agba l'obi ti ngbo* (The kolanut is truly mature only in the mouth of the elders), which actually suggests that words of wisdom are only found in the mouth of elders in the society. However, Daniel (2008) as well as many other scholars have challenged this view of proverbs as a wisdom that is the prerogative of elders within the society. It is obvious that proverbs are a product of linguistic employment and communicative intents. It is from this angle of proverbs as a communicative instrument that we choose to approach the pare-

miological considerations in this paper. Such an approach easily lends itself to the manipulation and adaptation of the usual restricted form, structure and nature of proverbs.

Communication is the essence of language use (Daniel, 2012). The idea here is that proverbs are actually used for communicative purposes (Mieder, 1997). This is why one cannot agree with Raji-Oyelade's (2012: 69-70 cited in 2014:16) description of post-proverbials as logophagic and logorrhoea, which counters his later acceptance of the fact that these modern renditions of proverbial sayings are actually a sign of cultural dynamism. This falls in line with the general attitude that what is new is foolish. We do not agree with this posture. For us, more interesting and compelling is the idea of proverbs as tools of communication. This position agrees with Fayemi (2009).

Proverbs as a Form

Scholars have tried to define proverbs. Martin (2015) defines proverbs as "short and pithy sayings that express some traditionally held **truth**. They are usually metaphorical and often, for the sake of memorability, alliterative." Nnolim (1983:36) describes a proverb as a recognised **truth** or shrewd observation about practical life that is ascertained through experience. Mieder (2004) defines a proverb as a "short phrase, usually from the folklore, containing **wisdom, truth, morality** and traditional perspectives expressed in a metaphorical sense, **stable** and trainable and **transmitted from generation to generation**." This is borrowed from Mieder's definition as presented in Soares (2010:163-164). Soares himself goes further to assert that: "*Proverbs are the condensed **good sense** of nations*' and their **permanence** is not in danger if we believe that '*Time passes, but the sayings stay*'" (Soares, 2010:164).

We have highlighted some important concepts that one should find objectionable in these definitions of what constitutes a proverb. The idea of traditional views of proverbs easily makes us see proverbs as long standing and thus unchangeable. It is therefore not surprising that Mieder sees them as stable and Soares avers their permanence (cf. Jegede, 2008). That they contain truth and wisdom has been variously challenged by scholars (see Daniel, 2008; Oluyamo, 2006; Yusuf, 1999; Ezeigbo, 1996; Onayemi, 2004, to mention a few). The truth contained in prov-

erbs thus becomes suspect. One can only imagine that this supposed truth is also why they are permanent in nature and get transmitted from generation to generation.

Balogun (2010) argues that proverbs are “cruel and unfair pithy sayings that derogate the dignity, integrity, rights and freedom of the womenfolk” (pg. 25). This definition again questions the issue of wisdom in the definitions provided above. It even raises questions on the issue of morality as contained in the description of proverbial sayings. We then wonder how proverbs can ever get defined. Soares (2010) also raised the confusion over the definition of proverbs in the paper referred to above even though a definition was later provided as quoted above. Our view is that the consensus by scholars that proverbs are fluid and non-definitive in their description is a safe position to take for now (Fayemi, 2009; Taiwo, 2010).

Modernity and the Elders' Wisdom

Within the paremiological study has remained the idea of the wisdom of the race as a defining factor for proverbial inquiry (Daniel, 2008; Jegede, 2008/2012, Kehinde, 2004; Mieder, 2004 in 2014; Soares, 2010). This thus ascribes to the elders within the society the custody of the wisdom that exists within that society. Nonetheless, the coercion that comes with such supposed age-defined custody has been challenged and presented as not too practical. Daniel (2008) asserts that such age-related supposed wisdom is actually an attempt at coercion of the younger generation to fall in line with the perceived ‘tradition’ of the race. Onayemi (2004), Oluyamo (2006) and Balogun (2010) all wondered at this supposed wisdom of the elders that results in the unfair treatment of women in the society.

Is it therefore any surprise that a Yoruba maxim makes the youngster that wants to make an incursion into this preserve of the elders having to do so apologetically by using a ‘by your leave’ with: “*Toto se bi owe o!*” (Let it not be like a proverb o!) after using a proverb in the course of a conversation where people older than they are present? In essence it should not seem like they are making use of proverbs before the elders. The elder of course acknowledges and says: “*Wa a pa'mi*” (You will make another proverb) to show approval and permission given.

Raji-Oyelade (2014) recaps his earlier works on the modernist structure of proverbs. Like noted above, his downgrading of the creative usages of these proverbial sayings as ‘rupture’ to us devalues the innovativeness of his identification of Yoruba post-proverbials (cf. Litovkina, Vargha, Barta & Hrisztova-Gotthardt, 2008). This is the 21st century and there is no way the people of this age can be expected to live like the people of the 20th century. Mieder (2014) agrees with this position. Ten years ago, technophobia was not seen as a problem; but today, non-technological compliance can make a person dysfunctional within the 21st century society. In the age of smartphones and tablets that are handheld and not to be swallowed, the wisdom of the present age has moved from the elders to the young. One can argue that this is a kind of wisdom and not necessarily cultural wisdom. That may appear true. However, we should not forget that cultural wisdom also has to do with cultural dynamism. This is what we talk about here. The elder that mixes up the concept of a tablet with that of something to swallow to cure the flu may end up in a worse shape. An elder that does not understand that the idea of *igi gogoro ma gun mi l’oju, ma dooji ni* (For the pointed tree not to injure my eye, I will dodge it) is the wise way of letting the younger generation express itself may likely get into a communication difficulty. This is the reality of the 21st century and not necessary the death of the people that own that culture. Cultural purism (Jegede, 2012) cannot survive nor be sustained in the highly mobile and globalised world of today. This is the reality that the modern society has to deal with. When the economic meltdown hit America, Europe sneezed and shook to its very foundations. Greece was overturned, Spain was in pains, the African nations had to look for new friends in Asia; the whole globalised world knew there was something happening around it.

In this wise, our posture is that instead of seeing modern proverbs as anti-proverbs (Litovkina et al, 2008; Mieder, 1997) or logophagic productions of rebellious youths (Raji-Oyelade, 2004/2014), the inherent creativity and the manifest linguistic creativity should be celebrated (Jegede, 2008/2012; Balogun, 2010; Mieder, 2014; Taiwo, 2010). Balogun’s (2010) attempts at reconstructing some of the Yoruba proverbs to reflect gender equity and gender ‘fairness’ may appear artificial but can essen-

tially succeed in displacing cultural oligarchy that says the male is superior to the female. The women empowerment battle did not start with people laying their hands idly on their laps and doing nothing. The wisdom of the elders cannot thus only be challenged but can be deconstructed and reconstructed (Fayemi, 2009; Balogun 2010; Daniel, 2008; Oluyamo, 2006). Jegede (2008/2012), Balogun (2010) and Taiwo (2010) exemplify these by providing the literary as well as linguistic reconstructions of some proverbial usages; even Mieder's (2014) samples of such reconstructions based on themes is a reflection of such possibilities. These clearly prove that the modern reality of the proverbial renditions is possible. These also deconstruct the idea that proverbs are stable and thus permanent (cf. Soares, 2010). The society has to change to meet its new needs and challenges. This occurs at the levels of linguistic and cultural fluidity. Scholars have always known this as a reality (cf. Mieder, 2014). No cultural puritanism can realistically withstand this future.

Post-proverbials as the Modern Reality

Post-proverbials have been defined as the twist and turn that traditional proverbs are subjected to. Raji-Oyelade (2014) defined post-proverbials as alternate creations derived from and which stand against traditional proverbs. He asserts that they are "inventive and subversive verbal acts" (pg. 15) produced in jest or ignorance of conventional and generally accepted and anonymous proverbs in a given culture. This definition of post-proverbials by Raji-Oyelade at the same time presents the salient definition as well as view of many people in Nigeria about this linguistic operation. He went ahead to give the Yoruba rendition of post-proverbials in Yoruba as *asakasa*. This means that post-proverbials are actually hippie cultural representation of traditional, respectable culture. They are thus uncouth. To us, this is already judgemental and may not be the reality.

His description of post-proverbials as playful blasphemies gives credence to our view of his position. He asserts: "A 'glotophagic' process is underway when on the playful tongue of its speaker the traditional proverb loses the sanctity of its structural fixation and gains an elasticity of form all its own" (Raji-Oyelade, 1999:76). It is no doubt obvious that the worry of Raji-Oyelade is the deconstruction of the traditionally fixed proverbs.

They thereby become blasphemous on the tongues of the youngsters. Even though he acknowledges that this linguistic expression is already pervasive in the cultural forms such as poetry, sermons, drama, the film, music, etc., to him, the verbal act is still an uncouth linguistic production (Raji-Oyelade, 2014).

However, the reality presented before us by Balogun's (2010) incursion into the re-formatting and re-structuring of the gender negative proverbs to provide the more gender friendly versions cannot be regarded as uncouth. This brings to the fore the assertion by Mieder (1997:416) that people do not necessarily consider proverbs as sacrosanct as they can get intentionally rephrased as "anti-proverbs in all types of modern communication". For us, this is a move from his position above of seeing proverbs as being stable. That youths will ask questions is a reality that the elders need not to shy away from. To stop them from doing that is a disaster waiting to happen. (I guess Hong Kong will find out this truth later, when the present youth uprising against Chinese despotism comes home to roost.) Raji-Oyelade's (1999/2014) seeming objection to that reality is one of the propelling force for this study.

Ethnographic Data Collection and Linguistic Analysis of Proverbs

Data collected for this study emanated from diverse sources. Essentially the proverbs were collections made from usages within the Nigerian society. Initially, the intention was to take many of the languages in Nigeria, however, due to the inability of the researcher to get the assistance in interpreting some of those proverbs in languages not familiar to the researcher, the proverbs from such sources were discountenanced. Therefore, only proverbs in the language (Yoruba) familiar to the researcher were used for analysis in this work. The proverbs were sourced from usages among colleagues that readily provided the researcher with the usages as identified in common usage. Some of the post-proverbials were also sourced from the researcher's own repertoire of such usages. Some of the usages were also sourced from the media as used on the television.

The linguistic instrument employed is simply a semantic inquiry into the expressive contents of the proverbial sayings. In this sense, the semantic features or the propositional contents of the

proverbs are of interest to the study. Essentially, the traditional forms of the proverbs are presented after their post-proverbial renditions. This is expected to put the proverbs in question in proper perspective.

Proverbial Examples, their Semantic Relativity and their Communicative Responsiveness

The next section focuses on discussing examples of proverbs, their post-proverbial versions and the communicative/ propositional contents.

Example 1

Post-proverbial: *Igi gogoro ma gun mi loju, ma dooji e ni* (For the tall pointed tree not to pierce my eye, I will dodge it).

Traditional version: *Igi gogoro ma gun mi loju, a tokere lati nwo* (For the tall pointed tree not to pierce my eye, one watches it from afar off).

It is obvious that the semantic content of the two forms of the proverb are quite different. However, the issue here is that while the traditional version of the proverb retains some metaphorical content that makes it appear mysterious, the post-proverbial version is a lot more accessible and thus communicatively more relevant. Straight-forward indicative sentences have been identified by Mieder (2014) as one of the structural features of modern proverbs. In order to be sensible, it appears wise that one should avoid a likely source of harm. Actually, in a literal sense, even the traditional proverb actually showcases a sense of being sensible. If you stay away from the source of harm, it appears to be a realistic choice. Nonetheless, one is aware that paremiological scholars may want to question the literal application of the traditional version. Our take is that even the proverbs in their original forms actually are sourced from realistic and definitive occurrences (cf. Kehinde, 2004; Nnolim, 1983). The way proverbs came about thus shows that their reality is also real. The story about Achilles and the proverbial expression on the Achilles heel is instructive in demonstrating this.

This is not to however downplay the seriousness of the discussion here. It is merely to demonstrate that making post-

proverbials appear sacrilegious is the ultimate in cultural puritanism. No society can be static; static societies are dead.

Daniel (2012) demonstrates the communicativeness of the Nigerian English as having at its heart communicative focus. Our position supports this. Many scholars of the English language in Nigeria are still at the stage of condemning the Nigerian English phenomenon (cf. Israel, 2015). But that position has not changed the reality of its increase and spread. The issue then is to move from the prescriptive pontification and engage the descriptive reality facing us. The same is suggested for the cultural puritans. Post-proverbials are communicative expressions and not uncouth sayings.

Example 2

Post-proverbial: *Aitete mole, ole nsalo* (The thief was not quickly apprehended, they started to run away)

Traditional version: *Aitete mole, ole n moloko* (The thief was not quickly apprehended, they turned round to apprehend the farm owner [farmer]).

Note: Here, the concept of the owner as possessor of the property is emphasised as against the intruder.

This sort of proverb tends to be used to indicate that the accused person may want to shift the blame. It is not necessarily criminality inclined. This idea is carried into the post-proverbial. Two friends may lightly let each other know that the one that decides to use the proverb is actually aware of the friend's lack of commitment to their friendship by making excuses and dodging the responsibility that such commitments demand. In this wise, the two proverb versions are close in interpretation. One could safely say the first version of the proverb is a more friendly version or more accessible and thus more communicatively relevant (cf. Mieder, 1997). One would disagree with the attempt to call such communicatively effective structures playful. This would be comparable to the chauvinistic and age related coercion that Daniel (2008) identified in the Nigerian society.

Example 3

Post-proverbial: *Koju ma ribi, gbogbo ara loogun e* (For one not to see (encounter) evil, all the being is the solution (medicine) for it).

Traditional version: *Koju ma ribi, ese loogun e* (For one not to see (encounter) evil, the leg is the solution (medicine) for it).

The idea here is that evil lurks at the corner. In order to avoid it, one necessarily has to move away quickly. Now the difference between the traditional version and the post-proverbial is actually that the movement should not only be seen as metaphorical but actually a deliberate act of total avoidance. Jegede (2004) has called this semantic extension. We will like to call it an act of deliberate emphasis on the urgency of the act of self-preservation. To us, this makes sense in the modern times that it is so easy to frame up a person by trumping up evidence to make one a culprit for a crime one never committed. This brings to mind another proverb that *a koba a daba, Oloun ma je a ri* (being accused of a crime one is innocent of, may God forbid it). *A koba* has landed many people in prison due to circumstantial evidence. Even when protesting one's innocence, it may be difficult to get out of it without a scratch. In such a case, it appears sensible to make a deliberate move to avoid it as in applying the whole 'body' rather than just the 'legs' as advised by the elders.

Yes, the idea itself might have been originally metaphorical, but the folk wisdom in the post-proverbial version is that you cannot afford to be slack in your decisions if you intend to preserve your life, family and every important aspect of your life and personal integrity. If you live in Lagos in Nigeria, it appears to make perfect sense in its metropolitan context.

Example 4

Post-proverbial: *Bi ekute ba dagba tan, o ti to ya laata* (When the rodent fully matures, it is ready for the soup pot).

Traditional version: *Bi ekutu ba dagba tan, omu omo re ni mu* (When the rodent fully matures, it sucks its kid's breasts).

Note: the concept actually is that it is taken care of by its offspring.

The rodent hunts and seeks for food when it is younger and stronger. However, as it eats this food, it gets quickly mature. For young people in Nigeria, bush rat hunting in the rural areas is a normal pastime. A big one is actually a big game. So, what is the use of an animal getting well fed if it cannot be eaten? For the younger generation, the metaphor of rodent hunting is for the purpose of finding meat to eat. This can be related to by the youths rather than the rat being provided for by its offspring as metaphorically determined by the traditional proverb. One may thus logically convey the impression of all one's effort in the corporate world as a modern worker is to get rewarded. Nonetheless, this interpretation does not preclude the fact that the younger generation of Nigerians are aware of their responsibilities to their parents/elders in the society. The reality also is that, unlike in the traditional setting where parents do not have pensions, the modern parents usually have their lifelong source of income till they die. In such a case, the traditional proverb may no longer apply nor make sense to the young person.

It should, nonetheless, be mentioned that only those that have retired from government service usually have this privilege. Many Nigerian income earners have to contend with a large number of dependents on their sometimes meagre income. In such a context, the traditional proverb may make sense.

Example 5

Post-proverbial: *Eyin ku 'le lota wa, ma gb'ojule bo 'ta*
(The enemy is at the back courtyard, so, I will go out through the front door).

Traditional version: *Eyin ku 'le lota wa, ile l'aseni n gbe*
(The enemy is at the back courtyard, the deceiver is living with one in the house).

When we talk of folk wisdom, I think it will be fool hardy to think it resides with only the elders. In this example, it appears sensible to leave the enemy waiting at the back courtyard while one moves on with one's life through the front door. The idea is that the enemy's ambush that has been discovered should be avoided. It appears even a sensible choice for a military general.

But a look at the traditional version provides the information that one is aware of the enemy not only waiting for one in the back yard; that one is actually living with one's deceiver in the same house appears to be a deliberate act of putting one's person and family in avoidable danger. Metaphorically, the traditional proverb might have suggested that one has the knowledge of those that bear ill-will towards one being uncovered, but it does not provide the solution on how to avoid the possible danger that they pose. In this class are also proverbs such as:

Won f'aju jo ore, sugbon ota ni won (They look like friends, but they are actually enemies). Some of the Pentecostal churches in Nigeria describe these as *unfriendly friends*.

B'Olorun bati fi ota eni han ni, won o le pa ni mo (When God reveals your enemy to you, they can no longer kill [harm] you).

Note: the concept here is that of being safe from the harm from the enemy once the enemy has been uncovered.

While the first sample here suggests uncovering unfriendly friends, the second appears to suggest a fatalistic inaction. The assumption is that knowing the enemy implies safety. This proverb can make such sense only if the precaution taken in the post-proverbial in Example 5 is practically applied here. To us, it will be like living in a fool's paradise as we know that some enemies cannot be easily appeased. Boko Haram in Nigeria is a classical case in point; ISIS in the Middle East is another. Al Shabab is certainly not a friend to Kenya. America is sure not to take lying low Al Qaeda and its persistent ill will towards the USA. So, deliberate action to counter the enemy appears a sensible option.

Example 6

Post-proverbial: *Maalu ti o ni'ru, o wa ni Sanngo* [Sabo, Ilorin, etc., depending on the city where you live and the location that the Fulani cow herd sellers do their merchandising there] (The cow that does not have a tail lives in Sanngo [Ibadan]).

Traditional version: *Maalu ti o ni'ru, Olorun lo n ba l'eesin* (The cow that does not have tail, it is God that helps it to drive away flies).

Essentially, this could be classified as fun making or flippant usage. This depends on the communicative context and the effect intended. The reality is that it is where there are many herds of cows that you find those that already have their tails cut off. So, if one wants to see such an unusual sight, one has to go to where many cows can be found. This is usually at their depot in the cities of Nigeria. There is therefore no need looking for the unusual form of a thing in the everyday environment; one may not find it. In this way, the traditional concept is deliberately and flippantly undermined for either communicative or irritability expressiveness. The idea that God is the helper of the helpless is downplayed. The suggestion here is that the powerless use of the traditional proverb to account for a hapless situation they are in may seem like mere excuse to the interlocutor. This may account for the unsympathetic and flippant response in this case.

An application of the Critical Discourse Analysis to analyse this post-proverbial indicates power relations being actually expressed in this post-proverbial. This brings us back to the idea that communicative act is actually mostly at the root of the post-proverbial usage rather than mere uncouth demonstrations of colonised minds as some of the scholars (cf. Fayemi, 2009) suggest.

Example 7

Post-proverbial: *T'eni be'gi lo ju, ko ge daadaa ni* (The problem is for the wood cutter because they did not cut the tree down very well).

Traditional version: *T'eni be'gi lo ju, igi a ru'we* (The problem is for the wood cutter because the tree must surely sprout again).

The philosophical saying here analysed suggests that the duty performed by the doer is not very well carried out. It is thus obvious that haphazard actions is what is being criticised here. It may also be viewed that the doer of the action is careless and that is why the tree was able to sprout again. The idea of semantic extension comes into play here. Nonetheless, it must be said

that the concept that is at the forefront here is that an act to keep one down in life may eventually be useless as the young shall surely grow is at the root of the original concept of this proverb. The semantic extension as used in the post-proverbial however also makes a whole lot of sense as a careless act in the first instance may have to be repeated in a more deliberate manner to succeed and achieve the intended purpose. This post-proverbial thus has the semantic content of an illocutionary act of warning against lackadaisical attitude to one's work or duty. In this sense, it does not appear merely to be an uncouth usage as claimed by Raji-Oyelade (2014) but actually a speech act of warning in order to avoid repeating what duty has been performed.

Example 8

Post-proverbial: *Eni to jin si koto, oju e lo fo* (A person that falls into a ditch must be blind).

Traditional version: *Eni to ji si koto, o ko ara yoku log-bon* (A person that falls into a ditch is a lesson to others coming behind).

Note: The concept of *koto*/ditch here could be related to mistake/error.

While the post-proverbial shows the concept of falling into a ditch as a sign of carelessness, a metaphorical representation shows that the sympathy of the user of the proverb is with the 'person' that fell or made the mistake. The harsh reality in the modern times, while not precluding the possibility of making mistakes, shows that one needs to be very smart to avoid being ruined. The economic meltdown of the late 2000s shows that one needs to be a lot more analytical in making investments. Instead of waiting to become others' guinea pig that they learn from, one should actually be smart enough to avoid making avoidable mistakes. The wisdom is thus that instead of crying for sympathy and being a lesson to others, the person that falls into a ditch should actually avoid falling into it by opening their eyes wide (Nigerians will say: *Shine your eyes*.). In the information age that we live in now, not making good use of resources that will help one avoid such unnecessary mistakes is actually an act of deliberate blindness. Such does not serve as an excuse nor deserve sympathy.

Findings and Conclusion

The paper has been focused on doing a parallel ethnographic and semantic analysis of the post-proverbs of some Nigerian traditional proverbs. A comparative weighting of the semantic and communicative imports of the post-proverbs and the proverbs were analysed. The findings include:

1. Unlike the claims by some scholars that the post-proverbs are mere blasphemous sayings by the youths in rebellion, the finding shows that these sayings make perfect common sense in communication. As such, they are not mere embellishments with no actual useful meaningfulness but stack reality to fit into the modern world which their creators and users live in. This finding agrees with the assertion by Taiwo (2010) that rather than post-proverbials being “a playful intent”, they have become “a critical instrument in the hands of the poet-satirist in lampooning socio-political contradictions of [his] immediate society” (square brackets added to query the gender insensitivity in the quote, pg. 2). The point being made is that post-proverbials are not mere blasphemous sayings of the uncouth as claimed by Raji-Oyelade (1999, 2004 & 2014) but actually critical linguistic choices used in deconstructing wisdom nuggets that have shifted in their usefulness to the information and technological age. This shows that, unlike the claim of the perpetuity of truth provided by the definers of the proverbial concept, the truth of the sages is not the truth of the ages (cf. Martin, 2015; Mieder, 1997; Soares, 2010). The reality before the modern users of the language is no longer fixed but very fluid. The economic meltdown showed us this reality in a very definite form.
2. Practical choices often times determine the form of the post-proverbs. Rather than being anti-proverbs (cf. Mieder, 1997) as these proverbs have sometimes been described, the idea of post-modern reality appears to guide the form and structure of the proverbs. As used by Raji-Oyelade (2014:15) in his opening of the section on post-proverbs in his inaugural lecture, *where there is a will, there are many relatives*. The reality is that beyond mere pun on the word ‘will’, the truth in this post-proverbial is uncanny. When the

will of the dead is to be read, many relatives heave and hope that a portion of the dead person's estate will be given to them; even where they have never made any contribution to the dead relative's achievements. We may laugh at the first sight of the post-proverbial [this researcher actually did laugh], we may assert its connection to the more traditional parallel of *where there is a will, there is a way*, but we cannot deny the wisdom and the reality it expresses. It is this our very reality that it expresses that makes us laugh self-consciously. This is the way the post-proverbials deconstruct even our own mentality. As such, instead of castigating these modern proverbs as 'colonially uninspiring' (cf. Raji-Oyelade, 2004 & Fayemi, 2009), the truth is that they expose our fixed mental hang ups and provide us with new ways of expressing our social and cultural realities (Mieder, 2014).

3. Some of the traditional proverbs have actually outlived their usefulness. If a problem is identified and no solution is provided, such a fool hardy venture has no place in the modern world that we live in. Yesterday is actually gone, today is here. Examples 3 and 5 aptly demonstrate this forward looking stance of post-proverbials. While the proverbs (these proverbs are still in use in Yorubaland, mind you) in these examples do not provide adequate solutions to the problems identified, the post-proverbs give full realistic solutions. In this wise, one could not call such ideas expressed as 'playful blasphemies' [to borrow the title of Raji-Oyelade (1999)] but sensible sentiments. This suggests that there are very useful semantic contents in the post-proverbs if the blind fold of seeing them as the inferior version of the traditional proverbs is removed.
4. One of the considered weaknesses of post-proverbials is that they are "the intervention and corruption" of the indigenous languages through linguistic borrowings from the English language (Raji-Oyelade, 2014:21). The reality that language in contact provides us with is that languages are borrowed and lost in the process of conversations by interlocutors. One would have thought that such reality should be viewed from the perspective of cultural dynamism and communica-

tive functionalism rather than an engagement in the be-moaning of the puritanical losses (Daniel, 2012). Except there is a deliberate act of correcting the overlord of the English language and the whole gamut of its structural effect in a systematic manner, focusing only on its creeping into post-proverbs as a colonially inspired conspiracy will not help anybody. Fifty-four long years have gone by and Nigerians and their government are unable to find the answer to the national language question. Why do we think forcing the youths, whose reality is the English language along with the indigenous languages, into linguistic guilt trip is the solution? The older generation is only reporting itself that it has failed and the youths of Nigeria are its victims. Obviously, this is crying over spilt milk and crying wolf where there is none. The responsibility for this situation eventually lies with the elders that refused to assert their political will in the first place.

We can go on and on. But the truth is that this discussion must be brought to a close. The conclusion is thus that the wisdom of the race does not reside only with the elders. The youths say loud and clear the truth that expresses their realities like the traditional proverbs may not be able to. The truth as expressed in proverbial sayings are not fixed or permanent but fluid to fit and express the reality of their owners. It has also been suggested that proverbs have particularised applications. We have been able to prove that modern proverbs express realities that are not just local but actually global. Probably, post-modernist reading of the proverbs may be responsible for this. But our take is that the human experience is actually the same the world over (cf. Soares, 2010 & Mieder, 2014); only the manner of expressing it may actually bend a bit this way or that way at times. The wisdom of the race is thus the wisdom of the whole race and not a section of it.

Do these findings express our anti-traditional proverb stand? Not at all. All we have tried to do is to present the reality as we see it within the communicative reality of our society. Accusing the young of communicative incompetence (Raji-Oyelade, 2014) because of their aversion to using proverbs in particular ways is also a non-realistic pursuit of cultural puritanism. Linguistic dynamism is a reality and cannot be stopped, even if we want to.

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CHARLES CLAY DOYLE AND WOLFGANG MIEDER

THE DICTIONARY OF MODERN PROVERBS:
A SUPPLEMENT

Abstract: This is the first supplement to *The Dictionary of Modern Proverbs* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2012) edited by Charles Clay Doyle, Wolfgang Mieder, and Fred R. Shapiro. It registers 85 additional modern Anglo-American proverbs with historical dates and contextualized references. We are planning to publish such supplements from time to time, and eventually we hope to bring out a new edition of our dictionary.

Keywords: American, Anglo-American, British, collection, context, date, dictionary, English, modern, paremiography, proverbs.

Since the publication of *The Dictionary of Modern Proverbs* (New Haven CT: Yale UP, 2012), we have gathered a number of addenda—with a lot of help from our vigilant friends, kinspersons, students, professional acquaintances, and strangers. Among those who have assisted, in direct and indirect ways, two individuals stand out: Fred R. Shapiro, our collaborator on the dictionary itself and author of the magisterial *Yale Book of Quotations* (2006), which he is currently updating and enlarging; and Garson O'Toole, whose “Quote Investigator” website (quoteinvestigator.com) is a continually expanding and meticulously researched repository of early datings for fixed expressions, including proverbs.

Some reviewers of *The Dictionary of Modern Proverbs* found confusing our procedure for identifying the “key words” within the proverbs (notwithstanding our exceptionally lucid explanation on page xiii). Ours is the procedure that folklorists customarily employ: The key word, which governs the alphabetical placement of a proverb, often does not point to the “theme” or “subject” of the proverb; it is simply the *first noun* present in the proverb as most commonly phrased (or, if no noun occurs, then the first *finite verb*).

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Of the addenda we have on file, the following are among the most prevalently encountered. As in *The Dictionary of Modern Proverbs*, we have included only “true proverbs,” as folklorists term them—that is, “propositional” sentences, not mere phrases or similes, not wellerisms or sarcastic interrogatives. A “modern proverb,” for our purposes, means one that originated no earlier than 1900, as far as we have been able to ascertain.

AIM small, miss small.

2003 *York [PA] Daily Record*, 18 Dec.: “Thinking I can hit a [golf] shot helps, too. I think, ‘Aim small, miss small.’” 2004 Brian Bascom, “Preliminary Rifle Instruction: Before the First Bullet Flies,” *Infantry* 93, no. 2 (Mar./Apr.) 43: “Remember, ‘aim big, miss big—aim small, miss small.’ If you aim at center mass, you might miss the target; if you aim at the belt buckle, you’ll still hit center mass.” 2004 *Daily Record [Baltimore]*, 25 Sep.: “This way, even when they miss the [golf] shot, the ball ends up very close to the hole. Aim small, miss small as they say!” The expression, in reference to firing a rifle, was popularized—if not originated—by the 2000 motion picture *The Patriot*.

If you don’t ask, the ANSWER is always no (Don’t ask, don’t get).

1913 Keble Howard, “Mrs. Dimple’s High Courage,” *Windsor Magazine* 37: 533: “‘Don’t make me ask! You know how I hate it!’... ‘Those who don’t ask don’t get.’” 1924 Richard Hughes, *A Rabbit and a Leg: Collected Plays* (New York: Knopf) 46: “DAVEY [sulkily]. I’d not ask nothing of you. NELL. Them as don’t ask, don’t get.” (square brackets and capitalization as given). 1985 Betty Lundsted, *Transits: The Time of Your Life* (New York: Weiser) 69: “A practical Taurus once told me that if you don’t ask, the answer would always be ‘no.’ If you ask you might get a ‘no’ as well, but that puts you the same level as you would be if you didn’t ask.” 1989 *Los Angeles Times*, 21 Feb.: “Do you want some big arts organizations to continue to receive the lion’s share? Remember, if you don’t ask, the answer is always No!”

There’s an APP for everything (anything and everything).

2009 *The Guardian [London]*, 10 Aug.: “Is the Guardian even available on iPhone? Bet it is...After all, there’s an ‘app’ for

everything.” 2009 *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 17 Oct.: “They say there’s an app for everything. Well, when it comes to shopping, that’s mostly true.” 2011 Ted C. Hays, *Aftermath* (Bloomington IN: Xlibris) 221. Well, I know that today’s generation truly believes there is an app for everything, but that’s just a bunch of lame phone commercial crap.” 2013 Kevin B. Wright et al., *Health Communication in the 21st Century*, 2nd ed. (Chichester UK: Wiley-Blackwell) 259: “Just like there’s an app for anything and everything, there’s a health campaign stemming from just about anything and everything you are encountering....”

Don’t ASK, don’t get.

See “If you don’t ask, the ANSWER is always no.”

The bigger the BAIT, the bigger the fish.

1913 “Fishing in Cape Colony,” *Forest and Stream* 81:459: “The saying here is, ‘The bigger the bait the bigger the fish.’ For a big fish will not trouble with a little piece....” 1934 *Washington Post*, 24 Jul.: “Frank Del Vecchio...used two hooks, an 8-ounce sinker, and a whole shrimp on each hook. He says the bigger the bait the bigger the fish.” 1990 Robert Ludlum, *The Bourne Ultimatum* (New York: Random House) 76: “Conklin stared first down at the floor, then at Jason Bourne. ‘It comes down to the almighty ego, doesn’t it?’ he said. ‘The bigger the ego, the bigger the fear—’ ‘The bigger the bait, the bigger the fish,’ completed Jason, interrupting.”

The BALL doesn’t lie.

1988 *Los Angeles Times*, 26 May: “If the ball [on a free-throw] goes in, he’ll [basketball player Maz Trakh will] say ‘The ball don’t lie.’ That usually ticks off the other team.” 1998 *Baron’s*, 30 Mar.: “Despite 12 years of teaching, his insights about golfing sounded fresh. ‘The ball doesn’t lie to you. It may not always tell you what you want to know, but it doesn’t lie,’ Bob [Haas] told us....” 2003 Bo Durkac, *How to Become a Professional Baseball Player* (Jefferson NC: McFarland) 65: “As an old saying goes, ‘The ball doesn’t lie.’ If you can consistently hit line drives off the back of the cage...then you will have developed a nice, inside-the-ball swing.” 2004 *Knight Ridder Tribune News Service*, 26 Apr.: “...[A]fter a foul call Rasheed [Wallace] didn’t agree with, which are many, the Bucks’ free-thrower missed. So Wal-

lace yelled to the referee, ‘The ball don’t lie.’” 2007 *McClatchy-Tribune Business News*, 18 Feb.: “...The ball doesn’t lie. I [Reyshawn Terry] say it every time if I feel like I didn’t foul him. I say: ‘Ball doesn’t lie.’ True enough, he missed all three free throws because I knew I didn’t foul him on that play.”

If you’re going to be a BEAR, be a grizzly.

1908 George Hyde Preston, “An Inside Tip,” *Cosmopolitan Magazine* 45: 91: “We have them on the run.... No half measures! If you are going to be a bear, be a grizzly!” 1976 Booth Mooney, *LBJ: An Irreverent Chronicle* (New York: Crowell) 275: “At the moment during the 1960 Democratic convention when things were not going well, [Lyndon] Johnson said to me, ‘I take things harder than most people.’...But that was the reverse side of the figurative coin on which was expressed his literal motto: ‘If you’re going to be a bear—be a grizzly.’” 1995 *Canadian Press NewsWire [Toronto]*, 2 Jun.: “Many foreign policy analysts argue that Clinton should rely on that old adage: ‘If you are going to be a bear, be a grizzly.’”

A BID is a bid.

1919 *Wall Street Journal*, 8 Sep. (advertisement for a bond broker; in large bold type, occupying the entire line): “A Bid is a Bid[.]” (Underneath, in smaller type:) “We will name immediate prices on all United States Government and Liberty issues.” 1987 *Orlando [FL] Sentinel*, 16 Aug.: “Robert Miller...said Friday his company does not owe Hicks money for extra dirt. Miller said Hicks signed a contract to cover work he did at the mall. ‘A bid is a bid,’ Miller said....” 1999 Jodie Wehrspann, “Lessons in Bidding,” *Farm Industry News* 32, no. 4 (Feb.) 84: “At auctions, items are sold through competitive bidding.... Some give a wink. Some hold up a finger. But a bid is a bid.” 2005 *Chicago Tribune*, 8 Mar.: “You may think that Sunday’s NCAA [basketball] Tournament selections are just announced on TV, but there’s a heck of a lot more to it than that.... [T]he only thing that’s certain is nobody wants to be No. 65, [but]...A bid is a bid.”

You have to risk it to get the BISCUIT.

2010 *NewsDay [New York]*, 8 Mar.: “Students acknowledged that it will take money to implement real solutions. But, as one young man said, to appreciative laughs and applause from his

peers, ‘You got to risk it to get the biscuit.’” 2010 *McClatchy-Tribune Business News*, 26 Apr.: “The local group has its own more competitive, and silly, motto: risk it to get the biscuit.” The saying probably passed into oral tradition as a proverb from the 2009 motion picture *Fired Up!*

The CAKE is a lie.

2007 *New York Times*, 25 Oct.: “[O]ne occasionally finds cramped back rooms filled with traces of former test subjects, one of whom scrawled, ‘the cake is a lie’ on the walls (a statement that would look great on a T-shirt).” 2007 *Deseret Morning News [Salt Lake City]*, 1 Nov.: “My elementary-age kids...keep telling me ‘the cake is a lie.’” 2008 *McClatchy-Tribune Business News*, 2 Jan.: “[C]onvention goers thrived on being surrounded by people who shared their passion and understood their in-jokes, such as a T-shirt with the phrase ‘The cake is a lie,’ a cryptic reference to the video game ‘Portal.’” 2010 *News Gazette [Champaign IL]*, 22 Jul.: “After all, because of that game [Portal], the phrase ‘The Cake is a lie’ has entered the pop culture lexicon...” 2015 *Washington Post*, 26 Feb.: “In the end, the cake is a lie. The cake is just an embodiment of what we believe is important to us. There is no value in protecting a cake no one can eat. Happiness will either result from eating the cake or baking a cake—but never from protecting it.”

If you have a CANNON, shoot it.

1979 David L. Foster, “Changing Substantive Rules for Procedural Reasons: Is This Wise?” *Antitrust Law Journal* 48:523: “[T]he Government can be expected to use it [evidence of the defendant’s ‘bad conduct’] in much the same way that Paul Brown of the Cleveland Browns used his great running back, Jim Brown: ‘If you have a cannon,’ he is reported to have said, ‘you shoot it.’” 1986 *Santa Fe New Mexican*, 4 Apr.: “‘My philosophy, simply, is if you have a cannon, shoot it,’ he [basketball coach Ron DeCarli] said. ‘If people are producing and going for you, you deal with them.’” 1993 *Los Angeles Times*, 18 Sep.: “‘We’ve got to throw to him as often as possible,’ [coach Glenn] Bell said. ‘If you’ve got a cannon, you’ve got to shoot it as often as you can.’” 2004 F. Peter Boer, *Technology Valuation Solutions* (Hoboken NJ: Wiley) viii: “If you have a cannon, shoot it!

And be aware that some of your competitors are arming themselves with similar weapons....”

CHAMPIONS make their own luck.

See “WINNERS make their own luck.”

Half a CHANCE beats (is better than) none.

1968 *The Spectator* [London] 220, no. 7287 (23 Feb.) 221 (title of an article): “Half a Chance is Better Than None.” 2003 *The Scotsman* [Edinburgh], 22 Feb.: “‘To take a liberty with an old proverb, half a chance is better than none.’ That is what the Celtic [soccer team] appear to have....” 2014 Cynthia Lord, *Half a Chance* (New York: Scholastic) 4: “The moth might already be too wet, too exhausted to live. But I...placed him gently on a rock so he could dry his wings. Even half a chance beats none.” Perhaps the proverb originated as an anti-proverb based on “Half a loaf is better than none.”

Be the CHANGE you want (wish) to see (in the world).

1974 Arlean Lorraine, “The Love Project,” in *Developing Priorities and a Style*, edited by Richard D. Kellough (New York: MSS Information Corp.) 85: “One way to start a preventative program is to be the change you wish to see happen” (underlining as shown). 1989 Robert K. Cooper, *Health & Fitness Excellence* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin) 486: “Mahatma Gandhi said: ‘You must *be* the change you wish to see in the world.’ You must *be* the health, fitness, integrity, compassion.... that you wish to see in the world” (italics as shown). 1997 *Bay State Banner* [Boston], 5 Jun.: “‘My charge to you is this,’ she [Oprah Winfrey] said. ‘...Live—embody—the ideals you espouse. Be the change you want to see.’” The attribution to Gandhi is common, though perhaps spurious.

CHECK yourself before you wreck yourself.

1994 *Washington Post*, 24 Aug.: “At the end, he [rapper Chuck D] cautions, ‘Check yourself before you wreck yourself / respect yourself / You gots to give it up’—‘it’ being the hegemony of guns, drugs, alcohol and hopelessness....” 1994 Tracy E. Hopkins, “AIDS: The Professional Killer,” *Black Professional* 5, no. 4 (Fall) 40: “AIDS is a disease that knows no boundaries.... The moral? Check yourself before you wreck yourself. Sex is not worth dying for.” 1995 *New York Amsterdam News*, 22 Jul.: “...I

[Fred Crawford] would hope you would think of what's in the best interest of the sport [professional basketball], and, as the rappers say today, 'Don't believe the hype, and check yourself before you wreck yourself.' 2002 *Washington Post*, 26 Dec.: "It's your attitude that causes aggressive driving. So check yourself before you wreck yourself."

You can't make CHICKEN SALAD out of chicken shit (chicken feathers).

1949 *Washington Post*, 4 Oct. (quoting manager Joe Kuhel): "I'll probably be canned [fired] at the end of the season and I'm not griping. That's baseball. But in my defense, I'd like to say this: You can't make chicken salad out of chicken feathers." 1970 Judith Crist, "Off and Crawling," *New York Magazine* 3, no. 3 (19 Jan.) 55: "Another sage...has said that you cannot make chicken salad out of chicken you-know-what, and the fact that [Tennessee] Williams' surviving hero is yclept Chicken has nothing to do with it." 2003 Larry Dierker, *This Ain't Brain Surgery* (New York: Simon & Schuster) 109: "He called us every name in the book, and...used two of his favorite expressions: 'You can lead a horse to water but you can't make him drink' and 'You can't make chicken salad out of chicken shit.'"

Not my CIRCUS, not my monkeys.

2014 *Smith Falls [Ontario] EMC*, 5 Jun.: "I've learned that other people's problems are 'not my circus...not my monkeys'" (ellipsis dots as shown). 2014 *Telegraph [London]*, 15 Jun.: "Every time you feel yourself getting pulled into other people's nonsense, repeat these words: not my circus, not my monkeys." 2015 *Times & Transcript [Monaton NB]* 22 Apr.: "I heard a saying recently which I've found myself repeating over and over: 'Not my circus. Not my monkeys.'" Sometimes said to have originated as a Polish proverb.

If you want to go (travel) fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go with COMPANY (companions, friends, others).

See "If you want to GO fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go with others.

The only easy DAY was yesterday.

1994 *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, 23 Jan.: "A sign at the [U.S. Navy Seal] Basic Underwater Demolition School reads: 'The only easy

day was yesterday.” 2002 *St. Petersburg [FL] Times*, 10 Feb.: “A conversation with Zephyrhills Police Capt. Richard Scudder almost always ends the same way: ‘Remember, the only easy day was yesterday.’” 2007 Gail Walker, “Stick with Wayne,” *HomeCare Magazine* 30, no. 5 (May) 8: There may be only one thing that will stay the same if you come out on the other side of HME’s biggest challenge (last platitude, I promise): The only easy day was yesterday.” The motto of the Navy Seals is sometimes attributed to Michael Thornton.

DO it once, do it right.

1953 *Atlanta Constitution*, 11 Mar. (advertisement): “Never needs painting...guaranteed against chipping, cracking, fading or peeling. Do it ONCE...do it RIGHT...di it with CARBO-TEX!” (capitalization as shown). 1975 Gene Hill, *Mostly Tailfeathers* (New York: Winchester) 14: “Men are too busy to do the same job twice. ‘Do it once—do it right.’” 1989 Arthur Burns, “Executing the International Project,” in *Project Management*, edited by Robert L. Kimmons and James Loweree (New York: Dekker) 851: “The cost of performing engineering is small when compared with the affected costs. The old adage ‘Do it once—Do it right’ is quite applicable.”

You’ve got to DO what you’ve got to do (A man has to do what a man has to do).

1946 Allan Roberts and Doris Fisher, title of a song in the motion picture *Talk about a Lady*: “You Gotta Do What You Gotta Do.” 1947 Thomas W. Duncan, *Gus the Great* (Philadelphia: Lippincott) 576: “Don’t like to do it—when I think how they used to call me Honest Gus—but a man’s got to do what he’s got to do.” 1947 Nedra Tyre, *Red Wine First* (New York: Simon & Schuster) 15: “Sometimes don’t look like a man has a choict. He’s gotta do what he’s gotta do.” 1968 *Washington Post*, 1 Sep.: “Sometimes it gets me [Dorold Knowles] that I’m not part of the game but a guy has to do what he has to do.” 1973 Jane Mercer, “Emperor of the North,” *Film 2*, no. 6 (Sep.) 22: “The lyrics...were of the ‘man’s gotta do what a man’s gotta do’ variety....” 1974 Henry B. Biller and Dennis Meredith, *Father Power* (New York: McKay) 1473: “In contrast, the person at the highest level is the one typified by the old saw ‘A man’s gotta do what a man’s gotta do.’” 1979 *New York Times*, 6 Jan.: “‘A man

must do what he must do,' he [Lou Saban] added cryptically in an interview laden with such sportspeak as 'You're only as good as your last game.'" 1979 *New York Times*, 30 Sep.: "[An actress portraying the biblical Judith] holding the severed head...manages to look both respectable and slightly apologetic—a woman's got to do what a woman's got to do." There exists a feminist anti-proverb "A man's got to do what a man's got to do, and a woman's got to do what he can't."

Knock on the (a) DOOR often (long) enough, and it will open.

1993 *The Independent [London]*, 31 Oct.: "You thought [John] Virgo had already claimed the prize for the week's most meaningless, self-fabricated aphorism with Tuesday night's 'Knock on the door often enough—eventually it opens.'" 1994 *Sun Sentinel [Ft. Lauderdale FL]*, 26 Mar.: "I think I'm ready for it, [golfer Fuzzy] Zoeller said. "They say if you knock on a door long enough, it will open. I've been knocking a long time." 1999 *Birmingham [UK] Post*, 3 Sep.: "Alan Richardson proves that the door of opportunity will open, providing you knock often enough."

There are no DO-OVERS in life.

1998 *Salt Lake Tribune [Salt Lake City]*, 9 Aug.: "But there are no do-overs in life. Penn State, Dallas and the Bucs are all behind [ex-football player Sean] Love." 2000 *Investor's Business Daily [Los Angeles]*, 13 Sep.: "There are no do-overs in life. We can only move on from where we are right now." 2001 *Los Angeles Times*, 1 Feb.: "This, in fact, has been a lousy week [for college basketball], the worst, but there are not 'do-overs' in life."

If you're going to DREAM, dream big (you might as well dream big).

1984 *Philadelphia Daily News*, 8 Nov.: "What we want to achieve here is not going to happen overnight.... But if you're going to dream, dream big." 1985 *Wall Street Journal*, 27 Sep.: "...[T]here's talk about winning 'em all and beating Notre Dame, for heaven's sake.... If you're going to dream, you might as well dream big." 1996 *Los Angeles Times*, 12 May: "You know the old saying, if you are going to dream, dream big. Well, she did."

One DREAM, one team (One team, one dream).

1994 Peter Krijgsman, "Lehman Brothers: An Old Dog Learns Some New Tricks," *Euromoney*, no. 297 (Jan.) 70: "...[S]ome groups have even come up with their own versions: 'One team, one dream' featured on the equity floor in London for a while."
 1997 *Orlando [FL] Sentinel*, 1 Nov.: "One dream, one team.... One defeat. Atlanta 105, Orlando 99" (ellipsis dots as shown).
 1997 *Florida Times Union [Jacksonville]*, 20 Dec.: "Our team goal is to take it all the way. One team, one dream."

If you're always EARLY, you're never late (you'll never be late).

2006 John Chapman, *Muddy Boots Leadership* (Mechanicsburg PA: Stackpole) 61: "A good officer once said, 'If you are always early, then you are never late.'...After your butt has been shredded...you will better understand this bit of ancient wisdom."
 2010 Walter J. Boyne, *Eagles at War* (Pacifica CA: IPS) 52: "If you're always early, you're never late, Bruno. You used to say that, back in the Great War."
 2013 *Austin [TX] American Statesman*, 22 Nov.: "Everyone who knew him could expect truth and fairness, and a saying or two, such as 'If you're always early you'll never be late'...."

There is no (little) EDUCATION (wisdom) in the second kick of a mule.

1966 *New York Times*, 4 May: "The South Carolina Democrat [congressman L. Mendel Rivers]...added with a grin: 'There's always another year. There ain't no education in the second kick of a mule.'" 1976 *New York Times*, 28 Sep.: "I trust that New Yorkers will show more sophistication.... As Senator [Ernest] Hollings [of South Carolina] would say, 'There is little education in the second kick of a mule.'" 1986 *Washington Post*, 16 Apr.: "Down South...they like to say: 'There's no education in the second kick of a mule.' Washington has lost so much of its southernness that it no longer knows that to be true." 2008 David C. Gompert et al., *Battle-Wise* (Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, for Center for Technology and National Security Policy) xi: "Sam Rayburn [of Texas], former Speaker of the House of Representatives, said it best about learning from mistakes in life, 'There is no wisdom in the second kick of a mule.'"

The ENEMY (also, always) has (gets) a vote.

1997 James Crider and Peter J. Palmer, "Decision Point Tactics during the Defense," *Infantry* 87, no. 2 (Mar.-Jun.) 21: "The OPFOR [opposing force] recognizes that enemy actions influence the way we fight, and on the battlefield, the enemy always gets a vote." 2000 Bruce A. Brant, "Developing the Adaptive Leader," *Field Artillery* 5: 24: "They have forgotten the maxim General (Retired) Richard E. Cavoros often cites..., 'Remember, in any plan, the enemy gets a vote.' Commanders too often focus on the plan, not the enemy." 2002 *Army Times*, 18 Mar.: "We do our best to do intel, but the enemy has a vote...They're not going to go where we tell them to go..."

You can't choose (pick) your FAMILY.

See "You can't choose your PARENTS."

You do (We do) what you (we) have to (do) for FAMILY.

1995 Jill Marie Landis, *Last Chance* (New York: Berkley) 340: "I know what it must have cost you to walk in here after all those years you spent in prison, Uncle Chase...'It's like Eva says, Lane: We do what we have to do for family.'" 2004 Laura Daye, *Before and Afternoon* (Alexandria VA: B-Side) 78-79: "His father passed at an early age and dreams were put aside to make sure his sister and mother were never without. 'That's big of you.' 'I wouldn't say that. You do what you have to do for family.'" 2011 Rebecca Zanetti, *Claimed* (New York: Brava) 151: "'That was brave of him...' 'He's a good man. You do what you have to for family.'"

FEEL good, play good (Look good, feel good, play good; Look good, play good).

1987 *Globe and Mail [Toronto]*, 23 Feb.: "'They are so much more comfortable,' [baseball] pitcher Mark Langston said.... 'The old saying—look good, feel good, play good—has some truth to it....I'm glad we didn't get one of those uniforms in 18 different colors.'" 1993 Skip Bayless, *The Boys* (New York: Simon & Schuster) 95: "In '88 [football player Michael] Irvin proudly wore symbols of his new wealth.... Irvin's motto: look good, play good." 1996 *Los Angeles Times*, 13 Feb: "[Israel] Paez is a flashy [pool] player cut from the look-good-play-good cloth...." 2003 *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, 19 Jun.: "My col-

lege coach had a saying that he used to keep his players positive on the [tennis] court while playing matches: ‘Feel good, play good.’” 2008 *New York Times*, 18 Sep. “At the end of the day, you can attribute this increasing trend to the old adage: look good, feel good, play good.”

You’re only as good as your last FILM.

See “You’re only as good as your last PERFORMANCE.”

Big FIRES (All fires) start small.

1918 “Von Duprin Fire Exit Latches,” *American Architect* 114: 629: “Fire is at all times a haunting dread where the ordinary precautions have been ignored. All fires begin as little things....”
 1921 “Frank L. Kelly and Ida May Stevens, “Epidemiology: The Necessity of Promptly Reporting Communicable Diseases,” *California State Board of Health Monthly Bulletin* 17: 28: “Communicable disease is like fire for as ‘all large fires begin as small ones’ so all epidemics begin with single cases.”
 1971 “Bueneventura vs. Bendicto,” *Philippine Supreme Court Reports Annotated* (New York: Oceana) 38: 73: “The respondent judge should constantly keep a watchful eye on the conduct of his employees. He should realize that big fires start small.”

A FISH doesn’t know it is in water (it is wet) (A fish doesn’t know it is in water until it is taken out; A fish doesn’t see water).

1909 Tadasu Hayashi, “Introduction” to *Every-Day Japan* by Arthur Lolyd (London: Cassell) xvi: “It is said that fish do not see water, nor do Polar bears feel the cold. Native writers...do not even think that anything which has been happening daily in their own immediate surroundings ever since their infancy can possibly be worthy of notice....”
 1924 V. Karapetoff, “Concerning Other General Matters,” in *Bell System Educational Conference* (New York: Bell System Education Conference) 177: “I said that a fish doesn’t know that he is in water unless he is taken out, and an American, as a rule[,] doesn’t realize under what perfectly definite conditions of general views he is working until he goes outside the country....”
 1955 George R. Stewart, *The Years of the City* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin) 127: “We can pardon him, for he has the usual difficulty of separating himself from the

world that was all around him, just as the proverb says, ‘A fish does not know he is swimming in water.’”

If you can’t FIX it, feature it (Fix it or feature it; Don’t fix it, feature it).

1985 Gerald M. Weinberg, *The Secrets of Consulting* (New York: Dorset House) 43: “Levine couldn’t sew a straight seam, but rather than try to fix it, or learn to do better, he adopted the Bolden Rule: If you can’t fix it, feature it.” 1998 Solomon W. Golomb, “Mathematics Forty Years after Sputnik,” *American Scholar* 67, no. 2 (Spring) 92: “Rather than apologize for these fields’ lack of applications, leading mathematicians and mathematics departments decided to turn a possible defeat into a virtue. (In this, they anticipated a basic tenet of Madison Avenue: ‘If you can’t fix it, feature it.’)” 1999 Julie Bick, *The Microsoft Edge* (New York: Pocket Books) 129 (chapter title): “DON’T FIX IT, FEATURE IT” (capitalization as shown). 2014 *Dominion Post [Wellington NZ]*, 27 Jan.: “Using the old marketing adage ‘If you can’t fix it, feature it,’ he now promotes the access road as a cycle trail.” 2015 Shaun Smith and Andy Milligan, *On Purpose: Delivering a Branded Customer Experience People Love* (London: KoganPage) 84: “Some other ‘F’s to think about are... ‘fix it or feature it.’... This is the mantra of Greg Gianforte, founder of RightNow Technologies.” Cf. “It’s not a bug, it’s a feature.”

Don’t try to kill a FLY with a sledgehammer (hammer, hatchet).

See “Don’t use a SLEDGEHAMMER to kill a fly.”

If you want to go (travel) fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go with FRIENDS.

See “If you want to GO fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go with others.”

You can’t create the FUTURE by clinging to (living in, being married to, using the tools of) the past.

1988 Stephen Sheppard, *For All the Tea in China* (New York: Tudor) 226-27: “‘The best you must always leave behind...’ ‘Why, sir?’ ‘Because you’ve no future if you cling to the past.’” 1993 *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, 29 May: “He [Fred Rosen] has a favorite saying: ‘If you’re married to the past, you can’t create the future.’” 2011 *Guardian [London]*, 22 Oct.: “Saida

Lakrimi, of the Tunisian lawyers union, said: ‘We are in a transitional period.... you can’t create the future using the tools of the past.’” 2012 *Daily Mail [London]*, 30 Jul.: “After all, you can’t move forward while looking backwards: you can’t create the future while living in the past.” 2013 *North Adams [MA] Transcript*, 1 Oct.: “‘I heard a quote on the television the other day that totally sums up where we are and why I want to continue— ‘You can’t create the future by clinging to the past,’” he [mayor Richard Alcombright] told a large crowd....”

You’re only as good as your last GAME.

See “You’re only as good as your last PERFORMANCE.”

If you aren’t GETTING better, you’re getting worse (You’re either getting better or getting worse).

1982 Harold T. Shapiro, “Introduction,” in *Industry at the Crossroads*, edited by Robert E. Cole (Ann Arbor MI: Center for Japanese Studies, U of Michigan) 1: “They claim that once, when he was a bit aggravated, he [coach Woody Hayes] told one of his players, ‘Look, you’re either getting better or you’re getting worse.’” 1986 *Newsday [New York]*, 29 May: “Performances like that require extensive rehearsal. ‘I’ve been taught that if you’re not getting better, you’re getting worse....” 1993 *Bismark [ND] Tribune*, 21 Oct.: “[Rodeo rider Dan] Greenough said ‘I had a great year last season, but you’ve got to only keep improving. You’re either getting better or you’re getting worse.’”

Don’t try to kill a GNAT with a sledgehammer (hammer, hatchet).

See “Don’t use a SLEDGEHAMMER to kill a fly (gnat, mosquito).”

If you want to GO (travel) fast (fastest), go alone; if you want to go far (farthest), go with others (company, companions, friends).

1917 Cyrus McCormick, “Men and Team Work,” *The Harvester World* 8, no. 6 (Jun.) 1: “Kipling says, ‘...he travels fastest who travels alone.’ That may do for a race, but...ours is a different kind of work, and we might rather say, ‘...he travels farthest who pulls with his team.’” 1926 Paul Popenoe, *The Conversation of the Family* (Baltimore: William & Wilkins) 52: “A proverb has it that ‘He travels fastest who travels alone.’ But he rare-

ly travels farthest, he rarely gets so much enjoyment from his travels as does one who has company.” 1956 Allen Raymond, “May Friends Go with You,” *The Rotarian* 88, no. 3 (Mar.) 36: “I know that Rudyard Kipling penned a good line.... ‘He travels fastest who travels alone.’ I would like to advance a corollary to that proposition. He travels farthest who travels with friends.” 1973 John Brooks, *The Expert* (London: Tom Stacey) 197: “‘He travels fastest who travels alone, as George Washington said.’ ‘But he travels farthest who has a companion.’” 1980 Paul Fussell, *Abroad: British Literary Traveling between the Wars* (New York: Oxford UP) 117: “He who travels furthest travels alone, to be sure, but he who travels best travels with a companion, if not always a lover.” 1993 Breyten Breytenbach, “Why Are Writers Always the Last to Know?” *New York Times Book Review* 98 (28 Mar.) 17: “It is important to take responsibility for the story. Imagination is politics. He who travels alone travels fastest, but in the company of friends, you go farther.” 2004 Bill Hull, *Choose Life* (Grand Rapids MI: Baker) 107: “So my gift of love has been to submit to that process. As the African proverb tells us, ‘If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.’” 2005 Ujala Satgoor and Susan Schneur, “International Partnership, National Impact,” in *Continuing Professional Development*, edited by Paul Gevoni and Graham Walton (Munich: K. G. Saur) 267: “The following African proverb succinctly captures the essence of a great partnership: If you want to go fast, go alone. *If you want to go far, go together*” (italics as shown). 2009 David Jensen, “From Conflict to Peacebuilding,” *Environmental Change and Security Program Report* 13: 56: “While the task may seem overwhelming at times, I take inspiration from the Afgan saying, ‘If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together.’” 2011 *Pasadena [CA] Star-News*, 19 Jun.: “Nothing ever happens when you’re standing still. Alone you go faster, but together you go farther.” The saying, which in recent years has often (though spuriously) been identified as an African proverb, might be regarded as an anti-proverb responding to the older Anglo-American proverb “He who travels fastest travels alone,” a variant of “He who travels alone travels fast(est).”

Just because there's a GOALIE (goal keeper) doesn't mean you can't score.

2008 *Arab American News [Dearborn MI]*, 15 Nov.: ““You have to engage in the same way that people engaged in (fighting) apartheid in South Africa,’ [Diana] Buttu said. ‘Don’t focus so much on what the leaders over there are doing but focus on what you can do here...Just because there’s a goal keeper, doesn’t mean you can’t score a goal”” (ellipsis dots as shown). 2010 Lauren Leto and Ben Bator, *Texts from Last Night: All the Texts No One Remembers Sending* (New York: Penguin), unpaginated, at the beginning of the section headed “Cheaters”: [remark:] “the redhead has a bf [boyfriend]”; [response:] “just because there’s a goalie doesn’t mean u can’t score.” 2014 Hugo Tang, *No Ice, No Slice* (Bloomington IN: AuthorHouse) 40: “Dick said to me some time ago that girls with boyfriends ‘aren’t off limits.’ He said that in games of football there is a goalie, but that doesn’t mean you can’t score.” In such contexts the word *score* can mean ‘engage in sexual intimacies.’

Thank GOD for Mississippi.

1929 H. L. Stanton, “Reports from States: North Carolina,” *Proceedings of the Fifth Conference on Vocational Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons* (Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office) 18: 30: “...[T]hey used to say whenever a list of illiteracy according to States was published, in which North Carolina ranged next to the bottom, ‘Thank God for Mississippi.’...” 1947 D. H. Redfearn, “A New Constitution for Florida,” *Florida Law Journal* 21: 11: ““Thank God for Mississippi’ was a favorite expression formerly used by some educators in Florida, the thanks being due to the fact that Mississippi kept Florida from being at the bottom of the education system in the United States by occupying that lowly position itself.” 1949 V. O. Key, *Southern Politics in State and Nation* (New York: Knopf) 229: “And every other southern state finds some reason to fall back on the soul-satisfying exclamation, ‘Thank God for Mississippi!’” 1957 Wilma Dykeman, *Neither Black nor White* (New York: Rinehart) 49: “You know, Arkansas says thank God for Mississippi. We keep her from being forty-eighth on every national list.” 1976 “State by State Profiles,” *Southern Exposure* 4, nos. 1-2 (Spring/Summer) 186: ““Thank God for Mississippi,’ they say

up North, meaning that no matter how bad things get up there, there's at least one place that's worse."

Be GOOD or be gone.

1932 *Washington Post*, 2 Sep. (in a collection of short items titled "Post Haste"): "Chancellor von Papen to the Reichstag: Be good or be gone!" 1941 *Catalog of Copyright Entries: Musical Compositions* (U.S. Government Printing Office) n.s. 36, no. 11, part 3 (for 8 Nov.): 1807 (copyright entry for a song): "Be good or be gone; w. & melody [by] Otto Alfred Hansen." 1975 *New York Times*, 15 Jun.: "I [coach Paul "Bear" Bryant] can tell you a lot about quitters. I used to have a sign at Kentucky: Be Good or Be Gone."

Be GOOD or be good at it.

1995 David Kerekes and David Slater, eds., *Critical Vision: Random Essays & Tracts Concerning Sex Religion Death* (Stockport UK: Headpress) 75 (hurried ending of a letter scrawled by a prison inmate) : "gotta go but not for long be good or be good at it." 2007 Stephen Banick, *Accidental Enlightenment* (Austin TX: Synergy) 261: "We wished Clifton God-speed, related a few favorite stories and told him to 'be good or be good at it.'" 2009 *Cairns [Queensland, Australia] Post*, 31 Aug.: "The best piece of advice I've received is be good or be good at it."

The GOOD is the enemy of the perfect.

1946 Louis Wirth, "Community Planning: Physical Structure," in *Community Planning for Peacetime Living*, edited by Wirth et al. (Stanford CA: Stanford UP) 22: "We know that the good is the enemy of the perfect, but it is true that the perfect is the enemy of the good. Compromising with the perfect is realistic..." 1978 *Panama Canal Treaties: Hearings before the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, Ninety-Fifth Congress, Second Session* (Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office), 4:68 (under a sub-heading "Is Good, Enemy of Perfect"): "...[I]t seems to me [senator Frank Church] that the difficulty with your argument is that the good is the enemy of the perfect. If one assumes your purist view to be the best possible policy...then the real alternatives we face are the rejection of these treaties and reversion to the status quo." 1999 *The Independent [London]*, 23 Sep.: "Even in a party this wedded to the

idea that the good is the enemy of the perfect, it seemed vanishingly unlikely that they would vote against the reconstruction of Kosovo or in favour of hate-crimes.” Cf. “The PERFECT is the enemy of the good,” and also the older “The good is the enemy of the best.”

Don’t use a HAMMER (HATCHET) to kill a fly (gnat, mosquito).

See “Don’t us a SLEDGEHAMMER to kill a fly.”

HATERS are going to hate.

2000 3LW, “Players Gon’ Play” (rap song): “The players gon’ play, / Them haters gon’ hate.” 2004 *South Bend [IN] Tribune*, 24 May: “‘I learned how to deal with ‘haters’ better by coming here,’ said Parish Ware, 14.... ‘Haters are going to hate no matter what,...just leave it alone.’” 2011 *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 13 Oct.: “He [a baseball team mascot] declined to respond to critics who call him a joke, a gimmick, a distraction. He did however tweet, ‘Haters going to hate.’” 2014 Charles Finch, *The Last Enchantments* (New York: St. Martin’s) 27: “Then there was his catchphrase, dashed liberally into his lectures about hip-hop and the elites of Mumbai: ‘Haters gonna hate.’ It wasn’t clear that he perceived with any great depth of comprehension what the phrase actually meant....”

If (When) you’re going through HELL, keep going (don’t stop).

1994 Dick Bernal, *When Lucifer and Jezebel Join Your Church* (San Jose CA: Jubilee Christian Center) 5 (in a list of “quotable quotes”): “When you’re going through hell, don’t stop.—Mario Murillo.” 1995 *Herald & Review [Decatur IL]*, 20 Oct.: “Andreas closed the meeting by admitting that he and the company had been through tough times lately.... Mulroneu quoted Sir Winston Churchill: ‘If you’re going through hell, keep going.’” The attribution to Churchill is common but probably spurious.

Don’t take a HOSTAGE you aren’t willing to shoot (If you’re going to take a hostage, you’d better be willing to shoot him).

1999 Kirk Victor, “Loan Star Phil,” *National Journal* 32 (30 Oct.) 3127: “‘...I concluded...that the Administration had taken a hostage—by threatening to veto the bill—that they weren’t willing to shoot,’ he [congressman Phil Gramm] said. ‘One of

the early lessons that people learned when they joined the Texas Rangers was, Don't take a hostage you aren't willing to shoot.” 2013 *Boston Globe*, 9 Aug.: “...Republican Congressman Aaron Schock said those threatening to hold the government hostage over health care were misguided.... ‘If you're going to take a hostage, you have to be willing to shoot it,’ Schock said.” 2015 *Washington Post*, 18 Mar.: “Majority Leader Mitch M. McConnell (Ky.) and his fellow Senate Republicans got themselves into this situation by violating the first rule of extortion: Don't take a hostage you aren't willing to shoot.”

IDEAS are bulletproof.

1988 Alan Moore and David Lloyd, *V for Vendetta* (New York: DC Comics) 236: “Did you think to *kill* me? There's no flesh or blood within this cloak to kill. There's only an *idea*. Ideas are *bulletproof*” (italics as shown). 1994 *Evansville [IN] Courier*, 26 Mar.: “The task now for [Mexican president Carlos] Salinas...is to keep social and economic reforms of track, demonstrating that, though men may perish, their ideas are bulletproof.” The saying was widely popularized by the 2006 motion picture *V for Vendetta*, based on the graphic novel. Cf. “You can't kill an IDEA.”

You can't kill an IDEA.

1908 Winston Churchill (the American novelist), *Mr. Crewe's Career* (New York: Macmillan) 340: “You can't kill an idea, and we'll see who's right and who's wrong....” 1919 *New York Times*, 30 Dec.: “Answering his own questions as to how the propaganda of Reds and I.W.W.'s and such are to be met in this country, Mr. [Homer] Cummings said, ‘You cannot kill an idea with a sword.’” 1920 *New York Times*, 20 Jan.: “Mr. [Alexander] Berkman declared that his deportation ‘was unfair and stupid. You can't kill an idea like that. The Czar tried and failed.’” 1920 “Life's Little Pleasures,” *Life* 75, no. 1942 (22 Jan.) 153: “Discussing Russia and the Bolshevist peril, General [Tasker] Bliss remarked, ‘But you can't kill an idea by bayonets.’” Cf. “IDEAS are bulletproof.”

INJUSTICE (A threat to justice) anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.

1958 Martin Luther King, Jr., *Stride toward Freedom* (New York: Harper & Row), 199: Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. A breakdown of law in Alabama weakens the very foundations of lawful government in the other forty-seven states." 1985 Paula Hirschhoff, "Interview: Congressman William H. Gray, III," *Africa Report* 30, no. 3 (May-Jun.) 50: "We're quick to speak out for the freedom of Sakharov and Sharansky, and we should do that...because injustice anywhere threatens justice everywhere..." 1993 Jacqueline Burnside, "A Farmer's Daughter in Academia," in *Working Class Women in the Academy*, edited by Michelle M. Takarezyk and Elizabeth Fay (Amherst: U of Massachusetts P) 147: "...[O]ur network enables us to draw upon each other's strengths in order to stay vigilant against the subtle injustices aimed at 'outsiders.' The presence of injustice anywhere threatens justice everywhere, even for the 'insiders.'" King's name often remains attached to the use of the expression as a proverb. Mieder (2010b) 354-356.

INNOVATE or die.

1958 Richard D. Crisp, "Product Planning for Future Profits," *Dun's Review and Modern Industry* 71, no. 3 (Mar.) 34: "Innovate or die! In any industry, over the long run, that's the iron law of the market." 1967 Aaron M. Rothenberg, "A Fresh Look at Franchising," *Journal of Marketing* 31, no. 3 (Jul.) 52: "The principle of 'innovate or die' caused retailers to devise additional methods of marketing..." 1972 F. D. Barrett, "Everyman's Guide to Creativity," *Business Quarterly* 37, no. 4 (Winter) 64: "The slogan *innovate or die* is providing a leitmotif for organizations in the seventies" (italics as shown). Since 1996, *Innovate or Die* has appeared as the title of at least six books.

Dress for the JOB you want (not the job you have).

1976 *Atlanta Constitution*, 16 Dec.: "You dress for the job you want! We had a guy...shows up in a sport jacket and sport shirt that didn't match!" 1978 "Does What You Wear Tell Where You're Headed? Interview with an Expert on Dressing for Executive Jobs," *U.S. News and World Report* 85, no. 12 (25 Sep.) 62: "Q[uestion:] How do you sum up your 'dress for success' philosophy? A[nsWER:] It would be something like this: Always

dress for the job you want, not the job you have.” 1983 *Boston Globe*, 31 May: “...[M]any up-and-coming State Street lawyers..., sartorially speaking, are already at the top and have taken to heart the wonderful adage: Dress for the job you want[,] not the job you have.”

LESSONS are blessings.

1991 Paul Ferrini, *The Circle of Atonement* (Brattleboro VT: Heart Ways) 100: “If my lessons are blessings, then I submit to them.” 1995 Bob Mandel, *Wake Up to Wealth* (Berkeley CA: Celestial Arts) 111: “The more we are grateful for our current happiness, the easier it is to see how everything that has happened to us was a lesson.... And lessons are blessings.” 1998 Gang Starr, “Moment of Truth” (rap song): “It’s universal / you play with fire it may hurt you / or burn you, lessons are blessings / you should learn through.” 2013 Vince Mafu, *The Chief Executive Hustler* (Crossways, UK: Xlibris): “As a CEH [Chief Executive Hustler], you must understand that lessons are blessings.”

If you save one LIFE, you save the world (Whoever saves one life saves the world; Save one life and you save the world).

1982 Thomas Keneally, *Schindler’s List* (New York: Simon & Schuster) 368: “It [a Hebrew inscription in a gold ring] was a Talmudic verse... ‘He who saves a single life saves the world entire.’” 1995 *Kingston [ON] Whig-Standard* 23 Feb.: “I miss being a counsellor and this is a way I can feel that I’m helping people. I really believe in the saying, ‘Whoever saves one life saves the world.’” 1996 *The Record [Bergen County NJ]*, 25 Feb.: “The Buddhist, Jewish, and Christian religions have a saying that if you save one life, you save the world. When it’s as simple as giving two vials of blood, ...why shouldn’t I do it?” The 1993 motion picture *Schindler’s List* popularized the saying. It has been questioned whether the English translation given by Keneally—and uttered in the movie—accurately represents the meaning of the Talmudic sentence (in Sanhedrin 4:5). Usually the English proverb omits *entire* at the end.

Inch-by-inch, LIFE (everything) is a cinch, but yard-by-yard it is hard.

1980 William Martin, “Lord, Won’t You Buy Me Some Time on TV?” *Texas Monthly* 8, no. 2 (Feb.) 122: “In his [Robert Schull-

er's] books and sermons, inspiring stories...are served up in a salad...garnished with catchy slogans (...'Inch by inch, anything's a cinch').” 1984 *Washington Post*, 12 Feb.: “Inch by inch, life's a cinch. / Yard by yard, it's really hard. Those words are from a poem De Matha High School Coach Morgan Wooten gives his players.” 1987 *Globe and Mail [Toronto]*, 13 Mar.: “We have a motto in our family: Inch by inch, life's a cinch. Yard by yard, it's very hard. I [Anne Bancroft] say it to my husband at the start of every film.”

LIVE what you love.

1926 Landone Brown, *The A-B-C of Truth: 35 Lessons for Beginners in New Thought Study* (Mokelumne Hill CA: Health Research) 33 (section heading within “Lesson 13—God Multiplies by Life”) : “Live what you love.” 2004 Amy Traverso, “From the Farm to the Islands,” *Yankee* 68, no. 8 (Oct.), 103: “At press time, they [Melinda and Bob Blanchard] were also working on an as-yet-unnamed series for PBS that expands on the theme of ‘live what you love.’” 2009 Tim Baker, *Leave a Footprint—Change the Whole World* (Grand Rapids MI: Zondervan) 113: “Your life makes them uncomfortable. So, go ahead, make them nervous. Live what you love.”

LOOK good, play good (Look good, feel good, play good).

See “FEEL good, play good.”

LOSING feels worse than winning feels good.

1994 *Los Angeles Times*, 16 Aug.: “[Barry] Melrose looks back on his first two years of coaching in the NHL and says, ‘I’m a strong believer in the old saying, ‘Losing feels worse than winning feels good.’”” 1996 *Courier Mail [Queensland AU]* 16 Jan.: “There’s nothing like winning. I [competitive kayaker Sarah Mengler] mean losing feels worse than winning feels good.” 1999 *Daily Gleaner [Fredericton NB]*, 15 Oct.: “Joe Garagiola used to say that losing feels worse than winning feels good when it comes to participating in the World Series.”

LOSERS deserve to lose.

2000 Jagdish S. Gundara, *Interculturalism, Education and Inclusion* (Thousand Oaks CA: Sage) 56: “Its [Great Britain’s Conservative party’s] proponents assume that the race is fair, the losers deserve to lose, and the winners deserve all the prizes.” 2000

The Times [London], 3 May: “These lucky industries do not need money. They have a booming private sector in which the losers deserve to lose.” 2005 Richard J. Rolwing, “Zionism and the Covenant” (correspondence), *First Things* 155 (Aug./Sep.) 6: “[Gary] Anderson relies upon only one of the Old Testament’s theologies, the Deuteronomic, according to which losers deserve to lose....”

LUCK is for the unprepared (ill prepared).

1994 *Junior* (motion picture): “Luck is for the ill-prepared” (the motto of a biotech firm). 2004 Robert Juda, *King of Ages* (Lincoln NE: iUniverse) 56: “‘Good luck to you.’ ‘Luck is for the unprepared, friend, but I thank you for the sentiment.’” 2007 *Los Angeles Times*, 23 Dec.: “‘That’s what it’s all about—it’s about preparation,’ he [Julian Affuso] told the students during their hike at Cerro Grande. ‘Luck is for the unprepared.’”

What’s good for MAIN STREET is good for Wall Street.

1995 Nick Sullivan, “The New State of Small Business,” *Home Office Computing* 13, no. 5 (May) 46: “We haven’t heard that in a long time, but it’s true: What’s good for Main Street is good for Wall Street is good for America.” 2008 *Irish Independent [Dublin]*, 11 Dec.: “What’s good for Main Street is good for Wall Street right now, a leading US investment banker said yesterday, inverting the famous Charlie Merrill quip.” 2014 *Investment Week [London]*, 24 Mar.: “But when it comes to equity markets, the adage of ‘what is good for Main Street is good for Wall Street’ may not hold true in this environment.” Cf. “What’s good for WALL STREET is good for Main Street.”

A MAN has to do what a man has to do.

See “You’ve got to DO what you’ve got to do.”

What gets MEASURED gets done (If it doesn’t get measured, it doesn’t get done).

1968 Robert H. Waterman, Jr., “Long-Range Planning—What Is It?” *Proceedings: National Automation Conference* (New York: American Bankers Association) 497: “It is not that measurement is an end in itself but rather that as Mason Haire, the behavioral scientist, likes to say, ‘What gets measured gets done.’” 1974 David E. Zeltner, “The Philosophy of Organizational Analysis: An Interpretation,” *Industrial and Labor Relations Forum*

10:119: “‘Maxims’ are general statements about the nature of organizations.... For example, a statement such as ‘what gets measured gets done’ may be considered a maxim.” 1982 Sonny Kleinfield, *The Biggest Company on Earth* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston) 209: “A truism of the system has evolved: If it doesn’t get measured, it doesn’t get done. If it doesn’t get measured properly, it doesn’t get done properly.” 1990 Laura A. Liswood, *Serving Them Right* (New York: Harper & Row) 78: “There’s an old management saying: ‘If it doesn’t get measured, it doesn’t get done.’ It’s equally valid to say that if you don’t measure what’s going on today, you have no way of setting standards for consistency in the future.”

Simple MINDS, simple pleasures (Simple pleasures for simple minds).

1957 Dorothy James Roberts, *Missy* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts) 4: “‘Well, well! Simple pleasures for simple minds!’ He tapped her playfully on the head.” 2001 Kevin Price and John Gardner, *Fairways and Highways* (Lincoln NE: Writers Club) 13: “We enjoyed the cheap thrill of driving across the nation’s longest stretch of interstate without an exit (simple minds, simple pleasures).” 2006 Robin T. Popp, *Seduced by the Night* (New York: Warner) 94: “She shrugged, a little embarrassed to have shared that. ‘You know what they say—simple pleasures for simple minds.’” 2009 *Salt Lake Tribune [Salt Lake City]*, 26 Dec.: “...‘Simple minds, simple pleasures,’ I’ve heard this saying spoken disparagingly, but I’ve never understood the negative connotation.”

MONEY is thicker than blood.

1904 Maude Roosevelt, “Social Logic,” *Lippincott’s Monthly Magazine* 74: 147: “Well, it is that way all over the world, dear; money is thicker than blood nowadays....” 1908 “Scientific Forethought vs. Brutal Blindness,” *Life Insurance Independent* 20: no. 12 (Dec.) 271: “Who was it said that blood is thicker than water? The point is not of much importance, but he might have added that money is thicker than blood—especially the blood of old age.” 1957 Brendan Gill, *The Day the Money Stopped* (Garden City NY: Doubleday) 158: “Blood may be thicker than water, but money is thicker than blood.” 1997 *Edmonton [AB] Journal*, 10 May: “The economic ties that bind us together are

weakening from lack of use, he [Graham Parsons] said. Like the old saying goes, money is thicker than blood." The proverb originated as an anti-proverb based on "Blood is thicker than water."

MONEY talks, wealth whispers.

1989 "Words of the Week," *Jet* 76, no. 4 (1 May) 40: "Dorothy Donegan, veteran jazz pianist, giving her definition of real economic power: 'Money talks but wealth whispers.'" 1993 Tony Warwick-Ching, *The International Gold Trade* (Cambridge UK: Woodhead) 35: "'Money Talks, Wealth Whispers' is the slogan greeting travellers at Geneva airport, reflecting the city's legendary role as a centre of discreet private banking for the rich and the very rich." 2000 *The Scotsman [Edinburgh UK]*, 24 Jul.: "Although equally expensive, these watches are made of white gold, steel, and platinum. After all, Mr. [Johann] Rupert observed, 'Money talks, wealth whispers.'"

Scared MONEY can't make money (Scared money won't win; Scared money is dead money; Don't play with scared money).

1935 Paul Gallico, "Gambling Is Certainly Wicked," *Vanity Fair* 43, no. 6 (Feb.) 22: "Is there any field that can come up with a more exquisitely expressive phrase than one like -'You cannot win with scared money'?" 1973 *Wall Street Journal*, 27 Feb. (an ad for a brokerage firm): "Many aggressive investors today say, 'Scared Money Can't Make Money.'" 1991 Charles Carroll, *Handicapping Speed* (New York: Lyons) 192: "Scared money rarely wins—at best, it helps you break even." 1993 *Los Angeles Times*, 30 May: "...[Y]ou should remember the first adage of investing: Don't play with scared money." 2004 Phil Gordon and Jonathan Grotenstein, *Poker: The Real Deal* (New York: Simon & Schuster) 171: "...[S]cared money is dead money, so bring enough for a rebuy if you get unlucky (or do something stupid) and go broke."

Don't try to kill a MOSQUITO with a sledgehammer (hammer, hatchet).

See "Don't use a SLEDGEHAMMER to kill a fly."

NATURE (Mother Nature) bats last.

1969 Paul Ehrlich, "Eco-Catastrophe," *Ramparts* 8, no. 3 (Sep.) 28: "The situation was recently summarized very succinctly: 'It

is the top of the ninth inning. Man, always a threat at the plate, has been hitting Nature hard. It is important to remember, however, that NATURE BATS LAST” (capitalization as shown). 1973 Thea Teich, “Producing a Teacher’s Handbook for Platt National Parks Environmental Study Area” (M.S. thesis, U of Wisconsin), 49: “‘Nature bats last—in other words, nature will eventually have the last word.’” 1987 *Chicago Tribune*, 2 Aug.: “Much of the Earth First! leadership comes from selling ecotage handbooks, bumper stickers bearing slogans such as ‘Nature bats last,’ and memorabilia...” 1991 *Los Angeles Times*, 6 Jun.: “The short-term, superficial accounting methods of free traders hide these costs while they propel us down the fast track to global disaster. Remember: Mother Nature bats last.” The saying is often attributed to Ehrlich, although (in the 1969 quotation) he seems to disclaim the attribution.

Leap (Jump), and the NET will appear.

1995 *Orange County [CA] Register*, 4 Jun.: “Opportunity doesn’t matter if you’re not prepared. But once you’re prepared, you have to step out on faith. There’s a quote I like: ‘Leap and the net will appear.’” 1996 *Miami Times*, 18 Jan.: “He [Les Brown] encouraged people to shake off that fear and what he called the poverty mentality and take a leap of faith. ‘Leap and the net will appear,’ he said.” 1999 Robin Crow, *Jump and the Net will Appear: How I Discovered the Art of Personal Achievement and the Rhythm of Success* (Franklin TN: Legacy).

If NOTHING changes, nothing changes (Nothing changes if nothing changes).

1978 Proposed Aircraft Sales to Israel, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia: Hearings before the Committee on International Relations, House of Representatives, Ninety-Fifth Congress, Second Session (Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office) 90: [Congressman Stephen Solarz:] “Would you say that in the absence of any significant changes that the Saudis would not have the need for additional advanced aircraft?” [Secretary of Defense Harold Brown:] “If nothing changes, nothing changes.” 1991 Antonio V. Almeida, “Inside the Manhole: New Design on a Leaky Link,” in *Environmental Engineering: Proceedings of the 1991 Specialty Conference*, edited by Peter A. Krenkel (New York: American Society of Civil Engineers) 100: “Finally, as

government regulation reflects a growing concern for worker safety, the well-being of system inspectors must be the ultimate criterion by which all manholes are judged. The axiom of ‘nothing changes unless something changes’ is obvious.” 1993 *Ottawa Citizen*, 30 Apr.: “After a chat one night with a fellow seeking counsel about a problem of drink, this is what the old man said: ‘The simplest notion but the most difficult reality we must face is that if nothing changes, nothing changes.’” 1998 *Mail on Sunday* [London], 29 Nov.: “But then I said to myself, ‘when are you going to move to the country? Do you need a man and a baby to do it? No. Then do it now. Nothing changes if nothing changes.’”

NOTHING tastes as good as (being) thin (skinny) feels (looks).

1989 *Edmonton [AB] Journal*, 26 Jun.: “Sweets remain [Pat Parke’s danger foods, but she can satisfy an occasional craving with one chocolate, she says.... She agrees...that ‘nothing tastes as good as thin feels.’” 1989 *Colorado Springs Gazette*, 18 Dec.: “She recommends arming yourself mentally with words of encouragement such as ‘Nothing tastes as good as being thin feels.’” 2007 *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, 31 May: “There’s nothing cooler than seeing someone you haven’t seen in awhile, and they comment on it [weight loss]. The saying, ‘nothing tastes as good as skinny feels, is so doggone true.” 2015 *Daily Telegraph* [London], 18 Apr.: “‘Nothing tastes as good as skinny looks,’ Kate Moss infamously said.”

You can’t choose (pick) your PARENTS (family).

1966 Heather Westendorp, *Living on Le\$\$* (Oxford Mills, ON: Westendorp) 128: “There’s an old saying ‘You can pick your friends but you can’t choose your family.’” 1970 *Atlanta Constitution*, 16 Oct.: “‘You can’t choose your parents,’ goes the old adage. Jimmy Grant didn’t choose his.” 1976 Arthur Ancowitz, *Strokes and Their Prevention* (New York: Pyramid), 51: “Unfortunately, there’s nothing much you can do about this [genetic] factor, since you can’t pick your parents.”

The PERFECT is the enemy of the good (Perfect is the enemy of good).

1946 Louis Wirth, “Community Planning: Physical Structure,” in *Community Planning for Peacetime Living*, edited by Wirth et

al. (Stanford CA: Stanford UP) 22: “We know that the good is the enemy of the perfect, but it is true that the perfect is the enemy of the good. Compromising with the perfect is realistic...” 1973 Committee on Public Engineering Policy, *Priorities for Research Applicable to National Needs* (Washington DC: National Academy of Engineering) 27: “But while...recognizing that ultimate solutions to society’s ills can never be achieved, the committee derives some comfort from the adage: the perfect is the enemy of the good.” 1986 *Los Angeles Times*, 6 Nov.: “Perfect is the enemy of Good. Given a civilized, consensual legal system, the ‘better ten criminals go free, than one innocent person be put to death’ philosophy is pusillanimous...” Cf. “The GOOD is the enemy of the perfect.”

You’re only as good as your last PERFORMANCE (game, film, song, etc.).

1935 *New York Times* 24 Nov.: “It has been said that in Hollywood you are only as good as your last picture, and...Mr. [Lionel] Barrymore’s latest film was...accorded an enthusiastic reception.” 1947 William Du Bois, *The Island in the Square* (New York: Farrar, Straus) 356: “You’re only as good as your last flop.” 1948 Orville E. Reed (title of a 4-line poem), “You’re only as good as your last time at bat,” *Printer’s Ink* 224, no. 6 (6 Aug.) 72. 1950 Jack Burton, “The Honor Roll of Popular Songwriters, No. 68: The Tobias Brothers (Part II),” *Billboard* 15 Jul.: 57: “‘You’re only as good as the last song you wrote’ is the philosophy he works on...” 1957 *New York Times*, 18 Feb.: “But the professional maxim that you’re only as good as your last picture tends to apply socially as well...” 1958 *Washington Post*, 1 Nov.: “In football, you’re only as good as your last season.” 1953 Ward Morehouse, *Just the Other Day* (New York: McGraw-Hill) 226: “An actor is as good as his last performance; a critic is loved, or is scorned, by his last notice.” 1962 *Atlanta Constitution* 15 Aug.: “What is it they say, you’re only as good as your last game.”

Simple PLEASURES for simple minds.

See “Simple MINDS, simple pleasures.”

POLITICS is not a spectator sport.

1963 Nelson Rockefeller, "Face the Nation" (Nov. 17), transcribed in CBS News, *Face the Nation, 1963-1964* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1972) 7:55: "And I think we would arouse a lot of participation on the part of the public. Politics is not a spectator sport. We need public participation." 1969 Ronald Reagan, quoted by Congressman Burt L. Talcott, "Governor Reagan Is Running California Well," *Congressional Record* 115, part 25, 34495 (Nov. 17): "Tax reform is dependent upon politics, the process by which we govern ourselves—and politics is not a spectator sport." 1985 *Washington Post*, 18 Oct.: "Politics is not a spectator sport, and Barbara Miculski has never been one to sit on the sidelines." Cf. "Life is not a spectator sport."

You can't be too RICH or too thin (too thin or too rich).

1974 Ann Fears Crawford, "Living off the Fat of the Land," *Texas Monthly* 2, no. 1 (Jan.) 42: "...[T]he Duchess of Windsor once stated, 'You can never be too rich or too thin.' Flip through the pages of *Harper's Bazaar* or *Vogue*, and you know that Wally has got to be right." 1974 *Washington Post*, 6 Jan.: "'You can never be too thin or too rich,' the Duchess of Windsor is said to have said. And, among politicians, it seems you can never be too mawkishly modest about your riches either." 1975 *Atlanta Constitution*, 21 Dec.: "The old saying, ...supposedly given the world by a married socialite, that you can never be too rich or too thin, also seems to be borne out by Mrs. Barry's operation."

No one remembers SECOND PLACE.

1967 Ron Clarke and Norman Harris, *The Lonely Breed* (London: Pelham), 20: "No one remembers second place... These few seconds are vital" (ellipsis dots as shown). 1973 Kenny Moore, "But Only on Sunday: Ron Clarke," *Sports Illustrated* 38, no. 8 (25 Feb.) 42: "The chorus, whenever [distance runner] Ron Clarke is consigned to insignificance, is 'Who ever remembers second place?'" 1987 *Washington Post*, 5 Feb.: "'The only person that can beat me is myself,' [wrestler Mo] Hall said. 'One match kept me from winning everything.... No one remembers second place, so I'm going for it all this year.'"

SEE something (If you see something), say something.

1992 *Burlington County [NJ] Times*, 3 Aug.: “‘Above all, members want to encourage other residents to get involved in making the [apartment] complex a nicer, safer place to live. ‘It’ll be up to the residents,’ [council chairman Allan] Ashinoff said. ‘If you see something, say something.’” 2002 Heidi Jacobs, “Speaking Up,” *Adweek* 43, no. 5 (26 Jan.) 5: “It’s up to you to help thwart terrorist acts, charge new ads from Korey Kay & Partners. The work, created recently in response to Sept. 11, features the tagline, ‘If you see something, say something.’” 2004 *Lowell [MA] Sun*, 13 May: “Signs, which will be put on trains and buses...., use the project’s motto, ‘See something? Say something.’”

Don’t use a SLEDGEHAMMER (hammer, hatchet) to kill a fly (gnat, mosquito) (Don’t try to kill a fly with a sledgehammer).

1910 Agnes C. Laut, *The Freebooters of the Wilderness* (New York: Moffat, Yard) 285: “I don’t believe...we like them very much; but one doesn’t kill a mosquito with a hammer.” 1917 Isabel Paterson, *The Shadow Riders* (New York: John Lane) 992: “It was not he who had alarmed the Opposition...; they wouldn’t kill a fly with a sledgehammer.” 1941 Joseph E. Davies, *Mission to Moscow* (New York: Simon & Schuster) 421: “There appears to be little subversive Comintern activity in the United States.... For the present at least under existing conditions, it is not advisable to ‘use a hatchet to kill a fly.’” 1991 *Resource Conservation and Recovery Act Amendments, 1991: Hearings before the Subcommittee on Environmental Protection of the Committee on Environment and Public Works, United States Senate, One Hundred Second Congress, First Session* (Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office) 2:321: “You can’t drive a nail with a fly swatter and you shouldn’t try to kill a fly with a hammer. You have to distinguish between the processes and the objectives....” 1996 Ellen K. Quick, *Doing What Works in Brief Therapy* (San Diego: Academic) 95: “There is a saying that one should not ‘use a sledgehammer to kill a fly when a fly swatter will do the job.’” 1998 *Wall Street Journal*, 12 Aug.: “...[C]ritics quickly labeled them [environmental regulators] as too heavy-handed. ‘You don’t want to use a hammer to kill a fly....’” 2007 Steve Piontek, “Ruritanian Wisdom,” *National*

Underwriter, Life and Health 11, no. 2 (8 Jan.) 4: “The old Ruritanian proverb—‘don’t use a sledgehammer to kill a fly’—came to mind as I reflected on one of the actions...” (Ruritania is a fictional country).

SNITCHES end up in ditches.

1997 Sinister (rap songster and Salt Lake City gang member), “Put a Snitch in the Ditch,” quoted in *Gang-Related Witness Intimidation and Retaliation: Hearings before the Subcommittee on Crime of the Committee on the Judiciary, House of Representatives, One Hundred Fifth Congress, First Session, June 17* (Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office), 32-33: “If homeboy snitch, they all going to the pen / But if he do he gonna sleep with the fishes / Cause snitches lie in ditches.” 2001 Steve Jackson, *Rough Trade* (New York: Pinnacle) 32: “She knew from personal experience that ‘snitches end up in ditches’ wasn’t just a saying.” 2003 Stephen J. Cannell, *Hollywood Tough* (New York: St. Martin’s), 19: “Near the body was a cardboard sign.... ‘Snitches get stiches and end up in ditches.’”

SNITCHES get stitches.

1987 *Newsday [New York]*, 22 Mar.: “...[John] Rizzi testified that he ‘learned to keep my mouth shut’ while there [in prison].... ‘They have a phrase that says, ‘Snitches get stitches,’” Rizzi explained.” 1989 Francis Ianni, *Search for Structure* (New York: Macmillan) 215: “Relationships with the correctional staff, however, do not offer protection, and one maxim learned by each new inmate is ‘Snitches get stitches,’ so few try to survive by informing to the staff.” 1990 *New York Times*, 1 Sep.: “...[O]ften, despite the dictum that ‘snitches get stitches,’ they [prison inmates and guards] do each other favors.”

You’re only as good as your last SONG.

See “You’re only as good as your last PERFORMANCE.”

It’s not where you START that matters; it’s where you finish (end up).

1970 *Atlanta Constitution*, 27 Mar.: “...‘[I]t isn’t where you start that matters, it’s where you finish,’ the three-time Atlanta 500 champ [Cale Yarborough] remarked.” 1970 *Atlanta Constitution*, 2 May: “My jockey, Mr. Ray Broussard, isn’t worried. He knows we can beat this crowd. Where you start isn’t important; it’s

where you finish.” 1972 Mavor Moore, “The Store,” in *A Collection of Canadian Plays*, edited by Rolf Kalman (Toronto: Simon & Pierre) 2: D-24: “It doesn’t matter where you start, it’s where you end up—and that’s not the end.”

If you STAY ready, you won’t have to get ready.

1994 *Washington Post*, 26 Apr.: “[Former mayor Marion Barry] has been plotting a mayoral comeback since he returned from prison. ‘He says that if you stay ready, you don’t have to get ready.’” 2005 *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 31 Dec.: “‘My motto is, you stay ready, you don’t have to get ready,’ [football player Verron] Haynes said. ‘I’ve been saying since I was a rookie, I prepare as if I’m going to start.’” 2009 *Louisiana Weekly [New Orleans]* 2 Sep.: “...[A]s members of SNCC and other human and civil rights organizations used to point out, if you stay ready you don’t have to get ready.”

STUPIDITY is its own reward.

1992 *Toronto Star*, 27 Jun.: “...I would not take my ’85 Honda CRX down a corduroy road, then sue Honda because I tore out the oil pan. Stupidity is its own reward.” 1996 Philip R. Craig, *Death on a Vineyard Beach* (New York: Scribner’s) 29: “...[A]nyone who deliberately leaves Martha’s Vineyard in July and drives to Boston for a weekend deserves whatever wretchedness he encounters, the principle being that stupidity is its own reward.” 2003 *Toronto Star*, 15 Dec.: “He [Saddam Hussein] sealed his own fate when he decided to stay instead of escaping to safer ground. He is living testament that stupidity is its own reward.” The proverb originated as an anti-proverb based on “Virtue is its own reward.”

Don’t mess with SUCCESS.

1978 *New York Times*, 2 Apr.: “Out of generations of dealing with the persistent, ornery problems of metal cutting comes the First Law of Machining: ‘Don’t mess with success.’” 1981 James Tabor, “Walking: Focus on Motion,” *Backpacker* 9, no. 2 (Apr./May) 49: “...[Y]ou have disrupted that balanced orchestration that evolution handed you after four million years of R&D. Moral here: don’t mess with success.” 1997 *Dallas Morning News*, 18 Dec. (regarding the movie *Tomorrow Never Dies*): “Its

don't-mess-with-success approach adds nothing new to the Bond canon."

You (can) find SYMPATHY between shit (sin) and syphilis (in the dictionary).

1961 George Henry Johnston, *Closer to the Sun* (New York: Morrow) 154: "'If I want sympathy, brother,' he said in a lower voice, 'I can find it where I've always found it—in the dictionary, between "sin" and "syphilis"!"' 1967 Hal Travers, *Voyage Sixty-Nine* (Rancocas NJ: Dorset) 335: "We often found much relief by weeping on each other's shoulders. I didn't have to look in the dictionary between shit and syphilis so long as he was available." 1971 Tracy Kidder, "Hobo Convention," *Audience* 1, no. 5 (Sep./Oct.) 54: "It might be noted that sympathy never interested hoboes much. There is a saying on the rails: 'You find sympathy between shit and syphilis in the dictionary.'"

One TEAM, one dream.

See "One DREAM, one team."

You can't be too THIN or too rich.

See "You can't be too RICH or too thin."

Good THINGS happen (come) to good people.

1980 *Atlanta Constitution*, 22 Dec.: "...I'm excited because to me, my father is the greatest man in the world, and I believe that good things happen to good people." 1985 *Philadelphia Daily News* 16 Mar.: "He told me he didn't think he was contributing enough. But as I've always said, 'Good things come to good people.'" 1986 Ronald Barri Flowers, *Children and Criminality* (Westport CT: Greenwood) xii: "Gratitude is also extended to...my former editor, who...restored my faith in the old adage that some way, somehow, good things happen to good people."

A THREAT to justice anywhere is a threat to (threatens) justice everywhere.

See "INJUSTICE anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

You say "TOMATO" [təme:to], I say "tomaato" [təma:to].

1967 Robert Troop, *The Hammering* (London: Joseph) 40: "'Naturally I don't want to cause a breach in the Anglo-American alliance, but I sense...a disparity of cultures...?' 'I say tomato and you say tomayto?' 'Yes, yes, aptly put,' Horaenson

agreed” (ellipsis dots as shown). 1971 Tom Eyen, *Sarah B. Divine! And Other Plays* (New York: Winter House) 83: “‘Chekhov! Not Check-off! Must you bring everything down to your own level?’ ‘You say tamahto, I say tomato.’” 2000 Peter A. Ubel, *Pricing Life* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press) 20: “At first glance, this discussion may seem unnecessary. You say ‘tomato,’ I say ‘tomahto.’ You say ‘allocation,’ I say ‘first-order tragic choice.’” 2004 Sam Horn, *Tongue Fu! At School* (Lanham MD: Taylor) 114: “The following phrases can give antagonists a face-saving out.... ‘Different strokes for different folks.’... ‘You say tomato, I say tomato [sic]. To each his own.’” The saying, misquoted, entered oral tradition as a proverb from Ira and George Gershwin’s song “Let’s Call the Whole Thing Off,” from the motion picture *Shall We Dance* (1936): “You like potato and I like po-tah-to; / You like tomato and I like to-mah-to; / Potato, po-tah-to, tomato, to-mah-to— / Let’s call the whole thing off!”

Small TOWN, big heart.

1982 *Atlanta Constitution*, 15 Sep.: “They have a slogan in Clarkston.... It’s right there next to the city limits sign: ‘Small town, bit heart.’” 1993 *New York Times*, 23 May: “Barnstead, N.H.: Small Town, Big Heart” (title of an article). 2004 *Concord [NH] Monitor*, 25 Oct.: “We are fortunate to have a veterinarian whose love and compassion for animals parallels my own.... He is a small-town, big-heart country vet....” There exists an anti-proverb “Small town, big ears.”

If you want to TRAVEL fast, travel alone; if you want to travel far, travel with company (companions, friends, others).

See “If you want to GO fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go with others.”

VICTORS make the rules.

See “Winners make the rules.”

What’s good for WALL STREET is good for Main Street (If it’s good for Wall Street, it’s good for Main Street).

1995 Gus Tyler, “Boom before Bust,” *Forward* 97: 957: “The conclusion is that what is good for Wall Street is good for Main Street. Or is the big boom the prelude to a bigger bust?” `2009 *Business Times [Singapore]*, 5 Mar.: “For many years, as the president [Obama] has said often, we had a mindset that, if it was

good for Wall Street, it was good for Main Street.” 2011 *Sunday Times [London]*, 6 Mar.: “[T]hese resilient Irish public companies will not be investing in Ireland any time soon. Is there an Irish translation for the old adage of what’s good for Wall Street is good for Main Street?” Cf. “What’s good for MAIN STREET is good for Wall Street.”

WINNERS (Victors) make the rules (The winners make the rules for the losers; Winners make the rules, and losers live by them).

1940 Lawrence Dennis, *The Dynamics of War and Revolution* (New York: Weekly Foreign Letter) 23 (chapter title): “The Victors Make the Rules.” 1992 *Los Angeles Times*, 30 July.: “Once my ancestors ruled this land.... Then, suddenly a few years ago they start fighting over a dusty wasteland called Texas. (Snaps fingers) Y, pronto, I’m the foreigner. Winners make the rules, Mexicans make do.” 1995 Robert C. Doyle, *Voices from Captivity* (Lawrence: U of Kansas P) 57: “Such conventions are usually called after an international conflagration by war-weary nations.... Winners make the rules for the losers, and there are no guarantees that future warring nations will see any value in such rules....” 1997 Brian Caswell and David Chiem, *Only the Heart* (St. Lucia, AU: U of Queensland P) 27: “They’d just have taken him out and shot him. The winners make the rules—on torture, murder...whatever” (ellipsis dots as shown).

WINNERS (Champions) make their own luck.

1989 Bryce Courtenay, *The Power of One* (New York: Random House) 400: “...Morrie made us think and behave like winners. ‘Winners make their own luck, but winners are also lucky,’ he said.” 1990 *New York Times*, 27 Aug.: “‘We [tennis players Helena Sukova and Jana Novotna] have been playing well, but at the same time we have had some luck also.’ The saying goes, though, champions make their own luck.” 1992 *USA Today*, 31 Jul.: “‘We are the best-prepared [bicycling] team in the world,...’ Olympic coach Chris Carmichael said. ‘You need luck to win, but I always say winners make their own luck.’”

There is no (little) WISDOM in the second kick of a mule.

See “There is no EDUCATION in the second kick of a mule.”

Network (You have to network) to get WORK.

1999 *Newsday* [New York], 12 Jul. (announcement of a meeting): "Society for Marketing Professional Service, 'Network to Get Work,' 6-8 p.m., Rose & Thistle Outdoor Patio..." 2000 *Daily Mail* [London], 20 Apr. (title of an article): "Network to Get Work." 2002 *Buffalo* [NY] *News*, 12 May: "'It's a full-time job getting a job,' they say. 'You have to network to get work,' the group is reminded." 2003 *Daily Mirror* [London], 13 Nov.: "Network to get work. Talk to everybody and anybody and let them know you are looking for work."

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REBECCA AND ISMET FANANY

PROVERBS AND CULTURAL CONSONANCE

Abstract: The proverbs that are known and used in a given language by some group of interest provide insight into the values, perceptions and experiences of the users. These aspects of collective knowledge contribute to a cultural model that is specific to the group in question. Increasingly, gaps in cultural consonance, the extent to which actual experience conforms to the expectations formed by a person's cultural model, are observed to contribute to wellbeing, psychological and physical health. This article considers the ways in which proverbs contribute to cultural models and how models generated in this way can serve as a baseline for the study of cultural consonance. Examples are provided from American English and Malay, which serve as a comparison with each other as well as with new cultural models disseminated by the media.

Keywords: cultural consonance, cultural model, proverbs, American, Malay

Introduction: Cultural Consonance

Cultural consonance refers to the relationship between an individual's behavior and the ideals of his or her culture. A person who is able to live and act in a way that corresponds to the values and norms of his or her culture of origin enjoys a high degree of cultural consonance, while someone whose lifestyle is at odds with cultural consensus in his or her community experiences a low level of cultural consonance. Increasingly, explanations for differential levels of health in various population groups have focused on social inequalities of various kinds which have been shown to correspond to differences in state of health (Berkman et al., 2014). Differences in culture, and specifically cultural consonance, can also be approached in the context of understanding differences in health in different communities.

It is generally agreed upon that psychosocial factors are significant in the health of individuals and groups and relate to the impacts caused by other social aspects of experience, including income (Lynch et al., 2001; Lynch et al., 2004). Income inequality

had been seen as the most significant impact on health differentials at the level of population, but that relationship now appears to be less clear cut than originally supposed (Subramanian and Kawachi, 2004; Lynch et al., 2004). Instead, psychological processes that arise from interactions between personality and the social environment are now understood to contribute to a range of health outcomes (Marmot and Wilkinson, 2001; Martikainen et al., 2003) and may be especially important in relation to stress, anxiety, and depression which are increasingly common in modern society (Hidaka, 2012; Schwab, 2013). In this context, culture must be considered as a determinant of health because of this known potential to influence the perceptions and emotions people experience as they interact with their surroundings (Lazarus, 1991).

Cultural consonance is directly related to individual and group experience. It has been suggested that each person has a cultural model that comes from his or her personal experiences and also the collective experience of the society in which the person originates (Dressler, 2004). The ability of this model to provide a framework that suggests how a person might act or react in any given situation is the essence of cultural consonance. Social values represent an important aspect of this model because they are integral to individual behavior but may also be manifested in the institutions and structures of society (Eckersley, 2006). Values are part of culture which also includes language, lore, beliefs, and assumptions that tend to be handed down within a society and internalized by its members from infancy (see Corin, 1995; Boyden, 2004). It has been noted that the internalized nature of values and other cultural precepts makes them difficult to study or even ascertain because we tend not to see them (Eckersley, 2006). This suggests that it is necessary to have an empirical means of assessing the most salient aspects of culture that may affect people's behavior and actions but also their psychological state.

Proverbs as a Cultural Model

The social information contained within proverbs is well documented within the body of proverb scholarship. For example, proverbs in many societies are used to offer advice, resolve problems between individuals, and indicate comradery and good will (Abrahams, 1968; Burke, 1974; Seitel, 1969; Obelkevitch, 2015). Proverbs also carry the weight of shared experience in the society

in which they are used and hence represent an indication of the way things are done and how members of the society (should) think about things (Mieder, 2014; Norrick, 2015). The values of the group are also transmitted through its proverbs, which makes proverbs an important source of information about basic beliefs that can be applied in contexts outside the study of the proverbs themselves (see, for example, Jackson, 2014; Ademowo and Balogun, 2014; Fernandez et al., 2014).

The proverbs that are widely known and recognized in a given language or community represent a ‘paremiological minimum’ that is defined by Mieder (2015) as a set of specific utterances recognized by a majority of speakers that represent a kind of cultural baseline that enables appropriate social interaction with other members of the same society. While there are additional proverbs that are known and used, the items that make up the paremiological minimum for any given community describe a set of observations, assumptions and perceptions that contribute to a cultural model that individuals can draw upon as a standard for evaluating their own experiences and determining their behavior and actions.

In considering the model that can be discerned from the set of proverbs in common use in a community of interest, it is important to take into account both the content (message) of the items and also their surface structure. Proverbs often contain one or more metaphors that are understood in specific ways by users. These images that are formed by the words of the proverb contribute to what Seitel (1969) has called the ‘out-of-context nature’ of these utterances and also their status within the folklore of the language. This is part of Arora’s (2015) ‘perception of proverbiality’, which refers to the ability of native speakers to recognize proverbs in their language even if they do not know exactly what they mean. The metaphors that make up the surface structure of proverbs are drawn from imagery that is part of the common experience of the community of use. In other words, the message of a proverb derives from the shared culture of users while the surface imagery refers to the environment and social context in which they live.

For this reason, study of the proverbs in use by a given group of speakers can be used to create a cultural model that encompasses values and perceptions but also relative position, status and importance of certain elements of the physical domain in which people may find themselves. For example, a number of proverbs

that are widely known and commonly used in the United States relate to the value of planning ahead, living within one's means and being economical. They include items like:

Save for a rainy day.
A penny saved is a penny earned.
Don't count your chickens before they hatch.
Money doesn't grow on trees.
A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.

Each of these proverbs is connected to other proverbs and proverbial expressions through their images which form part of a network of meaning. Expressions, like 'Every cloud has a silver lining', 'It never rains but it pours', 'Don't put all your eggs in one basket', 'Penny wise pound foolish', and many more, contain related metaphors. Their message and context for use are different from the set of proverbs above but there are, nonetheless, some consistent elements that can be recognized. For example, chickens represent an animal that has economic value. Their eggs are also worth something but must be handled with care to get the benefit. Weather conditions tend to be associated with fortune or luck and also have affective connections. These networks of meaning and metaphor are part of the unconscious framework of language that allow for appropriate language use and accurate understanding in the society where the items are used.

Consideration of these few proverbs, without taking into account the network of meaning and associated metaphor they fit into (see Fanany and Fanany, 2008, for a discussion of this), suggests that traditional advice holds that people should be careful with money and plan for the future without expecting much from things that are uncertain. This might suggest that living economically and managing one's resources are important values in the traditional context of American society. The fact that these proverbs are still widely known and used today can be taken as an indication that these values are still seen as relevant by many speakers, even if they do not apply them in their daily life. The surface elements of these proverbs also contribute to a cultural model that contains various elements that are (or have been) familiar to Americans and form part of the metaphorical framework of English as it is used in the United States. These elements include weather conditions; the name and nature of money; plants and

animals common in the environment of speakers; clothing and household objects; and so forth. These images have specific emotional and symbolic connotations and are part of the larger framework of meaning that assigns consistent metaphorical usages to certain imagery. An innate understanding of the underlying connections between surface image and customary metaphoric usage likely contribute to the ability of native speakers to identify proverbs even when they have not heard the specific item before (see Arora, 2015) and also fit the values and other social information the proverbs convey into a coherent cultural model.

Not surprisingly, this model may differ considerably between languages. On the one hand, the underlying perceptions, attitudes, norms, and values of two cultures of interest are likely to vary to a greater or lesser degree. On the other, the imagery and its customary metaphorical usage in proverbs will tend to differ to a greater or lesser extent because it derives from the collective experience of the society. It is to be expected, then, that proverbs used by speakers of linguistically distant languages will be very different in this regard. The following examples come from Malay, one of the major languages of Southeast Asia whose dialects include the national languages of Indonesia, Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam as well as one of the official languages of Singapore:

Bayang-bayang hendaklah sepanjang tubuh. [Your shadow should be as long as your body.]

Hemat pangkal kaya, sia-sia hutang tumbuh. [Economy is the source of wealth; carelessness lets debt grow.]

Biar titik, jangan tumpah. [A drip is all right as long as it doesn't spill over.]

Kalah membeli, menang memakai. [Lose when you buy (it), win when you wear (it).]

Ada emas, semua kemas; ada padi, semua menjadi. [If you have gold, everything is all right; if you have rice, everything works out.]

These proverbs show a somewhat different attitude towards money and spending behavior than the English examples. 'Your shadow should be as long as your body' is comparable to 'You must cut your coat according to your cloth' that is known by some English speakers. The Malay expression is used as advice to avoid spending beyond one's means. The second Malay example,

'Economy is the source of wealth; carelessness lets debt grow,' contains a similar sentiment. 'A drip is all right as long as it doesn't spill over', however, suggests a small loss of money (as a result of a business deal, debt, and so forth) is acceptable as long as it isn't too large. The metaphor is of a container of liquid which is still useful if mostly full, even if some of the contents spill. 'Lose when you buy (it), win when you wear (it)' uses a clothing metaphor and suggests that it is acceptable to splurge under certain circumstances if the value of the item is going to justify the cost. Finally, the last example, 'If you have gold, everything is all right; if you have rice, everything works out', which refers to the two main forms of wealth in the traditional Malay context, gold and rice, which can be stored for use in times when the harvest is poor, states a truism that holds that wealth allows people to do whatever they wish. As is the case with the English examples, each of these items is part of a network of related expressions that use the same and associated metaphors to express similar ideas. This contrasts with the English item, 'Money can't buy happiness', which suggests wealth is no guarantee everything will work out.

A comparison of the general sentiments expressed by these expressions in English and Malay shows a different orientation toward a set of similar issues. For example, the English items (and others like them) indicate the importance of planning ahead in anticipation of future need. The Malay, items, by contrast, do not show this type of anticipatory sentiment and seem to indicate that debt, while to be avoided, is a usual and expected state. On the other hand, both languages have a proverb that encourages hearers to match their spending to their income. The metaphors used are different – cloth and clothing in English, one's shadow compared to one's height in Malay – but the intent of the two proverbs is the same. This emphasizes the fact that similar images may have very different interpretations in different cultures. Gold, as an image, is an interesting example of this. In Malay proverbs, *emas* [gold] always refers to wealth that symbolizes the ability to achieve one's desires. There are a number of English proverbs that make reference to 'gold' as a metaphorical image, such as 'Silence is golden' and 'All that glitters is not gold'. In contrast to the Malay expressions, these English proverbs use gold as the measure of value but do not use it to represent 'wealth' in the economic sense; 'money'

generally appears in that usage, as in 'Money talks' or 'Money is the root of all evil'.

A further example can be seen in the groups of proverbs that relate to children and the relationship between parents and offspring. Several items of this type are widely known in the United States and include:

The apple doesn't fall far from the tree.
Boys will be boys.
The child is father to the man.
Children should be seen and not heard.
Spare the rod and spoil the child.
Little pitchers have big ears.

Taken together, these items suggest a view where children are acknowledged to engage in behavior that would not be acceptable in adults ('Boys will be boys'; 'Little pitchers have big ears') and to take after their parents, whether for good or bad ('The apple doesn't fall far from the tree'). The risk of not correcting bad behavior in children is also recognized for the impact it might have when the child reaches adulthood ('The child is father to the man'; 'Spare the rod and spoil the child'). Desirable behavior for children is also spelled out and suggests that children should be kept out of the way of adults and not permitted to make a nuisance of themselves ('Children should be seen and not heard'). There is a set of corresponding proverbial expressions that are part of this same cultural model. Many of these items associate badly behaved youngsters with animals ('[be] born in a barn') and include use of the term 'kid' to mean 'child' and 'black sheep of the family' for a child whose behavior violates social or cultural norms. Other expressions portray children favorably as 'the apple of [the parent's] eye', 'little angels', or 'a chip off the old block', which also suggests the likeness between parent and offspring. The idea that children grow into the type of adult they are guided to become is strong and fits with the forward-looking American worldview discussed by Dundes (1969).

In Malay, however, the view of children portrayed in proverbs is somewhat different although there is overlap with the American perception. Proverbs relating to children include:

Anak kambing takkan menjadi anak harimau. [A kid will not become a tiger cub.]

Bapak borek, anak rintik. [(If) the father is potted, the offspring will be speckled.]

Air dari atap jatuh ke pelimbahan jua. [Water from the roof falls under the eaves.]

Anjing kepada orang, raja kepada kita. [A dog to other people (is) a king to you.]

Getah meleleh ke pangkal, daun melayang jauh. [Sap sticks to the trunk; leaves fly far away.]

Apa guna bunga ditanam jika tidak diberi kumbang menyerinya? [What is the use of planting flowers if you don't have bees come to pollinate them?]

The first example suggests that children will not be very different in nature from their parents and, in particular, are not likely to be outstanding (represented by the tiger) if they come from ordinary stock (represented by the goat). The second example refers to chickens, where *borek* refers to a particular feather color which is dark with white spots or flecks, and notes the relationship in color between parents and offspring and is used in the same contexts. The next example is similar as well and is exactly comparable to 'the apple doesn't fall from the tree'. The next two examples, 'A dog to other people (is) a king to you' and 'Sap sticks to the trunk; leaves fly far away', describe the way parents see their own children. Dogs are considered to be dirty and dangerous animals in Malay culture and often appear metaphorically representing people who are crude, antisocial, and of questionable background. The proverb suggests that parents always see their own children favorably, even when others do not. In 'Sap sticks to the trunk; leaves fly far away', a tree metaphor represents the family. Sap refers to one's own children, while the leaves are one's nieces and nephews and other young members of the extended family. The proverb comments that, even in the traditional family context where there may be networks of obligation that involve the children of siblings and cousins, people favor their own children. The final example makes use of a very widely used metaphor in Malay where the flower refers to a young woman and the bees to young men. This proverb is used to point out that daughters are not useful to the family unless they are married off to appropriate husbands.

In contrast to the examples of items used in the United States that focus on the development of children as individuals, the Malay expressions relate more to the view of children as part of the extended family and reflect the social responsibilities of parents within that context to balance the needs of their children with those of other family members. The Malay items also reflect a view of individuals as fitting into specific, delineated social roles that are defined by their family origins. There are many non-proverb expressions that relate to the same cultural model and are widely known and used by Malay speakers. These expressions and others like them reflect a broad concern among Malay speakers for the family, its reputation, and social responsibilities between relatives. The extended family was the most important social institution in the traditional context and remains very important in modern society as well. The idea common to many proverbs about children used in the United States that suggests children have to be raised in such a way that they develop desirable adult characteristics is not part of the Malay cultural model, while the existence of children as an asset to the family that is central in the Malay items is absent from the American ones. The few examples presented here relate only to one aspect of people's values and outlook, but there are numerous other sets of items exist that address other values, situations, perceptions, and experiences that characterize the experience of each society as a whole.

Despite the existence of sets of proverbs that reflect a given cultural model in a language of interest, it is often possible to identify proverbs that suggest a very different or even opposite idea. For example, American usage contains both 'A penny saved is a penny earned' and 'Easy come, easy go'; 'There's no time like the present' and 'All things come to he who waits'; 'Too many cooks spoil the broth' and 'Two heads are better than one'; and so forth. The same is true in Malay and undoubtedly in most other languages as well. The existence of opposing proverbs, however, does not reflect an inconsistency in the cultural model. Rather, these expressions can be seen as indicating the existence of more than one view about a particular circumstance or situation. It is up to speakers to determine which model best fits the specific context in which a proverb is to be used. Since the details of situations are rarely identical but their general nature may be consistent, speakers can choose an appropriate proverbial item that makes reference

to the most relevant model. It is worth noting that there often seem to be two main models (hence the existence of proverbs that seem to offer opposite advice or observations) that represent socially validated responses in a given culture. It has been noted that proverbs do not conflict in use because the context determines which available cultural model an item can appropriately be drawn from (see Mieder, 2004, p. 133-4, for a discussion of this point). The existence of apparently conflicting proverbs in Malay has also been described as an aspect of proverbial reality in that culture (see Fanany and Fanany, 2008).

Taken together, all the sets of proverbial items in a given language form a cultural model of values, attitudes, and perceptions that gives an indication of what constitutes the underlying cognitive framework for people in the society of use. The exact nature of this framework will of course differ depending on the language and community of use, and it is possible to see various kinds of social orientation embodied in sets of proverbs and proverbial expressions. The social orientation of given societies has been of interest to scholars for some time because knowledge of how individuals and groups see themselves and what they feel is important has many practical applications in a range of disciplines from marketing and business to psychology to the study of civics. In fact, a number of authors, such as Aberle et al. (1950) and Hofstede (2001), have attempted to identify a set of domains that can allow comparison of culture in terms of certain perceptions that are felt to be characteristic of all societies. Hofstede's very influential work proposed five dimensions, namely individualism-collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity-femininity, and long term-short term orientation (added to the original four dimensions later; see Hofstede and Bond, 1988).

Hofstede's work specifically has been most widely applied in the context of international business and marketing, areas for which it was originally developed under the auspices of IBM where the author worked at the time. While proven useful in country to country comparisons, it has been noted that Hofstede's categories overlook cultural values not covered by the five dimensions of interest, do not account for values unique to a society of interest, and do not address how individual perception might relate to the application of values (see, for example, Kirkman et al., 2006; Taras et al., 2010). This suggests the difficulty of trying to find a

general form that adequately describes the cultural model used by given individuals or groups as a way of understanding and interpreting their individual and collective experiences.

The study of proverbs, which are accepted as containing values, observations, and advice that are important in their community of use, can provide an alternate method for identifying the cultural model that is most relevant in a group of interest. Rather than offer a generic pattern that can be fit to every society, using the body of proverbs known to be in use by some set of speakers to derive the desired cultural information has many advantages. This method allows the specific attributes of the group to be identified based on objective information that can be checked. While it may be difficult to infer values and perceptions even from detailed observation, proverbs, as examples of traditional literature, have been collected and documented in many languages. If no such collection is available, native speakers can always provide examples and tend to see these expressions as independent, separate from any application to which their underlying meaning might contribute. This means that a level of uncertainty is removed from the development of a cultural model because the proverbial items can be taken as hard data that can be checked and cross-checked. Interpretation is still required, but it is possible to seek input and advice from speakers of the language in which the items exist. Another advantage exists in the fact that proverbs that are known at any given time represent a type of general knowledge in the community of use and are screened by speakers themselves. Items that are no longer relevant fall out of use and others come into circulation, perhaps eventually attaining proverbial status. In this, it is possible to rely upon members of the group of interest to judge what proverbs should be considered and can be applied to the situations they experience. Finally, by their nature, proverbs are generally known to all members of their community of use. For this reason, the information about values, perceptions, and experience they contain can be taken as a kind of baseline about what constitutes shared culture in the group of interest. This may be very difficult to determine by other means, but proverbs provide a kind of shorthand representation of this shared background and can be taken to signify certain concepts all members of a group are aware of, even if they do not agree with them or act in other ways. The present authors have used this method of ascertaining the prevail-

ing cultural model in situations where there had been no prior study of a community's values and have shown that the precepts contained in proverbs are often the starting point for individual interpretations of experience (see, for example, Uker and Fanany, 2011; Tas'ady et al., 2013; Fanany et al., 2014).

Proverbs and Cultural Consonance

Returning to the question of cultural consonance which relates to the extent to which a person's experience accords with what he or she expects, based on the values, norms and perceptions of the society of membership, an understanding of the nature of the cultural model used by the group of interest is vital in making some kind of assessment of consonance. Much of the pioneering work in cultural consonance in the area of health and psychology has used a very general comparison of traditional lifestyle versus modern lifestyle and has related to groups for whom this distinction can be made more or less unequivocally (see, for example, Dressler and Bindon, 2000; Reyes-Garcia et al., 2010; Dressler et al., 2012).

Evaluating cultural consonance may be much more difficult, however, for individuals and groups for whom change over time has been more gradual and less clear cut. This is often the case for groups that are part of the cultural mainstream and tend to be seen as contributing to the pace of change, rather than suffering the effects of it. There has been some work on this (see Eckersley, 2001, 2005), but much of the study of cultural consonance has related to societies that are at least somewhat removed from their own national mainstream or the global cultural environment. In the United States, for example, which like many western nations is currently experiencing unprecedented levels of mental illness (Weissman et al, 2015), little attention has as yet been given to the role decreasing cultural consonance may play in creating wellbeing and building and maintaining resilience, both important aspects of mental health.

This is a context in which the identification of a cultural model based on proverbial wisdom would be very beneficial in providing a standard by which cultural consonance could be measured. It is often stated, for example, that the influence of the media is significant in a wide range of contexts that relate to health and wellbeing and contributes to negative body image (Tiggemann, 2014),

the glamorization of unhealthy behavior (Robinson et al, 2013), and a consumerist mentality (Solomon et al., 2014). These aspects of media are easily identifiable from advertising material, television and movie imagery, intense focus on the activities of celebrities, and so forth. To some extent, these themes can be objectively evaluated using a number of methodologies that have been developed in various disciplines. However, the judgment as to whether and how the impacts of these sources relate to the cultural models held by the public that derive from more traditional precepts is often little more than a feeling or impression on the part of the researchers.

While that impression may, in fact, be accurate, the more clearly the cultural model that is the basis for individual perception can be elucidated, the more accurately cultural consonance can be measured and evaluated. For example, it is frequently noted that the conceptualization of personal beauty depicted by the media can have negative consequences on the perceptions of individuals, especially for girls and young women (see Diedrichs et al., 2011; Markey and Markey, 2012; and many more). However, while the content of media portrayals has been explicated in detail, the nature of the traditional cultural model this new depiction seems to be replacing is rarely considered. A consideration of relevant proverbs can provide the material for comparison. The following proverbs are some of the items that describe the nature and role of personal appearance in the traditional cultural model of speakers of American English:

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.
Beauty is only skin deep.
Clothes don't make the man.
Handsome is as handsome does.
You can't judge a book by its cover.

These items are a small sample of proverbs that relate to beauty and appearance. Their meaning and usage all suggest that beauty and looks are comparatively unimportant, relative and superficial and do not give an indication of more important qualities associated with character that may be invisible on first glance. As is generally the case, these proverbs contain surface images that reflect the experience and living environment of users and refer to common items – body parts, animals, household items and clothing –

that all speakers should be familiar with. They are connected to other items, like 'You can catch more flies with honey than you can with vinegar' and the Biblical 'Charm is deceptive, beauty is fleeting', that suggest the importance of character and the transience of beauty through a network of meaning and metaphorical connections. It remains to be seen whether the new cultural model created largely by advertising and media images will replace the more traditional cultural model described by proverbs and proverbial expressions wholly or in part. Many scholars believe this new model is extremely pervasive and influential, but the proverbial items that make up the traditional model are part of the way language is used and occur regularly in numerous communicative contexts, not just the media.

The traditional cultural model created by proverbs and other customary usage in English does not fit well with the new model that can be discerned in the media material that many are concerned about. This new model seems to suggest, among other things, that appearance is far more important than character, that it is reasonable to go to great lengths to achieve a certain appearance, that the conceptualization of beauty is standard and generally agreed upon, and that beauty is strongly associated with youth. The psychological dilemma that results for many individuals comes about because the traditional cultural model, which is internalized by speakers gradually from infancy as they learn their native language, is in place long before a child is old enough to be aware of media representations, take an interest in them and understand the ideas they convey. As individuals become more familiar with the new cultural model, which is very visible in the English speaking world, the contrast with the traditional model becomes more pronounced, although it is likely that most people are not consciously aware of this gap. Instead, it may manifest as the dissatisfaction with self that is of such concern among girls and young women and which has been associated with mental illness and many kinds of negative patterns of behavior aimed at achieving an unreachable ideal. These psychological impacts can be seen as direct results of lack of cultural consonance, the mismatch between the cultural model that is the basis for perception and interpretation and the influences observed through personal experience.

Related to this is an interesting phenomenon that is increasingly observed, namely the use of this new media-generated cultural model in marketing around the world as many companies that operate in different locations attempt to standardize their advertising for use in multiple markets (see De Mooij, 2013). The degree of cultural fit between the new model and the traditional model associated with the culture of use may be less than expected (although efforts are made to ensure advertising and other marketing communication is appropriate for the culture of use). The resulting discrepancy may also be different in nature than the gap in cultural consonance in the culture of origin. For example, the following proverbs come from Malay and relate to beauty like the American items above:

Sungguhpun lemak santan akhirnya bau juga. [Even though it is coconut extract, it will eventually spoil.]
 Segar dipakai, layu dibuang. [(When it is) fresh, use it; (when it) wilts, throw it away.]
 Gombak gemilang kutu banyak, bibir hitam gigi kotor. [Shiny hair has a lot of lice, black lips have dirty teeth.]
 Hitam-hitam kendi, putih-putih sadah. [Black like a kettle, white like lime.]
 Tunggul kayu kalau ditarah pelicin, elok juga. [A tree stump planed (smooth) with oil will become fine.]

The first two items above relate to the connection between youth and beauty. Coconut extract is widely used for cooking in the Malay world and is considered a requirement for delicious food. In the first proverb above, it represents the beauty of a young woman that is not expected to endure over time. The second proverb uses a flower metaphor; as noted above, flowers often represent young women in traditional Malay literature. The item suggests that beauty is transient, and relationships based only on appearance are likely to end badly for the woman. The third proverb suggests that an attractive appearance can conceal an unpleasant personality. The term *bibir hitam* [black lips] refers to one of the effects of chewing betelnut, a practice that is rarely seen anymore but used to be common among women in the Malay world and was seen as an aspect of attractiveness. Betelnut is a mild euphoric. Chewed with lime wrapped in the leaves of a plant of the Piper species, over time it blackens the teeth and dyes the lips a very dark, black-

ish-red. The next proverb, which contains the image of a kettle, reminds hearers that something that seems unattractive may be more valuable than something that looks nicer. The lime mentioned is used to chew betelnut, as noted. The color white is often used to represent, not just fairness of coloring, but also desirable characteristics like truthfulness, innocence, cleanliness and quality. The final item, using a metaphor of a tree stump, suggests that an unattractive woman will appear beautiful if properly dressed and made up, implying that beauty is illusory.

These proverbs, which are highly metaphorical and whose images derive from the Malay context, are also associated with a large set of proverbial phrases that describe a traditional conceptualization of beauty in terms of the elements of traditional Malay life. These include *pipi seperti pauh dilayang* [cheeks like slices of mango]; *alis seperti semut beriring* [eyebrows like a line of ants]; *mata seperti bintang kejora* [eyes like the morning star]; and so forth. These items, along with the proverbs above and others like them, are part of a very detailed cultural model of beauty that is specific to the Malay world in terms of image as well as content. There is a point of intersection between this model and the sentiment expressed by a number of American proverbs suggesting that beauty is only skin deep. The Malay model intersects at a different point with the new model expressed in advertising that implies beauty is an attribute of youth. However, there are significant gaps between the Malay model and both the old and new cultural models of speakers of American English.

Discussion

It must be noted that, while language (and the expressions that are commonly known by speakers) is an important factor in shaping the cultural model, it is also the case that multiple models may exist among speakers of the same language, especially in a nation like the United States where so much of the population originated fairly recently in other locations, often speaking another language. Nonetheless, over time, it is to be expected that many elements of the cultural model associated with American English that are identifiable through proverbs will be internalized by immigrants as the language is learned. Over several generations, it might be expected that the cultural model of individuals will become more like the model among that predominates among speakers of the

language in question. This is the basis for the assumption that language is a proxy for culture.

In the Malay world, the situation is slightly different. The modern nations that use Malay also have a large number of local languages, especially Indonesia which has more than 700 other languages in use today. Each of these languages is associated with an ethnic group with its own culture and unique elements. Some of these groups/ languages are linguistically and culturally related to Malay, while others are not. This means that the population has numerous cultural models with different elements that derive from the shared experience of each of the ethnic groups involved. Nonetheless, each of these nations has made an effort to support and facilitate the development of a national culture using the national language. Interestingly, the study of proverbs is part of classes in the national language in the schools of the Malay-speaking nations because these items are seen as a vehicle for understanding the traditional literature of the region and also for depicting traditional values that are considered relevant in the modern context.

It must be assumed that every community has a cultural model that is associated with its language, culture and history. The traditional form of this model is discernable through the proverbs and proverbial expressions that are known and used by modern speakers, and study of these items can provide valuable information about the values, attitudes, and perceptions of the group. Nonetheless, cultural models are subject to change, as the influence of new models such as those created by popular culture and the media demonstrates. While it is not out of the question that new models such as this will ultimately dominate, the counterweight of the traditional models is considerable because they are embedded in language use. The ordinary language of daily interaction changes rapidly, but metaphorical items are more enduring, and proverbs specifically are known to retain archaic terms and syntax that no longer occur in other communicative contexts. While the surface structure and imagery may not be understood by modern speakers, the underlying meaning tends to be known, and the items continue to be used.

The persistence of the traditional cultural model is supported by its close connection to language which allows it to be absorbed along with social and linguistic rules for appropriate use as individuals learn to speak early in life. The deep seated nature of this

framework, within which the interpretation of experience takes place, contributes to the significance of the lack of cultural consonance as a factor in psychological health. The situation where a person's experience seems to conflict with his or her cultural expectations, including values, has been shown to relate to individual adaptive factors like resilience and coping, happiness, and also physiological health. Significant change in population health around the world in recent years suggests that new approaches to understanding its mental and physical aspects are required, and this is where cultural consonance as a contributing factor is of increasing importance.

However, as noted, the study of cultural consonance can be greatly enhanced by comprehensive knowledge of the relevant, traditional cultural model that can serve as a comparison with this observable or self-reported experience of the individuals or group of interest. It may be difficult, though, to elucidate the salient elements of the cultural model without an objective indication of the principles and values that contribute to it. It is here that consideration of the body of proverbs that are in use by members of the group is of great value. The fact that proverbs are known and understood by individuals is an indication that their meaning and application are still socially relevant and, by extension, have contributed to the associated cultural model. Proverbs, which are extremely stable, can provide a generally agreed upon indication of the nature of this model as well as the principles that form the core of a culture's worldview.

The use of proverbs and proverbial phrases as a means for identifying worldview is discussed by Dundes (1969; 1971) who notes that every culture has a set of assumptions or premises that serve as the base for its interpretations of experience. These concepts, which he refers to as 'folk ideas' (1971: 95-96), tend to be identifiable across genres of folklore and represent a pattern of consistent views that derive from the shared experience of the group. It has been noted that worldview defined in this way serves as a cognitive tool with which people determine their actions, behavior, and interpretations of experience (Dundes, 1971; Degh, 1994; Toelken, 1996). People often have no conscious awareness of the worldview that shapes their perceptions, even though it is implicit in their actions and reactions to their surroundings (Dundes, 1969; Jones, 1972). For this reason, it is often the indirect

results of accord or discord with this internal understanding of how things should be that people feel and that allow for an evaluation of cultural consonance.

The significance of cultural consonance as a measure of psychological health is likely to increase in the future as populations change to become more multicultural and multilingual, and individuals find that the mainstream culture of the community is becoming less like the specific cultural model associated with their own background. The phenomenon of population ageing that has been observed around the world is also related to cultural consonance, and unmet expectations due to social change that is not compatible with the cultural model of older individuals is increasingly observed (see Stanaway et al., 2011; Avgoulas and Fanany, 2012; Fanany et al., 2014; among others). For this reason, the models developed within the field of paremiology for the study of proverb meaning are highly relevant in evaluating and characterizing cultural consonance as a means of elucidating cultural models and can provide an important interdisciplinary approach to a range of psychological and health phenomena.

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¿ANTI-PROVERBIOS O PARA-PROVERBIOS?¹

Abstract: Wolfgang Mieder has created the word “antiproverbs” to name “parodied, twisted, or fractured proverbs that reveal humorous or satirical speech play with traditional proverbial wisdom”. The use of this term has become normal in the paremiological literature. In our essay we propound to use the term “paraproverb” instead of “antiproverb”. We base our proposal on the fact that in the technical terminology of Linguistics and Philology the prefix *para-* is the most used to create terms that express the humorous twisting of a model. It is the case of the generic term “parody” and the case of the more specific one “paratragedy”; and, more in general, we think that philologists can understand as humorous twisting of a model a neologism (from the literary or linguistic vocabulary) composed with the prefix *para-* (we have documented the use of some neologisms such as “paraepic” or “paracomical”). Furthermore, this sense of the prefix *para-* is not limited to the technical terminology, but modern languages use often the prefix *para-* to create new words that name a reality that maintains traits of the imitated model, but somehow deviates from this model or twists it: paramilitary, paranormal, parastatal, paramedical, parapharmacy, etc.

Keywords: definition, genre, para-proverb, anti-proverb, twisted proverb, prefix para-.

Desde que Wolfgang Mieder editó el primer volumen de *Antisprichwörter* (Wiesbaden: Verlag für deutsche Sprache, 1982), se han multiplicado los estudios y el interés por los llamados “antiproverbios”, que el propio Mieder define en otro lugar² como “proverbios parodiados, distorsionados o fracturados que revelan juegos de palabras humorísticos o satíricos con la tradicional sabiduría proverbial”. El hecho de que un maestro como Wolfgang Mieder haya acuñado el término y lo haya utilizado en un buen número de importantes e influyentes libros y artículos que ha ido publicando a lo largo de tres décadas,³ ha tenido una importancia determinante, como es natural, para que se haya consolidado entre los estudiosos de la paremiología e incluso entre los aficionados a

ella (“Antiproverbio” es, por ejemplo, el título de la quinta canción del disco *Cursi*, con el que en 1999 se presentó en el mercado discográfico el grupo uruguayo del mismo nombre). Desde hace tres décadas, en efecto, han ido apareciendo numerosísimos trabajos cuyos autores han utilizado el término “antiproverbios” para designar las deformaciones humorísticas (entendiendo el sintagma en sentido muy amplio) de las expresiones fijas en las más variadas lenguas y tradiciones.⁴

Pero ¿es “anti-proverbio” el término adecuado para designar la deformación humorística de un proverbio? El prefijo *anti-*, “enfrente de, opuesto a”, expresa oposición (“opuesto o contrario” y “con propiedades contrarias” son las glosas del *Diccionario de la Lengua Española* de la RAE);⁵ de manera que un “anti-proverbio” debería ser un proverbio que se opone a otro proverbio (como una antipartícula se opone a su partícula correspondiente), o una expresión que impide que haya proverbialidad (como un anticonceptivo evita que haya concepción, un anticongelante⁶ evita que haya congelación, y un antirrobo es un mecanismo que impide el robo). Así, Josefa Martín y Soledad Valera⁷ explican de la siguiente manera los usos del prefijo *anti-* en español: “En las formaciones nominales que denotan la simple oposición pueden distinguirse dos grupos: características opuestas o contrarias a las expresadas en la base nominal (*antihéroe*), y oposición a lo expresado en el nombre simple (*antidroga*). En el primer caso, el referente de la forma prefijada tiene las cualidades opuestas o contrarias a las del referente del nombre simple”. En mi opinión, lo que Mieder llama “anti-proverbio” no designa un enunciado que, por su forma y/o por su significado, sea “opuesto” o tenga “propiedades o características contrarias” a un proverbio, sino que, por el contrario, designa un enunciado que conserva características propias del original al que imita (perfectamente reconocible desde el punto de vista formal), pero de alguna manera se desvía de ese original o lo deforma. En consecuencia, el empleo de un compuesto con el prefijo *anti-* no sería, en nuestra opinión, adecuado.

Además, los muy numerosos neologismos que se crean uniendo el prefijo *anti-*, de origen griego, a una raíz que no es de origen griego adquieren con frecuencia (creo que en todas las lenguas) un marcado matiz de oposición más o menos radical e incluso virulenta, que es clara en términos como antiglobalización, antiamericanismo, antisemitismo o anticlericalismo. Y en nuestro caso no

creemos que la deformación humorística de un proverbio significa una toma de posición más o menos radical y virulenta contra el proverbio original.

Más minoritario es el uso de otros términos. La forma “perverbs” (cruce entre *pervert* y *proverbs*) se encuentra sobre todo en ámbitos angloparlantes, y en escritos en internet y no en la bibliografía de carácter más científico. Entre los estudiosos franceses es habitual el empleo de la expresión “proverbes détournés” (cf. Barta, 2005 y 2006; “proverbi modificati”, Cocco, 2014). Para el español, Juan de Dios Luque Durán⁸ ha propuesto “traducir” el término “antiproverbio” por “contrarrefrán”, un vocablo que tiene un antecedente en el inglés “counter-proverb”, creado por Ch. C. Doyle en 1972, aunque no para designar exactamente lo mismo que Mieder designa con el término anti-proverbio, sino “an overt negation or sententious-sounding rebuttal of a proverb, an explicit denial of the proverb’s asserted truth. A counter-proverb does not typically aim for any ironic effect, other than calling into doubt whatever wisdom it is that proverbs are supposed to encapsulate.”⁹ En efecto, de acuerdo con el sentido habitual del prefijo *contra-*,¹⁰ un “contrarrefrán” o “contraproverbio” no debería ser un proverbio deformado, sino más bien, como indica Doyle, un proverbio o refrán que responde a otro, expresando una idea contraria a la que el primero transmite, de la misma manera que un contraejemplo es un “ejemplo que contradice lo que se ha pretendido mostrar con otro”, una contraorden es una “orden que revoca otra que antes se ha dado”, o contradecir es “decir lo contrario de lo que uno afirma o negar lo que se da por cierto”. Al menos en español, el prefijo *contra-* puede ser sinónimo de *anti-*, pero también es habitual que, a diferencia de *anti-*, no se limite a indicar simplemente “oposición”, sino que exprese una reacción activa contra aquello a lo que uno se opone; así, no es lo mismo ser “contrarrevolucionario” (“favourable à une contre-révolution, mouvement politique, social, destiné à combattre une révolution”, según la definición de *Le Robert*), que ser “antirrevolucionario” (“qui est opposé ou hostile aux idées révolutionnaires”).¹¹ En todo caso, creo que ninguno de los valores que suele tener el prefijo *contra-* transmite claramente la idea de “deformación” o “desvío” con respecto a la realidad designada por la forma simple.

En mi opinión, el prefijo más adecuado para indicar la idea de “desviación” o “deformación” es *para-*, también de origen griego;

de manera que propongo el neologismo “paraproverbio” para designar un “proverbio parodiado, distorsionado o fracturado que revela un juego de palabras humorístico o satírico con la tradicional sabiduría proverbial”.

En griego antiguo el prefijo *para-* significa propiamente “junto a” (en “parásito” por ejemplo, que significa etimológicamente “que come junto a, en casa de”), pero también desarrolla a menudo el sentido de “al margen de, fuera de” y transmite la idea de desviación del camino correcto o esperado:¹² *par-ágo* (παρ-άγω) significa “llevar fuera del camino, desviar”; *para-baíno* (παρ-αβαίνω) “andar fuera del camino; violar una ley”; *para-gignósko* (παρ-α-γιγνώσκω) “tomar una decisión desviada, injusta”; *pará-nomos* (παρ-ά-νομος) “que está al margen de la ley, ilegal”; *pará-noia* (παρ-ά-νοια) “pensamiento desviado”; *pará-doxos* (παρ-άδοξος) “que está fuera de lo que puede creerse o esperarse, extraño, inesperado”; *para-blóps* (παρ-α-βλώψ) “que tiene la mirada desviada, bizco”, etc. E incluso en el propio término *par-oiimía* (παρ-οιμία), “proverbio”, es posible que el significado original del prefijo *para-* sea “fuera de, al margen de.”¹³ Las lenguas modernas han heredado este uso del prefijo *para-*¹⁴ y crean continuamente neologismos que designan una realidad que conserva rasgos del original al que imita, pero de alguna manera se desvía de ese original o lo deforma: paramilitar, paranormal, paraestatal, paramédico, parafarmacia, etc.

Las lenguas modernas también han heredado del griego antiguo un compuesto en el que el prefijo *para-* transmite en concreto la idea de distorsión humorística de una forma literaria y supone, por tanto, un clarísimo paralelo para el neologismo “paraproverbio” que proponemos. Se trata del término “par-odia”, que designa etimológicamente una “canción o poema cantado” (*odé*, ὀδή) distorsionado (*para-*, παρ-α-) con intención humorística,¹⁵ o una canción burlesca creada a base de imitar un modelo distorsionándolo.¹⁶ De manera similar, en el lenguaje técnico de la filología se emplea el prefijo *para-* para acuñar términos que, como en el caso de “parodia”, designan la desviación burlesca de un modelo, y no olvidemos que el carácter satírico y humorístico es, de acuerdo con la definición del propio Mieder, un rasgo esencial de lo que él llama “antiproverbio”. Así, al menos entre los estudiosos de la literatura antigua son frecuentes los términos “paratragedia” y “paratrágico” (“paratragisch”, “paratragic”, “paratragique”, etc.;

“mock-tragedy”, es la definición del *Oxford English Dictionary* para el término “paratragedia”); pero también hemos encontrado documentados otros términos similares como “paraépico,”¹⁷ “paranovelesco”¹⁸ e incluso, rizando el rizo, “paracómico.”¹⁹ Pienso, entonces, que en el léxico técnico de la Filología no estaría fuera de lugar, para designar la distorsión burlesca de un modelo, un término nuevo que sea un compuesto con el prefijo *para-*, y en concreto creo que términos como “paraproverbio” y “paraproverbial” son más adecuados que “antiproverbio” y “antiproverbial” para expresar la distorsión humorística o satírica de un proverbio (“en Abril, recortes mil”, “todos los caminos llevan a la fila del paro”, “dimmi con chi vai e ti dirò se vengo anch’io”²⁰) e incluso la frase humorística que no consiste en la deformación de un proverbio conocido, sino en una creación nueva en la que se imita la estructura y estilo habitual de los proverbios (“al ciudadano honesto todo son impuestos, y a los defraudadores todo son favores”); de igual manera una “paratragedia” puede consistir en la deformación de un verso trágico bien conocido (“to beer or not to beer” o “two beers or not two beers”), o bien en un verso, una estrofa o una escena creados de acuerdo con modelos trágicos pero sin imitar en concreto un verso, una estrofa o una escena trágica determinados.²¹

Dado que *para-* es un prefijo de origen griego, sería natural su unión con un término también de origen griego formando el neologismo “paraparemia”. Pero, si preferimos mantener el término acuñado por Mieder cambiando únicamente el prefijo, tampoco creo que el neologismo “paraproverbio” ofrezca mayores dificultades, pese a estar formado por un prefijo griego y una base léxica latina. En efecto, el prefijo *para-* (al igual que el también griego *anti-*, aunque es cierto que con mucha menor frecuencia) se une a menudo a raíces no griegas para formar nuevas palabras, como podemos comprobar en los ejemplos antes citados, como paramilitar, paranormal, paraestatal o paramédico (quizá entre dentro de la categoría que se da en llamar “prefijoides”). En todo caso, no entra dentro de nuestros objetivos discutir el debatidísimo problema de la terminología que debe emplearse para designar las expresiones fijas y unidades sentenciosas. El propósito principal de este trabajo ha sido intentar demostrar que, para designar deformaciones con fines humorísticos o burlescos, el prefijo *para-* es más adecuado que *anti-*, y que, en consecuencia, en nuestra opinión sería preferi-

ble utilizar términos como “paraproverbios”, “paraparencias”, “pararrefranes”, etc.²² (según la terminología que cada cual prefiera), en lugar de sus correspondientes compuestos con *anti-*.

Notes:

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² Mieder, 2004: 28. “An allusive distortion, parody, misapplication, or unexpected contextualization of a recognized proverb, usually for comic or satiric effect” es la definición que encontramos en Doyle, Mieder & Shapiro, 2012: xi.

³ Entre otros, además de los ya citados, Mieder (1985, 1998, 2007); Litovkina & Mieder (1999, 2006).

⁴ Por poner unos pocos ejemplos: Aleksa & Hrisztova-Gotthardt, 2012; Valdeva, 2003; Gossler, 2005; Aleksa, Litovkina & Hrisztova-Gotthardt, 2009; Alexiadis, 2012; Milică, 2013; Walter & Mokienko, 2005; Reznikov, 2009; Kozintsev, 2014; Vargha & Litovkina, 2013; Gábor, 2007; Hrisztova-Gotthardt, 2006; Adeyemi, 2012.

⁵ Un estudio minucioso de *anti-* puede verse en Stehlík, 2012; también Bartoš, 2002.

⁶ Inglés “anti-icer”: “a device for preventing the formation of ice on an aeroplane”.

⁷ En Bosque & Demonte, 1999: 5019. Debo esta referencia a María Teresa Zurdo. Explicaciones similares se encuentran en diccionarios de diferentes lenguas:

- J.A.H.M. Murray *et alii*, *The Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford 1989²: “Prefix: ‘opposite, against, in exchange, instead’. In English used: A) In compounds formed in Greek or others modelled on them. B) As a living formative, with sense of ‘opposed, in opposition, opponent, rival’ (*antichrist, antipope...*) ... Commonly used in combinations denoting an agent, device, product, etc., that inhibits, limits, or counteracts a condition, effect, etc.”.

- G. Devoto & G.C. Oli, *Nuovo vocabolario della lingua italiana*, Milán 1987: “Prefisso di composizione nominale col valore di ‘opposizione’ (*antipapa*); ‘prevenzione’ o ‘profilassi’ (*antisettico*); ‘impedimento’ (*antifurto*); ‘contrarietà’ o ‘contrasto’ (*antistorico*); ‘contrapposizione’ (*antistrofe, antipode*)”.

- *Le Robert. Dictionnaire de la langue française*, París 1986¹⁰: “Élément, du grec *anti-* ‘contre’, exprimant l’opposition ou la protection contre. Ce préfixe, très productif, a plusieurs valeurs: 1) Avec des mots désignant des opinions, des systèmes de pensée et les personnes qui les manifestent, *anti-* signifie ‘hostilité (ou

hostile) à’, ‘action (ou qui agit) contre’: *anticatholique, anticapitaliste, anticommuniste...* 2) Avec des adjectifs ou même des noms désignant des phénomènes, des processus ou des objets, *anti-* donne des adjectifs signifiant ‘qui s’oppose à..., lutte contre les effets de...’: *antiatomique, antibactérien, anticancéreux...* 3) Avec des mots scientifiques, *anti-* signifie parfois ‘qui possède les caractères opposés, inverses’: *antimatière, antiparticule, antiproton...* 4) Avec des mots abstraits (adjectifs et noms), *anti-* signifie parfois ‘qui est exactement l’inverse de (dans la même catégorie de choses)’: *antihéros...*”.

⁸ Luque Durán, 2002, y 2009: 114-116; Pamies, 2006; Isidro Núñez, 2013. El término está relativamente extendido en internet.

⁹ Cf. Doyle, Mieder & Shapiro, 2012: xi-xii.

¹⁰ Véase Montero Curiel, 2001; García Platero, 2006.

¹¹ Así ocurre también en “contrarreforma”, “contracultura”, “contracampaña”, “contraespionaje”, “contramanifestación”, etc.

¹² Véase, por ejemplo, Liddell, Scott & Jones, 1982: *s.v.* παρά G IV.3: “in composition ... (the idea) of alteration or change, as in *παράλλασσω* [‘change, alter’], *παραπείθω* [‘win with persuasive arts’], *παραπλάσσω* [‘transform’], *παρατεκταίνω* [‘work into another form, transform, alter, falsify’], *παράφημι* [‘speak deceitfully or insincerely’]”. También Chantraine, 1980: *s.v.* παρά, II 856-857: “certains emplois que paraissent divergents sont clairs si l’on pensé qu’en français *à côté* exprime à la fois la proximité et l’idée que les choses ne sont pas où elles doivent être”.

¹³ Cf. García Romero, 1999.

¹⁴ He aquí el comentario que se dedica al prefijo *para-* en *The Oxford English Dictionary*: “Occurring in words already formed in Greek, their adaptations, and derivatives, and in modern words formed on the model of these, and, in certain uses, as a living element, in the formation of technical nomenclature. As a preposition, Gr. παρά had the sense ‘by the side of, beside’, whence ‘alongside of, by, past, beyond’, etc. In composition it had the same senses, with such cognates adverbial ones as ‘to one side, aside, amiss, faulty, irregular, disorderer, improper, wrong’, also expressing subsidiary relation, alteration, perversion, simulation, etc. These senses also occur in English derivatives”. En ese diccionario se recogen términos como paramilitar (“of or pertaining to an organization, unit, force, etc., whose function or status is ancillary or analogous to that of military forces, but which is not a professional military force”); parastatal (“an institution or body which takes on some of the roles of civic government or political authority”), parajournalism (“a type of unconventional journalism not primarily concerned with the reporting of facts”); paraprofessional (“a person without professional training to whom a particular aspect of a professional task is delegated”); para-transit (“public transport of a flexible, informal kinds”), etc. En el *Diccionario de la Lengua Española* de la RAE se recogen los dos valores señalados: “junto a” y “al margen de”. Muy significativa a nuestros efectos es la glosa que encontramos en el *Diccionario de uso del español* de María Moliner, donde leemos que el prefijo *para-* expresa dos nociones que en principio podían parecer contradictorias: “expresa a la vez las ideas de ajeno o exterior y próximo” (compárese con lo que dice Chantraine, citado en nota 11). Esa aparente contradicción se resuelve si entendemos que *para-* forma compuestos que

pueden designar una realidad que conserva rasgos de la realidad designada por la forma simple (eso sería lo “próximo”), pero de alguna manera se desvía de ella o la deforma (eso sería lo “ajeno”). En diccionarios de otras lenguas encontramos explicaciones similares:

- Devoto & Oli: “Prefisso di molte parole composte derivate dal greco o formate modernamente, nelle quali indica sia vicinanza, sia somiglianza, affinità o anche relazione secondaria, deviazione, alterazione, contrapposizione”.

- *Le Robert*: “Premier élément (tiré du grec *para* ‘à côté de’) qui entre comme préfixe dans la composition de mots français empruntés du grec, come *paradoxe*, ou formés récemment comme *paramilitaire*”.

¹⁵ Véase también el verbo *para-poiéo* (παρα-ποιέω) “imitar para ridiculizar” (Aristóteles, *Retórica* 3.11, un largo capítulo en el que se habla precisamente de los efectos ingeniosos que se consiguen cuando en un verso o una frase se introducen palabras inesperadas, que es precisamente lo que caracteriza a un paraproverbio). Los filólogos antiguos utilizaban la preposición *pará* para indicar la distorsión humorística de proverbios. Por ejemplo, los escolios a Aristófanes, *Lisístrata* 110 ofrecen la siguiente explicación de la deformación de una expresión proverbial: παρά τὴν παροιμίαν ‘σκύνη επικουρία’, ἐπὶ τῶν ἀσθενῶν. ὁ δὲ εἰς τὴν σκυτίνην μετέβαλε. σκύτινοι γὰρ ὄλιβοι. εἰσὶ δὲ δευράτινα αἰδοῖα, οἷς χρῶνται αἱ χῆραι γυναῖκες (“Distorsión del proverbio ‘ayuda de higuera’, que se dice a propósito de lo que es débil. Lo ha cambiado en ‘de cuero’, porque de cuero son los consoladores. Se trata de órganos sexuales de piel, que usan las mujeres viudas”).

¹⁶ Debo esta última precisión a Virginia López Graña.

¹⁷ “Paraepic comedy” es el título que da M. RAVERMANN a su contribución al libro *Greek comedy and the discourse of genres*, ed. por E. BAKOLA, L. PRAUSCELLO & M. TELÒ, Cambridge: University Press, 2013, 101-128. En francés, cf. G. NAVAUD, «Andromaque, Artémise, Mélanippe: la subversion des modèles et contre-modèles féminins dans *Lysistrata*», *Loxias*, 43, Diciembre de 2013 (<http://revel.unice.fr/loxias/index.html?id=7627>), p.3.

¹⁸ Nuestro querido colega José B. Torres lo utiliza en su estupendo blog “El festín de Homero” (http://elfestindehomero.blogspot.com.es/2013_10_20_archive.html), y no es el único.

¹⁹ “Paracómico” y “paracomedia” son términos usados por K. SIDWELL, «Aristophanes’ *Acharnians* and Eupolis», *Classical et Mediaevalia* 45, 1994, 114; Ch. ORFANOS, «Ecclésia vs. banquet», en *Symposion. Banquet et représentations en Grèce et à Rome*, ed. por Ch. ORFANOS & J.C. CARRIÈRE, Toulouse: Presses Universitaires du Mirail, 2003, 208 nota 28; K. DIAMANTAKOU, «Euripides versus Aristophanes, *Ion* versus *Birds*. A possibility of ‘paracomical’ referentiality», *Mediterranean Chronicle* 2, 2012, 15-29. Pero no son términos exclusivos de la filología clásica; en su libro *Millecinquecento film da evitare. Dalla A alla Z* (Roma: Gremese Editore, 2003) MASSIMO BERTARELLI comenta (p. 116) que el director de la película *Grazie nonna* “dispensa qualche deprimente sketch paracomico e un paio di nudi dell’ottima Edwige Fenech”.

²⁰ Creación del cómico italiano Marcello Marchesi en su libro *100 Neoproverbi (debo su conocimiento a Francesca Cocco)*.

²¹ El paralelismo con el término “paratragedia” nos parece especialmente útil en nuestra argumentación en defensa del uso del prefijo *para-* en lugar de *anti-*, porque creemos que la parodia de proverbios viene a coincidir en sus características esenciales con la parodia de versos trágicos. Y debo agradecer una vez más a María Teresa Zurdo sus muy interesantes y precisas observaciones, que me han reafirmado en esa opinión a pesar de su desacuerdo con nuestra propuesta. En efecto, la profesora Zurdo comenta muy atinadamente que lo que ella prefiere seguir llamando “antiproverbios” se caracterizan por los siguientes rasgos:

- Son creaciones individuales, con frecuencia de autor conocido y vinculadas a contextos específicos.
- Son además difícilmente sistematizables porque su fijación es esporádica y los mecanismos que se aplican en su creación son marcadamente individuales.
- Son ocasionales y, generalmente, efímeras por su dependencia de la situación sociocultural en la que se generan.
- Casi siempre presentan desautomatización, *i.e.* son interpretables desde la literalidad de sus componentes.
- Se evita o se relativiza el valor de verdad general y se anula o se difumina el carácter sentencioso.
- Son manifestaciones de ingenio y agudeza mental del emisor, que implican siempre producir en el receptor un efecto de enajenación con respecto al modelo. La intención comunicativa es eminentemente lúdico-festiva pero, además del “carácter satírico y humorístico”, puede expresar otros muchos matices, como la ironía, el sarcasmo, la burla, la ridiculización e, incluso, la alabanza sincera o ficticia.

Pues bien, en mi opinión todos esos rasgos que caracterizan los “antiproverbios” pueden describir, prácticamente al pie de la letra, la parodia de tragedia, probablemente el más habitual y característico procedimiento de distorsión de un modelo (literario en este caso), al menos en la antigüedad grecolatina (y estamos pensando concretamente en las parodias trágicas que hallamos en las comedias de Aristófanes y otros poetas de la comedia griega de los siglos V-IV a.C.). Dado que para designar esas distorsiones el término técnico habitual no es “antitragedia” sino “paratragedia” (como en el clásico estudio de Peter Rau, *Paratragodia: Untersuchung einer komischen Form des Aristophanes*, Múnich 1967), me parece perfectamente lógico que el término técnico adecuado para designar unas distorsiones que presentan las mismas características, pero no sobre versos trágicos sino sobre proverbios, sea “paraproverbio” y no “antiproverbio”.

²² A partir del mismo argumento que hemos esgrimido para el término “paraproverbio”, creo que el término “pararrefrán” sería posible, ya que, como ocurre en formaciones como “paramilitar”, “paranormal”, “paraestatal” o “paramédico”, el prefijo de origen griego *para-* se une a palabras patrimoniales (en esos casos, siempre de origen latino) para formar neologismos, y “pararrefrán” sería uno más de estos neologismos.

En el caso del alemán, la profesora Zurdo nos ha hecho notar, sin duda con razón, que “Parasprichwörter” sonaría muy extraño, ya que “*Para-*” solo se encuentra en formaciones cuyas bases son exógenas y me atrevo a suponer que en la mayor parte de las derivaciones, si no en todas, se trata de términos importados probable-

mente a través del inglés o del francés”. He creído encontrar, no obstante, algún ejemplo de formaciones en las que *para-* se une a una palabra autóctona para formar un compuesto, como es el caso del adjetivo “parastaatliche” (que debe de ser de uso habitual, a juzgar al menos por la búsqueda que he hecho en internet). Por lo demás, desde un punto de vista teórico, “Parasprichwort” sería un tipo de formación absolutamente equivalente a “Antisprichwort” usado por Mieder, ya que en ambos casos un prefijo de origen griego se uniría a una base léxica patrimonial, aunque es bien cierto que *anti-* ha adquirido una autonomía y frecuencia de uso que ni mucho menos tiene *para-* y hace que los compuestos con *anti-* suenen en las lenguas europeas mucho más “naturales” que los compuestos con *para-*.

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PROVERBS IN MARTIN AMIS'S *LONDON FIELDS*: A
STYLISTIC ANALYSIS

Abstract: The aim of this paper is to present how Martin Amis uses proverbs in order to achieve a particular stylistic effect. The study draws on the corpus of 18 proverbs identified in *London Fields* of which paremias used in the canonical form represent precisely 50%. The findings show that the most qualitatively considerable alteration of proverbial structure includes changes in terms of lexical substitution. Examples are provided in order to examine the hypothesis that the proverbs altered by means of lexical substitution display polemics with traditional wisdom, whereas adages used in the canonical form are an attempt to re-evaluate proverbial truths. It has been observed that the use of structural changes or canonical forms has a different value for a given discourse. As regards the methodological tools used in this study, the analysis of proverbs with different paradigmatic relations and their literary relevance is largely based on the semiotic commutation test and the systemic-functional grammar approach applied as a component of discourse analysis. In particular, the transitivity theory proposed by M.A.K. Halliday is used to investigate the semantic links between proverbs and discourse. The conclusions drawn from this analysis may be further used for stating that Martin Amis's novel displays a high level of stylistic dexterity as regards the use of proverbs to suit literary purposes.

Keywords: discourse analysis, *London Fields*, Martin Amis, proverb transformations, stylistics, transitivity theory

Introduction

Martin Amis's *London Fields* (1989) has attracted a plethora of literary definitions and criticism. James Diedrick has aptly dubbed it "an unstable mixture of millennial murder mystery, urban satire, apocalyptic jeremiad, and domestic farce" (2004: 119) and Amis himself elucidated that it "is a kind of Post-Modernist joke" (Self 1993: 150). One may also classify it as a contemporary novel with dense grotesque saturation due to many

elements exhibiting such properties. For instance, Bernard speaks of the “ironic and grotesque inversion of both the Christian and the analogical paradigms” (1997: 170), Diedrick concentrates on the Oedipal rivalry between Guy Clinch and his son, Marmaduke (2004: 122), whereas Smith et al. highlight “the enactment of some grotesque sexual fantasies” (2003: 98). Although there have been various controversies regarding his artistic use of language, most notably the 1989 Booker Prize and gendered readings of the novel (cf. Smith et al. 2003: 98; Diedrick 2004: 128; Finney 2008: 139), Amis is widely regarded as a stylistically sophisticated author. His creative use of figurative language and linguistic word-play have been often praised by critics (Mittleman 1991: 123; Bernard 1997: 180; Smith et al. 2003: 109, 112; Finney 2008: 147-153). However, the stylistic significance of proverbs or idioms in Amis’s novels seems to have been slightly underestimated. This may be due to Morton W. Bloomfield’s covert distinction between the linguistic analysis of proverbs and novels, as if paremias should be treated as less meaningful literary constituents: “Proverbs and riddles are much easier to analyze linguistically or structurally than ‘personal’ works of art like novels, but even here the semantic elements cannot be avoided” (1976: 288). While it does seem logical that proverbs (as relatively short constituents) are definitely more concise than novels, they nevertheless pose intriguing interpretational challenges and ought not to be omitted in a stylistic analysis (according to Honeck: “Proverbs have unique poetic properties,” 1997: 42, cf. a similar comment in Szpila 2007: 617; see also Abrahams and Babcock 1977: 416-417).¹

The stylistic effects achieved by the use of proverbs in *London Fields* seem to depend on the form in which they are presented, i.e., it affects the interpretation of a given paremia. In what follows, I will briefly evaluate certain examples of proverbs identified in *London Fields* and concentrate on their contextual function. Paremias used in the canonical form are analysed first and occurrences of heterogenous transformational variants² are examined in the second section, while lexical alterations are scrutinised in the third part. The discussion of the 18 proverbs identified in the novel is arranged in the following way: paremias classified as either canonical, lexically altered, or changed by other structural transformations are presented in an ascending

order corresponding to their degree of proverbial repudiation/wisdom re-assessment/contextual elaboration on paremic constituents. Needless to say, such framework is rather subjective but seems to fulfil the illustrative purposes quite well. Finally, the conclusion offers a brief summary of the results, as well as some ideas for further inquiries into the subject matter.

The approach adopted in this study is a combination of semiostylistics³ and the Hallidayan transitivity theory (Halliday and Hasan 1989: 24-28, 30-36; Halliday 1996; Jeffries and McIntyre 2012: 68-99; Halliday 2014: 211-358). Semiostylistics is a useful method for describing the function, relevance and construction of meaning, as well as an efficient tool for identifying semiotic processes, which is indispensable for investigating how a different grammatical structure or lexeme may change meaning. As regards the transitivity theory, it makes stylistic analysis more thorough by focusing on classifying various processes and examining agent-goal relations. Such an in-depth description may reveal underlying patterns crucial for investigating whether certain characters are dominant or being manipulated. In this study, the transitivity patterns are mainly used in the analyses concerning canonical forms (therefore highlighting the context), whereas the semiotic commutation test serves as a basis for examining the meaning of structural alterations. The semiotic commutation test is understood hereby as a means for investigating underlying semiotic patterns along the paradigmatic and syntagmatic axes. Despite his numerous self-contradictory definitions and multiple terms concerning a paradigm, one of Hjelmslev's postulates, viz. treating a paradigm as a "class within a semiotic system" (qtd. in Sierstema 1955: 178) is consistent with the premisses of the present study. Hjelmslev's glossematic approach to commutation, along with the basic tenets of paradigmatic/syntagmatic transformations, is adopted hereafter (see Sierstema 1955, cf. Chandler 2007: 88-90 for a structuralist interpretation of the commutation test).

The application of the transitivity theory⁴ in literary studies was presented by Halliday in his seminal essay "Linguistic Function and Literary Style: An Inquiry into the Language of William Golding's *The Inheritors*," originally published in 1971 (see Halliday 1996). His approach is useful, amongst others, for exploring social power relations (Critical Discourse Analysis) but also

for examining the correspondence between a particular textual element (e.g., a proverb) and its immediate context (for his classification of functions consult *ibid.* 60). However, it ought to be mentioned that the transitivity theory, if applied indiscriminately in the study of literary works, may yield self-contradictory or simply completely irrelevant results, thus proving its non-universality. Although most of the following analyses are complemented by the basic tenets of the transitivity theory, several proverbs have been purposely discussed without any reference to the transitivity theory. The justification for not having fulfilled the fundamental premiss of this study is as follows: in the case of the aforementioned set, there seems to be no (or at least hardly any) logical relation whatsoever between the transitivity patterns of the context in which a given *paremia* is embedded and the proverb itself. That is to say, ascribing significance to strikingly random links just for the sake of applying the transitivity theory is an unscholarly method and ought to be avoided at all costs. Without undermining the validity of the method in question, a bypass justification may be proposed instead, *viz.* describing the limitations of the transitivity theory in literary investigations, therefore accounting for particular cases in which the use of this method is redundant and artificial.

As regards the literary study of proverbs (which not only includes the analyses of *paremias* in classical works but also in contemporary fiction, e.g., Szpila 2008, as well as studies from a diachronic perspective, cf. Naciscione 2010: 10; see also Abrahams and Babcock 1977), the vast *paremiological* scholarship is being constantly updated (see Mieder 2009; Mieder and Bryan 1996), which clearly proves that such interdisciplinary investigations are still of great interest to present-day *paremiologists* (and, of course, *paremiographers* collecting the occurrences of proverbs in literary works, thus enlarging their corpora; but cf. Mieder's comment, 2008: 27).⁵ The present paper aims to follow the step-by-step outline of a comprehensive literary analysis of proverbs as proposed by Mieder (2008: 27-28), which may be summarised in a few points: the identification of *paremias* (and also a description of potential introducers), their contextual embedding, a functional interpretation (relating both to the immediate context as well as to the entire novel in question), and finally the analysis of any stylistic transformations/allusions. On a more

general level, the above interpretational process may be reduced to the following guideline: "Ideally a literary proverb investigation consists of a proverb index and an interpretative essay" (Mieder 2008: 28).

2. *The proverbs in London Fields*

The paremic stock of the novel seems to be rather insignificant from a quantitative perspective. However, if one takes into consideration the stylistic function of the 18 paremias in a particular context, there emerges a relevant qualitative phenomenon. On the other hand, the subjectivity of the verdict concerning paremic saturation is a serious conundrum since there is no empirical scale against which the paremic status of a text could be measured (discussed in Szpila 2008: 99; cf. 2007: 615-616; 628-629). As regards the identification of the proverbs in *London Fields*, all the 18 paremias are rather easily discernible for an average reader. Again, I am well aware that the above statement is impressionistic since language users differ in many aspects, including proverb familiarity. However, the frequent deployment of paremias in their canonical form may suggest that Amis's intention was not to render adages almost unrecognisable by artistically experimenting with their syntax, but rather he aimed to reassess the usual proverb semantics by means of context manipulation (cf. Naciscione 2010: 37-55). In the case of truncation and other syntagmatic/paradigmatic transformations, the altered paremias are still distinguishable, albeit they undoubtedly require slightly more complex processing (cf. Szpila 2007: 617-626; 2008: 98, 109 for the discussion of proverb identification and alteration).

From a typographical perspective, the identification of paremias is not facilitated by any visual markers (example 5.5 being an exception, perhaps due to its Latin form), e.g., italics, quotation marks, which clearly accounts for the fact that proverbs are fully integrated within the discourse structure in which they are embedded. Moreover, there are no proverbial introducers (again, with the exception of 4.2) that would highlight the presence of a given adage. From the above, it may be inferred that the reader is expected to be familiar with canonical forms of proverbs as well as be able to reconstruct paremias from their representative constituents or frequent transformations.⁶

In total, four characters use proverbial language with Nicola Six being the most skilled at aptly choosing figurative expressions. On a similar intellectual level, Samson Young (the alleged narrator) and upper-class Guy Clinch exhibit certain cultural familiarity as well. On the contrary, Keith Talent (described as “working class, petty crook, wife-beater, rapist,” *LF* 4) on numerous occasions fails to grasp the, other than literal, meaning of a given proverb. Proverbs ought to be treated as symbols (Honeck 1997: 123; Langlotz 2006: 77),⁷ therefore one may interpret linguistic competence as a sub-component of the so-called semi-otic competence.⁸ To boot, Halliday postulates that “[l]anguage is itself a potential: it is the totality of what the speaker can do. (By ‘speaker’ I mean always the language user, whether as speaker, listener, writer, or reader: *homo grammaticus*, in fact)” (1996: 62; italics original). From a cognitive point of view, the inability to discern the figurative meaning of adages is characteristic of a young child’s speech and may be additionally regarded as an indicator of more or less severe mental impairment, which has been often noted by psycholinguists interested in proverb processing (Norrick 1985: 82-84; Dundes 1994: 44; Honeck 1997 *passim*; Mieder 2008: 24-26, cf. the literal interpretation of idioms in Langlotz 2006: 20). In the same vein Keith Talent may be viewed as a retarded adult addicted to television, pornography and darts.

3. Proverbs used in the canonical form⁹

Paremiias belonging to this category constitute 50% of the corpus and may be said to act as contextually appropriate comments or characteristic verbal manifestations of a given character’s idiolect. In general, they ought not to be perceived as instances of proverbial repudiation, rather they function as literary re-evaluations of folk wisdom or, in the case of examples 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, as prefabricated units succinctly describing reality without necessarily attempting to enter into polemics with prototypical proverbial meanings (cf. “[W]hen the proper proverb is chosen for a particular situation, it is bound to fit perfectly, becoming an *effective formulaic strategy of communication*,” Mieder 2008: 9; emphasis mine). The first three instances of proverb use demonstrate the language-economy function (Szpila 2008: 112) of employing fixed expressions in discourse instead of stylisti-

cally unsophisticated circumlocutions, while the remaining ones implicitly (3.5, 3.6) or explicitly (3.7) comment on a given proverb's semantics by using two distinct techniques.

3.1 *It takes one to know one*

'Camera don't lie like. That last film he was always giving her one. She wasn't complaining, no way. She said nobody did it quite like Burton.'

'Yeah,' said Nicola, and leant forward with her hands on the table like a teacher, 'and he probably had to stagger into his trailer or his bungalow to throw up between the takes. He's a fruit, Keith. And as I said, who cares? Don't worry. It does your masculinity credit that you can't see it. It takes one to know one. And you aren't one, are you Keith.' (190)

In this case, the proverb is used by Nicola Six who aims to convince Keith that his favourite film star is not heterosexual. Before applying the proverb in this situation, she enumerates (in the internal argumentation) two activities belonging to the perceptive 'like' type process and one classified as a desiderative process (Halliday 2014: 257). On this basis, it may be inferred that the celebrity is being treated as an object of female desire and that he is perceived as a product shaped by his numerous fans (189-190). The use of the paremia in this context may be a subtle intratextual reference to *Beauty is in the eye of the beholder* (see 3.6 below) as both Nicola Six and the film star are devoid of social independence.

The deployment of a proverb in its canonical form (and preserving the prototypical semantics and pragmatics) is quite unusual for Amis since, in most cases, he alters either of the aforementioned three categories. Interestingly, *It takes one to know one* is one of two paremias in *London Fields* employed in canonical form while also fulfilling the prototypical semantics and pragmatics (the other being 3.2).¹⁰ The frequent paradigmatic/syntagmatic, semantic, and pragmatic changes of adages may be due to the fact that Amis strives for creativity in language use, has a thorough knowledge of each proverb's canonical form, semantics, pragmatics, and assumes that the reader will be able to interpret his comments on a given paremia (see for e.g., 3.5,

3.6, 3.7) or any slight, yet significant, structural changes. Moreover, as postmodern writer known for his innovativeness, he may simply want to avoid being too old-fashioned and stereotypical in his use of proverbial language: “[Proverb modification] may be treated as an avoidance strategy on the part of the author/narrator against sounding too trite and hackneyed” (Szpila 2008: 106-107).

3.2 *When it rains, it pours*

It seemed now that she would finally have to kiss him. Well, he asked for it. Nicola felt a noise, a soft rearrangement, go off inside her, something like a moan— one of those tragic little whimpers, perhaps, that thwarted lovers are said to emit. She breathed deep and leaned down and offered Keith the Rosebud: fish mouth, the eyes thankfully closed. ‘Mah,’ she said when it was over (and it lasted half a second). ‘Patience, Keith. You’ll find with me,’ she said, ‘that when it rains, it pours.’ (190)

Nicola proverbially demonstrates her dominance after having shown Keith her self-made sex tape. As she escorts him to the door, she finally decides to give him a “half-a-second” kiss and concludes this brief instance of intimacy with the abovementioned proverb. As regards the form, *When it rains, it pours* is an American proverb corresponding to the older British adage *It never rains but it pours* (W. Mieder, personal communication, September 28, 2015), therefore no structural alterations can be posited in this case. Taking into consideration the few lines preceding the adage, it may be stated that Nicola temporarily loses control over the situation as she feels (perceptive ‘like’ type process) a quasi-physical uneasiness building up in her. Again, using Hallidayan terms the Actor is an abstract entity which performs the attributive process on the Senser (2014: 249), present in the line: “Nicola felt a noise...go off inside her.” However, she seems to regain her *femme fatale* status by choosing to use the figurative expression, therefore strengthening her superiority over Keith Talent. Moreover, the paremia *When it rains, it pours* may be said to fulfil both the micro- and macrofunction in the text¹¹ since it does foreshadow Nicola’s manipulative behaviour

towards Keith (amongst other characters) and hints at the ultimate plot twist towards the end of the novel. Interpreted from a slightly different angle, it may also anticipate Nicola and Keith's sexual intercourse, which is eventually initiated by her, albeit with certain grotesque elements (see p. 428).

3.3 *Ask no questions and I will tell you no lies*

Keith completed his meal in silence, with a couple of breaks for cigarettes. Then he said, 'Come on, Clive. Up you get, mate.'

The great dog climbed stiffly to its feet, one back leg raised and shivering.

'Come on, my son. Don't sit around here in this fuckin old folks' home, do we.'

Grimly, his long head resting on an invisible block, like an executioner, Clive stood facing the front door.

'No way. We're off.' He looked at his wife and said, 'Where? Work. In the correct environment.' He extended an indulgent knuckle to the baby's cheek, and then added, with perhaps inordinate bitterness, 'You just don't comprehend about my darts, do you. What my darts means to me. No conception.' His eyebrows rose. His gaze fell. He shook his head slowly as he turned. 'No...conception.'

'Keith?'

Keith froze as he opened the door.

'Would you give her a bottle when you come in?'

The shoulders of Keith's silver leather jacket flexed once, flexed twice. 'Ask me no questions,' he said, 'and I'll tell you no lies.' (315-316; emphasis original)

Keith's brief conversation with his wife epitomises his wickedness and failure to fulfil parental duties. The proverb serves as a means to cut Kath short, thus it may be stated that it performs an important pragmatic function. Interestingly, Keith's wife (as a speaker taking part in the conversation or rather the quasi-

monologue) is not mentioned at all in the above fragment. Her only contribution to their interaction is the polite request about feeding the baby. She is, as if, 'muted' and remains passive to the point of not rebutting her husband's accusations about her inability/unwillingness to understand his darts fascination. Her lack of voice is best seen in the line where Keith gives an answer to an implied question ("Where? Work. In the correct environment."). Keith's dominance, apart from the obvious quantitative aspect, is also noticeable in his being the Actor and performer of many processes, which is missing in Kath's case.

Bearing in mind Keith's limited intellectual capacity, the correct use of the paremia seems quite unnatural, especially when his idiolect is considered as a whole. He frequently makes grammatical mistakes, uses slang expressions and is not a very eloquent speaker, to say the least. In this particular case, he may be called an "idiot savant"¹² as understood by Abrahams and Babcock, who further elaborate on the subject: "Proverbial wisdom from the mouths of fools and clowns and children operates as a complicated framing device in which proverbs become moves in a literary game" (1977: 424).

3.4 *There is a first time for everything* (used in the past tense form) is present in the fragment:

[S]he remembered the killer line she had laid on Guy Clinch. 'There's just one other thing: I'm a virgin.' A *virgin*. Oh, *yeah*. Nicola had never said those words before, even when she had the chance: twenty years ago, in that little gap between finding out what it meant and ceasing to be one. She had never said when it was true (especially not then. And would it have made much odds to the drunken Corsican in his mag-strewn boiler room, beneath the hotel at Aix-en-Provence?). 'I'm a virgin.' But there was a first time for everything. (191; emphasis original; cf. 133)

After her regular meeting with Keith, Nicola reflects upon her physical encounter with Guy Clinch, which was ultimately thwarted by her lie about being a virgin. The paremia may be interpreted as a reference either to the fact that she had never said the line before or to a more exophoric level that *There is a*

first time for everything could function equally well as a comment on sexual initiation in general. Interestingly, the transitivity patterns identified in this paragraph indicate that, at least in this case, she is entirely in control and is not affected by any external phenomena. Both the context (the seduction of Clinch) and linguistic construction (transitivity) prove her mental independence (cf. the opposite transitivity patterns in 3.6 below).

As regards the past tense form, it does not seem to be an intentional stylistic foregrounding, rather it is determined by the overall structure of the narrative. Nevertheless, the possibility of its being an intentional stylistic operation should not be completely excluded from the analysis. In that case, the use of the past tense form would signify a temporal paremic transformation functioning as a situational delimiter. To support this hypothesis, a passage from Honeck is cited:

“[T]he main verb is almost always stated in the present (nonpast) or, less often, the future tense. It is unlikely that proverbs set in the past tense exist, because such usage almost always particularizes an utterance and robs it of its omnitemporal and polysituational potential. Within this constraint, however, there seems to be no limit on the kind of sentence that can be used to frame a proverb” (1997: 14).

3.5 *Love is blind*

Tall, thin, the blind man stood with blind erectness, backward-tending, as road and pavement users criss-crossed past. Something wavery in his stance suggested that he had been there for some time, though he showed no distress. In fact he was smiling. Guy strode forward. He took the blind man's blind arm. ‘Would you like a hand, sir?’ he asked. ‘Here we are.’ he said, guiding, urging. On the far kerb Guy cheerfully offered to take the blind man further—home, anywhere. Sightless eyes started at his voice in astonishment. (222)

Guy was kind, or kind that day. It was all right for him. He had Nicola's postcard in his pocket. The suit of armour: the brave words. Any other time he might have walked right past. Love is blind; but it makes you see the

blind man, teetering on the roadside; it makes you seek him out with eyes of love. (223)

Contextually, this paremia operates on two planes. On the one hand, it is a semi-literal reference to the visually impaired elderly man whom Clinch helps cross the street and on the other, to the metaphorical dimension of the proverb proper. With regard to the entire novel, the proverb hints at the role of love in the post-modern world tormented by an imminent nuclear disaster. Guy Clinch is shocked when the man is reduced to tears: “The present seemed perfectly bearable...until you felt again what it was like when people were kind” (222). In terms of the transitivity theory, Clinch is the Actor performing various activities pertaining to the domain of ‘material’ clauses (Halliday 2014: 243-245). The comment on the proverb, belonging either to Clinch through the free indirect speech or the omniscient narrator, clearly indicates the reversal of roles: love (an abstract entity) becomes the Actor, therefore is ascribed substantial significance.

This observation is noteworthy if we take into consideration the quasi-symmetrical structure surfacing in the final lines of the second excerpt, that is to say, the proverb proper: “Love is blind” vs. “[blind love] makes you seek him out with eyes of love.” On a literal level, it is simply a banal contradictory statement but from a figurative perspective it is a very meaningful elaboration on the proverbial truth. Additionally, Guy’s infatuation with Nicola Six, which may be deemed a negative fact considering that he is a married man (following the most common view which regards adultery as immoral), summarised by the proverb *Love is blind*, is at the same time seen more positively since it makes Guy sensitive to human misery. The fragments: “He had Nicola’s postcard in his pocket” and “Any other time he might have walked right past” clearly prove the above point.

There is yet another intriguing stylistic operation concerning the use of *Love is blind*, viz. Amis constructs his discourse as if on the basis of the paremia’s final constituent by the repetition of the adjective *blind* (not to mention that the man on the road is literally blind): “blind erectness,” “blind man’s blind arm,” and also its synonym: “sightless eyes” corresponding, albeit not overtly in form, to the paremia. Considering the sheer number of words and phrases referring to the proverb (and the metaphorical

elaboration discussed above), the following question should be asked: is the function of *Love is blind* primary or secondary in this particular context (cf. Szpila 2007: 617)? Has it been simply an appropriate stylistic choice fitting the plot or, on the contrary, has this excerpt been planned to match the proverb? The above questions ought to be left unanswered as we cannot determine what the author actually had in mind while writing the passage.

3.6 *Beauty is in the eye of the beholder* is found in the fragment where Nicola Six elaborates on her passionate hatred of bikinis:

As she spoke Nicola was looking, not at Keith, but at her bikini and what it framed. She rightly imagined that he was doing likewise. The interproximate breasts, concavities of throat and belly, white pyramid, the racing legs. Keith did not know, could not have guessed, would never have believed, that half an hour ago this body had stood naked before the bathroom mirror while its mistress wept—drenching the feet of the god of gravity. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Which is fun for the beholder; but what about the owner, the tenant? Nicola wondered whether she'd ever had a minute's pleasure from it. Even at sixteen, when you're excitedly realizing what you've got (and imagining it will last for ever), you're still noticing what you haven't got, and will never get. Beauty's hand is ever at its lips, bidding adieu. Yes, but bidding adieu *in the mirror*. (127; emphasis original)

The context of this “paremic locus” (Szpila 2011: 172) is Nicola and Keith's conversation in which she informs him on the etymology of the word bikini. She utters the proverb in an internal monologue and reflects on her being the object of male desire. She seems to be highly disillusioned and dissatisfied by this reified social role, therefore the comment following the adage serves as an attempt to assess her situation by means of reference to traditional wisdom, albeit interpreted in a semi-literal and mildly polemical way. As regards the transitivity patterns, in the excerpt preceding the proverb, Keith is the Actor who performs the cognitive ‘like’ type process (Halliday 2014: 257), while pondering about the fact that Nicola must have been naked before he met her. Therefore, Keith seems to be in control during

their interaction. In the further elaboration on the proverb, beauty (name of entity: abstract, *ibid.* 58) is ascribed the function of the Actor. A conclusion may be drawn, that the act of physical reification becomes intensified by the use of specific clause constructions.

As regards the ensuing elaboration on the adage itself, there are two relevant operations (following the order in which they appear): one involving the proverb's final constituent and the other being a literary comment on its initial constituent.¹³ The former manipulation of the prototypical proverbial meaning, noticeable in the fragment: "Which is fun for the beholder; but what about the owner, the tenant?" is achieved primarily by focusing on the last lexeme in the syntagmatic structure, *viz. beholder*, thus creating a clear extension of the *paremia* in question. Furthermore, the use of two near-synonyms, *viz. owner* and *tenant*, seems to be relevant in the overall interpretation, especially when the aforementioned reification of Nicola's body (supported by the transitivity patterns) is taken into consideration. If one were to disregard the possibility of Amis being a superfluous writer unaware of his stylistic choices, it could be quite easily observed that the presence of these two near-synonyms is not purely coincidental; on the contrary, it may be an important interpretational hint. That is to say, *owner* has a wider referential scope than *tenant*; I would venture to say that most speakers would probably agree on its being semantically less specific than *tenant*. Whether or not one may 'own beauty' is rather debatable but the state of being 'beauty's tenant' is even more vague. However, in the legal sense *tenant* means "a person in possession of real property by any right or title,"¹⁴ therefore it may be inferred that this seemingly redundant repetition actually aims to emphasise the (rather pejorative) transactional aspect of beauty in this context.

The latter stylistic manipulation is visible in: "Beauty's hand is ever at its lips, bidding adieu. Yes, but bidding adieu *in the mirror*." From a formal point of view, it is achieved by means of the previously mentioned Actor function and personification (cf. 3.5). To my mind, the italicised phrase is an interpretational key as it stresses the juxtaposition between the solitary realisation of one's physical shortcomings and the previously discussed passiveness while one's appearance is being judged by others. Sure-

ly, my understanding is merely a fraction of what may be said about this excerpt, nevertheless, it does seem acceptable to state that the employment of the initial paremic constituent in a figurative passage is a form of play on the prototypical proverbial meaning.

3.7 *Look before your leap; Waste not want not; A stitch in time saves nine*

It occurs to me that certain themes—the ubiquitization of violence, for example, and the delegation of cruelty—are united in the person of Incarnacion. There is, I believe, something sadistic in her discourses, impeccably hackneyed though they remain. I wonder if Mark Asprey pays her extra to torment me. She has been giving me a particularly terrible time about the stolen ashtray and lighter. And I'm often too beat to get out of her way. Endlessly, deracinatingly reiterated, her drift is this. Some objects have *face value*. Other objects have *sentimental value*. Sometimes the *face value* is relatively small, but the *sentimental value* is high. In the case of the missing ashtray and lighter, the *face value* is relatively small (for one of Mark Asprey's means), but the *sentimental value* is high (the gifts of an obscure but definitely first-echelon playmate). Being of high *sentimental value*, these objects are irreplaceable, despite their relatively low *face value*. Because it's not just the money. Do you hear her? Do you get the picture? It takes me half a day to recover from one of these drubbings. I am reminded of the bit in *Don Quixote* when Sancho has spent about fifteen pages saying nothing but look before you leap and waste not want not and a stitch in time saves nine, and Quixote bursts out (I paraphrase freely, but I really understand): Enough of thine adages! For an hour thou hast been coining them, and each one hath been like a dagger through my very soul... (349-350; emphasis original)

This proverbially saturated passage is Samson Young's internal monologue after having been reprimanded by the maid about Mark Asprey's missing ashtray and lighter. Young compares her

incessant insistence on having respect for Asprey's possessions to a well-known quote from Miguel de Cervantes' *Don Quixote* in which Quixote scolds Sancho Panza for overusing proverbial language (cf. Cervantes 1998: 925; for the discussion of scholarship and analysis of proverbs in *Don Quixote* consult Mieder 2008: 277-316). Also, this example of intertextuality is characteristic of Amis's style (Finney 2008: 86-94; see also Abrahams and Babcock 1977: 417 for intertextuality regarding proverbs in *Don Quixote*). Apparently, adages are strongly associated with a highly irritating idiolect, therefore Young's connotations clearly point to his dislike of figurative expressions used to ascribe sentimental value to ordinary objects.

Interestingly, the explicit reference to *Don Quixote* and, in particular, to Sancho's highly vexing manner of preaching by proverb-stacking¹⁵ (for more illustrative examples see Mieder 2008: 284-285) may hint at certain attitudinal similarities between Incarnacion—Sancho and Samson—Don Quixote. It might be purely coincidental but the Spanish maid's name, Incarnacion, seems to be a blending of the following heteronyms: *incarnation* and *encarnación* (also used as a popular Spanish name). This onomastic issue becomes relevant if one is to interpret Incarnacion as a sort of moralistic embodiment of Sancho Panza (his paremic repository described as a "sack full of proverbs," qtd. in Mieder 2008: 283-284). Furthermore, the maid is Spanish; clearly, the aforementioned analogy breaks if Samson's American origin is taken into consideration. What may be stated with more certainty is that Amis purposely defamiliarised the maid's name in order to draw the reader's attention to it and perhaps make him wonder about the motivation behind this stylistic operation. Even though the interpretation involving the two-set analogy is consistent only to a certain point, the following quotation (relating to Sancho and Don Quixote's interactions) does support it: "Clearly there exists at least 'three pairs of antithetical ideas and currents' in this uniquely paired couple of characters, i.e., 'the opposition madness-sanity,' 'the opposition art-reality,' and 'the opposition between subjective-objective'" (Mieder quoting Durán 2008: 283).

Incarnacion's insistence on respecting the "sentimental value" of seemingly ordinary objects is a literary echo of Sancho's down-to-earthness reflected in his numerous nagging comments

on his companion's irrational ventures (cf. Abrahams and Babcock 1977: 425-426). It may also be speculated that Young's quest to capture the thrilling apocalyptic escalation leading to murder (the account of which was meant to be published as his ultimate bestseller) is yet another ill-fated "tilting at windmills." To prove the above point, a few confessions made by Young towards the end of the novel will be discussed here. In the two closing revelatory sections, the reader finally learns that Young (who was supposed to be the puppetmaster behind the story) has, in fact, been slyly outsmarted by Nicola Six (forced to murder her and then commit suicide by swallowing a pill) and by the successful writer Mark Asprey:

She outwrote me. Her story worked. And mine didn't. There's really nothing more to say. (466)

Nicola destroyed my book. She must have felt a vandal's pleasure. Of course, I could have let Guy go ahead and settled for the 'surprise' ending. But she knew I wouldn't. Flatteringly, she knew I wasn't quite unregenerate. She knew I wouldn't find it worth saving, this wicked thing, this wicked book I tried to write, plagiarized from real life. (467)

[in the final letter to Mark Asprey] PPS: You didn't set me up. Did you? (468)

Unlike Don Quixote who finally learns his lesson and regains sanity, Young dies slowly while coming to terms with his disillusionment and painfully acknowledging his defeat caused by unrealistic pursuits. The above proves that these three paremias (or rather the literary context evoked by them) are highly relevant not only in the humorous excerpt but also in the entire plot.

4. Syntagmatic transformations

As already mentioned, this category (containing four proverbs) is the most heterogenous one since some instances of paremias are only truncated without any other transformations (or, on the contrary, are an example of addition), others are an amalgamation of syntagmatic and paradigmatic modifications, while still others display multiple alterations, hence being the most difficult to classify.

4.1 *It's an ill wind that blows nobody good*

When Nicola was good she was very very good. But when she was bad...In the VIP Lounge there were scenes of protest and violent rejection. One old man kept distractedly offering money to a uniformed PR officer. Coldly Nicola drank her brandy, wondering how death could take people so unprepared. That night she had acrobatic sex with some unforgivable pilot. She was nineteen by this time, and had long left home. Potently, magically, uncontrollably attractive, Nicola was not yet beautiful. But already she was an ill wind, blowing no good. Considered more generally—when you looked at the human wreckage she left in her slipstream, the nervous collapses, the shattered careers, the suicide bids, the blighted marriages (and rottener divorces)—Nicola's knack of reading the future left her with one or two firm assurances: that no one would ever love her enough, and those that did were not worth being loved enough by. (16-17)

The use of this paremia is probably the most stylistically sophisticated transformation since it encompasses a few permutations. Its formal composition will not be discussed here as it would require too many syntactic digressions. Moreover, the considerable changes are quite obvious on the level of the surface structure, therefore they are sufficient to make certain semantic observations.

This modified proverb is, at the same time, highly relevant in terms of its macrofunction in *London Fields*, viz. it provides an early revealing testimony of Nicola's destructive personality. Accordingly, her role in the novel may be summarised in this way: she is a *femme fatale* figure causing a downfall of everyone she gets involved with by calculated scheming and emotional ruthlessness. In this context, the paremia suggests that even at the age of 19, Nicola was already devoid of any moral core—a feature which did not disappear in her mature life (she turns 36 towards the end of the novel). Although the proverb undergoes several transformations, it may be stated that they do not serve as a means of its truth re-assessment but rather they aim to render the paremia as a contextually appropriate comment on Nicola's

personality, thus fulfilling the aforementioned language-economy function.

4.2 *Curiosity killed the cat*

Duplicity consumed time. Even deciding to have nothing to do with duplicity was time-consuming. After Keith left, to run a local errand, Guy spent an hour deciding not to call Nicola Six. The urge to call her felt innocent, but how could it be? He wasn't about to run upstairs and share the experience with his wife. A pity in a way, he mused, as he paced the room, since all he wanted was the gratification, the indulgence of curiosity. Sheer curiosity. But curiosity was still the stuff that killed the cat. (93-94)

This variant is a prime example of changes in terms of syntagmatic relations. This syntagmatic transformation (addition in semiotic terminology or expansion in paremiological terms) (Chandler 2007: 90) serves the purpose of rendering the proverb a stylistically inconspicuous element juxtaposed with the foregrounded lexeme *curiosity*. One possible interpretation is that the proverb itself does not stand on its own, instead it is an extended foregrounding of "curiosity." An observation could be made that Amis again repeats the kernel of the paremia in non-figurative contexts, thus highlighting the proverb proper (cf. examples 3.5, 3.6, 5.3). It may be argued that this is one of the very few examples discussed in this paper in which the transformation, albeit noticeable, does not seem to affect substantially the overall meaning of the proverb. Therefore, it might be treated as a counterexample of the pattern that whenever structural transformations occur, a change in meaning usually follows.

As can be easily deduced from the context, *Curiosity killed the cat* describes a situation when Guy is morally torn between pursuing his budding extramarital affair and remaining faithful to his wife by not calling Nicola. Judging from his later inability to resist his object of desire and eventually breaking up his family, it may be concluded that this paremia also fulfils an important macrofunction since he actually does end up metaphorically killed (or better heart-broken) by Nicola Six.

Additionally, the fact that Amis used a syntagmatic transformation based on expansion, thus making the proverb even more prominent, is consistent with what has been said above concerning the unproblematic identification of paremias in *London Fields*. For instance, had Amis wished to be more stylistically sophisticated and less straightforward in the deployment of *Curiosity killed the cat*, he could have chosen the following expression: “well, you know what happened to the cat.”

4.3 *The camera doesn't lie*

The paremia is used by Keith as a means of self-assurance that his favourite film star is, indeed, heterosexual. Chronologically, the excerpt cited below immediately precedes the fragment discussed in 3.1. By employing a paremia which conveys an easily comprehensible message, Talent succeeds at making a concise and relevant comment about Burton's sexuality off and on screen.

The workout king, the erection lookalike: however fearless and patriotic you made him, however many wives and Bibles and three-foot Bowie knives you gave him, he still belonged to locker rooms, cuboid buttocks, testosterone hotels.

‘Burton Else's a happily married man,’ said Keith. ‘He loves his wife. Loves the woman. Do anything for her.’

Nicola waited, thinking about love, and watching the dull invitation to violence subside in Keith's eyes.

‘Camera don't lie like. That last film he was always giving her one. She wasn't complaining, no way. She said nobody did it quite like Burton.’ (190)

Keith's utterances are rather short, containing on average 7.5 syllables, therefore it may be stated that his manner of expression is unsophisticated and syntactically unvaried. Interestingly, the paremia is rendered in a non-standard English form (with the contraction *don't* replacing the grammatically correct third-person *doesn't*). Furthermore, the colloquial *like* immediately follows the proverb, serving as a stylistically appropriate addition. Again, the term “idiot savant” (cf. 3.3) may be used to summarise Talent's contribution. The peculiar form of the pare-

mia in question is characteristic of Keith's idiolect and proves, on yet another occasion, Amis's creative manipulation of proverbial structures and meanings.

4.4 *In for a penny, in for a pound*

The truncated version of this paremia is used by Keith as a reference to the burglary planned by Thelonus and himself. Furthermore, an intriguing paradox is found in the description following the proverb, viz. transitivity patterns which foreground the despicable view on petty thieves (burglars are in turn "burgled by fellow burglars," 248).

Their plan was deceptively simple. Thelonus's baby-mamma Lilette worked as a cleaning-lady—but never for very long. As soon as any household felt the time was right to entrust her with a doorkey, Lilette felt the time was right to entrust it to Thelonus (who had it copied) and then quit the following day. The following night Thelonus would be stopping by in the small hours... Thelonus seemed offended by Keith's mild hint that the filth would soon put two and two together.

'Filth don't know shit,' he said. 'This is the big one. It have long bread, man.'

'Bingo,' said Keith.

As planned, Keith showed up at the Golgotha shortly after nine. Thelonus was there, as planned. Quite untypically, and not very encouragingly, Thelonus was drunk. 'Sdoveo,' said Thelonus. 'Svodeo.' He was trying to say 'Videos'. Another stretch of time passed while Thelonus tried to say 'Digital'. Well, in for a penny, thought Keith (prophetically enough). (247)

The adage is a clear hint that certain seemingly trifling obstacles are most likely to precede a complete fiasco, which seems correct since their joint venture turns out to be an ill-conceived endeavour. First of all, it turns out that their getaway car contains no petrol and when they finally do arrive at the chosen location, they realise that it has already been burgled countless times. To make matters worse, Keith soon observes that Thelonus has made a mistake and chose an ordinary corner shop instead of a

video store they had originally intended to rob. Finally, their misadventure gets from bad to worse when they become aware of the owners' presence. They promptly decide to threaten the old Polish couple until they disclose where their precious belongings are hidden. When Thelonius and Keith fail to elicit this response (leaving their DNA on the dressing-table), they simply rummage through the couple's possessions only to find that they are poor and do not own anything of significant value. Thus, they abort their endeavour and Keith tries to overcome his frustration by getting drunk.

The above summary shows that "in for a penny," is a clear foreshadowing of the ultimate failure awaiting the characters. In this respect, the paremia's function is quite similar to the one observed in examples 3.2, 4.1, 4.2, albeit its impact is profound to a lesser degree, that is to say, it does not fulfil the macrofunction noted in the aforementioned cases. Instead, the parenthetical comment indicates that the adage may be regarded as a symbol functioning on a deep stylistic level due to its noticeable relevance in the specific context.

5. Alteration by means of lexical substitution

There are as many as five paremias in this category (including two debatable examples), which clearly indicates that lexical substitution is the most productive alteration in the novel (apart from the heterogenous category encompassing syntagmatic transformations). Radical changes in proverbial paradigmatic relations (involving mainly negation) may be an adequate argument for making the assumption that the aforementioned alterations are explicit contradictions of traditional wisdom. The semiotic commutation test, viz. the substitution transformation, serves hereafter as a methodological tool for investigating the underlying structure on the level of the *signifiant* (Dundes 1968: 6; Chandler 2007: 87-90, cf. Copley 2001: 171; Dirven and Radden 2004: 20-21). Examples provided in this section aim to prove the hypothesis that proverbs altered by means of lexical substitution are a firm reassessment of folk wisdom. These examples, though seemingly similar to the re-evaluations analysed in the canonical group, are different in the respect of being noticeably more polemical and straightforward.

5.1 *Silence is golden*

The following paremia is an instance of a paradigmatic transformation (substitution of “silence is golden” by the nominative absolute “silence being golden”). It ought not to be regarded as a truncated version of *Speech is silver, silence is golden*, since the two forms, though tightly related semantically and partly structurally, are two distinct proverbs (W. Mieder, personal communication, September 28, 2015).

When Nicola asked Keith about his romantic discretion, about his ability to keep his mouth shut on the subject of women and sex, Keith coughed and answered in the following terms: ‘Never do that. No way.’ This was untrue. It was by no means the case. He *always* did that. When it came to kissing and telling, Keith was a one-man oral tradition...Keith had tried getting by without a regular bird, and his subsequent disintegrations were invariably dramatic. All the more reason to keep your mouth shut, if you could, silence being golden, as they said. ...Keith loved to kiss and tell. But what could he tell about Nicola? Not even a kiss. (167-168; emphasis original)

The excerpt which contains the paremic locus is an extensive comment made by the omniscient narrator about Keith's attitude towards Nicola's request to keep their kiss (and perhaps the matter of the sex tapes) a secret. Apart from the presence of the idiom *kiss and tell* and the last two quarters of the proverb proper (quadripartite structure as suggested by Milner, Norrick 1985: 51-57), the fragment: “There was no money in rape. But there was money, it seemed, in Nicola Six” (169) may be regarded as a (perhaps far-fetched) literal interpretation of the proverb. To support this claim, it could be further argued that Keith associates keeping this difficult promise (“silence”) with a lucrative opportunity (“golden”). The proverbial affix (Norrick 1985: 45) “as they said” serves as a stylistic marker to place the adage in cultural context and facilitates the identification of the paremia by the reader.

On the other hand, the line “but there was money, it seemed, in Nicola Six” need not be a literal elaboration on the proverb. As regards the use of the paremia, it may be said to perform an intensifying function, i.e., making the preceding utterance (“all

the more reason to keep your mouth shut”) more prominent and of utmost importance. Considering the fragment describing Keith’s dependence on sex, “silence being golden” might be regarded as a succinct manner of summarising Talent’s determination to keep the difficult promise and receive his sexual reward.

5.2 *What goes up must come down* is featured as a truncated form transformed in a paradigmatic manner:

Wehn Kieth got back that...When Kieth...Wehn Keith got back that nite, okay. Eezy does it. Where’s the lite? Okay. No way was them last *pornos* [a kind of drink] too clever. Ditto going again to Shirt Trish again. But Nik siad OK to drink waht felt okay. Dim matter. Siad it dim matter. Man is the hunter. He slammed the front door behind him. He stood at the sink and drank a lot of warm water. Then he felt better. Then he fell over...What was it? Driving back like that—what was it? In the car, and Clive [the dog] sleeping. The moon. And London like it used to be. Many moons of the street-lamps, many moons ago. TV. Jesus. Coming up on me now. Felt yung innit. Uh-oh. What goes down must—oop. Whoop. Yeah that was the phing. Yooph, mate, yooph! (322)

One possible reason for this structural change might be Keith’s inability to access his mental lexicon and search for the appropriate ending for this fixed expression. Furthermore, Keith’s semiotic incompetence (Norrick 1981: 72) may be explained by his being drunk and euphoric after one of the countless sexual escapades. Even though there is no certainty whether this expression was meant to end with “must go up,” it may be cautiously speculated that the lexical substitution was intentional on Amis’s part.¹⁶ If this were the case, Keith’s situation could be interpreted counter to the standard reading of the proverb. His newly-acquired omnipotence would then indicate an upcoming status amelioration.

The passage in which the paremia is embedded resembles a stream of consciousness and, in terms of the transitivity theory, is similar to what Halliday dubbed “Language A” in his stylistic investigations of Golding’s *The Inheritors* (1996: 75), viz. the

above excerpt shares the following main aspects with Halliday's classification (ibid.):

- Keith (subject) is the only participant—"actor in a non-directed action (action clauses are intransitive), or participant in a mental process"
- "the process is action (which is always movement in space)...or mental process (thinking and talking as well as seeing and feeling)"
- "[the process is] active, non-modalized, finite, in simple past tense (one of a linear sequence of mutually independent processes)
- other elements are present (adjuncts), "i.e. treated as circumstances attendant on the process, not as participants in it; there are: static expressions of place...or, if dynamic, expressions of direction (adverbs only)...or of directionality of perception

The truncated version of *What goes up must come down* (and possibly the substitution transformation as well, cf. the final remark in footnote 15) seems to be, in this particular context, completely natural and suitable. The aforementioned aspects concerning transitivity illustrate explicitly the linguistic simplicity of the text, therefore making it quite obvious that the paremia ought to be modified in one way or another, otherwise it would not be consistent stylistically with the entire fragment.

5.3 *Charity begins at home*—in the fragment presented below, the lexeme charity fulfils the role of a mass noun and the kernel of the proverb.

What kind of man was this? How unusual? Guy gave money to charity. For every other man in his circle, charity began at home. And ended there too. Or not quite: charity continued for a mile or so, into the next postal district, and arrived at a small flat with a woman in it. These men winced at their wives' touch; they jerked up too soon to kiss them hello or goodbye. And Guy wasn't like that. (87)

A point need to be made in the preliminary interpretation: the use of the paremia in this context is, as if, a two-step process,

that is to say, *Charity begins at home* is first altered paradigmatically and then an allusion to it is made by means of yet another substitution transformation, which additionally generates an antonym to the verb present in the original proverb.

Bearing in mind the tense change (cf. 3.4 and 4.1), it may be analogically inferred that the figurative expression has the following form: “charity ended at home.”¹⁷ Again, the transformation by lexical substitution renders a structurally contradictory meaning of the preceding fragment (“charity began at home”) but it ought to be treated as a further comment on the aforementioned line and not as its overt repudiation. To boot, the beginning of the ensuing sentence (“or not quite”) explicitly states that the expression in question should not be interpreted as a contradiction of the paremia. Intriguingly, the initial constituent of the proverb is also used on a different plane, viz. *charity* as an abstract entity becomes the Actor in the metaphorical elaboration on the proverb proper. This stylistic operation is, as has been mentioned before, characteristic of Amis’s use of adages (cf. 3.5 and 3.6) and may be said to constitute one of his major techniques for modification of prototypical proverbial meanings.

It would seem that the juxtaposition constructed on the proverbial basis is a salient testimony to Guy’s altruistic benevolence as opposed to his egoistic counterparts (“and Guy wasn’t like that”). On the contrary, the excerpt is a manifestation of his utter hypocrisy, which is well illustrated by the following quotation:

In the last month he had given £15,000 to charity, and he was feeling terribly guilty.

‘Fifteen *grand*? said Hope. ‘Save the Children, huh?’ She herself had given a similar amount to charity in the last month, but to galleries and opera houses and orchestras and other repositories of social power. ‘What about *our* child? Who’s going to save him?’

‘Marmaduke’, said Guy, ‘will have plenty of money.’ (85; emphasis original)

Taking into consideration Hope’s fierce criticism of financially supporting humanitarian organisations and her preference for donating money to “repositories of social power,” “charity ends

at home" may not only be applied to "every other man in [Guy's] circle" but also to these men's upper-class wives. Clearly, the elaboration on *Charity begins at home* serves as a further comment on Guy's hypocritical behaviour (concerning both his being guilty of giving money to charity and becoming more and more estranged from his wife) explicitly stated in a fragment preceding the proverb: "He had begun to enter the world of duplicity. He was passing through the doors of deception, with their chains of lies" (86-87).

5.4 *There are plenty of (good) fish in the sea* is uttered by Samson Young when he tries to comfort Guy's sister-in-law that her gluttonous lifestyle will not jeopardise a potential relationship:

Lizzyboo says she eats too much when she is unhappy. She tells me this, between mouthfuls, in the Clinch kitchen. She tells me more over her shoulder from the icebox or he cooker. It's a terrible thing with her...She takes her head out of the bread-bin to tell me that she doesn't know what she's going to do about it. Although I could point a finger at the world situation, I'm clearly meant to take the blame for this. For this disaster also I am obliged to pocket the tab. 'Come on, honey' I say to her. 'There are plenty of fish in the sea.' Again, a poor choice of words, perhaps. Because there aren't plenty of fish in the sea, not any more. Lizzyboo shakes her head. She looks at the floor. She gets up and heads for the grill and sadly makes herself a cheese dream. (262)

Formally, it is not an alteration by means of lexical substitution but it is treated here as a substitution in the paradigm of the positive/negative form. The second instance of the proverb is unquestionably another example of negation fully compatible with Norrick's terminology (1985: 162). Additionally, Young's use of one adage both in the affirmative and negative form seems to be the most overt denial of proverbial wisdom in the entire novel. Also, the fact that he chooses the canonical form when addressing Guy's sister-in-law and then goes on to deny explicitly what he has said (by means of free indirect discourse), indicates that he treats proverbs as bygone truths. However, by purposely choosing this particular expression to comfort the woman, he

may be said to believe in the persuasive function of adages, hence not denying their value in everyday discourse (see esp. Szpila 2008: 118 for the comment on using proverbs without necessarily accepting their wisdom). To my mind, Young does not really believe in her succeeding at finding a partner (or at the very least he doubts it) since, at the beginning of the novel, he describes her as “[a] fulsomely pretty girl. She is also voluble, indiscreet and, I think, not too bright” (98; see also 135-136). Additionally, Samson is well aware of “her four or five unhappy affairs” (146-147) but he still wants to convince her that she will become romantically fulfilled in the future. Interestingly, she remains single in the novel.

As Kenneth Burke aptly stated: “Proverbs are *strategies* for dealing with *situations*. In so far as situations are typical and recurrent in a given social structure, people develop names for them and strategies for handling them. Another name for strategies might be *attitudes*” (2007: 646; italics original). In the similar vein, Mieder asserts that: “Clearly the meaning and purpose of proverbs are best revealed by strategic use in social situations” (2008: 20). Apart from fulfilling a multitude of pragmatic functions, proverbs may also be perceived as “a tactful use of speech” (Honeck 1997: 109), which is clearly noticeable in the above excerpt. A further contextual explanation is needed: throughout the novel Lizzyboo becomes infatuated with Young and on numerous occasions shows her affection but is consistently firmly rejected by her love interest.¹⁸ However, after each such polite refusal to pursue a romantic relationship with Lizzyboo, Young is remorseful and tries to make up for his lack of interest (cf. “I’m clearly meant to take the blame for this. For this disaster I am obliged to pocket the tab.” 262).

Apart from being an exemplar of the highly important pragmatic function of proverbs (which, in this case, is quite interesting due to Samson’s contrary opinion on the paremia in question), *There are plenty of fish in the sea* may be regarded as a proverb performing the macrofunction (see footnote 9) in *London Fields* since the plot revolves around the concept that the Earth (in physical sense), morality, emotions, human values (amongst others) are ultimately annihilated by a metaphorical nuclear apocalypse (or “the Crisis” as it is originally called). The contradictory statement *There aren’t many fish in the sea*, espe-

cially the ensuing comment “not any more,” clearly points out to the ephemeral nature of centuries-old wisdom.

5.5 *Pecunia non olet* appears when Guy Clinch decides to provide Nicola with a large sum of money. The paremia may be classified as the first genuine example of negation in the sense used by Norrick (1985: 162). As in the case of the previous example, it is formally a syntagmatic transformation but may also be regarded as a substitution in the paradigm of the positive/negative form. It is included here in the substitution transformation category since the positive/negative change in the paradigm is highly relevant in the overall interpretation of the paremia.

The money came in four buff envelopes. They contained used fifties. Much-used fifties. Sitting in his office (with its Japanese furniture and single Visual Display Unit and clean desk), Guy offered up his delicate and increasingly emotional nostrils to a familiar experience: the scurfy smell of old money. It always struck him, the fact that money stank, like the reminder of an insidious weakness in himself. Of course, the poets and the novelists had always patiently insisted as much. Look at Chaucer's cock. Look at Dickens (Dickens was the perfect panning-bowl for myth): the old man up to his armpits in Thames sewage, searching for treasure; the symbolic names of Murdstone and of Merdle, the financier. But all that was myth and symbol, a way of saying that money could somehow be thought of as being smelly, of being scatological. It was frightfully literal-minded of money, he thought, to be actually stinking up the place like this. *Pecunia non olet* was dead wrong. *Pecunia olet*. Christ, heaven stops the nose at it... (250-251; italics original)

Tainted. The money was *tainted*. Certainly those fuming fifties had quite a genealogy: privatized prisons under Pitt, human cargo from the Ivory Coast, sugar plantations in the Caribbean, the East India company, South African uranium mines. This was all true: sweatshops, sanctions-busting, slain rainforests, toxic dumping, and munitions, munitions, munitions. But none of it was

news to Guy.... Hope's money stank too: everywhere, vast bites out of the planet. Go back far enough and all money stinks, is dirty, roils the juices of the jaw. Was there any clean money on earth? Had there ever been any? No. Categorically. Even the money paid to the most passionate nurses, the dreamiest artists, freshly printed, very dry, and shallowly embossed to the fingertips, had its origins in some bastardy on the sweatshop floor. (254-255; emphasis original)

Following Norrick's nomenclature, the most transparent case of negation is understood as the complete sentential negation but one may also distinguish a purely semantic dimension, viz. "dead wrong" as a personal comment which intensifies the syntactic negation. Moreover, the merging of literal and figurative planes, the use of two rhetorical questions and a redundant answer account for the hypothesis that certain proverbial truths may no longer be applicable to define the Postmodern reality.

The highly polemical comments on the proverb proper (probably cited in its Latin version for additional sophistication or for emphasising its antique wisdom) are, by far, the most extensive elaboration on a paremia. Not only do we find various literal remarks on money (e.g., the repetition and emphasis on the lexeme *tainted*) but also references to its similar unclean status in literary contexts and, finally, there is the geopolitical fragment reflecting the dirty origin of money.

Interestingly, when discussing his then-latest novel (*London Fields*), in the interview with Patrick McGrath (1987: 27), Martin Amis describes Guy Clinch in the following way: "And there's a remnant of the upper classes who's sitting very uneasily on a pile of the dirtiest money there is. I mean, all money is dirty if you go back far enough. Someone in a sweatshop somewhere." Clearly, Amis's utterance is an echo of his fictional elaboration on the altered paremia. This may be proof that not only is he stylistically aware of the paremic functions in *London Fields*, but also he is conscious of the role of proverbs in spoken discourse.

6. Conclusions

The detailed analyses of the proverbs identified in Martin Amis's *London Fields* serve as a basis for making a statement that proverbial wisdom (understood in terms of traditional, uni-

versal values) performs a function of stylistic defamiliarization. As regards proverbs presented in the non-canonical form, defamiliarization is achieved by the use of structural alterations, whereas in the examples of canonical forms, the context in which they appear makes them less prototypical instances of the abovementioned effect. Numerous instances of substantial alterations noticeable in various syntagmatic or paradigmatic relations evidently point to the fact that Amis is capable of manipulating proverbial structure in order to achieve a particular literary effect. Moreover, alterations in paradigmatic relations display a significantly higher degree of contradiction than the syntagmatic operations. Elaboration on the nature of prototypical proverb forms has been confirmed to be the author's most frequent stylistic tool for dealing with foregrounding the polemics with standard proverbial meanings. Although it may seem that the occurrence of 18 paremias in Amis's novel is not a substantial corpus (compared to other contemporary works of fiction), it is a sufficient amount to notice the writer's creative methods of rendering popular adages slightly different syntagmatically or paradigmatically, thus obtaining stylistically intriguing effects. As emphasised in the introduction to this paper, the deployment of proverbs in *London Fields* is particularly interesting from the qualitative point of view, since the adages perform important functions both at the form and content planes.

As regards the attitude towards paremias, Nicola Six seems to be the most competent in semiotic (and linguistic) terms. Apparently, the use of proverbs by the characters depends on their social status and mental capability. Furthermore, the transitivity theory has indicated that paremias determine the context to a certain extent, therefore having a profound effect on the overall reception of a given situation. My results regarding Amis's attempt to re-evaluate proverbial wisdom is largely consistent with what Peter Stokes says about the language in Amis's novels: "[A]lthough language may no longer be thought capable of rendering transparent truths, it is still capable of producing, in Foucault's language, *effects*. Amis's fiction, then, investigates the social ends of a postmodern literature cast not as a discourse of truth or realism, but as a discourse of mediated truths or truth-effects" (1997: 300-301); and also: "Amis examines the effects of languages and other representational mediums in constructing

and reconstructing subjects, authors, and authority alike” (ibid. 302). It may be inferred from the above analyses that some paremias are perhaps bound to alter (or better, extend) their traditional meanings to suit the fast-paced Postmodern reality with its new system of values.

The major limitation of this study was undoubtedly the subjectivity of contextual interpretation, in particular the transitivity theory which is commonly regarded as a rather impressionistic methodological tool. Although it may have yielded certain thought-provoking results in the case of most proverbs, its applicability, as signalled in the introduction, was by no means universal and was simply impossible in several analyses. On the other hand, a strict syntactic analysis would inevitably lead to the neglect of semantics, therefore making the study largely artificial. Apart from the individualised reading of certain fragments, the small corpus analysed in the paper may not represent the way in which proverbs are generally used in Postmodern literature and, perhaps more importantly, in Amis’s works. As regards further scholarly examinations, a more thorough and all-encompassing study could be conducted in order to check the hypothesis whether proverbs deployed in Anglo-American Postmodern literature exhibit significant meaning alterations. Naturally, such a study would require a compilation of an annotated corpus for comparative purposes and a scrutiny of any potential patterns.

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Appendix

Proverbs in the canonical form	Proverbs in <i>London Fields</i>
1. <i>It's an ill wind that blows nobody good</i>	"She was an ill wind, blowing no good" (17)
2. <i>Charity begins at home</i>	"Charity began at home" (87)
3. <i>Curiosity killed the cat</i>	"Curiosity was still the stuff that killed the cat" (94)
4. <i>Beauty is in the eye of the beholder</i>	"Beauty is in the eye of the beholder" (127)
5. <i>Silence is golden</i>	"Silence being golden" (167)
6. <i>It takes one to know one</i>	"It takes one to know one" (190)
7. <i>When it rains, it pours</i>	"When it rains, it pours" (190)
8. <i>The camera doesn't lie</i>	"Camera don't lie like" (190)
9. <i>There is a first time for everything</i>	"There was a first time for everything" (191)
10. <i>Love is blind</i>	"Love is blind" (223)
11. <i>In for a penny, in for a pound</i>	"In for a penny" (247)
12. <i>Pecunia non olet</i>	"Pecunia non olet" "Pecunia olet" (251)
13. <i>There are plenty of fish in the sea</i>	"There are plenty of fish in the sea" "There aren't plenty of fish in the sea" (262)
14. <i>Ask no questions and I will tell you no lies</i>	"Ask me no questions and I'll tell you no lies" (316)
15. <i>What goes up must come down</i>	"What goes down must—" (322)
16. <i>Look before you leap</i>	"Look before you leap" (350)
17. <i>Waste not want not</i>	"Waste not want not" (350)
18. <i>A stitch in time saves nine</i>	"A stitch in time saves nine" (350)

Notes

¹ Cf. Žolkovskij's discussion of the artistic aspect of adages: "The artistic nature of paremies [sic] seems also to offer a clue to one of the borderline cases between the thematic and the linguistic components, namely the opposition of particular and general statements. The fact is that general propositions (stating certain universal regularities) that form the content of a large class of proverbs quite often assume the form of a particular statement about individual objects. This is only natural if one takes into consideration that one of the axioms of aesthetics is that art 'embodies the general in the particular.' In other words, general truths (thematic component) are artistically expressed through particular statements (linguistic component)" (1978: 315).

² When referring to paremic transformations, I will be using paremiological and semiotic terminology interchangeably.

³ The term *sémiostylistique* used by Molinié (1995), cf. paremiostylistics (Szpila 2007; 2008 *passim*; 2011: 171), phraseology and stylistics (Naciscione 2010: 20-21). For more on the study of proverbs from the semiotic perspective see Žolkovskij (1978; esp. 311-313), Grzybek (1994), Mieder (2008: 19-21), cf. Fontanille (1999) for a general introduction to semiotic literary studies.

⁴ In Halliday's own words: "Transitivity is the set of options whereby the speaker encodes his experience of the processes of the external world, and of the internal world of his own consciousness, together with the participants in the processes and their attendant circumstances; and it embodies a very basic distinction of processes into two types, those that are regarded as due to an external cause, an agency other than the person or object involved, and those that are not. There are, in addition, many further categories and subtypes. Transitivity is really the cornerstone of the semantic organization of experience" (1996: 81).

⁵ The review of literary study of proverbs is too vast a topic to be covered in a short introduction, moreover it has already been done (for an introduction see esp. Mieder 2008: 26-28; Mieder 2009; Mieder and Bryan 1996; for an informative summary consult Szpila 2008: 97-98, cf. *ibid.* note 1, 124).

⁶ "In the process of identification it is useful to look out for the author's comments. These may pursue a number of aims. Apart from providing cohesion in text, they may indicate that the formation is perceived as a stable word combination by explicitly stating that it is a proverb or using an inserted phrase such as *as the proverb goes, as the saying goes*" (Naciscione 2010: 52; italics original).

⁷ "Language is the semiotic system par excellence; it cannot but signify, and exists only through signification." Lévi-Strauss (qtd. in Chandler 2007: 6). For idiomatic expressions perceived in terms of cultural and linguistic symbolism, cf. Langlotz 2006: 72.

⁸ Cf. "Active proverb-competence involves judgment both of the appropriateness of the saying to the situation, and whether the proverb called forth is actually the best one to use in that situation" (Abrahams and Babcock 1977: 418).

⁹ Except for examples 3.1, 3.2, 4.3, 5.1 and 5.5, all canonical forms are cited from *The Wordsworth Dictionary of Proverbs*.

¹⁰ The three proverbs in 3.7, despite their being used in the canonical form with prototypical semantics and pragmatics, are not treated here as the same case as *It takes one to know one*. I argue that their prototypical features are preserved on purpose for putting emphasis on their old-fashionedness. Furthermore, they are used not so much for communication purposes as for the evocation of a specific passage in *Don Quixote*.

¹¹ Cf. the micro- and macrofunction of proverbs as discussed in Szpila 2008: 113: "Proverbs can semantically refer locally to smaller portions of the text, as well as globally to larger parts, in which case they are used to serve the purpose of global characterizations of the characters, events, behaviours and reactions, reaching far beyond their physical embedding in the text. This function can be called their macrofunction, as opposed to the microfunction of proverbs, which is fulfilled when paremias refer to single actions, events and reactions, with their meanings bound to the immediate context but not reaching beyond it."

¹² "There are also the wise fools and *idiots savants* who, though not the appropriate speaker, nevertheless employ a proverb appropriate to a dramatic situation" (1997: 425; italics original).

¹³ See esp. Szpila 2008: 105 for the detailed discussion on the stylistic effects of splitting proverbs into constituents.

¹⁴ *Oxford Dictionary of English*, 3rd edition, 2010. Oxford University Press [electronic edition].

¹⁵ The employment of three proverbs following in immediate succession in the excerpt cited does not seem to be entirely coincidental since Amis is known for his characteristic use of triadic constructions (including various parts of speech), therefore apart from fulfilling an intensifying function, the three proverbs may be an example of an extended triadic construction.

¹⁶ Cf. the anti-proverb: "Food: what goes down must go up" (as quoted in Mieder and Litovkina 2002: 226). However, it seems highly unlikely that the author was familiar with the aforementioned anti-proverb and used it as an indirect reference to the physiological process usually associated with excessive alcohol consumption. Cf. the comment in Szpila 2008: 111-112 concerning the reader's inability to state with total certainty the reason for the use of a particular proverb in a given novel.

¹⁷ Cf. Mieder and Litovkina 2002: 56 for the use of the lexeme *end* in a different anti-proverbial context.

¹⁸ This quotation epitomises the issue: "Lizzyboo is so pretty and keen and affectionate and straightforward that I'll have to come up with a really world-class excuse" (136).

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ARE PROVERBS CLICHÉ?
AN APPLICATION OF THE ELABORATION LIKELIHOOD
MODEL TO FOLKLORIC PERFORMANCE

Abstract: Although proverbs resemble clichés in the broad sense of being common fixed-form phrases, and have been considered to be clichés by some scholars, proverbs are not prototypically cliché in other ways. Most importantly, whereas clichés are generally presumed to tarnish communicative efforts, the invocation of proverbs may often be an effective rhetorical act. It is here proposed that whether a particular text, in this case a proverb, is perceived as cliché may depend as much on contextual factors surrounding the performance of the text as on the familiarity of the text itself. The Elaboration Likelihood Model, which grew out of the persuasion literature in social psychology, describes two different routes to persuasion. Analysis with respect to the ELM suggests that proverb performances may be successful either because they provide useful arguments (i.e., by way of the central route) or because they exploit any of a number of heuristic truth cues (i.e., by way of the peripheral route); in either case, a successful performance is unlikely to be deemed cliché. Proverb performances that fail, however, may be deemed cliché—either because the arguments they present fail or because heuristic cues (e.g., their commonness) result in rejection of the message without consideration of its merits. The likelihood of these outcomes, though, may depend as much on the type of processing used by the audience as it does on the invocation of the proverbial text itself.

Keywords: proverb(s), paremiology, cliché(s), Elaboration Likelihood Model, persuasion, central route to persuasion, peripheral route to persuasion, folklore, traditional wisdom

Many of us have had educational experiences that have prepared us to appreciate the humor of the t-shirt slogan that warns us to “Avoid Clichés Like the Plague.” However, contrary to the long history of terms that refer to related linguistic categories—like proverbs, which were recognized at least as far back as the ancient Greeks (Whiting, 1932)—the term cliché itself is a relatively recent invention. When the C volume of the *Oxford English Dic-*

tionary was released in 1893, the term cliché was included only as a foreign word and only with reference to its technical definition as a type of printing surface from which multiple identical copies could be made (Pickrel, 1985; *Webster's*, 1989); the term's use in reference to a kind of stereotyped speech act appears to date only to the late 19th century (Haberer, 2005-2006; Kirkpatrick, 1996; Partridge, 1966; Pickrel, 1985, *Webster's*, 1989).

In its application to speech acts and other kinds of endeavors in which originality is presumably possible and desirable¹, the designation of an act as cliché has apparently always been derogatory. In no small part, the vilification of the cliché seems to be linked to an historical shift in the ethos of the educated. Whereas familiarity with stores of shared knowledge was once regarded as the hallmark of a good education, the rise of originality as a defining intellectual virtue meant that having ideas of one's own was at least as important as being familiar with a common canon of culturally significant texts (Goldfine & King, 1994; Obelkevich, 1988).

The admonition that clichés are to be avoided has been maintained in many modern writing textbooks (e.g., Axelrod & Cooper, 2013; McKernan, 1988) and style guides (e.g., *The AMA Handbook of Business Writing*, Wilson, & Wauson, 2010; the *AMA Manual of Style*, American Medical Association, 2007; *The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, American Psychological Association, 2010). Although such guides make it clear that clichés are to be avoided, however, what they leave far less clear is what they are. The linguistic category of the cliché has apparently been much easier to revile than to define (Goldfine & King, 1994, Haberer, 2005-2006, Kirkpatrick, 1996; Partridge, 1966; Pickrel, 1985; Rank, 1984; *Webster's*, 1989). It has, in fact, been noted that “it has become something of a linguistic cliché to say that it is difficult to define a cliché” (Kirkpatrick, 1996, p. 16). This problem has long been recognized. For example, in one early study, seven raters independently indicated the clichés they found in a speech by Franklin D. Roosevelt; of the 55 phrases selected as being cliché by at least one rater, none was agreed to be cliché by five or more of the raters and 62% were identified as cliché by only a single rater. What's more, raters were not even necessarily consistent with themselves, being more likely to mark a phrase as cliché if it was presented in isolation (in

a list) rather than in the context of a speech (Miller & Villarreal, 1945).

These problems of identifying defining features of the cliché may reflect, at least in part, the tendency of the category of the cliché to be “an inveterate borrower” (Kirkpatrick, 1996, p. 18). Alternatively it may be that the domain of the cliché is perhaps not so much compulsive in its borrowing as particularly adept at linguistic chameleonism, changing in appearance depending on the circumstances. Clichéd similes (e.g., light as a feather, strong as an ox), after all, do not cease to be similes when they become cliché although we may well see and respond to them differently when we encounter them in a context that leads us to interpret them as cliché. This chameleon-like nature also helps to explain why phrases may, in a different socio-historical context, “forfeit their cliché status” (Kirkpatrick, 1996, p. 19), as has (at least arguably) occurred with a number of entries from early lists of clichés as general knowledge of the classics and the Bible has declined. Should today’s college students include in their essays phrases like, “timeo Danaos et dona ferentes” or his “name is Legion”—both of which were included in Partridge’s (1942) list of clichés—one suspects the average college professor would be less likely to write “cliché” in the margin than to write “obscure,” “archaic,” or “unclear”—or “interesting point.”

Although many different definitions of clichédness have been offered (see Kirkpatrick 1996 for a review), Partridge’s 1942 definition highlights many of the major themes that also appear in later definitions, stating that “a cliché is an outworn commonplace; a phrase (or virtual phrase) that has become so hackneyed that scrupulous speakers and writers shrink from it because they feel that its use is an insult to the intelligence of their auditor or audience, reader or public” (pp. 59-60). Certainly this definition highlights the central role of overuse, and phrases are often argued to be cliché if they are “overused, too common, too familiar, seen too much, used too often, by too many people” (Rank, 1984, p. 45). In its broad sense, then, the characterization of a text as cliché seems to mean little more than frequently heard or encountered.

Some definitions of the cliché are, in fact, explicitly limited to emphasizing just this familiar fixedness of form; this is the case for Permyakov whose “Notes on the General Theory of Cliché” defined cliché as referring to “set word-combinations which are

reproduced in a form fixed once and for all" (1979, p. 8) and who, as such, included within this domain not only proverbs but also commonly cited quotations. Likewise, Rozhdestvensky, in his response to Permyakov's work, defined clichés as "ready-made and reproducible language units" (in Permyakov, 1979, p. 259). Importantly, this perspective suggests an objective definition of broad-sense clichédness. That is, if members of a group (within a given socio-historical context) are given partial phrases to be completed with the "most common ending" (e.g., "for all intents and _____," "a breath of _____," "deus ex _____," "once and for _____," or "it is what _____"), then truly cliché phrases should be completed in the same way by the vast majority of the group. Thus an objective definition of broad-sense clichédness is possible and such an approach, unwieldy though it may be in practical terms, could in theory circumvent the current problems of relying purely on idiosyncratic individual opinions to ascertain the clichédness of particular phrases (Kirkpatrick, 1996).

Partridge's early definition also highlights a second apparently defining feature of the cliché, however, and that is the disdain with which its use will presumably be greeted, suggesting that a phrase is a cliché only if it has worn out its welcome among members of a particular group. Many of the definitions that have been offered for the cliché suggest that the term "cliché" itself may be more of an invective, a pejorative evaluation of a common phrase, than a label for an objective linguistic category (e.g., Copperud, 1970; Haberer, 2005-2006; Kirkpatrick, 1996; Miller & Villarreal, 1945; Olson, 1982; Rank, 1984; Suhor, 1975; *Webster's*, 1989). This negative emotional reaction may stem, at least in part, from the perception that these phrases have been so widely used as to have lost much of their meaning (Olson, 1982; Orwell in Orwell & Angus, 1968; *Webster's*, 1989)²—hence the recurrent reference to terms like trite and hackneyed and the objection that the use of clichés is an insult to the intelligence of the audience. It is in this sense that clichés have been compared to "zombies or ghosts," not because they are common but because they are "dead but they won't lie down" (Ricks, 1984, p. 423).

This perspective suggests a second and narrower definition of clichédness, one in which a phrase becomes a true cliché not merely when it becomes familiar and predictable but instead when it becomes so common that its use becomes reflexive rather than reflec-

tive—when repetition *ad nauseum* has, in fact, made us quite sick of it. Importantly, this narrow-sense clichédness is also potentially objectively demonstrable. That is, if a phrase is clichéd in this narrow sense, then its invocation in a rhetorical act presumably adds nothing of substance to the act and, in fact, undermines it. Although the inclusion of a cliché phrase may make the appeal longer and potentially more poetic, the essence of the message itself is presumably unchanged. Thus although clichés may be appealing and impressive to audiences who are processing the message at only a shallow level, those rhetorical garnishes should presumably be dismissed by anyone who has the time, the ability, and the motivation to consider the issue at a deeper level. Thus if a phrase is defined by narrow-sense clichédness, and that is true on a consensual (and not merely an idiosyncratic) level, then two variants of a rhetorical appeal, one including a cliché (e.g., “this legislation will put a stop to this problem ONCE AND FOR ALL”) and the other avoiding clichéd language (e.g., “this legislation will put a stop to this problem”), should show no advantage—and quite possibly a disadvantage—for the clichéd communication, at least among audiences who are carefully considering the merits of the message. Again, unwieldy though such an approach might be in practice, especially as the degree to which a phrase is regarded as cliché may vary considerably from audience to audience, this type of analysis could circumvent the current problems of relying on individual opinion to ascertain the degree to which a particular phrase is considered cliché (Kirkpatrick, 1996). The extent to which communicative impact really is undermined by clichéd language is, after all, an empirical question --although the answer to this question appears to have been more frequently assumed than investigated.

Proverbs and Clichédness in the Broad Sense

Despite its ambiguities, the issue of what it means to be cliché is of relevance to paremiology because proverbs, almost by definition, are cliché in the broad sense. This is evident once we consider that most definitions of the proverb emphasize elements including fixedness of form (e.g., Norrick, 1985; Taylor, 1931), an established history of use (e.g., Arora, 1984; Basgoz, 1990; Hulme, 1902; Lau, Tokofsky, & Winick, 2004; Mieder, 1993; Norrick, 1985), a relatively high level of currency, frequency of use, and familiarity to members of a group (e.g., Arora, 1984; Hulme, 1902; Mieder, 1993;

Mieder, Kingsbury, & Harder, 1992; Norrick, 1985), and brevity³ (e.g., Abrahams, 1972; Basgoz, 1990; Hulme, 1902; Lau et al., 2004; Mieder, 1993; Mieder et al., 1992; Norrick, 1985)—all of which would also be typical of clichédness in the broad sense. The overlap between these domains is visually evident in Norrick's (1985, p. 73) feature matrix comparing proverbs to related genres. In this matrix, both proverbs and clichés are characterized as conversational, spoken, traditional, fixed form phrases that can constitute a single free conversational turn, and both proverbs and clichés are listed as being potentially figurative, characterized by prosodic features, and humorous, although neither is considered to be used primarily for the purposes of entertainment.

That said, however, some proverbs may not be clichés even in the broad sense. This could occur, for example, when a paremiological designation of proverbiality is bestowed on the basis of an established history of use despite the phrase being rare in contemporary usage.⁴ In this sense, of course, even clichés may not always be cliché as some phrases that have been indexed as cliché within one socio-historical context are not only not overused but actually not even familiar in other groups, in other times or in other places. Olson (1982), for example, reported creating a quiz consisting of 30 phrases designated in textbooks and handbooks as “common clichés,” and presenting each in an incomplete form (i.e., without its final word) to 120 students enrolled in a first-year English course. The average score on the quiz was 50%, meaning that the students were often unable to complete these phrases in the expected clichéd way despite the fact that the phrases were designated as prototypical clichés in authoritative sources. At the extreme, more than 93% of the sample were unable to complete the stems representing the presumed clichés “a tempest in a (teapot),” “the depths of (despair),” “doomed to (disappointment),” and “the acid (test),” suggesting that although these phrases may well have been regarded as cliché by some people at some time, they never were or were no longer cliché to American college students (or at least to the kinds of students who shared the culture of this particular sample). Similarly, despite presumably being limited to the kind of knowledge that “is meant to be shared by everyone” and to items and references that were presumed to be “likely to be known by a broad majority of literate Americans” (p. ix), Hirsch, Kett, & Trefil's (1988) *Dictionary of Cultural Literacy*

included a number of proverbs that research data have revealed to be generally unfamiliar to college students. When Haas (2008) asked college students in four different geographic regions of the United States to rate their familiarity with a sample of proverbs on a 1-4 scale with 1 indicating “Not at all familiar: I have never heard this phrase in this form before” (p. 330), many of the proverbs Hirsch et al. included as elements of cultural literacy were rated as being very unfamiliar; these included “The game is not worth the candle” (with average values in the four regions ranging from 1.00-1.03), “Murder will out” (1.00-1.07), “The burnt child fears (dreads) the fire” (1.03-1.10), “Comparisons are odious” (1.06-1.10), and “A new broom sweeps (new brooms sweep) clean” (1.03-1.13). In short, that which is presumed to be common knowledge (and therefore potentially cliché) may not actually be so commonly known after all, and these data suggest that many indexed proverbs may lack sufficient currency to be deemed cliché even in the broad sense.

The most prototypical proverbs, however, are likely to be those most frequently used in the mass media (Lau, 1996), those most frequently spontaneously generated by informants (Albig, 1931; Bain, 1939; Haas, 2008; Haynes, Resnick, Cougherty, & Althof, 1993), those rated as most familiar (Benjafield, Frommhold, Keenan, Muckenheim, & Mueller, 1993; Brundage & Brookshire, 1995; Cunningham, Ridley, & Campbell, 1987; Haas, 2008; Haynes et al., 1993; Higbee & Millard, 1983; Litovkina, 1996; Nippold, 1998; Penn, Jacob, & Brown, 1988), and those familiar enough that respondents are able to choose or supply the appropriate proverbial ending when provided with an incomplete stem (Berman, 1990; Litovkina, 1996). Evidence of such widespread familiarity would also seem to be sufficient to warrant that these common proverbs be categorized as cliché in the broad sense. Thus it is not surprising that dictionaries and other listings of clichés include a number of prototypical proverbs. Kirkpatrick (1996), for example, chose to include in Bloomsbury’s *A Dictionary of Clichés* a number of phrases familiar in the paremiological literature in the categories of “Allusion Clichés” (in which a proverb, saying, or quotation appears in abbreviated form, e.g., “a bird in the hand,” “birds of a feather,” a “new broom,” “the grass is always greener,” and “there’s many a slip”); “Quotation Clichés” (which includes misquotations, e.g., “a little knowledge is a dan-

gerous thing” and “money is the root of all evil”); “Catchphrase Clichés” (e.g., “a man’s gotta do what a man’s gotta do” and “you can’t take it with you”); and, more messily, the “Idiom Cliché” (e.g., “take the bull by the horns”) and the “Hackneyed Phrase” (e.g., “better late than never”). Most relevant, though, is the category of clichés Kirkpatrick called the “Proverb Clichés,” a category that encompasses clichés that “start life as proverbs or sayings” (p. 21). Kirkpatrick gave, as examples of Proverb Clichés, “the early bird catches the worm, forewarned is forearmed, little pitchers have big ears, make hay while the sun shines, many hands make light work, and one good turn deserves another” (p. 21). Unfortunately, however, the issue Kirkpatrick left unaddressed is the question of whether *all* currently popular proverbs are, then, by definition, cliché within this system. That same question might be posed to a number of other scholars who also included proverbs (or, at least, phrases that a large proportion of paremiologists would be likely to deem proverbial) in their lists of clichéd phrases. Even Partridge, who explicitly claimed to omit proverbs (1942, 1966), included in his list of clichés a number of arguably proverbial phrases. For example, in his 1942 list of clichés beginning with the letter A he included, “accidents *do* (or *will*) happen,” “all is fish that comes to (*e.g.*, his) net,” “am I my brother’s keeper?” and “any port in a storm.”

In summary, although some historically-important-but-out-of-vogue proverbs may not be familiar enough to be cliché, the most prototypical proverbs, as commonly-known fixed-form phrases, do meet the requirements of broad-sense clichédness. However, not everything familiar is deemed cliché, presumably because some disrespect is intended when a text is called cliché. Thus the next question is whether those proverbs that meet the criterion for clichédness in the broad sense are also cliché in the narrow sense.

Proverbs and Clichédness in the Narrow Sense

The question of whether proverbs are wise or trite long predates the invention of the term cliché. Although the designation of a speech act as cliché has apparently almost always indicated a derogatory stance, the much longer history of the proverb shows their popularity waxing and waning. Following the 16th century, a period during which proverbs were quite popular, skepticism replaced enthusiasm in the late 17th and into the 18th century (Ob-

elkevich, 1988). More than 100 years before the term cliché was coined, Lord Chesterfield was writing to encourage his son to avoid “old sayings, and common proverbs” (1741, quoted in Mieder, 2000, p. 25) as “proverbial expressions and trite sayings are the flowers of the rhetoric of a vulgar man” (1749, quoted in Mieder, 2000, p. 25). Although there was a brief resurgence in the popularity of the proverb in the 19th century, the proverb was soon replaced in the affections of the educated by the quotation, with both forms declining in status (whether or not in the frequency of their actual usage) into the 20th century (Obelkevich, 1988). Proverbs, like clichés, after all, are familiar prefabricated phrases; they are, by definition, not original—and if intellect is defined by originality, then proverbs, like clichés, will be deemed unintellectual, unscholarly, uneducated, and unfit for the educated. As one social historian argued, in an era of the “apotheosis of the creative self, there is no role for the anonymous, impersonal proverb” (Obelkevich, 1988, p. 59)—except, perhaps, to be perverted into a clever, witty, and original anti-proverb (Obelkevich, 1988; see also Mieder, 2004).

It is not surprising that proverbs might sometimes be categorized as clichés, given that both categories refer to fixed-form phrases in relatively widespread use; the question, though, is whether proverbs are, by virtue of this fact, always cliché, whether some proverbs are cliché, or whether proverbs and clichés are two different types of phrases that happen to share these two key features. Although a number of scholars have included at least some proverbs in the ranks of the cliché, others who have attempted to define the cliché have explicitly distinguished between proverbs and clichés (e.g., Pickrel, 1985; and, ostensibly, Partridge, 1942). Such a distinction would be difficult if the primary criteria for the designation of clichédness were fixedness of form and familiarity, suggesting that at least some scholars have considered other criteria as being of at least equal importance in characterizing the essence of the cliché.

Narrow-sense clichédness, as defined in this article, requires that the invocation of the potentially cliché phrase elicit a negative reaction on the part of an audience in a way that undermines communicative intent. Haberer (2005-2006), for example, argued that:

the “cliché effect”, when experienced, interrupts what had been established as an interlocutory exchange between addresser and addressee. When I say or think “Cliché!” to what I hear or read... that utterance [is] assessed as worthless and rejected.... Instead of lending my ear to what is being said of the other’s truth through what he or she is trying to say, I stop listening. (p. 145)

For this reason, authors and speakers are urged to avoid clichés as nothing more than “linguistic gaucherie” (Suhor, 1975, p. 159) that “weaken your writing” and “are an insult to the intelligence of your readers” (*Webster’s*, 1989, p. 250). Several lines of evidence, however, suggest that proverbs invoked in communicative acts are not necessarily cliché in this narrow communication-inhibiting sense.

The Association of Proverbs with Wisdom Suggests Proverb Use Is Not Cliché Per Se

One essential characteristic that distinguishes prototypical proverbs from prototypical clichés is their function, inasmuch as proverbs have long been argued to be statements of truth and wisdom while clichés have generally been argued to be superfluous. Although many definitions of the proverb have emphasized their structural rather than their functional characteristics,⁵ a number of scholars have explicitly noted the tendency of proverbs to express “common sense...wisdom, and above all truth” (Mieder, 1993, p. 5). The importance of the truth-function of proverbs was evident even in early definitions of the proverb such as Hulme’s 1902 description of proverbs as a part of a culture’s “heritage of sound wisdom and good working common-sense” (p.3) and Whiting’s 1932 observation that a proverb “expresses what is apparently a fundamental truth” (p. 302). Importantly, this association is shared by non-specialists. For example, when a sample of lay people was asked to define the term “proverb,” the word that appeared most frequently in their responses was the word “wisdom” (Mieder, 1993). Likewise, when college students were asked to choose the “best” proverbs in a sample, their choices were highly correlated ($r = .86$) with the truth scores for the proverbs given by students in a separate group (Teigen, 1986). This wisdom function may also help to explain why proverbs are often accorded a kind of status as cultural touchstones. Such a status is evident in the fact that Hirsch et

al. (1988) included a full chapter on proverbs in their listing of references that “every American needs to know.” Certainly it is possible that people may differ in their opinions as to what cultural literacy entails and one man’s wisdom may be another man’s cliché,⁶ but it is equally clear that the term “proverb” does not necessarily carry the negative connotation that is almost universally ascribed to the term “cliché”. It may, in fact, be exactly this element of wisdom and/or truth that makes proverbs “stick” in our minds and in the culture; that is, it may be the conjunction of simplicity and profundity that makes them the ideal exemplar of a “sticky” idea that may persist for centuries or even millennia (Heath & Heath, 2007). In this analysis, it is not merely that proverbs are short that makes them stick, but that they are short and meaningful; because they are meaningful, proverbs can serve as helpful behavioral heuristics and because they serve this heuristic function well, they persist.

This emphasis on the truth or wisdom function of proverbs echoes the defining distinction Norrick (1985) made between proverbs, to which he assigned at least the potential of a didactic function, and clichés, which are, in his system, by definition, not didactic.⁷ Prototypical proverbs do not merely label situations; they tell the audience, directly or indirectly, how to respond to those situations—that is, they are invoked to “direct future activity” or to “alter an attitude toward something that has already occurred” (Abrahams, 1972, p. 121; see also Basgoz, 1990; Haas, 2013; Lau et al., 2004; Norrick, 1985; Whiting, 1932). They serve “as rules for identifying new and previously unknown situations and choosing the relevant line of behavior” (Rozhdestvensky in Permyakov, 1979, p. 272). In fact, in distinguishing between prototypical proverbs and the arguably much more prototypically cliché formulaic intensifiers (e.g., “sly as a fox,” “slow as molasses in January,” and “so dumb he couldn’t pour piss out of a boot even if the instructions were printed on the heel”), Abrahams (1972) noted that “proverbs... are self-contained units; they have a moral weight of their own and an argument that is virtually self-sufficient” (p. 123) as opposed to providing only dramatic or humorous hyperbole.

The didactic function of proverbs may further explain why parents, elders, and peers are more likely to be the purveyors of proverbs than those cast in more subordinate roles; by using a proverb, a speaker indicates that “he wants to or at least is willing to assume the role of teacher/advisor for his hearer” (Norrick, 1985, p. 29).

Although this didactic function, whether direct or indirect, is not necessarily present every time a proverb is used, Norrick argued that "...all proverbs should be usable as directly didactic in some context" (pp. 42-43) and argued that "sayings lacking didactic potential entirely are clichés rather than proverbs" (p. 43). This didactic nature explains why as early as 1902 Hulme referred to proverbs as "counsels," "hints," and "warnings" (p.3)—functions highly unlikely to be ascribed to prototypical clichés. It is also consistent with the fact that the Yoruba proverb usages described by Arewa and Dundes (1964) included letting a child know about a cultural norm (p. 74), reprimanding (p. 74), indicating displeasure with conduct (p. 75), informing a person of a mistake (p. 75), urging parents to alter their behavior (p. 76), conveying an opinion (p. 77), chastising and censuring (p. 77), and explaining and defending another's behavior (p. 78)—didactic usages all.

The situation is, of course, quite different for the prototypical cliché, which many scholars have decried specifically because clichés are seen as incidental to the message. To the extent to which clichés are an attempt to convey humor or drama (Copperud, 1970) rather than wisdom, their intended function is quite different from that generally ascribed to proverbs (although anti-proverbs—Mieder, 2004—are often employed for witty and humorous purposes). This may help to explain the admonition to avoid clichés, which clearly implies that the omission of the cliché would strengthen rather than undermine the message. It explains why scholars have urged writers to ask themselves whether they could "put it more shortly" (Orwell in Orwell & Angus, 1968, p. 135). Already pithy statements of wisdom cannot be shortened, but the elimination of pseudo-wit may well be an advisable rhetorical choice.

It seems clear, then, that the wisdom-function of proverbs may be a criterion by which proverbs can be differentiated from clichés. A designation of "cliché," in the narrow sense, implies that the indicated phrase can and should be omitted because it undermines the message. Often, however, when a speaker or a writer uses a proverb, the proverb *is* the message⁸—and to the extent to which the proverb effectively communicates this message, the use of the proverb is not cliché in the narrow sense regardless of how frequently it is invoked.

Rules for Proverb Use Suggest Proverb Use Is Not Cliché Per Se

It has long been noted that there are rules, often tacit, that govern the use of proverbs. It is in this sense that Arewa and Dundes (1964) argued for considerations of proverb use that acknowledge this “ethnography of the speaking of folklore” (p. 71) by considering not only the texts but also the contexts of their use—who uses proverbs, to whom, when what others are present, in what situations, by what mediums, in private or public ways, with respect to what topics, etc. For example, in most contexts the invocation of proverbs occurs when older people address younger people or when peers address each other and not when youngsters address their elders (e.g., Arewa & Dundes, 1964); this pattern has, in fact, even been noted to hold in contemporary fictional contexts (Haas, 2011). Specific rules for how to use proverbs, though, would not be necessary if proverb use were simply *verboten*; if there are rules for how to use proverbs, then the act of invoking a proverb must itself be an acceptable communicative strategy as long as the relevant performance rules are not violated. The existence of performance rules suggests that proverbs are not objectionable merely because they are familiar fixed form phrases (i.e., cliché in the broad sense) although they may be deemed cliché in the narrow sense in certain contexts (e.g., in formal academic writing, when performance rules about when, how, and to whom proverbs can be used are violated).

The Use of Explicit Proverb Markers Suggests Proverb Use Is Not Cliché Per Se

Not only is proverb use bound by (generally implicit) performance rules, but the use of proverbs is also often explicitly marked. In a written text, for example, markers may include italicizing the proverbs, enclosing them in quotation marks, beginning the proverbial phrase with a mid-sentence capital letter, or, historically, indicating them with pointing hands printed in the page margins (Obelkevich, 1988). In both spoken and written contexts, the proverb user may preface the proverb with an introductory phrase (i.e., Norrick’s 1985 “proverbial affixes”) like “you know what they say...,” “as they say...,” “as it is sometimes said...,” or “as the old saying goes...” (Arora, 1984) or by employing a “proverbial infix” such as the “proverbial” in the sentence “The proverbial pen is mightier than the sword” (Norrick, 1985). Among

the Yoruba, some proverbs are marked with the affix “a kii...,” which has been compared to “the Biblical injunction of ‘thou shalt not...’” (Coker & Coker, 2008). Moreover, in Yoruban culture, younger people are also expected to employ a proverbial affix as a prefatory apology that says, essentially, “I don’t claim to know any proverbs in the presence of you older people, but you elders have the saying...” before using proverbs in the presence of their elders (Dundes & Arewa, 1964, p. 79). The relatively common reliance on these kinds of cues to mark the use of a proverb suggests a goal-directed, if perhaps largely unconscious, act on the part of the speaker or writer to help to ensure that the text is perceived as proverbial and is interpreted as such.⁹ The given course of action proposed is, the marker indicates, not merely the user’s preferred course of action, but rather is the course that the community as a whole has endorsed as proper.

It is potentially instructive, in this context, to note that Lord Chesterfield, would-be nemesis of the proverbial utterance, used proverbs regularly despite his condemnations of their vulgarity. This is clearly evident in the notably didactic context of providing lessons about etiquette and life in his letters to his son (Mieder, 2000, which is the source from which the subsequent references are drawn). Chesterfield clearly recognized the tendency of speakers to mark proverbs as proverbial. He noted, for example, that when a “vulgar man” wishes to indicate that “men differ in their tastes” he “both supports and adorns that opinion by *the good old saying, as he respectfully calls it*, that what is one man’s meat, is another man’s poison” (quoted in Mieder, 2000, p. 25, italics added). Chesterfield also often marked his own invocations with proverbial affixes, e.g., “the vulgar have a coarse saying...” (p. 29), “according to the vulgar saying...” (p. 29), “in that respect, the vulgar saying is true...” (p. 28), and “it is a vulgar, ordinary saying, but it is a very true one...” (p. 29). In these frames, Chesterfield adapts several common proverb frames (e.g., “we have a saying...,” “according to the saying...,” and “in that respect the saying is true...”) in ways that allow him to distance himself from the expressions he deems vulgar (Mieder, 2000, p. 29) while nonetheless endorsing their sentiments. Chesterfield also occasionally introduced English proverbs with neutral frames (e.g., “It is a saying...,” p. 31; “It is said that...,” p. 35; “Every virtue, they say, has its kindred vice...,” p. 32), although his use of neutral affixes appears to have been more

likely when he introduced proverbs in languages other than English—e.g., “there is a Spanish proverb, which says very justly...” (p. 36), “There is good sense in the Spanish saying...” (p. 36), “remember the French saying...” (p. 37), “for you know the French saying...” (p. 38), and, in introducing Latin proverbs, “It is said that...” (p. 35), “There is nothing truer than the old saying...” (p. 36), and “It has been long said...” (p. 36).

The most reasonable rhetorical choice for a critic like Chesterfield, who deems proverbs vulgar and cliché, would seem to be to forgo their use. Should occasional use be warranted, perhaps as a cautionary example, it would be reasonable to mark the text with a dismissive frame to ensure that the audience would perceive that the use was intentional. Allowances might even be made for an occasional unmarked use, which could indicate nothing more than distraction or hurry on the part of the user or that the phrase was not recognized by the user as proverbial. But why would a critic of common sayings not only use the sayings but explicitly mark them as such in neutral or even approving ways? In this case, Chesterfield’s actions speak louder than his words. Despite his protestations to the contrary, it appears that Chesterfield does not deem proverbs to be merely vulgar ornamentations of speech; instead, his actions suggest that he understands proverbs to be potentially effective rhetorical and didactic devices whose effectiveness may be further magnified by ensuring recognition of their proverbial status.

The Rhetorical Effectiveness of Proverbs Suggests Proverb Use Is Not Cliché Per Se

Folklore has been argued to comprise “a collection of texts of cultural value and significance” (Rozhdestvensky in Permyakov, 1979, p. 268). By this definition, although proverbs and similar folkloric materials are cliché in the broad sense, they are clichés notable for their “eternal significance” (Rozhdestvensky in Permyakov, 1979, p. 266). In invoking the issue of “eternal significance,” Rozhdestvensky differentiated folkloric clichés like proverbs from other texts, like amusing anecdotes, which “cannot be told twice to the same person” (p. 266) without losing much in the telling. Proverbs, on the other hand, like many other forms of clichéd folklore, “are potentially immortal” (p. 266) because they “can be repeated to the same person any number of times” (p. 268). In fact, it is not just that a proverb *can* be repeated, as need-

ed, even to the same audience, but that unless it is perceived as having exactly that repetitive quality of echoing from the past, the performance of a proverb text will not succeed. Quite in contrast to a proverbial invocation being dismissed because it is unoriginal, “what is... essential to the success of any proverb performance, is evidence that the utterance in question was ‘not made up’ by the speaker; that it belongs to the category of ‘they say,’ not ‘I say’” (Arora, 1984, p. 7); to be accepted as proverbial wisdom, a phrase must be recognized as belonging “to the people as a whole and to no one in particular” (Rozhdestvensky in Permyakov, 1979, p. 269). In short, “the success of a proverb performance as such must depend ultimately on the listener’s ability to perceive that he is being addressed in traditional, i.e., proverbial, terms. If the listener does not reach that conclusion, the performance of the proverb as a proverb must fail, although the speaker’s opinions, comments, etc., may have the desired effect for other reasons” (Arora, 1984, p. 4). Although such an analysis does not preclude the possibility that a proverb might be so frequently used as to undermine its effectiveness as a rhetorical device, it does caution that it is the audience’s response to the proverb, and not merely the familiarity of the phrase, that must be established before a characterization of cliché, in the narrow sense, can be justified. Claiming that a proverb is commonly used and therefore cliché (with an implication of rhetorical impotence) is not tenable when it may well be exactly that familiarity of the phrase to the audience that gives the proverbial invocation its rhetorical power.

Such an analysis could help to explain Lord Chesterfield’s begrudging use of proverbs, as he may well have understood (at least implicitly) that invoking a proverb was likely to be rhetorically effective even if also subject to disapprobation within his social circle. Chesterfield was no doubt aware of the tacit social rules that warned of negative consequences for the voicing of “vulgar” proverbs but he also almost certainly knew, from personal experience, that apt proverbs can win arguments. Occasionally these two sets of contingencies would be in conflict—using a proverb may be censured but it might also be the best rhetorical tool to make a given point. As is clear from Mieder’s (2000) analysis of Chesterfield’s letters, in at least some cases the contingencies favoring proverb use won out. As behavioral psychologists might say, Chesterfield’s verbal behavior was shaped by its consequences; he

continued to use proverbs because they worked, while often prefacing his invocations with additional verbal behavior (i.e., apologetically dismissive proverbial affixes) that were likely to minimize the adverse social consequences of those proverbial references. The fundamental tenet underlying this operant conditioning analysis is that behaviors (including proverb use) recur because of the reinforcing consequences they have had in the past; behaviors that are not reinforced, at least occasionally, would not be maintained. Thus Chesterfield's continued use of proverbs (even despite the apparent existence of concurrent negative social consequences of their use) suggests that their use must have been followed by reinforcing consequences. Although it is not possible, without a full functional analysis, to determine what those reinforcing consequences were, it seems reasonable to suggest that they might well have involved indicators from the audience that the communicative attempt had been successful (e.g., head nods, smiles, statements of affirmation, echoing of the proverb, or evidence of a desired change in behavior).¹⁰

With respect to the issue of clichédness, at least in the narrow sense, the effectiveness of the rhetorical act is a key. Capturing this kind of evidence, however, falls beyond the scope of even most exemplary ethnographic fieldwork methods (as per Arewa & Dundes, 1964) because it requires recording not only the immediate situational context of the proverb use but also the audience's response to that use. Better evidence, then, may come from the study of written communications which, at least in some cases, preserve both the original proverbial act and the response. Thus the work of researchers who have analyzed written correspondence to see what proverbs were used and to find themes in those invocations also provides some evidence of the effectiveness of those communiqués. Abigail Adams, for example, used a number of proverbs and proverbial phrases in her letters (Mieder, 2005). One of these illustrates this criterion of effectiveness. In a letter to Abigail, John Adams wrote, "...your Words are as true as an oracle 'God helps them, who help them selves'..." (in Mieder, 2005, p. 62). Clearly, in John's own mind, that proverbial phrase, apparently initially invoked by Abigail, provided the appropriate encapsulation of the situation; it is not merely that he was swayed by her argument but that those words of proverbial wisdom rang true and stuck with him, enough so that he repeated the message back to

her verbatim. This pattern is also evident in the correspondence between Franklin D. Roosevelt and Winston Churchill.¹¹ The most striking example occurred after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Churchill later recalled Roosevelt calling to inform him of the development. When Churchill asked if the reports were true, Roosevelt confirmed them and said, "They have attacked us at Pearl Harbor. We are all in the same boat now..." (in Mieder, 2005, p. 199). After his message to Congress the next day, Roosevelt sent Churchill a telegram saying, "Today all of us are in the same boat with you..." (p. 199). The following day Churchill replied, saying "I am grateful for your telegram of December 8. Now that we are as you say 'in the same boat'..." (p. 199). This echo of Roosevelt's own framing of the situation in proverbial terms clearly seems to indicate that it was not just the general argument but the proverbial framing of that argument that survived the trip across the Atlantic. The meeting of the minds is evident not in a mere restatement of the same general idea, but in the echoing of the very same proverb that was originally used to convey the message.

However, although proverbs have often been presumed to be effective rhetorical devices and although folklorists and others have, in fieldwork and in the analysis of written records, noted a number of examples in which communicators employed proverbs in seemingly effective ways, these lines of evidence are limited because it is nonetheless possible that the communicative efforts might also have been effective had the proverbs not been used. That is, Abigail Adams might have swayed her husband's thoughts, and Roosevelt Churchill's, even without using the proverbs quoted above, making the proverbs incidental rather than essential to the effectiveness of the communication. Likewise, Messenger (1959) carefully limited his analysis of the role of proverbs in the Anang judicial system only to those cases "in which at least one justice admitted being swayed" (p. 68) by the citation of the proverb. Even this conservative analysis, however, does not preclude the possibility that the same arguments might still have carried the day even had these proverbs not been invoked. With no control condition it is impossible to demonstrate conclusively that the invocation of any given proverb was the decisive rhetorical factor in a successful communicative act. What's more, it is also acknowledged that full ethnographic analyses of proverb use are unfortunately rare (e.g., Arewa & Dundes, 1964), and even where

they have occurred it is possible that investigators might have emphasized in their reports the proverb performances that were deemed effective relative to those that were not, resulting in an impression that the invocation of proverbs in communicative acts is a more frequently effective strategy than is, in fact, the case. A more controlled and systematic approach to the question of the effectiveness of proverbs in altering attitudes and behavior would, then, be a useful complement to traditional folkloric research, allowing researchers to disentangle the effects of the proverb use from other rhetorical elements.

Fortuitously, psychological studies conducted for other purposes sometimes use proverbs as stimuli and several such studies are relevant to the question of the rhetorical impact of proverb exposure. One such study comes out of the literature on the differences between “entity” theories of traits and abilities (i.e., you either have it or you don’t) and “incremental” theories (i.e., in which traits and abilities are seen as malleable behavior patterns that can be developed). Although different people may hold different beliefs (e.g., while some people may believe that intelligence can be increased with effort, others may believe that you have a certain level of intelligence and there is little you can do to change that), many people may actually hold both sets of beliefs with their responses to a given situation depending on which belief system is activated. Although these construct systems could be activated in a number of ways, Poon and Koehler (2006) reported the results of one study in which they used exposure to proverbs to prime activation of these belief systems. In their study, they randomly assigned college students to one of two conditions. Participants in the entity prime condition were presented with the proverbs “You cannot teach an old dog new tricks,” “Old habits die hard,” and “A leopard cannot change its spots.” In the incremental prime condition, participants were presented with the proverbs “It is never too late to learn,” “Experience is the best teacher,” and “When in Rome, do as the Romans do.” Participants in each condition were asked to rate their familiarity with the proverbs, explain the meanings of the proverbs, describe situations in which the proverb could be applied, and think about a person who exemplified the meaning of each proverb. For the purposes of the present analysis, the key finding was that participants who were primed with exposure to proverbs indicating that you are what you are and there’s

not much you can do to change it were more confident in ascribing dispositional judgments to a target (i.e., they were more confident in inferring traits from behaviors). They were also more pessimistic about the possibility of personality change. Those participants who were primed with exposure to proverbs indicating that people can change, on the other hand, were less confident in ascribing personality traits on the basis of behavioral cues and more optimistic about the possibility of personality change. In short, even in a highly controlled situation in which people were randomly assigned to conditions (meaning that some students assigned to the entity prime may have been naturally inclined to the incremental view of ability and vice versa), exposure to proverbial wisdom had predictable proverb-consistent effects on behavioral responses.

A second illustrative psychological study relevant to the question of whether proverbs can affect attitudes and action tendencies is drawn from the literature regarding the way that people draw dispositional (i.e., trait) inferences from behavior. Psychologists have long recognized that observers tend to leap to trait inferences without fully considering the role that situational factors may play in determining behavior (e.g., a teacher confronted with a student who fails to submit a homework assignment is likely to assume that the student is lazy and unmotivated rather than to consider the possibility that the student was required to work much later than expected to cover for a co-worker who was ill). This tendency, moreover, appears to be even more likely when people are under conditions of cognitive load (i.e., busy thinking about other things). In one study of this phenomenon, Trope and Gaunt (2000) presented half of their college student participants (from Tel-Aviv University) with four proverbs related to the influence of situational factors on behavior (e.g., "When in Rome, do as the Romans do") and the other half with proverbs not relevant to this issue. All the participants were asked to reflect on the proverbs, restate them, explain them, and give examples. The participants were then presented with an essay ostensibly written by a student in a different study and asked to rate how much the essay revealed the writer's true attitude. Half of the raters, though, were told that the writer had been assigned a position (i.e., prolegalization of marijuana) and the other half were told that the writer had been free to choose the position advocated. Although it seems logical that raters would assume that the essays written by authors in the

free choice condition would express their true attitudes but avoid this inference for writers they knew had been assigned to a position, more than 50 years of psychological research shows that raters often ignore this kind of situational information and instead draw dispositional conclusions. One of the key findings of this study, however, was that this tendency was attenuated by the situational proverb primes. Participants who had been induced to consider the influence of situations on behavior via the presentation of relevant proverbial wisdom were less likely to draw attitude inferences on the basis of the essay and this was true even when the participants were under cognitive load. Thus, again, exposure to proverbial wisdom had predictable proverb-consistent effects on the participants' responses.

Although scientific analyses of the effects of proverb exposure are artificial in a way that folkloric performance studies are not, their advantage is their ability to disentangle the effects of different elements of the performance and to establish causal relationships. Thus scientific studies can provide a useful complement to the real world observations of folklore scholars. Although it is possible that the effects observed in both of these studies were created or exaggerated by the significant elaboration of the proverbs the subjects were induced to do (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) rather than by the presentation of the proverbs per se, this experimental evidence nonetheless converges with theoretical speculation, ethnographic reports, and case study information in suggesting that exposure to proverbial wisdom can in fact alter attitudes and action tendencies—which is evidence of the potential effectiveness of the invocation of proverbs in rhetorical acts and contrary to a characterization of these phrases as being merely cliché.

Consideration of Factors that Affect the Perception of Clichédness

If a designation of clichédness is to be ascribed merely on the basis of frequency of exposure (i.e., broad-sense clichédness), then proverbs will almost always be deemed cliché. If, however, clichédness is dependent on adverse rhetorical impact (i.e., narrow-sense clichédness), then the effects of the invocation of the proverb are the key consideration. Here, though, there is little agreement; while some, including Lord Chesterton, would clearly advise us to avoid vulgar sayings, other lines of evidence suggest

that proverb use can be an effective rhetorical choice. One possible resolution results from reframing the question. That is, rather than attempting to determine *whether* proverbs are cliché, we might instead ask *when* proverb performances are likely to be deemed cliché. Recall, for example, that Miller & Villarreal (1945) reported that phrases were more likely to be marked as cliché if they were presented in a list—outside of any meaningful context—rather than in the context of a speech. This suggests that the perception of clichédness depends on contextual and performance factors and not just on the familiarity of a given phrase. This possibility also recalls Haberer's observation that when the addressee of an interlocutory exchange perceives clichédness, the utterance is likely to be "assessed as worthless and rejected" (2005-2006, p. 145). Although Haberer suggested that the perception of "cliché" leads to the assessment of worthlessness, however, the other possibility is that the assessment of the statement as worthless leads to the perception of clichédness. By this analysis, the perception of clichédness is a function of the failure of the proverb performance and a successful proverb performance is unlikely to be deemed cliché. Although an unsuccessful performance could fail for many reasons (e.g., a perception that the source was ignorant, was lying, or was manipulating the audience for his or her own ends), one of those reasons could be the perception that the performance was flowery or folksy but vacuous (i.e., cliché).

It is here proposed that the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM; e.g., Petty & Cacioppo, 1981, 1986) may provide a useful framework for considering the likely impact of proverb use in performance situations. Like traditional analysis of performances in many different subfields of folklore, the ELM considers the role of source, message, recipient/audience, and contextual factors in performance situations, but the ELM is explicitly intended to help to provide a general explanation of how communications effect attitude change (Petty & Cacioppo, 1981) and, more generally, how they influence evaluative judgments (Petty & Wegener, 1999)—a topic that is perhaps even more germane to the field of paremiology than to most other folkloric genres.

The Elaboration Likelihood Model grew out of the persuasion literature in social psychology. Researchers in the field had long been frustrated that apparently simple variables (e.g., the expertise of the source of a persuasive message) had inconsistent effects,

sometimes increasing the persuasiveness of a communication, sometimes decreasing it, and sometimes having no effect. Petty and Cacioppo (1981) argued that these discrepant findings could be reconciled by distinguishing between two different paths to persuasion. In the central route to persuasion, the available information is analyzed carefully according to its merits (i.e., the issue-relevant material in the appeal is “elaborated”). Importantly, however, the central route requires considerable cognitive resources and is used only when the recipient of the message has the motivation and the ability to carefully consider the issue at hand. When recipients are tired, distracted, or lackadaisical about the importance of the message, they do not attend carefully to the message or reflect thoughtfully about the issues, relying instead on persuasion cues to guide their judgments about the likely validity of the message (assuming, for example, that “she’s an expert so she must be right” or “he’s been talking forever, so he must know what he’s talking about”); this is known as the peripheral route to persuasion because judgments are based on factors peripheral rather than central to the issue at hand.¹² Importantly, although research has often emphasized conditions under which the central and peripheral routes are especially likely to operate, the two types of processing actually mark two ends of a presumed elaboration continuum, such that mid-range values of elaboration likelihood are also possible.

It is also important to emphasize that persuasion may occur as a result of processing via either route; careful analysis of the merits of the arguments is not a requirement for persuasion to occur and, in fact, when the persuasive appeal is weak, its persuasiveness is likely to be greater the less carefully it is processed. Persuasion achieved via the central route, though, appears to have several important advantages, presumably because of the more elaborated cognitive processing it entails. First, persuasion achieved via the central route appears to be more lasting and more resistant to counter-persuasion attempts. Second, persuasion achieved via the central route appears to be more likely to result in behavior consistent with the persuasive appeal.

The Relevance of the ELM to Proverb Performance

To the extent to which the invocation of a proverb can be conceptualized as a persuasive act (or, more generally, an act with the aim of affecting social judgments on the part of the audience/re-

ipient; Petty & Wegener, 1999), the Elaboration Likelihood Model is relevant. If, as has been argued, all items of expressive culture, including all folkloric texts that are performed, are “implement[s] of argument” and “tool[s] of persuasion” (Abraham, 1968, p. 146), then the ELM is presumably relevant to analyses of all folkloric performances. Whether or not this is equally true of all expressive folk genres, however, certainly most prototypical proverb usages can probably be categorized as essentially persuasive in nature (although there are exceptions, e.g., the use of anti-proverbs). Certainly many scholars have concurred that proverbs “attempt to persuade” (Abrahams, 1972, p. 121; see also McGlone & Tofighbacksh, 1999) by presenting “an argument” (Abrahams, 1972, p. 123) or by “amplify[ing] an argument” (Obelkevich, 1988, p. 55) in order to “shape attitudes and action” (Goodwin & Wenzel, 1979; see also Abrahams, 1972). In the extreme, one folklore scholar even went so far as to argue that proverbs are even “to some extent aggressive in purpose; the speaker is, after all, attempting to impose his ideas and his will upon his audience” (Abrahams, 1968, p. 152). It is in this sense of the invocation of a proverb as an inherently persuasive act that St. Jerome was said to reference “liars should have good memories” to “clinch an argument” in the fourth century (Hulme, 1902, p. 18). It is also in this sense that the invocation of proverbs has been studied in legal settings (e.g., Arewa & Dundes, 1964 and Messenger, 1959 discussed legal uses of proverbs in African cultures and Fock, in Abrahams 1963, among the Mataco Chaco in Argentina). It has long been noted that proverb performances are a means to the end of effecting changes in attitudes or behavior (e.g., Abrahams, 1972; Goodwin & Wenzel, 1979; Obelkevich; 1988), a goal which subsumes all the usages Arewa and Dundes (1964) described for Yoruba proverbs (i.e., conveying opinions; informing people of norms; chastising, censuring, and reprimanding; urging changes in behavior; and explaining and defending another’s behavior). Likewise the often-noted didactic function of proverbs is also a persuasive function; when proverbs are used to teach, they are used to attempt to produce particular actions or attitudes on the part of the audience.

If indeed proverbs are intended to persuade, then the success of a proverb performance is determined by how effectively they do so, but the ELM suggests that the effectiveness of a perfor-

mance may be a function of a number of other variables that characterize the performance situation. In the ELM, variables (whether related to the source, the message, the audience, or the mode of the communication) can serve as information relevant to the determination of the merit of a communication (i.e., as arguments processed via the central route), can serve as simple cues as to the likely validity of the message (i.e., as heuristics processed via the peripheral route), or can affect the extent to which a message is elaborated (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). A key feature of the model is that a single variable may operate in any or all of these ways depending on the circumstances. As per Petty and Cacioppo's analysis, for example, the number of people who endorse a position may serve as a simple peripheral cue (e.g., "if everyone agrees, it must be right"), may serve as an impetus to generate relevant arguments via the central route (e.g., "I wonder why everybody seems to be agreeing with this speaker—is this a biased sample or is the speaker really on to something?"), or may affect the likelihood of elaboration (e.g., "although I wasn't sure this issue really had any relevance for me, an awful lot of people seem to think it's important so I'd better at least consider the issue"). Proverbs, as fixed-form phrases with considerable currency in the culture, might similarly elicit agreement because they function as peripheral cues (e.g., "it's a common saying so it must be true"), as arguments of substance (e.g., "it really has been my experience that this proverb often holds true so I had better consider whether it might also hold true in this particular case"), or as variables that affect the likelihood of elaboration (e.g., "if this belief is so common that it has been codified in proverbial form, then it really might be worth considering"). Thus the issue of apparent consensus is one way in which proverbs could act as cues, arguments, or variables affecting the likelihood of elaboration, but it is not the only one and several additional possibilities will be reviewed briefly here.

Proverbial Invocations as Arguments Processed Via the Central Route

For a person who has the ability and motivation to consider the issue and process the persuasive appeal carefully (i.e., for someone who is processing by way of the central route), the content of the proverb comprises an argument that will be either ac-

cepted or rejected on its merits. In central route processing, then, an apt proverb may be a persuasive argument in and of itself. For example, the proverb “better to have it and not need it than need it and not have it,” may be all the argument it takes to convince a hearer to carry an umbrella on a cloudy day; after all, the input cost of taking the umbrella is quite low even if the umbrella is not needed, and the benefits of having it are high if it is needed. For a person who is carefully processing the merits of the arguments, though, the invocation of “boys will be boys” may not be a persuasive argument for forgoing punishment for a broken lamp after warning the boys three times not to play ball in the house if the person decides that boys may be boys when they are boys, but boys grow up to be men and to do so they need a little discipline. In the central route to persuasion, the quality of the argument conveyed by the proverb is the key to its persuasive impact.

It is possible, in fact, that proverb-based arguments may be quite likely to generate central route processing because their open, often metaphorical, and sometimes vague counsels, often typified by multiple layers of connotation and implication, may require hearers to self-generate arguments about the applicability of the counsel to the particular instance at hand—and self-generation of arguments is clearly associated with persuasion via the central route (Petty, Wheeler, & Bizer, 1999). It seems quite possible, for example, that the argument “boys will be boys” may come loaded with considerably more cognitive baggage (e.g., boys act differently than girls do, boys are prone to rough-housing, boys don’t always listen to their parents, boyish behavior should be tolerated), at least for many hearers, than a more literal rephrasing, such as “young boys are often rambunctious and such behavior must be tolerated,” would have been. Even more cognitive processing may be required if the proverbial argument were presented, as is often the case, in elliptical form, e.g., “You know what they say about boys...”—which would require the recipient not only to self-generate arguments for the applicability of the invocation of the proverb but also to complete the proverb itself.

Conventional wisdom might argue that proverbs could never serve convincingly as arguments for audiences utilizing central route processing because proverbial wisdom is messy and self-contradictory; it is all too often the case that for every instance of “look before you leap” there is a parallel instance of “he who hesi-

tates is lost.” This messy inconsistency is evident in the finding that subjects often rate both members of apparently antonymous proverb pairs as true or as false, rather than (as logic would seem to dictate) rating one as generally true and the other as generally false (Furnham, 1987). Moreover, when unfamiliar descriptive proverbs were reversed to create contradictory pseudo-proverbs, there was essentially no relationship between the truth ratings of these unfamiliar proverbs and their opposites—sometimes both were rated true, sometimes both were rated untrue, sometimes only the authentic proverb was rated true, and sometimes only the reversal was rated true (Teigen, 1986). The existence of antonymous proverbs is not necessarily reason to dismiss their arguments, however, as their logical inconsistency may simply indicate that the truth or advice they suggest is contextual (e.g., Furnham, 1987). And, of course, it is not just in the proverb literature that truth depends on context; in fact, some scientific findings also come down to an “it depends” clause (Teigen, 1986). Any scientific finding, for example, that entails a U or inverted U function between two variables describes a pattern in which the correlation between two variables is sometimes positive and sometimes negative and thus, when describing the direction of the correlation, we must say that “it depends.” Although the explicit description of the U (or inverted U) obviously has the significant advantage of acknowledging both halves of the pattern and describing the relationship between them, accomplished proverb users might well also recognize important situational limits to the applicability of the proverbs that appear in apparently opposing pairs. To investigate this possibility, Furnham (1987) asked participants to rate the extent to which antonymous proverb would each be true in a given context. The results confirmed that participants recognized specific elements of context as key determinative factors in their assessments of the truthfulness of the statements. For example, “absence makes the heart grow fonder” was rated as true in the context of close friends, but “out of sight, out of mind” was rated as true for casual acquaintances and the length of the time apart also mattered. Likewise, the relative merits of being wary of Greeks bearing gifts versus not looking gift horses in the mouth depended both on whether the gift was big or small and whether it was given by a close acquaintance or a comparative stranger. Thus the real question when we are confronted with apparently antonymous proverbs is not whether they can both be true, but whether they can both be

usefully applicable to some sets of circumstances (Gibbs & Beitel, 1995). Those who are familiar with the proverbs probably learn these contextual limits, however implicitly, as a part of their proverb literacy, much as students of social psychology learn the contextual limits that constrain central route processing. More important to the issue at hand, however, is that the key to central route processing is not that the arguments made are true, but that they are considered thoughtfully. It is important to note, for example, that although Teigen (1986) showed that students rated both unfamiliar proverbs and their reversals as true in some cases (e.g., “Wise men makes [sic] proverbs and fools repeat them” and “Fools make proverbs and wise men repeat them”), this cannot be interpreted merely as evidence of mindless yea-saying because raters rated only half of the statements (authentic and reversals) to be more true than not, which clearly suggests that the raters were considering the arguments made and discriminating between them.

Although it would be easy to dismiss the arguments made by common proverbs as naïve or overly simplistic, in making social judgments and in determining appropriate social behaviors, social mores, which are often encoded by proverbs, may be quite relevant. If the recipient of a message has the necessary ability (e.g., time and energy) and motivation, a proverb-based argument should be treated as any other argument and processed according to its merits.

Proverbial Invocations as Heuristics Processed by the Peripheral Route

The invocation of proverbs might also impact audiences who are responding to the message via the peripheral route to persuasion. Recall that the peripheral route is most likely to be operating when the audience lacks either the ability or the motivation to process the merits of the message carefully. Thus although critics have decried the careless users of clichés, it would perhaps be even more reasonable to criticize those who succumb to clichéd rather than well-wrought persuasive appeals. Although Orwell argued that “every such phrase anaesthetizes a portion of one’s brain” (in Orwell & Angus, 1968, p. 137), the more important consideration may be that such appeals are likely to be persuasive only to a partially anaesthetized brain—i.e., when the audience is tired, distracted, lacking in necessary background, or is simply not

motivated or not interested; when the brain is on autopilot, the ELM suggests that we are more likely to be persuaded by peripheral cues than by the soundness of the central arguments of the message. Thus, in the peripheral route the content of a proverb would not be the key determinant of its persuasiveness. Instead, the mere invocation of the proverb would serve as a cue by which the validity of the speaker's appeal would be judged.

One way in which a proverbial invocation may act as a peripheral cue is by increasing message length (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Research has indicated that a "longer is better" heuristic may enhance the persuasiveness of long-winded appeals when the audience is processing via the peripheral route. Thus if the audience is unable or unmotivated to attend carefully to the merits of the message, including proverbs in the argument may result in a more persuasive appeal simply by virtue of the appeal's increased length.

Second, research has indicated that previous exposure to a stimulus generally increases liking of and positive associations to the stimulus. This effect also apparently extends to the perception of truth. Early research, for example, showed that the apparent truth value of factual "trivia-like" statements (e.g., "Lithium is the lightest of all metals") increased if the statements were presented multiple times over the course of several weeks—and this occurred whether or not the statement was actually true (e.g., Bacon, 1979; Hasher, Goldstein, & Toppino, 1977). Although these findings are specific to the apparent truthfulness of factual statements, they are consistent with the premise that a sense of familiarity may act as a cue during peripheral route processing of persuasive messages (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) and thus we might likewise expect that the invocation of a proverb may make a persuasive message more appealing simply by virtue of the familiarity of the proverb text. This may be why advertisers frequently employ proverbs or adaptations of proverbs, as doing so results in ads that "have a familiar ring that lures the customer into regarding the advertised product as one which has withstood the test of time" (Mieder & Mieder, 1977, p. 308), creating "a feeling of positive identification and trustworthy authority" (Mieder & Mieder, 1977, p. 310). Although no research appears to have tested this possibility directly, several studies are suggestive. First, researchers have reported that statements about human behavior are rated as more accurate when they are presented in their familiar proverb form

(e.g., “opposites attract”) than when the same ideas are paraphrased (e.g., “people with divergent interests and personalities tend to be drawn to one another”; McGlone & Hecker, 1998 in McGlone and Tofiqbakhsh, 2000). Second researchers have demonstrated an inverse relationship between ratings of proverbs’ perceived truth value and quality and their perceived originality (i.e., higher ratings of originality predicted lower ratings of truth and quality and lower ratings of originality predicted higher ratings of truth and quality; Teigen, 1986). Thus when it comes to evoking the ring of truth, it appears that sometimes the old ways are best. That said, however, research does also put some limits on this tendency for familiarity to positively affect the perception of truth. Researchers have observed that the effect of repetition on persuasion tends to form an inverted U (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). This dual tendency is also recognized in the proverb record, accounting for both the observations that “familiarity breeds contempt” and that “familiarity breeds content.” This suggests that the familiarity of proverbs may produce a boomerang effect in some cases, decreasing persuasive effectiveness, exactly as we might expect if the phrases were deemed cliché.¹³ Whether the familiarity of the phrase increases or decreases persuasion, however, the fact that it is the familiarity of the message rather its merit that determines its impact suggests that peripheral route processing rather than central route consideration is at work.

The tendency for familiar texts to seem true has, of course, also been noted in the proverbial record itself, in the observation of the folk that “if you say something often enough, it becomes true.” Some research, however, suggests that the belief that a statement has been heard before is actually a more important determinant of the increased perception of truth than its actual repetition per se; that is, statements that are perceived as having been repeated show an increase in believability even if the statements are entirely new or actually contradict earlier statements (e.g., Bacon, 1979). Thus the perception of a statement as familiar (whether the judgment is correct or not) has been called “an heuristic basis for the ring of truth” (Begg & Armour, 1991, p. 197). Further, telling respondents that the statements are merely being repeated does not seem to undermine the tendency to perceive repeated statements as more truthful (Bacon, 1979) and neither does presenting the facts initially with negative biasing statements (e.g., “few people be-

lieve that...”; Begg & Armour, 1991; Begg, Armour, & Kerr, 1985). Although the existing studies have focused on people’s acceptance of factual statements rather than persuasive appeals, this research suggests a possible heuristic advantage of employing a proverbial affix (e.g., “You know what they say...” or “As the old saying goes...”), as such a frame may act as an affirmative biasing statement, further increasing the credibility of the statement (in this case, the proverb) that follows. What’s more, given that presenting texts with negative biasing statements nonetheless leads to greater rated truthfulness when the statement is again encountered later (compared to statements never before encountered), the advantage to structuring the proverb performance to maximize the perception of a ring of truth may well outweigh the possibility that an audience member might, as a result of the frame, be more likely to consider the performance cliché—especially as evidence suggests that people actually show very little memory for negative biasing information present at the time a statement was first encountered (Begg & Armour, 1991). Unfortunately, very little research appears to have addressed the impact of biasing statements above and beyond the impact of repetition of the statement, and what little evidence exists is somewhat contradictory (Begg & Armour, 1991). Certainly however it seems at least worth considering the possibility that although these kinds of biasing statements “are not in and of themselves evidence for truth,... they may be circumstantial evidence that provides a reason for believing” (Begg & Armour, 1991, p. 197). In persuasion contexts, of course, a persuasive impact of the “merely circumstantial evidence” of a biasing statement (or a proverbial affix) would be consistent with peripheral route processing.

Fourth, studies of factors that affect persuasion have long emphasized the potential importance of apparent consensus; although groups may be wrong and individuals may be right, people who are not carefully processing the content of the message may use an “everyone believes it so it must be true” or “two heads are better than one” heuristic to guide their judgments. Given this, the invocation of a proverb may act as a kind of consensus claim, or argument from authority (Goodwin & Wenzel, 1979), asserting that the argument represents not merely the wit of one but the wisdom of many. In this sense, “utterances of proverbs are acts of quoting. But the speaker does not quote an individual author; he quotes the linguistic

community itself" (Norrick, 1985, p. 26). In short, speakers may reference proverbial wisdom (e.g., "Not only do I believe this, but it is what we all know—proverbially—to be true") much as they reference expert opinion (e.g., "Not only do I believe this, but the experts say it is true") or empirical evidence (e.g., "Not only do I believe this, but the data support me") in forming their arguments. The corpus of proverbial wisdom has, in fact, been argued to serve as "the common folk's equivalent of a logic textbook" (Goodwin & Wenzel, 1979), a "proverbial philosophy" (Obelkevich, 1988, p. 50), and "a kind of protoscience" encapsulating "naïve generalizations about man's adjustment to his physical, biological, and cultural environment" (Bain, 1939, p. 433). Although proverbial wisdom lacks the rigor of formal logic or scientific research, it may act nonetheless "to guide ordinary persons in reasoning and arguing about their mundane affairs" (Goodwin & Wenzel, 1979, p. 289) by codifying relevant folk beliefs.

The possibility that invocations of proverbs work in part by establishing the appearance of consensus also suggests another possible rhetorical function for the proverbial frame, as the frame itself could serve as a peripheral route cue that an argument should be heeded merely in deference to existing consensus. In this case, "You know what they say..." may serve a function much like "As the Bible says...", "As Benjamin Franklin used to say...", or "As research shows...". Regardless of the actual validity of the argument, the argument may be made more compelling by the explicit invocation of the wisdom of the group.

Finally, although they are not explicitly referenced in the standard ELM literature, several other features of proverbs may also serve as peripheral route cues affecting the response to persuasive appeals. First, the archaic language, phrasing, and metaphors invoked by proverbs might serve either to enhance persuasive appeal (e.g., "ah yes, this is the old way and the old ways are best") or, for other audiences or in other contexts, immediately reduce the persuasive appeal of an argument (e.g., "Justice depends on whose ox got gored? Who even owns oxen anymore?!"). Second, the humor that sometimes characterizes proverbial wisdom (e.g., "Why buy the cow when you can get the milk for free" or "Why buy the pig when all you want is a little sausage?")—and that almost always characterizes anti-proverbs—may itself serve as a peripheral cue. Although this possibility has not been empha-

sized in the ELM literature itself, the possibility has been raised when the ELM has been applied in advertising (e.g., Chung & Zhao, 2003; Zhang & Zinkhan, 2006) and in educational contexts (e.g., Wanzer, Frymier, & Irwin, 2010). Third, the poetic elements that commonly characterize proverbs—e.g., cadence, meter, rhythm, rhyme, assonance, alliteration, parallelism, personification and metaphor (e.g., Abrahams, 1972; Arora, 1984; Gibbs & Beitel, 1995; Hulme, 1902; Mieder, 1993; Norrick, 1985)—may also function as peripheral route cues. Many of these poetic devices can act as mnemonics and during the time in human history when knowledge was communicated orally rather than in print, they no doubt served a very important purpose in enhancing the memorability of messages (Goldfine & King, 1994; Ong, 1999). Thoughts that cannot be recorded must be recalled to be of any use, so as Ong (1999, p. 62) wrote:

How could you ever call back to mind what you had so laboriously worked out? The only answer is: Think memorable thoughts. In a primary oral culture, to solve effectively the problem of retaining and retrieving carefully articulated thought, you have to do your thinking in mnemonic patterns, shaped for ready oral recurrence. Your thoughts must come into being in heavily rhythmic, balanced patterns, in repetitions or antitheses, in alliterations and assonances,...

Thus it is not surprising that phrases that successfully stick with us even today—e.g., proverbs and clichés—are also often characterized by these same features.¹⁴ Nietzsche (1887/2006), for example, argued that “even now... the very wisest of us occasionally becomes the fool of rhythm, be it only that one *perceives* a thought to be *truer* when it has a metrical form” and noted the irony in the fact that “the most serious philosophers, however anxious they are in other respects for strict certainty, still appeal to *poetical sayings* in order to give their thoughts force and credibility” (p. 65). Unfortunately, however, the extent to which these kinds of poetic elements serve as peripheral cues has not yet been the subject of much empirical investigation. The best studied appears to be a “that which rhymes is true” heuristic, described in the literature as the “rhyme as reason” heuristic (McGlone & Tofiqbakhsh, 1999, 2000) or the Keats heuristic, after Keats’s observation that “beauty is truth, truth

beauty” (McGlone & Tofiqbakhsh, 1999). In this research, McGlone & Tofiqbakhsh (1999) showed that rhyme appears to grant a phrase an air of validity, even when the phrase is unfamiliar. When unfamiliar proverbs were presented in both their original rhyming form and a semantically-equivalent non-rhyming form (e.g., “Men should first thrive before they wive” and “Men should first thrive before they marry”), the rhyming versions were rated as more accurate even though the non-rhyming versions were rated as equally comprehensible—and even though raters showed no conscious insight into their tendency to rate rhyming versions as more valid. Although their research focused specifically on raters’ judgments of the accuracy of proverbs, the researchers suggested that this “rhyme as reason” heuristic may well also operate outside parermiology, citing Johnnie Cochran’s famous argument to the jury that “If the gloves don’t fit, you must acquit!” as an example of rhyming plea that appeared to be rhetorically effective despite being logically dubious (McGlone & Tofiqbakhsh, 1999). Importantly, however, later research (McGlone & Tofiqbakhsh, 2000) demonstrated that the truth advantage for the rhyming form was attenuated when raters were explicitly warned to base their assessments of accuracy only on the content of the phrase and not on its poetic qualities, suggesting that people can inhibit the effects of this peripheral route cue when they are motivated to do so—exactly as the ELM would predict.

Although persuasion via the peripheral route has generally been shown to result in attitude changes that are more transient, more susceptible to counterpersuasion, and less predictive of subsequent message-consistent behavior, even low-elaboration processes may have important impacts in some circumstances, as might happen, for example, with repeated presentation of a peripheral cue, as this could increase the accessibility of the associated attitude (Petty & Wegener, 1999). This pattern may be particularly relevant to contexts in which proverbs are invoked in persuasive appeals, given that such invocations probably often entail multiple peripheral cues being presented simultaneously (e.g., presentation of a familiar stimulus, invoking a sense of consensus with a proverbial affix, and invoking a proverb that uses archaic language or rhyme). What’s more, the fact that many culturally important ideas are encoded by a number of different proverbs (e.g., the admonition to be careful with one’s money is encoded by

“a fool and his money are soon parted,” “money doesn’t grow on trees,” “save for a rainy day,” and “waste not, want not”) means that proverbs may be presented together in a persuasive appeal as variations on a theme, quite possibly increasing attitude accessibility and the persuasive effects of the exposure (Petty & Wegener, 1999). In short, the rhetorical impact of proverbs may be multiplied when multiple peripheral cues occur in the same performance situation and/or when multiple proverb-based messages are invoked together.

The possibility that proverbial invocations might operate via the peripheral route is consistent with the assessment of proverbs as “the oldest class of naturally sticky ideas” (Heath & Heath, 2007, p. 11), as the idea of “natural” stickiness suggests that retention of the message requires limited effort on the part of the audience.¹⁵ It is important to emphasize, though, that peripheral cues may also undermine the effectiveness of proverb-based persuasive efforts. Some people, for example, may utilize an “it is common, so it’s bad” heuristic that leads them to reflexively dismiss all arguments framed in familiar forms, including all familiar proverbs or phrases prefaced with proverbial affixes. This may, in fact, be related to the inverse U function observed between familiarity and persuasiveness; once a phrase is perceived as “too familiar,” that extreme level of familiarity may result in rejection via the peripheral route (for recipients who are not carefully attending to the message) regardless of how apt the argument. This reaction, of course, requires no more thought than rejecting all arguments made by Democrats, all arguments made by Republicans, all arguments that reference statistics from government agencies, or all arguments that invoke Bible verses, but peripheral route cues appear to act in exactly this way, allowing us to pass judgment without much actual consideration of the message. Hearing others deem a message cliché could also act as a peripheral route cue leading to reflexive dismissal of the message. Although no research regarding the extent to which proverbial status is likely to operate in a message-reinforcing versus message-undermining way appears to have been conducted to date, certainly it seems possible that a “proverbs are cliché” heuristic could exist and could undermine the persuasive power of proverb-based arguments for at least some audiences.

The Effects of Proverbial Invocation on the Level of Elaboration Given to an Argument

The invocation of a proverb may also affect the way a given message is elaborated. Petty and Cacioppo (1986) discussed a number of variables (e.g., distraction, repetition, personal relevance, personal versus group responsibility for making a decision, and prior knowledge and forewarning of the persuasive appeal) that appear to affect the way a message is elaborated. These and other factors may also affect the processing of proverb-based appeals. For example, as the ELM posits that distraction is likely to result in a default to peripheral route processing, any act that increases the likelihood that the source will be able to gain or maintain the audience's attention should also increase the likelihood of central route processing—and many of the common structural characteristics of proverbs (e.g., rhyme, meter, alliteration, metaphor, or parallelism) may function to focus attention on the appeal. For any number of reasons, then, it seems possible that the invocation of a proverb may affect the recipients' likelihood of attending to the message and therefore of engaging in critical evaluation of it.

Other aspects of proverb performance, not generally highlighted in the ELM literature, may also affect the likelihood of the elaborative processing of proverb-based arguments. The humor that characterizes the invocations of some proverbs and anti-proverbs may, for example, affect the audience's motivation to process the message, much as it has been argued to do for audiences responding to humorous ads (e.g., Zhang & Zinkhan, 2006, who predicted that humor would increase message scrutiny—an hypothesis that received mixed support), for audiences responding to political commentary (e.g., Young, 2008, whose results suggested that humor decreases the critical scrutiny given to these texts), and for students responding to humorous messages in a classroom setting (where the impact of the humor may depend on the humor's appropriateness and relevance to course content; Wanzer, Frymier, & Irwin, 2010). Relatedly, metaphorical proverbs (e.g., "a stitch in time saves nine" versus "haste makes waste") may require more processing (although see Kemper, 1981 and Gibbs & Beitel, 1995). Finally, the audience's familiarity with a cited proverb might also affect the audience's ability to interpret the proverb and to assess its applicability to a given situation. Despite evidence of considerable consistency in proverb familiarity across different groups (e.g., Haas, 2008), there

are also clear individual differences and these differences may be a function of personality. For example, people high in Restraint may well have a history of greater exposure to proverbs like “don’t rock the boat,” “don’t play with fire,” “look before you leap,” “think before you speak,” “don’t bite off more than you can chew,” “if you can’t say something nice, don’t say anything at all,” and “don’t start what you can’t finish” than those lower in this dimension (Haas, 2002; Haas & Rouse, 2012), either because the trait was molded by significant others who used these proverbs in their persuasive appeals or because people high in this trait have adopted these trait-relevant proverbs as personal mantras and recite them to themselves in self-focused persuasive appeals. In either case, the increased personal relevance of this type of appeal or the increased knowledge base about this mode of behavior (because of its match to a defining character trait) may affect the degree of elaboration likely to occur in response to the message (Petty & Wegener, 1999).

Research also suggests that cultural factors may impact whether particular variables serve as peripheral cues or substantive arguments. In one study, for example, students from Hong Kong who were induced to engage in central route processing were shown to be significantly more likely to be influenced by the extent of perceived consensus about a product than students in the U.S. were, even to the point of discounting relevant attribute information inconsistent with the consensus information (Aaker & Maheswaran, 1997). This suggests that the perception of consensus may itself serve as an argument worthy of thoughtful consideration in collectivist cultures (i.e., those characterized by high levels of interdependence and an emphasis on the importance of fitting in to larger social structures), while being more likely to be dismissed as a peripheral red herring in more individualist cultures (i.e., those characterized by high levels of independence and an emphasis on the importance of individuality). It also raises the possibility that even within individualist cultures, individuals higher in traits such as Traditionalism (Tellegen & Waller, 2008) or Group Ties (Haas, 2002; Haas & Rouse, 2012) may be more likely to treat proverbs as touchstones of cultural wisdom worthy of central route consideration.

Finally, it is also important to note that variables affecting the extent of elaboration may interact in important ways. Research suggests, for example, that arguments by consensus lead to greater

processing if the message is counter to one's current attitudes, but to less elaboration if the message is proattitudinal (Petty & Wegener, 1999); thus, to the extent to which proverbs are interpreted as statements of relative consensus, invocations of proverbs may be more likely to be processed via the central route when they are invoked in counterattitudinal appeals. Research also suggests that incorporating rhetorical questions into a persuasive appeal may increase elaboration. The effects of the rhetorical question, though, apparently depend on whether they introduce or summarize the arguments, whether the key arguments are strong or weak, and whether the audience is already inclined toward elaborative processing (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Summarizing strong arguments with a rhetorical question, for example, appeared to increase elaboration only for people who were otherwise disinclined to elaborate; for those already processing via the central route, the rhetorical question intervention had little effect (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). However, when rhetorical questions were used to introduce the material rather than to summarize it, and were presented in a printed rather than an audio form (allowing more time for message processing, Petty & Cacioppo, 1986), argument elaboration was enhanced (producing stronger agreement when the arguments were strong and decreased agreement when the arguments were weak) both for an audience that was led to believe that the issue had personal relevance and for an audience who believed it did not. Because some proverbs exist as rhetorical questions (e.g., "With friends like that, who needs enemies?" or "If everyone else jumped off a bridge, would you?" see Haas, 2013), this research may well be relevant to how these proverbial interrogatives function in persuasive contexts. Similar questions might also be raised, however, for more traditional proverbs, which might well operate quite differently in the context of otherwise strong or weak arguments or when prefacing versus summarizing persuasive appeals (especially given evidence that unfamiliar proverbs, at least, are more readily interpreted when presented after longer paragraphs than shorter ones, Kemper, 1981, and the tendency for idiomatic expressions to be used as a means of summarizing comments related to a current topic of discussion before changing topics, Drew & Holt, 1995).

WHEN Are Proverbs Cliché?

Although there is no consensually recognized definition we can use to ascertain clichédness unambiguously, two elements of clichédness seem to be key and it is on this basis that broad-sense and narrow-sense clichédness are distinguished here. In the broad sense, the cliché encompasses all that is commonly used, highly recognizable, and formulaically predictable—and by that criterion, all commonly used proverbs could be considered to be cliché in the broad sense (although historical proverbs, no longer in wide distribution, would not). But a narrower reading of clichédness also exists in the literature, one that is defined not just by frequency of use but by a negative reaction on the part of the audience to the clichéd message which, as a result, undermines its communicative impact. With respect to this more stringent standard of clichédness, there is considerable reason to question whether prototypical proverbs are truly cliché. Paremiological theory has generally assumed that proverbs are used to convey truth or to direct action in a way that calls on the power of the “wisdom of the ages” as a means of increasing the likelihood of achieving the intended rhetorical end, and this function of proverbial invocation seems fundamentally inconsistent with the perspective that clichéd speech is meaningless, superfluous, and rhetorically impotent or even counterproductive. That assumption is bolstered by evidence that proverb use can be an effective rhetorical strategy.

Somewhat paradoxically, unless a proverb is perceived as cliché in the broad sense, it cannot possibly succeed as a proverbial performance because it will not be interpreted as a traditional text; however, having succeeded as a proverbial performance, a proverb cannot be cliché in the narrow sense because rather than creating a negative reaction that undermines the communicative effort, the successful invocation of the proverb demonstrates that the proverb has achieved its aim thus evading the criterion of clichédness in the narrow sense. Thus the perception that a proverb is cliché presumably can only be argued to occur when the invocation of a familiar proverb fails in a performance situation—a possibility that could occur in at least two different ways according to the Elaboration Likelihood Model.

In the central route to persuasion, the arguments in a persuasive appeal are carefully considered. Inasmuch as proverbs present arguments, the ELM predicts that when people have the ability to

consider the arguments carefully and have the motivation to do so, the arguments (presumably including proverbial invocations) will be judged on their merits. This consideration may result in either a successful proverb performance (i.e., one that persuades in the way that it was intended to) or in a failed performance. If the performance fails because the proverb was judged to offer nothing particularly insightful to the consideration at hand and thus was not worthy of the time and consideration given to it, then the proverb may well be dismissed as cliché.¹⁶ In such cases the proverbial invocation is perceived as a clichéd insult to the intelligence of the audience, much as an advertisement's representation of beautiful people in beautiful places doing fun things while beautiful music plays in the background is a clichéd insult to the intelligence of an audience looking to find a good credit card.

The ELM suggests, though, that this kind of reasoned central route processing is likely only if the audience has the ability and the inclination to consider the persuasive appeal carefully, and the likelihood of central route processing may be quite different in the real world than it is in the lab (Petty and Cacioppo, 1981). First, many of the persuasive appeals made in the real world (e.g., whether to buy one brand rather than another) are not about highly involving issues and they are therefore unlikely to trigger central route elaboration. Second, in contrast to lab settings in which "facts" can be fabricated to pad a persuasive appeal, in the real world it may often be challenging to create highly convincing persuasive appeals (e.g., how much does it really matter what brand of dish soap we buy?). More generally, processing is more likely to proceed via the peripheral route when the audience lacks time, lacks background knowledge, or is distracted and all of these are probably more likely to characterize persuasion in real-life contexts. Thus it is not surprising that sources in everyday life may often play to the peripheral route, with or without presenting a strong central route appeal. Such is surely the case with the men's hosiery ad copy reading, "Introducing patterned Supp-hose Socks. Because feet cannot live on solid colors alone" (in Mieder & Mieder, 1977, p. 313). Clearly the advertiser is not intending for the ad to be processed via the central route, and for consumers who just want to buy socks without spending too much time thinking about it, the play on proverbial wisdom may make the message more attention-getting, more memorable, and more convinc-

ing. What's more, such an approach may ultimately be effective because personal behavior can become an argument in and of itself—i.e., once people engage in a behavior (e.g., buying Supp-hose Socks) they often generate their own reasons to justify their actions; these self-generated arguments may then effect attitude change via the central route, with all its attendant advantages. In short, “what begins... as a temporary change via the peripheral route, may end up being a more permanent change via the central route” (Petty & Cacioppo, 1981, p. 267). Thus the importance of peripheral route processing in our daily lives should not be underestimated. Although, as previously noted, peripheral cues associated with proverb invocations could undermine persuasion (by way of, say, an “it is common, so it's bad” heuristic), the fact that many proverb performance situations entail many of the persuasion-enhancing peripheral route cues discussed in the literature (e.g., increased message length, increased number of arguments, apparent consensus, previous exposure to the message, and the presence of rhyme) suggests that many proverb-based appeals—whether in formal advertising or in everyday communication—may be successful when the recipients of the message are processing via the peripheral route.

The ELM research literature also reveals several other patterns that may have implications for the perception of clichédness in proverb performance situations. First, research suggests that message recipients who are personally responsible for evaluating the quality of a message are more likely to engage in central route processing than are message recipients whose response to the message will be decided as a group; thus, the theory suggests, peripheral cues may be more important determinants of outcomes when persuasive appeals are addressed to a group rather than to an individual (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Second, because audio presentations of material allow less time for message processing than print presentations, it appears that central route processing is more likely in response to print presentations and peripheral cues may often play a more important role in response to oral appeals (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Finally, some people may be more dispositionally likely to use central route processing; these people, often identified in the personality literature as high in the need for cognition, seem to be inclined to undertake effortful cognitive work (e.g., central route processing) even at times when others

wouldn't and, in fact, generally report relishing the opportunity (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Thus the ELM would seem to suggest that objections related to the clichédness of a message would arise more often when messages are presented to highly invested individuals rather than to groups, to those high in the need for cognition, and when the messages are presented in written form rather than orally. This is intuitively consistent with the observation that the admonition to avoid clichés seems especially strong in academic circles, populated by people high in the need for cognition, and is apt to be applied most strictly in the context of formal academic writing, another context in which reasoning via the central route would be expected to be especially likely.

This analysis suggests that using proverbs orally to address a group may well be a reasonably effective technique; this is a context in which there is likely to be a default to peripheral route processing, which may play to the strengths of proverbs given the high number of peripheral heuristics associated with the genre. Using proverbs in individual exchanges, and particularly in written communications, may be, however, a double-edged sword. On the one hand, proverb use may be especially liked to be rejected as cliché in such contexts; audiences who are carefully analyzing arguments (proverb-based or not) are more likely to find the arguments lacking. On the other hand, when such performances are successful in these contexts, their persuasive impact should also be greater (i.e., resulting in greater persistence, greater resistance to counter-persuasion, and greater alignment with post-message behavior) because the effects were achieved by the central route (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Notably, it was in exactly this kind of context (a written communication addressed to a single individual) that we see John Adams and Winston Churchill echo the proverbs that embodied the arguments that were presented to them.

The Elaboration Likelihood Model appears to provide a helpful framework for addressing the question of clichédness by reframing the issue to focus less on whether a particular text is cliché and more on the conditions under which a performance of the text is likely to be perceived as cliché. From this perspective, the criticism of the cliché may have been somewhat misplaced. If the goal of an appeal is persuasive, and if a cliché (or the invocation of any peripheral route cue) attains that end (much to the dismay of the high in the need for cognition and defenders-of-the-central-

route academic critics), then the fault lies neither with the source nor with the message but with the processing of the recipient. That is, the invective should be hurled not at the user of the cliché nor at the cliché itself, but at the audience that falls for it. Despite the argument that “there is no bigger peril to thinking or to education than the popular phrase” (Binder, 1932 in Partridge, 1947, p. 59), the real concern is not the invocation of the clichéd phrase itself but its effectiveness; to some extent, the cliché is not so much a peril to thinking or education as the test of it. To identify a phrase or image or assertion as a cliché is to argue that it should, on its merits, fail as an argument—and because the academe so values central route reasoning, arguments that succeed via the peripheral route are anathema. But although writers and speakers who are addressing able and motivated audiences should be aware that clichés and other peripheral route cues will add little to the persuasiveness of their communications and may, in fact, undermine it, they should presumably also be aware that in some cases peripheral route cues (quite possibly including clichés) might well be effective. Thus whether or not clichés work by way of the central route, they “continue to serve a useful rhetorical task” because in a fast-paced world with too many messages and too little time “they require little time or effort... to compose and a similar level of effort to interpret” (Goldfine & King, 1994, p. 349).

In summary, an analysis of proverb performance with reference to broad and narrow-sense clichédness and from the perspective of the Elaboration Likelihood Model suggests that although proverbs are not immune from valid charges of clichédness, neither are such charges necessarily appropriate. Successful proverb performances are, by virtue of their effectiveness, not cliché in the narrow sense as defined here. Unsuccessful proverb performance, though, may fail on the grounds of clichédness and this can happen in either of two ways. First, the invoked proverb may fail to offer any worthwhile insight into the issue at hand; if this occurs, those who are carefully processing the message (i.e., using central route processing) may well cry cliché (in the narrow sense) and the argument will be rejected. Alternatively, those who are not carefully considering the message conveyed by the proverb may reject its wisdom merely because it takes a familiar form, relying on mere familiarity (i.e., broad-sense clichédness) as a peripheral route cue. Thus studies of the rhetorical impact of proverb perfor-

mances may benefit from consideration of psychological research on variables that affect the effectiveness of persuasive appeals. Whether proverb-based arguments are processed as clichéd or non-clichéd may depend as much on the processing style of the audience as on the presence of the proverb, suggesting that, in a sense, cliché is as cliché does.

Notes:

¹ Although many authors at least implicitly limit the category of cliché to speech acts—sometimes including in that category not only stereotyped phrases but also single words—the term is also applied more broadly in ways that encompass themes that recurrently emerge in non-linguistic domains (e.g., clichéd illustrations, visual images, dance elements, urban renewal movements, and political campaigns are referenced in *Webster's*, 1989; see also Haberer, 2005-2006). In the context of this article, however, the focus will be on clichéd language.

² As, perhaps, when “awesome” ceased to refer to an event that inspired awe and began, instead to refer to especially good French fries, and when “kiss of death” lost its Biblical overtones and began to be used to refer to a diet undone by the doughnuts brought to the teacher’s lounge.

³ Mieder (2012) reported that the proverbs included in *The Dictionary of Modern Proverbs* averaged about 7 words and Kemper (1981) reported an average of 7.1 words for the proverbs in her research sample. This suggests that proverbs may generally be longer than clichés, as the main entries in Partridge’s (1942) list of clichés averaged only 3.7 words in length.

⁴ This is evident, for example, in Gallacher’s definition of the proverb as “a concise statement of an apparent truth which has [*had*, or *will have*] currency among the people” (in Mieder, 1993, p. 14, italics added). Such paremiologically recognized proverbs, however, may not function as proverbs in performance situations, as the lack of perceived proverbiality may undermine the phrase’s impact as reflecting the wisdom of the people.

⁵ Although Dundes (1975) is no doubt right that “purely functional definitions are inadequate” (p. 961), it does not necessarily follow that “the critical question is thus not what a proverb does but what a proverb is” (p. 962). It may instead be the case that both structural and functional considerations are important determinants of the perception of proverbiality—and other considerations (e.g., the frequency with which the phrase is used in a group) may be important too (Arora, 1984; Haas, 2013).

⁶ Notably, a number of the same proverbs that Hirsch et al. (1988) included as references essential to cultural literacy have also been included in the ranks of the cliché (e.g., Partridge’s 1942 listing of “any port in a storm” and “am I my brother’s keeper?”).

⁷ It is, in fact, this requisite didactic function that most distinguishes the proverb from the related genres in Norrick’s (1985) analysis. Norrick argues that proverbs are by definition didactic, while riddles, tales, songs, slogans, and aphorisms may be, and proverbial phrases, clichés, jokes, curses and wellerisms are not.

⁸ The fact that the proverb itself is the message is clearly evident in the “drummed” proverbs of the Yoruba. In this culture, specially trained drummers broadcast proverbial messages to the community by means of drummed sequences that conveyed the rhythm and tonal variations of proverbs. Some of these proverbs, in fact, appeared to be more commonly presented in their drummed forms than in their spoken forms (Arewa and Dundes, 1964).

⁹ Norrick (1985) noted that these kinds of proverbial frames are not used nearly as frequently with the arguably more prototypically cliché proverbial phrases, which also are not used for didactic purposes. Although people sometimes frame clichés with an affix such as “that old cliché,” the intent in such cases appears to be an acknowledgment on the part of the speaker that the phrase is being used despite an anticipated negative reaction on the part of the audience. When proverbial affixes are employed, they appear to be intended to draw attention to the utterance in anticipation of a positive response.

¹⁰ In operant conditioning, the frequency of a verbal (or any other) behavior is a function of the contingencies (i.e., situation-behavior-consequence links) in a speaker’s history. It was, notably, this same kind of contingency analysis that B.F. Skinner (1974, 1980) used to explain the presence and persistence of proverbs themselves. To Skinner, a proverb is a statement (even if in metaphorical form) describing a contingency. For example, he translated the proverb, “If you want fire, do not fear the smoke,” to mean, “Do not draw away from the aversive features of behavior that will be reinforced” (1980, p. 326). The proverb thus states the contingency, assisting the audience in assessing the likely consequences of a given behavior (especially when those consequences are delayed, Skinner, 1974) and, therefore, altering the audience’s likelihood of responding to the situation in a particular way (i.e., in the way advocated by the proverb user).

¹¹ Mieder (2005) also commented on the relative paucity of proverbs in the Roosevelt-Churchill exchanges, however. This may, as he noted, have been in no small part due to the very practical and tactical nature of their communications, but it might also be true that “folk wisdom or sententious remarks might have added too much of a didactic or authoritative tone...” (p. 205).

¹² The ELM is one of a number of “dual-process” models in psychology, all of which emphasize a distinction between a careful conscious mode of processing and a more automatic and heuristic mode. The ELM in particular, though, has engendered a good deal of related research in a variety of fields and thus seemed to be especially applicable to paremiological scholarship.

¹³ Teigen (1986) found no evidence of such a curvilinear relationship in his sample of university students and considered the possibility that older raters or those with greater educational attainments might be more discerning, although he noted that there are few good reasons to believe that a student sample would be less accepting of novelty and originality than the population at large. Teigen’s sample of proverbs was, however, biased toward unfamiliar proverbs and thus was not well-suited for investigation of the impact of perceived clichédness.

¹⁴ Clichés also often involve poetic elements such as alliteration, rhyme, simile and metaphor (Partridge, 1966—e.g., “safe and sound,” “fair and square,” “cool as a cucumber,” or “fit as a fiddle”) and it may be the presence of these features that helps to explain why “time alone, repetition alone, familiarity alone—none of these can make a cliché out of just any old piece of language” (Pickrel, 1985, p. 254).

¹⁵ Heath & Heath (2007), however, also argue that proverbs—in their somewhat extended sense of the term—are essentially profound, and thus presumably by their definition proverbial invocations are also likely to succeed when processing occurs by way of the central route.

¹⁶ Not all arguments that fail to offer insight will necessarily be dismissed as cliché, of course. Some messages, for example, may be dismissed as sound bites rather than as clichés. Both clichés and sound bites are likely to fail to be persuasive to central route processors because they are perceived to be vacuous, vague, or pithy to the point of being misleading, but they can be distinguished because sound bites lack the fixed familiar form that typifies clichés.

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ROMANIAN AND ENGLISH FOOD PROVERBS AND IDIOMS: A CONTRASTIVE VIEW

Abstract: The present study is a short exploration of the cross-linguistic and cross-cultural significance of a limited class of proverbs and idioms, those which are thematically or lexically related to food and food stuffs, of a vital nature for human existence and ‘philosophy’ of life. The literal as well as the figurative interpretation of a set of these proverbs and/or idioms is discussed in semantic, lexical and pragmatic terms, with a few ethno-linguistic references to the Romanian paremia and folklore in general. The study may prove useful to paremiologists and linguists alike, if we take into consideration that proverbiality and idiomaticity bear the imprint of a people’s language, cultural history, and cognitive development. This limited selection of the proverbs and idioms of Romanian and (American) English can shed some light on the common and different tastes, priorities, and linguistic idiosyncrasies shared (or not) by the two peoples and cultures.

Keywords: conceptual metaphor, idiomaticity, lexical-conceptual unit, frame semantics, contrastive analysis, phrasal expression, literal vs. figurative meaning, proverbiality, semantic equivalence.

1.1. Methodology and material

In thematic terms, the present article will be a short study of food-denoting proverbs and idioms, in Romanian and English, with a comparative view on the conceptual cognitive characteristics of these proverbs: the contrastive view regards the identical, the similar and the dissimilar image-triggers of the source domains which give rise to a metaphorical mapping into the projected domain so as to mean what some proverbs mean, or evoke, at the figurative level of language. In my present analysis, I relied on a limited corpus of proverbs and idioms that are connected with the basic nutritional elements of ‘food’, in terms of edible stuff, appropriate for normal/healthy human life, such as: bread, water, some basic vegetables, fruits, meat and meat by-products, the common (continental climate-specific) poultry as

well as cattle; all these elements constitute the most frequent lexical items (lexical units) to be found both in idioms and in proverbs, in paremiological cross-linguistic studies. In those cases where a distinction occurs between the source-domain of image triggers in the two languages, the obvious (empirical) conclusion is that the source 'model' of reference and basis for conceptual mapping is different. This indicates different conceptual analogies and metaphorization processes, a different 'prototype effect' (R. Lakoff, 1987: 59-67) in general terms. Therefore, the 'best example' in setting a metaphorical equivalence in the cross-linguistic endeavor can prove most effective, in that it helps us find the categorical status of proverbs within a universal cognitive proverbial 'corpus'.

The present analysis is based mainly on A. Dundes' defining structural observations (cf. A. Dundes, in *Proverbium*, 1975: 961-973), with regard to the type of logical structure of proverbs. Dundes' paremiological theory starts from the assumption that "a proverb appears to be a traditional propositional statement consisting of at least one descriptive element, a descriptive element consisting of a topic and a comment" (cf. A. Dundes, 1994: 59-60). Being basically made of at least one full-fledged sentence, a proverb can include either two descriptive elements or a contrastive, oppositional relation of some kind. Dundes notes that there is 'a continuum from non-opposition to opposition' in the structure of a proverb. Alongside this continuum, there are different scales of opposition or contradiction, exemplified in a variety of proverbs. The food-denoting proverbs may go along the same gradual characterization, in terms of content informational (pragmatic) and semantic structure. Moreover, as Dundes himself notes in his most substantive article on the structure of proverbs (1975, reprinted in 1994: 60-61), such an analysis is quite tentative and needs to be 'tested' with proverb materials from a variety of cultures. In the present paper, I am doing exactly this, in an attempt to exemplify and possibly illustrate the parallelism or differences of certain proverbs related to food in the Romanian and English cultures. This kind of approach has to do more with what has been called ethno-linguistics, as it is connected both with people's language and with their specific way of expressing certain customary, traditional and cultural perceptions about reality. The study is cross-cultural and cross-linguistic as it

looks in parallel into two cultures and two languages at the same time, in an attempt to outline those common and different elements that can lead to relevant conclusions or to further insight into this fascinating field of folklore and proverbiality across countries and languages.

The material (Romanian proverbs and their glosses and the English proverbs related to food) is extracted from a more extensive research project on idiomatic expressions and proverbs in Romanian and English, which are to be collected in a book, the background of which was made possible by a Fulbright scholarship and by the generous, indefatigable support and expertise of professor Wolfgang Mieder, to whom I am forever grateful.

1.2. *The common (most frequent) lexical-conceptual ‘units’ in English and Romanian food-denoting proverbs (and idioms): ethno-lexical food items*

Meals of the day (bread, salt, water); the table as a functional object for food consumption while sitting at table.

The basic elements of reference in Romanian proverbs related to domestic rural life are the three meals of the day, breakfast, lunch, dinner and the table as the central functional object in one’s house. If someone does not respect the custom of sitting at table while eating, there is an idiom which says: someone (because he/she is in a hurry) eats “at the horse’s muzzle”, which means that that person eats while standing, as if standing by a horse (eating quickly in a standing position): *a mânca la botul calului*.

The symbolic elements for hospitality are intrinsically related to food offering, in the form of “**bread and salt**”. Bread is the symbol of everything a human being needs so as to survive, the mere necessity of life, and salt symbolizes the (presumably, ‘good’) taste that food must have for ‘pleasant’ consumption. This symbolic combination of bread-and-salt is an ethno-folkloric token of hospitality in certain parts of south-eastern Europe. The usual saying “*cine aduce pâinea pe masă*” means that the person who is the bread winner in a house is also the head of the family. Bread is a symbolic element in Romanian paremia; as in many other cultures and languages, it is explicitly referred to in the Christian prayer to the Lord. Bread is an essen-

tial food item, therefore, it is most valuable and remains as a focal image-trigger in proverbs such as the short list below:

- *Pe ciobanul fără câine lupii-l lasă fără pâine.* = rhymed: The shepherd with no dog, the wolves will leave him with no bread.
- *Pâine peste pâine nu strică.* = Bread onto bread will bring no harm. (better have more than not enough).
- *Omul bun e ca pâinea cea de grâu.* = The good man is like wheat-made bread.
- *Omul harnic, muncitor, de pâine nu duce dor.* = (rhymed) The hardworking man will never long for bread.
- *Nu uita ziua de mâine, ca să nu duci dorul de pâine.* = Do not forget tomorrow lest you long for bread, i.e. work hard so that you should earn your living.

Bread-and-water is the basic food of the very poor man ('*a se hrăni cu pâine și apă*'='feed (oneself) on bread and water') or it can imply deprivation in a place of confinement (prison) or self-isolation and seclusion (the hermit's life in a monastery), or it can also be the 'dietary' ideal meal for good health. Conversely, the good qualities of bread are metaphorically transferred to the quality of being a 'good' man, by comparison: *Omul bun e ca pâinea cea de grâu* (the good man is like the bread made of wheat). The Romanian proverb that praises bread to the detriment of polenta ("mămăliga") also alludes to the nutritional and economic values of bread, as the essence of quality of life in general. If "mămăliga" is basic to nutrition, bread is its added value: *Mămăliga-i stâlpul casei, pâinea-i cinstea mesei* (Polenta is the pillar of the house, while bread is the 'honor', i.e. The 'corollary' of the table/meal). Another proverb, *Nimic nu e mai scump decât pâinea* (Nothing is more expensive than bread) is an implicit metaphor for good health acquired through good nutritional elements, and which is the most 'costly', as it is vital for all human beings.

Bread is used metaphorically in proverbs which stipulate that one's own homeland is the best to live in, despite adversarial circumstances: *Fie pâinea cât de rea, tot mai bună-i în țara mea* = no matter how bad the bread, it is/tastes better in my homeland, implying "not elsewhere".

But there are alternations with respect to life perspectives: “*Pâinea e bună oriunde, numai pâine să fie*” = “Bread is good anywhere, suffice it to be”, obviously calling for the basic fact in life, food in general, irrespective of where it is obtained. Then the social opposition: rich – poor is also judged in terms of “having or not having bread to eat: “*sătutul nu crede celui flămând*” (“the man who has eaten enough [food], will not understand/believe the hungry man”).

The idiomatic phrase “*A mânca o pâine mai albă*” (“whiter bread”) is a metaphor which reflects the social status of those who can afford a better standard of living in general. On the contrary, “*pâinea neagră*” (‘black bread’) is the symbol of poverty and low social status: “*Pâinea neagră e pâinea săracului*” = black bread is the poorman’s bread.

The ‘derivatives’, “*cozonac*”, “*colac/colaci*”, “*covrigi*”: *cozonac* is a special kind of cake, baked in a ‘canonical form: rectangular, round or oval-shaped cake (baked in different types of usually copper-made moulds), are the ‘specialties’ that are usually prepared and served to members of the family and/or convivial gatherings, on traditional special occasions: Easter, Christmas or on family celebrations and commemorations (weddings, baptisms, and burials). The last lexical item, “*covrigi*”, is part of a very interesting Romanian proverb, which says: “[*Aici*] (*nu*) *umblă câinii cu covrigi în coadă*” (“[Here] dogs walk/do not walk with “croissants’ in their tails”), i.e. a context (cognitive world) where someone believes that in a certain place, region, country, the economic situation of the respective *locus* and, consequently, the social and living conditions in general, are so good, that dogs are wearing ‘*covrigi*’ – a croissant-shaped sort of good quality bread – in their tails, on the basis of the mimetic image: dogs with coiled tails). Therefore, the lexical item “*covrig*” is the image-trigger word or lexical unit that gives rise to the whole metaphorical expression.

The opposite bread item “*păine uscată*” (dried bread, crumbs), *posmeți* (regionalism for “*pesmeți*”), “*posmagi*”, the latter appears in the definite article form, in a proverb, the structure of which is an interrogative (rhetorical) question: “*Muieți îs posmagii?*” (Are the bread crumbs wet, drenched already?). Its connotation is that if such a question is addressed to someone, that interlocutor is supposed to be very lazy, so lazy that he will not even bother to

munch and wet the bread crumbs, as if someone else would have to do that for him.

The extremist idiomatic ‘formula’, in terms of bread “derivatives” is an idiomatic expression (even a collocation), not a proverb, and it reads as follows: “*am mâncat răbdări prăjite*” (We ate fried ‘patiences’ [*sic*]), meaning that we ate nothing, while longing for some food to come. The lexical verb “a răbda” means to wait in eager anticipation for something to happen, to come, while keeping patient. The collocation “răbdări prăjite” is a lexicalized, reversed metaphorizing expression. The expression consists of the lexical transitive verb: a mânca (eat), a DO NP, headed by an abstract noun (‘răbdare’), which is inflected in the plural form (this form never occurs in the plural, as it is a mass noun) and the metaphorizing agreement-marked adjective “prăjite” (fried, pl. fem.); the idea of eating nothing is thus conceptualized, in an “ideal conceptual model” (Lakoff’s ICM) where someone is hungry and has to control themselves to wait while “frying” their yearning. Therefore, the negative metaphor is the basic cognitive element of this expression.

Water. As regards water – as a basic vital element, the following proverbs in the two languages can provide us with interesting cognitive and cultural insights into the perception of the need for water and the way in which people interpret that necessity metaphorically, in their real world and in everyday life:

I. Romanian proverbs and idioms based on the image trigger Apă (‘water’)

- a. *A nu avea (nici) după ce bea apă.* = to have nothing to drink water after: have no food which would call for water to finish the meal in a habitual way), be so poor that not even basic food is available.
- b. *Nu are nici după ce bea apă și el se scobește în măsele.* = He has no food which would call for water to finish the meal, but he still uses toothpicks (as if he had eaten a lot): about someone who is very poor but v. proud too.
- c. *Apa nu-i bună nici în cizme.* = Water is no good even in boots. i.e. about someone who usually drinks wine, not water at the regular meals of the day. (who drinks a lot).

- d. *Din pumni străini nu te saturi când bei apă.* = When you drink water from a stranger's fists you will never have enough.
- e. *Face cât trei ape și una, clocotită.* = It is worth as much as three waters [*sic*] and one, which is boiled, meaning it is worth nothing, it is of no value.
- f. *Bea apă rece că te vei răcori.* = Drink cold water and you will cool down (calm down).
- g. *Si apa se gată câteodată.* = Even water runs short sometimes, meaning that some fortune may get spent and exhausted, if it is not renewed.
- h. *A sti în ce apă se scaldă/se adapă* = Literal: know in what kind of waters someone bathes, i.e. to know what someone aims at, what goals to attain.
- i. *A se îmbăta cu apă rece* = literal: get drunk with cold water, i.e. make illusions, make illusionary plans.
- j. *A căra apă cu ciurul* = a strânge puțin câte puțin, a nu avea spor într-o muncă, de obicei, grea. = Carry water by the pail (pail after pail..), i.e. have no efficiency in one's labor, work hard with very little result.
- k. *Dacă nu-i dai omului apă, nu-i da nici de mâncare* = Unless you give a man water, do not give him food either, i.e. grant minimal hospitality to sb., including food and water. One without the other is worth nothing.

The short list above is a limited selection of the most current proverbs that contain the image-trigger 'water' (apa) in the Romanian paremia. Structurally, they are quite varied, for instance, example *b.*, which is an extension of *a.* – is an idiomatic, proverbial saying, based on an emphatic type of negation (*nu are nici*..has not even...) and a consequential sentence (*și el se scobește în măsele*: he uses toothpicks to show he has eaten a lot), with a derogatory meaning. Example *c.* is constructed like *a.* and *b.*, with an emphatic negation, *d.* is a descriptive type of proverb, in the second person singular, with a generic, but familiar, advisory tone. Example *e.* is built on an interrogative pronominal adjective *cât* (=as, quantitative) which

plays the role of a quantifying complementizer and two coordinated nominals, *trei ape* (three waters) and *una clocotită* (one boiled). It is a complete quantitative ‘assessing’ sentence to show the null value of the item compared to water in its different ‘forms’. Examples *e. – j.* are structurally and semantically different in that they must be interpreted in context, figuratively. Example *k.* is also an interesting case where a hypothetical sentence is followed by an imperative mood consequence, expressed in the negative as well, as a logical deduction triggered from the first part of the proverb.

II. English proverbs based on the image trigger ‘water’

- a. *Blood is thicker than water* Rom. equivalent: Sângele apă nu se face.
- b. *Don't make waves (do not cause trouble)* Rom. equiv.: Nu fă valuri (don't make waves)
- c. *Don't throw the baby out with the bath water* (Don't discard something valuable along with something undesirable).
- d. *Don't wash your clothes in public.* Rom equiv. Rufele se spală în familie. (Clothes are washed in the family).
- e. *Gone water does not mill anymore.* You should not pay attention to what is in the past. Let bygones be bygones.
- f. *He is wet behind the ears.* Rom. equiv. E cu cașul la gura. (be very young and inexperienced).
- g. *Plenty of water has passed under the bridge.* So much time passed by.
- h. *Still waters run deep.* The quiet people can be the smartest and wisest. Rom. equiv. Apele liniștite sunt adânci.
- i. *That's water under the bridge.* It is in the past now. Approx. Rom. (toponym) equiv. Multă apă a mai curs pe Dunăre. ‘A lot of water has run in the Danube River’, meaning a lot of time passed).

- j. *The drop that makes a vase overflow.* Something is no longer bearable. Rom. equiv. *Picătura care a umplut paharul.*
- k. *They are like water and fire/They are like devil and holy water.* These two people are absolutely different/opposed to each other.
- l. *To be in bad waters.* To be in a difficult position.
- m. *To discover warm water.* Something is very obvious.
- n. *To have water up to the throat.* To have few chances to succeed; Also: *Keep one's head above water.* Avoid succumbing to difficulties, usually debt.
- o. *To keep water in one's mouth.* To keep a secret.
- p. *To lose oneself in a glass of water/To drown in a glass of water.* To be easily discouraged.
- q. *To make a hole into the water/To pound water in a mortar.* Making vain attempts.
- r. *To throw water on fire.* To cool down a hot matter.
- s. *To work under water.* Hiding one's real intentions.
- t. *You can lead a horse to water but you cannot make him drink.* You can tell someone something but they will not do it or remember it.
- u. *You draw water to your own mill.* You only act in your own advantage. Rom. equiv. *I-a venit apa la moară* (Water came to his mill).
- v. *You're a sitting duck.* You're open to danger.
- w. *You're in hot water.* You're in trouble.
- x. *You're walking on thin ice.* You are close to getting in trouble.
- y. *You trouble the water.* You make mischief.

It is obvious that the English and Romanian cognitive and psycho-social 'priorities' related to water reflected in proverbial phrases are different from the cultural (and historical) points of

view, as well as from the folkloric perspective. Where there are equivalent conceptions and proverbial expressions of those conceptions and generalizations, like (1) water – blood metaphorical opposition or (2) deep waters signifying trouble and the unknown, hence, some danger to be avoided, or some other similarities and even identical metaphors, it is understandable that they should be found in both cultures and customary, traditional sayings and proverbs. However, there are also a series of conceptual discrepancies between the two languages epitomized in water-denoting proverbs. One of them regards water as a sign of utmost deprivation (for religious, purification purposes) or as a symbol of sheer poverty. This is to be found in a bunch of Romanian proverbs, together with the opposite metaphor of good health coupled with corporeal and moral purity expressed through water as an element of pristine nature (The Romanian collocation “*apa de izvor*” has this metaphorical interpretation).

The cook, the good meal, conviviality, and wine in Romanian proverbs and idioms

When the members of the family sit around the table, the most important one is the housemaker, who is also the cook of the family. Some proverbs make specific reference to the cook and her qualities: “*Bucătăreasa a făcut bucate bune*” (The cook made good ‘pieces’/meals for the festive dinner).

Wine is the regular festive beverage and is much praised in different proverbs and sayings. In Romanian and in many other languages, wine proverbs evoke some common literal and figurative characteristics related to the effects of drinking wine:

- Wine – changes man’s behavioral profile;
- Wine – a psychological ‘drug’ (wine leads man into oblivion, sleep, and apparent lightheartedness, lack of responsibility);
- Wine and its consumption – leads to poverty, bankruptcy;
- Wine – sign of wealth and plentiful food in one’s home;
- Wine also leads to debauchery, misconduct, if drunk in excess;
- Wine and moderation means living a healthy and wise life.

In terms of structural characteristics, the wine-denoting or connoting proverbs, both the literal and the figurative, metaphorical ones share a few repetitive structures: the identificational, the contrastive or oppositional types, the equational and the multi-descriptive element proverbs. For instance, proverb *a.* in the short list below is a triple-structured aphoristic proverb, where the first part (“*cu vinul și cu somnul*” with wine and sleep) – man will forget his worries and misfortunes, i.e. “*uită grijile omul*”. The description is to be found both in the topic and in the comment part of the proverb. Proverb *b.* is also a descriptive element proverb, but it also contains a contrastive or opposition part, from the logical point of view, since it is not financially sound to sell something that is valuable (*vineyard*) through its potential and buy the end-product (*resins*) of that that is the source of that product. Obviously, this is a sign of mismanagement and bad business. Proverb *c.* stresses the idea that wine is good, but not in excess, and the structure is a contrastive one, with a positive underlying meaning. The opposition is within the pair *vin – minte* (wine – mind/brains); they share the verb, this is the reason why in the commentary part the sentence will have a predicate in the negative form: *bea vinul, dar nu-și bea mintea* ([he] drinks wine but not his brains/minds), they stay sober. Proverb *d.* is rather ambiguous as to its qualities, the more so as it is rhymed, and it could be interpreted as a humorous, slightly irresponsible comment on the nature of wine, as if the person who evokes the proverb were a bit tipsy.

- a. Cu vinul și cu somnul/ Uită grijile omul. = With wine and sleep man will forget his worries.*
- b. Vinde via și cumpără stafide. = He sells out the vineyard and buys resins, Do bad unprofitable business.*
- c. Toată lumea bea vinul, dar nu-și bea mintea.. = Everybody drinks their wine but they do not drink their minds: drink moderately.*
- d. Toarnă vin în două oale/Că nici capul nu mă doare. = Pour wine in two bowls, my head will not ache, about heavy drinkers, still, not drunkards.*

- e. Vinu-i bun, rachiu îmi place/Și parale nu pot face. =
Wine is good, rum I like it/And money I cannot
make/earn/have no ne.*
- f. Bun îi vinul, nu-i ca apa/Nici friptura nu-i ca ceapa.=
Good is wine, it is not like water/nor is roast meat like
onion.*
- g. Bere după vin e un chin, vin după bere e plăcere.= Beer
after wine is torture, while wine after beer is a pleasure.*

According to A. Dundes' classification, proverb *e.* is descriptive-contrastive and oppositional, as it denies in the comment part of the proverb the power of making money as an effect of drinking wine and rum, i.e. spending money on those drinks instead of saving it. Proverb *f.* is also a rhymed proverbial statement, formed of two juxtaposed sentences: the first sentence is a comparison identificational (wine is good, it is not like water), and the second sentence refers to an apparently incongruent part of the proverb, stating that neither is roast beef like onion. The figurative meaning is that real substance, the genuine quality intrinsic to wine and to roast meat cannot be compared to water or onion, the 'humblest' of vegetables.

As expected, the nutritional and pleasurable qualities as well as the abuse of wine-drinking are epitomized in Romanian as well as in many other languages. The second opposition regards the lexical-conceptual pair water – wine, present in the Romanian proverbs, where water is de-valued in favor of the gastronomic 'qualities' of wine. However, there are common traits of wine that are epitomized both by the Romanian and English paremia, such as the tastefulness and the luring nature of wine, its risky impact on sb.'s behavior if consumed in excess, lack of self-control and morality associated with debauchery, etc.

The English wine-related proverbs and their figurative interpretation

(source: Dictionary of American Proverbs, ed. by W. Mieder, S.A. Kingsbury, and K.B. Harder, New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

According to A. Dundes' structure of proverbs, the wine-related ones listed below illustrate a variety of forms and structural patterns, hence their meanings are generally perceived to be

conative, or indirectly retrievable from the surface sentential structure.

The first two proverbs, *a.* and *b.*, are imperative advisory proverbs, in which the authoritative tone is obvious and the overall sense is a prescriptive or normative statement, set from an opposing 'posture'. The same interpretation can be given to *e.* and *g.* Proverb *c.* is of an interesting heuristic type, based on a supposition (if wine tells the truth, which is also a proverb, with Latin origins, as is known). Practically, we have to do with a proverb-within-proverb technique of chaining - logically and pragmatically - two different concepts or representations that have already reached proverbial status. In this particular case, the second part of the new proverb refers to two overlapping 'facts': one is that brandy is implicitly known to be much stronger than wine, and the second, deriving from this 'truth', is that brandy 'lies', as opposed to the 'truth' told by wine. The stylistic effect is a funny, heuristically deductive conclusion with a figurative proverbial interpretation. Examples *e.* and *f.* as well as the rest - proverbs from *g.* to *n.* - are identified *in situ*, as to their structure and semantic interpretation.

- a. *Don't pour new wine in old bottles.* Contrastive oppositional
- b. *Drink wine and have the gout. Drink none and have it too.* Contrastive, descriptive
- c. *If wine tells truth, so have said the wise, it makes me laugh to think how brandy lies.* Oppositional, descriptive, heuristic
- d. *In wine there is truth* (Lat. *in vino veritas*). Descriptive, identificational.
- e. *Never spare the parson's wine nor the baker's pudding.* Negative, descriptive, contrastive
- f. *Sweet's the wine, but sour's the payment.* Contrastive, oppositional
- g. *Take counsel in wine, but resolve afterwards, in water.* Oppositional

- h. *The sweetest wine makes the sharpest vinegar.*
Oppositional, descriptive
- i. *When wine is in, wit is out.* Negative, oppositional
- j. *When wine sinks, words swim.* Contrastive, descriptive
- k. *Wine has drowned more men than the sea.* Descriptive
oppositional
- l. *Wine makes all sorts of creatures at the table.*
Descriptive, identificational
- m. *Wine on beer brings good cheer; beer on wine is not so fine.* Descriptive, contrastive
- n. *Wine, women and songs will get a man wrong.*
Descriptive, identificational

Summing up in thematic and cognitive terms, there is a slight difference of ‘world view’ with respect to the wine proverbs in English and Romanian: with one or maybe two mild exceptions (*c*, *e*, p. 7 above), the Romanian proverbs evoke a rather ‘hedonistic’ conception about life and the pleasure of conviviality, which includes drinking wine, while in the list of English proverbs, almost all the examples above evoke a prohibitive, even punitive ‘view’ on the risks of wine drinking. The last but one proverb (*m*) is semantically equivalent to the Romanian proverb in (*g*). Only proverb (*e*) evokes a different thematic domain, being based on a different metonymical effect: the stereotypical food items to be found with two traditional social classes: the parson and the baker.

Eggs, cheese, bacon/lard: English and Romanian proverbs and idioms

Eggs are not considered to be of the essence in Romanian paremiology, therefore, there are not too many proverbs containing a reference, figurative or not, to this foodstuff. There are a few collocations, related to the traditional manner in which eggs can be cooked (boiled, fried, poached, etc.), but proverbs are even fewer. Some of them are metaphors for human behavior and prejudices, e.g. *Cine fură azi un ou, mâine poate fura un bou* = He who steals an egg today will steal an ox tomorrow. Reference is made here to a tiny food-denoting item, the egg as a

comparative unit of theft, counterposed with the size of an ox, in the proverbial 'source' domain; this reference is purely rhetorical, with an explicit ban on theft in general. The moral precept is the target domain of the metaphorical transfer through figurative language. Another Romanian proverb is: *Invață oul pe gaină* = "The egg will teach the hen", which is reminiscent of the English proverb: *Două ouă când se ciocnesc, unul trebuie să se spargă* = "When two eggs knock each other, one must break". This proverb is a metaphor for two strong wills or temperaments, two people whose wills hit or meet and one must succumb, defeated by the opponent. Again, the egg is viewed as a fragile and tiny item, of not big material importance, unless it symbolizes man's will, when it comes to its hard shell. In Romanian there is a lexical verb, *a cloci*, which is interpreted figuratively, its lexical meaning is "to hatch" in the following sentence: *Clocește el ceva...*, literally: "He is hatching something", i.e. he is doing something secretly.

As distinct from Romanian, the English folklore and idiomatic lexicon consists of more numerous and significant egg-focused proverbs. The metaphorical proverbial phrase: *to have all your eggs in one basket*, meaning to risk everything in one go is most frequent in real speech situations. Other proverbs, such as: *Have egg on one's face* = be caught out (embarrassed); *You can't make an omelette without breaking some eggs* (do something to the detriment of sth. else); *to over-egg the pudding* = exaggerate in trying too hard to do sth. (and finally spoiling it) are a few of the popular proverbs that occur in present-day press comments or public speeches too.

However, the obvious difference in a cross-cultural approach appears to be related to the bread-and-butter concept which is missing in the Romanian proverbial vocabulary. "Bread-and-butter" is a sort of collocation, but it occurs in a proverbial context, with a figurative meaning as well.

A culinary combination of this kind: two elements that through their association symbolize – in the case of bread-and-butter – a certain state of material wealth and good social status, is also to be found in the Romanian proverb thesaurus, but the lexical-idiomatic combination has an opposite figurative meaning; this is *slănină/slană-cu-ceapă* (= bacon/lard-with-onion), in the phrase: *a manca slană cu ceapă* (= eat lard with onion),

which suggests a modest, rural, though healthy – because natural – way of feeding oneself.

As for **cheese** as a basic food item reflected in English and Romanian proverbs and idioms, it seems to be equally appreciated in folklore, for its nutritional qualities. The proverb below is a figurative way of giving good dietary advice:

- Cheese is gold in the morning, silver at noon, and lead at night.

There is no such Romanian equivalent alluding to the healthy way of eating cheese only in the morning, as the English proverb above prescribes. In the same prescriptive manner, the English rhymed proverb ‘*Apple pie without cheese is like a kiss without a squeeze*’ praises the rich tastefulness of cheese as an obligatory ingredient of a good pie.

The idiomatic phrase: *As different as chalk and cheese* is said about two things that are completely different, that have nothing in common. The paremiological dictionaries also list: *No more like than an apple to an oyster* (TTEM, 155b, p. 344). It is interesting to note that for the same concept of dissimilarity, a different phrasing is available, the former relates to the apparent similarity between the two designating lexical items (chalk, cheese), while they are substantially different. The second phrase *no more like an apple to an oyster*, instead, designates two object in the real world that have nothing in common, not even at face value.

In Romanian, ‘*brânză*’ (cheese) as a food item is associated with some wealthy standard of living, in the countryside, where cows and cattle in general represent the farmer’s good ‘fortune’ as it provides him with a wealthy and healthy living standard. When cows are not there, on the farm, this is a sign of poverty and deprivation. However, those who eat cheese without having cows to take the milk from, are squandering and careless people: ‘*Vaci n-avem, brânză mâncăm*’ (we have no cows, but we eat cheese).

Then the following Romanian proverbs are interesting from the cultural point of view, as they all reflect a sort of negative, pessimistic view upon life, on those people whose conduct is reproachable in some way or another or upon poverty as an irreversible social condition:

- *[este] Brânză bună în burduf de câine* = [he is] Good cheese in a dog's belly, meaning that despite his innate (usually) intellectual qualities, he has a bad character.
- *S-a umplut de brânză ca broasca de păr* = He is as filled with cheese as the frog – with hair, meaning he earned nothing (He won nothing, if in a competition)
- *Nu e bun de nicio brânză* = He is good for no cheese, meaning he is good for nothing.
- *S-alege brânza de zer* = Cheese is put aside from (milk) whey, meaning good is sorted (out), separated from the evil'.
- *De-am avea brânză după cum n-avem pâine, bună apă de papară !* = Should we have cheese, as we lack bread, good is water to cook some *papara* (i.e. Engl. 'panada'). This is a Romanian saying which is uttered when in a family all the basic foodstuffs are missing, as they cannot afford getting them.
- *S-a împutit brânza între ei.* = Cheese got rotten and stinking between them, said when friendship or some other good relationship between two people was broken.
- *Frate, frate, dar brânza e pe bani.* = Brother, [yes], brother [are you to me], but cheese is for money (in exchange for money, not free). The meaning is quite transparent, i.e. no matter how good friends, or even close relatives we may be, business is business.

The English Pie and the Romanian plăcintă

From among the cooked food items presented in proverbs, the pie is the most common 'artefact' in the English proverbs:

- *Have a finger in every pie, as easy as (apple) pie.*
- *Too many fingers spoil the pie.*
- *Apple pie and motherhood issue* (American proverb).
- *Clear as the inside of a blueberry pie* (Calif.).
- *To one who has a pie in the oven, you may give him a bit of your cake* (French).
- *Promises, like pie crust are made to be broken* (Latin, in Amer. since 1700).

- *Sweet as apple pie* (English).
- *Better some of a pudding than none of a pie.*
- *Promise someone a pie in the sky* (Amer., meaning to promise a future reward).
- *Giving cold-pie to someone (rudely awaken either with cold water or by pulling off the bedclothes)* (Source: The-saurus of Traditional English Metaphors, P.R. Wilkinson, Routledge, London and New York, 1993).

Maybe one ‘cultural’ explanation for the multitude of pie-proverbs in English and American paremia and even in a variety of collocations could be found in the orderly, tidy and well-‘planned’ setting and laying technique of the pie-making process and the delicious taste of the end-product, epitomizing a ‘perfect’ world, with no faults in it. This ideal world requires one planner, one person making the pie, not several “fingers”, i.e. several cooks. The pie is metaphorized as motherhood in the American culture, e.g. “as American as mom and apple pie”.

In Romanian, a similar, age-old traditional view is conceptually associated with pie-eating and pie enjoyment, e.g.:

- a. *De plăcinte râde gura, de vârzare și mai tare* = Of the pie my mouth laughs, of the cabbage in it, so much the more..., i.e. I am fond of pies, but the contents are even more tasty.
- b. *Cine n-are vara minte, iarna nu mănâncă plăcinte* = He who has no brains in summer (is careless), shall have no pie in winter time.
- c. *La plăcinte înainte, la război înapoi* = Ahead when it comes to pies and [keeping] backwards, when there is war.

However, in Romanian paremia, there are relatively few proverbs or idioms containing the lexical item ‘pie’ as a gastronomical ‘treat’ or a figurative expression of some pleasurable reward for good conduct.

Fish in English proverbs (lexical-grammatical structure and metaphorical meaning)

On the basis of a short corpus of fish-denoting proverbs, we can classify them into the following categories, from the lexical-semantic point of view:

1. Evolutive narrative

Prescriptive eventive-conditional proverbs

Imperative mood; the “didactic” structure

- *Make not the sauce till you have caught the fish.*
- *Venture a small fish to catch a much greater one.*
- *Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime (Chinese proverb).*
- *You need to bait the hook to catch the fish.*
- *If you swear you will catch no fish.*
- *In the morning be first up, and in the evening last to go to bed, for they that sleep catch no fish.*
- *It is ill fishing before the net.*

2. Stagnant narrative

a. Declarative sentenced-based

- *A fish follows the bait.*
- *Fish and visitors smell in three days.*
- *The best fish keep to the bottom (ca. 1566).*

b. Expositive comparative or counter-posed events in proverbs

- *There is better fish in the sea than have ever been caught.*
– longing for what you have not.
- *The fish will soon be caught that nibbles at every bait.*
- *All cats love fish but hate to get their paws wet.*
- *It is at courts as it is in ponds; some fish, some frogs.*
- *It is fish that comes to the net.*

The English proverbs focused on fish contain a variety of metaphors. In proverbs the metaphor "fish and frogs" relates to the variety of human characters to be met in law courts, in parallel with the variety of creatures living in ponds. The negative sense of the metaphor conveyed by "frogs" is transparent enough. This proverb – when and if used in an appropriate context – would sound like an allegorical remark to some interactive social event or situation. The next proverb in the list above is based on an anticipatory *It* Construction that emphasizes (under focus) the rightmost periphery of the sentence: *It is fish that comes to the net*. The post-verbal Subject NP *fish* is focalized by a clefting construction. This is a less common structure in proverbs, as it is rather elaborate, syntactically speaking. Obviously, the semantic interpretation of the proverbs is all the more prominent in the given context.

The Romanian 'case'

A similar classification and description is provided below to the Romanian proverbs, with a view to delineating the contrast in terms of conceptual metaphors and cultural associations in fish-denoting paremia:

1. Expositive, conditional, prescriptive, in the impersonal tone Or ***Declarative, evaluative***: are balta pește [...]

- *Peștele de la cap se-mpute*. (<Lat. *Piscis primum a capite foetet*; Fish stinks from the head first).
- *Cu râma mică se prinde peștele mare*. With the little worm you can catch the big fish.
- *Peștele, ca și musafirii, e bun trei zile*. Fish, like guests, is good only three days.
- *Inoată ca peștele în apă*. He/she swims like a fish in water.
- *Se simte ca peștele pe uscat*. He feels like a fish out of water.
- *Tace ca peștele*. Var. *E mut ca un pește*. He keeps quiet like a fish. Var. He is mute like a fish.

- *Peștele se prinde cu năvodul, omul, cu vorba* (Armenian proverb). Fish is caught with the net, a man, with the word.
- *Are balta pește...* The pond has got a lot of fish. There is plenty of fish in the pond.

In Romanian, the fish proverbs have a comparatively simple structure. The first one is an expositive sentence, with the oblique adverbial, topicalized into an emphatic pre-verbal position: *de la cap* (from the head), while the subject is the lexical NP: *peștele*. It is obvious that the metaphor would be semantically significant exactly for the topicalized part of the sentence, the Source theta-role being the most relevant bit of information for a context where “the head” is easily decoded as the leader of some sort, in a social, political environment. The second proverb is structured similarly, where the contrasting, hence the relevant constituent of the proverb, the Instrument theta-role, is also topicalized in a pre-verbal and pre-subject position: *cu râma mică* (with the small worm). The sentence is based on a cliticized 3rd pers. Middle SE, therefore, the Patient theta-role argument occurs post-verbally, differing from the first sentence, where the Theme (undergoer of the event of going rotten) is positioned pre-verbally. The two verbs are lexically different: *a prinde* (catch) presupposes an Agent (hence, the middle SE construction), while the verb *a se împuși* (stink, go rotten) is unaccusative, therefore, the Theme unique argument occurs post-verbally in a Romance language such as Romanian. The next four proverbs introduce comparative structures: “*ca și musafirii*” (like guests) and “*ca peștele*” (like fish). Some property is apparent in both cases, hence, the comparative adverbials, indicative of similarities as regards the respective properties. Given the terms of comparison (fish – guests; some human being – fish), any of these proverbs may occur as an ironic remark in a given context. The last proverb in the list above has a different structure, where lexical verb gapping (*se prinde = is caught*) occasions a sort of emphatic opposition between the two instrument arguments: “*cu năvodul*” (with the net), “*cu vorba*” (with the word), relating to the Patient arguments, *peștele* (fish) and *omul* (man), respectively.

If we compare the large variety of fish-related proverbs in English with the few that exist in Romanian, it will become obvious that the former derive from a people where fish is a regular dish, if not the national dish, in some way (fish and chips).

2. *Further comparative insights into food paremia*

In connection with Romanian culture and folklore, food-denoting proverbs and gastronomy generally reflect a preference for meat-based ‘specialities’. Even pies are cooked with minced meat as a primary ingredient. This kind of food calls for many spices, combined with all sorts of vegetables (salt, pepper, parsley, coriander, dill, onion, garlic). Most all of these ingredients make up the content of the Romanian proverbs which fall under the thematic field of food in terms of common syntactic structures typical of proverbial or idiomatic language. Similes and metonymic phrasing are most frequent in English, e.g.: *be as cool as a cucumber* (composed, calm), *be nutty as a fruitcake* (=slightly crazy), *be as easy as (apple-)pie* (very easy, elementary), *be pale as a parsnip*, *be fresh as a young head of lettuce*, *be a hot potato* (a controversial, difficult issue), *be a couch potato* (be very lazy). An equally high frequency structure is formed of a lexical transitive verb and its direct internal argument, the direct object: *to know your onions* (know a subject very well, know it thoroughly, be proficient), *spill the beans*, or ditransitive constructions as in: *give someone the onions*.

As to the metaphoric effect of proverbs, the so-called “metaphorical proverbs” (A. Taylor, 1931), below is a short set of examples of American proverbs relating to **fruit, grains and vegetables**, which will serve as a basis of contrastive analysis. Proverbs become metaphorical when they only occur in a “functional context”. For instance, proverb *a.* below can acquire a figurative meaning when it is uttered or used in a situation where some event is a logical and expected result of the precondition of “ripening”, of natural evolution. All the other proverbs in this short list can be interpreted figuratively, in the adequate context of verbal communication and metaphorical motivation (cf. Dobrovolskij & Piirainen, 2005: 84-85).

- a. *The time to pick berries is when they are ripe*
(American).

- b. *Life is but a bowl of cherries* (American).
- c. *One man's strawberries are another man's hives.*
- d. *Stolen cherries are sweetest* (American).
- e. *Eat your melons and don't ask about the melon bed* (American proverb).
- f. *Some of the sweetest berries grow among the sharpest thorns* (Scottish proverb).
- g. *He who is afraid of black berries should stay out of the woods* (Traditional proverb).
- h. *A bird which eats berries can be caught, but not a bird that eats wood* (New Zealander proverb).

The structure of these proverbs is relatively simple: either the predicate is an equative copulative (*a.*, *b.*, *c.*) or an attributive one (as in *d.*) above. Examples *a.* to *d.* are descriptive situational, while *e.-g.* are eventive, oppositional, in Dundes' terms. In *e.*, the structure is more complicated in that the proverb contains two coordinated imperative sentences, the meanings of which are contradictory.

Finally, the examples that follow are proverbs about **corn** and its source benefit, as the basic grain of good and healthy food:

- i. *Out of old fields comes new corn* (English).
- j. *Plow deep while sluggards sleep, and you will have corn to sell and keep* (English).

Example *i.* above is a proverb based on an opposition of 'old' fields (land, soil, earth) and 'new corn' (symbol of the seed, outcome of plowing, as a sign of (re)generation). Example *j.* is a traditional, folk rhymed praise of thorough and timely farming work (land ploughing) as the basic human activity for livelihood and survival. Generally speaking, most proverbs which cover the semantic area of agriculture and fruit growing are prescriptive, highly figurative and normative as regards human conduct, character, morality and individual habits.

The Romanian proverbs with reference to vegetables call for a sort of derogatory or negative interpretation, when used in

functional contexts, where their extended meaning ‘borrows’ from the specific properties of the evoked vegetables: **onion, leek, radish, savory (thyme)**, etc.

Romanian idioms, sayings, proverbs denoting vegetables

- a. *A nu valora/face nici cât o ceapă degerată*: to be worth not even a frozen onion, i.e. value nothing.
- b. *Cu o ridiche și o ceapă nu se face grădină*: With a radish and an onion you cannot have a whole garden.
- c. *E ca cimbrul, în toate*: This/He/She is like savory/thyme, in everything (ab. Someone who gets involved in too many tasks or responsibilities).
- d. *Taie frunză la câini*: He cuts leaves for dogs (does nothing, he is a lazybones).
- e. *De dorul fragilor, mănâncă frunzele*: While longing for raspberry, he eats the leaves (of that plant), living a life of deprivation, in poverty.
- f. *A mânca praz*: To eat leek, i.e. to lie, to say things which are not true.
- g. *Nu mai mănânc, d-ar fi și praz*: I won’t/cannot eat anymore, even if there were leek. It means that sb. cannot eat anything more.

In these examples, only *a.* and *c.* are comparative identificational structures. In *a.* there is a verb gapping, and *b.* contains two coordinated instrument arguments (*cu o ridiche și cu o ceapă*=with a radish and an onion), placed in a topic position and the truistic sentence with a clitic SE+construction V (*a face* = make) and its direct internal argument: *grădina* (garden). Proverb *d.* is a total (opaque) metaphor, in the sense that the literal meaning: “cut leaf for dogs” has no logical justification in the real world, it can only be interpreted metaphorically. Very similar from the conceptual perspective is also the proverb in *e.*, where no one is likely to eat leaves because of lack of fruit, unless in real vital need. Example *g.* is very interesting, because its content (the text of the proverb) is logically valid and it can also be real, in the real world. If someone is too full to eat, that

person would not be able to swallow anything else. Except for what is mentioned afterwards, as an anticlimax, hence, the ironical tone of the proverb. This is a proverb that can be understood and used locally, as it is a humorous remark used by the Southern Romanians (neighbors with the Serbian territory), in the Western part of Romania (Banat). The Romanians know that the Serbs consider leek to be a most valuable vegetable, so, if someone cannot even eat leek, it means he/she really had enough food (cf. I. Zanne, vol. IV: 98).

For none of the above-listed proverbs is there an English equivalent, as these proverbs bear a deep imprint of idiomaticity in the way in which they are structured and in their conceptual evocations. We could say, in line with the Romanian paremiologist P. Ruxandoiu, that they arose from a genetic context. However, many other proverbs related to fruit, for example, especially to the most common fruit, the apple, are generic, in that they stipulate the same gist of wisdom, universal knowledge about the world. For an illustration, below is a parallel between English and Romanian proverbs:

- h. *The mellowest apple has a cawk inside*: nothing on earth is perfect (it has some fault).
- i. *One bad apple spoils the bunch* (German).
- j. *Mărul putred le strică și pe cele bune*: The rotten apple will spoil the good ones.
- k. *Din afară măr frumos și-năuntru – găunos*: Outside it is a beautiful apple, inside it is hollow.

2.1. Cognitive and representational creativity in paremia

Contrary to the general view that proverbs are formulaic in nature, therefore, I consider proverbs to be short, but remarkably well polished examples of ‘prose’ or ‘poetic prose’ (i.e. rhymed cogitations), whereby the ‘voice’ of the proverb expresses its own feelings or perception in relation to the understanding of the world, in its variety and multi-faceted appearance.

Due to their orality and collective representation of the world, proverbs have always been considered paragons of human conduct. They are ethical epitomized precepts and ‘rules’ that had to be learned, accepted and further proclaimed. Their struc-

ture is pre-determined, in the sense that they are conceived in a patterned, fixed model, sometimes with a few variations. Their content is prescriptive and/or evaluative. However, the variety of situations and experiences ('scenes' and 'frames') evoked in proverbs reflects, in general, their lexical and semantic variegated metaphorical interpretation – which is so much the more diverse and inspirational. On the other hand, proverbs and idioms seem to be arbitrary and highly idiosyncratic, because they are so narrowly circumscribed, culturally, cognitively and linguistically.

More specifically, proverbs function like mini-allegories by embodying an abstract truism in concrete imagery drawn from familiar experience; the truism is thus reified and made exceptional or 'un-familiar', while keeping closely to the 'concrete', e.g. *Better a small fish than an empty dish. Big fish are caught in a big river. Big fish are caught with little hooks, etc.*

Over the centuries, food proverbs have been most popular, as most of them were extracted from biblical texts, such as: “*eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats*” (cf. *Biblehub.com, Proverbs 23:6*). In Europe, during the 16th century, numerous Greek and Latin proverbs were revived thanks to the Dutch humanist Erasmus, who published a collection of three thousand proverbs derived from classical literature, including: “*You are decorating a cooking pot*” (meaning you’re doing needless work, in Romanian, a potentially equivalent idiomatic expression would be: *a tăia frunză la câini* = cut leaves for the dogs), and “*When offered turtle-meat, either eat or don’t eat* (meaning: make up your mind one way or another).

Proverbs about food reflect, naturally, the gastronomic and culinary norms of the culture in which they are produced. For example, the proverb “*from eggs to apples*”, meaning “*from beginning to end*”, originated in ancient Rome, where it was customary to begin a meal with eggs and end it with apples. (cf. *Encyclopedia of Food and Culture, 2003: 160*). In Asian cultures, proverbs abound with references to rice and tea, including such sayings or proverbs as: “*Talk does not cook rice*”, or “*Better to be deprived of food for three days than tea for one*”. In Azerbaijan, many proverbs refer to yogurt and halva, including: “*He who burns his mouth on milk will blow on yogurt when eating it*”. In

Romanian, there is a similar proverb, encouraging to precaution and moderation, but the first edible item is sour soup (*ciorba*): *Cine s-a fript o dată cu ciorbă, suflă și în iaurt* (Literal translation: “He who burnt his lips with sour soup (*ciorba*) once, will blow to cool down even his yogurt”). The English proverb for expressing precaution after a bad experience is: *Once bitten twice shy*. The English metaphor construction and the concise sentential form lack the canonical subject-and-predicate phrases in the ‘well-formed’ English sentence (*Once somebody is bitten he will be twice as shy*), which gives it brevity and prescriptive strength.

2.2. Concluding remarks

Summarizing the distinctive and similar conventional figurative units that are to be found in English and Romanian proverbs and idioms in general related to ‘food’, we list a few below:

- Bread-and-butter vs. bread-and-onion/lard(bacon)-and-onion vs. bread-and-water;
- Have/bring bread (or bacon) on the table (be the bread-winner in a family) vs. *a avea pâinea și cuțitul, a câștiga pâinea* (*traiful*=life, living, earn one’s living);
- Bid sb. ‘welcome’: ‘Make yourself at home/comfortable’ vs. ‘*A primi pe cineva cu pâine și sare*’, = Welcome sb. with bread and salt (as a declarative sign of hospitality, not necessarily followed by the performative act – as part of a custom – of bread-and-salt offering). It is true that in English there is another idiom which is conceptually similar to the Romanian saying, e.g. *break bread with someone*, which implies an invitation that someone (usually a close friend or a close acquaintance) should come to the host’s house and have meal together. The idiom originates in the Biblical texts.
- The apple as a metaphor either for good health or – in its degradation (rotten form) – for negative moral traits in a human being. This metaphor is common in both languages;
- Water as a metaphor evoking the transitoriness of time – in both languages; water as a symbol of poverty and dep-

rivation (Romanian paremia) or as a symbol of emptiness or lack of value as opposed to the ‘value’ of wine. Neither of these symbols are found in the English paremia on water. Instead, water as a sign of purity and life is common to both languages and cultures;

- Within the thematic class of fruit-denoting proverbs, in English or in English-tradition countries (New Zealand), berries are the current fruit in connection with which various generalizations are made (see the examples above). The figurative significance is their rarity. In metaphorical terms, berries represent something that is both precious and difficult to attain.

In the English culture and paremia, the longstanding tradition of eating eggs as a primary culinary item justifies the high number of proverbs related to eggs, for instance: *Don't put all your eggs in one basket*, *As sure as eggs be eggs*, *Better an egg in peace than an ox in war*, *It is hard to shave an egg*, *Who means to have the egg must endure the cackling of the hen*, *Be a bad/good egg* (=be a bad or a good person, morally and temperamentally). Other food proverbs survive by virtue of Shakespeare's works, such as: *to take eggs for money* (meaning to exchange something valuable for something worthless). Still others have been obsolete for centuries in the English language and culture, such as: *to come in with five eggs* (meaning to interrupt with an idle story), while others have been rendered obsolete by changing social conditions, such as inflation: “*as dear as two eggs a penny*”. In Romanian, apart from the well-known proverb: *Cine fură azi un ou, mâine va fura un bou* (He who steals an egg today, will steal an ox tomorrow), there are a few others which make reference to the cackling hen that will not make eggs or to the precaution of counting the chickens after they are hatched, not before: *Găina care cotcodăcește mult, nu face ouă* (the cackling hen will not lay eggs), *Numără puii după ce au ieșit din ouă* (count your chickens after they came out of the hatched eggs). All these egg-referencing proverbs are metaphorical, since once they are contextualized, they will be interpreted figuratively.

What is interesting as a developmental process of language variation and language regularity as well, in terms of cognitive

and linguistic structures, is that some proverbs persist even if they have ceased to make literal sense. For instance, the proverbial phrase “*to eat humble pie*”, meaning “to be forced into asking for apologies in a humiliating manner”, remains a current phrase even though it has been largely forgotten that “humble pie” was originally “umble pie”, and that the umbles were the innards of a deer, often cooked into a kind of meat pastry (cf. *Encyclopedia of Food and Culture*, 2003:159).

As already discussed before, in Romanian traditional customs and culture, **bread and water** and **bread and salt** are the common items of reference which are also present, almost ubiquitously, in proverbs and idioms. These ‘items’ or lexical units which trigger different images in the source domain of some ICM and give rise to metaphors or metonymies in the target domain, in the form of conventional figurative language units (Dobrovolskij & Piirainen, 2005: 39-43), occur either in a constructional unit (bread-and-water, bread-and-salt), or they occur in single word-constructions, as part of the idiom or of the proverbial ‘text’.

The food-denoting proverbs, like all proverbs, in general, have changed their form over time. The early sixteenth century proverb “*Many things fall between the cup and the mouth*” (a Romanian equivalent of which can be: *Nu aduce anul ce-aduce ceasul*, whose literal translation would be: “The hour can bring much more than the year-long duration”) evolved through the mid-nineteenth century, into the more familiar: “*There’s many a slip ‘twixt cup and lip*”. The special rhymed form of such proverbs has a mnemonic function and it also signifies a special status, encrypted into a set form, on account of some stylistic (figurative) device. Other devices include alliteration (*the more crust, the less crumb*), parallelism (*the nearer the bone the sweeter the flesh*), and antimetabole (*while one wastes drink, the drink wastes him*). All these proverbs are dating from the XIVth, XVth and XVIth century, respectively, but in the contemporary age, proverbs continue to be invented, though perhaps not at the high rate at which they occurred centuries ago. Obviously, proverbs are the imprint of the age, social and historical, (multi-)ethnic background where they emerge. This is the reason why the conceptual (cognitive) image-trigger of any such proverb is decisive in identifying the cross-linguistic differences and simi-

larities as regards views upon life and reality. It is in this way that proverbs and idioms re-assess their functionality as real facts of language, i.e. in efficient communication.

As mentioned at the outset, the present article is focused on the cross-semantic equivalences regarding a limited group of food-denoting proverbs and idioms and on their modern pragmatic significance, according to a variety of lexical-conceptual and syntactic features. If we go through these proverbs in both languages, we can notice that these specific features may cause context-dependent interpretations, whether literal or (mainly) figurative. The motivation and accessibility regarding the production and understanding of proverbs, in both languages and cultures, reflect the users' own idiosyncrasies, experiential knowledge, and ethno-linguistic 'taste' or, in other words, the users' cultural literacy (cf. W. Mieder, 1994: 297).

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JAIME LORÉN

PAREMIAS QUE APARECEN EN LA OBRA *CAMINO*, DE
SAN JOSÉMARÍA ESCRIVÁ DE BALAGUER

Abstract: *The Way* is the most popular work of Saint Josémaría Escrivá Balaguer. It has been translated into 43 different languages and has sold 4.5 million copies. It is one of the most successful books about spirituality since its first edition in 1934. Its author is the Aragonese priest Josémaría Escrivá de Balaguer, founder of Opus Dei and sanctified in 2002. *The Way* is a work of great spiritual depth, written in a simple and entertaining language that comes easily to the reader. Escrivá de Balaguer included a large number of proverbs and proverbial phrases that we have gathered in our study.

Keywords: San Josémaría Escrivá, Opus Dei, *The Way*, Spirituality, Paremiology, Proverbs

Repasando viejos papeles tras la muerte de mi padre, encuentro esta interesante colección de paremias que espigamos ya hace años en la obra, *Camino* de San Josémaría Escrivá de Balaguer, una de las de mayor impacto y difusión de la espiritualidad contemporánea. Pensamos que vale la pena dar a conocer esta gavilla de dichos sentenciosos que teníamos ya olvidada y que cosechamos en esta influyente obra religiosa.

¿Quién era Josémaría Escrivá de Balaguer el fundador del Opus Dei?

Por la semblanza biográfica que aparece en la página web oficial del Opus Dei¹, sabemos que Josémaría Escrivá de Balaguer nació en Barbastro (Huesca, España) el 9 de enero de 1902. Sus padres se llamaban José y Dolores. Tuvo cinco hermanos: Carmen (1899-1957), Santiago (1919-1994) y otras tres hermanas menores que él que murieron cuando eran niñas. El matrimonio Escrivá dio a sus hijos una profunda educación cristiana.

En 1915 quebró el negocio del padre, comerciante de tejidos, y la familia hubo de trasladarse a Logroño, donde el padre encon-

tró otro trabajo. En esa ciudad, Josémaría, después de ver unas huellas en la nieve de los pies descalzos de un religioso, intuye que Dios desea algo de él, aunque no sabe exactamente qué es. Piensa que podrá descubrirlo más fácilmente si se hace sacerdote, y comienza a prepararse primero en Logroño y más tarde en el seminario de Zaragoza. Siguiendo un consejo de su padre, en la Universidad de Zaragoza estudia también la carrera civil de Derecho como alumno libre. D. José Escrivá muere en 1924, y Josémaría queda como cabeza de familia. Recibe la ordenación sacerdotal el 28 de marzo de 1925 y comienza a ejercer el ministerio primero en una parroquia rural y luego en Zaragoza.

En 1927 se traslada a Madrid, con permiso de su obispo, para obtener el doctorado en Derecho. En Madrid, el 2 de octubre de 1928 Dios le hace ver lo que espera de él y funda el Opus Dei. Desde ese día trabaja con todas sus fuerzas en el desarrollo de la fundación que Dios le pide, al tiempo que continúa con el ministerio pastoral que tiene encomendado en aquellos años, que le pone diariamente en contacto con la enfermedad y la pobreza en hospitales y barriadas populares de Madrid.

Al estallar la guerra civil, en 1936, Josémaría Escrivá se encuentra en Madrid. La persecución religiosa le obliga a refugiarse en diferentes lugares. Ejerce su ministerio sacerdotal clandestinamente, hasta que logra salir de la ciudad. Después de una travesía por los Pirineos hasta el sur de Francia, se traslada a Burgos.

Cuando acaba la guerra en 1939 regresa a Madrid. En los años siguientes dirige numerosos ejercicios espirituales para laicos, para sacerdotes y para religiosos. En el mismo año 1939 termina sus estudios de doctorado en Derecho.

En 1946 fija su residencia en Roma. Obtiene el doctorado en Teología por la Universidad Lateranense. Es nombrado consultor de dos Congregaciones vaticanas, miembro honorario de la Pontificia Academia de Teología y prelado de honor de Su Santidad. Sigue con atención los preparativos y las sesiones del Concilio Vaticano II (1962-1965), y mantiene un trato intenso con muchos de los padres conciliares.

Desde Roma viaja en numerosas ocasiones a distintos países de Europa, para impulsar el establecimiento y la consolidación del trabajo apostólico del Opus Dei. Con el mismo objeto, entre 1970 y 1975 hace largos viajes por México, la Península Ibérica, Amé-

rica del Sur y Guatemala, donde además tiene reuniones de catequesis con grupos numerosos de hombres y mujeres.

Fallece en Roma el 26 de junio de 1975. Varios miles de personas, entre ellas numerosos obispos de distintos países —en conjunto, un tercio del episcopado mundial—, solicitan a la Santa Sede la apertura de su causa de canonización.

El 17 de mayo de 1992, Juan Pablo II beatifica a Josémaría Escrivá de Balaguer. Lo proclama santo diez años después, el 6 de octubre de 2002 en la plaza de San Pedro de Roma, ante una gran multitud. “Siguiendo sus huellas”, dijo en esa ocasión el Papa en su homilía, “difundid en la sociedad, sin distinción de raza, clase, cultura o edad, la conciencia de que todos estamos llamados a la santidad”.

Camino, libro de espiritualidad

La obra que es objeto de nuestro estudio, *Camino*, como señala asimismo la web del Opus Dei², es fruto de la labor sacerdotal que San Josémaría Escrivá había iniciado en 1925. Aparece por primera vez en 1934 en Cuenca (España) con el título de *Consideraciones Espirituales*. En la edición siguiente realizada en Valencia en 1939, el libro está notablemente ampliado y recibe ya su título definitivo. Desde entonces se ha difundido con un ritmo sostenido y progresivo. Actualmente se han publicado de *Camino* cerca de 4.500.000 ejemplares en 43 idiomas.

Camino tiene un estilo directo, de diálogo sereno, en el que el lector se encuentra frente a las exigencias divinas en un ambiente de confianza y amistad. Cuando se publicó en Italia, *L'Osservatore Romano* comentó: “Mons. Escrivá de Balaguer ha escrito más que una obra maestra, ha escrito inspirándose directamente en el corazón, y al corazón llegan directamente, uno a uno, los párrafos que forman *Camino*”. Su propio autor recomienda en el Prólogo:

“Lee despacio estos consejos. Medita pausadamente estas consideraciones. Son cosas que te digo al oído, en confianza de amigo, de hermano, de padre. Y estas confianzas las escucha Dios. No te contaré nada nuevo. Voy a remover tus recuerdos, para que se alce algún pensamiento que te hiera: y así mejores tu vida y te metas por caminos de oración y de Amor. Y acabes por ser alma de criterio”.

Repasando detenidamente *Camino*, hemos encontrado un total de 57 paremias que por su interés pasamos a relacionar teniendo en cuenta las siguientes consideraciones:

1. Hemos intentado realizar una recopilación de todos aquellos refranes, proverbios, dichos, máximas, frases hechas, modismos, aforismos, consejos arrefranados, etc. que actualmente se engloban con la denominación genérica de paremias, ante la dificultad de deslindar con claridad tantos enunciados fraseológicos procedentes del tronco lexicológico de la Real Academia Española, que no logra separar sin ambigüedades los matices diferenciales de unos y otros.
2. Disponemos las paremias según el orden de aparición en el libro.
3. El número que figura entre paréntesis al final de cada paremia corresponde al que aparece al frente del punto de *Camino* de donde se ha tomado.

Paremias de Camino

- No vuelles como ave de corral, cuando puedes subir como las águilas. (7)
- Lo que hay que hacer, se hace ... Sin vacilar ... Sin miramientos. (11)
- No dejes tu trabajo para mañana. (15)
- No eres moneda de cinco duros que a todos gusta. (20)
- ¿Qué ... ¡no puedes hacer más!? – ¿No será que ... no puedes hacer menos? (23)
- No discutáis. – De la discusión no suele salir la luz, porque la apaga el apasionamiento. (25)
- Te empeñas en ser la sal de todos los platos ... Y tienes poca gracia para ser sal. (48)
- Si no tienes un plan de vida nunca tendrás orden. (76)
- ¿Virtud sin orden? - ¡Rara virtud! (79)
- La oración del cristiano nunca es monólogo. (114)
- Muchos viven como ángeles en medio del mundo. – Tú ... ¿por qué no? (122)
- La gula es la vanguardia de la impureza. (126)
- El pudor y la modestia son hermanos pequeños de la pureza. (128)

- Aunque la carne se vista de seda, carne se queda. (134)
- Corazones partidos / yo no los quiero; / y si le doy el mío, / lo doy entero. (145)
- Si tu ojo derecho te escandalizare ... ¡Arráncalo y tíralo lejos! (163)
- No digas: esa persona me carga. – Piensa: esa persona me santifica. (174)
- Busca mortificaciones que no mortifiquen a los demás. (179)
- Paradoja: para vivir hay que morir. (188)
- El alma y el cuerpo son dos enemigos que no pueden separarse, y dos amigos que no se pueden ver. (195)
- Di a tu cuerpo: prefiero tener un esclavo a serlo tuyo. (214)
- Tu mayor enemigo eres tú mismo. (225)
- Una mirada al pasado. Y ... ¿lamentarte? No: que es estéril. – Aprender: que es fecundo. (239)
- ¡Mañana!: alguna vez es prudencia; muchas veces es el adverbio de los vencidos. (251)
- El silencio es como el portero de la vida interior. (281)
- Paradoja: es más asequible ser santo que sabio, pero es más fácil ser sabio que santo. (282)
- Nadie puede servir a dos señores. (300)
- Cristo ha muerto por ti. – Tú ... ¿qué debes hacer por Cristo? (299)
- A los tibios los vomitará Dios. (325)
- Al que pueda ser sabio no le perdonemos que no lo sea. (332)
- Una hora de estudio para un apóstol moderno, es una hora de oración. (335)
- No olvides que antes de enseñar hay que hacer. (342)
- No olvides que hasta las “medianías” pueden pecar por demasiado sabias. (351)
- Si no eres malo y lo pareces, eres tonto. (370)
- ¿Por qué esta precipitación? No me digas que es actividad: es atolondramiento. (374)
- ¡Sé intransigente, pero no seas cerril! (397)
- ¡Dios y audacia! – La audacia no es imprudencia. – La audacia no es osadía. (401)
- No has fracasado: has adquirido experiencia. (405)
- Santurrón es a santo, lo que beato a piadoso: su caricatura. (408)
- ¡No hay más amor que el Amor! (417)

- No olvides que el Dolor es la piedra de toque del Amor. (439)
- No hagas crítica negativa: cuando no puedas alabar, cállate. (443)
- Se gasta lo que se deba, aunque se deba lo que se gaste. (481)
- La Misa es larga ... porque tu Amor es corto. (529)
- Si la obediencia no te da paz, es que eres soberbio. (620)
- Obedecer siempre es ser mártir sin morir. (622)
- No te olvides: aquel tiene más que necesita menos. – No te crees necesidades. (630)
- Si eres hombre de Dios, pon en despreciar las riquezas el mismo empeño que ponen los hombres del mundo en poseerlas. (633)
- De callar no te arrepentirás nunca: de hablar, muchas veces. (639)
- Aquella persona ha sido mala contigo. – Pero, ¿no has sido tú peor con Dios? (686)
- No pretendas poner puertas al campo. (688)
- La vida terrena es una mala noche en una mala posada. (703)
- Tú lo quisiste, fraile Mostén; tú lo quisiste, tú te lo ten. (704)
- No eres menos feliz porque te falta que si te sobrara. (770)
- Obras son amores y no buenas razones. (933)
- Sed hombres o mujeres del mundo, pero no seáis hombres o mujeres mundano. (939)
- Comenzar es de todos; perseverar, de santos. (983)

Notes:

¹ ANÓNIMO: San Josémaría. Biografía. *Opus Dei*. <http://www.opusdei.es/es-es/articulo/biografia-de-san-josemaria-2/> Consulta 1 de septiembre de 2015

² ANÓNIMO: Camino. Josémaría Escrivá. *Página de las obras del fundador del Opus Dei (1902-1975)*. <http://www.escrivaobras.org/book/camino.htm> Consulta 1 de septiembre de 2015

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DENNIS F. MAHONEY AND WOLFGANG MIEDER

“GREGOR HAD YET TO DISCOVER THAT LIFE WAS TRULY STRANGER THAN FICTION”: PROVERBIAL MESSAGES IN MARC ESTRIN’S KAFKAESQUE NOVEL *INSECT DREAMS. THE HALF LIFE OF GREGOR SAMSA* (2002)

Adversaries are no longer considered human, no longer even those humans of whom it is written *homo homini lupus*.
(461)

Abstract: Readers and reviewers alike have delighted in *Insect Dreams. The Half Life of Gregor Samsa* (2002), Marc Estrin’s survey of political and cultural developments in Europe and the United States between 1915 and 1945. Estrin traces the odyssey of Gregor Samsa, Franz Kafka’s most famous literary character, from Vienna to Los Alamos via New York and Washington, D.C. Up until now, however, no one has followed the red thread of proverbs and proverbial expressions throughout this epic work. By exploring when, why, how, by whom, and to whom proverbs are used in *Insect Dreams*, we show what effect the traditional or modified proverbial language has on the style and message of this truly innovative American novel. This modern novel is proof positive that proverbs can play a major role in a literary work whose author plays all registers of language, just as Nobel laureates Günter Grass, Elfriede Jelinek, José Saramago, and Alexander Solzhenitsyn have done with proverbs in their novels.

Keywords: American, anti-proverb, Bible, Marc Estrin, function, identification, Franz Kafka, innovation, language, literature, modification, novel, proverb, proverbial expression, style, tradition.

The study of the use and function of proverbs and proverbial expressions in literature has a long and impressive history, as can be gleaned from the 2,654 entries in the bibliography *Proverbs in World Literature* (Bryan and Mieder 1996). While the earlier scholarship consists primarily of annotated lists of the proverbial material found in literary works, more recent studies are character-

ized by the dual process of identification and interpretation of proverbial language in drama, poetry, and prose (Dundes 1965). The locating of proverbial texts serves paremiographical goals in that it furthers the study of the origin, history, and dissemination as well as the variance in language and structure of individual proverbs that can then be included in proverb collections and dictionaries. The interpretation of proverbs goes beyond this step by looking at the function and meaning of proverbs in the literary texts. By asking such questions as when, why, how, by whom, and to whom proverbs are used in literary works, it can be determined what effect proverbial language has on the style and message of an entire work. Of much interest is, of course, also whether a proverb is marked by an introductory formula, whether the standard form has been altered for stylistic effect, or whether a proverb is merely being alluded to or changed into an anti-proverb questioning its traditional wisdom. Most literary works, unless they serve a definite didactic purpose, integrate proverbs with much creative freedom, and it is often the juxtaposition of the traditional proverb text with its innovatively altered wording and form that results in meaningful communication.

Many authors of world literature have been investigated for their proverbial language, including book-length studies on Chrétien de Troyes, Shakespeare, Cervantes, Goethe, Dickens, Nietzsche, Shaw, Brecht, Achebe, Rushdie, and many others. They all show that preformulated language is part and parcel of literary styles, just as proverbs and proverbial expressions appear in oral communication, in the media, the internet, and literally everywhere. Of special interest to the literary and proverb scholar is the investigation of one single work of literature to see whether the included proverbial language does in fact contribute considerably to its message. Regarding modern literature, studies on individual novels by such Nobel laureates as Günter Grass, Elfriede Jelinek, José Saramago, and Alexander Solzhenitsyn have been undertaken, showing once and for all that proverbs are an intrinsic part of their language, style, and message (Mieder 2012a). This is also clearly true for Marc Estrin's novel *Insect Dreams. The Half Life of Gregor Samsa* (2002), which is particularly rich in proverbial texts that take nothing away from its intellectual heights. In fact, as will become obvious, Estrin plays all registers of the rich Anglo-American language, filling his massive volume with language

and contents ranging from the colloquial to the philosophical, from the mundane to the bizarre, from the athletic to the musical, from the humanistic to the scientific, from the Christian to the Judaic, and from the proverbial to the quotational.

The complexity of identifying proverbs, let alone interpreting their meaning in the novel, can be illustrated by the following contextualized examples without any discussion of their significance in the plot itself. When Marc Estrin writes that "they talked of mice and men, of history and destiny" (13) at the beginning of his novel, he is actually alluding to the proverb "The best-laid plans of mice and men often go astray" that has its origin in Robert Burns' poem "To a Mouse" (1785) with the word "schemes" instead of "plans" (Stevenson 1948: 2040). The statement "Our American friend steps in where angels fear to tread" (42) is clearly an alteration of the proverb "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread", and the observation "A leopard's spots are the same and its disposition is the same wherever it is whelped" (293) calls to mind the Bible verse "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots" (Jeremiah 13:23) that has been reduced to the folk proverb "A leopard cannot change his spots". Matters are more complex with the observation "You can't have a divine weapon, a sacred tool, without its abominable owner vomiting curses and fouling his nest" (245-246), since it requires a keen proverbial mind to sense the folk proverb "It's an ill bird that fouls its own nest" behind it that is also used as the proverbial expression "to foul one's nest" (see Kunstmann 1981). Something similar is going on with Estrin's use of the well-known triad "wine, woman (women), and song" in two places in the novel: "A stranger to wine, women, or song, his whole life resolved around his stomach pain" (199) and "The Biblical Samson was more like the Feynman of wine-women-and-song than like Gregor" (347). This Epicurean formula is actually the reduction of the proverb "He who loves not wine, woman (women), and song, remains a fool his whole life long" which has falsely been ascribed to Martin Luther (Mieder 1983). But all of this does not mean that Estrin never integrates proverbs without manipulating them, to wit "He tore into the envelopes, first the bill—business before pleasure—then the thicker packet" (257).

When it comes to proverbial expressions, Estrin is more likely to employ them as ready-made metaphors without letting his lin-

guistic imagination run its impressive course. And yet, instead of citing the phrase “to run the gauntlet” he writes: “To get through the gauntlet of breasts and hips, of smiling faces and gay human flirtation” (188). For some expressions like “to say uncle”, he actually includes explanatory comments for his main character Gregor, who is struggling with learning American English: “‘I’m not doing well, Mr. Samsa. I’m in a bad spell that won’t say uncle.’ / ‘What uncle?’ Gregor interrupted. / ‘Say uncle. That means you give up. It won’t give up. The spell’” (160). But even when Estrin employs a proverbial expression verbatim, he nevertheless overcomes its perhaps clichéd metaphor by placing it into an unexpected context: “It was like looking for a needle in a haystack, except the needle was dispersed in tiny pieces, and the hay was horrendously radioactive” (372). But then, his prose ever ready to offer stylistic contrasts, he also comes up with the scatological: “Don’t tell me that, man. You’ll scare the shit out of me” (364). That type of drastic language can, however, be elevated into a famous quotation, when one becomes aware of the fact that the fifteen minutes of celebrity in the following statement might well be an allusion to Andy Warhol’s famous saying “In the future everybody will be world famous for fifteen minutes” from 1968 (Shapiro 2006: 797): “Gregor’s celebrity lasted about fifteen minutes, and then the office settled in to its daily routine” (186). Knowing Marc Estrin’s erudition, which ranges from his acquaintance with popular culture and on to sophisticated knowledge of the sciences and the humanities, nothing really surprises the reader of this intriguing, fascinating, and unique novel.

Having said this, it is utterly amazing and incomprehensible that reviewers of *Insect Dreams*, while praising its approach and message, have literally nothing to say about Estrin’s command of the English language (see http://marcestrin.com/marcestrin/Reviews_ID/Entries). Part of his linguistic genius is, to be sure, his frequent use of proverbs, proverbial expressions, and other types of fixed phrases, including literary quotations. The major references of this type are listed at the end of this study, with many of them being cited in the following proverbial interpretation of Marc Estrin’s fabulous (in various senses of this word) novel *Insect Dreams*. In fact, almost every ensuing quotation from the novel contains a proverb or a proverbial expression, and together they

create a proverbial red thread that helps to understand and interpret this literary and yes, proverbial masterpiece.

* * *

During a visit to the grave of Franz Kafka in Prague, the American writer Marc Estrin left a message in which he whimsically invited his deceased colleague to pay a visit to Burlington, Vermont: "We have a nice guestroom, I wrote, where he wouldn't have to sleep next to his father" (see http://marcestrin.com/marcestrin/Fiction_blog/Entries/2006/2/25_InsectDreams). Three weeks later, Estrin experienced personally the impact of the proverbial saying "truth is stranger than fiction" when he woke up in the middle of the night with the inspiration for his novel *Insect Dreams*—what if Franz Kafka's most famous literary figure had not died at the end of *Die Verwandlung* (The Metamorphosis, 1915), but had instead immigrated to the United States?

Unlike Kafka's traveling salesman, who metamorphoses into a gigantic, peeping, but otherwise unspecified and incomprehensible "Ungeziefer" (vermin) (Kafka 1946: 69), Estrin's Gregor early on is revealed to be a five-foot-six-inch cockroach possessing the capacity for human speech. Brought from Prague to a Viennese circus in December of 1915 (shortly after the publication of Kafka's story) by the cleaning lady and the three male tenants from *Die Verwandlung*, who commence negotiations with its owner, Amadeus Ernst Hoffnung, Gregor is startled into speech when he hears that he might be exhibited as The Hunger Insect—yet another of the many allusions within the novel not only to the works of Kafka, but a host of literary and musical personalities on both sides of the Atlantic (Mahoney 2008: 324-325). Gregor protests, wanting instead to eat, read, and think (10). Hoffnung accedes to this request, and soon Gregor's lectures on Albert Einstein's Theory of Relativity and Oswald Spengler's *The Decline of the West* become the rage of wartime and post-war Vienna, attracting not only visitors like Robert Musil, but also H. V. Kaltenborn, the European correspondent for the newspaper *The Brooklyn Eagle*. Kaltenborn's articles and radio broadcasts about Gregor help inspire not only a new dance, the Jitterbug, but also lead to an invitation for Gregor to come to America for a fan club tour sponsored by American Cyanamide—the manufacturer of Raid! Needless to

say, Gregor decides that he will not do any ads for American Cyanamide, but he is tempted by the idea of traveling to a new continent and becoming fluent in English, which he hitherto knows only from his readings of Shakespeare and Robert Frost.

Gregor's decision to go to America is confirmed by the April 20, 1923 circus visit by Ludwig Wittgenstein, currently serving as a village schoolmaster following the publication of his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophus* because he feels he has nothing more to write of philosophical import. Wittgenstein brings along six of his young students to the circus in order to test their assumptions of human nature. Gregor unsettles them further when he reveals that he is Jewish. But Wittgenstein and Gregor are in turn shaken by young Epi Schlüsselberger's anti-Semitic syllogism justifying why a cockroach could be Jewish: "Jews are vermin, right, and isn't a cockroach vermin?" (53; see Mieder 1993: 246-248). Gregor is deeply troubled by this remark and its implications: "But if human character is infinitely plastic, he worried, what is to stop these children from being entirely formed by the resentments of their elders?" (54). This question takes on a special, fateful relevance for the course both of the novel and of world history when one considers that Epi and Gregor have posed their queries on a calendar date soon to become (in)famous as the birthday of Adolf Hitler. Gregor has a question of his own for Wittgenstein: "Why are humans more bestial than beasts?" (54-55)—a variant on the proverb *homo homini lupus* that Gregor encounters during his reading of Schopenhauer during the course of both World Wars (439) and that Estrin's narrator employs in the Afterword to *Insect Dreams* (461). During their subsequent nighttime conversation in Gregor's cage, Wittgenstein expresses his reservations about Gregor's questing nature with the help of the following Biblical proverb (Ecclesiastes 1:18), which he observes has held true ever since Eve and the apple: "In much wisdom is much grief: he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow" (59). Alluding to the mass destruction of the recent war in Europe, Wittgenstein provides a variant on yet another proverb as a warning on scientific curiosity freed from ethical considerations: "Curiosity will kill the roach—and perhaps a lot of others" (60). Drawing upon Gregor's reference to Goethe's ballad of the Sorcerer's Apprentice as a tale apposite to those who know enough to bring a process in motion over which they learn too late they have no control, Wittgenstein

makes the following prediction, putting the proverbial expression “to hatch an egg” into an apocalyptic context: “Mark my word. There will be scientists who, in the calm and cool of seminar rooms, will hatch the egg of world destruction. And you, dear Chitinous Apprentice, will see it come to pass” (60). These words find their fulfillment in the fourth and final stage of the Half Life of Gregor Samsa, when Gregor becomes a risk management consultant for the Manhattan Project in Los Alamos, New Mexico, and witnesses the creation of the first atomic bomb. But Gregor may never have made the trip to the United States if he had not received the following advice from Wittgenstein on the question of whether or not he should stay in Europe:

If you think that the naked rule of power will soon transform to Justice under Law—if you believe that story in the face of the last ten years, then stay here. On the other hand, if you subscribe to the Darwinian, to Life emerging out of primal slime and fighting its way upward—fittest dog eats fittest dog, then perhaps you should make yourself scarce—for you will be crushed and devoured. (60-61)

Here we have a fascinating reversal of the proverb “Dog will not eat dog” to fit the Social Darwinism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which ultimately became the so-called scientific justification for the racial politics of National Socialism about which Gregor will learn later in the novel.

In the meantime, Gregor, like his literary half-brother Karl Roßmann from Kafka's fragmentary novel *Amerika*, first finds work in Manhattan as an elevator operator in the Occidental Hotel. Like Roßmann (literally “Horse-Man”) the Gregor of both *Die Verwandlung* and *Insect Dreams* combines an animal's heightened capacity for sensory perception with human reasoning and the desire to learn more about his new and excitingly strange environment. His initial efforts to enter into dialogue with the people he encounters in America, however, are hampered by his still imperfect command of English. No wonder, then, that Gregor is momentarily confused by the phrase “Don't take any wooden nickels” (85) uttered by one of the hotel guests shortly before he presents Gregor with two tickets to the Princeton-Yale championship baseball game in newly-built Yankee Stadium. Gregor, in turn, asks another guest staying in the hotel, the feminist activist

Alice Paul, whether she might be willing to go to this game with him and help explain the American national game, which she agrees to do. Gregor, who finds Alice far more beautiful and alluring than the photo of the woman in furs that he had hung on his wall in Prague (86), frames his delight in language that reflects his (and his author's) equal familiarity with the proverbs of classical antiquity as well as Goethe's *Faust* and Alexis de Tocquville's 1840 study *Democracy in America*: "This was the perfect American day, in the perfect American place, the *mens sana* of universities in the *corpore sano* of sport, and here he was with his newly beloved leading the way, *das Ewig-Weibliche*, Democracy in America!" (87). As luck would have it, the older man sitting in the adjacent box seat at Yankee Stadium turns out to be the life insurance executive and composer Charles Ives, who is happy to share with Gregor and Alice his extensive knowledge of the game and its impact on American culture, including "baseball idioms that have become part of everyday language: out in left field, three strikes, you're out, off-base, switch hitter, wild pitch, in the ballpark, to throw someone a curve ball, unable to get to first base—with Gregor furiously taking notes" (90; see Frank 1983).

Yet another proverbial idiom derived from baseball and the contradictory impulses it inspires in the American psyche prove so striking that "[e]ven twenty years later, Gregor remembered one thread of the discussion, a theme he would encounter, significantly, to the end of his days" (91). It all begins when a foul ball slightly injures the person in dark clothing standing behind home plate, which sets off wild cheering in the crowd. Puzzled why people would enjoy seeing someone hurt, Gregor learns that this "someone" is the umpire. Ives explains the conundrum. On the one hand, the proverb claims "the ump is always right" (91); on the other hand, the American "love affair with lawlessness" (91) inspires another, contradictory impulse made famous in Ernest Lawrence Thayer's poem "Casey at the Bat", namely "'Kill the ump!' [...] In America, freedom is more important than integrity, said Ives. Gregor would have cause, often, to remember these words" (92).

Gregor, for his part, subscribes to the proverbial maxim that "honesty was the best policy" (100), which will not prove advantageous in the world of power, aggression, and evil that he gradually becomes aware of on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean, but

which he does practice later that evening in his room at the Occidental Hotel when he suddenly asks Alice Paul: "'Would you go to bed with me?' There, he said it! All or nothing. Whatever happens, happens" (101). To be sure, these latter two sentiments are dangerous proverbs in a troubled world even on the personal level. The results of Gregor's and Alice's attempts to couple prove so disastrous that—rather than trying again, "hope burning eternal in the sweating breast" (103)—she checks out of her room the next morning, while Gregor is left devastated by the knowledge that once again, as during his sojourn as an insect in Prague with his family, he has given great pain to someone he loved. Hope, to be sure, is a very important theme within *Insect Dreams*, beginning with the name and musical interests of Gregor's circus-owner turned friend, Amadeus Ernst Hoffnung. In that regard, it is not surprising that Gregor, in seeking out a plastic surgeon named Dr. Lindhorst, unwittingly finds himself entering into a scene reminiscent of one of the most famous 'Tales of Hoffmann,' namely *Der goldne Topf* (The Magic Pot), in the hopes of securing a medically induced metamorphosis that will make possible a same-species reunion with his beloved (see Mahoney 2008: 324-325). Before entering Lindhorst's Fifth-Avenue townhouse office, however, Gregor realizes "for the first time that he might be getting into something over his head" (104), which also will be true later on in the novel for the scientists and politicians who get over their heads in their haste to be the first to enter into the atomic age. As Lindhorst observes: "There's no time like the present. Except the future. Except the future" (115). In other words, we must think what our actions mean for the future of humankind. And the conversation that Gregor has with Lindhorst, to the musical accompaniment of the Prelude and Love-Death from Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, dissuades him from attempting transformation via plastic surgery. During his reverie, Gregor has a vision from Dante that proves decisive in helping him to change his mind: "that of a man carrying a light on his back to illuminate the way for others: the only way to accomplish that task was to plunge resolutely into the darkness" (121). Darkness and light prove key images throughout the novel. As Gregor's solo flight from Vienna to America nears its first destination, he asks himself: "what did he see by the dawn's early light? Manhattan Island" (66). Even before hearing Charles Ives intone an obbligato to "The Star Spangled Banner"

before the start of the Princeton-Yale game in Yankee Stadium, Gregor already knows the words to what soon will become the national anthem. He will hear “By the dawn’s early light” sung on his final day on earth, twenty minutes before the first testing of the atomic bomb (456).

In the interim, Gregor will have numerous occasions to observe to what extent his new country is, in fact, “the Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave” (326). With regard to the first category, early on in his employment at the Occidental Hotel, Gregor learns “the facts of American life [...]—in Colored and White” (82), namely why a black man has to climb the seventeen floors of stairs to Gregor’s apartment rather than riding the elevator, as do his white co-workers. With respect to bravery, Alice Paul demonstrates the latter quality in her championship of equal rights for women and support for the oppressed, despite jailing and force-feeding when she went on hunger strikes—“Like a Hunger Artist”, Gregor observes, in yet another reference to Kafka’s narrative *Ein Hungerkünstler* (95). During a later, platonic stay at her Washington, D.C. apartment, he is perplexed by a letter she receives from the local chapter of the Ku Klux Klan advising her via the truncated classical proverb “A word to the wise is sufficient” to terminate this cohabitation with a dark and foreign male: “A word to the wise—and you are wise. Other-wise, we may have to have a fashion show featuring some of our latest Kostumes” (135). Alice’s scorn for the Klan is all the more striking when Gregor personally witnesses not only its size and strength but also just how ‘American’ it is when the two of them watch the following parade on Pennsylvania Avenue: “It was August 8, 1925, and forty thousand hooded Klansmen marched the broad thoroughfare from White House to Capitol celebrating their victories in the recent election, and their faith in America’s future” (138). Alice already has made Gregor aware of the death sentences pronounced on the Italian anarchists Sacco and Vanzetti despite any concrete evidence of their involvement in a robbery turned murder (137). No wonder that Gregor takes part in the worldwide protests against their electrocution, even translating a letter of support from Albert Einstein (142), despite such anxiety about the sinister possibilities awaiting him that he literally has an “Insect Dream” in which he and Alice themselves are executed (139-145) for their alleged crimes.

Upon his return to New York City, Gregor attends the January 29, 1927 Town Hall performance of the first two movements from Charles Ives's Fourth Symphony and is so entranced by it that he resolves to pay a visit to his office, where he tells him that Ives has supplanted Gustav Mahler as his favorite composer. In an allusion to Julius Caesar's momentous decision to cross the Rubicon, Estrin's narrator observes, "the die was cast" (158): Ives offers Gregor a position at his life insurance firm, where the latter not only helps initiate the science of risk management but also provides Ives with a sympathetic ear when his employer suffers a spell of depression in November of 1929 that paralyzes his will and ability to compose music. Given the admiration that Ives has for the Concord Transcendentalists, it is not surprising that the composer makes use of Emerson's sententious remark turned folk proverb (Mieder 2007: I, 338) to express his aspirations as well as his seemingly failed attempt to reach the heavenly heights: "You know, a man who tries to hitch his wagon to a star and falls over a precipice, wagon and all, always finds something greater than the man who hitches his gilded star to a mule who kicks him back into a stagnant pool, where he lives forever, safe and sound in his swamp, in his ecstasy of splashing mud on mankind" (159). In his own positive allusion to the proverb *Per aspera ad astra*, Gregor reminds Ives of the "Watchman!" poem that the latter had set to music in 1913 in the process of work on his Fourth Symphony and that Gregor heard at the Town Hall concert (155): "He says that there is a mountain to climb, and above the mountain is a glory-beaming star. He says to hope and make joy, because the night brings the day" (161). As the composer's "thank-you for being reminded of that glory-beaming star, the promised day of Israel" (184), Ives dedicates to Gregor his latest work, "The Insect Sonata" (172), whose premiere performance on April Fool's Day of 1930 Estrin describes in such convincing detail that one might assume that this work actually exists (177-184).

Another attendee of this concert is the current governor of New York State, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who is destined to play an even greater role in politics as well as in Gregor's life. Their common love for music and respective physical impediments—Gregor first notices Roosevelt as "someone in a wheelchair sitting keyboard side, toward the front" (185)—signal an elective affinity that makes all the more understandable Gregor's

willingness to help out in Roosevelt's presidential election campaign in 1932 by providing information on the dubious role played by the Federal Government under the direction of its Secretary of Commerce, Herbert Hoover, following the Mississippi River flooding of the year 1927. Hoover had employed his coordination of relief and rescue efforts to secure a national reputation that led to his victory in the Presidential Election of 1928, which Estrin's narrator proverbially describes as "a no-lose situation, doing well by doing good" (189). But the seven volumes of information culled from Gregor's perusal of national and regional newspapers in the Low Memorial Library at Columbia University document the deliberate neglect and mistreatment of the black populace south of New Orleans whose disclosure helps wean African-Americans from their traditional allegiance to the Republican Party and thereby ensure Roosevelt's victory in the 1932 election campaign.

Already during Gregor's 1919/20 Vienna seminars on Oswald Spengler's *The Decline of the West*, "one Spenglerian notion seemed always to generate the most light and the most heat: his prognosis for Faustian Man in a Faustian Culture, ever restless, ever longing for the unattainable" (21). Whereas one audience member, for example, might cry out "Anything goes" as his proverbial explanation for the Faustian winter afflicting the world, another, more well-dressed woman would counter with "Not anything goes [...] middle-class values". The common denominator in these debates, however, was the following: "at every seminar, no matter who attended, the government came under fire" (21)—and so it should, as *Insect Dream's* account of Gregor's Half Life in Washington, D.C. will demonstrate. Gregor's initial hero-worship of Roosevelt and the belief in the proverb that "[i]n America, everything is possible" (197) will suffer considerable disillusionment, as he gradually experiences the unfortunate as well as the fortunate directions that the country will be taking during the Roosevelt presidential era. This insight helps explain Estrin's anti-proverb linking politicians with thieves and other criminals, "There is honor even among politicians" (198), when Mayor Anton Cermak of Chicago tells Roosevelt that he is glad that it was he, rather than the President-Elect, to have been fatally wounded by a would-be assassin in "Surrealpolitik", the concluding chapter dealing with Gregor's New York sojourn.

The initial months, even years, of Gregor's association with the White House begin harmoniously. Eleanor Roosevelt, as First Lady, reminds Gregor of her husband's remark in his First Inaugural Address, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself" (208, 213) and adds to Roosevelt's Four Freedoms—freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, freedom from fear—a Fifth Freedom for Gregor: "the Freedom to be a Roach" as a literal and figurative member of the newly created "kitchen cabinet" (208). "So does the world tease us with metaphors, language re-ven-geing itself on reality", Estrin's narrator remarks (208). And, indeed, Gregor's clambering on the hallways and walls of the White House with the Roosevelt children, for whom "Bucking Blattid" and "Roach the Roof" become their favorite games (209), serves as an idyllic contrast to the isolation he had experienced from his actual family in *Die Verwandlung*, in much the same way that the entire country experiences a renewal of hope and resolve during "the famous first hundred days" of the Roosevelt administration (212). Gregor later learns that the "fear itself" remark was added at the last moment to the inaugural address by Louis Howe, Roosevelt's all-powerful advisor and *éminence grise*, whom Gregor regards "as a kind of hideous anti-Lindhorst, a Mephistophelian sculptor of men, scheming others' ambitions into being, then claiming his due" (215). Indeed, this proverbial remark about Fear, while in a way older than Roosevelt (see Mieder 2005a), provides an example of just how language plays a role in shaping human aspirations, regardless of who might have been the originator of such a remark or policy. And so Gregor believes that he has found the firm foundation on which to build a better world, picking up on a saying attributed within the novel to Newton, but which can found at least as far back as Anselm of Canterbury, and applying it to what he perceives as Roosevelt's proverbial sense of noblesse oblige:

Gregor's ambition—not for himself, but for humanity—was great. So he would need great shoulders to stand upon, Newton's "shoulders of Giants." Even a cockroach standing on a giant's shoulders may see farther than the giant himself. Franklin Delano Roosevelt had giant shoulders, shoulders of a football player from his years on crutches, years propelling himself in a chair. His moral

shoulders were huge with noblesse oblige. His spiritual shoulders? Well, he had Henry Wallace close at hand. And now he had Gregor. It was a plan. Why not? Insert roachwise into the crevices of government, earwig into appropriate ears, and do it! Already well placed, Gregor fell asleep to the sweet smell of steaming sourdough. (215)

The high point, but also the turning point in Gregor's positive experiences with Franklin Delano Roosevelt is Christmas Eve of the year 1935, when he attends the President's reading of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* (1843) underneath a couch in the presidential bedroom, which causes him to recall his fateful attempt to listen to his sister's violin-playing in their parental living room (216). Another reminder from old Europe pays him a visit that evening like the Ghost of Christmas Past: a nine-page letter in a packet sent him by Amadeus Ernst Hoffnung which Gregor reads in a kind of counterpoint to the passages being recited from Dickens. Hoffnung, deathly ill but also "Cat-curious" (221) in Berlin, provides extensive examples of the persecution of Germany's Jewish population through the newly proclaimed Nuremberg racial purity laws, sending along a "Gift"-copy of *Mein Kampf* as proof of the Nazi leader's poisonous lust for war and use of Anti-Semitism as justification for every totalitarian excess (see Mieder 1997a). In a skillful double allusion to the tales of Chicken Little and the Boy who cried Wolf, Amadeus exhorts his old friend to share his letter with the President of the United States: "This ancient pullet does not cry wolf. The sky is falling" (227). Gregor, in fact, resolves to make use of his proximity to Roosevelt and attempt to help change the world for the better by sharing this letter with the president. But, as Hoffnung writes anti-proverbially with respect to his own fatal condition: "every cloud has its sulfur lining" (228). Louis Howe successfully argues against any specific reference to Nazi Germany in the president's forthcoming address regarding domestic issues to a joint session of Congress on January 3, 1936, citing the recent petition signed by 154,000 American students refusing to bear arms in any war that the United States might conduct: "That's the tip of a very big, very cold iceberg, Franklin" (235). The president responds to Gregor's plea to at least prepare for war with Nazi Germany with a proverbial phrase

of his own: "Let's choose our battles. For the moment, labor versus capital. If we win this, we'll have seventy-five million more voters behind us, and next term, we can do what needs doing about Hitler. Keep me informed. Whatever you find out" (236).

In the course of 1936, not only Roosevelt's attention, but also Gregor's are diverted to domestic concerns, particularly the dust clouds devastating the farming fields of the West and then the locusts that followed in their wake: "a secondary plague perhaps, not as well remembered as the dust, but for those whose lives and livelihoods were decimated, the straw that broke the dying camel's back" (247). Having taken the proverb "The last straw will break the camel's back" out of its traditional structure, Estrin continues on the same page by citing a modern proverb as he observes that Gregor is assigned the task of conducting research in order to help prevent locust swarms from extending into California: "Insects researching Insectiva—a wise move: it takes one to know one" (247). Here the author is somewhat on a proverbial roll, but he is slightly mistaken historically speaking. As far as has been established, the proverb "It takes one to know one" came into being only in 1946 (see Doyle, Mieder, Shapiro 2012: 184). In any case, in 1937 and 1938 there were no major insect swarms, and the simultaneous recession of these years leads to a drying up of funds for WHIRL (White House Institute for Research on Insects). It is not until April of 1939 that another swarm of grasshoppers occurs in Nevada. "But by that time," we learn, "Hitler had invaded Czechoslovakia" (253).

This historical information helps provide a context for the first use of the proverb "Truth is stranger than fiction" within *Insect Dreams*. During the final years of his time in New York City, Gregor had lived in Lower East Side, whose sights and sounds reminded him of Josefov, the remnants of the old Jewish quarter in Prague from his youth that had survived the 'urban removal' of gentrification efforts of the 1890s. Given the Nazi occupation of Prague, one might expect that nothing of Josefov would have survived. Such is not the case, we readers learn from Estrin's narrator, whose seeming omniscience also includes awareness of proverbial phrases such as "With friends like these, who needs enemies?":

But truth is stranger than fiction: the remnants of the old Jewish quarter had their savior, one Adolf Hitler, who chose to preserve what little there was of the ghetto [...] as the basic sites for an “Exotic Museum of an Extinct Race.” Jewish artifacts stolen from all over central Europe were stored in these buildings, and now constitute one of the great collections of Judaica in the world. With friends like these ... (167)

In 1939, of course, Estrin’s hero is not yet privy to such information: “Gregor had yet to discover that life was truly stranger than fiction” (257). But the marriage proposal that he receives that April from Katherine MacPherson, an employee at Ives and Myrick who had been too shy to confess her love for him when they had been fellow workers, contains a further example of Marc Estrin’s use of proverbial speech: “When you left, I thought I would recover. ‘Out of sight, out of mind,’ we say in America. But we also say ‘Absence makes the heart grow fonder,’ and almost every day I found my mind wandering” (257; see Mieder 2004: 1). After getting advice from Eleanor Roosevelt on how best to formulate a tactful, but decided rejection of Katherine’s proposal of marriage, Gregor then attempts in vain to find a home phone and address for her, starting in New York City. These efforts provide the occasion for first a positive, and then a negative allusion to the proverb already used by Amadeus Ernst Hoffnung, in that Gregor thereby learns the latest instances of Nazi Germany’s mistreatment of Jews and the tacit support it is receiving from the world community, including the United States: “The silver lining in the cloud was that he became a habitual user of the Library of Congress. The cloud inside the silver lining was that the Library of Congress subscribed to every newspaper published on earth, and Gregor became acutely aware—in all details, in several languages—of the dismaying events unfolding off the coast of Cuba, and now Florida” (261). Gregor reports to the President on the uncertain fate of the 930 Jewish refugees on the *Saint Louis*, the Hamburg-American Line’s cruise ship, after the bulk of them have been refused admission in Havana. He even points out that the *Völkischer Beobachter* is using American silence on this issue as a sign that the United States agrees with Germany’s anti-Jewish policy. Roosevelt, however, continues to find reasons why he needs to delay any open

opposition to Hitler: "I'm sympathetic to the victims, but you know we can't risk being labeled 'pro-Jew.' I want us to be known as 'anti-Nazi'" (263). Gregor warns that Hitler's "actions will grow to a demand for extermination: I need no crystal ball here" (264). Louis Howe, asked for his advice by the President, likewise responds proverbially that "I agree that things may get worse over there before they get better" (264), but dismisses the notion that things could get that bad in the United States, even though he and Roosevelt have just finished practicing their parody of a "President Rosenfeld" Jewish accent. Frustrated by his fruitless attempts to influence presidential policies by means of personal appeals, Gregor abruptly gets up and walks out of the meeting, with the author commenting with a frequently heard colloquial phrase: "You don't get brownie points for such behavior" (265).

Later that summer, to be sure, Gregor proves instrumental in alerting the White House about German attempts to split the atom in the search for an atomic bomb. "We are going to trump Hitler on the bomb" (273), he learns from a new acquaintance, the Hungarian physicist Edward Teller, although Gregor needs an explanation of both this card-playing expression and also the plan to involve Albert Einstein in writing a warning letter to the President. Leo Szilard, Teller's fellow countryman, is initially skeptical of this plan: "Once the government sets its claws on something ..." (275), and Einstein likewise objects with the anti-proverb: "You cannot create peace by preparing for war" (276), contradicting the traditional proverb "If you desire (want) peace, you must prepare for war" that has been attributed to the Roman historian Cornelius Nepos (Mieder 2012a: 95-96). Szilard, eventually however, convinces his pacifist colleague with a statement that appears to circumscribe the classical proverb: "If we make the bomb, and Hitler knows we have done that, he will be afraid to use his, and we will not have to use ours" (276). Einstein agrees to write a letter to Roosevelt, which Gregor agrees to deliver personally and which, we are informed with a phrase from the world of sports, will "set a ball slowly rolling that would gather speed enough to shatter worlds" (278).

First, however, Roosevelt has to win an unprecedented third election to the Presidency in 1940, and elections, we are told, "bring out the worst in people—the duplicity of dignitaries, the gullibility of the electorate" (282). "*Caveat emptor*" (Let the buyer

beware) might serve as a suitable warning for such an electorate; Roosevelt campaigns as a peace candidate, even though he knows that a war against Nazi Germany will be unavoidable sooner or later, and wins convincingly against Wendell Wilkie, the Republican challenger. Several days before the election, on the closing day of the 1939-40 World's Fair in New York City, Gregor visits the exhibits and reads about preparations to preserve records of current civilization via a time capsule, where the Latin proverb has been appropriately rephrased: "When it has been brought up out of the ground, let the finders beware, lest in their eagerness they spoil the contents by ill-considered moves" (286). From all that he has seen since his arrival in the New World, Gregor has become wary of American claims of exceptionalism, which seem to him all-too-reminiscent of salient lines from Goethe's *Faust* (287-289). After his visit to "The World of Tomorrow" at the fair, Gregor reflects on the motives that drive governments and businesses to create what they regard as a glorious future, but he also feels compassion for the people on whose behalf such projects allegedly are begun in an expression that simultaneously cites and qualifies the proverbial opening to the Book of Ecclesiastes (1:2): "Vanity, all is vanity, and yet not so. He looked around at the sad yet marveling crowd, and he found them lovable, all lovable in their sadness, and lovable in their awe" (289).

Gregor's compassion for others becomes evident once again when he witnesses the self-immolation of a young Japanese-American man on the steps of the US Capitol as a protest against the forced internment of his countrymen at the onset of World War II. A policeman responds to Gregor's distressed request for help with the following admonition, in which the stereotypical American proverb "The Only Good Indian Is a Dead Indian" (Mieder 1997b) takes on a deadly life of its own: "Cool it, buddy. The guy's a crisp. Besides, the only good Jap is a dead Jap" (303). A photo of this incident on the cover of the 6 March 1942 front cover of *Life*-Magazine helps bring the relationship between himself and Roosevelt not only "to loggerheads" (304), but also to "the point of no return" (305): "The President did not need moral superiors to criticize or lecture him on behalf of the Jews or Japanese. Gregor, on the other hand, didn't need heroes with moral feet of clay" (304). Although he fully expects and fears in the weeks after the ritual suicide of Yoshio Miyaguchi "to be called

on the carpet" (305) for his failure to prevent it from occurring, it is only at the end of 1942 that the President asks Gregor to go on a special, but unspecified assignment of great benefit to humanity, adding that this might never have come to pass without Gregor and Einstein. Gregor is suitably flattered—"Putting two and two together was easy compared to putting Gregor and Einstein together" (307)—but also suspicious about this request. Attempting to call Leo Szilard for advice, he three times receives a busy signal and is about to retire for the night on New Year's Eve when Szilard reaches him, saying that he had been trying to phone Gregor at the same time, urging him to accept the President's offer. "What do they say?" Gregor asks: "Great minds think alike?" (308). "Great minds think alike" (309), Szilard confirms, adding that he too will be going to this unspecified Site Y. This short verbal exchange occupies a pivotal space in the novel, and it is somewhat reminiscent of the exchange between Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Winston S. Churchill immediately after the attack on Pearl Harbor, when both former Navy men used the maritime phrase "to be in the same boat" to seal their partnership in fighting the Nazi menace (see Mieder 2005b: 199-200).

On June 12, 1943, Gregor boards a train from Washington, D.C, for Lamy, New Mexico, before which destination he follows White House orders and proceeds to the baggage car, where he locks himself into a wooden crate provided for him that will be transported to a site still unknown to him. This experience of being touched on all sides of his body at once produces in Gregor a feeling not of being buried alive, but rather of exhilaration, as is only proper for a being enclosed within the body frame of a roach accustomed to living in tight places. Upon describing this experience "and the sense of power coming at him, into him, out of him" to Seth Neddermeyer, a young physicist working at Los Alamos, the two of them experience an illumination. "Gregor had planted a seed: the implosion bomb idea was born between them", but it is "a rough beast still, and slouching" (326)—not towards Bethlehem, as in the William Butler Yeats poem "A Second Coming," but rather towards the test site of Alamogordo two years from that early July in 1943. That fateful journey receives further impetus two days later on the Fourth of July, when they conduct an experiment in Los Alamos Canyon: "An observer might have mistaken Gregor and Neddermeyer for large boys having fun, playing with

matches and firecrackers on Independence Day” (326). Much earlier in the novel, on the evening after his encounter with Epi Schlüsselberger, Gregor has experienced an “Insect Dream” derived from the “Paulinchen” episode in *Struwelpleter* about the danger of playing with matches and fire (55-56), and now this danger is to become infinitely magnified as the scientists proceed with their nuclear experiments. When Neddermeyer reports on this theory and initial experiment, Gregor observes how the proposal for detonating the atomic bomb via implosion initially is met with skepticism and even derision, as being “‘from left field,’ as Ives had taught him to say” (329), but eventually is adopted by the other scientists. This, we learn, is a “crucial change of heart: for good or ill, had Neddermeyer’s work been stopped, there would have been no atomic arsenal—at least till long after the war” (329)—a proverbial phrase expressing a major matter!

In terms of plot, Gregor’s transfer from the White House to White Sands, New Mexico is the equivalent of his having been “removed” from the familial apartment in Prague by the house cleaner and the three tenants. On the other hand, his time at Los Alamos is for Gregor the equivalent of the Nature Theater in Oklahoma for Karl Roßmann in Kafka’s *Amerika* novel, namely the last chance of a happy ending for him in the New World. The aspens that gave the place its name tremble in the September light of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in ways that recall the legendary origin of the proverbial phrase “to tremble [shake, quiver] like an aspen leaf” (331). J. Robert Oppenheimer, the head of the Los Alamos laboratories, proves to be another beneficent father figure for Gregor like Hoffnung, Ives, and (at least initially) Roosevelt. Through Oppenheimer, Gregor meets Tilano, a Native American who takes him to see a six-foot petroglyph where the interplay of light and shade at sunset produces a human figure that suddenly has six legs, not two. Gregor wonders whether he is seeing the image of his real father (340), as opposed to the vision of his father in Prague “ever ready to wound and punish” (339). Tilano’s mission-school education and benign disposition enable him to finish the second half of a Biblical proverb (Matthew 6:34) in a way that accords with his own unhurried and open attitude toward life: “Sufficient unto the day ...” “is the goodness thereof” (336). In like manner, he comments on the passing glory of the ruins of a three-hundred-room apartment from the pre-Pueblo Anasazi cul-

ture by remarking to Gregor: "*Sic transit Gloria [mundi]*" (338). For the readers of *Insect Dreams*, though, this proverb also stands for the precarious situation of a world with atomic weapons and their danger, no longer just the obsidian spearhead that Gregor discovers at the foot of the boulder on which the petroglyph is inscribed (341). Whereas time seems on proverbial hold in the natural landscape, "above the canyon, on the mesa between the mountains, the clock was ticking, the minute hand drawing ever nearer the putative midnight when Hitler would call the world to attention with nuclear weapons" (332).

This sense of urgency has its effect on Los Alamos researchers like Otto Frisch: "Behind his gentle, cultural exterior was a man bitten by the bug, a scientist driven to quiet lunacy by the question of critical mass" (356). It is ironic that it is Gregor, "the bug", who in his capacity as risk management consultant has warned Frisch about performing the risks in performing hazardous experiments, and yet the latter is still willing to expose himself to radioactivity! Frisch is by no means an exception in that regard. Although General Leslie Groves, the military supervisor of the Manhattan Project, ostensibly has as foremost principle for project design "safety first against all hazards" (374), Oppenheimer informs Gregor that the indisputable first priority for Groves is "speedy production", with the health and safety of workers being "absolutely last" (374)—such are the anti-proverbs of actual importance when constructing the site where the first deliveries of plutonium from Oak Ridge, Tennessee are to be housed, for "good—and bad—things come in very small packages" (372). Faced with the assignment of assessing health risks in a setting where the sharing of such information is regarded as a breach of security, "Gregor was sure he could forge ahead with his Herculean task. But it turned out to be more a story of Samson than of Hercules" (375)—a combination of a classical proverbial phrase and a Biblical allusion that is here ironically appropriate, in that Gregor already has been ordered to change his name to "George Samson" (346) for purposes of military security. In his first official conversation with Gregor, Groves makes unmistakably clear in proverbial language what his priorities are if a decision has to be made between worker safety, on the one hand, and developing an atomic bomb before Hitler does, on the other:

You eggheads with your damn abstractions! You think we need some kind of ethical debate over means and ends? We need the right kind of health people here who can see the larger picture and not worry the community about measly issues. And you're not going to stand in my way, understand? (377-378)

Gregor, for his part, “was getting the picture of how to work here” (378), namely not to send out memos announcing his principles for gathering data, which Dr. Stafford Warren, General Groves’s loyal assistant, terms “a fishing expedition” with the goal of minimizing the dangers of working with radioactive materials (378). This picture becomes even clearer when Gregor finds that his beret has been contaminated with plutonium; despite his extensive report the next day, the culprit is never identified. At the end of August in 1944, Oppenheimer, concerned, calls him into his office to find out how he is doing. Gregor assures him that he is feeling fine: after all, it is well known who will inherit the earth—insects, and not humans like Oppenheimer! (386, 388) This reformulation of a Biblical proverb (Psalms 37:11) in praise of the meek reminds us that, while human beings may well be destroyed by the atomic bomb, insects might have a chance to survive.

By the late autumn of 1944, it has become ever more evident that the Germans have no atomic bomb project and probably never did. In a phrase adapted from “Casey at the Bat”, Estrin’s narrator informs us “There was much joy in Mudville” (395), i.e. Los Alamos, and Gregor initially joins in the jubilation, because he assumes that the work on the Manhattan Project will be terminated once the ostensible reason for its necessity no longer exists. This, however, does not happen, much to Gregor’s dismay, although he himself had experienced the psychological rationale for the continuation of work on the atomic bomb project in the course of his flight from Vienna to New York City when he asked himself while still over the Wachau in Austria: “Why turn back? Why not go all the way? But where was all the way? America” (65). “To go all the way” might have seemed a harmless phrase at the time, but now Gregor is in a better position to appreciate the words of a writer whom, ironically, he has condemned in a letter to Hannah Arendt as a spreader of paralyzing pessimism, namely Franz Kafka: “From a certain point onward there is no longer any turning

back. That is the point that must be reached.' The spirit of Kafka hovered over the land" (396). Thus it is all the more appropriate that Arendt, in her (fictive) reply to Gregor, makes reference to a proverb that has both individual and societal import: "We agree, I think, on the message Kafka brings to a misconstructured world: the ancient admonition to 'Know Thyself.' The truth of our time must be disclosed or uncovered from within its all-pervasive and seductive trappings" (397; see Wilkins 1917).

Another literary reference within the supercharged intellectual community at Los Alamos occurs when Gregor is invited to attend a March 19, 1945 meeting of the Alliance Française for a discussion of the La Fontaine fable of the cat who was metamorphosed into a woman, only to pounce on mice in her bedroom during her wedding night, and its concluding moral: "You'll never be Nature's master. If you push it out the door, it will climb back through the windows" (409). Both this formulation and the remark by the twelve-year-old Gaby Peierls "that inner nature will always assert itself" (411) play around with the uncited proverb "Nature passes (trumps) nurture." As he walks home, Gregor realizes that Gaby and her two preadolescent friends have brought him in to answer their questions because they, like himself, fear what human nature is likely to reveal when freed of any ethical restraints. The proverbial remark "Once bitten, twice shy", in fact, indirectly provides the reason why Gregor has refrained from attending any of the rehearsals to the ballet performance of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* that Gaby's mother Genia Peierls, is producing: "Perhaps he only feared what the piece might do to him should he become trapped in its powerful jaws. Once devolved, twice shy." (412) Gregor's apprehensions prove correct when the performance on March 21, 1945 is set not in an archaic Russia, but rather Los Alamos itself, and where the maiden to be sacrificed at the end, danced by none other than Gaby Peierls, dies on a ziggurat that resembles Enrico Fermi's uranium pile.

And so it is not surprising that Gregor aids Leo Szilard in gathering signatures at Los Alamos for a petition objecting to the use of atomic bombs on moral grounds. While Oppenheimer refuses to sign the petition, at least he does not forbid its circulation, as Groves would have done. The results, however, are all the more dispiriting for Gregor. In a notebook of entries from the month of June 1945 that he entitles "Death by a Thousand Cuts" (431),

Gregor records quotes from the people who have declined to sign his petition, whose formulaic language suggests that they are responding with pre-packaged opinions rather than reasoned arguments. The following entry from 12 June, for example, combines an allusion to the proverb “If you desire peace, prepare for war” and the modern (from 1917) proverb “There’s no such thing as a free lunch” (Doyle, Mieder, Shapiro 2012: 253) turned into an anti-proverb with another image from the world of sports, this time from American football: “It’s a matter of posturing. Peace comes by being too tough to tackle. It’s okay to be an idealist, but you also have to be a realist. There’s no such thing as an ideal world” (433). A reply from later that month on 26 June is even more robotic in its formulation: “I’m only a small cog in a complex machine, but I try to do my job competently and earn my pay” (437). And, if “Nature trumps Nurture,” as Gregor has recently learned from La Fontaine, then the final entry in his notebook from 30 June—“Mother Nature is a mean bastard. She always collects. The only question is who pays and when. She always collects” (438)—makes quite understandable why at the Trinity test site Gregor has begun to re-read “Schopenhauer’s indictment of the state of things, the struggle of all against all, the turbulent division of Will against itself, *homo homini lupus* bringing forth jealousy, envy, hatred, fear, ambition, avarice, and so on without end, the utter misery of the world” (439). For his part, Gregor has formed the resolve to place himself under the site of the atomic bomb test in a suicide that has redemptive intent. During a serious illness that April following the death of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, in his delirium Gregor had spoken lines in German from his childhood Bible, and a sentence is provided that well may be Gregor’s self-diagnosis of his illness and path toward final healing: “Fires of hatred, of passion, of despair burnt lower. Dust goeth to dust, and man to his long home” (426). Now he consciously contemplates an end involving “redemption of the mindless whole by the mindful part” (439).

By July of 1945, the United States has a new President, Harry S. Truman, and he is attending the Potsdam Conference, awaiting word of test results in New Mexico. Despite predictions of thunderstorms, General Groves urges that the test take place as scheduled on the morning of July 16: “perhaps the whole future of post-war relations hung in the balance” (451). Seeing that Enrico Fermi

is simultaneously taking bets on "whether the explosion would wipe out the world or merely destroy the state" (451), the proverbial phrase employed by Groves applies to the precarious state of the modern world as well. No wonder, then, that on this Christian Sabbath at Alamogordo, "there was no rest for the weary" (450), an observation that is based on the Biblical proverb "There is no peace for the wicked" (Isaiah 48:22). The one big exception is Gregor, who is as snug as a bug, but not under a rug. Instead, he has asked Oppenheimer to drive him to Site Zero, where he calmly awaits his final metamorphosis.

In the essayistic Afterword to *Insect Dreams* written in April of 2001 by Rudolph Bernard, at one time the youthful hospital director of the Manhattan Project, where he and Gregor became friends following his treatment of Gregor's illness, Bernard observes that "it would seem that Gregor had captured the uttermost prize, a truly owned, passionate, infinite death, with clear mind, and almost sound body untouched by madness or deep disease" (458-459). How appropriate it is that a physician turned biographer would allude to the proverb used by Gregor nearly eighty years ago before his trip to Yankee Stadium with Alice Paul (87)! At the same time, Bernard wonders whether one there can be "a good death via a weapon of mass destruction" (459). Reflecting on the mass killings of civilians in the wars he has witnessed over the course of his lifetime, he makes use of the significant proverbial message that serves as the epigraph to this essay: "Adversaries are no longer considered human, no longer even those humans of whom it is written *homo homini lupus*. The struggles are between complex bureaucratic structures that serve the ideological needs of civilization's death machine" (461). And yet, sustained by the tale of Gregor, Bernard fights against the proverbial "cold heart" (461) that appears to be the trajectory of human history: "That was my friend, Gregor Samsa. I shall follow him soon. And *après moi? Le déluge?* Let us hope not" (463). Here we have a reference to the fatalistic remark of the French King Louis XV in the years before the French Revolution that has become proverbial in English as "After us the deluge" (see Oesch 1971). But this defeatist, non-engaging, and negative proverb is followed by the ultimate, encouraging, and positive message of the novel, namely the call for hope. As Bernard observes: "The second half of the last century did not produce another Gregor, but I have not given up hope. One

must believe the future into existence” (461). In that regard, proverbial hope truly does spring eternal in the human breast, or more drastically “hope burn[s] eternal in the sweating breast” (103), regardless of what its outer appearance may be!

Proverbial references as they appear in the novel

This list includes only those proverbs and proverbial expressions that have particular significance for the plot and message of the novel. Altogether the novel contains about 300 phraseologisms on 468 pages that amounts to the impressive frequency of one phraseological unit for every page and a half. In comparison, Franz Kafka’s novels and other prose exhibit a dearth of proverbial materials, a clear indication that his style is not particularly metaphorical (see Binder 1992, Doerr 2004, Gross 1980, and Koelb 1982).

p. 5: a collection of wonders that would burst the seams of any cabinet.

p. 6: The name reflected the mind-boggling collection of freaks and oddities there assembled—the cast-off “tailings” of otherwise normal production, the butt-end protrusions, the devil flaunting an anal thumb at the world. (a play with the proverbial expression “to bite one’s thumb at someone”, used so splendidly by Shakespeare at the beginning of *Romeo and Juliet*)

p. 12: But it was both his cross and his salvation.

p. 13: They talked of mice and men, of history and destiny. (an allusion to the proverb “The best-laid plans of mice and men often go astray” that has its origin in Robert Burns’ poem “To a Mouse” (1785) with the word “schemes” instead of “plans”; see Stevenson 1948: 2040)

p. 17: That would be sensational—if he could get away with it.

p. 21: Anything goes. Not anything goes.

p. 21: But at every seminar, no matter who attended, the government came under fire.

p. 32: It was, as they say now, a win-win situation.

p. 39: how many of you have had the wool pulled over your eyes!

- p. 39: may shine some light on the critical problem of authenticity in our postwar world.
- p. 42: Our American friend steps in where angels fear to tread.
- p. 59: In much wisdom is much grief: he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow. (Ecclesiastes 1:18)
- p. 60: Curiosity will kill the roach—and perhaps a lot of others.
- p. 60: There will be scientists who, in the calm and cool of seminar rooms, will hatch the egg of world destruction.
- p. 61: Darwinian ... fittest dog eats fittest dog (based on the proverb “Dog will not eat dog” to fit Darwinism and its aggressive struggles for survival; of course, the phrase “dog eats dog” is part of this as well)
- p. 65: Why turn back? Why not go all the way? But where was all the way? America.
- p.85: “See ya. Don’t take any wooden nickels.” [...] “Wooden nickels,” Gregor thought. “What is that, wooden nickels?” (see Urdang and LaRoche 1980: 8)
- p. 87: The country was quick to react, to wash its dirty laundry clean,
- p. 87: This was the perfect American day, in the perfect American place, the *mens sana* of universities in the *corpore sano* of sport, and here he was with his newly beloved leading the way, *das Ewig-Weibliche*, Democracy in America.
- p. 90: baseball idioms that have become part of everyday language: out in left field, three strikes, you’re out, off-base, switch hitter, wild pitch, in the ballpark, to throw someone a curve ball, unable to get to first base.
- p. 91: And the ump is always right.
- p. 96: We’re putting our heads together about strategy.
- p. 98: As usual, Alice was quick to get down to business.
- p. 100: under these conditions, honesty was the best policy.
- p. 101: All or nothing. Whatever happens, happens.

p. 103: Some will try again, hope burning eternal in the sweating breast. (the proverb “Hope springs eternal in the human breast” originated in Alexander Pope’s *Essay on Man* in 1733; see Mieder, Kingsbury, and Harder 1992: 309)

p. 104: he realized for the first time that he might be getting into something over his head.

p. 115: There’s no time like the present. Except the future. Except the future.

p. 123: Yet Gregor, tutored by cynical bellhop colleagues, was “in the know” about other explanations.

p. 124: You look white as a sheet. Well, tan anyway.

p. 128: It may seem strange to call you out of the blue.

p. 129: “Your English is better. But you have to say, ‘What’s up?’” / “What’s up? I will remember that.”

p. 129: It’s a long story I can tell you later.

p. 135: A word to the wise—and you are wise. Other-wise. (shortened classical proverb “A word to the wise is sufficient”)

p. 141: The stakes were as high as they come.

p. 154: couldn’t make head or tail of the music.

p. 154: hid themselves in the green room, where they could hear scarcely anything (Bryan 1992).

p. 158: the die was cast.

p. 159: You know, a man who tries to hitch his wagon to a star and falls over a precipice, wagon and all, always finds something greater than the man who hitches his gilded star to a mule who kicks him back into a stagnant pool.

p. 160: “I’m not doing well, Mr. Samsa. I’m in a bad spell that won’t say uncle.” / “What uncle?” Gregor interrupted. / “Say uncle. That means you give up. It won’t give up. The spell.”

p. 160: I’m thinking about it. Throw in the towel. Why not?

p. 167: But truth is stranger than fiction.

- p. 167: With friends like these ... [who needs enemies?].
- p. 174: In fact, this little colloquy had quite taken the wind out of Gregor's sails.
- p. 181: "All hands on deck!"
- p. 186: Gregor was a big hit at work.
- p. 186: Gregor's celebrity lasted about fifteen minutes, and then the office settled in to its daily routine. (possibly an allusion to Andy Warhol's "In the future everybody will be world famous for fifteen minutes" from 1968; Shapiro 2006: 797)
- p. 188: To get through the gauntlet of breasts and hips, of smiling faces and gay human flirtation.
- p. 188: A little of that went a long way—far enough to get him to his isolated cubicle in the stack.
- p. 189: a no-lose situation, doing well by doing good.
- p. 190: He rode this wave for all it was worth.
- p. 193: I've got money to burn.
- p. 194: He was still the new kid on the block.
- p. 197: In America, anything is possible.
- p. 198: There is honor even among politicians.
- p. 199: A Stranger to wine, women, or song, his whole life resolved around his stomach pain. (Shortened triad of the proverb "He who does not love wine, women, and song, remains a fool his whole life long"; see Mieder 1983)
- p. 205: when the whole Roosevelt kit and caboodle arrived together.
- p. 208 (also p. 213 and p. 215): The only thing we have to fear is fear itself.
- p. 210: At least that's what he was told by those who wanted off the hook.
- p. 211: Scared the dickens out of one of the chambermaids.

p. 212: The famous first one hundred days—Gregor found himself admiring, then awed by the leader [FDR] behind them.

p. 215: So he would need great shoulders to stand upon.

p. 215: His moral shoulders were huge with noblesse oblige.

p. 217: dead as a door-nail. (see Barrick 1978; Marc Estrin is citing Charles Dickens' use of the proverb here in his *A Christmas Carol* from 1843; see Bryan and Mieder 1997: 98)

p. 221: I heard yelling in the street. Cat-curious, I went down to follow the crowd.

p. 224: Now you can tell all bruchs [the blessings recited at the Passover table] by their covers. (anti-proverb based on "You can't tell a book by its cover", a variant of the more popular "You can't judge a book by its cover; Mieder, Kingsbury, and Harder 1992: 62)

p. 224: Since the Night of Long Knives—do you know about this?—guard duty is granted exclusively to Gestapo "Death's Head Units." (Mieder and Pilachowski 1978)

p. 227: This ancient pullet does not cry wolf.

p. 228 (also on p. 261): But every cloud has its sulfur lining.

p. 235: They don't want to "fan the fires of anti-Semitism," as they say.

p. 235: That's the tip of a very big, very cold iceberg.

p. 236: Let's choose our battles.

pp. 245-246: You can't have a divine weapon, a sacred tool, without its abominable owner vomiting curses and fouling his nest (Kunstmann 1981).

p. 247: And after the dust clouds came the locusts [...] a secondary plague perhaps, not as well remembered as the dust, but for those whose lives and livelihoods were decimated, the straw that broke the dying camel's back.

p. 247: Insects researching Insectiva—a wise move: it takes one to know one.

p. 248: Gregor among them, stood at this crossroads.

pp. 256-257: He tore into the envelopes, first the bill—business before pleasure—then the thicker packet.

p. 257: What?? (Gregor had yet to discover that life was truly stranger than fiction.)

p. 257: When you left, I thought I would recover. “Out of sight, out of mind,” we say in America. But we also say “Absence makes the heart grow fonder,” and almost every day I found my mind wandering, thinking resentful thoughts.

p. 261: The silver lining in the cloud was that he became a habitual user of the Library of Congress. The cloud inside the silver lining was that the Library of Congress subscribed to every newspaper published on earth.

p. 264: But his actions will grow to a demand for extermination: I need no crystal ball here, or especially smart.

p. 264: I agree that things may get worse over there before they get better.

p. 265 (also on p. 388): And Gregor got up and walked out. Walked out on the President, and on his gray-green eminence. You don't get brownie points for such behavior.

p. 266: The neutron. [...] but heavy enough to throw its weight around at the behest of others. A well-placed tool in the pantheon of power.

p. 272: While salami is a far cry from weapons, he was again years ahead of his time.

p. 273: “We are going to trump Hitler on the bomb.” / “What is trump?” / [...] / “Trump is when you get the better of someone. Surprise them.”

p. 275: Once the government sets its claws on something.

p. 276: You cannot create peace by preparing for war.

p. 278: It set a ball slowly rolling that would gather speed enough to shatter worlds.

p. 279: they came up with a compromise dark horse: Gregor.

p. 282: Elections bring out the worst in people—the duplicity of dignitaries, the gullibility of the electorate.

p. 286: When it has been brought up out of the ground, let the finders [buyers] beware, lest in their eagerness they spoil the contents by ill-considered moves.

p. 289: Vanity, all is vanity, and yet not so. (Ecclesiastes 1:2)

p. 293: A leopard's spots are the same and its disposition is the same wherever it is whelped. (see the Bible verse “Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots”; Jeremiah 13:23)

p. 303: Cool it, buddy. The guy's a crisp. Besides, the only good Jap is a dead Jap

p. 304: the war had brought the President and his blatted guest to loggerheads.

p. 305: Gregor felt the point of no return had been his failure.

p. 305: Gregor expected at each moment to be called on the carpet, to be punished according to the enormity of the crime.

p. 307: Putting two and two together was easy compared to putting Gregor and Einstein together.

p. 308 (also on p. 309): “How peculiar! What do they say? Great minds think alike” / “Only mediocre minds think. Great minds don't think at all.” / “um ... yes. Well, mediocre minds think alike, then.” / “Speak for yourself.”

p. 313: “What's bad with his [Dr. Bong] name?” / “A Bong by any other name would [*sic*] smell like feet.” (anti-proverb to Shakespeare's “A Rose by any other name would smell as sweet”; Mieder, Kingsbury, and Harder 1992: 516)

p. 314: I could make such monkey business up?

p. 314: Vat [*sic*] the eye doesn't see, the heart doesn't feel.

p. 324: A light bulb lit in Gregor's head.

p. 326: Gregor had planted a seed: the implosion bomb idea was born between them, a rough beast still, and slouching.

p. 326: An observer might have mistaken Gregor and Neddermeyer for large boys having fun, playing with matches and firecrackers on Independence Day.

p. 329: Admittedly, this was a proposal "from left field," as Ives had taught him to say

p. 329: A crucial change of heart: for good or ill, had Neddermeyer's work been stopped, there would have been no atomic arsenal—at least till long after the war.

p. 331: Two legends are told about the aspen [...] its leaves began to tremble with horror and have never ceased. (the proverbial phrase "to tremble [shake, quiver] like an aspen leaf")

p. 332: But above the canyon, on the mesa between the mountains, the clock was ticking, the minute hand drawing ever nearer the putative midnight.

p. 336: Sufficient unto the day ... is the goodness thereof. (Matthew 6:34: "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof")

p. 338: *Sic transit Gloria [mundi]*, was, strangely, all he had to say. Where did he learn Latin? His companion wondered.

p. 344: It drove the all-too-similar Feynman up the wall.

p. 347: the Biblical Samson was more like the Feynman of wine-women-and-song than like Gregor.

p. 347: She [...] had fallen head-over-heels in love again.

p. 351: Put it there, pod'ner, he said, imitating a phrase he had heard on the radio. He held out his claw.

p. 356: Behind his gentle, cultural exterior was a man bitten by the bug, a scientist driven to quiet lunacy by the question of critical mass.

p. 364: Don't tell me that, man. You'll scare the shit out of me.

p. 371: George, you sure are one fubar'd cat. Gregor looked bewildered. That's army for "fucked up beyond all recognition."

p. 372: Once neutrons had been harnessed [...] it was only a matter of time.

- p. 372: But good—and bad—things come in very small packages.
- p. 372: It was like looking for a needle in a haystack, except the needle was dispersed in tiny pieces, and the hay was horrendously radioactive.
- p. 373: All project design here at the site is governed by three rules: One: safety first against all hazards—known and unknown.
- p. 373: It's obvious the general don't know beans about science.
- p. 375: Gregor was sure he could forge ahead with his Herculean task. But it turned out to be more a story of Samson than of Hercules.
- pp. 377-378: You eggheads with your damn abstractions! You think we need some kind of ethical debate over means and ends? We need the right kind of health people here who can see the larger picture and not worry the community about measly issues. And you're not going to stand in my way, understand?
- p. 378 (also on p. 380): He was getting the picture of how to work here.
- p. 378: The word "specific" gutted Gregor's interest in low-level radiation: "a fishing expedition," Warren called it.
- p. 386 (also on p. 388): I'm feeling fine, Gregor assured him. It's well known who will inherit the earth. Insects. Naturally. (Psalms 37:11: "The meek shall inherit the earth")
- p. 388: Will you do it? You'll get extra brownie points.
- p. 388: That's because you're not going to inherit the earth.
- p. 397: We agree, I think, on the message Kafka brings to a misconstructed world: the ancient admonition to "Know Thyself." The truth of our time must be disclosed or uncovered from within its all-pervasive and seductive trappings.
- p. 399: and head home to hit the straw.
- p. 409: *Jamais vous n'en serez les maîtres. / Qu'en lui ferme la porte au nez, / Il reviendra par les fenêtres. / You'll never be Nature's master. If you push it out the door, it will climb back through the windows. A delightful image [proverb!], Gregor*

thought, and probably true. He resolved to read all of La Fontaine. (allusion to the classical proverb "Nature passes [trumps] nurture" illustrated by folk narratives; see Braekman and Macaulay 1969; and Mazzarella 1970)

p. 411: If La Fontaine is correct that inner nature will always assert itself. (allusion to the proverb above)

p. 412: Perhaps he only feared what the piece might do to him should he become trapped in its powerful jaws. Once devolved, twice shy. (anti-proverb to "Once bitten, twice shy")

p. 421: It is written in the stars that the second half of April will be the turning point for us.

p. 426: Fires of hatred, of passion, of despair burnt lower. Dust goeth to dust, and man to his long home. (Bible proverb plus phrase about grave and casket)

p. 433: It's a matter of posturing. Peace comes by being too tough to tackle. It's okay to be an idealist, but you also have to be a realist. There's no such thing as an ideal world. (anti-proverb to "There's no such thing as a free lunch")

p. 437: I'm only a small cog in a complex machine, but I try to do my job competently and earn my pay.

p. 439 (also on p. 461): Gregor relaxed, gratefully, into Schopenhauer's indictment of the state of things, the struggle of all against all, the turbulent division of Will against itself, *homo homini lupus* bringing forth jealousy, envy, hatred, fear, ambition, avarice, and so on without end, the utter misery of the world. (Bertolt Brecht employed this proverb several times in his poems and plays to show inhumanity; see Mieder 1998:60-62)

p. 450: It was the Christian Sabbath, but there was no rest for the weary. (Isaiah 48:22: There is no peace for the wicked")

p. 451: perhaps the whole future of post-war relations hung in the balance.

p. 456: Surely a curious nut being cracked.

p. 458: it would seem that Gregor had captured the uttermost prize, a truly owned, passionate, infinite death, with clear mind,

and almost sound body untouched by madness or deep disease. (allusion to the proverb “A healthy mind in a healthy body”, see above on p. 87)

p. 461: Adversaries are no longer considered human, no longer even those humans of whom it is written *homo homini lupus*.

p. 461: Even though the trajectory of human history seems to be toward complacency, decadence, and coldness of heart, we may still be saved by obscure efforts of heroic individuals whose passion it is to redeem the world, they who live a faithful life, and will rest in unmarked graves.

p. 463: That was my friend, Gregor Samsa. I shall follow him soon. And *après moi? Le déluge?* Let us hope not.

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THE SLOVENE PAREMIOLOGICAL OPTIMUM:
NEW EMPIRICAL RESEARCH TOOLS AND THE
AUGMENTATION OF THE FIELD OF MINIMUM-
ORIENTED RESEARCH

Abstract: The article presents the main results of an online survey and corpus research of Slovene paremiological units and discusses how paremiological units of modern origin are gathered. Some practical examples of the advantages of an optimum are given. An overview of the top 50 units of the Slovene paremiological optimum and their English equivalents touches upon the question of describing shares of units with a common motivation as “high” or “low”, while a comparison of genetically close languages – Slavic languages in this case – points towards a broader context. The article also discusses how the field of minimum-oriented research can be expanded by taking different socio-linguistic criteria into account. Lastly, it argues that the use of spoken corpora could lead to an even more holistic optimum in the future.

Keywords: paremiological optimum, paremiological minimum, paremiological unit, online survey, corpus-based research, paremiological lemma, Slovene language, Slavic languages, paremiological equivalents, empirical paremiology.

1. Minimum- and optimum-oriented paremiological research

The two research projects presented here – demographical research with an online survey and corpus-based research on the Slovak National Corpus (SNK) and the Corpus of Written Slovene (FidaPLUS) – were conducted in the framework of a doctoral thesis aimed at establishing the Slovene and Slovak paremiological optima in order to effect a comparison from a constructional, semantic and suprasemantic perspective. Erika Kržišnik, one of the most influential Slovene phraseologists, recently stated (2013: 25) that Slovene paremiology has received too little attention. The choice of empirical approaches is therefore well grounded. The minimum-oriented empirical studies introduced by Permyakov (1988) gained popularity in the 1980s

and 1990s and are still current today. Mieder notes that “demoscopic research will also finally give scholars a much better idea as to which of the thousands of proverbs listed in the older collections are still in actual use today” (2004: 128). The paremiological minimum has been established – or attempts have been made to establish it – for Russian (Permyakov 1988), Hungarian (Tóthné-Litovkina 1992), Czech (Schindler 1993, Čermák 2003), English (Grzybek, Chlosta 1995), Croatian (Baur, Chlosta, Grzybek 1996), German (Baur, Chlosta, Grzybek 1996, Ďurčo 2006, Steyer 2012), Sorbian (Hose 1995), Spanish (Muñoz, Diaz 1997), Slovak (Ďurčo 2002), Polish (Szpila 2002), Ukrainian (Vyshnya 2008) and recently also for Slovene (Meterc 2014a). The revolution in linguistic research that occurred over the last twenty years as a result of language corpora has also led to important changes in phraseology. The concept of the paremiological minimum was enhanced with the notion of the frequency of the paremiological units in the language corpus (Čermák 2003), and a basic theoretical and methodological step forward was taken when phraseologists divided the vague descriptive term “popularity of units” into two different and empirically measurable categories – frequency and familiarity. According to Grzybek and Chlosta (2008: 102), the two notions are mutually interdependent and form a feedback loop. In Ďurčo’s opinion (2006: 17) information about both familiarity and frequency is needed to establish an empirical basis for phraseography and contrastive paremiology. The resulting set, the so-called paremiological optimum, is a larger set of paremiological units arranged as a correlation between the familiarity of the units as ascertained through demographical research and the frequency of the units as ascertained in research on the corpus. To date, the paremiological optimum has been established for Slovak (Ďurčo 2014, Meterc 2014a), German (Ďurčo 2006) and Slovene (Meterc 2014a).

2. Establishing the Slovene paremiological optimum

According to Ďurčo (2006: 4, 2014) research on the paremiological optimum should consist of five phases: 1. selection of a data set and design of a questionnaire, 2. reduction of the core set of proverbs through work by experts, 3. a survey questionnaire to determine commonly known proverbs, 4. frequency

analysis of the best known proverbs in the corpus and 5. creation of the paremiological optimum. The following article will discuss this process in the context of the Slovene optimum and will also present the use of an online survey to collect new paremiological material.

2.1 Demographical research: A list of best known paremiological units in Slovene

The making of the experimental corpus for the online survey was described in detail elsewhere (Meterc 2015: 196-197). To summarize, it consisted of 918 proverbs, sayings, and (proverbial) winged words and one Wellerism¹. These units were found by a systematic search of two dictionaries: *Slovar slovenskega knjižnega jezika* (Standard Slovene Dictionary) and *Frazeološki slovar v petih jezikih* (Phraseological Dictionary in Five Languages, Pavlica 1960). An analysis of answers given by informants was conducted at the very end of the survey and revealed that the experimental corpus for Slovene was rather well made². Āurčo's full text presentation questionnaire model makes it possible to observe the important difference between passive and active knowledge of proverbs (Āermák 2003), as it allows respondents to choose from five possible answers for each individual unit: 1. I know it and I use it; 2. I know it but I do not use it; I do not know it, but I do understand it; 4. I do not know it and I do not understand it and 5. The possibility of adding a variant form. The Slovene questionnaire can be found on the webpage <http://vprasalnik.tisina.net>³. Filters can be used to make different lists according to the demographical data (year of birth, sex, level of education, the regional group of Slovene dialects in which a respondent grew up, and the regional group of Slovene dialects in which he or she is living at the moment) and the completion percentage of the questionnaires. The answers can be arranged using one filter or combinations of several filters. The software thus makes it possible to create a variety of minima.

2.2 Main results of the survey

On October 13, 2012, the data was frozen on a separate page to establish a list of the 300 best known Slovene paremiological units. Up to that point, 316 respondents had marked all of the 918 units presented to them. The oldest respondent was born in 1928, and the youngest in 2000. The familiarity of the best

known paremiological unit was 99.7% and the familiarity of paremiological unit 300, that is, of the unit at the end of the minimum, was 79.7%. Āurčo (2014) suggests that 50% familiarity of a unit could also be used as a cut-off point – 546 out of 918 units in the demographical research met this criterion. Āurčo defines (2014) paremiological performance as “the active and the passive overall knowledge of proverbs by all informants in a paremiological experiment” (2014). Taking into account all paremiological units in the experimental corpus, overall knowledge was 36.8% (168,256 instances of answers 1, 2 and 5 out of 470,167 total answers). On average, a Slovene speaker uses 290 and knows but does not use 250 of the 918 presented units. They understand the motivation of the majority (318) of the units they do not know. There were 224 known and actively used units, and 12 units were known but not used (passive knowledge) by over 50% of the informants. Over 50% of the informants were not familiar with 292 units in the corpus, but the motivation of these units was understood in most cases (286).

Paremiologists underline the need to gather paremiological units of modern origin (Mieder 2004: 128). Slovene folklorist Marija Makarovič even stressed the importance of this task when she presented the results of her field research on the familiarity of Slovene proverbs in the 1970s (1975: 207)⁴. The Slovene online survey fulfilled this function by asking respondents to list any proverb, saying or similar unit that they could think of and could not recall seeing in the questionnaire. A cursory overview of the long list of answers reveals textemes of different types and origins (movie quotations, commercial slogans, song titles and parts of lyrics) among other paremiological units. A detailed analysis of this material (that would probably include corpus-based research and another questionnaire) would be needed to ascertain the degree to which a particular unit is known to Slovene speakers, the frequency with which it is spoken and written in Slovene and whether its heterosituativity can be proven. Attention would also need to be given to the kinds of textemes (and other paremiological genres) accepted and listed by the respondents as proverbs, since the collected material reveals a large number of superstitions, weather proverbs, anti-proverbs, winged words and slogans (international slogans and especially slogans from Socialist Yugoslavia). Also present were some Wellerisms

which are not very common in Slavic languages (Mlacek 1986: 157, Grzybek 1994: 290) and quite rare in Slovene paremiological collections; as noted above, the Standard Slovene Dictionary only lists one Wellerism. Other questions adopted from Āurĉo's survey (2002) encourage respondents to write down their favorite proverb or saying as well as any anti-proverbs, jokes and anecdotes associated with proverbs. The five most frequently listed anti-proverbs were already discussed elsewhere (Meterc 2014), and more work will need to be done on the rest of the material in the near future. Two additional questions were added to the final set of questions: respondents were asked to list units from other languages which they quote when they communicate in Slovene and to list their least favorite proverb or saying⁵. It is interesting that by far the proverb the respondents most frequently listed as their least favorite was *Rana ura, zlata ura* (*The early bird catches the worm*, lit. Early hour, gold hour/clock/watch)⁶. Surprisingly (or not), this is the 22nd best known unit. It was familiar to 99% of the respondents (80.7% of them actively use this proverb) and was listed in 77th place in the Slovene paremiological optimum.

2.3 Corpus research: A list of the most frequent paremiological units among the 300 best known paremiological units in Slovene

As noted above, the paremiological optimum is a list of the top paremiological units arranged as a correlation between the familiarity of the units and their frequency (Āurĉo 2006: 17). Information about the frequency of the 300 best known units in the Slovene experimental corpus was collected from the reference corpus of written Slovene, FidaPLUS. When the corpus research began, FidaPLUS contained around 600 million words; its successor, Gigafida, which contains 1.2 billion words, was only available as a demo at the time.

Two basic tactics were used to search for units in the corpus. The first tactic was to search for units with the help of their lexemes. This was a good way to find out whether any syntactic variants exist. A number of proverb transformations were also found with this tactic. The second tactic was more sophisticated, and involved the use of constructional formulas (for example *Like X, like Y*), as suggested by Āurĉo (2006: 9-10). These formulas made it possible not only to find numerous variants and

actualizations, but also additional proverbs (even some that have not been registered in Slovene paremiographical sources). Attempts were made to use both tactics on each single paremiological unit (Meterc 2014a: 80-92). The lexical and also phonetic and orthographic variants found using the second tactic were further checked using the first tactic. On the other hand, if syntactic variants were found while searching for units by their lexemes, the search model based on the constructional formulas was modified to get as close as possible to the so-called paremiological lemma or abstract model of every unit (Đurčo 2014a: 13). Attempts were also made to develop alternative search procedures. These were based on the syntax irregularity of some units and the archaic forms captured in them.

The average frequency of the 300 best known units was 101 occurrences. Only 42 units occurred more than 200 times. Seven units occurred more than 400 times, and the unit with the highest frequency occurred 691 times. At the opposite end, 71 units occurred fewer than 20 times in the corpus. Some reasons for their low frequency will be discussed below. In either case, comparisons of the frequency and familiarity of Slovene paremiological units confirmed the observation that frequent proverbs tend to be familiar, while familiar proverbs do not necessarily occur frequently (Grzybek, Chlosta 2008: 104). Information about the number of all prototypical occurrences of paremiological units in FidaPLUS (30,462) and the number of words in the corpus (600 million) made it possible to estimate that a unit from the minimum (in the classical sense) can be expected roughly for every 20,000 words in the FidaPLUS corpus. By comparison, Čermák (2007: 570) estimated that a unit from Schindler's list of the 99 best known Czech proverbs occurs every 80,000 words. Recent research on the frequency of the 300 most familiar Slovene proverbs and sayings in the GOS reference corpus of spoken Slovene (Meterc 2015: 7) also arrived at an estimate of about 20,000 (22,502) words⁷. The low frequency this corpus revealed for some units is in most cases a result of the difference between the oral and written usage of phraseological units. Đurčo (2006: 15-16) has also presented numerous examples of well-known proverbs with below-average frequency. It should be noted that language corpora mostly include texts from journalism genres, and this certainly has an impact on the distribution and frequency

of the proverbs. These facts by themselves show why it is a good idea to combine data from corpora with data from sociolinguistic research; there are of course other factors, some which will be discussed below.

Following Āurčo's concept, we arrive at the top of the intersection of the familiarity level as indicated by speakers and the frequency of occurrences in the Corpus by correlating the two parameters (familiarity and frequency). The top of the Slovene optimum (50 units) has 30 units in common with the list of the best known paremiological units (the paremiological minimum in Permyakov's classical sense; Āurčo, Meterc 2013). The ten best known units (and 18 out of the top 20 units) are found in the top 50 units of the optimum. Below, examples will be used to present certain advantages that the paremiological optimum has over the paremiological minimum.

Research in the FidaPLUS corpus showed that the frequency of the Latin variant *In vino veritas* (56 occurrences) in written Slovene is almost as high as the frequency of the Slovene variant *V vinu je resnica* (60 occurrences). The relation between the frequency of original Latin quotations (and those taken from other languages) and their variants differs from unit to unit and from language to language. Being aware of the mutual influence present between the familiarity and frequency of the proverbs, it should be kept in mind that active usage of the Latin unit also influences the level of familiarity with the Slovene unit among respondents who prefer to use the Slovene variant. In practice this means that some Slovene units which are as frequent as their foreign-language variants or even less frequent drift towards the lower part of the paremiological optimum in comparison to their place in the paremiological minimum. The mutual influence of the familiarity and frequency of the proverbs should also be taken into consideration in the case of proverb transformations. The Slovene and Slovak corpora show that in some cases proverbs are much less frequent than their transformations. An example would be the Slovene proverb *Vsak naj pometa pred svojim pragom* (19 occurrences, literally *Let each man sweep his own doorstep*) and its Slovak equivalent *Každý nech si pred svojim prahom zametá* (27 occurrences), both with the meaning *People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones*. In the case of this proverb, transformations (the verbalization *to sweep own door-*

step) are at least ten times more frequent in FidaPLUS and SNK. Information about proverb frequency can also solve some problems associated with the diachronic aspect of paremiological units. A large number of archaic units can be found not only in proverb collections, but also in some standard language dictionaries⁸. Comparing the demographical and corpus-based research, it was possible to observe that respondents sometimes marked a proverb which they don't use as familiar, even though it might just seem familiar to them because of a unit with a similar motivation but rather different structure and meaning: the proverb *Brez setve ni žetve* (literally *There is no harvest without sowing seeds*) was known to 88.3% of respondents, but no occurrence could be found in FidaPLUS. The unit *Kar kdo seje, to bo tudi žel* (*You reap what you sow*), on the other hand, was known to 93.3% of respondents and had 119 occurrences in the FidaPLUS corpus. All three examples show how data about proverb frequency help obtain a more accurate picture of proverb usage.

One must also be critical of the data presented in language corpora. Čermák (2003: 16) draws attention to the fact that language corpora don't include all information about language because they only reflect written language, which represents a rather small part of daily communication. This is another argument in favor of combining demographical and corpus-based data in the optimum and an important factor of proverb frequency in both written and in oral communication. A significant difference can be noted in the range of situations the different proverbs refer to, and certain situations can be presumed to be less frequent than others in day-to-day communication. Only 21 occurrences (below-average) of the Slovene proverb *Riba mora plavati trikrat – v vodi, v olju in v vinu* (*A fish must swim three times – in water, in oil and in wine*) were found in FidaPLUS, although this proverb was known to 85.1% of the respondents. At the same time 93 occurrences (near average) of the proverb *Riba smrdi pri glavi* (*The fish stinks from the head down*) were found in the corpus, but only 82.6% of respondents knew this proverb.

3. Comparing paremiological equivalents with a common motivation as a share of the best known and most often used units in different languages

Once English equivalents for the first 50 units in the Slovene paremiological optimum have been found, the share of Slovene-English equivalents with a common motivation can be placed in a broader perspective by comparing Slovene paremiology with those of other Slavic languages.

3.1 The top 50 units of the Slovene paremiological optimum and their English equivalents

As Mieder (2004: 128) points out, many proverbs of classical, biblical or medieval origin will be found in the paremiological minima of European languages. English phraseological equivalents with the same motivation were found for 26 (52%) of the top 50 proverbs in the Slovene optimum. The share of synonyms is a bit lower (19, 38%), but further investigation of their usage would be needed in order to state with certainty that they are all typical synonyms or to determine whether some other kind of relation exists between equivalents – for example equipollent synonymy or hypernymy as described in the complex typology of phraseological equivalents (Đurčo 2012)⁹. Comparison with a list of 75 units “which would represent 25% of an Anglo-American paremiological minimum of 300 texts” (Mieder, 1992, 2004: 129-130, Litovkina 1994) gives nine proverbs with the same motivation and five synonyms.

	Paremiological unit, English equivalent or meaning and literal meaning	Familiarity	Frequency
1	<i>Denar je sveta vladar. Money makes the world go round. (lit. Money rules the world.)</i>	99.3	439
2	<i>Jabolko ne pade daleč od drevesa. The apple doesn't fall far from the tree.</i>	99.1	313
3	<i>Boljši je vrabec v roki kakor golob na strehi. One in the hand is worth two in the bush.</i>	99	323
4	<i>Po toči zvoniti je prepozno. It's no use crying over spilt milk. (lit. It's too late to ring the bell after the hail.)</i>	99.4	237

5	<i>Vaja dela mojstra. Practice makes perfect.</i> (lit. Practice makes a master.)	98,7	386
6	<i>Počasi se daleč pride. Haste makes waste.</i> (lit. Slowly we come far.)	99,4	217
7	<i>V tretje gre rado. Third time's a charm.</i>	98,4	573
8	<i>Iz te moke ne bo kruha.</i> (lit. There will be no bread out of this flour.)	99	261
9	<i>Pustimo času čas. Rome wasn't built in a day.</i> (lit. Let's give time to time.)	98,4	393
10	<i>Vsi za enega, eden za vse. All for one, one for all.</i>	98,8	243
11	<i>Kdor čaka, dočaka. Good things come to those who wait.</i> (lit. He who waits lives to see it.)	99	207
12	<i>Nobena juha se ne poje tako vroča, kot se skuha. Things aren't as bad as they first seem.</i> (lit. No soup is eaten as hot as it is cooked.)	99,1	196
13	<i>Zarečenega kruha se največ poje. Never say never.</i> (lit. The bread one swore he would not eat is eaten in the largest amounts.)	99,3	185
14	<i>Ni vse zlato, kar se sveti. All that glitters is not gold.</i>	98,7	245
15	<i>Konec dober, vse dobro. All's well that ends well.</i>	98,4	312
16	<i>O tem čivkajo že vrabci na strehah. Everybody knows it.</i> (lit.: Sparrows are tweeting about it from the rooftops.)	98,1	617
17	<i>Ljubo doma, kdor ga ima. Home sweet home.</i> (lit. Lovely is the home to he who has one.)	98,7	240
18	<i>Nesreča nikoli ne počiva.</i> (lit. Bad luck never rests.)	98,4	253
19	<i>Čas celi rane. Time heals all wounds.</i>	99,4	150

20	<i>Dober glas seže v deveto vas. Good news travels fast. (lit. Good news reaches the ninth village.)</i>	98	397
21	<i>Za malo denarja malo muzike. You get what you pay for. (lit. Little money, little music.)</i>	99,1	160
22	<i>Bolje pozno kot nikoli. Better late than never.</i>	98,7	181
23	<i>Dobrota je sirota. Eaten bread is soon forgotten. (lit. Kindness is an orphan.)</i>	98,4	203
24	<i>Oko za oko, zob za zob. An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.</i>	97,8	327
25	<i>Več glav več ve. Two heads are better than one. (lit.: More heads know more.)</i>	99,4	138
26	<i>Zdrav duh v zdravem telesu. A sound mind in a sound body.</i>	98,1	255
27	<i>Vsak je svoje sreče kovač. Man is the architect of his own fortune. (lit. Man is the blacksmith of his own fortune.)</i>	98,4	196
28	<i>Obljuba dela dolg. A promise is a promise. (lit. A promise makes a debt.)</i>	98,1	251
29	<i>Zrno do zrna pogača, kamen do kamna palača. Take care of the pence and the pounds will take care of themselves. (lit. Grain by grain, white bread is made, stone by stone, a palace.)</i>	99,3	138
30	<i>Za dežjem sonce sije. Every cloud has a silver lining. (lit. After the rain comes sunshine.)</i>	98	295
31	<i>Kdor prej pride, prej melje. First come, first served. (lit.: He who arrives first uses the mill first.)</i>	98,4	190
32	<i>To je pa druga pesem. That's something completely different. (lit. That's another song.)</i>	97,7	373
33	<i>Ljubezen gre skozi želodec. The way to a man's heart is through his stomach.</i>	98,1	227

34	<i>Lepa beseda lepo mesto najde. Kindness begets kindness.</i>	99,4	127
35	<i>V slogi je moč. Union is strength.</i>	97,5	316
36	<i>Kuj železo, dokler je vroče. Strike while the iron is hot.</i>	98,5	144
37	<i>Obleka dela človeka. Clothes make the man.</i>	97,5	298
38	<i>Kovačeva kobila je zmeraj bosa. (lit. The blacksmith's horse is always unshod.)</i>	97,8	204
39	<i>Kjer se prepirata dva, tretji dobiček ima. Two dogs fight for a bone, and a third runs away with it. (lit. Where two people argue, a third profits.)</i>	99,4	114
40	<i>Ena lastovka ne naredi pomladi. One swallow doesn't make a summer. (lit. One swallow doesn't make a spring.)</i>	98,2	173
41	<i>Na napakah se učimo. We learn from our mistakes.</i>	98,1	183
42	<i>V tem grmu tiči zajec. There's the rub. (lit. There is a rabbit in this bush.)</i>	96,8	396
43	<i>Podarjenemu konju se ne gleda na zobe. Never look a gift horse in the mouth.</i>	97,8	195
44	<i>Laž ima kratke noge. Lies have short wings. (lit. A lie has short legs.)</i>	98,4	141
45	<i>Rečeno – storjeno. Said and done.</i>	97,1	300
46	<i>Kdor drugim jamo koplje, sam vanjo pade. He who digs a hole for someone will fall into it himself.</i>	99	113
47	<i>Kar se Janezek nauči, to Janez zna. Knowledge in youth is wisdom in age. (lit. What Johnnie learns, John knows.)</i>	99	106
48	<i>Klin se s klinom izbija. Fight fire with fire. (lit. A wedge is used to knock out a wedge.)</i>	99,3	96
49	<i>Kdor išče, najde. Seek and you shall find.</i>	99,7	86
50	<i>Okusi so različni. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. (lit. Tastes are different.)</i>	96,8	263

Further investigation of the aspects of equivalency should include suprasemantic differences between phraseological units (Đurčo 2012, Đurčo, Meterc 2013). A large number of equivalents with the same motivation (formal variants, lexical-transpositional variants and even idionyms) which are a part of known and actively used paremiology in one language may appear only rarely (and mostly in older collections), or be known to a very small group of people in another language. This suprasemantic feature (diachronic difference) is of course connected to the diafrequent difference. Cases of Slovene-Slovak paremiological equivalents which reveal a link between the diafrequent difference and other suprasemantic differences (for example diastratic, diaevaluative or dianormative differences) were recently presented (Đurčo, Meterc 2013, Meterc 2014a). Diamedial difference is a result of the fact that a certain unit is more frequent in oral communication in one language, while it is usually found in written texts in another language. In order to arrive at a short list of such paremiological pairs, the sociolinguistic results were compared with the corpus data. First a list of the most actively used Slovene units (according to Slovene respondents' intuition; units that received answer 1) with below-average frequency in the corpus was prepared (Meterc 2014a). This list was then compared with a list of the units' Slovak equivalents to try to find equivalents which were quite frequent (average or above average) in the Slovak corpus.

3.2 Equivalency in the context of the Slavic languages

While Czech and Slovak paremiologies could be expected to have a great deal in common with Slovene paremiology, the degree of similarity found between Slovene and English paremiologies comes as somewhat of a surprise, particularly when the considerable distance between the Slovene and Russian paremiologies is taken into account. The phraseology of genetically close languages can be used to design a metric which could describe the share of units with a common motivation as "high" or "low". For the top 50 units in the Slovene optimum, 36 (72%) Slovak equivalents with the same motivation were found, while 35 (70%) Slovene equivalents were found for the 50 top units in the Slovak optimum; 25 of the 36 Slovak equivalents are part of the Slovak optimum and 26 of the Slovene equivalents are part

of the Slovene optimum. This is just a part of a more extensive comparison (Meterc 2014a) in which Slovak equivalents were sought for all 300 units of the Slovene optimum and vice versa. Equivalents were found for roughly half of the units in each of the paremiological optima. About one third of the units in the Slovene and the Slovak optima have equivalents with the same motivation in the other paremiological optimum. Once equivalents from secondary sources (classical and online proverb collections) were added, the overall share of paremiological equivalents was 274 (91.3%) in the case of the Slovene optimum and 261 (87%) in the case of the Slovak optimum, while the share of equivalents with the same motivation in the other language rose to above half of the units in that language's optimum. There were only 16 units in both optima for which a phraseological equivalent could not be found, meaning the degree of idiosyncrasy was low (5.3%). This research made it possible not only to present the distribution of the types of equivalency in a large sample, but also to show how the share of each type of equivalency changes in line with the six intervals (50 units) of the optimum.

It is also interesting to consider the relation between Slovene and Slovak paremiology in the context of other Slavic languages. The first 50 units of the Slovene paremiological minimum (in the classical sense) were compared with the Russian, Czech and Slovak minima (Meterc 2014a). Comparing the situation in the first 50 units in the Slovene optimum (72% Slovak equivalents with the same motivation) with the situation in the first 50 units in a recently presented Slovene minimum (Đurčo, Meterc 2013: 23-25, Meterc 2014a), the number of equivalents is even higher: 39 (78%). Research conducted in the framework of my dissertation (Meterc 2014a: 199) revealed a similar situation when the first 50 units in Čermák's Czech minimum (Čermák 2003) were compared with the Slovene paremiology – 37 equivalents (74%) were found. On the other hand, the number of Slovene equivalents with the same motivation as the top 50 Russian units (Permyakov 1989) is quite low – only 10 proverbs (20%) (Meterc 2014a: 199). A future goal would be to establish a larger and more complex web or map of paremiological relations in the Slavic language group. It would be very interesting to compare such data with similar research conducted on the level of (non-

sentential) phrasemes (Fojtů 2012)¹⁰. Petra Fojtů has questioned the classical division of Slavic languages (south, west and east) and its usefulness for phraseology, where other patterns, groups and links can be observed. She and other scholars (Földes 2010) have shown how the German language has influenced a large number of Slavic languages. It would be interesting to find out if this also holds true for paremiology. There is still much work to be done in contact phraseology. By comparing all this information, in the future it will perhaps be possible to show that paremiological units migrate faster (or slower) or influence the units in contact languages more (or less) than other parts of phraseology.

4. Expanding the field of minimum- and optimum-oriented paremiological research

As the amount of research on paremiological equivalency between languages continues to grow, the informational context for estimating how close or far the paremiologies of different languages are will become more precise. However, comparisons based on the same or at least very similar methodological tools are needed. Phraseologists have already presented a variety of projects which provide valuable information on phraseological relations between different languages (Pirainen 2005, Fojtů 2013), and these often include paremiological relations (Sprichwort-Plattform) and healthy amounts of material. The plane of suprasemantic differences between phraseological units represents a vast and highly dynamic field, since individual types of differences often interact. Sociolinguistic research on proverb familiarity and corpus-based research have already been very informative in this regard, but in our opinion an array of specific research tools will have to be developed for the detailed exploration of every single type and its interaction with other types. To give an example of the possibilities of research on the diamedial difference between equivalents, although the reference corpus of spoken Slovene (GOS) is small (120 hours of recordings), it is significant that some units with below-average frequency in the written corpus were found, while many of the most frequent units were absent (Meterc 2015a: 6-7). Paremiologists will have to wait until the spoken corpora are large enough to achieve a more representative comparison and a more precise list of units

which are used more in oral than in written texts. Research on Slovene paremiology in the spoken corpus (Meterc 2015a: 13) also points towards the idea of a “spoken optimum” and of a “combined spoken/written optimum”. Once the spoken corpora are large enough, it will be possible not only to establish the spoken optimum, but also a more holistic paremiological optimum which would combine information on the frequency of units from both types of corpora. Āurčo (2006: 3) proposes making specific minima out of the paremiological optimum on the basis of various criteria and in line with different purposes. Instead of the classical concept of the paremiological minimum as a set of units which all people (or at least all adults) are supposed to know, he suggests making a number of different paremiological minima out of the paremiological optimum for specific groups of people. The plurality of such minima could be multiplied by the sociolinguistic filters presented above. The use of these tools would make it possible not only to establish different minima out of the already made optimum, but also to establish different optima for different age intervals, education levels and regions. Mokienko (2012: 83) has criticized the concept of the minimum in the classical sense as a rather static top list of units and has proposed a new concept: the paremiological minimum as a zone of known units. The trend of multiplying paremiological minima and optima is in our opinion a combination of Mokienko's critique – that the static list should be replaced with the concept of a dynamic sphere of active paremiology – and a continued awareness of the importance of data produced by empirical research on the familiarity and frequency of phraseological units. Finally, the place of the paremiological optimum and minimum in the broader field of sentential phraseology should also be analyzed more carefully. What would a hypothetical “optimum of sentential phraseological units” look like? What tools would have to be developed? And how would the criteria (for example, the level of frequency) have to differ from the criteria used to establish the paremiological optimum? Paremiology is, after all, an integral part of phraseology as a whole, and the borders between the many types and (sentential and non-sentential) levels of phrasemes are liquid.

Notes:

¹ Weather proverbs and superstitions were not included.

² Only one proverb added by respondents was listed by more than five respondents (out of the 191 who answered the additional question) and not included in the survey (*Po jutru se dan pozna*, lit. *A man can guess what the day will be like by its morning*).

³ The survey is still active and the number of completed questionnaires had risen above 420 at the time of writing (February 2015).

⁴ A set of 100 proverbs intuitively designed by Makarovič was presented to 64 respondents from different parts of Slovenia. Makarovič also asked respondents to add any units that spontaneously came to mind. Grzybek has noted (2008: 24-25) that this can be considered the first modern empirical work on Slovene paremiology.

⁵ The list of answers is quite long and rich. There is a rather large number of English and Latin units. Of particular interest was the usage of Italian, German, Hungarian and Croatian units among Slovenes living near the border with Italy, Austria, Hungary and Croatia respectively. On the other hand, Croatian, Bosnian and Serbian units represent a rather large share due to the fact that Slovenia was a part of Yugoslavia and the older generation was taught so-called Serbo-Croatian in school; the popular culture of other former Yugoslav republics also had and continues to have an important impact on Slovene phraseology. Of course, units from other languages were also listed by the respondents.

⁶ The Slovene expression *ura* is a polyseme that means *clock*, *watch* and *hour*.

⁷ Since fifty-five examples were found for 37 different units and the corpus contains 120 hours of recorded speech, it is realistic to expect a unit from the Slovene paremiological minimum to show up once per every hour and a half of recorded speech.

⁸ According to the research over one quarter (158 out of 599) of the paremiological units in the Standard Slovene Dictionary (SSKJ) are known to less than 50% of the respondents.

⁹ Taking into account the fact that the four basic logic relations (identity, equipollent opposition, privative opposition and disjunction) can occur in both semantic and formal comparisons of phraseological units, Āurčo introduced 16 hypothetical types of equivalence. To date, examples of 14 out of these types have been found in contrastive researches for German, Slovak, Russian (Āurčo 2012: 93-94), Slovene

and Slovak (Đurčo, Meterc 2013, Meterc 2014a). The fact that it is based on structural relations in the language system instead of deduction from examples found makes this typology very different from other typologies of phraseological equivalents used by scholars to date.

¹⁰ A set of 1,000 Russian phrasemes was chosen as a starting point to search for equivalents in Czech, Slovak, Polish, Upper Sorbian, Croatian, Bulgarian, Belorussian and Ukrainian. Fojtů presented a fairly precise typology of phraseological equivalents which is comparable to the typology developed by Đurčo and used in our research on Slovak and Slovene paremiology.

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“SAGEMENT SE CHASTIE QUI PAR AUTRUIT SE
CHASTIE”: LE PROVERBE COMME FACILITATEUR DE
L'ÉMOTION DANS *UNE EPISTRE LAMENTABLE ET
CONSOLATOIRE* DE PHILIPPE DE MÉZIÈRES

Abstract: Dans *L'Épître lamentable et consolatoire*, Philippe de Mézières utilise les proverbes afin de faire passer au plus grand nombre le message de nécessité de changement de la chevalerie suite au désastre de Nicopolis (1396). Puisque ceux-ci ont une dimension populaire connue et acceptée par tous, les préceptes de l'auteur apparaissent ainsi de façon plus tangibles et compréhensibles, sous la forme d'une rythmique proverbiale qui « démocratise » la nécessité d'une nouvelle chevalerie.

Keywords: chevalerie, ordre, massacre, croisade, ritournelle, émotions, Philippe de Mézières, Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari.

Comment décrire l'indescriptible, comment apaiser une douleur atroce, comment expliquer l'inexplicable? La terrible défaite des troupes croisées à Nicopolis (1396) a été un traumatisme terrible pour ceux qui l'ont vécue, et qui en ont été les victimes directes ou indirectes.¹ De nombreux chevaliers français et bourguignons moururent ; beaucoup de survivants ne rentrèrent jamais en France, étant donné que leurs familles ne furent jamais capables de payer les très lourdes rançons demandées par les Turcs. Cette défaite eut un retentissement dramatique sur non seulement la chevalerie, mais également sur le royaume de France, déjà affaibli par de nombreuses autres crises, comme la folie du roi Charles VI, la guerre civile entre Armagnacs et Bourguignons, la guerre de Cent Ans et le Grand Schisme d'Occident.²

Le massacre de Nicopolis a grandement influencé de nombreuses œuvres écrites à cette époque. Eustache Deschamps, le célèbre poète français, décrit dans plusieurs ballades les scènes de désolation qui suivirent les nouvelles de la défaite.³ L'anonyme *Livre des faits du bon messire Jehan le Maingre, dit Bouciquaut* se focalise sur les actions du Maréchal de Boucicaut durant la ba-

taille, en sublimant le sacrifice des chevaliers, tout en taisant les nombreux errements de ces derniers. La très grande majorité de ces œuvres met en avant la “déconfiture lacrimable” des chevaliers comme la caractérise Philippe de Mézières, et les critiquent, en les tenant responsables de cette défaite. Jean Froissard explique dans ses *Chroniques* qu’ils “[...] leverent sus et boutterent les tables outre et demanderent leurs armes et leurs chevaulx, et avoient le vin en la teste, dont ilz estoient eschauffez, et en plus grand frestel et en maus de sens et d’avis.”⁴ L’anonyme auteur de la *Chronique du religieux de Saint-Denis* souligne également leur indiscipline, ainsi que leur ignorance : “[...] cum Francis mos semper fuerit non sequi sed ad insequendum hortari, hoc reputamus indignum.”⁵

L’Epistre lamentable et consolatoire de Philippe de Mézières, écrit et publié très rapidement après le massacre, répond au postulat initial de cet article. Dédié au duc de Bourgogne Philippe II le Hardi, dont le fils Jean Ier de Bourgogne était au nombre des prisonniers, *l’Epistre* essaie de “guérir” le duc de son désarroi et de sa tristesse, tout en essayant d’identifier les causes de cette défaite, et en critiquant tout particulièrement le comportement impie, voire sacrilège, de la chevalerie, afin d’empêcher une telle tragédie d’arriver à nouveau. Philippe propose la création d’un ordre de chevalerie qui serait la représentation de la Cité de Dieu sur Terre, et qui serait la plus à même de venger les morts, mais également de sauver les prisonniers encore retenus par les Turcs.

Philippe de Mézières est un auteur dont l’œuvre a été abondamment analysée et commentée, principalement ses livres à portée politique et religieuse.⁶ Cependant, je n’ai trouvé qu’une seule étude parémiologique, par Jean-Louis Picherit, qui analyse les proverbes dans le *Songe du vieil pèlerin*.⁷ Dans leur édition de *l’Epistre*, Jacques Paviot et Philippe Contamine ont relevé les proverbes qui y sont contenus, en mettant en note de bas de page leur référence dans le guide séminal des proverbes au Moyen-âge de James Woodrow Hassell, Jr.⁸ Cependant, seul ce travail de relèvement est effectué ; leur rôle n’est pas souligné ou bien analysé, et ils ne sont pas véritablement replacés dans le contexte de l’œuvre, à savoir la raison pour laquelle l’auteur a décidé de les utiliser dans son écriture didactique de consolation.

C’est ce que je me propose de faire ici, en étudiant particulièrement la façon dont le proverbe a un rôle double dans *l’Epistre*.

Dans un premier temps, il est utilisé afin de rendre les idées de l'auteur compréhensibles par le plus grand nombre, en utilisant des expressions de la vie quotidienne afin de rendre des notions avancées plus tangibles, par le biais de la sagesse populaire. Il rend ainsi plus concrète la construction de la nouvelle chevalerie que Philippe propose, en permettant au lecteur et à l'auteur de prendre pied dans une réalité émotionnelle ancrée dans des expressions quotidiennes.

L'origine de l'œuvre.

Si Philippe est particulièrement détruit et affligé par les nouvelles venues de Nicopolis (il affirme en effet que les échos de la défaite l'ont choqué "amerement et non pas sans larmes"⁹), c'est qu'il avait eu un rôle important dans la mise en place de cette expédition. Il s'était effectivement personnellement investi, en utilisant sa grande expérience diplomatique pour plaider la cause de la croisade auprès de nombreux royaumes européens.¹⁰ C'est donc un Philippe désespéré que ses idées aient été, en partie, responsables de ce massacre qui met en scène ses émotions et celles du royaume dans son *Épître*.

Philippe choisit pour sa démonstration la forme de l'épître, un genre littéraire ancien, déjà présent chez Horace et dans la Bible, qui était fermement ancré dans la culture littéraire médiévale.¹¹ Les épîtres se caractérisaient par le fait qu'elles étaient écrites pour des destinataires particuliers, avec une dimension philosophique ou didactique. Ils créaient, alors, un rapport intime avec leur destinataire, qu'ils devaient toucher, inspirer, et aider. Chez Philippe, le destinataire qui est identifié est le "tres puissant, vaillant et tres sage prince royal Philippe de France, duc de Bourgoingne, conte de Flandres, d'Artois et de Bourgoingne."¹² Le titre de l'œuvre de Philippe est marqué d'une dimension émotionnelle forte, qui permet d'identifier la direction particulière qu'il veut donner à son œuvre. Le *Dictionnaire du moyen français* donne pour "lamentable" la définition suivante: "qui donne sujet à se lamenter," "propre à susciter des lamentations, des plaintes," "qui exprime le chagrin." L'adjectif "consolatoire" quant à lui signifie "propre à reconforter, à encourager."¹³ En suivant ces définitions, on peut dès lors envisager cette œuvre de Philippe de Mézières comme étant dotée d'un double objectif. Dans un premier temps, elle est destinée à aider à la consolation et au réconfort de Philippe de

Bourgogne, qui fut touché en tant que père par la captivité de son fils, retenu prisonnier par Bajazet à la suite de la défaite de Nicopolis.¹⁴ Mais c'est également sa facette publique, celle du duc, homme d'état, et importante figure du royaume, qui est mise en avant. Mézières veut l'aider à accepter la mort d'autant de compatriotes, sans pour autant les exonérer de leurs erreurs.

L'établissement du contexte émotionnel de l'Épître.

L'écriture proverbiale de Philippe met en place "l'émotionnalité" de l'œuvre. Gisèle Mathieu-Castellani souligne le fait que "la rhétorique se définit surtout comme l'art d'utiliser les émotions."¹⁵ Les émotions sont centrales au développement de *l'Épître*, en s'adressant, comme je l'ai précédemment expliqué, aux aspects privés et publics de la personnalité du duc, créant un espace de réception émotionnelle dans lequel ces deux aspects, bien que distincts, sont mis sur un pied d'égalité afin d'être au centre de la critique de la défaite. Philippe utilise ainsi le ressort émotionnel afin de l'impliquer dans sa critique des vices des chevaliers passés (ceux morts à Nicopolis), et présents, mais également pour mettre en place la chevalerie idéale qu'il souhaite instaurer. De ce fait, vices, vertus et émotions sont intriqués, et se mêlent les uns aux autres dans le discours de Philippe.

Il convient alors de se focaliser sur le rôle du proverbe chez Philippe. Jean-Claude Faucon explique que le proverbe doit être vu comme "l'intervention directe ou par porte-parole de l'auteur, qui communique au destinataire de l'œuvre un système de normes sociales ou morales."¹⁶ Ce que Philippe effectue, tout au long de son épître, est bien sûr un effort de consolation du duc ; il se met également en position de puissance, comme dépositaire d'une idée de la chevalerie et de la chrétienté qui ne saurait être remise en question. Ce qu'il veut effectuer, c'est "to console and control," ainsi que l'a magistralement montré Andrea Tarnowski dans une de ses études du sujet.¹⁷ La nouvelle chevalerie proposée et prônée par Philippe, qui est présentée comme la Cité de Dieu sur Terre, devient ce nouvel ordre moral qui a pour but de remplacer l'ancienne chevalerie, vérolée et dissipée.

Le Proverbe: outil de changement et facilitateur de la rhétorique émotionnelle.

L'importance du proverbe dans la mise en place de la réponse émotionnelle et dans la volonté de changements clairement mis en

avant par Philippe est essentielle. Si définir un proverbe est difficile, tant il est vrai que son origine semble se perdre dans les méandres de l'histoire, il est néanmoins communément admis que celui-ci est une tranche de sagesse populaire. Elizabeth Schulze-Busacker souligne que le proverbe dépasse néanmoins cette dimension populaire en le qualifiant de "code particulier de caractère universel," qui permet de mettre en relief la dimension culturelle de celui-ci.¹⁸ Reprenant le postulat initial de Harriet Goldberg, elle insiste sur le fait que le proverbe doit être perçu comme "an utterance inserted into discourse in order to transmit a traditional message either by means of metaphor or a witty conceit."¹⁹ Claude Buridant de son côté, souligne l'importance didactique du proverbe, outil d'apprentissage et de moralité.²⁰ À ces dimensions culturelles et sociétales, il convient également de considérer l'impact du dit proverbial sur son lecteur. À propos de la présence de proverbes dans *La Chanson de Bertrand du Guesclin* du poète de cour Cuvelier (XIV^e siècle), Jean-Claude Faucon explique "les citations fréquentes d'une sagesse ordinaire immuable prouvent que l'état de guerre ne saurait ébranler la permanence de l'ordre moral. Les proverbes servent ici en quelque sorte de consolation, en donnant au lecteur ou à l'auditeur un point de repère fixe dans un monde 'bestorné'".²¹

Dans *l'Épître*, cette utilisation du proverbe telle que l'indique Faucon est renforcée par l'objectif de l'œuvre, indiqué dans le titre, qui est de « soigner » les douleurs morales de ceux ayant été touchés par un tel massacre. Quand bien même le duc est le principal récipiendaire de son épître, la portée générale de cette œuvre est évidente. Lori Walters explique ainsi que "for Mézières [...] reformation of the greater body politic had to begin with the moral reformation of all its members;"²² Philippe Contamine revendique que, bien au-delà de la simple dimension de sauvetage de la chevalerie, le but de Mézières était également de "revivifier la chrétienté catholique, à en faire lever la pâte épaisse."²³ La malléabilité du proverbe, mise en avant par Elizabeth Schulze-Busacker,²⁴ est un des nombreux mécanismes utilisés par Philippe afin de faire passer son message. En appliquant l'explication savante, religieuse et politique qu'est son épître à une matière trouvant ses origines dans la culture folklorique et populaire, Philippe permet à son œuvre d'être à la portée de tous. C'est également le proverbe qui accrédite et justifie le dessein de consolation.²⁵

L'ensemble du texte, que ce soit dans la voix et les interventions personnelles de Philippe, dans la représentation des maux de la chrétienté et des chevaliers ou d'une façon plus positive, de la nouvelle cité de Dieu sur terre, est fortement imprégné d'une image émotionnelle forte. Picherit explique que, dans ses œuvres, Philippe "use et abuse" d'éléments rhétoriques tels "celui de l'analogie, de la métaphore et de l'allégorie, combinés au procédé de l'aventure onirique."²⁶ Le proverbe entre dans ce schéma rhétorique, de par sa fonctionnalité au cœur du système émotionnel, duquel il devient un rouage à part entière. La tristesse et la honte sont les deux émotions les plus importantes dans la mise en littérature du ressenti de Philippe à la déroute de Nicopolis, deux émotions qui sont abondamment présentes dans *l'Épître*. Nous savons depuis Cicéron et Aristote, entre autres²⁷, que les passions sont un élément crucial du développement du discours rhétorique; Gisèle Mathieu-Castellani exprime avec force cette relation innée entre passion et rhétorique, indiquant que celle-ci souligne "l'importance des passions dans l'écriture du discours, dans sa lecture, dans sa réception critique."²⁸ Le jeu de création et réception qui est mis au point par Philippe de Mézières se développe donc selon un schéma multiple. Il est basé sur les émotions engendrées chez l'auteur et chez le peuple de France par la défaite de Nicopolis. En se basant sur ces émotions, il met en scène une dénonciation du comportement des chevaliers, en incriminant leur attitude dans son effort de réconfort du duc. C'est également par ce biais qu'il met en avant la nouvelle chevalerie qu'il propose en tant que solution à ces problèmes, pour purifier et renouveler la chrétienté. Le rôle du proverbe de faciliter ce message, en donnant au texte de Philippe un ancrage contemporain.

Pour Philippe, la défaite de Nicopolis est liée à la destruction de l'ordre moral au cœur des troupes. Elles n'ont pas respecté les bases de ce qu'une chevalerie devrait être, en corrompant les "III vertus souvent proposees, c'est assavoir de regle, de discipline de chevalerie, de obediencie et justice;" les dites vertus ont été remplacées par "Orgueil, Envie et Division, Inobediencie, Legierté, Oultrcuidance et Propre Voullenté et pluseurs autres vices."²⁹ L'objectif de sa chevalerie est le rétablissement de cet ordre moral perdu. Celui-ci passe par l'établissement de la Cité de Dieu sur terre, comme on l'a déjà annoncé. Dès lors, la chevalerie de Philippe construit un nouveau modèle pour la population de façon

générale. L'imagerie parémiologique prend toute sa dimension, apparaissant comme une sorte de témoin populaire, permettant l'élargissement du message vers une audience plus large.

Analyse des proverbes de l'Épître.

Les seize différents proverbes qui sont présents dans *l'Épître* sont, dans leur très grande majorité, représentés chez Hassell. À la manière de ce que Picherit indique à propos de la présence des proverbes dans *Le Songe du vieil pèlerin*, tous les proverbes de *l'Épître*, à l'exception de deux, sont introduits par une formule qui les définit comme tels. En effet, ils sont amenés dans le discours par la formule "il se dit en proverbe" (ou une variation de celle-ci). Les chapitres dans lesquels ils apparaissent gravitent autour de trois thèmes principaux. Le premier est celui du Turc, et du mal qui l'habite, discuté dans les chapitres "Un petit prologue pour venir après a la declaracion de la condicion et puissance des Turchs,"³⁰ "Un prologue pour venir a la voie de fait et faire bonne guerre audit Baxech et a sa generacion de Turquie,"³¹ et finalement au chapitre de continuation de la discussion dans lequel "l'auteur recite cy une grant doubte d'entrer en traictié avec le Turch et met les raisons pour quoy."³²

Le second thème est celui de la "déconfiture" subie, et particulièrement ce qui concerne la dimension morale de cette défaite. Il est présent dans le chapitre traitant des "III vertus morales [qui] sont necessaires, la santé qui en vient quant elles sont bien gardees et le contraire quant elles sont corrompues en l'ost d'un grant seigneur,"³³ le chapitre traitant de "la desconfiture en gros du roy de Honguerie, de son host et des causes pour quoi il a esté desconfiz."³⁴ On trouve une trace proverbiale également dans le chapitre traitant de la façon dont "l'auteur, en confortant le duc de Bourgoingne, li montre qu'il n'est pas seul plaié et qu'il a grant compaignie qui sont plaiez comme lui,"³⁵ dans celui dans lequel l'auteur démontre que "[...] la plaie de ladicte desconfiture est commune a tous les rois, princes et communes de la crestienté."³⁶ Trois proverbes sont également présents les uns à la suite dans un chapitre mettant en avant la figure "d'une noble dame figuree et misterieuse que Dieu avoit mandé en l'ost du roy de Hongrie pour le salut de l'ost."³⁷

Le dernier thème est celui de la construction et de l'établissement de la nouvelle chevalerie et chrétienté de Dieu, qui doit rem-

placer la société corrompue et pécheresse ayant chuté à Nicopolis. Il regroupe des chapitres consacrés à la construction de la chevalerie, mais également à sa composition et à ses membres. On y trouve ainsi l'annonce du projet de Philippe, à savoir la nécessité d'avoir une chevalerie plus obéissante et pieuse dans "une exhortation comment le roy de France alant contre les ennemis de la foy doit estre mieulx regulé que la chevalerie du roy de Honguerie;"³⁸ "Comment la chevalerie de la Passion de Jhesu Crist tant de fois repetee doit estre creee et mise sus par les roys de France et d'Angleterre et des autres roys de la crestienté par le vaillant et sage pourchaz du noble duc de Bourgoingne;"³⁹ "Ci parle l'auteur au duc de Bourgoigne et aus roys de la crestienté pour avancier ladicte edificacion de l'arche figuree."⁴⁰ Afin d'arriver à ce résultat, ce sont les rois et princes eux-mêmes qui doivent se remettre en question ("[...] il est fort e chose de reguler a la lettre les grans princes en leur host selon les IIII vertus tant de foiz repetees"⁴¹); L'auteur explique finalement que les membres de sa cité de Dieu sur terre pourront venir d'horizons divers ("[...] les gens d'armes du moien degré pourront estre souffisans d'estre bien regulé et les causes pour quoy."⁴²

Les proverbes sont utilisés afin de renforcer la rhétorique de Philippe dans les trois éléments principaux qui composent son épître : la dénonciation, la menace turque, et la nécessité d'union sous la forme de la chevalerie. Ils sont donc utilisés pour affermir la voix de l'auteur, tout en impliquant directement le lectorat et les membres potentiels de cette nouvelle cité de Dieu. Les chapitres développant l'idée de la fourberie du Turc, ainsi que son danger, sont illustrés par des proverbes qui mettent en avant l'intelligence guerrière et politique nécessaire à défaire ces ennemis de la foi. Au cas où les pourparlers précédemment proposés avec eux ne fonctionnerait pas, une autre solution, cette fois-ci militaire, devra être mise en place : "il fait bon avoir deux cordes en son arc car, se l'une fault, l'autre soit trouvee toute preste."⁴³ L'autre proverbe a portée militaire souligne la nécessité de se renseigner sur l'ennemi, de "touchier aucunement de la puissance et des conditions en groz des seigneurs et des gens d'armes de Turquie." La raison pour ceci est que "la cognoissance de son ennemi et de ses condicions peut estre dicte la moictié de la victoire."⁴⁴ Le dernier proverbe ("plus clerc que le soleil n'est a midi"⁴⁵), même s'il n'est pas à proprement parler directement lié au domaine militaire, se

glisse tout de même dans cette catégorie, car il induit une réflexion sur les pourparlers à mener –ou pas– avec l'ennemi.

Les proverbes à portée militaires sont utilisés afin de donner un ancrage concret et populaire aux demandes et conseils de Philippe. Ils sont également compréhensibles par tous, même les non militaires. Betsy Bowden explique la façon dont le proverbe agit comme un ancrage dans un espace de sécurité et de souvenir : “because a short proverb appeals to sight or sound or very often both, it can function as a tool to search the human memory.”⁴⁶ Je vois donc dans l'utilisation des proverbes chez Philippe ce même élément de familiarisation et de confort que Bowden décrit. Le proverbe est un lien entre le spécifique (les actions des chevaliers) et le général (la population en général qui souffre), renforçant ainsi les différents niveaux de lecture que propose cette œuvre.

L'une des autres grandes catégories dans laquelle les poèmes sont développés est celle de la nature. Il y a cinq proverbes de ce type: “après fortune, bonnache, c'est calme,” “après le vent, des vens indiscrets, et des grans estas et outrages viennent les tempestes horribles et les perilleux orrages” et “après le beau jour cler, viennent les tenebres de la nuit;”⁴⁷ “chascun scet bien qu'une pomme pourrie mise ou milieu de XL fera les autres pourrir,”⁴⁸ et finalement “plus clers que le soleil n'est a midi.”⁴⁹ Ces proverbes apparaissent dans des chapitres qui mettent particulièrement en avant les causes de la défaite, sous ses différents abords. Les trois premiers de cette liste sont au cœur d'un chapitre expliquant l'apparition “d'une noble dame figuree et misterieuse que Dieu avoit mandé en l'ost du roy de Hongrie pour le salut de l'ost.”⁵⁰ Les deux autres traitent des détails techniques de la défaite (“De la deconfiture en gros du roy de Honguerie, de son host et des causes pour quoi il a esté desconffiz”⁵¹) et du comportement à avoir avec les Turcs (“[...] il se rapporte a la plus saine partie de ceulx qui mieulx diront et au traité par le moien d'aucunes moderacions au traictié neccessaires.”⁵²)

Le thème de la nature est ici regroupé autour des éléments du passage du temps et de son impact. Ainsi, une pomme pourrie contaminera les autres; “le beau jour cler” est toujours suivi de la nuit; le vent et les nuages sont annonciateurs de mauvais temps, etc. C'est donc ici une utilisation quasi scientifique de la nature qui est effectuée afin de démontrer l'inéluctabilité de tels événements. Réciproquement, ainsi, ce que Philippe met en avant est

également inéluctable, insinuant ainsi que ses indications ne peuvent souffrir d'aucune contestation, et renforce alors la sévérité de sa critique.

Les deux dernières catégories sont très proches l'une de l'autre, en ce sens qu'elles mettent le proverbe au cœur de l'homme et de sa place dans le monde. Elles sont centrées autour de l'idée de sagesse (deux proverbes) et de celle du comportement humain (les cinq derniers proverbes). Ces idées soulignent l'importance de ne pas réitérer les erreurs qui ont pu être causées par d'autres ("sagement se chastie qui par autrui se chastie,"⁵³) et la façon dont la modération est la clef d'une société chevaleresque réussie ("le moien estat est le plus seür.")⁵⁴ La dernière catégorie, qui est celle qui en regroupe le plus grand nombre (cinq) me semble également être celle qui est la plus "parlante," puisqu'elle condamne le comportement d'une certaine partie de l'humanité, qui ne répond pas aux exigences de Philippe, mais qui pâtit également d'un comportement aberrant d'une façon générale.

Ainsi, et même si les conseils qui sont donnés dans les proverbes de cette catégorie sont partie prenante de la déclaration de Philippe, il me semble qu'ils touchent également une grande frange de la population, qu'elle soit ou non directement impliqués dans le dessein de Mézières. Ainsi, toute attaque ou remise en question de la figure et du pouvoir de Dieu va causer le malheur du responsable ("a qui Dieu veult mal, il lui lieve le sens;")⁵⁵ la solitude empêche d'avoir une expérience agréable lors de son cheminement ("les personnes qui sont plongiees jusques aux yeuls es parfondes tribulacions prennent aucun confort quant elles ont aucuns compaignons."⁵⁶) En prenant l'image d'une maison qui brûle, la nécessité d'être sur ses gardes et de ne pas rester passif par rapport aux éléments de la vie est mise en avant ("qui voit la maison de son voisin ardoir, il doit veillier et non estre asseürez de la sienne;")⁵⁷) quiconque veut obtenir des résultats doit les acquérir par travail et persévérance ("qui a mestier du feu au foyer le quiert."⁵⁸) Finalement, le temps ne doit pas être gaspillé, sous peine de voir les opportunités disparaître ("qui temps a et temps attent, temps lui faut.")⁵⁹

Le proverbe est utilisé pour éclaircir les différents éléments nécessaires au changement pour que l'humanité et la chevalerie – dans leur grande acception- puissent atteindre le niveau nécessaire afin de pouvoir fonder la nouvelle communauté d'amour et de joie

de Philippe, qui est avant toute chose la chevalerie de Jésus Christ. Il faut qu'ils deviennent de meilleurs hommes, plus sages, plus conscients de leur place sur terre, et qui ne négligent pas l'art de la guerre. Il ne faut cependant pas voir dans *l'Épître* une dénonciation drastique des chevaliers et de leurs gouvernants. Philippe ne se serait pas, tout d'abord, risqué à écrire une telle œuvre qui aurait pu fâcher et blesser encore plus une personnalité aussi importante que le duc de Bourgogne, qui plus est dans une période où le royaume était complètement dévasté politiquement et émotionnellement. Il ne fait que pointer les erreurs qui ont été faites, en soulignant bien que celles-ci sont somme toute « naturelles » pour des hommes qui sont, par définition, faillibles. Même les plus grands des rois et dirigeants français ont connu des moments de faiblesse qui leur ont fait perdre de leur superbe et leurs qualités de dirigeants.⁶⁰ Ainsi, *l'Épître* apparaît moins comme une œuvre moralisatrice que comme une tentative de réconcilier, de reconforter, tout en pointant certes vers les erreurs qui doivent être corrigées afin de permettre à la nouvelle communauté de chevaliers qu'il propose – qui s'apparente à une communauté de vie, avec les différentes catégories de potentiels membres qui seront acceptées⁶¹ – de s'inscrire durablement dans la durée. Dans ce dessein, le proverbe agit, comme je l'ai indiqué précédemment, comme une sorte de conciliateur, mettant le message à la portée de tous.

J'ai expliqué précédemment que le proverbe était introduit de façon très directe dans l'œuvre par une formule qui le désignait comme tel.⁶² Cette répétition constitue une rythmique presque musicale dans le texte, en rappelant toujours l'ancrage populaire et généraliste que Philippe donne à son épître, malgré la dédicace qui y est faite. En ce sens, le proverbe est ainsi proche du concept de “petite chanson” que Deleuze et Guattari développent dans leur construction de l'idée de ritournelle. Pour eux, la petite chanson que susurre un enfin apeuré est “comme l'esquisse d'un centre stable, au sein du chaos.”⁶³ Cette chansonnette poussée est l'une des phases de construction de la ritournelle, qui est “tout ensemble de matières d'expression qui trace un territoire, et qui se développe en motifs territoriaux, en paysages territoriaux.”⁶⁴ Dans cette notion de territorialisation et de création, l'un des éléments cruciaux à comprendre est de voir à quel point l'idée de retour, de recreation et de reterritorialisation est importante. Philippe veut recréer la chevalerie qui était en “deconfiture” depuis la terrible

défaite de Nicopolis, et dont les fondements même –humilité, piété, courage, modération- ont été piétinés lors de cette défaite. La volonté expansionniste de cette nouvelle cité de Dieu, qui, dans les faits, est plus une communauté de vie qu'un ordre religieux, puisqu'elle accueille et encourage même la présence de femmes et de membres non adoubés- est mise en emphase par Philippe. Cette communauté n'est pas destinée à être statique, puisque Philippe indique qu'il s'agit d'une "cité portative merveilleuse biauté, de grant vertu et de singuliere puissance."⁶⁵ L'idée de déplacement est associée à celle de transmission, pour agir comme un porteur de symbole. Ainsi, la nouvelle chevalerie a pour but de se réinventer, de se recréer un territoire, mais également, d'en parcourir d'autres, et d'ainsi mettre en place une nouvelle territorialité, à la foi physique et intellectuelle, qui permettrait à son message de se perpétuer tout en acquérant une nouvelle audience. C'est en effectuant cet effort de reterritorialisation physique et surtout intellectuelle que Philippe veut créer sa nouvelle chevalerie, dont le but est de permettre au traumatisme de la défaite de se dissiper et d'ainsi être le soc d'un nouveau départ.⁶⁶ Le proverbe est un élément crucial de la mise en place de cet espace de territorialisation, en mettant le lecteur et les dédicataires de cette épître dans un espace de confort, qui leur permette de se sentir à l'aise malgré le chaos ambiant lié au traumatisme de la défaite et à la mort des chevaliers, mais également à la dénonciation de leurs vices et fautes par Philippe. Il permet de se situer dans l'espace de l'avant, dénué de toutes les mauvaises actions qui ont été produites par les chevaliers, tout en se projetant dans cet "après" idéal, un territoire idéalisé et rassurant. Philippe essaye ainsi de faire table rase du passé, tout en gardant tout de même des moments d'un territoire intellectuel passé qui réconfortent.

Malgré tous les efforts de Philippe de Mézières, son projet de nouvelle chevalerie n'arrivera jamais à fruition. À sa mort, en 1405, le royaume est toujours plus que jamais englué dans les problèmes politiques et belliqueux, et sa disparition marque la fin des idées de la chevalerie de Jésus Christ. Lors de la bataille d'Azincourt, le 24 octobre 1415, la chevalerie française fut décimée de nouveau par une armée anglaise largement en infériorité numérique. Encore une fois à cause d'un comportement hautain et d'un orgueil disproportionné des troupes françaises face, cette fois-ci, à la mobilité des archers anglais.

*Annexe : liste des proverbes de L'Épître
lamentable et consolatoire*

Les différents proverbes de *L'Épître* seront accompagnés de la page dans lequel ils se trouvent et, si possible, de leur référence dans Hassell.

“A qui Dieu veult mal, il lui lieve le sens,” 105 ; Hassell D68, 94.

“Chascun scet bien qu'une pomme pourrie mise ou milieu de XL fera les autres pourrir,” 119, non référencée chez Hassell.

“Les personnes qui sont plongiees jusques aux yeuls es parfondes tribulacions prennent aucun confort quant elles ont aucuns compaignons,” 122 ; Hassell S11, 232.

“Qui voit la maison de son voisin ardoir, il doit veillier et non estre asseurez de la sienne,” 123 ; Hassell M20, 155.

“Sagement se chastie qui par autrui se chastie,” 126 ; Hassell C101, 67-68.

“En fait d'armes on ne doit point mentir au conseil des grans princes,” 138 ; Hassell M117, 163.

“Le moien estat est le plus seür,” 143 ; Hassell, E81, 105.

“Plus clers que le soleil n'est a midi,” 174; Hassell, S104, 231.

“Il fait bon avoir deux cordes en son arc car, se l'une fault, l'autre soit trouvee toute preste,” 183; Hassell, C305, 84.

“Qui a mestier du feu au foyer le quiert,” 185; Hassell F71, 113.

“Qui temps a et temps attent, temps lui faut,” 201; Hassell T26, 236.

“La congnoissance de son ennemi et de ses condicions peut estre dicte la moictié de la victoire,” 210; Hassell C268, 81.

“Aprés fortune, bonnache,” 225; Hassell B137, 56.

“Aprés le beau jour cler, viennent les tenebres de la nuit,” 225; Hassell J31, 142.

“Aprés le vent, des vens indiscrets, et des grans estas et outrages viennent les tempestes horribles et les perilleux orrages,” 225; Hassell T62, 239.

Notes

¹ La meilleure analyse de la croisade, de ses origines et de ses conséquences, fut écrite par Aziz S. Atiya dans *The Crusade of Nicopolis* (Londres: Methuen, 1934).

² Sur la folie du roi et la guerre civile, voir notamment Bernard Schnerb, *Les Armagnacs et les Bourguignons, la maudite guerre* (Paris: Perrin, 2001); sur le Schisme, voir Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, *Poets, Saints and Visionaries of the Great Schism, 1378-1417* (University Park: the Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006).

³ On peut citer notamment “Pour les français morts à Nicopolis,” “Faicte pour de Monseigneur de Coucy” (1397).

⁴ Jean Froissard, *Chroniques, Livre III (Du Voyage en Béarn à la Campagne de Gascogne) et Livre IV (1389-1400)*, éd. Peter Ainsworth & Alberto Varvaro (Paris: Librairie générale française, 2004), 616.

⁵ *Chronique du Religieux de Saint Denys, contenant le règne de Charles VI*, trad. ML Bellaguet, Tome II (Paris: Éditions du comité de travaux historiques et scientifiques, 1994), 488-90.

⁶ Voir le volume édité par Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski et Kiril Petkov, *Philippe de Mézières, Piety and Politics in the Fourteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), qui offre un panorama extrêmement riche de la recherche récente sur Philippe. L’introduction de la nouvelle édition critique du *Songe du vieil pèlerin* par Joël Blanchard (Genève: Droz, 2015) donne également un grand nombre d’informations sur Philippe.

⁷ Jean-Louis Picherit, “Formes et fonctions de la matière proverbiale dans *Le Songe du vieil pèlerin* de Philippe de Mézières,” dans *La Locution. Actes du colloque international, Université McGill, Montréal*, éd. G. di Stefano et R. McGillivray (Montréal, Québec: CERES, 1984), 384-99.

⁸ James Woodrow Hassell, Jr., *Middle French Proverbs, Sentences, and Proverbial Phrases* (Toronto, Ontario: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1982). Dans la suite de cet article, cette œuvre sera référencée sous le nom de son auteur.

⁹ Philippe de Mézières, *Epistre lamentable et consolatoire*, éd. Philippe Contamine et Jacques Paviot (Paris: Société de l’histoire de France, 2008), 100. Dans le reste de cet article, la référence à cette œuvre dans les notes sera *ELC*.

¹⁰ Voir particulièrement à ce sujet les explications d’Atiya (26-45).

¹¹ L’étude des épîtres et de la rhétorique au Moyen-âge a produit de nombreuses études ; en donner une liste exhaustive serait donc, par conséquent, impossible. On peut consulter, entre autres, Scott D. Troyan, ed., *Medieval Rhetoric : A Casebook* (New York, New York: Routledge, 2004), ou Martin Camargo, ed., *Essays on Medieval Rhetoric* (Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate, 2012). Pour la période qui nous intéresse, à savoir le Moyen-âge tardif, voir les articles contenus dans le premier volume de *Disputatio*, “The Late Medieval Epistle” (1996).

¹² Mézières, *ELC*, 97.

¹³ *Dictionnaire du moyen français*, www.atilf.fr, consulté le 9 octobre 2015.

¹⁴ Jean Ier de Bourgogne, qui allait devenir une des figures les plus importantes de guerre entre Armagnacs et Bourguignons, fut effectivement détenu prisonnier par les troupes turques, et son père dut s'acquitter d'une très forte rançon. Néanmoins, de par son courage lors de la bataille et de sa détention, il gagna le surnom de "Jean sans Peur." Voir Bertrand Schnerb, *Jean sans Peur, le prince meurtrier* (Paris: Payot, 2005).

¹⁵ Gisèle Mathieu-Castellani, *La Rhétorique des passions* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2000), 14.

¹⁶ Jean-Claude Faucon, "La Sagesse populaire au service du roi: de l'utilisation des proverbes par un chroniqueur du XIV^e siècle" dans *Richesse du proverbe vol. 1: le proverbe au Moyen Âge*, eds. François Suard et Claude Buridant (Lille: Presses de l'Université de Lille III, 1984), 90.

¹⁷ Andrea Tarnowski, "To Console and Control. Philippe de Mézières's *Epistre lamentable*." *Digital Philology* 2.2 (2013), 181-200.

¹⁸ Elisabeth Schulze-Busacker, *Proverbes et expressions proverbiales dans la littérature du Moyen-âge français. Recueil et analyse* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1991), 16.

¹⁹ Wendy Pfeffer, *Proverbs in Medieval Occitan Literature* (Gainesville, Floride: University Press of Florida, 1997), 5.

²⁰ Claude Buridant, "Les Proverbes et la prédication au Moyen-âge. De l'utilisation des proverbes vulgaires dans les sermons," dans *La Richesse du Proverbe, Vol. 1*, 28.

²¹ Faucon, "La Sagesse populaire," 97.

²² Lori Walters, "The "Vieil Solitaire" and the "Seulette": Contemplative Solitude as Political Theology in Philippe de Mézières, Christine de Pizan, and Jean Gerson," dans *Philippe de Mézières and his Age*, 143.

²³ Philippe Contamine, "Croisade, réformation religieuse, politique et morale de la chrétienté au XIV^e siècle: Philippe de Mézières (vers 1325-1405)", *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome - Italie et Méditerranée modernes et contemporaines* [En ligne], 124-1 | 2012, mis en ligne le 19 décembre 2012, consulté le 17 février 2015. URL: <http://mefrim.revues.org/138>

²⁴ "C'est de cette qualité du proverbe de s'adapter au contexte, d'être "actualisé" ou "individualisé" au besoin que les auteurs médiévaux semblent avoir profité le plus pour les buts les plus divers," dans *Proverbes et expressions proverbiales*, 20.

²⁵ "D'une façon générale le proverbe, au sens médiéval du terme, est assez souvent employé comme point de départ d'un chapitre, d'un développement, d'une nouvelle idée, ou comme point final d'une intervention, afin de lui donner le maximum d'efficacité." Picherit, "Formes et fonctions," 390. Les italiques sont de moi.

²⁶ Jean-Louis Picherit, *La Métaphore pathologique et thérapeutique à la fin du Moyen Âge* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1994), 38.

²⁷ À consulter en particulier le Livre II de *Rhétorique* d'Aristote et le Livre VII des *Tusculanes* de Cicéron.

²⁸ Gisèle Mathieu-Castellani, *La Rhétorique des passions* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2000), 25

²⁹ Mézières, *ELC*, 121.

³⁰ Mézières, *ELC*, 210.

- ³¹ Mézières, *ELC*, 183.
- ³² Mézières, *ELC*, 173.
- ³³ Mézières, *ELC*, 104.
- ³⁴ Mézières, *ELC*, 119.
- ³⁵ Mézières, *ELC*, 122.
- ³⁶ Mézières, *ELC*, 122.
- ³⁷ Mézières, *ELC*, 224.
- ³⁸ Mézières, *ELC*, 126.
- ³⁹ Mézières, *ELC*, 184.
- ⁴⁰ Mézières, *ELC*, 200.
- ⁴¹ Mézières, *ELC*, 138.
- ⁴² Mézières, *ELC*, 143.
- ⁴³ Mézières, *ELC*, 183.
- ⁴⁴ Mézières, *ELC*, 210.
- ⁴⁵ Mézières, *ELC*, 174.
- ⁴⁶ Betsy Bowden, "A Modest Proposal, Relating Four Millenia of Proverb Collections to Chemistry with the Human Brain," *The Journal of American Folklore* 109, 434 (1996): 442.
- ⁴⁷ Mézières, *ELC*, 225.
- ⁴⁸ Mézières, *ELC*, 119.
- ⁴⁹ Mézières, *ELC*, 174.
- ⁵⁰ Mézières, *ELC*, 224. Cette allégorie du comportement de la chevalerie se voit être défigurée par le comportement des chevaliers.
- ⁵¹ Mézières, *ELC*, 119.
- ⁵² Mézières, *ELC*, 173.
- ⁵³ Mézières, *ELC*, 126.
- ⁵⁴ Mézières, *ELC*, 143.
- ⁵⁵ Mézières, *ELC*, 105.
- ⁵⁶ Mézières, *ELC*, 122. Il faut voir les compagnons ici dans un double sens : celui d'être en communauté, ce qui correspond à l'idée que Philippe défend tout au long de son épître. Mais je considère également que la notion de solitude est liée à l'absence de "compagnonnage" avec Dieu, ce qui est particulièrement mis en relief dans les chapitres précédant celui où ce proverbe se situe.
- ⁵⁷ Mézières, *ELC*, 123.
- ⁵⁸ Mézières, *ELC*, 185.
- ⁵⁹ Mézières, *ELC*, 201.
- ⁶⁰ Dans les nombreux exemples donnés des vertus guerrières qui ont été corrompues par les vices, et qui donc ont gâté la chevalerie, Philippe donne des exemples tirés du monde "païen," de la Bible, avec "Saül premier roy d'Israel" (111), "Judah Machabeus" (112), mais également de l'histoire de France, avec, entre autres, les "XII pers de France" (113), "Godefroy de Buillon" (114), et "Guy de Lisignen, roy de Jherusalem" (115).
- ⁶¹ Voir pp. 145-70 dans *l'Épître*
- ⁶² Voir p. 13.
- ⁶³ Gilles Deleuze et Félix Guattari, *Mille plateaux. Capitalisme et schizophrénie 2* (Paris: Éditions de minuit, 1980), 382.

⁶⁴ Deleuze et Guattari, *Mille plateaux*, 397.

⁶⁵ Mézières, *ELC*, 147.

⁶⁶ François Zourabichvili explique que la ritournelle se situe dans un système de deux triades : "Première triade : 1. Chercher à rejoindre le territoire, pour conjurer le chaos, 2. Tracer et habiter le territoire qui filtre le chaos, 3. S'élancer hors du territoire ou se déterritorialiser vers un cosmos qui se distingue du chaos [...] Seconde triade : 1. Chercher un territoire, 2. Partir ou se déterritorialiser, 3. Revenir ou se reterritorialiser," *Le Vocabulaire de Deleuze* (Paris : Ellipses, 2015), 74-75.

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GERHARD MÜLLER

„FRIEDE, FREUDE, EIERKUCHEN“: ANNÄHERUNGEN
AN EINE BEKANNTE FORMEL

Abstract: Der Beitrag befaßt sich aus sprachwissenschaftlicher Sicht mit der Drillingsformel „Friede, Freude, Eierkuchen“ im Hinblick auf Entstehung und Gebrauch. Er untersucht insbesondere die Struktur dieses Phraseologismus, das Glied „Friede und Freude“ und das dazu im Gegensatz stehende Glied „Eierkuchen“. Diskutiert werden Möglichkeiten der Etymologie und der Interpretation.

Keywords: Sprachwissenschaft, Wortforschung, Phraseologie, Drillingsformel, Zwillingsformel, Redewendung.

Wer kennt sie nicht, die seit einiger Zeit immer wieder zu hörende und zu lesende Drillingsformel? „Also Friede – Freude – Eierkuchen, wie man so schön zu sagen pflegt.“¹ Mit diesem Zitat aus dem Jahr 2002 ist schon Bekanntheit und Geläufigkeit jener Formel angesprochen, und aus der öffentlichen Sprache, also Presse und Literatur, könnten zahlreiche Belege beigebracht werden – begnügen wir uns mit einer knappen, charakteristischen Auswahl. Besonders seit 1980 begegnet man der Formel immer wieder.

„Friede, Freude, Eierkuchen: Für manche Menschen scheint im Leben immer die Sonne zu scheinen“ (2011); „Demokratie, das sollte ohnehin allen klar sein, ist keine Spaßgeschichte von Friede, Freude, Eierkuchen. Demokratie ist ein Mittel, mit Dissens umzugehen“ (2010).² In ungebrochenem und direktem Sinn siehe etwa auch: „Aber innerhalb des Spielfelds herrschen Friede, Freude, Eierkuchen und eitel Sonnenschein“ (2011). In solche Verwendungsweisen läßt sich „Friede, Freude, Eierkuchen“ durchaus im Sinne von 'Einigkeit', 'Einverständnis', 'Harmonie' deuten. Lax gesprochen, könnte man eine umgangssprachliche Wendung heranziehen: „es ist alles in Butter“. In anderen Fällen hingegen wird eine gebrochene, ironische bzw. kritische Verwendung sichtbar. Die Formel wird da als Stilmittel zur Färbung

und Distanzierung genutzt, so wenn es z. B. heißt (ein Gewerkschaftsvertreter 1993): „Bei allen Gegensätzlichkeiten muß aber der Wille zum Konsens da sein. Konsens heißt dabei nicht, Friede, Freude, Eierkuchen, sondern demokratische Streitkultur, die auf Kompromiß abzielt.“ – Analog drei Beispiele aus der Politik (2011, 2014): „Die Bundesregierung spielt uns Friede, Freude, Eierkuchen vor, spricht von Fortschritten bei der Integration – und dann entscheidet sie vollkommen über unseren Kopf hinweg“; „Der feine Herr kommt aus dem Urlaub, lächelt die Probleme weg, und dann ist wieder Friede, Freude, Eierkuchen“; „Aber da saß eine Dame aus dem FDP-Bundesvorstand auf dem 'Heißen Stuhl', die nach acht Minuten plötzlich ihren Standpunkt verließ und sich hinter die 'Gegner' stellte. Friede, Freude, Eierkuchen!“.

Derlei Textbeispiele lassen sich dabei auch für die Schweiz und für Österreich reichlich nachweisen. – Daneben ist die Variation der Dreierformel zu beobachten: „Auch Bürger haben Sträuße mit breiten Trauerschleifen abgelegt – und mit eindeutigen Aufschriften: 'Erst Friede, Freude, Eierkuchen – jetzt Trauer, Wut und Hass – Warum?'“ (2011). – Prägnant auch dieser Pressebeleg, der kontrastiert: „Dieser Bericht klingt in meinen Ohren, als wäre er von einer frustrierten Rosamunde Pilcher geschrieben: Einerseits die schöne heile Welt mit Friede Freude Eierkuchen und andererseits das Böse, das Unheil, das sich unaufhaltsam nähert“ (2011). – Eine Wertung und Interpretation der Dreierformel („spottet der Volkswitz“) brachte das Editorial der Zeitschrift *Das Argument* schon im Juni 1981: „Gerade dies Heilige ist es, das Feierliche, Weihnachtliche, das vielen ein heimliches Unbehagen bereitet, ein Unbehagen, das sich immer einstellt, wenn es um Höheres geht, und das umschlagen kann in die Langeweile am Reden über den Frieden. Friede, Freude, Eierkuchen, spottet der Volkswitz.“

Seit wann ist *Friede, Freude, Eierkuchen* in Umlauf? Das *Lexikon der sprichwörtlichen Redensarten* von Lutz Röhrich sagte Anfang der neunziger Jahre aus: „Die erst in jüngster Zeit bekannt gewordene Redensart 'Friede, Freude, Eierkuchen' bezieht sich auf den von Politikern, aber auch in Familien, Vereinen etc. nicht selten unternommenen Versuch, die Dinge zu beschönigen und Harmonie vorzutäuschen. Sie bedeutet soviel wie: Dieses Schöntun mag glauben, wer will.“³ Auf die inhaltliche

Interpretation ist schon eingegangen worden. Was nun die Zeitangabe betrifft – „in jüngster Zeit“ –, so bezieht sich Röhrich offensichtlich auf die seit den achtziger Jahren steigende Frequenz dieser Formel, und ein Beleg aus dem Jahr 1981 wurde hier bereits zitiert. Die früheste lexikographische Buchung indes, die mir bekannt ist, stammt von Heinz Küpper, der die Formel 1983 verzeichnete.⁴

Eine Internetrecherche förderte etliche weiter zurückliegende Belege zutage. So wurde die Dreierformel – um nur einige aussagekräftige Beispiele herauszugreifen – von der Wochenzeitung *Die Zeit* 1985 als stilistisch prägnante Formulierung verwendet („... Unlust, Aufregung und Konflikt sind das Böse, das zu vermeiden ist zugunsten von Friede, Freude, Eierkuchen ...“), und – dies vielleicht als Zeichen für die seinerzeitige Bekanntheit – sie, die Formel, wurde als Motto genutzt für die Berliner Love Parade im Jahre 1989 (vgl. *Süddeutsche Zeitung*).⁵ „Das Motto – 'Friede, Freude, Eierkuchen' – setzte sich aus 'Friede' für Abrüstung, 'Freude' für die bessere Völkerverständigung durch Musik und 'Eierkuchen' für gerechte Verteilung von Nahrungsmitteln zusammen.“ – 1980 findet sich *Friede, Freude, Eierkuchen* in der Fachliteratur (Martin Vogel, *Musiktheater*), wobei die traditionelle Drillingsformel *Jubel, Trubel, Heiterkeit* gegenübergestellt wird. – Und: „Wer wäre nicht für Friede, Freude, Eierkuchen“ (*Prokla. Zeitschrift für politische Ökonomie und sozialistische Politik*, Berlin 1996). – Auch Willy Brandt hat sich der Formel, relativ früh, bedient (1972): „Man kann nicht haben wollen, daß wir möglichst nicht politische Krawalle in den Straßen haben und gleichzeitig in den etablierten Parteien Friede, Freude, Eierkuchen haben.“⁶ – Zeitlich am Anfang indessen stehen drei Belege aus der DDR – die Frage, ob der Ursprung von *Friede, Freude, Eierkuchen* in der öffentlichen Sprache des damaligen deutschen Teilstaats liegt, muß aufgrund der Beleglage hier offenbleiben, so reizvoll ihre Erörterung auch wäre. Mein Nachschlagen im Ostberliner *Wörterbuch der deutschen Gegenwartssprache* blieb ohne Erfolg. 1962 hieß es in der Zeitschrift des FDGB: „Aber da [= Diskussion über die Rolle der Arbeiterklasse] war es aus mit Friede, Freude, Eierkuchen“, und zwei Belege aus dem Jahr 1959 stammen aus der satirischen Zeitschrift *Eulenspiegel*.⁷

Fügen wir an dieser Stelle abschließend an, daß die Formel schon seit etlichen Jahren auch als Buchtitel figuriert (was ebenfalls für ihr Verbreitetsein und ihre Bekanntheit spricht): z. B. *Friede, Freude, Eierkuchen? Mediationsverfahren in der Umweltpolitik* (Lars Holtkamp/Birgit Stach, Marburg/L. 1995), ja auch: *Friede, Freude, Eierkuchen. Comics* (Rolf Boyke, Semmel-Verlag 1983) oder auch, in wieder anderer Färbung: *Friede, Freude, Eierkuchen. Ein Heimatvertriebener erinnert sich* (Wolfgang Tape, Oldenburg 2006).

Wo ist der Ursprung dieser Formel, woher leitet sie sich ab? Vor einigen Jahren suchte die Wiesbadener Zeitschrift *Der Sprachdienst* eine Klärung dieser Frage, doch es ergab sich keine schlüssige Erklärung.⁸ Verwiesen wurde formal auf die parallel gebaute Formel *Jubel, Trubel, Heiterkeit*, die sich inhaltlich wohl von *Friede, Freude, Eierkuchen* unterscheidet, aber ihr im Rhythmus und im oft zu beobachtenden Dreierschritt gleicht. Man denke auch an *Sonne, Mond und Sterne* und an *Feld, Wald und Wiesen ...* bis hin zu *Titel, Thesen, Temperamente ...* Auch die einschlägigen Lexika, über die schon genannten hinaus (Küpper, Röhrich), geben keine triftigen Hinweise. So verzeichnen die großen Dudenwerke *Friede, Freude, Eierkuchen* nur mit einer knappen – und annehmbaren – inhaltlichen Deutung („ungetrübte [aber fragwürdige] Harmonie“).⁹

Betrachtet man die in Rede stehende Dreierformel inhaltlich, fällt eine Zweiteilung auf: dem ersten Element *Friede, Freude* steht ein zweites kontrastierend gegenüber: *Eierkuchen*. Es wird ein gewisser Gegensatz und, wenn man will, eine Antiklimax deutlich, anders als in den genannten anderen Dreierformeln. Damit ist, meine ich, der Grund gelegt für den bisweilen distanzierenden, ironischen oder kritischen Gebrauch im Textzusammenhang. *Friede* und *Freude* stehen dabei in langer und sozusagen gewichtiger, gehaltvoller Tradition. Hier liegt eine eigenständige Zwillingsformel vor, die bis in den biblischen Sprachgebrauch zurückreicht. Sie bildet als Topos gleichsam die Basis, auf der eine (volkstümliche) sprachspielerische bzw. -kritische Weiterbildung mit dem ganz schlichten, ding- und volkshaften Wortelement *Eierkuchen* erwachsen ist.

Auch hierzu eine Auswahl kennzeichnender Beispiele: So ist in der *Luther-Bibel* zu lesen: „Die, so Böses raten, betrügen; aber die zum Frieden raten, schaffen Freude“ (*Die Sprüche Salomonis*

12, 20).¹⁰ Und: „Gott aber der Hoffnung erfülle euch mit aller freude vnd friede / im Glauben [...]“ (*Römer* 15, 13). – In einem maßgeblichen theologischen Handbuch heißt es: „Erst mit dem vollkommenen Selbstverzicht auch hinsichtlich des 'Trostes' ziehen Friede und Freude ein“ (*Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart, Handwörterbuch* [...]. Bd. 3; Tübingen 1956–1965). – Und ein kirchliches Lied Paul Gerhardts sagt u. a.: „gottlob, nun ist erschollen / das edle fried- und freudenwort“ (zitiert im *Deutschen Wörterbuch*, Band 4, 1878). In einem anderen Kirchenlied heißt es: „Mit Fried und Freud ich fahr dahin.“

Verwendungsbeispiele aus der schönen Literatur sind zahlreich. Auch jetzt seien nur einige prägnante Zitate aufgeführt, um sozusagen den Gestus des Sprachausdrucks zu verdeutlichen. *Friede* und *Freude*, seit alters geläufig, tragen positive, hohe Werte, sind moralisch-ethisch markant, wenn auch gewiß (schon) oft konventionalisiert.

„[...] darum will er [der Mensch] in Frieden Lust suchen, denn Friede bringt Freude“ (Meister Eckhart, aus: *Meisters Eckharts mystische Schriften*; Berlin 1903). – „Und Friede und Freude mit allen. / C. B. d. 8. May 1820.“ (Goethe, *An F. Th. von Müller.*) – „Jede Freude, meiner Seelen Friede, / Ist dahin, [...]“ (Ch. M. Wieland, nach dem *Grammatisch-kritischen Wörterbuch der Hochdeutschen Mundart* von Adelung, Bd. 4; Leipzig 1801). – „O könnt ich ihn mit diesen Armen weit / Hinübertragen in ein glücklich Land, Wo Friede wohnet und wo Freude blüht (...)“ (Ludwig Uhland, *Ernst Herzog von Schwaben.* siehe *Werke*, Viertes Aufzug). – „Dorthin auf jenes Dach, wo sonst wir uns ergötzen in Friede und Freude, wo fröhliche Lieder schallten [...]“ (E. Th. A. Hoffmann, *Lebensansichten des Katers Murr*, Zweites Band). – Erwähnenswert auch das Gedicht *Die Einsiedlerin* von Clemens Brentano: „O lasse Geliebter mich einsam leben! / Dem Tode bin ich früh geweiht, / Ich kann dir nicht Friede nicht Freude geben, / Doch beten für dich in Einsamkeit. [...]“ – Auch der Sprachkünstler Jean Paul bezieht die Formel ein: „Voll Freude und Friede zog der Notar nach Hause – in die stillen Gassen schaueten nur die hohen Sterne –“ (*Flegeljahre*, Zweites Bändchen). Man könnte zudem aus Eduard Mörikes Roman *Maler Nolten* zitieren. – „Diese kindliche Herzensgeschichte ging ein halbes Jahrlein in Friede und Freude so hin [...]“ (Ludwig Ganghofer, *Lebenslauf eines Optimisten*, Kap. 3;

Stuttgart 1909–1911). – Hervorgehoben tritt die Zwillingsformel indessen bei Gerhart Hauptmann auf: „Die Seligkeit ist eine wunderschöne Stadt, / wo Friede und Freude kein Ende mehr hat“ (*Hanneles Himmelfahrt*, Zweiter Teil; zuerst 1893). – Abschließend, ganz prominent, am Ende von Schillers *Lied von der Glocke*: „Ziehet, ziehet, hebt! / Sie bewegt sich, schwebt, / Freude dieser Stadt bedeute, / Friede sei ihr erst Geläute.“

Ein lexikographisch-historischer Beleg sei angefügt: „Dann folgte das *silberne* Zeitalter, in dem Friede und Freude schon zeitweilig gestört wurden [...]“ (Brockhaus' Kleines *Konversations-Lexikon*, Bd. 2; 1911). – Auch im Märchen, also einem populärem Genre, läßt sich die Zwillingsformel beobachten, z. B.: „Da wurde die Hochzeit mit großer Pracht gefeiert, und der Junge ward nach dem Tode seines Schwiegervaters König und lebte in Friede und Freude“ (Josef Haltrich, *Deutsche Volksmärchen aus dem Sachsenlande in Siebenbürgen*). – „Der Palast im Wald verschwand, und am königlichen Hof war nun wieder Freude und Friede wie ehemals“ (Ignaz und Joseph Zingerle, *Die zwei Königskinder*, in: *Kinder und Hausmärchen aus Süddeutschland*). – Gleichfalls wäre an ein älteres volksläufiges Sprichwort zu erinnern: *Hauss Freud bringt Hauss Fried* (K. F. W. Wander, *Deutsches Sprichwörter-Lexikon*, Band 2; 1870).

Genug der Beispiele – die wohl für sich sprechen; ich will Friede und Freude des aufmerksamen Lesers nicht überbeanspruchen. In welcher Weise und unter welchen Umständen tritt nun *Eierkuchen* hinzu? Und dies ja anscheinend erst seit etwa Mitte des 20. Jahrhunderts.

Was ist überhaupt ein Eierkuchen? Ist es einfaches, schlichtes oder ein besseres, ein wertvolleres Gebäck? Auch diese Frage ließ sich leider nicht bündig klären; ich fand Belege für beides. Hält man sich an das von Wander verzeichnete Sprichwort *Noth lehrt Eierkuchen essen* (Bd. 5, 1880), so handelte es sich um eine bescheidene Speise.¹¹ Denkt man hingegen an einige Zeilen aus Heinrich Heines Zyklus *Deutschland ein Wintermärchen* (Caput IV), wo es heißt: „Zu Köllen kam ich spätabends an, / [...] Ich aß / Dort Eierkuchen mit Schinken, / Und da er sehr gesalzen war, / Mußt ich auch Rheinwein trinken“, so könnte man doch auf ein besseres Gericht schließen, und dies würde durch einige andere Belege¹², so in einem Dialektwörterbuch¹³ und im *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens* bestätigt. Diese Speise wird

dort verschiedentlich erwähnt und spielte im Brauchtum und bei Riten offenbar eine nicht unbeträchtliche Rolle. So wurde Verliebten Eierkuchen gebacken, und er trat als Karfreitags- bzw. Osterkuchen auf, zudem beim Bekränzen der Kühe, und er sollte auch zur Milchbildung helfen, weiterhin, mit Bovistpulver vermischt, gegen Gelbsucht; öfter wird daran erinnert, daß er die Potenz stärke.¹⁴ Der Eierkuchen zeigt sich also als volkstümlich und vielfach präsent.

Eierkuchen – und dies scheint nun von Belang zu sein – wird, wie zahllose andere Wörter, auch übertragen gebraucht, was beispielsweise in der Neubearbeitung des „Grimm“ deutlich wird: Hier wird „etwas Unerhebliches“ notiert.¹⁵ Wichtig ist, daß übertragener Gebrauch ins Spiel kommt, und es erklärt sich vermutlich von hier aus das Vorkommen von Eierkuchen in jener Drillingsformel. Süddeutsche Dialektwörterbücher enthalten tatsächlich entsprechende Belege! So bringt das *Badische Wörterbuch* die Verwendungsbeispiele: „Die sind *ein* Eierkuchen“ im Sinne von 'die leben in dickster Freundschaft' und „Da war alles ein Eierkuchen“ = 'da waren alle ein Herz und eine Seele (später wurde es anders)'. Im negativen Fall wird analog gesagt „*Der* Eierkuchen wird auch gefressen“ bzw. „Jetzt ist der Eierkuchen gefressen“ = 'diese dicke Freundschaft wird auch einmal aufhören' und 'die Freundschaft ist aus!'¹⁶ – Verschiedenes, Heterogenes also kommt zusammen, wird vermengt und zu einem einheitlichen Etwas (Gebäck) gebracht; die äußere Einheit mag indessen nicht stabil sein und wieder zerfallen.¹⁷ Und in weiterführendem Sinne spricht sich das *Schwäbische Wörterbuch* aus: *Das ist eiⁿ Eierkuchen* – „spöttischer Ausdruck für Einigkeit“.¹⁸

Damit wäre doch wohl die Verbindung zum heutigen vielfachen ironischen Gebrauch von *Friede, Freude, Eierkuchen* erreicht, und dies mag als Hypothese gelten. Wie sich freilich der Sprung von den süddeutschen Sprachvarietäten aus den ersten Jahrzehnten des 20. Jahrhunderts zur seit ab 1959 belegten Drillingsformel im einzelnen vollzogen haben könnte, dies muß vorderhand aufgrund der Quellenlage noch offen bleiben.

Anmerkungen

¹ Max W. Busch, *Jean-Pierre Ponnelle 1932–1988*; Berlin 2002, S. 52 (nach der Google-Buchsuche, Juni 2015).

² Die Belege werden hier wegen der Lesbarkeit und Übersichtlichkeit nicht detailliert und im einzelnen exakt nachgewiesen; sie sind aus digitalen Textsammlungen mehrerer Internetquellen entnommen (Juni 2015), die hier en bloc genannt seien: books.google.de, google.scholar.de, www.wortschatz.uni-leipzig.de und ids-mannheim.de/cosmas2.

³ Band 2; Freiburg/Br. 1994, S. 476. Dieses Lexikon ist zuerst 1991 erschienen.

⁴ H. K., *Illustriertes Lexikon der deutschen Umgangssprache. Band 3*; Stuttgart 1983, S. 937. Seine Umschreibung 'es ist alles in Ordnung' mag hingehen, seine Deutung jedoch – „Vielleicht ist ursprünglich gemeint, daß es aus Freude über das Kriegsende einen Eierkuchen gibt“ – überzeugt, wie später auszuführen ist, nicht.

⁵ Auf Einzelbelege wird wieder verzichtet; die Belegstellen werden in der Regel und wenn nichts anderes vermerkt nach den genannten Onlinequellen zitiert. – Zum Motto der Love Parade siehe Gregor Betz u. a., *Urbane Events*; Wiesbaden 2011, S. 265 (zitiert nach books.google.de, abgerufen Juni 2015).

⁶ Helga Grebing, Gregor Schoellgen und Heinrich August Winkler (Hrsg.), *Willy Brandt. Berliner Ausgabe. 10 Bände*; Bonn 2000–2009: Band 7, S. 361. Vgl. auch Wolfgang Mieder, *Drillingsformeln: Texte, Titel und Tendenzen*; in: *Sprachspiegel*, Jg. 1980, S. 4–11 (auch in: ders., *Sprichwort, Redensart, Zitat. Tradierte Formelsprache in der Moderne*; Bern 1985, S. 131–139). Diese Hinweise verdanke ich Wolfgang Mieder.

⁷ *Die Arbeit* (Berlin/DDR), 1962, S. 52. – „Am Schluß, wie sichs gehört, Friede, Freude, Eierkuchen und Beifall“, so in einer Theaterkritik: *Eulenspiegel*, 3. Juniheft 1959, S. 6 (nach dem entsprechenden Wikipedia-Eintrag, abgerufen Mai 2015); ein weiterer Beleg nach books.google.de: „Dies also die Reste der Menschheit – im übrigen jedoch Friede, Freude, Eierkuchen. Das heißt nicht ganz [...]“ (abgerufen Juni 2015).

⁸ Siehe Jahrgang 2004, S. 72, 182.

⁹ Siehe das neue Lexikon *Das große Buch der Zitate und Redewendungen*; Mannheim/Leipzig/Wien/Zürich ²2007, S. 261; ganz ähnlich das *Große Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache. Dritter Band*; Mannheim etc. ³1999, S. 1319, und: *Redewendungen. Wörterbuch der deutschen Idiomatik*. Hrsg. von der Dudenredaktion; Mannheim etc. ⁴2014, S. 237 (= Der Duden in 12 Bänden, Band 11).

¹⁰ Auch hier wird auf die detaillierte Quellenangabe verzichtet, um die Lesbarkeit zu gewährleisten. Diese Gruppe der Belege geht auf die elektronische Sammlung der *Digitalen Bibliothek* (Berlin) zurück, die umfangreiche Textkorpora wie *Deutsche Literatur von Luther bis Tucholsky*, *Bibliothek der Weltliteratur* und diverse Lexika (Fach- und Konversationslexika) erschlossen hat, teils auch auf die große Online-Ausgabe des Gutenbergprojekts (www.spiegel.gutenberg.de).

¹¹ So auch *Ei dr Nut frißt do Teifel en Eierkuchen*; siehe: *Sudetendeutsches Wörterbuch. Wörterbuch der deutschen Mundarten in Böhmen und Mähren-Schlesien. Band III*; München 2002, S. 552.

¹² In Gottfried Kellers Novelle *Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe* (Kap. 9, zuerst 1856, hier zitiert nach der Ausgabe der Digitalen Bibliothek, a. a. O.) heißt es: „[...] der gute Kaffee, der fette Rahm, die frischen, noch warmen Brötchen, die schöne

Butter und der Honig, der Eierkuchen und was alles noch für Leckerbissen da waren!“

¹³ So etwa Karl Spangenberg, *Thüringisches Wörterbuch. II. Band*; Berlin 200–2004, Sp. 29: Eierkuchen u. a. als Oster-, Kirmes- und Hochzeitsgebäck.

¹⁴ Hanns Bächthold-Stäubli, *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens*; Berlin/Leipzig: *Band I* (1927, Sp. 1485), *Band V* (1932/33, Sp. 656, 671, 679), *Band VI* (1934/35, Sp. 329, 1320, 1325), *Band VIII* (1936/37, Sp. 189, 191, 193).

¹⁵ Jacob u. Wilhelm Grimm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch. Neubearbeitung. 7. Band*; Leipzig 1993, Sp. 353. In der ursprünglichen Ausgabe (Bd. 3, 1862, Sp. 86) ist nur die konkrete Bedeutung „Eierflade“ vermerkt.

¹⁶ Ernst Ochs, *Badisches Wörterbuch. Erster Band*; Lahr 1925–1940, S. 640.

¹⁷ Ähnlich eine fach- und sondersprachliche Verwendung: *Eierkuchen* = „<scherzh., im Jargon der Drucker> durcheinandergeratener Schriftsatz“: Brockhaus-Wahrig, *Deutsches Wörterbuch in sechs Bänden. Zweiter Band*; Wiesbaden/Stuttgart 1981, S. 373.

¹⁸ Hermann Fischer, *Schwäbisches Wörterbuch. Zweiter Band*; Tübingen 1908, Sp. 566.

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PROVERB TRANSLATION VS. PROVERB EQUIVALENCE
AND RELEVANCE THEORY

Abstract: Translation, viewed as a multi-faceted task, can lead to different types of difficulties. The equivalence refers to the identity relation between two units having the same denotation and connotation and displaying the same meaning in two different languages.

Proverbs have been considered special patterns, displaying sometimes hidden meanings or suggesting morals issuing from a particular example. These paremic units—the proverbs—convey feelings, states of mind, behaviors or ‘metaphorical descriptions of certain situations’ (Krikmann).

Starting from Savory’s list of pair-wise contradictory translation principles, I intend to prove that the link between different ‘forms’ and their ‘contents’ lies in the principle of relevance when referring to proverbs. Even if relevance theory is not a theory of linguistic structure—and many translation problems imply structural mismatches—relevance theory offers insights about contextual information.

Proverbs are seen as texts in themselves. My analysis will target the ethnofields of ‘to buy’ and ‘to sell’ in English proverbs and their Romanian corresponding versions.

Keywords: context, ethnofield, equivalence, focal area, meaning, principle, proverb, Romanian, structure, translation

1. Towards a definition.

I. 1. When uttering the word ‘translation’, we can think about:

- an abstract concept including both the process and the product, which means the activity of translating and translation as an entity;
- the translated text;
- the translator’s method.

Among the theories that explain the term ‘translation’, the interpretive theory is focusing on the process, displaying domains belonging to psycholinguistics, semantics, pragmatics, cultural context, communication competence. From such a perspective,

translation can be either an oriented text approach or an oriented interpretation analysis.

Roman Jakobson [1959:232-239] saw in the translation exercise three types of approaches:

- the intralingual translation;
- the interlingual translation which seems to be the translation in itself;
- the intersemiotics translation, where the non-verbal symbols can perform the interpretation of the verbal symbols.

Georges Mounin saw in translation a series of operations whose final product bears in it the sum of meanings the translator can produce. Both Jakobson and Mounin considered translation an adequate interpretation of a unit which belongs to a different code than the one that is named the source text or the starting point in the translation exercise.

What is equivalence? The equivalence describes, in fact, the result of the translation exercise and it has a synonymous relation with the term 'literal translation'. The texts that are considered equivalent are seen as integrated into a common culture, into the interaction between the translator and the text/s.

There are different types of equivalence: cognitive, affective, intuitive, denotative, and connotative. It can also be standard, pragmatic, dynamic. The last one shows a powerful connection between the translator and his/her readers, the translator having the mission to make his/her readers really live the events, situations or the messages.

I am going to refer a bit farther to the *functional equivalence*, without giving it the same space in this article. The functional equivalence is said to be specific to proverbs because it targets not only the linguistic signs but also their meanings and their users.

What is also very important is the fact that through the equivalence mechanism, the proverbs translation becomes a search effort in the target language (TL). It can also be a semantic analysis of the text in the source language (SL). The degree of equivalence allows the acceptance of the solution.

I.2. When a text is re-created through the translation exercise, the sender of the message has to cope with the addressee's register and at the same time the addressee has to understand the sender's

language. It is called in translation terms a ‘spiritual transfer’. Such a ‘spiritual transfer’ is almost the image of a ‘perfect text’. The universal text is also very difficult to be obtained as it has to contain universal human values.

Romanian translators have been successful in both re-creating and conveying human values, as we do have nowadays what Mircea Eliade had as a dream that has become reality: a universal library offering the world prose writers, poets or playwrights translated into Romanian. There has been performed the reverse exercise as well: outstanding Romanian writers, poets or playwrights have been translated into different foreign languages, too.

II. Is translation a pure interlingual and interpretive exercise?

II.1. Target language readers do find themselves, sometimes, faced with contextual information that the source text authors understand differently. Such a situation can be explained either by the norms of structural organization that function in the two languages (viewed as ‘source’ and ‘target’) according to each specific linguistic system or the semantic mechanism that implies vocabulary choice and discourse analysis.

Many researchers suggest the possibility of an ‘interpretive use across language boundaries’ in the case of translation [Gutt, E-A: 2000]. English and Romanian do not belong to the same language family. Still, they have French as a common ‘denominator’. French and Romanian belong to the romance languages family and on the other hand French has considerably influenced English in its whole linguistic system developed along the centuries (the most undeniable proof is the English vocabulary that has 40% words of French origin—a natural consequence of three centuries during which French was the administrative official language for the English kingdom born after the Norman Conquest in 1066).

Within the translation process, proverbs, seen as phraseological units or better said, independent texts, seem to be subjected to different types of reorganizations, transformations or modifications. There are, however, proverbs that illustrate the perfect transfer from the source language (SL) to the target language (TL)¹:

E: Better buy than borrow.

R: Mai bine cumperi decât să împrumuți.

The above example is what we can call ‘word-for-word’ translation, the two languages displaying a pattern that involves the following structure: Adv.—Verb (comparison particle)—Verb.

II. 2. Method and corpus.

Due to the fact that translation is considered a multi-faceted task, my analysis, centered on the English and Romanian proverbs structure, will represent a combination of approaches among which I mention the relevance theory and the discourse analysis.

Within the corpus I selected, I have searched for:

- exact vs derived information:

E: Don’t sell the bearskin before you killed the bear.

R: Nu vinde pielea ursului din pădure.

(the first parts of the two paremic units are identical as pattern and meaning, while for the second part English retains the moment of killing the animal and the Romanian version focuses on the ‘place’ the animal lives in—the forest/ ‘din pădure’)

- optimal relevance:

E: If you buy the cow, take the tail into the bargain.

R: Când te apuci de o treabă, n-o lăsa fără ispravă.

The transfer from the SL to the TL, in the above example is performed through what we can call ‘indirect translation’, fostering a personal apprehension of the message: English values the act of ‘buying’ which implies negotiation and the checking of the ‘bought’ object—be it [+animate] or [-animate]. The animal which is taken as the example of the buying act—the cow—is usually valued for the milk and the meat. The source text author implies that ‘the tail’ is also important and he does oblige the addressee of the message to think about all the elements that are necessary for a successful acquisition. The Romanian version of the English above mentioned proverb underlines another aspect: the importance of bringing to a good end a good beginning.

- a presumption of optimal resemblance:

E: The buyer needs a hundred eyes, the seller but one.

R: Mușteritul trebuie să se uite de zece ori, negustorul doar o dată.

There are, obviously, different attitudes and ideas concerning proverbs and the result of the translation process in proverbs. The majority of comparative works conclude on the difficulty of rendering the meaning as a whole in ready-made clichés. That is why changes—during the transfer from SL text to TL text—may occur under the form of possible:

- contamination:

R: Economul bun își cumpără iarna car și vara sanie.

E: Have not thy cloak to make when it begins to rain.

(the wise man is both the person who buys cheaper needed objects during seasons when they are on sale and the one who has his clothes made before the cold weather begins)

- enlargement:

R: Să cumperi vecinii întâi și apoi casa.

E: You must ask your neighbour if you shall live in peace.

(the neighbours are to be asked if the buyer of the house can live peacefully)

- reduction:

R: Nu cumpăra mâța-n sac/ pisica-n traistă.

E: To buy a pig in a poke.

(from a SL negative sentence where the cat is in a sack, the TL retains a cliché, underlining the danger of buying something without seeing it)

The corpus extracted from Virgil Lefter's "Dicționar de proverbe, Englez-Român și Român-Englez", Teora, 2007, having the ethnofields of 'to buy' and 'to sell' as well as their Romanian versions, made possible an accurate analysis through the relevance theory mechanism and concepts, especially 'the degree of relevance' and 'the contextual effect'.

III. Direct/ indirect translation vs the relevance theory. Where should we place the equivalence?

III.1 The idea of the complete resemblance between the source language utterance/text and the target language utterance/text seems to be a possible definition of the direct translation:

E: Better buy than borrow.

R: Mai bine să cumperi decât să împrumuți.(translation)

The above example excludes the explication of implicit information or changes in language. The idea of 'property' is universally desired and this might be the success of this direct translation example. The linguistic and the cultural differences seem to be annulled.

The question that may arise is whether the translator understands the cognitive environment accurately or not? The main advantage offered by a direct translation is that it provides the frame of reference for its own evaluation. In indirect translation there is the translator's presumption that his interpretation adequately resembles the original text in respects relevant to the target language text.

According to Sang Zhonggan [2006: 47], the difference between direct and indirect translation is to be found in the degree of 'complete interpretive resemblance' vs. 'the adequate resemblance in relevant respects' of the transfer from the source language text to the target language text. Sang Zhonggan' hypothesis is that translation is a clues based interpretive use of languages across language boundaries.

III.2. Translation validity vs. translation fidelity can be seen in what Roman Jakobson named in 1959 'equivalence'. During the 21st century very many other voices pleaded for the importance of communication, of the translator's intention(s) and the source text functions. Admitting that translation is an interlingual interpretive process means, in fact, that we can see in translation 'an act of ostensive-inferential interlingual interpretation of the source text' [Zhao, Y.C: 1999, cited by Sang, Z: 2006]:

E1: He that buys land, buys many stones.

E2: He that buys flesh, buys many bones.

E3: He that buys eggs buys many shells, but he that buys good ale buys nothing else.

R: Cine cumpără pământ, se-alege cu pietre, cine cumpără carne rămâne cu oasele, cine târguiește ouă are parte de coji, dar cel ce cumpără bere bună, acela n-are ce pierde.
(trad.)

The above example shows that the translation exercise can be conducted via pragmatic-semantic strata of the text to be translated. The translator took into account the linguistic and the contextual difference between the source text and the target text. The direct translation was possible up to a point. The English proverb displayed three parts of the buying act, when any person who buys 'land' finds 'stones' or 'bones' after buying 'flesh' or 'shells' after buying 'eggs'. The last part which can be seen as a conclusion is different in the English proverb as compared to the Romanian translation. For the English source text reader buying 'ale' means buying 'ale' and nothing else. For the target source reader (a Romanian one) the person who buys 'ale' has 'nothing to lose'. The contextual difference here is a matter of cultural awareness and clues-based interpretive exercise, a step towards relevance theory.

III.3. Between 'to buy' and 'to sell' as two pragmatic poles of everyday life, I shall select a very well known proverb that entered the category of the 'equivalent' versions.

When somebody utters:

E: Knowledge is power.

the Romanian addressee does understand that:

R: Învățătura e cea mai bună avuție

(E: Knowledge/Learning is the best wealth)

or

Ochii înțeleptului văd mai departe

(E: The wise man's eyes do see farther)

The above equivalence that is labelled as 'functional' makes us reconsider the analogy exercise because what is transferred from the SL to the TL is the moral message and a possible metaphor (in the case of the wise man's eyes).

In such a case the *adaptation* solution seems to correspond to a socio-cultural reality that is specific to the TL—Romanian for the above example.

IV. Principles, rules and exceptions

IV.1. If we are tempted to believe Savory's rather negative evaluation of translation principles—there are no universally accepted principles of translation—then we can believe that different read-

ings of the same text may appear as distinct strategies for obtaining the most appropriate meaning.

Savory's 'pair-wise' contradictory translation principles rotate themselves around modal verbs like 'must', 'should', 'may' and hide, in a way, the importance of the main verbs like 'read', 'reflect', 'possess', 'add', 'omit' or 'be'. The 12 principles are well known and my intention is not to analyse them but to underline the importance of a possible shift from the descriptive- classificatory approach to an open explanatory one.

Proverbs, with their unique status of both literary and philosophical texts in themselves, can illustrate the hypothesis according to which translation is a clues-based interpretive use of language across language boundaries. They address themselves to individual source text readers/speakers as well as to collective ones, whose cognitive environment may be different from that of any other. Still, what really makes proverbs universal, is the metarepresentational use of the utterance and topics/themes they convey.

IV.2. When referring to explicit vs implicit interpretive translation exercise, there can be a lower order of representation lying, in the resemblance of the communicative clues, while the truthfulness of the state of affairs may appear as a background image. According to Sang Zhonggang, citing Gutt, E-A, the higher-order representation includes the intuition of the communication as well as the communicative clues in the text. Translation, considered as a part of cross-culture communication is a higher-order communication, embracing the lower-order communication:

R: Cine deschide ochii după ce cumpără, cumpără totdeauna marfă proastă.

E1: The buyer needs a hundred eyes, the seller but one.

E2: Measure thrice what you buyest and cut it once.

The above example, which in the source language text—Romanian—displays a general universal relative pronoun 'cine' [who] as a starting point of the utterance, continues in the i-mode (based on the meaning intention), 'deschide ochii după ce cumpără' and develops the c-mode (based on the communicative clue of the verb 'a cumpăra', 'cumpără totdeauna marfă proastă'). A word-for-word translation of the Romanian proverb would give: 'who opens

the eyes after having bought, always buys bad merchandise'. The first English version of the Romanian proverb I am analyzing has given 'The buyer needs a hundred eyes, the seller but one', emerging in the c-mode, as it gives the communicative clues 'buyer' vs 'seller' and infers the intention of the original communication: a buyer has to be very careful/attentive, looking at he/she wants to buy as having a hundred eyes, the seller does not need to be very attentive. The second English version as well as the first one implies 'the object/merchandise', without naming it as such. The idea of 'carefulness' remains. The 'buyer' (named in the first English version but absent in the second English version and contained only in the verb 'to measure') has to be attentive *before* buying, and more than that he/she has to 'measure' before 'cutting'. The implicit 'object' does not exist in the English text surface structure (though it does exist in the Romanian surface structure, the transfer from the source language text—Romanian—to the target language text—English—being performed through an omission). The communicative clues 'buyer' and 'seller' make the inferential combination 'buy'—'the buyer' vs. 'sell'—'seller' opposed to the verb 'to measure', building the context and recovering the information of the Romanian source degree text—'the bad merchandise'. The second English version adds to 'the total communication intended or assumed by the writer [Larson: 1984] the importance of a 'wise, buyer who needs to measure carefully before cutting the 'merchandise'.

IV.3. The text vs the context opposition is found in the causal interaction between the two entities. The translator aim is to 'maintain a successful communication, irrespective of cultural and linguistic barriers, achieving an interpretive resemblance of the two texts. The context role is therefore very important if we think about the degree to which the target language text is relevant to the target language reader/receptor/hearer and faithful to the source text reader.

Going back to the example I have chosen:

R: Cine deschide ochii după ce cumpără, cumpără totdeauna marfă proastă.

(source language text—SLT1)

E1: The buyer needs a hundred eyes, the seller but one.

(target language text—TLT2)

E2: Measure thrice what you buyest, and cut it but once.

(target language text—TLT3)

The translator's task has been to make the strata of T1 (the phonetic units, the semantic units, the schematized aspect units as well as the objective portrayed units) [Ingarden: 1073] equivalent to the source language versions of the English text.

The translator of the Romanian proverb succeeded, in my opinion, to make sure that the target language texts both T2 and T3 resemble the source language text adequately. The four stratified structures of T1 met the causal interaction of T2 and T3. Regarding the meaning, T1 needed no significant change when the target language text T2 emphasized the role of the 'buyer':

E1: The buyer needs a hundred eyes.

as opposed to:

R: Cine deschide ochii după ce cumpără...
[Who opens the eyes after buying...]

Relevance as a comparative notion is different in degree if we discuss the second English version –T3– of the Romanian proverb. In T3—*Measure thrice what you buyest, and cut it but once*, the key word is 'buyest'. There is here, however, a modifying pattern of resemblance of the target language text meaning. The main emphasis in T3 is on 'measuring' and 'cutting' which can bring the implicit information of a possible 'tailor' who could have bought the 'merchandise'. It is very true that what Lakoff [1991] called 'possible factors' that can influence the language behavior (like class, gender, occupation) and may bring some light within the text-context relationship in the case of T3.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that translation and the theory of relevance can work together in terms of processing efforts and contextual effects in the case of proverbs. From the undertaken analysis of the ethnofields 'to buy' and 'to sell' in English proverbs and their Romanian versions 'a cumpăra' and 'a vinde' it is very obvious that the translator of the source language text had to take into account the addressee's competence and the information that is given. The information can be a 'comprehensible input' in Krashen's terms or can be implicit.

Proverb translation can be compared to literary texts translation. There is, nevertheless, a specificity that cannot be denied or

ignored. A proverb as a source language text may represent a starting point. The target language text can contain words that correspond to the source language text, with regard to their function. In proverb translation, one can also find:

- a word game;
- words that rhyme, referring to different targets;

R: Cine nu te știe, te vinde, iar cine te știe, te cumpără.

E: He who doesn't know you sells you, he who knows you, buys you.

I can affirm that relevance theory is applicable to translation and to proverb translation and proverb equivalence, too. Relevance can be optimal or even strong if the translation is a direct one. The weak relevance appears if the target language text changes the source text strata or even the meaning:

R: Inima de *vânzător* e venin otrăvitor.

E: In the heart of a *traitor* there is the most venomous poison (translation).

(the Romanian word 'vânzător' corresponds to both the English words 'seller' and 'traitor')

On the other hand, as translation is a complex process, I cannot deny the importance of subjective thinking, even when we deal with small texts as proverbs. The Romanian source text can pick up a certain term while the English version chooses another. In the following example even if we deal with the world of wild animals, the difference between the 'actors' is a huge one:

R: Nu vinde pielea *vulpilor* înainte de a o prinde.

E: Don't sell the *bear's/lion's* skin before you killed the bear/lion.

(Romanian prefers 'the fox' to the 'bear/lion' and Romanian does not kill the fox, it catches it)

In everything that displays the proverbs' implicit information, we can deal with the source text author's competence vs the target text reader's/hearer's competence. The context is important even if proverbs appear as texts in themselves.

Notes

¹ My approach is a comparative one, implying the differences in patterns of cohesion of either English(SL) and Romanian(TL) proverbs or Romanian(SL) and English(TL) proverbs, within two ethnofields: 'to buy' and 'to sell' and respectively 'a cumpăra' vs 'a vinde'.

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Appendices

Equivalent proverbs

1. E: A friend in need is a friend indeed, or A friend is never known till a man have need.
R: Prietenul la nevoie se cunoaște.
2. E: Love is blind.
R: Dragostea e oarbă./ Dragostea nu are ochi.
3. E: Speech is silver(n), silence is gold(en).
R: Vorba/Cuvântul e (de) argint, tăcerea e (de) aur
4. E: Still waters are deep.
Still (/smooth) waters run deep.
Take heed of still waters, they quick pass away.
R: Apele liniștite sunt adânci
Ca apa lină, nicio primejdie mai rea;
Apele line sunt amăgitoare (/mult te-nșală);
Apa stătătoare e des înșelătoare.;
Râul lin are apa afundă.
5. E: Knowledge is power.
R: Învățătura e cea mai bună avuție.
Ochii înțeleptului văd mai departe.
6. E: Everything has an end.
R: Tot începutul are și sfârșit.
Orice început are și sfârșit.
7. E: Every country has its customs.
R: Fiecare țară cu (/are) obiceiurile ei.
8. E: I cannot be your friend and your flatterer too.
R: Prieten adevărat e acela care te sfătuiește de bine , iar nu acela care îți laudă nebuniile.

9. E: Everything is good in its season.
R: Toate la vremea lor. *sau* Orice lucru este bun la timpul său.
10. E: When you are at Rome, do as Rome does/as the Romans do.
R: După al locului obicei, să te porți și tu în orice bordei.

Translated proverbs from English to Romanian

To buy/A cumpara & To sell/A vinde

1. E: Better buy than borrow.
R: Mai bine să cumperi decât să împrumuți. (trad.)
2. E: If you buy a cow, take the tail into the bargain.
R: Când te apuci de o treabă n-o lăsa fără ispravă.
3. E: The buyer needs a hundred eyes, the seller but one.
R: Mușterii trebuie să se uite de zece ori, negustorul doar o dată.
4. E: He that buys land buys many stones; he that buys flesh buys many bones;
He that buys eggs buys many shells; but he that buys good ale buys nothing else.
R: Cine cumpără pământ, se-alege cu pietre, cine cumpără carne rămâne cu oasel, cine târguiește ouă are parte de coji, dar cel ce cumpără bere bună, acela n-are ce pierde.
(trad.)
5. E: Don't sell the bearskin before you killed the bear.
R: Nu vinde pielea ursului din pădure.
6. E: Ale sellers should not be tale –tellers.
R: Cârciumarul care știe toate ale mușteriiilor săi, nu trebuie să bată toba.
7. E: Buy the truth and do not sell it....wisdom, instruction and insight as well.
Get the truth and never sell it; also get wisdom, discipline and good judgement/wisdom, instruction and understanding.
R: Cumpără adevărul și nu-l vinde....înțelepciune, educație și vi-ziune.
Obține adevărul și nu-l vinde...obține și înțelepciune și bună judecată.

Translated proverbs from Romanian to English

A cumpăra/To buy

1. R: Cine deschide ochii după ce cumpără, cumpără totdeauna marfă proastă.
E: The buyer needs a hundred eyes, the seller but one.
Measure thrice what you buyest and cut it but once.
2. R: Cine nu te știe, te vinde, iar cine te știe, te cumpără.
E: He who doesn't know you, sells you, he who knows you, buys you.(trad.)

3. R: Economul bun își cumpără iarna car și vara sanie..
E: Have not thy cloak to make when it begins to rain.
4. R: Nu cumpăra mâța-n sac/pisica-n traistă.
E: To buy a pig in a poke.
5. R: Omul cuminte/gospodar își cumpără vara sanie și iarna car.
E: In fair weather prepare for foul.
He is wise that is aware in time.
6. R: Să cumperi vecinii întâi și apoi casa.
E: You must ask your neighbour if you shall live in peace.
7. R: Săracul cumpără scump.
E: The poor man's shilling is but a penny.
8. R: Calul bun se vinde din grajd.
Calul bun din grajd se vinde; și mai bun preț pe el prinde.
E: Good ware makes quick markets.
9. R: La grădinar castraveți să nu vinzi.
E: An old fox needs learn no craft.
10. R: Nu se vinde gogoșarului, gogoși.
E: You must not teach fish to swim.
11. R: Nu vinde pielea vulpii înainte de a o prinde.
E: Don't sell the bear's /lion's skin before you killed the bear/lion.
12. R: Inima de vânzător e venin otrăvitor.
E: In the heart of a traitor there is the most venomous poison. (trad.)
13. R: Cu bani nu poți cumpăra fericirea, dar poți s-o închiriezi.
E: Money does not buy hapiness but you may rent it.
14. R: Banii nu aduc învățătură, dar învățătura aduce bani.
E: Knowledge is power.

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HAPPINESS IN MODERN ANGLO-AMERICAN PROVERBS: A LINGUOCULTURAL STUDY

Abstract: This study analyses a corpus of 103 Anglo-American proverbs that belong to the thematic field “happiness” found in the two most recent major Anglo-American proverb collections: *A Dictionary of American Proverbs*, edited by Wolfgang Mieder, Stewart A. Kingsbury, and Kelsie B. Harder (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), and *A Dictionary of American Proverbs*, edited by Charles Clay Doyle, Wolfgang Mieder, and Fred Shapiro (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2012). The aim of the study is to outline and discuss the proverb-based popular notion of happiness in present-day U.S. culture. The research methods involve two steps: the linguocultural approach and its further part, the culturematic analysis, which are intended for explicating the proverb culturemes and messages, and a summary and discussion of the findings obtained via this analysis for outlining the cultural content of the concept of happiness in present-day American society.

Keywords: American culture, Anglo-American proverbs, happiness, cultureme, culturematic analysis, linguocultural approach, theme.

Introduction

The rich and inexhaustible treasure trove of proverbs, which unites in one complex, huge hypertext contrasting categories like the sublime and the everyday, the uplifting and the pessimistic, the didactic and the permissive, the ennobling and the cynical, the romantic and the prosaic, the tragic and the comic, the rational and the absurd, the witty and the banal—belongs to the most enduring monuments of the creative human impulse working through the ages. Proverbs are like life itself – indisputable, authoritative, and often unfathomable. They derive from the incessant urge in the soul of the creative individual to come to terms with a baffling experience, articulate an inner insight, put in human language the awe felt at seeing something breathtakingly beautiful, or commend a clever way of coping with a prob-

lem. By clothing their personal observations and insights in vivid, compact and memorable form, the generations of unknown proverb authors make possible the storing and transmission to their children and grandchildren of this constantly growing body of **precedent mini-texts**, these ready-made nuggets of wisdom gleaned directly from life's trials and tribulations in the form of witty comments or well-meaning advice, which can be learned and applied in life by many others.

Compared to all other literary genres, one striking characteristic of proverbs is that among perhaps all other types and modes of artistic creation, they seem to somehow best bridge the gap between vastly different languages, epochs, historical periods, natural landscapes, ethnic groups, social classes, religions, ideological affiliations, generations, or levels of education. Proverbs are truly unique in being the meeting ground of sublime religious revelations or philosophical reasoning and the down-to-earth, shrewd wisdom of the common folk, as Ralph Waldo Emerson noted nearly two centuries ago—in 1841 (Mieder 2014: 11; *Collected Works II*, 186–187, quoted in: Mieder 2014: 269–270). They thus serve as a perfect tool for communication, a most eloquent language that can be understood equally well by the highly educated citizens of the technological societies and the illiterate among the masses, as well as by tribesmen inhabiting some of the most remote, isolated and inhospitable parts of the earth—the desert, the jungle, the tundra, the high mountain, the barren plateau. Proverbs reach down to the most fundamental layers of the human psyche and, as if by a kind of magic similar to that found in the folk and fairy tales, they succeed miraculously in surpassing all natural and cultural boundaries, be they biological, social, or intellectual, uniting in a single, powerful embrace the whole of the human race.

A cursory glance through the proverbs in the multilingual proverb collections we are familiar with shows that “happiness” is a constantly recurring theme. The committed proverb scholar would certainly find it very rewarding to undertake the comparison of the proverb-based notions of happiness in the folklores of several different linguocultures across time and space. Should this be done, a common core would no doubt emerge, notwithstanding the diverse language and cultural differences, for the

pursuit of happiness has always been among the most basic human preoccupations.

Aims of the study, method and material

In this paper, my aim is to look at the contemporary Anglo-American proverbs about happiness. “Happiness” is one of the key words that have come to define modern American culture. This is evidenced in Paul Aron’s book *We Hold These Truths ... And Other Words That Made America*, published in 2009, where the author writes: “[a]ll men are created equal. Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness’. – These two collocations sum up the American creed as upheld by most American statesmen and politicians and the American people as a whole since the drafting of the Declaration of Independence in 1776, a document that is universally seen as the defining statement of the American identity and has become akin to holy writ” (Aron 2009: 91–96, quoted in: Mieder 2014: 151, 167). The word “happiness”, then, denotes a concept that has become very dear to every American. But what exactly does this word mean to American people? What exactly is the typically American idea of happiness like?

Answers to these questions can be yielded in a variety of ways—by conducting a sociocultural study with a specifically designed questionnaire, by studying the way happiness is presented in U.S. media, by exploring how the notion of happiness is represented in literary works by American authors, or by simply talking to people and observing them. I believe that one particularly promising and rewarding way to get very close to the American notion of happiness is through analysing the Anglo-American proverbs that are dealing with this theme. Proverbs, these “concise traditional statements of general truths with currency among the folk”, are described by Wolfgang Mieder as “short, generally known sentences of the folk that contain wisdom, truths, morals, and traditional views in a metaphorical, fixed, and memorable form and that are handed down from generation to generation” (Mieder 1996: 597, quoted in Mieder 2014: 21). These short, well-familiar texts, known for their wide currency and traditionality, can therefore provide the researcher with the most authentic knowledge of this typical American value.

In linguoculturology, the concept of happiness has already been analysed in great depth in several studies and monographs by the Russian scholar Professor Sergey Vorkachev, one of the founders of linguoconceptology (Vorkachov 2001, 2002, 2004), and has received further attention in subsequent works, again in Russian (cf. Vashteulova 2012). Vorkachov's works however focus predominantly on the Russian concept of happiness, while A. S. Vashteulova's article studies happiness vs. unhappiness in American political and literary discourse, and not in proverbs or folklore. The review of much of the available literature in paremiology shows that no significant attempt at studying the Anglo-American proverbs about happiness has been undertaken so far, so I hope the present paper, by being probably the first of its kind in terms of the combination of topic, method and material (empirical data), will provide a clue not only to this specifically American concept, but also to a proverb-based, i.e. traditional and thus enduring and truthful representation of a fragment of the character of the American **linguocultural personality**. The latter term, which is beginning to acquire wide currency in linguoculturology, denotes an abstraction similar to that signified by the term "average man/woman/citizen" used in sociology. The linguocultural personality is, briefly stated, a mental construction, a "virtual" person, an artificially constructed human type, whose language and culture represent the most characteristic, invariant, basic features of a given ethnic group or nation (Maslova 2001: 120), although it may also mean a widely recognized figure, often a writer, who is generally regarded as a typical representative of a certain linguoculture (Petrova and Denizov 2014). By taking us closer to the American linguocultural personality, this study will also help us reveal the driving force and motivation behind the efforts and exploits of generations of American people, their most sacred dreams and aspirations. The proverb-based knowledge of this key value in American culture will thus additionally contribute to our understanding of happiness as an essential human value and global pursuit, particularly given the unique status of the English language (and, more particularly, its American variety) as the lingua franca of the people all over the world today and its great influence on those who speak English as a foreign language (Petrova 2012a).

The corpus we will be dealing with is made up of all the proverbs belonging to the thematic field of happiness found in the two major contemporary Anglo-American proverb collections, *The Dictionary of American Proverbs*, henceforth DAP (1992), and the *Dictionary of Modern Proverbs*, henceforth DMP (2012). The selection procedure has aimed to identify the proverbs about happiness regardless of whether or not the lexeme “happiness” was part of their wording. It consists in putting the question, “Is this sentence a proverb about happiness?” to an intuitively “suspected” text; if the answer is “Yes”, then the sentence qualifies for inclusion in the corpus. For example, if this question is put to the proverb *Happiness is a journey, not a destination* (DMP), the answer will quite simply be “Yes, it is”, while if we put it to *Only God can make a tree* (DMP), the answer will be “No, this proverb is not about happiness, it is about religion and God”. If we were to put this question to the metaphorical proverb *The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence* (DMP), the answer would again be negative—“No, this proverb is not about happiness, it is about envy”. Interestingly enough, each of the texts selected via this procedure lists the lexeme “happy” or one of its derivatives in its wording, which is not always the case when applying it to identify some other themes; as can be seen in the last example above, figurative texts as a rule do not include the corresponding thematic lexeme or phrase in their wording. A similar example is the popular English proverb *An apple a day keeps the doctor away*, which does not include the thematic word “health” in its wording.

An explanation about the sources is needed at this point. Of the two modern collections used for this study, the earlier dictionary—DAP—is based entirely on field research stretching over almost half a century across a very large area within the U.S.A. and some neighbouring territories in south-eastern Canada (DAP, Preface: xiv), while DMP, which includes proverbs that have originated in English not earlier than 1900 and for the first time has made use of Internet sources, appears to be even more global in scope (cf. DMP, Introduction: x). One might suggest that it is precisely the global scope of DMP that has dissuaded its editors from adding the usual ethnonym to the title, which would have otherwise read either *A Dictionary of Modern Anglo-American Proverbs*, *A Dictionary of Modern Proverbs in*

the English Language, A Dictionary of Modern Proverbs in Anglo-American Usage, or A Dictionary of Anglo-American Proverbs in Modern Communication Across the Globe, instead of the “nation-less” and somewhat “globalistic” title *A Dictionary of Modern Proverbs*. But I would like to draw the attention of the reader to another especially important detail. There is indeed a time lag of only two decades between the publications of these two collections, and this fact alone has some rather interesting implications. On the one hand, the two publication dates—1992 and 2012—pertain to two very close synchronic planes of the evolution of the proverb genre. Technically, they fall into the same, most recent, contemporary period of development of the Anglo-American linguoculture, which means that both collections contain “living proverbs”, texts that are “in actual use in American speech” (DAP, Preface: ix). But what is of particular importance for the present study is that in terms of the timing of the publications vis-à-vis the advent of the Third Information Revolution, which began in earnest in the early 1990s with the massive introduction of the Internet that brought in its wake the unprecedented Anglobalisation Period in human history, the years 1992 and 2012 belong to two very different periods within its modern phase, which can be termed “before the Anglo-American Globalisation” and “after the start of the Anglo-American Globalisation”. We can assume, then, that this fact is at least one of the reasons accounting for the striking differences in content, style and, most particularly, messages of many of the texts in the two collections. If we were allowed to make some broad generalisations, we would venture the opinion that the proverbs in DAP on the whole tend to belong to the old, archetypal proverb type as we know it: wise, traditional, didactic, poetic, uplifting, while those in DMP bear many of the characteristics of the anti-proverbs: witty, amusing, blunt, prosaic, sarcastic, even obscene and cynical. Some of these peculiar characteristics, especially of the DMP corpus, have already been discussed in great detail in several recent works by Wolfgang Mieder (Mieder 2012, 2014) as well as by myself (Petrova 2013a, 2013b, 2014a, 2014b, 2015), but, to the best of my knowledge, no attempt has so far been undertaken at comparing the proverbs in the two collections.

The term “culture” has already been used several times in this introduction. We are aware of the practically hundreds of definitions of this term that have arisen over the last century or so, offered by diverse schools and elaborated by representatives of a large variety of disciplines (for brief discussions of this term see: Maslova 2001: 16–23 and Petrova 2004: 25–43). **From a linguocultural perspective, in the present study culture as a social phenomenon and an intrinsic human characteristic should be understood as the dynamic set of values and anti-values that corresponds to the specific way of life of a group of people who share the same language. This set of values is stored in the structures of this language across a period of time and is handed down from one generation to the next through its precedent texts. In this context, a linguoculture is a highly specific language-cum-culture integral.**

Because we will be dealing with the cultural aspect of proverbs, we will be interested first and foremost in their axiological characteristics, i.e., in the values and anti-values making part of their semantics, hence the **linguocultural approach** we have chosen to apply. As I have demonstrated in a number of earlier works (Petrova 2002, 2003, 2004, 2006, 2007, 2010, 2012b, 2013b, 2014a, 2015), in essence, the linguocultural approach basically boils down to “reducing” the proverb (or any other language item or text) to the one (or, very rarely more than one) single major entity it comments and evaluates as positive (desirable or commendable) or negative (something to be avoided) and to relating this cultural entity to the direct or implicit advice given by the proverb (its message). Some proverbs may have more than one such major entity, and also more than one message, but this is comparatively rare. This major entity can be further decomposed into a number of constituent entities, as will be shown below. I call such a positive or negative cultural entity a **cultureme**. The cultureme has a verbal name plus a mathematical positive or negative sign (plus or minus) attached to it. Its name can be identified with the help of the question, “What does this language item or text show as positive or negative?” The cultureme obtained is thus a sign integrating a fragment of a given culture, whose content is denoted verbally by its name, and a positive or negative evaluation attached to it by this culture, denoted by its plus or minus sign. For instance, the entities in an

English-based culture denoted by the words *joy*, *beauty*, or *freedom* are represented by the same words plus a positive sign, e.g., “joy (+)”, “beauty (+)”, and “freedom (+)”, while the cultural entities *death*, *hatred*, and *traitor* are represented with negatively marked verbal signs – the nouns “death (–)”, “hatred (–)”, and “traitor (–)”. Many of the larger language items, which either recommend or criticize or condemn something, among which one-sentence auto-semantic texts, such as the proverbs, as well as larger texts, like fables, anecdotes, poems, stories, narratives, newspaper articles, essays, dramas, even scholarly discourse, etc., are also bearers of such axiologically marked entities. For instance, the major cultureme of the proverb *Love makes the world go round* is “love (+)”, while that of *You can take the horse to the water, but you cannot make him drink* is “coercion (–)” and not “horse”, “water”, or “drinking”. As the latter example shows, the name of the major cultureme of a text does not necessarily participate in the wording of this text, and, as we have seen, this is the case with figurative expressions, idioms, metaphorical proverbs, fables, myths, fairy tales, and so forth, but it nevertheless is there—in the proverb definition (explanation) – “Coercion is useless, it doesn’t work”. Explaining the figurative proverbs by giving their definitions, i.e. interpreting the surface structure of the figurative (metaphorical) sentence into its deep structure, is the indispensable preliminary step that the researcher should take in order to explicate the proverb cultureme and message.

The positive or negative sign of the cultureme can be verified via the proverb message, because **the message of the text provides the context of its major cultureme**. To find out what the message is, we need to put another question to the proverb sentence: “What does this proverb advise us to do / to be, or not to do / not to be?” The answer to this question can have either a positive or a negative modality. For instance, the message of the popular metaphorical proverb *A stitch in time saves nine*—“We must repair things on time to economise on labour, resources, etc.”— is positive, since it urges us to behave in a certain way that is regarded as good and proper, while that of *Sloth is the key to beggary*—“Do not be lazy, avoid sloth”—is negative, since this proverb tells us what we should not do or be. Similarly, the positive message of the proverb *Love makes the world go*

round—“Do things with love to participate more fully in life’s growth”—affirms the positive sign of the cultureme, “love (+)”, while that of *You can take the horse to the water, but you cannot make him drink*—“Abstain from coercion, for such behaviour is useless”—affirms the negative sign of its cultureme, “coercion (-)”. The message thus brings to light in a most clear manner the true axiological (positive or negative) characteristic of the major cultural entity and communicative focus of the proverb. As a means to revealing the hidden major cultureme of texts marked by hyperbole, irony, or sarcasm, the message is truly an indispensable tool. For example, the proverb hyperbole *No good deed goes unpunished* (DMP) advises us implicitly not to expect gratefulness from people to whom we have been good, kind, generous and sincere. Thus, its major focus, the major entity it criticizes, is not the explicitly mentioned goodness or punishment, but human ingratitude, hence its major cultureme, “ingratitude (-)”.

One great advantage of the application of the cultureme in linguocultural studies over the analysis involving the more widely used unit in linguoculturology, **the (linguo)cultural concept** (cf. Slyshkin 2000; Maslova 2001: 51; Vorkachov 2001, 2002, 2004), is that our approach frees the researcher from any preconceived ideas or expectations, making him depend for his conclusions about the hierarchy of the cultural values he is exploring entirely on the text or texts he is studying. A somewhat simplified example should make that idea clear. We can take a corpus of proverbs (or any other class or group of language items or texts) in a language that pertain to a particular historical period, knowing that the greater the corpus the more reliable our findings and conclusions, and through extracting all of the major culturemes and messages from them all and then arranging them along two separate positive and negative quantitative scales according to their **semantic density** (frequency of occurrence and cultural elaborateness), we will obtain a rigorous, data-driven, objective and legitimate representation of the hierarchy of the positively and negatively evaluated entities characterising the linguoculture under study for this particular period. In the process, we shall notice that the bulk of these entities is made up of human values and character traits – both good and bad.

The second more refined stage of the linguocultural approach is the **culturematic analysis**. It consists in further decomposing the text (hypertext, group of texts) into all of its culturemes, after having explicated the major one(s). The resultant culturemes function as components of the major cultureme, thereby providing further and much more detailed knowledge of its subject content. The total number of culturemes thus obtained from a text or body of texts can, in a similar way, also be grouped around themes and arranged hierarchically along two quantitative scales according to their semantic density. The results obtained will be an even more detailed and authentic “global” picture of the linguoculture under study pertaining to a given period. This method has been demonstrated in several of my more recent works, e.g., my monograph of the *Book of Proverbs* in the Authorised Version (King James Bible) (Petrova 2012b), my study of the English proverb *If there were no clouds, we shouldn't enjoy the sun* (Petrova 2013), and elsewhere. The example below with the proverb *Love makes the world go round* is an illustration of the culturematic analysis.

First, the proverb text should be explained, i.e., we have to provide its definition: “When acting out of love, a person (or any other agent, such as God, etc.) is empowered to make things happen, thereby increasing life's growth.”

Next, the proverb sentence is parsed into its immediate constituents. These include

- two noun phrases: *love, the world*, and
- two verb phrases: *makes the world go round*, which contains the phrase *go round*.

Then, the verb phrases are transformed into noun phrases and their imagery is interpreted, thus four more noun phrases are obtained:

- *making the world go round*, a metaphor meaning *making things happen, thereby increasing life's growth*, and
- *going round*, a metaphor meaning being alive and growing.

To the four noun phrases we add the nominalised proverb definition,

- *love as a force that makes things happen, thereby increasing life's growth.*

On the linguistic plane, the structure of the proverb sentence as a finite set of noun phrases is now the following:

- 1) *love*
- 2) *the world*
- 3) *making the world go round*
- 4) *going round*
- 5) *making things happen, thereby increasing life's growth*
- 6) *being alive and growing*
- 7) *love as a force that makes things happen, thereby increasing life's growth.*

Within the context of the proverb, apart from the neutrally evaluated collocations *the world* and *going round*, each of the other noun phrases above has a positive evaluation as part either of its denotation (dictionary meaning) or connotational (contextual) meaning. This should be marked with a positive sign, placed next to the corresponding phrase or word. As a result, we obtain **the complete set of culturemes exhausting the culturematic (cultural) content of the proverb as a complex sign of culture:**

- 1) love (+)
- 2) making the world go round (+)
- 3) making things happen, thereby increasing life's growth (+)
- 4) being alive (+)
- 5) love as a force that makes things happen, thereby increasing life's growth (+).

As can be seen, not all constituent noun phrases exhibit axiological characteristics, therefore not all function as **component signs of culture**.

The positive sign of the major cultureme, "love (+)", can be verified via the proverb message, which is with positive modality: "Act with love, and this will empower you to make things happen, thereby increasing life's growth."

Proverbs are meant to be used in real-life situations on account of the messages they put across for solving a variety of

problems. In communication, they can be used in speech acts, which makes them an object of **linguistic pragmatics**, the study of “people’s intended meanings, their assumptions, their purposes or goals, and the kind of actions (for example, requests) that they are performing when they speak” (Yule 1996: 4). But often the messages of some proverbs are not easy to find because of some hidden, implied meanings in the proverb texts, which the researcher should try to “unearth”. In semantics and linguistic pragmatics such implied meanings have been studied in great depth and described as implicatures, entailments, and presuppositions (Kempson 1992: 139–144; Yule 1996: 25). Apart from them, however, there exist other types of hidden meanings, including the figurative meanings of the images, but also meanings which can only be unravelled via knowledge about the origin, usage and cultural background of the proverb; all of these hidden meanings can be subsumed under the umbrella term **implicit meanings** (from *implicit*, i.e., “implied or understood though not directly expressed”, according to The Free Dictionary). An example of a text with an implicit meaning is the old English proverb *Happy’s the wooing that’s not long a’doing* (DAP). Its definition—“Happy is the wooing which in due time leads to a marriage proposal”—is based on the knowledge (or presumption) that “wooing should in due time lead to a marriage proposal”, which is a fact from traditional English culture. The major cultureme of this sentence is “the happy wooing (+)” since this is the main entity the proverb comments on and evaluates as positive, while the implicit meaning is found not in the proverb sentence, but in the last (third) member of the finite set of its constituent culturemes: 1) “the prolonged wooing (–)”, 2) “making a marriage proposal (+), and 3) “the happy wooing, which leads to a marriage proposal (+)”.

Our next example of a proverb with an implicit meaning is *He is happiest, be he peasant or king, who finds peace in his home* (DAP). The wording of the implicit meaning, “the social status of a person determines his happiness”, is part neither of the proverb sentence, nor of its major cultureme—“the happy person (+)”, but can be identified in the last (third) member of its finite set of constituent culturemes—1) “the person who finds peace in his home (+)”, 2) “finding peace in one’s home (+)”, and 3) “the happy person, who finds peace in his home, regard-

less of his social standing (+)". The collocation "regardless of his social standing" is part of the proverb definition—"When a person finds peace in his home, he is truly happy, regardless of his social standing" and, as we have just seen, it is also part of one of its constituent culturemes. I will call the cultureme whose wording includes the interpretation of the proverb's implicit meaning an **implicit cultureme**. In summary, when a proverb with an implicit meaning undergoes culturematic analysis, it elicits an implicit cultureme, which becomes part of the proverb definition.

The analysis shows that, in a similar way, the culturematic structure of the explicit, literal proverbs includes explicit culturemes that also participate in the wording of the proverb definition. For example, we can decompose the proverb *Happiness is more than riches* (DAP) into its major cultureme, "happiness (+)", and its two constituent ones, 1) "riches (+)", and 2) "happiness as something that surpasses riches (+)", where the latter is a nominalisation of its definition, which in this case is just a modification of the proverb sentence. Let us call the cultureme most fully representing the proverb definition an **explanatory cultureme**. As has become evident so far, proverbs with implicit meanings elicit explanatory culturemes in which are embedded the corresponding implicit culturemes, while the explicit, literal proverbs elicit explanatory culturemes which are nominalisations of the proverb sentence.

Let us now turn to the sign of the explanatory cultureme. Observations show that some proverbs may bear two variants of the same cultureme, each with a different sign, depending on two contrasting interpretations of the proverb text. An example is the proverb *Happiness in this world, when it comes, comes incidentally* (DAP), from which can be elicited two explanatory culturemes, or, rather, the same explanatory cultureme, "the sudden and incidental nature of happiness", but in two varieties—with two different signs—(+), and (-). They derive from the two different, but equally valid definitions of the proverb: "Because happiness is highly unpredictable, there is always hope that one may become happy", which is with positive modality, and "However hard you work to attain happiness, nothing guarantees that you will be happy, because happiness is highly incidental and unpredictable", which is negatively laden because of the

pessimism implied. The different signs of the cultureme can be tested against the two messages of the proverb: the positive, “Keep hoping for happiness to come into your life”, and the negative, “Do not rely on happiness as it is so unpredictable”.

Proverbs with one major cultureme bear only one explanatory cultureme, while those with two or more than two major culturemes—and such proverbs are comparatively rare—bear the same number of explanatory culturemes.

Let it be noted again that with regard to the dichotomy *literal: figurative*, to the types of culturemes listed so far we should also add the **literal** and the **figurative culturemes**. The example below will illustrate the difference.

If we subject the proverb *Happiness is a butterfly* (DAP) to culturematic analysis, we will get the following set: a major cultureme, “happiness (+)”, and four constituent culturemes—1) “happiness as a butterfly (+)”, 2) “butterfly (+)”, 3) “beauty, colourfulness, wantonness and playfulness (+)”, and 4) “happiness as something beautiful, colourful, wanton and playful (+)”, which is the explanatory cultureme of the proverb. The third, 3) “beauty, colourfulness, wantonness and playfulness (+)”, is a figurative cultureme, while the rest are not. The figurative cultureme is derived from the image of the butterfly by “translating” it into “literal” language, and incorporated into the explanatory cultureme.

Finally, let it also be noted that the name of the major proverb cultureme does not necessarily have to be the same as the word or phrase denoting **the theme** to which the proverb belongs, although there are often cases of coincidence (e.g., *Love makes the world go round*, where the thematic word “love” coincides with the name of the major cultureme, “love (+)”). For example, the proverb *No good deed goes unpunished* (DMP), quoted above, belongs to the thematic field “good”, while its major cultureme—“ungratefulness (–)”—is quite a different word.

So far we have seen that **the culturemes in a proverb sentence form a set with one (or, rarely, two or more) major cultureme making up its core, and a finite set of constituent culturemes, among which there are literal, implicit (including the figurative), and explanatory culturemes. In the case of proverbs with implicit meanings, the latter are incorporated into the explanatory cultureme.**

In the way of concluding remarks to this section let us recuperate that the major cultureme is not always found in the wording of the proverb sentence, neither is it the same as the thematic word or phrase of the proverb text. It is a sign denoting the cultural focus of the text (or texts) that serve(s) as its vehicle(s) which enables the researcher to establish quantitatively the ranking and prominence (or lack thereof) of a particular cultural entity versus all other entities stored in a text or body of texts. The constituent culturemes are extensions of the major cultureme. From them, the explanatory cultureme is the most informative one, because it incorporates not only the major cultureme(s) of the proverb text, but also its definition.

Analysis and findings

For the purposes of the study, each text of the corpus of 103 American proverbs about happiness has undergone the procedure outlined in the section above: the images in the figurative proverbs were interpreted, each proverb text was explained, the definition obtained was decomposed into noun phrases, those with axiological characteristics were identified as culturemes and then arranged into a set, the proverb message was formulated, and its sign—compared to the sign of the major cultureme. From the 103 sets of culturemes, only the explanatory culturemes have been chosen for our analysis on account of their being the most informative of all others. Their number, 108, slightly exceeds the number of proverbs under study – by five items. This is because there are a few proverb sentences containing more than one explanatory cultureme. For example, the proverb *It is neither wealth nor splendour, but tranquility and occupation which give happiness* (DAP) bears two explanatory culturemes, “tranquility as a true source of happiness (+)”, and “occupation as a true source of happiness (+)”.

This study focuses on the explanatory culturemes only. It does not deal with the subject content and semantic density of the other culturemes, the stylistic features of the proverbs or their imagery, all of which can undoubtedly provide the researcher with additional, valuable, in-depth knowledge of American culture. They will be explored separately. The present paper is only the first step of a longer project and its aim is limited to giving

an initial, general description of the proverb-based popular notion of happiness in present-day U.S. culture and society.

Below are arranged the **108 explanatory culturemes contained in the 103 proverbs** under study. Next to each in round brackets is placed the corresponding proverb. The culturemes are grouped around the **fifteen themes** that have been elicited from the proverb corpus under study. The theme headings are arranged on a cline according to their semantic density, which is determined by the number of explanatory culturemes and their variants that represent them. The themes represented by the same number of explanatory culturemes occupy the same position on the list. Theme Number One at the top of the hierarchy, “Happiness, which consists in a positive state of mind”, is represented in 19 explanatory culturemes, while the last four themes—Numbers 10.1, 10.2, 10.3, and 10.4—are represented each in a single explanatory cultureme.

1. Happiness, which consists in a positive state of mind—19

- happiness, which derives from a person’s inner life (+) (*All happiness is in the mind.* DAP)
- seeking happiness in a person’s mind (+) (*Happiness is to be sought not outside but within.* DAP)
- tranquility as a true source of happiness (+) (*It is neither wealth nor splendor, but tranquility and occupation which give happiness.* DAP)
- happiness as something that does not consist in things, but in thoughts (+) (*Our happiness does not consist in things but in thoughts.* DAP)
- happiness, which consists in peace of mind and heart (+) (*Real happiness consists of peace of mind and heart.* DAP)
- happiness, which is content (+) (*Content is happiness.* DAP)
- happiness, which is content (+) (*True happiness is in a contented mind.* DAP)
- happiness, which is content (+) (*Happy is he who is content.* DAP)
- happiness, which is an inner state of contentment and abundance (+) (*A poor man can’t be happy because a happy man is never poor.* DAP). The implication is that because the happy man always feels satisfied, he cannot regard himself as poor.

- happiness, which derives from gladness of the heart (+) (*Happiness comes from gladness as light from the sun.* DAP)
- happiness, which is a state of complete inner contentment, i.e., lack of longings (+) (*Happiness has no longings.* DAP)
- the blissfully happy man as a person who has peace of mind (+) (*The man with peace of mind is blissfully happy.* DAP)
- happiness as the art of never holding in one's mind an unpleasant memory (+) (*Happiness is the art of never holding in your mind the memory of any unpleasant thing that has passed.* DAP)
- happiness, which consists in liking the things one has to do (+) (*Real happiness is found not in doing the things you like to do, but in liking the things you have to do.* DAP)
- happiness, which consists in knowing that one still has something to lose (+) (*So long as we can lose any happiness we possess some.* DAP)
- the determination to be happy and enjoy life in spite of the wickedness of the world (+) (*There ain't no happiness in this world so we must be happy without it.* DAP)
- happiness, which is a habit (+) (*Happiness is a habit.* DAP) The implication is that a person can cultivate and maintain a habitual positive inner state.
- the happy man as someone who finds wisdom and gets understanding in the context of the Bible (The Book of Proverbs) (+) (*Happy is the man that finds wisdom and gets understanding.* DAP)
- happiness, which consists in being satisfied with oneself (+) (*One is happy when one is satisfied with one's self.* DAP)

2. Happiness as a state a person can create consciously – 17

- happiness, which is what one makes of one's chances (+) (*Happiness is what you make of it.* DAP)
- happiness, which consists in making the best of one's chances (+) (*One's chances for happiness are what he makes them.* DAP)
- happiness, which is a product of conscious work (+) (*Happiness is for those who make it and not for those who search for it.* DAP)

- occupation as a true source of happiness (+) (*It is neither wealth nor splendor, but tranquility and occupation which give happiness.* DAP)
- attaining happiness by keeping ourselves busy (+) (*To fill the hour—that is happiness.* DAP)
- hard work as a condition for happiness (+) (*Labor is the law of happiness.* DAP)
- happiness as a state of being active (+) (*Man was never so happy as when he was doing something.* DAP)
- happiness, which consists in keeping oneself busy (+) (*Busy hands are happy hands.* DMP)
- happiness as the enjoyment of the process of pursuing one's goals (+) (*Getting what you go after is called success, but liking it while you are getting it is happiness.* DAP)
- the happy man as someone who has a hobby (+) (*Happy is* DAP)
- happiness, which consists in pursuing a [worthy] goal (+) (*There is more happiness in pursuit than in possession.* DAP)
- attaining happiness by living within one's income (+) (*The happiest place in the world to live is within one's income.* DAP)
- attaining happiness by limiting one's wants to one's necessities (+) (*Happy is he who limits his wants to his necessities.* DAP)
- making use of the available happy moments in one's life (+) (*Happiness is where you find it.* DMP)
- happiness, which consists in enjoying whatever one is experiencing while pursuing a goal, regardless of the results (+) (*Happiness is a journey, not a destination.* DMP)
- concealing one's private life from others as a condition for happiness (+) (*Hidden life, happy life.* DMP)
- being happy by being simple (i.e., humble, unpretentious and sincere – The Free Dictionary) (+) (*Happy is he who is simple.* DAP)

3. Happiness, which comes from generosity – 16

- the sharing of one's happiness with others (+) (*Happiness adds and multiplies as we divide it with others.* DAP)
- those who give happiness (+) (*Happiness comes from those who give it.* DAP)

- happiness, which is something rare and precious, which one gives to others and gets some of it oneself (+) (*Happiness is a perfume that you cannot pour on others without spilling a little on yourself.* DAP)

- happiness, which comes as the result of making oneself useful to someone (+) (*Happiness is a wayside flower growing upon the highway of usefulness.* DAP)

- happiness, which consists in making oneself useful to others (+) (*If you want to be happy make yourself useful.* DAP)

- becoming happy by making oneself necessary to somebody (+) (*To be happy, make yourself necessary to somebody.* DAP)

- happiness, which is something delicious that you give to others and get some in the process (+) (*Happiness is like jam: you can't spread even a little without getting some on yourself.* DAP)

- the perfect happiness, which is shared (+) (*Happiness is not perfect until it is shared.* DAP)

- attaining happiness by making others happy (+) (*True happiness consists of making others happy.* DAP)

- being truly happy by making others happy (+) (*You're truly happy if you make others happy.* DAP)

- attaining happiness by keeping others happy (+) (*True happiness consists of keeping others happy.* DAP)

- attaining happiness by making others happy (+) (*Keeping someone else happy is the secret of happiness.* DAP)

- attaining happiness by making others happy (+) (*He is truly happy who makes others happy.* DAP)

- the blessed state of the happiness makers (+) (*Blessed are the happiness makers.* DAP)

- wishing for others everlasting happiness (+) (*May your sun of happiness never set.* DAP)

- attaining happiness through being kind to others (+) (*Kindness brings happiness.* DAP)

4. Happiness as a supreme value—12

- happiness, which is the best reward in life (+) (*Happiness is the best reward.* DAP)

- happiness, which is the true measure of success (+) (*Happiness is the true measure of success.* DAP)

- happiness, which surpasses riches (+) (*Happiness is more than riches.* DAP)
- happiness, which cannot be bought with money (+) (*Money can't buy happiness.* DAP)
- happiness, which cannot be bought with money (+) (*Money will buy everything but real happiness.* DAP)
- happiness, which cannot be bought with money (+) (*Money won't buy happiness.* DAP)
- the richest person, who is not the happiest (-) (*Call not him the happiest who is the richest.* DAP)
- happiness as something preferable to wisdom (+) (*It's better to be happy than wise.* DAP)
- happiness as something better than wisdom (+) (*'Tis more to be good than great; to be happy is better than wise.* DAP)
- happiness as something better than wisdom (+) (*Better be happy than wise.* DAP)
- happiness as something better than wisdom (+) (*Better* DAP)
- money as a factor contributing to our good life, but unable to buy happiness (+) (*Money won't buy happiness, but it will go a long way in helping you.* DAP)

5. Hindrances to happiness—11

- the lack of virtue as the reason for one's unhappy life (-) (*Without virtue happiness cannot be.* DAP)
- sin as a hindrance to being happy (-) (*Sin and happiness cannot dwell together.* DAP)
- the deliberate pursuit of happiness (-) (*Happiness is never found by pursuing it.* DAP). The implication is that a person should practice non-attachment with regard to happiness.
- depending on the approval of others for one's own happiness (-) (*He who seeks for applause from without has all his happiness in another's keeping.* DAP)
- the overlooking of happiness only because it is free (-) (*Much happiness is overlooked because it doesn't cost anything.* DAP)
- depriving ourselves of the happiness we have by selfishly keeping it to ourselves (-) (*We shall never gather happiness if we try to retain it for ourselves.* DAP)

- the loss of happiness as a result of anger (-) (*Every minute you are angry you lose sixty seconds of happiness.* DAP)
- not believing that one is happy (-) (*No man is happy unless he thinks himself so.* DAP)
- the seeking of physiological proof that one is happy (-) (*People are not always feeling their pulse to see if they are happy.* DAP)
- ruining one's happiness by taking a wife (-) (*Whoever is tired of a happy day, let him take a wife.* DAP). This exaggerated proverb may be a joke.
- the unhappy mother, who makes the whole family unhappy (-) (*If mama ain't happy, ain't nobody happy.* DMP). This proverb may be a joke.

6. Positive characteristics of happiness—8

- the long duration of happiness (+) (*Happiness goes on forever.* DAP)
- the power of happiness to make dull and ordinary things look pretty (+) (*In happiness, iron is bright; in sadness, gold is dull.* DAP)
- hope as a result of happiness (+) (*Hope is the blossom of happiness.* DAP)
- the sudden and incidental nature of happiness (+) (*Happiness in this world, when it comes, comes incidentally.* DAP) The implication is that happiness is highly unpredictable, so one can always hope to attain such a state.
- happiness, which is a good sold to humans by nature (+) (*Happiness is a good that nature sells us.* DAP). The implication is that happiness is available for all those who are determined to pay for it.
- the worldly idea of happiness, which is possessing what others can't get (+) (*Most of our happiness in this world consists in possessing what others can't get.* DAP). The implication is that everybody can be happy as long as he knows he possesses something others don't have.
- the happy men, who easily attract friends (+) (*Happy men* DAP)
- the power of happiness to generate good health and drive away disease (+) (*Happy people don't get (fall) sick.* DMP)

- the happy wife, who makes her husband happy (+) (*Happy wife, happy life*. DMP)

7. Happiness as a family-based value – 7

- the good family life, which is a condition for happiness (+) (*Happiness grows at our own firesides and is not to be picked in strangers' gardens*. DAP)

- family unity as a condition for happiness (+) (*In a united family happiness springs out of itself*. DAP)

- the happy husband, who is the happiest among all men (+) (*A happy husband is the happiest of men*. DAP)

- the happy person as someone who finds peace in his home (+) (*He is happy who finds peace in his own home*. DAP)

- being a happy man by liking one's wife although love may long have passed (+) (*A happy man will also like his wife, though love may long have passed*. DAP)

- the happy wooing, which soon ends up with a marriage proposal (+) (DAP)

- the happy wife, who makes her husband happy (+) (*Happy wife, happy life*. DMP)

8.1. Happiness as a state closely related to health—4

- happiness, which is determined by good health (+) (*Happiness makes health, health makes more happiness*. DAP)

- happiness, which is the same as health (+) (*Happiness makes health, health makes more happiness*. DAP)

- happiness as a condition for health (+) (*Happiness makes health, health makes more happiness*. DAP)

- being happy, which is the same as enjoying good health (+) (*To be happy is to be healthy*. DAP)

8.2. Happiness as a state closely related to beauty—4

- happiness, which is beautiful, colourful, wanton and playful like a butterfly (+) (*Happiness is a butterfly*. DAP)

- learning something beautiful every day as a prescription for happiness (+) (*Learn, see, do something beautiful every day is a prescription for happiness*. DAP)

- seeing something beautiful every day as a prescription for happiness (+) (*Learn, see, do something beautiful every day is a prescription for happiness*. DAP)

- doing something beautiful every day as a prescription for happiness (+) (*Learn, see, do something beautiful every day is a prescription for happiness.* DAP)

8.3. Negative characteristics of happiness—4

- the short duration of the deepest happiness (-) (*Deepest happiness is for a short duration.* DAP)

- the sudden and incidental nature of happiness (-) (*Happiness in this world, when it comes, comes incidentally.* DAP). The implication is that however hard you work for your happiness, nothing guarantees that you will attain it.

- happiness, which is a good sold to humans by nature (-) (*Happiness is a good that nature sells us.* DAP). The implication is that one may not be able to afford the price for the happiness that abounds in nature.

- the worldly idea of happiness, which is possessing what others can't get (-) (*Most of our happiness in this world consists in possessing what others can't get.* DAP). The implication is that even if someone has a lot of valuable possessions, if some other people have the same things, he is bound to feel miserable.

9.1. Happiness as dependent on pain and suffering—3

- sorrow as a condition for appreciating happiness (+) (*One does not appreciate happiness unless one has known sorrow.* DAP)

- tribulations as a road to happiness (+) (*The way to happiness is through tribulation.* DAP)

- believing that when things reach their worst, happiness will soon follow (+) (*When things look blackest, happiness is just round the corner.* DAP)

10.1. Happiness, which is verified only after death – 1

- death as the ultimate verification for a happy life (+) (*Call no man happy till he is dead.* DAP)

10.2. Happiness in the home, which depends on the faith in God – 1

- the happy home as a place where faith in God reigns supreme (+) (*There is not a happy home on earth but stands on faith.* DAP)

10.3. Being happy, which takes courage – 1

- being happy, which takes courage (+) (*Happiness is a form of courage*. DAP)

10.4. The happy bride, who has sunshine on her wedding day – 1

- the happy bride, who has sunshine on her wedding day (+) (*Happy is the bride the sun shines on*. DAP)

Discussion

Before discussing the subject content of this thematic group of proverbs, first let us look at their origin. If we refer to the introductory notes in DAP, they will tell us that many of the American texts are inherited from older, predominantly British sources: as the editors have put it, “[t]he value of this dictionary...lies in its registration of both traditional English-language proverbs, and new, indigenous American proverbs (DAP, Preface: xii– xiii). Therefore, the name “Anglo-American” introduced by Wolfgang Mieder, is the most adequate name for describing the proverbs current in America. Among the proverbs about happiness, which total 103, ninety six of which belong to DAP, the traditional British texts can be traced back to well-known sources such as *The Consolation of Philosophy* by Boethius in Geoffrey Chaucer’s translation (1391), Richard Taverner’s collection *Proverbs of Erasmus* (1539), John Heywood’s *Dialogue of Proverbs* (1546), Joseph Addison’s periodical series *The Spectator* (1712), Alexander Pope’s poetic essay *Essay on Man* (1733), Thomas Fuller’s *Gnomologia* (1732), even some works by romantic poets, e.g., *Don Juan* by George Gordon, Lord Byron (1818). All this points to a stable, enduring cultural tradition, which has never been interrupted. But apart from the British traditional texts, there is also a number of older, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century American proverbs in this group which belong to works by Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Nathaniel Hawthorne and other notable American statesmen and authors, although it is worth remembering that during this period American men (and, certainly, women) of letters were as a rule still expected to follow British literary models. Of the 103 excerpted texts, the total number of British traditional proverbs about happiness in DAP is only 18

(slightly over 19% of 96), while the ones taken from works by eighteenth- and nineteenth-century American writers amount to only seven (7% of 96). So, the larger part of the texts in DAP – the 78 proverbs, which can be described as “recent” or “modern” (on account of their being recorded after the start of the twentieth century), are local American coinages that have sprung up in diverse parts of the country and continent. They constitute 81% of the corpus of 96 texts and represent the modern popular concept of happiness in American culture. These numbers and proportions come to show that the word “American” in the title (*The Dictionary of American Proverbs*) should be understood in the context of the unique historical and geographical conditions under which the American culture has come to exist. It blends traditional European and British trends with new, fresh and vigorous local American influences, which by far predominate. The high percentage of modern proverbs in DAP also testifies to the youth of the American nation.

As far as the prominence of the theme of happiness is concerned, let us now turn again to some figures and percentages. As mentioned above, the total number of proverbs about happiness excerpted from DAP and DMP is 103, and only seven of them belong to DMP, but in terms of proportion the percentages for the corresponding collections coincide almost completely: 0.64% for DAP, and 0.68% for DMP, each group thus making up less than one percent of the total number of texts in either corpus, which is approximately 15,000 for DAP and exactly 1,422 for DMP. So, if we were to make judgments about the prominence of the “happiness” theme in terms of its semantic density (i.e., the proportional representation of the proverbs about happiness versus the total number of proverbs in both corpora under study – 16, 422), we can safely assume that this theme is indeed of some significance, but, especially as far as DMP is concerned, it is not as central as some other themes according to the key words of the proverbs, such as life, man, sports, business, finance and money (cf. Mieder 2014: 110–115).

Our next focus is the axiological character of this thematic group. The ratio of positive to negative explanatory culturemes is 95 : 13, which means that happiness is defined almost completely positively. In the comparatively small number (13) of negative explanatory culturemes (e.g., “the short duration of the deepest

happiness (-)", "the loss of happiness as a result of anger (-)", "depriving ourselves of the happiness we have by selfishly keeping it to ourselves (-)", and ten more), happiness is not denied, undervalued or denigrated. On the whole, these texts only warn us of some of the hindrances to happiness and suggest ways in which they can be evaded.

Next, let us examine the subject content of the 108 "happiness" explanatory culturemes. As has been demonstrated, fifteen component thematic subgroups have been distinguished within this thematic class of culturemes, constituting the cultural content of the thematic field of happiness in modern Anglo-American culture. These subgroups occupy ten positions, where the eighth position is taken by three small subgroups of four culturemes each, while the tenth is occupied by single subgroups each represented by a single cultureme. The most dominant thematic subgroups that occupy the first three positions on the list and exhibit the highest semantic density (they are represented by 19, 17, and 16 explanatory culturemes respectively), show happiness as an inner state of the mind and the soul, most often a state of peace, contentment and joy, a desired state a person can attain through his own conscious work and a special effort of the will including change of attitude, and as a blessing that grows miraculously when shared with others. The culturemes in the next four central positions (represented respectively by 12, 11, 8 and 7 items), describe happiness as a supreme value surpassing money, riches, and even success, warn of eleven hindrances to attaining happiness, list nine positive characteristics of happiness, and stress how much happiness depends on a person's good family life. The next four thematic subgroups (represented respectively by 4, 4, 4, and 3 items each) describe some even less dominant aspects of happiness: its relatedness to health and beauty, some of its negative features, and its dependence on pain and suffering. Lastly, there are four single explanatory culturemes. They remind us of the ancient maxim that happiness can be proved only after death, that it depends on faith in God and on personal courage, as well as that a bride's future happiness depends on some good omens like the sunshine on her wedding day, a cultureme which comes from the single superstitious proverb in the corpus.

As we have seen, the American proverb-based notion of happiness has a very rich and varied subject content. Happiness is predominantly seen as a state of inner peace, contentment and serenity versus something determined by arbitrary, outward factors such as luck, destiny, God, the father, the ruling elite, political power, domination, rivalry, competition, fame, riches, worldly success, or prestige. Happiness is not shown as a privilege for the select few. Quite on the contrary, every single individual regardless of his station in life can honestly and diligently earn his share of happiness through hard work, frugality, self-discipline and intelligence. All this reminds us of the old Puritan ethics of the first American settlers and reflects the typical American individualism and the specific American vision of democracy (cf. Comager 1950; Brogan 1990; Bradbury and Ruland 1992). The happy people deeply care about their families. They are aware that they have to work consciously to make others happy if they wish to perpetuate this desired state and that they have to constantly bear in mind that it can very easily be lost through committing crime or sin, being negligent, or getting too attached to it. Virtue, beauty and good health are inseparable from happiness, almost one with it, and death is the final test for a happy life.

In summary, the ideal, proverb-based image of the happy American that can be reconstructed from the findings of this analysis then is of a person who is independent, self-sufficient, knowledgeable, inquisitive, intelligent, well-organised, hard-working, frugal, pragmatic, self-reliant, optimistic, determined, responsible, well-meaning, caring, generous and courageous. These then seem to be some of the characteristic features of the American linguocultural personality as presented in this small body of Anglo-American proverbs. All of these features certainly do not hold good for each and every American, but they are surely held as the standard and the norm to be admired and emulated by most members in modern American society.

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A DAILY DOSE OF WISDOM: GLOBALIZATION AND SMS PROVERBS IN NIGERIA

Abstract: Globalization ensures connectedness, the sharing of knowledge across nations and across continents. This is facilitated mainly by growth in information technology which, to a large extent, is dominated by the developed world. The SMS text message is a product of technology as people can send written messages through their cell phones. The language of text messages is of necessity brief and full of abbreviations and symbols because the cell phone SMS facility has a limited capacity for containing written texts. In relation to artistic production the SMS facility is grossly inadequate. It is however appropriate for containing and relating gnomic narrative forms such as the proverb. This paper acknowledges the receipt of SMS proverbs on a daily basis from centre 5020 and centre 5810. The paper looks at one year's collection of such proverbs, analyses its distribution, and examines its form, particularly the pseudo-proverbs that are presented alongside the proverbs and comments on some of the major themes embedded in them. The paper concludes that modern technology is a career of culture and that a developing world like Nigeria needs to be an active participant in the global world lest it be culturally swallowed by the technologically advanced countries.

Keywords: African, cellphone, globalization, ICT (Information and Communication Technology), Nigerian, orature, proverb, SMS (Short Message Service), technology

Introduction

Since time immemorial people all over the world have used the proverb in order to spice their conversations, to instruct young people, and to strengthen their arguments. The proverb then is situated in discourse and is a mark of eloquence and wisdom. As society developed over the ages there was criss-crossing between the cultural values of one group and another. Through social interactions people exchanged tales, songs, riddles, jokes and proverbs to the extent that today there are synonymous tales and proverbs across cultures.

The exchange of ideas and values has taken many forms including the forcible, the brutal such as slavery where people found themselves singing their songs in foreign lands and gradually having their cultures submerged in the cultures of the new land. Colonization was yet another form of disproportionate exchange with the colonized at the receiving end of alien ways of life. In the field of orature, Europeans tended to emphasize the importance of the written over the oral. Ime Ikiddeh states that “the colonial conditioning...is...a concomitant of the tyranny which the written word has exercised for centuries on a section of the world” (1987: 133). This denigration of African orature was largely fostered by the Evolutionary School which saw orature items as mere residues of ancient, decadent culture that are of no relevance to modern, civilized society. Africans were to feed on the diet of Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Arnold, Dickens and other Western writers. Indeed, Ngugi Wa Thiong’O laments the severance and dismembering of African memory and argues that cultural colonialism was an act that was backed by and was essential to political and economic colonialism. The memory of the colonized subject was cut off from the subject’s collective body as the colonialists “dismembered the colonized from memory, turning their heads upside down and burying all the memories they carried” (2009: 4). Today, however, some of these lost memories are being resurrected and being seen as dynamic ingredients of modern culture. Both Western and African scholars have engaged in more rigorous study of African orature which they see as valuable. Such study includes the interface of the oral and the written, of the ancient and the modern, particularly in relation to a technologically advanced and globalizing world.

Globalization

Globalization suggests the integration of people, the coming together of nations in social, economic and to some extent, political terms. It infers the socialization of the world, a harmony of ideas and views all of which are engineered by the new technology of the internet, the computer and the cell phone, among others. In this sense globalization is synonymous to multiculturalism and is consequently seen as enhancing the cultural knowledge of the people. Michael Maduagwu quotes Felix Wilfred as saying:

Present-day globalization is but a continuation of a long tradition of over five hundred years of imperialism. Globalization is only the latest phase and expression of this uninterrupted history of domination and subjugation of peoples, nations and cultures through the conquistadors and colonizers. It is a tradition of political, economic and cultural domination of some nations over others. (1999: 4)

Globalization is here seen as a process in which local, third world cultures are being integrated into the mainstream of Western culture. It is a course of action through which the identities of people in the third/developing world are gradually being obliterated.

Tunde Adegbola also looks beyond the façade of globalization as integrative, as benefiting everyone, as advancing the growth of democracy in the world and as a process that intensifies and accelerates social exchanges and activities. He points out that: "History teaches us that powerful individuals, powerful communities and powerful nations will always express a quest to control less powerful individuals, communities and nations" (2006: 4). In their strivings to modernize and to embrace global aspects of life, developing countries need to be very conscious of the forms of exchange. For example, we know that many social and economic boundaries of African countries have been broken and Nigeria in particular keeps calling for foreign investors to come as if their coming is going to erase the social injustice and inequality that pervades the society as a result of many years of bad governance. The critical question is: how does the developing world manage globalization? Who sets the rule of the game and who benefits from it?

Joseph Stiglitz believes that globalization has its positive values because it has the capacity to enrich everyone, adding that:

[W]e all share a single planet. We are a global community, and like all global communities have to follow some rules so that we can live together. These rules must be – and must be seen to be – fair and just, must pay due attention to the poor as well as the powerful, must reflect a basic sense of decency and social justice. (2002: xv)

The question of fairness and justice should of course be the concern of the developing countries that are largely on the disadvan-

taged side since they lack the technological power that is at the heart of globalization.

In relation to orature, globalization has both positive and negative tendencies. Globalization and its technological component are supposed to ensure a world of shared information, knowledge and ideas but as Maduagwu argues: “The communication dimension of globalization has the potential of eroding national cultures and values and replacing them with the cultural values of more technologically and economically advanced countries” (1999: 2). In a consumerist nation like Nigeria where almost everything is imported, the flow of information is lopsided and the onus of ensuring *fairness and social justice* in the matter rests on us. It depends on how we manage the ICT at our disposal – the internet and the cell-phone, for example.

SMS Proverbs: An Analysis

The technological revolution that ushered in globalization has affected orature by taking it to another dimension. As Liz Gunner points out: “In an era of globalization, orality has not disappeared but has often adapted itself in its many different forms to become a vehicle for the expression of the fears and hopes of new generations of Africans” (2007: 70). Technological advancement has continued the interface of the oral and the written. Nigerian writers like Achebe, Soyinka, Rotimi, Alkali, Osundare and others, have incorporated aspects of orature in their literary works (Mieder 1994, Mieder and Bryan 1996). Proverbs receive the greatest attention in this respect and are often put in the context of day to day conversations. This has ensured the continuity of the oral in modern times and has also helped in recording the wisdom of the people for posterity. Many Nigerian scholars have also collected, analyzed and published the proverbs of their people while others have posted such works on the internet. This has further opened the flow of information to the global world and has consequently served as a means of contributing to the general pool of human culture. The wisdom of our people, their philosophy and world view, is seen to be worthy of continuity.

In addition to books and the internet the cell phone is now being equally used as a carrier of orature. The cell phone is of course a mini-internet with various possibilities for the flow of information, knowledge and ideas. It has the capacity for oral exchange

and for the written mode. In terms of text messages, however, it is limited in the sense that the number of words it can carry per message is limited. Lengthy messages or articles cannot be conveyed through it. The proverb, because of its short, epigrammatic nature, is a fitting habitat of this world as are other forms of sayings and short quotations.

One can subscribe on the cell phone and have access to particular types of information just as I get a proverb a day from centre 5020 and centre 5180 of Airtel. From 1st July, 2012 to 30th June, 2013, I have received and saved 313 proverbs. This means that about 52 proverbs have not been received in the period and this might be due to occasional battery failures of my cell phone and lack of service from Airtel. The failure of technology in the third world can be due to many factors and can have great consequences on the social and economic lives of the people, including research work by intellectuals.

Out of the 313 proverbs received, 227 seven are from Africa as the table below indicates:

Country	Number of Proverbs
Burkina Faso	1
Burundi	1
Congo	6
Gambia	2
Ghana	24
Kenya	6
Liberia	2
Libya	1
Malawi	2
Mali	3
Nigeria	147
Rwanda	1
Senegal	1
Sierra Leone	1
South Africa	4
Sudan	2
Swahili	1
Tanzania	9
Uganda	3
Zimbabwe	1

Out of the 227, Nigeria has 147 proverbs representing 65%. This is followed by Ghana with 24 proverbs representing about 1%. But for Tanzania with 9 proverbs and Kenya and Congo with 6 proverbs each, the rest of the African countries have very insignificant contributions. Many African countries such as Ivory Coast, Cameroon, Niger, Chad, Guinea Bissau, Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Zambia, Angola and Namibia are not represented at all.

The table below highlights the distribution of Nigerian proverbs across language groups in the period under study.

Language Group	Number of Proverbs
Nigeria Unspecified	22
Efik	1
Fulani	14
Igbo	50
Yoruba	60

Yoruba proverbs top the list with about 41% followed by Igbo with 34%. Fulani has 14 proverbs representing about 10% while Efik has just 1 proverb representing about less than 1%. Hence out of the over 250 language groups in Nigeria only two, Yoruba and Igbo, and to some extent, Fulani are fairly represented. Some of the major language groups such as Hausa, Kanuri, Igala, Tiv, Ibibio, Urhobo, and others have no representation at all, not to talk of the so-called minority language groups that have been suffering neglect of representation even in written forms or usage in the media.

The 86 non-African proverbs have the following distribution:

Country	Number of Proverbs
China	71
Japan	8
English	2
Jewish	2
Others unspecified	3

China tops the list with 82% seconded by Japan with 9%. English and Jewish proverbs each represent 2%. Hence many other countries of the world such as India, Russia, France, Germany, United

States of America, Latin American countries, Iraq, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and others, do not feature at all. Nobody expects the representation of all countries but it is intriguing to know why China features much and why Japan is the second. Certainly it is not because they have more proverbs than other nations. Could it be that their proverbs are more readily accessible to the programmers of the SMS proverbs? We note also that though the services are provided mainly for Nigerian consumers, Chinese proverbs are higher than that of any single Nigerian language group. Yoruba, which is the highest in Nigeria, has only sixty proverbs to Chinese seventy-one. The number of Japanese proverbs is also very close to that of the Fulani and certainly four times higher than that of the Efik. Again, why the prominence of the Chinese and Japanese proverbs in an information system that is consumed by Nigerians?

Perhaps the answer rests in the control of technology and therefore in how information flow is designed. It is very apparent in Nigeria that the Chinese are everywhere in the economy – from the construction of railroads to the sale of many consumer goods, especially electronics which include our handsets and modems, many of which are made by them. Tunde Adegbola makes an apt observation on the paradoxical nature of the growth of information and communication technology (ICT) in Nigeria:

Today, modern ICT has become the means of generally processing, transporting and presenting information. The age-old technology of speech, the traditional textual technology of print, and relatively more recent electrical technologies of radio and TV are all validly ICTs that have in their various ways promoted the portability of human thought. In recent times however modern ICTs have brought about unprecedented increase in the pace and intensity of human communication and by so doing facilitated globalization.

ICT can either spell doom for our languages and the cultures they bear, knocking the death knell or they can provide new avenues and media to invigorate them by opening up new windows of orality on one hand and redefining literacy on the other. (2006: 8)

The problem really is that it is not having the technology that matters but having full control over it so that it will be tailored to the needs of our society.

The SMS text proverbs are, like all written forms of orature materials, deficient in some of the devices used in proverbial utterances. The written form is fixed and the extra-linguistic features noticeable in the oral form, such as facial expressions, do not feature at all. The SMS proverbs are generally presented out of contexts while the oral forms are usually situated in the contexts of larger discourses where they serve as succinct and profound words of caution, advice, consolation or education. In the text messages gathered, however, an attempt is made to provide some form of conversational platform. This is noticeable at the beginning of all SM texts where some statements are made before citing the proverbs. In addition some traditional markers that announce the proverbial utterances are also used. Some of the various introductory phrases used include: *As the elders say*, *as they say*, *because they say*, *Yoruba say*, *as this Chinese proverb says*, *as the Igbo say*, *that is why the elders say*, *as this Ashanti proverb says*, *just as*, *so that*, *therefore* and others. Below are some of the proverbs and their preambles.

1. There are things that cannot be rushed if they are to be properly done. *As the elders say*, "A forest is not made in a season." (Fulani. 21/06/13)
2. When you overdo things, they lose their value *just like*, "Adding legs when painting a snake." (Chinese. 30/03/13)
3. Search around you for the cause of the problem *because*, "The enemy lives in the backyard. The one who inflicts injury lives in the home." (Yoruba. 06/08/12)
4. Make sure the action you take matches the situation *because this proverb says*: "The bush fowl of a village cries in the dialect of the village." (Igbo. 16/12/12)
5. You cannot know today what will happen tomorrow *for they say*, "Tomorrow makes known to us what tomorrow will bring." (Tanzania. 28/10/12)

We note that in each of the above, a statement is first made which attempts to provide a conversational framework that is immediate-

ly followed by a signal word or phrase – those indicated in italics – then followed by the proverb. As in real discourse situations, the proverbs seem to be aimed at supporting or strengthening the speaker's statement.

In most cases the ideas in the initial statements agree with those in the proverbs but sometimes the initial statements do not seem to agree with the spirit of the proverb or they may provide just one alternative view to the meaning of the proverb. Context is crucial to providing the meaning of a proverb. Wolfgang Mieder notes that:

Proverbs in actual use are verbal strategies for dealing with social situations. As speech acts they must be viewed as part of the entire communicative performance. This is true to proverbs employed in oral speech but also in their frequent appearance in literary works, the mass media, advertising, popular songs, cartoons, comic strips, etc. Only the use and function of proverbs determine their specific meaning. (1998: viii-ix)

Some of the meanings ascribed to the proverbs below depend on the context of usage, and, consequently some of the meanings provided may not be quite adequate.

1. Grow up in wisdom and insight. Respect the opinions of elders because, "Cows are born with ears; later they grow horns." (Sudan. 19/10/12)

The metaphorical proverb here suggests various stages of growth which may have to do with wisdom and diverse types of skills. Ears may refer to natural endowment at birth while horns, which are necessary for the survival strategies of cows, develop with age. The proverb thus could be used in cautioning a person not to be in a hurry to judge or underrate a young person who later in life may prove dynamic and heroic. In such a case the issue of respecting the opinions of elders does not arise. The idea of respect for elders in connection to the Sudanese proverb perhaps came with the application of the English idiom, "growing horns," which implies becoming stubborn. It is a transfer of meaning that seems to be out of place with the tenor of the proverb.

2. Inexperienced people won't know something is wrong until it is too late because, "After the child has eaten his fill, he remembers the soup is bad." (Igbo. 07/06/13)

The point of the proverb is hardly the issue of inexperience. While eating, the child must have definitely noticed the quality of the soup from the taste but hunger must have forced him/her to eat the bad soup. Satisfaction makes him/her realize later on that what he has eaten is neither delicious nor fresh. It is a belated thought but it is equally an experience that the child might repeat given a similar situation of hunger. Poverty, destitution and need compel people into uncomfortable and weird behaviors. It is hence not necessarily a question of choice or naïveté or immaturity but rather the issue of availability. A corollary proverb from the Tangle people of Gombe State is, "People do not choose *the thing* with which to push the night." *The thing* refers to food and this is usually uttered in a period of starvation when any kind of food is welcome.

3. Be grateful for anything done for you because, "he who purchases the food eats, and cares not what the season is; his yams always flourish like trees." (Yoruba. 27/03/13)

Here the introductory statement is not fully in agreement with the proverb because the emphasis of the proverb is not on gratefulness but rather on differences in sources of livelihood. A person who does not farm cares less about the seasons but a farmer always looks for clouds in the sky once it is the farming season. Yams are always available in the market, whatever the season may be. Thus the proverb implies that different people have different needs, depending on their social situations. What may be a problem to one person may not be to others. In a world of varied desires and varied social states there is bound to be disparity of expectations, longings and hope.

4. Don't be afraid to begin something, the support you need will come because, "Wherever something stands, something else will stand beside it." (Igbo. 15/12/12)

The keyword in the proverb is *something else* which stands beside *something* hence suggesting difference. The conversational context provided in the opening statement does not really fit in as the *something else* of the proverb does not in reality indicate assis-

tance, support or help but rather, the existence of a contrary. The proverb evinces the spirit of contraries or dialectics, the idea that life is complex and that just as death exists besides life, good also exists besides evil. Every body has a shadow and every shadow has a body. There is duality in every being. The proverb thus recognizes the paradoxical nature of life and equally the need for people to tolerate differences of tribe, race, sex, ideas/opinions, and human choices. With reference to the Nigerian state, for example, the proverb captures the spirit of the world of conflicting values, beliefs and experiences. Biodun Jeyifo quotes a contextual usage of the utterance by Achebe thus:

It is in the very nature of creativity, in its prodigious complexity and richness, that it will accommodate paradoxes and ambiguities. But this, it seems, will always elude and pose a problem for the uncreative, little mind. The literal mind is the one-track mind, the mind that cannot comprehend that where one thing stands another will stand beside it. (2010: 9)

5. Don't boast when you are around people you don't know because, "The blacksmith in one village becomes a blacksmith's apprentice in another." (Ghana. 25/07/12)

The introductory statement and the proverb agree but the proverb can be interpreted in other ways depending on the context. The proverb shows that nobody is all-knowing and that the degree of our skills, its evaluation, depends on where we are. Whether or not we boast about our expertise we should know that someone in another clime may do better than us in our chosen area of specialization. The proverb hence acknowledges the limitations of the skills of individuals. One can be the best expert only in relation to one's locality.

We note therefore that while many of the preambles provided to the SMS proverbs are appropriate, some are misleading as they do not agree with the apparent meanings of the proverbs. Even when the meanings agree, the preambles often present only one side of the story without recognizing the polythematic and poly-functional nature of proverbs. The meaning of a proverb, we stress again, resides in the context of social interaction. As Eric Aasland states: "Proverbs... are defined by their contexts. Their meanings

are defined by being situated” (2009: 2). The feeble attempt by the SMS to situate the proverbs is worthy in that tries to replicate the proverbial state in face-to-face encounters. We need, however, to be careful in matching the proverbs to the words in the preambles.

In terms of order of presentation, there is no clear cut regular pattern of issuance of the SMS proverbs. In some weeks Nigerian or African proverbs predominate but sometimes it is a mixture of both African and non-African proverbs. For example from 1st July, 2012 to 09/10/12 African proverbs predominate while we have a series of Igbo proverbs from 07/11/12 to 10/12/12. Japanese proverbs are presented from 12/12/12 to 24/12/12 and we witness a profusion of Chinese proverbs from 27/12/12 to 05/02/13 – a period of more than a month. Most of the proverbs are, however, mixed up in terms of the language groups that they represent.

The proverbs are also not grouped according to themes, functions or structure. Various themes are scattered across the days or months. Some of the various themes discernible from the proverbs include that of education, hard work and perseverance, giving and kindness, listening to the advice of elders, sharing and solidarity, violence, honesty, selfishness and hope. We will examine a few of the themes.

Five of the proverbs relate to elders out of which one is Chinese and the other four are African. This definitely shows the high regard that people have for elders in traditional African society. The proverbs are:

1. One must take into consideration whatever an elder says because, “If you refuse the advice of an elder you will walk until sunset.” (African. 10/02/13)
2. Do not neglect the advice/words of an elder; they are precious gifts just like “A pearl from an old oyster.” (Chinese. 12/01/13)
3. Never reject the advice of elders, for it is said, “The arrow the child used to kill the vulture, it was an adult who carved it.” (Igbo. 20/11/12)
4. Always pay heed to the words of those who are in important position for they say, “From the words of an elder is derived a bone.” (Rwanda. 28/09/12)

5. Old people have a lot of knowledge to pass on to young ones, as this Mandinka proverb says, “Every time an old man dies, it is as if a library has burnt down.” (Mali. 21/03/13)

All the proverbs above recognize elders as repositories of wisdom, as custodians of vital words that are needed for communal guidance. The first proverb stresses the dire consequences that one is likely to face if one rejects an elder’s advice while the second and fourth proverbs point to the precious nature of the words of elders. To listen to the words of elders is like possessing a valuable jewel or having a juicy bone to chew. The third proverb implies that skills and expertise are to be learnt from elders. The proverbs therefore indicate the need for people to learn from elders or from people in senior positions of work who have acquired experience over the years in chosen fields of specialization or in life in general. As the store-house of knowledge elders are to be respected and listened to. The sixth proverb hinges on this significance of elders as bearers of wisdom. It is equally a saying that is often quoted to remind African scholars of orature of the urgent necessity of collecting and documenting orature items before the sources are lost.

About twelve proverbs focus on the issue of sharing and of the need for unity and collective action. People are advised to help their kith and kin. All the proverbs are from Africa and a few of them are:

1. Be willing to share whatever you have to spare because, “Everyone should be concerned about his/her welfare without neglecting that of kin.” (Igbo. 14/12/12)
2. You should help others when you alone have the power to do so for they say, “A tree on a hill in the savannah is a meeting place for birds.” (Congolese. 26/09/12)
3. Try to help those in need and you will be helped when you are in need because, “One hand washes the other” [this proverb might be appropriated from the English]. (Zulu. 26/07/12)
4. A collective power from everybody is the root of human development because, “Many hands make light work” [this proverb might be appropriated from the English]. (Tanzania. 28/08/12)

5. You should cooperate with people around you because, “one hand does not catch a buffalo.” (Ghana. 28/08/12)

6. There is strength in numbers, working together towards a common goal. As the Yoruba say, “It is with fingers bundled together that one strikes one’s breast.” (Yoruba. 12/07/12)

The proverbs stress the significance of solidarity with those around one and highlight the virtues of collectivism. Just as one should help those in need one should also realize that there are tasks that demand many hands. Collaboration is therefore very vital. This is true of life in the traditional past as it is in modern, technological society.

Closely related to the above theme are eight proverbs that focus attention on the virtues of giving and kindness. Again they are all from Africa some of which are:

1. A generous person will always be honoured wherever he goes as they say, “The big spender is never disgraced in the presence of the miser.” (Yoruba. 09/04/13)

2. Anyone who is kind will always have friends around him as this Ashanti proverb says, “My house is like a spongy coconut, anyone who likes comes to visit.” (Ashanti. 06/04/13)

3. Always be willing to help a fellow man, as is said, “One who has palm fruits should give it to the bush rat because the bush rat does not climb.” (Igbo. 06/04/13)

Kindness is therefore seen as a virtue and the proverbs imply that to be kind is to be blessed. Africans generally appreciate the virtues of giving and of being kind.

On violence, there are four proverbs, one Chinese and three Africans. They are:

1. If you threat someone badly, the person can react violently because, “If men are cruel to the cat, the domestic cat becomes a wild animal.” (African. 13/03/13)

2. You must know when to apply aggressive measures to a tough situation. That is why the elders say, “Fight fire with fire” [this proverb might be appropriated from the English]. (Chinese. 20/02/13)

3. When you start trouble you must be ready to face the consequences for, “If you provoke a rattlesnake, you must be prepared to be bitten by it.” (Kenya. 07/02/13)

4. Trouble makers cause trouble for themselves too because, “Smoke does not affect honey bees alone; honey-gatherers are also affected.” (Liberia. 03/10/12)

The proverbs warn on the dangers of the use of violence in society and caution that those who use violence suffer the consequences. This is because, by implication, violence often leads to counter-violence. A cycle of violence may therefore emerge and the final results could be cataclysmic. The implication is that dialogue or the use of other subtle means of persuasion is preferable to the use of force. This is a message that both local and international terrorists need to learn. The ideas of the proverbs are being realized in Nigeria today as the Federal Government has woken to the reality that only through the use of soldiers can it be able to combat the deadly menace of the Boko Haramists in the North-Eastern sub-region. Violence is being met with violence. This also agrees with the Chinese proverb that sees the necessity of violence in quelling violence. In *The Wretched of the Earth* Frantz Fanon argues at length that revolutionary violence embarked upon by the oppressed is necessary for combating the violence of the oppressor.

There are sixteen proverbs that deal with education, discourse and knowledge out of which only four are African, the rest are Chinese. The following are examples:

1. A fast horse needs only a lash of the whip, just as, “A quick student needs only one word of wisdom” (Chinese. 05/02/13)

2. A teacher exposes you to knowledge but the way you take advantage of it depends on you. “Teachers open the door; you enter by yourself. (Chinese. 04/02/13)

3. You can always learn anything by observing and imitating because, “When the mother goat chews her cud, her children learn.” (Igbo. 23/11/12)

4. You can truly benefit from teaching others. “To teach students for three years is to teach yourself.” (Chinese. 29/01/13)

5. One must learn something well before one can teach it to others therefore, “First be a student, then be a teacher.” (Chinese. 30/01/13)

6. Actions speak louder than words because, “Teaching by example is better than teaching by preaching.” (Chinese. 31/01/13)

The proverbs above and many others centre on the acquisition of knowledge which is seen to be beneficial to both the student and the teacher. Education is presented as a necessary requirement for a successful profession and learners are advised to be alert and dedicated to their studies. Though mostly Chinese in origin, the proverbs are relevant to the basic needs of Nigeria for, at the heart of technological advancement and globalization is knowledge which comes with education.

There are also twelve proverbs dealing with work or the need for perseverance. Nigeria has two, China five and other African countries four. The proverbs urge people to work hard, to be patient and persevering and warn against the dangers of laziness. People should also not feel discouraged by difficulties since hardship is often a precursor of wisdom. Some of the proverbs are:

1. Take great pride in performing your duties properly, “To do one’s duty is to eat the prized fruit of honour.” (Fulani. 24/04/13)

2. One often gains wisdom after experiencing a misfortune. As the Chinese proverb says, “Suffer a fall into the pit, gain in your wit.” (Chinese. 03/02/13)

3. If you want to succeed at anything, you must be willing to do your best because they say, “A feeble effort will not fulfill the self.” (Dogon from Mali. 28/03/13)

4. Nothing good can be done if you do not put in hard work and determination because they say, “You cannot kill game by looking at it.” (African. 15/02/13)

5. People should be aware that enjoyment is a result of hard work because, “The one who eats has tasted the hardship of labour.” (Congolese. 18/09/12)

There is therefore a diversity of themes in the SMS text proverbs and though there is an unbalanced presentation in terms of nationality of the proverbs we note that the selected proverbs are

rich, valuable and appropriate to the needs of contemporary Nigerians. The Chinese proverbs, like other African proverbs, are useful to the aesthetic and pedagogical needs of contemporary Nigerians. The issues of kindness, solidarity, violence, hard work and education are of universal relevance as they are perennial matters that human beings all over the ages and in all parts of the world will continue to face. A proverb may be local in composition and usage but its impact and meaning may be borderless. The universalistic import of proverbs has been noted by D'Israeli who states that many proverbs appear common to various nations due to similarity of human nature: "Similar situations and similar objects have unquestionably made men think and act and express themselves alike. All nations are parallels of each other" (1823 [2006]:14). Again, Bernth Lindfors acknowledges that "works of art communicate in such a universal human idiom that they are capable of transcending their particular time and place and speaking to all mankind" (2002: 2). A proverb may also be ancient in origin but still function in modern contexts. As Wolfgang Mieder argues:

Modern paremiology is an absolute open-ended phenomenon with many new challenges lying ahead. There is no doubt that proverbs, those old gems of generationally-tested wisdom, help us in our everyday life and communication to cope with the complexities of the modern human condition. The traditional proverbs and their value system give us some basic structure, and if their worldview does not fit a particular situation, they are quickly changed into revealing and liberating anti-proverbs. (1997: 416)

In fact most of the preliminary statements that accompany the SMS proverbs are proverbial as well rather than hypothetical discourse situations.

The basic limitation of SMS text proverbs is its essential lack of context. There is no identifiable speaker such as we might find in a literary text like plays or novels. There is consequently no specific audience neither is there a social interactional situation that obtains in oral day-to-day conversations. The senders and the recipients of the proverbs are both anonymous and the proverbs are therefore presented out of context.

Despite the above deficiency, however, we note that the cell phone, like the computer, is a cultural agent, a technological phenomenon that has reached all the cities and villages of the world. The question is who is responsible for uploading some of the items we download from them. How active are we in taking advantage of the technological revolution to document and circulate our cultural artifacts such as proverbs? Mercy Nwegbu et al. note the transformative power of globalization thus:

The advent of ICT has forced libraries and librarians to operate with such concepts and phrases like information society, digitization, computer or information explosion, globalization, cyberspace and information superhighway. These technologies have forced the developed world to operate in a context of change which automatically affects the ways our cultural heritage are documented, preserved and practiced. It has brought the culture, folklore and heritage of western countries onto our doorsteps, reading tables, desktop or laptop with just a press of the computer or a click of mouse. Where is Nigerian cultural heritage in the world cultural arena? (2011: 9-10)

Nigeria, and indeed Africa, needs to make its presence felt in an increasingly multicultural world where every society presents its wares.

Conclusion

The study of the proverb in contemporary African society goes beyond primary orality and its use in literary texts. With technological development, the internet and cell phones are now the habitat of proverbs. This paper acknowledges the receipt of SMS text proverbs and notes the disparity in the range of distribution across countries/continents and across Nigerian language groups. We note that cultural products such as proverbs are globalized through technology and that the content of the internet or cell phones is largely determined by the manufacturers and controllers of the internet or cell phones. Whatever the politics of the distribution may be, we equally point out the deficiencies inherent in an oral form finding itself in a written form that lacks the context of performance. The SMS version attempts to use some of the traditional markers associated with proverbs in daily discourse.

There are varieties of themes which we note are worthy of universal application and therefore pertinent to the aesthetic world of modern Nigeria. In spite of the numerous weaknesses of globalization to Nigerians – and there are many lapses – SMS text proverbs have proved to be veritable sources of cross-culturalism. They equally afford scholars raw materials for comparative study of the content and form of proverbs. While feasting on the cultural diet of other nations, however, it is our duty to Nigeria and to humanity to make significant contributions to the global world. In this way we will be able to re-assert our human dignity and reveal our specific identity as a nation that is culturally rich and diverse. As Abdul-Rasheed Na’Allah points out: “The terminology ‘World as a Global Village’, doesn’t just emphasize the shrunken world, but also affords every member ethnicity of the world’s cultures the opportunity to maintain and project their voices and identities as part of a multicultural world” (2011: xiv).

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WOLFGANG MIEDER

Sprichwörter in drei Sprachen: Deutsch – Französisch – Finnisch. Eine kontrastive Studie. By Satu Helomaa. Helsinki: Unigrafia, 2014. Pp. 440.

Bereits der Titel dieser nun im Druck vorliegenden Dissertation weist darauf hin, daß es sich in dieser umfangreichen Arbeit um wissenschaftliches Neuland dreht. Eine kontrastive Studie über deutsche, französische und finnische Sprichwörter hat es bisher nicht gegeben! Überhaupt ist bis heute außerhalb Finnlands immer noch recht wenig über finnische Sprichwörter bekannt, obwohl gerade in Finnland die Parömiographie und Parömiologie zwischen 1950 bis 1995 unter der Leitung des international anerkannten Folkloristen Prof. Matti Kuusi bedeutende Publikationen aufzuweisen hat. Massive Sprichwörtersammlungen sind zu der Zeit in finnischer Sprache veröffentlicht worden, und wie es damals üblich war, sind auch zahlreiche wissenschaftliche Arbeiten hauptsächlich in deutscher Sprache erschienen, darunter vor allem Kuusis *Parömiologische Betrachtungen* (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedakatemia, 1957). In englischer Übersetzung sind dann Kuusis wichtigste deutsch- und finnischsprachige Aufsätze mit dem Titel *Mind and Form in Folklore. Selected Articles* (Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura, 1994) von Henni Ilomäki zu seinem achtzigsten Geburtstag herausgegeben worden, womit die finnische Forschung international zugänglich wurde. Hinzuzufügen ist selbstverständlich, daß Matti Kuusi in der zweiten Hälfte des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts in Europa der führende Parömiologe war, der internationale Parömiologen durch die Gründung der Zeitschrift *Proverbium* (1965-1975) miteinander verband. Die fünfundzwanzig Hefte sind dann 1987 von mir als zweibändiger Nachdruck herausgebracht worden (Bern: Peter Lang, 1987), und das "alte" *Proverbium* gilt bis heute als wissenschaftliche Grundlage der internationalen Parömiologie, die seit 1984 durch das von mir herausgegebene *Proverbium: Yearbook of International Proverb Scholarship* weitergeführt wird.

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Matti Kuusi Schüler und andere finnische Wissenschaftler haben in den letzten drei Jahrzehnten viel geleistet, darunter bekannte Gelehrte wie Pentti Leino, Pekka Hakamies, Jarmo Korhonen, Ingrid Schellbach-Kopra und Liisa Granbom-Herranen. Besonders zu erwähnen ist selbstverständlich Kuusis Tochter Outi Lauhakangas, die das gewaltige Werk ihres Vaters weiterführt, und zwar besonders die elektronische Datenbank von Sprichwörtern aus aller Welt, ein einmaliges Netzwerk, das sie in ihrem Buch *The Matti Kuusi International Type System of Proverbs* (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedekatemia, 2001) ausführlich vorgestellt hat. Darin sind auch viele bisher nicht übersetzte finnische Sprichwörter in englischer Übersetzung abrufbar.

Satu Helomaa hat ihre Dissertation im Fachbereich der Germanistik an der Universität Helsinki vorgelegt, und sie tritt damit in die Reihe etlicher berühmter Parömiologen ein, die alle aus der Germanistik hervorgegangen sind, zum Beispiel Archer Taylor, Richard Jente, Stuart Gallacher, Wayland Hand, Lutz Röhrich und selbstverständlich auch ihr international renommierter Doktorvater Jarmo Korhonen. Dieser hat sich mit einer Unmenge von Büchern und Aufsätzen in der Phraseologie und im engeren Sinne in der Parömiologie verdient gemacht, und hinzu kommen natürlich noch die unter seiner engagierten Leitung entstandenen zahlreichen Magisterarbeiten und Dissertationen.

Weil die finnische Sprache nun einmal sehr schwer zu erlernen ist und weit außerhalb der germanischen, romanischen und slawischen Sprachen liegt, haben sich Parömiographen außer in Finnland selbst, wo ausgezeichnete finnische Sprichwörtersammlungen vorliegen, kaum mit finnischen Sprichwörtern befaßt. Sie fehlen in den meisten zwei- und multisprachlichen Sammlungen, und auch Emanuel Strauss' dreibändiges *Dictionary of European Proverbs* (London: Routledge, 1994) registriert nur sehr wenige finnische Sprichwörter. Die große Ausnahme bildet Gyula Paczolays unübertroffene Sammlung *European Proverbs in 55 Languages with Equivalents in Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit, Chinese and Japanese* (Veszprém: Veszprémi Nyomda, 1997), die selbstverständlich von Satu Helomaa für ihre große Äquivalenzstudie herangezogen wurde. Aber Paczolay behandelt lediglich 106 dieser über Europa verbreiteten Sprichwörter, wobei einige in den Entlehnungsprozessen nicht bis nach Finnland vorgedrungen sind. Somit geht Helomaa mit ihren 958 Sprichwörtern (345 deutsch,

342 französisch und 271 finnisch) weit darüber hinaus, wobei zu betonen ist, was für eine gewaltige, mühsame, linguistische Arbeit sie in ihrer vergleichenden Studie geleistet hat.

Gewiß weiß Satu Helomaa auch, daß der Vergleich zwischen deutschen und französischen Sprichwörtern als benachbarte Sprachkulturen bereits verschiedentlich bearbeitet worden ist, und ich nehme an, daß es lediglich ein Versehen ist, daß Ida von Düringsfelds und Otto von Reinsberg-Düringsfelds gewichtige zwei-bändige Sammlung *Sprichwörter der germanischen und romanischen Sprachen vergleichend zusammengestellt* (Leipzig: Hermann Fries, 1872-1875; Nachdruck Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1973) nicht in ihrer umfangreichen Liste von Wörterbüchern und Sammlungen erscheint (vgl. S. 414-417). Die bedeutendsten Quellenwerke zu deutschen, französischen und finnischen Sprichwörtern sind verzeichnet, und es ist beachtenswert, daß Satu Helomaa auch die kleinere Sammlung *Provérbios Europeus –European Proverbs –Eurooppalaisia sananlaskuja* (Helsinki: Hakapaino Oy, 2006) von Rui J.B. Soares kennt, der in Tavira die Jahrestagungen der International Association of Paremiology organisiert. Diese lediglich 93 Seiten umfassende vergleichende Sammlung portugiesischer, englischer und finnischer Sprichwörter trägt dennoch bedeutend dazu bei, daß finnische Sprichwörter und die darin zum Ausdruck kommenden Weisheiten bekannter werden. Leider gibt es keine solche vergleichende Sammlung französischer und finnischer Sprichwörter, doch dafür sieht es schon besser für die Zusammenhänge deutscher und finnischer Sprichwörter und Redensarten aus, was u.a. die Wörterbücher/Sammlungen Jarmo Korhonens *Alles im Griff. Homma hanskassa. Saksa-suomi-idiomisanakirja. Idiomwörterbuch Deutsch-Finnisch* (Helsinki: WSOY, 2002) und Ingrid Schellbach-Kopras *Finnisch-Deutsches Sprichwörterbuch* (Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura, 1980) unter Beweis stellen. Wie gesagt, Satu Helomaa kennt diese Publikationen und hat sie überzeugend in Betracht gezogen. Als linguistisch ausgerichtete Germanistin hat sie nun bedeutend zu einem noch besseren Verständnis deutsch-finnischer Sprichwortbezüge beigetragen, womit der internationale Ruf dieses Fachgebiets an der Universität Helsinki verstärkt wird. Mit all diesen parömiographischen Kenntnissen ist es Helomaa gelungen, ihr Sprichwörterkorpus für die drei zu vergleichenden Sprachen

zusammenzustellen, wobei sie gerade für den französisch-finnischen Bereich enorme Pionierarbeit geleistet hat!

Im Prinzip besteht Satu Helomaas Dissertation aus zwei großen Teilen, wobei sich die Kapitel 1-11 mit theoretischen und wissenschaftsgeschichtlichen Aspekten befassen. Im zweiten Teil geht es im 12. Kapitel um Klassifikationsmodelle der Sprichwort-Äquivalenz, wo Helomaa dann auch ihr erweitertes auf Briitta und Jarmo Korhonen beruhendes System erklärt (vgl. deren Aufsatz "Phraseologische Äquivalenz und Differenz am Beispiel deutscher, englischer und finnischer Verbidiome" in Hans-Peter Kromann und Anne Lise Kjær [Hrsg.], *Von der Allgegenwart der Lexikologie*. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1995, S. 67-90). Ihr akribisch aufgebautes vergleichendes Klassifikationssystem ist am Anfang des 13. Kapitels tabellarisch auf den Seiten 99-102 dargestellt, und es zeigt bestens, um welche komplexen Äquivalenzverhältnisse es sich bei verwandten Sprichwörtern der drei behandelten Sprachen handelt. Das System geht von der Total-Äquivalenz einiger deutscher, französischer und finnischer Sprichwörter bis zur Nulläquivalenz zwischen vor allem französischen und finnischen aber auch zwischen einigen deutschen und finnischen Sprichwörtern. Das gewaltige 13. Kapitel ist dann in zehn Abteilungen aufgeteilt, die wiederum etliche Gruppen aufweisen. Als Beispiel für die Abteilungen seien hier nur erwähnt 13.2 Äquivalenz Deutsch-Französisch, partielle Äquivalenz bzw. Differenz Finnisch; 13.4 Äquivalenz Französisch-Finnisch, partielle Äquivalenz bzw. Differenz Deutsch; 13.7 Differenz Französisch-Finnisch, partielle bzw. totale Differenz Deutsch. Wie schon angedeutet, kommen noch zahlreiche kleinere Gruppierungen hinzu, und es muß eine Herkulesarbeit für Satu Helomaa gewesen sein, ihre 958 Sprichwörter in dieses Klassifikationskorsett einzuordnen. So etwas auf einer so großen Materialgrundlage hat es bisher in der linguistisch ausgerichteten Parömiologie noch nicht gegeben! Dabei dreht es sich nicht nur um ein logisch und konsequent durchgeführtes Aufbausystem, sondern auch um Forschungsergebnisse, die von großer Bedeutung für die Parömiographie, Lexikographie, Sprachkulturforschung usw. sind. Da Satu Helomaa auch immer wieder auf das Problem der Varianten von Sprichwörtern zu sprechen kommt, geht es hier eben auch um das schwierige Problem, bei in Varianten umgehenden Sprichwörtern die geeignetste Nennform für Wörterbücher und

Sammlungen zu finden. Wer sich lexikographisch oder enger parömiographisch betätigt, wird gut daran tun, sich diese detaillierte Studie anzuschauen, denn sie enthält zahlreiche und bedeutende Hinweise zur komplexen Lemmatisierung von Sprichwörtern.

Die wie schon erwähnt 958 Sprichwörter (345 deutsch, 342 französisch, 271 finnisch) werden also alle in diesem 13. Kapitel (S. 97-396) in 345 Gruppierungen gegenübergestellt, wobei jeder Gruppe knapp eine Seite Text zur Verfügung steht, wo Satu Helomaa linguistische sowie kulturelle Erklärungen liefert, die sich oft um das interessante Phänomen des Entlehnungsprozesses drehen. Obwohl ich darauf noch zurückkommen werde, sei hier erwähnt, mit welcher wissenschaftlichen Freude ich bemerkt habe, daß Helomaa einen älteren Beitrag herangezogen hat, der mich vor vielen Jahren gleichfalls stark beeinflusst hat. Es dreht sich um O.J. Tallgren-Tuulio, "Locutions figurées calquées et non calquées. Essai de classification pour une série de langues littéraires," *Mémoires de la société néo-philologique de Helsingfors*, 9 (1932), 279-324. Es ist ja leider heutzutage gar nicht mehr selbstverständlich, daß etablierte sowie junge Wissenschaftler die ältere und anscheinend "veraltete" Forschung einsehen. Aber wer sich mit LehnSprichwörtern befaßt, sollte diesen grundlegenden Beitrag nicht zur Seite schieben! Hier sei jedoch noch ein weiteres gewichtiges Werk zu LehnSprichwörtern erwähnt, das Helomaa als Germanistin leider nicht in ihre umfangreiche Bibliographie der Sekundärliteratur (S. 418-426) aufgenommen hat: Friedrich Seiler, *Das deutsche LehnSprichwort*, 4 Bde. (Halle: Verlag der Buchhandlung des Waisenhauses, 1921-1924. Nachdruck hrsg. von Wolfgang Mieder. Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 2007 [= F. Seiler, *Die Entwicklung der deutschen Kultur im Spiegel des deutschen Lehnworts*, Bde. 5-8).

Auf das 13. Kapitel folgen dann noch die kurzen summarischen Kapitel 14 (Ergebnisse der Äquivalenzbeschreibung, S. 401-402), Kapitel 15 (Auslegung und Erklärung der Ergebnisse, S. 403-408) und Kapitel 16 (Zusammenfassung, S. 409-412). Sehr zu begrüßen ist es ebenfalls, daß am Ende des Buches (vgl. S. 432-440) drei Stichwortverzeichnisse der deutschen, französischen und finnischen Sprichwörter auftreten. Ich muß gestehen, daß ich nach den 300 Seiten (!) der Einzelstudien (S. 103-400), wie ich sie nennen möchte, die drei letzten Kapitel brauchte, um all diese man-

nigfaltigen Einzelbeobachtungen und komplexen Äquivalenzverhältnisse sozuzagen unter einen redensartigen Hut zu bekommen. Hier betont Satu Helomaa, daß es natürlich wegen der engeren historischen und sprachkulturellen Verbindungen zwischen Deutschland und Frankreich auch bei den Sprichwörtern zu erheblich größeren Äquivalenzbeziehungen kommt als zwischen deutschen und finnischen bzw. französischen und finnischen Sprichwörtern. Das wird auf S. 401 eindrucksvoll tabellarisch und statistisch aufgezeigt. Wichtig ist auch der erneute Hinweis darauf, welche erhebliche Rolle die Kirche hatte, die die in Europa allgemein verbreiteten Bibelsprichwörter auf dem Wege über Schweden nach Finnland brachte, wo der mit Luther befreundete finnische Bibelübersetzer Mikael Agricola, der sich u.a. auf Luthers Bibelübersetzung bezog, diese Texte ins Finnische aufnahm. Sie erklärt aber auch, daß finnische Gelehrte bis gut 1950 wegen ihres Studiums in Deutschland oft der deutschen Sprache mächtig waren und somit deutschsprachige Sprichwörter ins Finnische aufnahmen. Auch das Französische hatte in den gebildeten Schichten im Norden sprachkulturellen Einfluß, wobei es, wenn auch in kleinerem Umfang, zu Entlehnungen ins Finnische kam. Helomaa kommt auch noch einmal auf solche Aspekte wie Variantenbildungen, Bekanntheitsgrad, Frequenz, Doppeldeutigkeit, Übersetzungsprobleme sowie die Bedeutung von Sprichwörtern im Fremdsprachenunterricht zu sprechen. Auch gehen bekanntlich veraltete Sprichwörter über die Jahre hinweg verloren bzw. neue Sprichwörter kommen hinzu, was sich besonders durch die modernen internationalen Entlehnungen angloamerikanischer Sprichwörter bemerkbar macht. Als ich diese wenigen zusammenfassenden Seiten las und genoß, erinnerte ich mich daran, daß ich zuweilen beim Lesen des großen 13. Kapitels gedacht habe, daß vielleicht einige längere historische, sprachkulturelle und vor allem volkskundliche Aspekte hätten erläutert werden können. Das aber hätte den Rahmen dieser detaillierten Textanalyse gesprengt. Es handelt sich schließlich um eine komparatistische, synchrone, linguistische Äquivalenzstudie, und diese ist auf mustergültige Weise im umfangreichen 13. Kapitel durchgeführt worden.

Diesbezüglich enthält der erste parömiologisch ausgerichtete Teil der Dissertation mit seinen elf Kapiteln beeindruckende Kommentare zur Sprichwörterforschung. Auf das Einleitungskapitel folgt im zweiten Kapitel eine klare Darstellung von vier

grundsätzlichen Aspekten, die zum Wesen von Phraseologismen ganz allgemein und auch von Sprichwörtern im besonderen gehören, nämlich Polylexikalität, Festigkeit (wobei völlig berechtigt erklärt wird, daß es sich um relative Festigkeit handelt), Idiomatizität und Reproduzierbarkeit. Viele Sprichwörter existieren in gängigen Varianten, und natürlich kommt es auch zu ganz bewußten Modifikationen in den Medien usw., wobei gerade sogenannte Antisprichwörter zu eigentlichen Sprichwörtern werden können. Völlig richtig bemerkt Helomaa hier: "Es ist nicht immer leicht zu unterscheiden, ob es sich um eine Variante oder Modifikation desselben Phraseologismus handelt" (S. 21). Hier kann oft erst eine detaillierte Spezialuntersuchung entscheiden, worum es geht. Das zeigt natürlich auch, daß die rein linguistische Parömiologie schließlich an Grezen stößt, wenn sie die sprachkulturellen und diachronen Aspekte nicht einbezieht. Ich darf hier vielleicht die Bemerkung riskieren, daß die Phraseologie ganz allgemein immer noch zu sehr linguistisch und synchron ausgerichtet ist und oft das Kulturelle, Geschichtliche und Volkskundliche außer Betracht läßt. Im Unterschied zu den meisten Phraseologen beschäftigen sich die nicht aus der Linguistik kommenden Parömiologen gerade mit den sprachkulturellen sowie semantischen Aspekten.

Das 3. Kapitel bringt eine aufschlußreiche Darstellung des von Heinz-Helmut Lüger ausgearbeiteten Klassifikationssystems satzwertiger Phraseologismen. Auch hier wird deutlich, wie Satu Helomaa kritisch bemerkt, daß solche Unterscheidungen wie etwa zwischen Sprichwort (bildhaft) und Gemeinplatz (nicht bildhaft) "fließend" (S. 28) sind. Man kann gar keine strenge Trennung vornehmen, da es zu viele "Übergangsphänomene" (S. 26) gibt. Das gilt besonders auch für sogenannte "geflügelte Worte", die bekanntlich zu anonymen Sprichwörtern werden können. Selbst Antisprichwörter sowie einzeilige Aphorismen sind zu Volkssprichwörtern geworden. Es stimmt einfach nicht, wenn Klassifikationssysteme hier absolute Grenzen markieren, denn genau genommen beginnt doch jedes Sprichwort einmal mit einem Individuum – ist also ein Zitat, geflügeltes Wort, Aphorismus, Antisprichwort, Pseudosprichwort oder was auch immer. Erst die Aufnahme, Wiederholung, Bekanntheit, Frequenz usw. machen einen erfundenen sprichwortähnlichen Text zu einem *bona fide* Sprichwort! Es gibt also verschiedene Übergänge, die sich rein linguis-

tisch nicht festlegen oder erklären lassen. Dazu gehört auf jeden Fall die historisch, sprachkulturell und volkskundlich ausgerichtete traditionelle Parömiologie, die eben doch nicht identisch ist mit der Phraseologie.

Zu betonen ist, daß Satu Helomaa sich dessen wohl bewußt ist, und so überrascht es nicht, daß sie auf dieses Kapitel sogleich das 4. Kapitel über “Das Sprichwort” (S. 32-41) folgen läßt. Hier wird deutlich, daß sie sich ein sehr detailliertes theoretisches Wissen zum Sprichwort angeeignet hat, indem sie die bedeutendste Sekundärliteratur, etwa von Harald Burger, Elisabeth Piirainen, Jarmo Korhonen, Wolfgang Fleischer, Kathrin Steyer, Peter Durco usw. rezipiert hat. Es geht um Mikrotexpte, Einleitungsformeln, Stilmittel, Sprichwortmodelle (Strukturen), Allgemeingültigkeit, Syntax, Doppeldeutigkeit, Semantik und sprachliche Besonderheiten. Von besonderer Bedeutung ist, daß die “Dokortochter” auf die Ausführungen ihres Doktorvaters Jarmo Korhonen “zur Polysemie, Polyfunktionalität und Polysituativität” (S. 38) hinweist. All dies aber ergibt sich nicht aus den Sprichworttexten an sich, sondern erst dann, wenn Sprichwörter in Kontexten auftreten. Viel Theorie zum Sprichwort geht “verloren”, wenn man Sprichwörter in eigentlichen mündlichen oder schriftlichen Texten analysiert, wo diese anscheinend fixierten Mikrotexpte plötzlich in syntaktischer und struktureller Auflösung auftreten, oft sogar lediglich als fragmentierte Auflösung. Man liest in linguistischen oder phraseologischen Arbeiten zum Sprichwort eher selten etwas zur “Biologie des Sprichwortes”. Es ist gut, daß Satu Helomaa auf solche Dinge hinweist, indem sie auch die bedeutenden Arbeiten zu Sprichwörtern und sprichwörtlichen Redensarten des Volkskundlers und Parömiologen Lutz Röhrich ins Gespräch bringt.

Bekanntlich liegt in der Kürze die Würze (man beachte diese aufgelöste, kontextualisierte Sprichwortverwendung), und so besteht das 5. Kapitel über “Gegenseitige Beeinflussung Sprichwort – Idiom” (S. 42) aus lediglich einer Seite, wobei ich es als Parömiologe vorgezogen hätte, wenn Satu Helomaa statt “Idiom” lieber “Redensart” oder “sprichwörtliche Redensart” geschrieben hätte. Sie geht auf die Übergänge zwischen Sprichwörtern und sprichwörtlichen Redensarten ein, bezieht sich aber vor allem auf die Ausführungen der Linguisten und Phraseologen Wolfgang Fleischer und Heinz-Helmut Lüger. Gerade zu zu dem Phänomen, daß man durch die Hinzufügung des unpersönlichen modalisie-

renden Ausdrucks "Man muß/soll" aus vielen Redensarten Sprichwörter machen kann, und daß man Sprichwörter mit eben dieser Formel zu Redensarten umformulieren kann, liegt eine muster-gültige Untersuchung des weltweit bekannten Germanisten, Folkloristen und Parömiologen Archer Taylor vor (1890-1973): "The Proverbial Formula 'Man soll ...'," *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde*, Neue Folge 2 (1930), 152-156; auch in A. Taylor, *Selected Writings on Proverbs*, hrsg. von Wolfgang Mieder (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 1975), S. 101-105. Ein überzeugendes Beispiel dafür findet man in meinem Beitrag "'Das Kind mit dem Bade ausschütten': Ursprung, Überlieferung und Verwendung einer deutschen Redensart," *Muttersprache*, 102 (1992), 319-340; auch in W. Mieder, *Deutsche Redensarten, Sprichwörter und Zitate. Studien zu ihrer Herkunft, Überlieferung und Verwendung* (Wien: Edition Praesens, 1995), S. 161-182. Hier konnte ich nachweisen, daß bereits Martin Luther diese auch über die deutsche Sprache hinaus bekannt gewordene Metapher als sprichwörtliche Redensart sowie als "Man muß/soll"-Sprichwort benutzt hat. Man wird es mir sicherlich nicht verübeln, wenn ich hier ganz ehrlich schreibe, daß es mir Leid tut, daß Archer Taylors auch heute noch grundsätzliches Werk *The Proverb* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1931; Nachdruck hrsg. von Wolfgang Mieder. Bern: Peter Lang, 1985) in der Bibliographie fehlt, das übrigens drei für Satu Helomaas Arbeit wichtige Kapitel über "Translated Proverbs", "Biblical Proverbs" und "Classical Proverbs" (S. 43-65) enthält. Erwähnt sei nebenbei, daß Taylor drei Jahre später in Finnland (!) *An Index to "The Proverb"* (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 1934) mit 105 Seiten zu seiner Sprichwörterkunde herausgebracht hat, das ich in meinem gerade erwähnten Nachdruck von 1985 eingeschlossen habe. Von Bedeutung wären auch die drei großen parömiologischen Beiträge von Taylors Freund Bartlett Jere Whiting über "The Origin of Proverbs" (1931), "The Nature of Proverbs" (1932) und "The Study of Proverbs" (1939), die zusammen als Nachdruck vorliegen: "*When Evensong and Morrowsong Accord*". *Three Essays on the Proverb*, hrsg. von Joseph Harris und Wolfgang Mieder (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University, 1994). Aber diese Festsstellungen eines alten Parömiologen sollen den hohen Wert ihrer Dissertation absolut nicht schmälern! Taylor und Whiting fehlen halt auch in Arbeiten von Fleischer, Lüger und anderen,

weil die folkloristisch ausgerichtete Parömiologie oft nicht von Phraseologen und Linguisten rezipiert wird.

Damit komme ich zu dem bedeutenden 6. Kapitel über "Sprichwort und verwandte Gattungen" (S. 44-47). Hier versucht sich Satu Helomaa an einer Unterscheidung von Sentenz, Maxime, Aphorismus, geflügeltem Wort, Gemeinplatz und Slogan – es ist ihr gut gelungen, wobei man ihr nur zustimmen kann, wenn sie betont, daß es sich bei diesen Gattungen um nur relative Abgrenzungen mit fließenden Übergängen handelt. Auch hat sie sich wieder kritisch mit bedeutender Sekundärliteratur von Klaus Dieter Pilz, Gerhard Peukes, Wolfgang Fleischer, Harald Burger, Heinz-Helmut Lüger, Lutz Röhrich, Wolfgang Mieder usw. auseinandergesetzt. Man sieht aber auch hier wieder, wie problematisch all dies ist, wenn man nicht detaillierte Einzeluntersuchungen durchführt. Wenn Helomaa zum Beispiel Wolfgang Fleischer zitiert, der den Ausgangspunkt des allgemeinen europäischen Sprichwortes "Wer zuerst kommt, mahlt zuerst" als geflügeltes Wort aus Eike von Repgows *Sachsenspiegel* sieht, so geht verloren, daß es sich um ein mittellateinisches Sprichwort handelt; vgl. dazu mein Kapitel "'First Come, First Served': A Medieval Legal Proverb from the Millers," in W. Mieder, *Proverbs. A Handbook* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2004), S. 43-52; und natürlich auch die hervorragende schwedische Monographie von Sven B. Ek, *Den som kommer först till kvarns – ett ordpsrak och dess bakgrund* (Lund: Gleerup, 1964). Wie man erwarten würde, gibt es zu diesen satzwertigen Phrasemen viel Sekundärliteratur, die Helomaa absolut nicht vollständig einsehen mußte! Ich möchte hier noch zwei weitere Literaturangaben beibringen, damit sie nicht völlig vergessen werden. Da ist einmal der von Matti Kuusi für seine parömiologische Zeitschrift angenommene Beitrag des britischen Anthropologen Nigel Barley, "'The Proverb' and Related Problems of Genre-Definition," *Proverbium*, Nr. 23 (1974), 880-884, und zum anderen sei auf folgendes von Phraseologen und Parömiologen fast völlig ignoriertes Buch hingewiesen, obwohl gerade der bekannte Parömiologe Peter Grzybek etliche Artikel darin verfaßt hat: Walter A. Koch (Hrsg.), *Simple Forms. An Encyclopaedia of Simple Text-Types in Lore and Literature* (Bochum: Norbert Brockmeyer, 1994). Ich werde die Begeisterung für dieses Buch von dem amerikanischen Folkloristen und Parömiologen Alan Dundes nie vergessen, für den ich es mit Freude

aus Deutschland besorgt hatte; vgl. Wolfgang Mieder, “*Best of All Possible Friends*”. *Three Decades of Correspondence Between the Folklorists Alan Dundes and Wolfgang Mieder* (Burlington, Vermont: The University of Vermont, 2006), S. 192-193.

Mit dem siebten Kapitel “Zur Herkunft von Sprichwörtern” (S. 48-54) nähert sich Satu Helomaa dem eigentlichen Anliegen ihrer so gründlichen Dissertation, denn sie behandelt schließlich hauptsächlich solche deutschen, französischen und finnischen Sprichwörter, die auf gemeinsame Quellen zurückgehen und sich durch komplexe Entlehnungsprozesse in die Sprachen Europas und darüber hinaus verbreitet haben. Es sei nochmals betont, daß eigentlich jedes der von ihr behandelten Sprichwörter eine detaillierte Einzeluntersuchung verdiente. Als tätige Lehrkraft habe ich immer wieder betont, daß eigentlich jeder Phraseologe oder Parömiologe wenigstens eine Einzeluntersuchung zu einem Sprichwort oder einer Redensart durchführen müßte, um all das aus eigener Erfahrung kennenzulernen, was Helomaa in diesen Kapiteln darlegt. Ich erinnere nur an Matti Kuusis einmalige 489 Seiten umfassende Studie *Regen bei Sonnenschein. Zur Weltgeschichte einer Redensart* (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 1957). Zahlreiche weitere faszinierende Studien sind verzeichnet in Wolfgang Mieder, *International Bibliography of Phraseology and Paremiology*, 2 Bde. (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2009). Überzeugend stellt Helomaa die großen Herkunftsquellen der über Europa verbreiteten Sprichwörter dar, nämlich 1. die griechisch-römische Antike, 2. die Bibel, 3. Latein des Mittelalters, 4. Weltliteratur, und 5. neueres angloamerikanisches Sprichwortgut. Es wäre gewiß für Helomaa ein Leichtes gewesen, sich auf die ersten vier Quellen einzuschränken, und so ist es sehr zu begrüßen, daß sie ihre vergleichende Studie auf das moderne Zeitalter erweitert hat. Hier nämlich kann man erkennen, wie sich heutzutage englischsprachige Sprichwörter in Blitzesschnelle nicht nur in Europa sondern auf der Welt auf dem Wege der Medien verbreiten, wobei es durch wortwörtliche Lehnübersetzungen meist zu Totaläquivalenzen kommt. Dennoch gibt es auch auf diesem Gebiet Äquivalenzverschiebungen, die von Helomaa im 13. Kapitel beispielhaft aufgezeigt werden. Wie gut sie sich auch in dieses faszinierende Gebiet eingearbeitet hat, geht daraus hervor, daß sie sich auf Elisabeth Piirainenens neue exemplarische Studie *Widespread Idioms in Europe and Beyond. Toward a Lexicon of*

Common Figurative Units (New York: Peter Lang, 2012) bezieht. Es sei mir gestattet, hier noch zwei weitere Forschungsergebnisse zu ergänzen: Valeriee M. Mokienko, "Phraseologisierung von Europäismen oder Europäisierung von Phraseologismen? Divergente und konvergente Prozesse in phraseologischen Systemen europäischer Sprachen," in *Europhras 95. Europäische Phraseologie im Vergleich: Gemeinsames Erbe und kulturelle Vielfalt*, hrsg. von Wolfgang Eismann (Bochum: Norbert Brockmeyer, 1998), S. 539-555; und Wolfgang Mieder, "Sprichwörter des Kontinents," in *Das gemeinsame Haus Europa. Handbuch zur europäischen Kulturgeschichte*, hrsg. von Wulf Köpke und Bend Schmelz (München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1999), S. 956-965.

Das 8. Kapitel über "Gebrauch und Funktionen von Sprichwörtern" (S. 55-58) behandelt die Polyfunktionalität der Sprichwörter, wobei Satu Helomaa darauf zu sprechen kommt, daß die Beliebtheit von Sprichwörtern zu gewissen Zeiten und unter gewissen Umständen unterschiedlich ist. So weist sie darauf hin (S. 55), daß das klassische lateinische Sprichwort "Suum quique", das als "Jedem das Seine" ins Deutsche entlehnt wurde, heute im Deutschen nicht mehr zu gebrauchen ist, da es als gräßlicher Slogan am Tor des Konzentrationslagers Buchenwald mißbraucht wurde; vgl. dazu Karin Doerr, "'To Each His Own' (Jedem das Seine): The (Mis-) Use of German Proverbs in Concentration Camps and Beyond," *Proverbium*, 17 (2000), 71-90. Erwähnt wird auch, daß Sprichwörter als Aufmerksamkeitserreger in den Massenmedien wirken, daß sie in der politischen Argumentation eingesetzt werden, und daß sie heute weniger als Weisheitssätze gebraucht werden. Vor allem werden sie modifiziert und parodiert, wobei sich der Sinn solcher Wortspielereien auch daraus ergibt, daß das traditionelle Sprichwort als Kontrast im Hintergrund mitwirkt. Diese Individualisierung (S. 57) im modernen Sprichwortgebrauch, oft in der Form von Antisprichwörtern, ist zwar heutzutage recht dominierend, ist aber nicht so neu, wie oft behauptet wird. Man erinnere sich doch nur an William Shakespeares Sprichwortgebrauch, der schließlich gerade durch die wortspielerische Anwendung tradierter Sprichwörter gekennzeichnet ist.

Mit dem 9. Kapitel kommt Satu Helomaa auf die "Definition des Terminus 'Sprichwort'" (S. 59-61) zu sprechen. Hier benutzt sie im Unterschied zu dem Sprichwort-Begriff für tradierte Satz-

phraseme auch die in der Folkloristik gängige Bezeichnung “sprichwörtliche Redensart” für Idiome oder Phraseologismen, was darauf zurückzuführen ist, daß sie sich gründlich mit den Forschungsergebnissen der volkskundlichen Parömiologie auseinandergesetzt hat. So bespricht sie Definitionsversuche von Karl Friedrich Wilhelm Wander und erfreulicherweise wird auch die Definition von Friedrich Seiler zitiert (S. 60), dessen *Deutsche Sprichwörterkunde* (München: C.H. Beck. 1922; Nachdruck München: C.H. Beck, 1967) bis heute als parömiologisches Basiswerk zu gelten hat. Allerdings ist Helomaa hier ein kleines Malheur passiert, denn der Titel erscheint nicht in ihrer Bibliographie. Gerade zu dem Definitionsproblem ist viel geschrieben worden, und Satu Helomaa hat sich kritisch mit einigen der bedeutendsten Definitionen auseinandergesetzt, darunter die von Harald Burger, Wolfgang Eismann und Peter Grzybek, Bengt Holbek, Lutz Röhrich und Wolfgang Mieder usw. Selbst die unter Parömiologen sprichwörtlich gewordene Definition “A proverb is the wit of one and the wisdom of many”, die Lord John Russell in einem Brief aus dem Jahre 1823 formuliert hat, findet Erwähnung. Daß sich Helomaa nach ihrer Auseinandersetzung mit unterschiedlichen Sprichwortdefinitionen dazu entschlossen hat, den Sprichwortbegriff für ihre Dissertation recht weit zu fassen, ist völlig berechtigt.

Das aufschlußreiche 10. Kapitel behandelt “Die Vielfalt von Sprichwortformen” (S. 62-67), und hier kommt Satu Helomaa darauf zu sprechen, daß Sprichwörter oft in Varianten auftreten. Das macht sich ganz besonders bemerkbar, wenn man ein Sprichwort über Jahrhunderte hinweg in seiner sprachlichen Gestaltung untersucht. Die lexikalische und syntaktische Festigkeit hat sich nicht immer sofort ergeben, und bei gewissen älteren Sprichwörtern haben sich zwei oder auch drei Hauptvarianten herausgebildet, was meistens in Wörterbüchern nicht beachtet wird (vielleicht hauptsächlich wegen Platzmangels, wo dann nur eine Nennform angegeben werden kann); vgl. hierzu den neuen und Helomaa noch nicht zugänglichen Beitrag von Jarmo Korhonen, “Lexikalische und morphosyntaktische Änderungen von Sprichwörtern vom Frühneuhochdeutschen bis zum heutigen Deutsch,” in *Parémiologie. Proverbes et formes voisines*, hrsg. von Jean-Michel Benayoun, Natalie Kübler und Jean-Philippe Zouogbo (Sainte Gemme: Presses Universitaires de Sainte Gemme, 2013),

Bd. 2, S. 251-266. Helomaa erwähnt auch, daß vor allem längere Sprichwörter oft nur verkürzt mit ihren sinntragenden Komponenten zitiert werden, um im mündlichen Gebrauch Zeit und in der schriftlichen Verwendung Platz zu sparen. Diesbezüglich spricht Neal Norrick von diesem "minimal recognizable unit as the *kernel* of the proverb"; vgl. Neal Norrick, *How Proverbs Mean. Semantic Studies in English Proverbs* (Amsterdam: Mouton, 1985), S. 45. Diese Idee des Sprichwortkerns verdiente es, in der Forschung mehr rezipiert zu werden, und auch Satu Helomaa hätte von Norricks linguistisch ausgerichteter Studie profitieren können. Zusätzlich beschäftigt sich Helomaa in diesem Kapitel mit dem nicht leicht zu fassenden Unterschied zwischen Modifikationen und Varianten, wobei sie auch auf das Problem der lexikographischen oder parömiographischen Nennform zu sprechen kommt. Sie hat selbstverständlich völlig Recht, wenn sie die "Mehrfachlemmatisierung" (S. 67) befürwortet! Natürlich spielen einmalige sprachspielerische Modifikationen in ihrer vergleichenden Textanalyse keine Rolle, und auch bei den Varianten hat Helomaa sich logischerweise dazu entschlossen, ihren Vergleichen für alle drei Sprachen immer die heute gängigen Standardvarianten zugrunde zu legen. Auf dieses Problem kommt sie in ihren Minianalysen im 13. Kapitel immer wieder zurück, indem sie auf weniger gängige und veraltete Varianten hinweist.

Im ausführlichen und hervorragend ausgearbeiteten 11. Kapitel werden dann "Verschiedene Klassifikationen von Sprichwortvarianten" (S. 68-88) an Hand von zahlreichen Beispielen analysiert. Es stimmt allerdings nicht ganz, wenn Helomaa anfangs meint, daß nur wenige Untersuchungen die Variabilität von Sprichwörtern zum Gegenstand [haben]" (S. 68). Vor allem Untersuchungen zu einzelnen Sprichwörtern gehen meistens auf Varianten ein, und das gilt zum Beispiel besonders für Studien zu Bibelsprüchwörtern, die ja bereits in der Bibel in zahlreichen Varianten auftreten; vgl. dazu Jouko Parad, *Biblische Verbphraseme und ihr Verhältnis zum Urtext und zur Lutherbibel* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2003); und die von Helomaa rezipierte und wertvolle Sammlung von Carl Schulze, *Die biblischen Sprichwörter der deutschen Sprache* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1860; Nachdruck hrsg. von Wolfgang Mieder. Bern: Peter Lang, 1987). Eigentlich weist jede diachron ausgerichtete Sprichwortuntersuchung Varianten auf, und wenn dies bereits in historischen

Schriftbelegen der Fall ist, so gilt es ebenso für das mündliche Auftreten von Sprichwörtern. Von all den Studien hierzu sei die folgende herausgegriffen: Pierre Crépeau, "The Invading Guest: Some Aspects of Oral Transmission," in *The Wisdom of Many. Essays on the Proverb*, hrsg. von Wolfgang Mieder und Alan Dundes (New York: Garland Publishing, 1981), S. 86-110. Es geht in diesem anthropologisch-linguistischen Beitrag um sage und schreibe sieben Varianten von nur einem mündlich überlieferten Sprichwort aus Rwanda, die soziolinguistisch und textanalytisch erklärt werden. Satu Helomaa geht in ihrem Kapitel ähnlich vor, indem sie grammatische, lexikalische, syntaktische, synonymische und andere Variabilitäten mehr durch Beispiele aufzeigt. Und schließlich ist sie völlig berechtigt zu folgender Aussage: "Laut einer Untersuchung von Ďurčo (2003:85) ist die Zahl der variablen Sprichwörter jedoch nicht höher als 3%, welches aber meinen Beobachtungen einigermaßen widerspricht; meines Erachtens müsste diese Zahl etwas höher ausfallen" (S. 88). In dem Moment, wo Sprichwörter nicht nur aus einem Wörterbuch oder einer Sammlung herausgegriffen werden sondern aus einem mündlichen oder schriftlichen Kontext, fällt schnell auf, daß selbst neue Sprichwörter, die schneller als früher ihren nationalen und als fremdsprachliche Entlehnungen oder als Lehnübersetzungen ihren internationalen Markt durch die Medien erobern, dennoch in Varianten auftreten!

Im zwölften Kapitel "Zur Äquivalenz von Sprichwörtern" (S. 89-98) beschäftigt sich Satu Helomaa selbstverständlich mit dem Hauptanliegen ihrer Dissertation, nachdem sie sich überzeugend mit den theoretischen Aspekten der Parömiologie auseinandergesetzt hat. Sie erklärt den Begriff der Äquivalenz und unterscheidet Monoäquivalenz, Polyäquivalenz und Nulläquivalenz von einander. Natürlich ist auch zwischen der eher seltenen totalen und der verbreiteten und zu erwartenden partiellen Äquivalenz eine Grenze zu ziehen. Obwohl es sich vor allem um lexikalische und syntaktische Unterschiede handelt, wenn Sprichwörter in verschiedenen Sprachen mit gleicher Herkunft verglichen werden, so kommt noch hinzu, daß sich auch das sprachliche Bild verändern kann. Wie man all dies klassifizieren kann, wird an Hand von den Modellen von Isabelle Lucia Dogbeh sowie Briitta und Jarmo Korhonen erläutert, und es ist zu begrüßen, daß sich Helomaa für eine erweiterte Fassung des Korhonenischen Klassifikationsmodells

entschieden hat. Korhonens Oberbegriffe von Konvergenz und Divergenz sind äußerst überzeugend, indem der Konvergenzbereich in totale und partielle Äquivalenz gegliedert wird und die Divergenz in partielle und totale Differenz (vgl. S. 74). In ihrem erweiterten Modell wird dann die partielle Differenz in mehrere Unterklassen eingeteilt, was im ersten Teil des 13. Kapitels als detailliertes System vorgestellt wird (S. 99-102). Es dreht sich um ein spitzfindig oder akribisch (alles positiv gemeint!) ausgearbeitetes System, und es sei hier ein für allemal gesagt, daß es so ein Detailsystem noch nicht gegeben hat, und natürlich schon gar nicht, daß es auf 345 Sprichwörter in den Sprachen Deutsch, Französisch und Finnisch angewandt worden ist. Der Arbeitsaufwand muß ungeheuerlich gewesen sein, und umso klarer und überzeugender ist das Resultat.

Damit bin ich nochmals im 13. Kapitel gelandet. Es ist nicht möglich, daß ich alle 345 Sprichwortgruppen einzeln bespreche, aber es war eine spannende Lesefreude und ein wissenschaftlicher Lernprozeß, diese dreihundert Seiten zu verkraften! Ich beschränke mich nun im Folgenden auf nur einige Beobachtungen und Anmerkungen, die nicht als Kritik sondern als positive Reaktion gemeint sind.

1. zu zwei Sprichwörtern aus der griechischen und römischen Antike

Nr. 36 (S. 127-128): Da ich, wie Satu Helomaa erwähnt, eine historische Einzelstudie zu dem griechischen Sprichwort "Die großen Fische fressen die kleinen" vor fast zwanzig Jahren vorgelegt habe, bin ich nicht überrascht, daß es zwischem den deutschen und französischen Sprichwörtern eine Totaläquivalenz gibt. Eine große Überraschung ist es allerdings, daß es das Sprichwort in diesem Wortlaut im Finnischen nicht gibt, wo es doch auch gerade in Finnland ganz natürlich wäre, von großen Fischen, die kleine Fische fressen, zu sprechen. Es scheint nur das Sprichwort "Die Großen fressen die Kleinen" zu geben. Frage: Gibt es auch in dem riesigen Sprichwortarchiv in Helsinki keinen "Fisch"-Beleg?

Nr. 121 (S. 197-198): Hier möchte ich noch einmal das Problem der Varianten aufgreifen. Das lateinische Sprichwort "Vestis virum reddit" ist im Deutschen als "Kleider machen Leute" gängig und also recht anders als im Finnischen "Das Kleid macht den

Mann” und im Französischen “L’habit fait l’homme”. Schaut man nun aber in Karl Friedrich Wilhelm Wanders *Deutsches Sprichwörterlexikon*, so entdeckt man die identische Variante “Das Kleid macht den Mann” (II,1372, Kleid 25) und auch noch “Das Kleid macht nicht den Mann” (II,1372, Kleid 28). Nimmt man diese erste Variante in Betracht, so ergibt sich eine Totaläquivalenz für die drei Sprachen! Auch ist diese Variante heute nicht so unbekannt, wie man denken möchte. Thomas Mann zum Beispiel hat sie benutzt. Dennoch, und deshalb erwähne ich es hier, hat sich Satu Helomaa völlig richtig für “Kleider machen Leute” entschieden, da dies die Nennform des Sprichwortes ist und allgemein gebräuchlich ist.

2. zu zwei Sprichwörtern aus der Bibel

Nr. 104 (S. 181-182): Hier erklärt Satu Helomaa, daß das deutsche Bibelspruchwort “Wer andern eine Grube gräbt, fällt selbst hinein” mit der Pluralbildung “andern” von dem Singular im Französischen abweicht. Das ist auch völlig richtig, denn das Sprichwort im Deutschen ist so gängig. Interessanterweise erscheint die Nennform in Wanders *Deutschem Sprichwörterlexikon* in der Singularbildung: “Wer einem andern eine Grube gräbt, fällt selbst hinein” (II, 153,Grube 6). Hier wird deutlich, daß Wanders massive fünfbindige Sprichwörtersammlung “veraltet” ist, wenn man den heutigen Sprachgebrauch in Betracht zieht, und darum geht es in dieser Dissertation.

Nr. 117 (S. 192-193): Zu dem Bibelspruchwort “Wes das Herz voll ist, geht der Mund über” liegt eine Menge Sekundärliteratur vor, die sich mit den zahlreichen Varianten und deren Überlieferung befaßt. Sie sei einmal hier nur als Beispiel angegeben, um zu zeigen, was erforderlich und möglich ist, um nur die Herkunft, Überlieferung, Varianten, Bedeutung, Verwendung usw. eines Sprichwortes aufzuzeigen. *Nota bene*: diese Sekundärliteratur geht selbstverständlich weit über das Thema der vorliegenden Dissertation hinaus, wo Helomaa jedoch auf Luthers *Sendbrief vom Dolmetschen* und das darin auftretende Sprichwort hinweist (S. 193). Bekanntlich hat Martin Luther für die Übersetzung dieses Bibelspruchs auf das bereits umlaufende Volksspruchwort “Wes das Herz voll ist, geht der Mund über” zurückgegriffen. In der King James Bible von 1616 hat man den lateinischen Text “Ex

abundantia cordis os loquitur" wörtlich durch "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" übersetzt. Verständlicherweise ist diese Übertragung im Englischen nur begrenzt zum Sprichwort geworden, das heute kaum noch im Volksmund umläuft. Von großem Interesse sind nun Helomaas Ergebnisse, daß die französischen und finnischen Übersetzungen identisch sind und sogar auch dem Englischen entsprechen! Interessant, daß Mikael Agricola, der sich in seiner finnischen Bibelübersetzung doch auf Luther beruft, sich nicht an Luthers volkstümlichere Formulierung gehalten hat. Doch hier nun die Sekundärliteratur: William Kurrelmeyer, "'Wes das Herz voll ist, des gehet der Mund über'," *Modern Language Notes*, 50 (1935), 380-382; John G. Kunstmann, "And Yet Again: 'Wes das Herz voll ist, des gehet der Mund über'," *Concordia Theological Monthly*, 23 (1952), 509-527; Heinz Bluhm, "'Wes das Herz voll ist,'" in H. Bluhm, *Martin Luther. Creative Translator* (St. Louis, Missouri: Concordia Publishing House, 1965), S. 138-151; Wolfgang Mieder, "Martin Luther und die Geschichte des Sprichwortes 'Wes das Herz voll ist, des geht der Mund über'," *Sprachspiegel*, 39 (1983), 66-74; auch in W. Mieder, *Sprichwörtliches und Geflügeltes. Sprachstudien von Martin Luther bis Karl Marx* (Bochum: Norbert Brockmeyer, 1995). S. 13-22; Timothy C. Nelson, "'Ex abundantia cordis os loquitur': Ein Beitrag zur Rezeptionsgeschichte eines umstrittenen Sprichwortes," *Proverbium*, 3 (1986), 101-123; und Wolfgang Mieder, "'Es ist gut pflügen, wenn der acker gereinigt ist': Sprichwörtliche Argumentation in Luthers Sendbrief vom Dolmetschen (1530)," in *Wörter-Verbindungen: Festschrift für Jarmo Korhonen*, hrsg. von Ulrich Breuer und Irma Hyvärinen (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2006), S. 431-446.

3. zu zwei mittellateinischen Sprichwörtern

Nr. 13 (S. 110-111): Bekanntlich sind viele Sprichwörter nur bis zum Latein des Mittelalters zurückzuverfolgen, die dann durch Übersetzungsübungen an den Klosterschulen und durch die Humanisten, vor allem durch Erasmus von Rotterdams *Adagia* (1500ff.), in die europäischen Sprachen lehnübersetzt wurden. So ist auch das Sprichwort "Viele Wege führen nach Rom" bis hinauf nach Finnland gekommen, und mehr oder weniger erwartungsgemäß gibt es eine Totaläquivalenz unter den drei vorliegenden Sprachen. Oft meint man, daß mit Rom die Stadt der Antike ge-

meint ist, aber es handelt sich um das Rom der christlichen Kirche. Ich erwähne dieses Sprichwort hauptsächlich, um zu betonen, daß Helomaa selbstverständlich weiß, daß es zu diesem Sprichwort nationale Varianten gibt, wo statt Rom eben Turku, Paris, Moskau usw. eingesetzt werden. Diese Art von Varianten gibt es auch für das ebenfalls mittellateinische Sprichwort "Rom ist (auch) nicht an einem Tag erbaut worden" (vgl. Nr. 101; S. 178-179).

Nr. 223 (S. 308-309): Da ich mich selbst in meiner Monographie *"Morgenstunde hat Gold im Munde"*. *Studien und Belege zum populärsten deutschsprachigen Sprichwort* (Wien: Edition Praesens, 1997), eingehend mit dem "Morgenstunde"-Sprichwort auseinandergesetzt habe, war ich selbstverständlich erfreut zu erfahren, daß das Sprichwort im Finnischen etwa als "Morgenstunde Gold wert" tradiert wird. Es ist übrigens auch in die ungarische Sprache vorgedrungen. Begeistert war ich auch, als ich las, daß es Satu Helomaa bekannt ist, daß gerade dieses Sprichwort jetzt im Deutschen sowie im Finnischen durch die Lehnübersetzung des englischen Sprichwortes "The early bird catches the worm" verdrängt wird (S. 309; vgl. ihre Ausführungen unter Nr. 31, S. 123-124). Ich darf diesbezüglich vielleicht noch hinweisen auf meine Untersuchung "'Der frühe Vogel und die goldene Morgenstunde': Zu einer deutschen Sprichwortentlehnung aus dem Angloamerikanischen," in W. Mieder, *"Spruchschlösser (ab)bauen"*. *Sprichwörter, Antisprichwörter und LehnSprichwörter in Literatur und Medien* (Wien: Praesens Verlag, 2010), S. 285-296. Doch es gibt noch etwas, nämlich eine kleine mir passierte Geschichte, die Satu Helomaa sicherlich interessieren wird. Als ich einer deutschen Freundin vor gut fünfzehn Jahren mein "Morgenstunde"-Buch schenkte, reagierte sie schnell und ernsthaft, daß mein Titel verkehrt sei. Sie meinte steif und fest, er könnte nur heißen "Morgenstund hat Gold im Mund", denn nur so sei das Sprichwort bekannt! Helomaa weist auf diese "e" Variante hin, und es zeigt sich an dieser Geschichte, wie wichtig Varianten bei der Äquivalenzbestimmung sind.

4. zu neuen angloamerikanischen Entlehnungen

Sabine Fiedler (Leipzig) und wohl auch ich haben uns recht intensiv mit den neuen Lehnübersetzungen angloamerikanischer

Sprichwörter in Europa auseinandergesetzt. Satu Helomaa hat diese Forschungsergebnisse rezipiert, und es gibt noch einige weitere in meinem gerade erwähnten Buch. Man kann sich vorstellen, daß ich als sogenannter Deutsch-Amerikaner ihre Minidarstellungen gerade zu diesem internationalen Phänomen mit großem Interesse und Gewinn gelesen habe. Die englische Sprache ist heute die *lingua franca* der Welt, und so überrascht es nicht, daß Sprichwörter dieser Sprache direkt oder lehnübersetzt Verbreitung finden. Es gäbe viel dazu zu sagen, aber ich verweise kurz und bündig auf einige der ausgezeichneten Darstellungen, die Helomaa in ihrer Dissertation anführt: Nr. 7 (S. 107) “An apple a day keeps the doctor away” (Totaläquivalenz), sowie mit unterschiedlichen Äquivalenzstufen Nr. 31 (s. 123-124) “The early bird catches the worm”, Nr. 105 (S. 183) “The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence”, Nr. 129 (S. 206-208) “Don’t put all your eggs into one basket” und natürlich Nr. 211 (S. 295) “A (One) picture is worth a thousand words”. Ich möchte noch so manches zu diesen und anderen angloamerikanischen Sprichwörtern sagen, aber das würde den Rahmen dieser Rezension sprengen und auch weit über das Anliegen dieser Dissertation hinausgehen. Nur so viel sei noch erwähnt, nämlich, daß, wie Satu Helomaa mit Bezug auf Nr. 211 sehr gut weiß, eben auch moderne Sprichwörter in Varianten kursieren, was kontrastive Äquivalenzbestimmungen erschwert. Noch kurz zu Nr. 74 (S. 158-159) “The road to hell is paved with good intentions” (Der Weg zur Hölle ist mit guten Vorsätzen gepflastert) ist nicht nur “wahrscheinlich” (S. 158) sondern gewiß eine Lehnübersetzung aus dem Englischen, wo das Sprichwort, auf verwandten antiken Aussagen beruhend, bereits Ende des 16. Jahrhunderts belegt ist. Hier sei noch eine aphoristische Variation Friedrich Nietzsches hinzugefügt, die Andreas Nolte und mir als Buchtitel diente: “*Zu meiner Hölle will ich den Weg mit guten Sprüchen pflastern*”. *Friedrich Nietzsches sprichwörtliche Sprache* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 2012).

Doch es muß ein Ende gefunden werden, auch wenn ich so gerne noch manches zu diesen so interessanten und ergiebigen Ausführungen von Satu Helomaa sagen möchte, so etwa zu dem Sprichwort Nr. 157 (S. 236-237) “Vorsicht ist die Mutter der Weisheit”, das, wie sie darlegt, viele Varianten aufweist, die alle auf der Strukturformel “X ist die Mutter von Y” beruhen; vgl. dazu den Beitrag meines verstorbenen Freundes Wayland Hand, “A

Classical Proverb-Pattern in German," *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 36 (1937), 224-233. Und wie großartig sind Helomaas Äquivalenzbestimmungen zu den Sprichwörtern Nr. 201 (S. 284-285) "Die Katze läßt das Mäusen nicht", Nr. 236 (S. 321-323) "Was Hänschen nicht lernt, lernt Hans nimmermehr", Nr. 244 (S. 332-334) "Eigener Herd ist Goldes wert", Nr. 256 (S. 345) "Wer A sagt, muß auch B sagen", Nr. 259 (S. 346-347) "Die Axt im Haus erspart den Zimmermann", Nr. 290 (S. 367) "Glück und Glas, wie leicht bricht das", Nr. 308 (S. 377-378) "Im Trüben ist gut fischen" (vgl. Archer Taylor, "'It Is Good Fishing in Troubled Waters,'" in A. Taylor, *Selected Writings on Proverbs*, hrsg. von Wolfgang Mieder [Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedekatemia, 1975], S. 172-179) und Nr. 327 (S. 389) "Man muß mit den Wölfen heulen"! Je höher die Sprichwortnummer, desto komplizierter ist die Aufgabe, die mannigfaltigen Möglichkeiten der Äquivalenz zu bestimmen. Doch Satu Helomaa gelingt dies alles in vorzüglicher Weise.

Immer wieder erwähnt Satu Helomaa das Variantenproblem bei der Äquivalenzbestimmung und betont berechtigtermaßen, daß es keinen Zweck hat, veraltete und nicht mehr gebräuchliche Texte in die Vergleiche einzubeziehen. Sie wiederholt ebenfalls, daß die Äquivalenz zwischen deutschen und französischen Sprichwörtern als benachbarte Sprachkulturen am stärksten ist, dann zwischen Deutsch und Finnisch, wo das Schwedische in den Entlehnungsprozessen mitgewirkt hat (S. 404), und erst dann mit Abstand zwischen Französisch und Finnisch, wo größere geographische, sprachliche und kulturelle Unterschiede vorherrschen. Immer wieder hebt Helomaa hervor, daß der Bekanntheitsgrad und auch die Frequenz der verglichenen Sprichwörter zu beachten sind (S. 408). So entpuppt sich die detaillierte "Beschreibung des Äquivalenzgrades" als harte Nuß, die nur schwer zu knacken ist, um es redensartlich zum Ausdruck zu bringen. Für die weitere Äquivalenzforschung wäre es von großem Nutzen, wenn parömiologische Minima für mehr Sprachen vorlägen, die dann die wirklich gängigen Sprichwörter in ihrer Standardform zum Vergleich ermöglichen würden. Parömiologen in den Ländern, wo bisher keine parömiologischen Minima erstellt worden sind, arbeiten daran. Den Schlußsatz dieser sprachlich und stilistisch einwandfrei formulierten Dissertation möchte ich allen Parömiographen und Lexikographen ans Herz legen: "Bis heute gibt es kein drei-

sprachiges deutsch-französisch-finnisches Sprichwörterbuch. Hoffentlich wird meine Dissertation mit dazu beitragen, diese Lücke zu füllen und auch der Lexikografie etwas Neues zu bringen. Da für das Finnische und Französische noch kein parömisches Minimum erarbeitet wurde, wäre die Aufstellung von Listen mit entsprechenden Sprichwörtern nicht nur für den Parömiologen wichtig, sondern auch für die Lexikografen" (S. 412). Mein Vorschlag wäre jedoch, daß Satu Helomaa eben diese dreisprachige Sprichwörtersammlung selbst herausbringt, denn sie hat doch schon einen Großteil der Arbeit vollbracht und ist bestens qualifiziert für dieses wichtige Unterfangen.

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Introduction to Paremiology: A Comprehensive Guide to Proverb Studies. Ed. by Hrisztalina Hrisztova-Gotthardt and Melita Aleksa Varga, managing ed. Anna Borowska, associate ed. Darko Mato-vac, language ed. Aderemi Rajij-Oyelade. Warsaw & Berlin: DeGruyter Open, 2014. Pp. 368.
<http://www.degruyter.com/viewbooktoc/product/449649>

This is a book that many have wished for, some have dreamt of trying to write, but it is now available to all, published as open access on the Web. The authors (mostly from continental Europe) all have expertise in their fields – which is better than one person trying to write the whole book alone. Not surprisingly, the book is dedicated to Wolfgang Mieder.

All of the chapters in the book examine European proverbs (almost) exclusively, though Lauhakangas does refer to Kuusi's database which is based on proverbs from around the globe. This is both a strength and a weakness. It is a *strength* in that the authors are dealing with a similar (often shared) set of sayings and language behaviors. It is a *weakness* in that they overlook additional data from the rest of the broad proverbial world. One point where differences arise between European languages and some others is the breadth of the definition of "proverb". (A number of non-European language communities have different definitions and criteria for proverbs. For example, in Efik of Nigeria *ηke* means "proverb", but the same word also includes "story, riddle, tongue-twister" (Finnegan 1970:426, fn. 2).) Concentrating on data from Europe allows for the writers to assume the same (or very similar) concept of proverb across all their data, even if it is not universal. The book's Eurocentric view was highlighted when one author wrote that anti-proverbs are "studied all around the world, major European languages being considered" (p. 283).

The first three chapters all touch on the matter of defining proverbs, but the first one is the most focused on this topic. The three complementary perspectives are helpful. Other than these,

there is little overlap between the chapters; each article can stand by itself as a resource on its subject.

1. Subject Area, Terminology Proverb Definitions, Proverbs Features. Neil R. Norrick

The first three chapters all touch on the challenge of defining a “proverb”, but Norrick’s addresses the topic most directly. As Archer Taylor warned us long ago, “The definition of a proverb is too difficult to repay the undertaking”. But, of course, this has not stopped many from trying.

I am delighted that Norrick distinguishes “proverbs proper” from a variety of similar constructions, such as proverbial phrases, proverbial comparisons, wellerisms, and idioms (p. 8). There are times that these other types of constructions can be considered along with proverbs, but it is more often useful to distinguish them from true “proverbs”. He introduces the concept of prototypicality of proverbs (p. 14, 22), but does not go on to develop it in any detail as a way to define proverbs.

I find the concept of prototypicality helpful in classifying sayings as proverbs. It is helpful to think of a series of concentric circles, as in a target. Some proverbs are at the center, very prototypical: “Don’t judge a book by its cover.” Other traditional sayings may be further from the center, less prototypical proverbs: “If it moves, shoot it.” And some sayings are at the outer ring, far from being prototypical proverbs: “‘I see,’ said the blind carpenter as he picked up his hammer and saw.”

Norrick provides a helpful and detailed comparison and analysis of many methods used to define or describe proverbs, showing how certain approaches have obtained results of varying usefulness. However, all of Norrick’s analysis and his examples are based on English proverbs, but much of it would also apply to proverbs from other language communities. The chapter shows many ways that have been used in defining a proverb. They have shown a variety of degrees of usefulness. Norrick, probably wisely, does not attempt to form a definition that would satisfy all needs and all opinions.

2. Origin of Proverbs. Wolfgang Mieder

Mieder writes about a complex subject in a way that can be understood by undergraduate students. His chapter is like many of

his writings, major points supported by clear examples drawn from his voluminous knowledge of proverbs from many eras.

Mieder explains that proverbs are not created by “the folk” in a mysterious and murky process. Rather, each proverb is created by an individual, though others may then alter and popularize it. It is rarely possible to identify the actual originator of a proverb, even for proverbs that are traced to certain authors since those authors may well have quoted it from others. There are, of course, some proverbs that can actually be traced to an individual (Doyle, Mieder, and Shapiro 2012). Also, new proverbs are constantly created, while some old ones are lost.

He lists “four major sources of common European proverbs.” The first is from earlier civilizations, especially Greek and Latin, particularly because they left written records. Much proverb lore from classical antiquity was spread across by Erasmus of Rotterdam in his monumental *Adagia*. His second major source of European proverbs is the Bible, both from vernacular translations and the Latin Vulgate translation. With the sad decline in awareness of the Bible, many no longer recognize that they are using proverbs that are derived from the Bible. The third major source of proverbs in European languages is “the rich treasure trove of medieval Latin proverbs.” Since Latin was the language read by scholars from Portugal to Scandinavia to the Black Sea, these proverbs were readily circulated and translated into local languages. His fourth major source of proverbs in European language may not be as readily agreed on by some: proverbs from English. He gives several examples of proverbs from English that have been translated and adopted into other languages, though some will not know their origin. He shows that other languages also contribute to the pool of borrowings, the media allowing for the spread of proverbs. He makes it clear that despite these four major categories, each language has its own store of proverb treasures, made with their homegrown alliteration, meter, rhyme, images, etc.

Though scholar’s interests vary, I found his final section to be fascinating and helpful. Mieder challenges the works of Honeck & Welge and Winick in their listing of defining characteristics of proverbs. Winick believes that “the proverbiality of an utterance is the text itself” regardless of whether the utterance become adopted and used by society (p. 41). Honeck & Welge studied proverbs from a cognitive point of view, regardless of whether the utteranc-

es becomes adopted and used by society. Mieder argues (to my mind, convincingly) that the repeated and widespread use of a saying is a defining feature of proverbs. Those who study proverbs from different academic points of view may loosen definitions within their smaller spheres, but I believe Mieder's position will be followed by the majority of *Proverbium* readers.

3. *Categorization of Proverbs. Outi Lauhakangas*

Lauhakangas examines the two best-known taxonomic systems devised to categorize proverbs, the one by G. L. Permjakov and the one by Matti Kuusi (her father). But before she compares them, she writes of proverb collections. She notes that for both scholars, "the starting point has been a real proverb corpus, collections and archives of proverb texts" (p. 62). As a writer on proverb collection methods, I chuckle when some scholars belittle proverb collections for not having contexts, while so many scholars find many ways to profit from collections.

Organizing collections of proverbs has always been a challenge: alphabetical order, alphabetizing by key word, or by themes. There is subjectivity involved, especially if the analyst does not know well the culture from where the proverbs were collected.

She compares the two systems, first examining the work of Permjakov. "His analysis is a description of the rules of building clichéized texts and considers clichés originating as oral speech... Permyakov sees that features of proverbs centre around a limited number of invariant opposition pairs of the type *one's own—another's*, *near—faraway*, *good—evil*, etc. ... The problem in his approach is his attempt to make differences between proverb types according to their negative, positive, and mixed forms" (p. 57) [italics in original]. As Chlosta and Grzybek tried to apply his system to German proverbs, they found his system difficult to apply. "The difficulties are not only due to the complexity of Permyakov's system, but because it seems to be more exact than our everyday usage of proverbs" (p. 59).

In describing Kuusi's International Type System of proverbs, Lauhakangas is able to describe it authoritatively since she helped her father with it, classifying and entering proverb data. Instead of following the work of others who studied the evolution of proverbs among geographical neighbors, Kuusi noted similarities be-

tween proverbs from Africa and Finland. His system for classifying proverbs began with 13 categories, each of which was divided into lower categories, and these themselves into smaller categories. "For example, in the subgroup C1d you will find a global proverb type C1d 19 *An old ox plows makes a straight furrow*. Equivalent proverbs will be found... a Japanese synonymous proverb *An old horse doesn't forget his path*" (p. 61,62).

In her comparison of how some proverbs are classified in the two systems, there is not enough explanation for most readers (including me) to adequately understand the significant differences, strengths, or weaknesses of either system. Today, neither system is being widely applied to additional collections of proverbs, but since Kuusi's system is better described in English and is on the Web, it is more used, more useful, and more likely to be applied by scholars in the future (at least in the West). Though neither system is being used as much as its creator had hoped, their mere existence is important as proverb scholars, present and future, think about ways to classify proverbs. In the next chapter, Grzybek also provides a brief comparison of the proverb classification systems of Permjakov and Kuusi.

4. Semiotic and Semantic Aspects of the Proverb. Peter Grzybek

Grzybek's contribution is the longest chapter in the book, and the most intellectually rigorous. His approach requires a significant amount of theoretical framework, more than some readers will be willing to study. But he offers significant proposals and insights for those who are familiar (or willing to read his theoretical summaries and become familiar) with pragmatics, semiotics, model-theoretic notation, and other formal approaches to meaning. To illustrate the difference between his approach and most of the others in this book, he refers to the writings of Charles Peirce more often than Wolfgang Mieder. Depending on the readers' interests, they may think this is the most helpful chapter in the book, or the least helpful. But if readers will read it carefully, all will learn and gain something new.

Grzybek points out that proverbs have generally been an object of research for those in such fields as folklore, linguistics, and sociolinguistics. But taking a different approach, Grzybek vigorously applies formal theoretical tools for the analysis of meaning to the study of proverbs and their meanings. Most proverb schol-

ars are not familiar with logical formulation to represent a proverbial phrase or saying: “ $\exists_x(x=a)(P_x \supset Q_x)$ or $\exists_x(P_x \supset Q_x)$ ” as distinguished from “ $\forall_x(P_x \supset Q_x)$ ” to represent a proverb (p. 96). Nor are we used to using a notational system such as $A:B::C:D$ to represent the structure of a proverb, comparing this to $A:B::p:q::C:D$ (p. 98, 99). Grzybek introduces and explains each new concept in its relation to proverb study. But those who want to understand Grzybek enough to apply his ideas on their own will want to read the appropriate literature that he cites, unless they already grasp the concepts he uses.

It is disappointing that after all of the precise discussion about how to analyze the meaning of a proverb, the Grzybek did not give any examples analyzing a proverb in use, not even a hypothetical example. I agree with his conclusion, “It should have become clear that theoretical as well as empirical works are necessary to provide a sufficiently broad picture.”

5. Structural aspects of proverbs. Marcas Mac Coinnigh

Mac Coinnigh reviews proverb structures, systematizing much that is commonly assumed in proverb studies but is not usually so carefully explained in grammatical detail. For example, he speaks of “asyndetic parallelism”, carefully explaining that in asyndetic parallelism there are no conjunctions to link the two parallel elements. Mac Coinnigh includes many grammatical structures for proverbs, but does not include the adverbial types with such words as “always”, “never”. Nor does he include the common quantifier adjectives: “all”, “no”, “every”, “each”, “many”, “few”, “none”, “nothing”. Outside of Europe, we find other kinds of proverb structures, also, such as dialogue proverbs, e.g. from Yoruba, “They say, 'Lame man, the load on your head is sitting crookedly.' He replies, 'It is not the load, but the legs.'”

Mac Coinnigh mentions sound-based markers that can indicate that a saying is carefully crafted as a proverb, but mentions only rhyme and alliteration. These are common, but so is meter, especially in forming two parallel lines of equal syllables. Ironically, Jesenšek’s chapter on stylistic aspects of proverbs includes more examples showing sound-based art in the structure of proverbs, and also more labels for syntactic figures (p. 138,139). Though there are some gaps here, I will assign this chapter to my students as they study proverb structures.

6. *Pragmatic and stylistic aspects of proverbs. Vida Jesenšek*

Jesenšek makes three contributions, all related. First, readers get a brief introduction to stylistics, learning of the distinction between “stylistic-pragmatic” effects and “functional pragmatic” perspectives. Second, for those who may still need persuasion, Jesenšek provides evidence and repeated reminders that the meaning of a proverb needs to be studied in the context of its use. Third, the chapter provides a set of categories for stylistic and pragmatic aspects of proverb use.

She reminds readers that “an analysis and interpretation of the stylistic-pragmatic functionality of proverbs is possible only in a context” (p. 137). The meaning of the *use* of a proverb is understood in context. She strongly made her point that proverbs cannot be classified in stylistic terms without knowing the context in which one is used, e.g. one German proverb (in isolation) was classified in different ways by three different sources (p. 142).

One of the applications of her approach is showing the importance and contrast of function of proverbs at the beginnings and endings of texts. At the beginnings of texts, proverbs can introduce a topic and situational frame, but at the ends they summarize and conclude. As the author wished, the chapter provides a good basis for further research into proverb use and serves as a warning for those who work too vigorously to describe and categorize the meaning of a proverb outside of a context in which it is used.

7. *Cognitive Aspects of Proverbs. Anna Lewandowska and Gerd Antos, in cooperation with Dana Gläßer*

This chapter’s perspective for studying proverbs is very different from the approach taken by those who think more like folklorists and stress context. It is based on the work of Lakoff & Johnson and their Conceptual Metaphor Theory as first introduced in their *Metaphors We Live By* (1992). Their theory holds that “Our ordinary conceptual system... is fundamentally metaphorical in nature... the way we think, what we experience, and what we do every day is very much a matter of metaphor.” Applying this approach to proverbs, instead of more traditional folklore or literary approaches asks very different questions. Instead of looking at grammatical structure, they look at the metaphors in the structure.

They think about the differences between literal and metaphorical proverbs. They wrestle with the matter of language and cognition.

They list four proverbs (from languages outside of Europe!) that are all classified under one type by Permjakov. But by cognitivist methods, they claim that these four are better classified into “two opposing PCs [Proverb Concepts]” (p. 172).

Their cognitive view leads them to downplay the importance of sound-based artistry which is seen as important by some; rather, they believe “proverbs are perceived as proverbs independently of their” sound based artistry (p. 169).

8. Empirical Research and Paremiological Minimum. Peter Ďurčo

Ďurčo seems to have more publications than others in actually assessing a paremiological minimum (PM), much of it studying Slovak proverb familiarity. Proverb scholars in different countries have used different methods to determine which proverbs are in the PM. There is no single method that scholars agree on. A key point is that nobody is exactly sure how to precisely define the PM. All agree that it is the proverbs that adults in the language community will know. But how should this be precisely defined? The proverbs known by 90% of the adults over the age of 25? The proverbs recognized by 80% of the adults over 20? The 100 proverbs that are most commonly known by adults over age 30?

Ďurčo’s is the most detailed discussion I have found of methodology of measuring the PM, or ranking proverb familiarity. He covers different kinds of testing methods (interview, questionnaire, Web, corpus) and different types of tests (listing as many as a person knows, responding to a list by saying whether one knows the proverb, completing a proverb when given only part of it, etc. p. 188,189).

Rather than spending much time arguing about a point on which many will not agree, I think it is more useful (and easier) to speak of ranking the familiarity of the proverbs in a speech community. In this way, the researcher does not have to claim that they have discovered the paremiological minimum, but only say that they have shown the ranking of the most commonly known proverbs in a language community. A researcher may go so far as to say that they have identified the 100 most commonly used proverbs in a corpus, but these may not compose the PM. It is still

very useful to think of the PM as we study proverbs; it is still a useful concept even if it is not precisely defined.

Those interested in studying the PM or doing Web-based proverb research should consider the innovative method used by Zelle (2014) to collect Pashto proverbs. He launched the collection of Pashto proverbs on the Web. Counting the number of people who submitted a proverb, then noting how many times each proverb was tweeted and retweeted, he was able to assess the relative popularity of Pashto proverbs. (See the review of this in the 2015 *Proverbium* by Kuhlberg.)

9. Proverbs from a Corpus Linguistic Point of View. Kathrin Steyer

The Web contains a huge amount of data relevant to the form and use of proverbs. Previous authors have explained ways to search for and study proverbs on the Web, but as newer software and systems are created, there will always be a need for newer, up-to-date studies on this subject. Some of the chapters in this book touch on this, each with its own focus.

Steyer's specialty is searching through large language corpora, her specialty being the German corpus, Deutsches Referenzkorpus (DeReKo) at Mannheim. She explains the results of different ways to search for proverbs, such as keywords in context or seeking key words with a specified minimum number of words in between. She demonstrates how the application of her techniques proved that an old German proverb *Alte Ochsen machen gerade Furchen* ("Old oxen make straight furrows") is no longer in use. When she did not recognize what her children claimed was a new proverb, *Das Leben ist kein Ponyhof* ("Life is not a pony farm"), she also applied these tools and confirmed her children's report of a new proverb becoming established in usage.

Steyer gave some good clues on how to search the Web for proverb use, so I found myself testing them as I read. However, her article does not give detailed instructions on how to search a specific corpus for proverbs since some corpora have different ways to search the data. The searches she described found many examples of the use of partial proverbs or deliberately restructured examples of proverbs, anti-proverbs. However, I was surprised to find no explicit mention of "anti-proverbs" or how searches should be done to include or exclude them. Clearly Steyer has

done this sort of search, but she did not specifically describe the applications to restructured proverbs.

10. Paremiography: Proverb Collections. Tamás Kispál

All who have used a wide variety of proverb collections know that many of them are quite different in arrangement, function, and breadth. Kispál has given us some clear and useful categories to use in analyzing proverb collections. For example, some collections make “no distinction between ‘proverb, proverbial phrases and proverbial similes,’” but others are collections of “*pure proverbs*” (emphasis in original) (p. 230).

Kispál emphasizes the importance of the intended usage of proverb collections, electronic or paper. Some contain historical forms, including multiple variants. Other collections organize proverbs according to subjects/themes, such as “economy” and “diligence”. Proverb collections that are prepared in more than one language are useful for those comparing proverbs across languages, which he classifies as “scientific”, “popular scientific”, and “for the teaching of foreign languages” (p. 231).

The arrangement of proverbs is classified into three categories: by keywords, alphabetically, and by theme. He recommends that collections that are arranged alphabetically should also include an index of keywords. Kispál goes on to discuss the content of each proverb entry: some collections simply list the proverbs, others include explanations and equivalent proverbs in another language, origin, usage of the proverbs, frequency, and examples of the proverbs in context.

The chapter closes with a discussion of electronic proverb collections, disks or Web. These collections may be digitized versions of old proverb collections (such as a collection of German proverbs from 1867-1880) or new collections. With electronic collections, searching is more flexible, allowing the study of more patterns and forms. As the Web develops and software packages grow more powerful, such topics will become more and more important.

11. Contrastive Study of Proverbs. Roumyana Petrova

Petrova examines how large numbers of proverbs around the world are often similar in meaning (and in form), but also many proverbs are different. She distinguishes between “comparative” and “contrastive” approaches to studying proverb collections. She

realizes that “contrastive paremiology” is not a familiar term or field of study for many, particularly outside of Eastern Europe, admitting that it is a “relatively recent branch of proverb study” (p. 247). She sees the *Matti Kuusi International Type System of Proverbs* as a powerful tool for this approach.

A major part of the Contrastive approach is comparing the cultural values expressed by the proverbs of a language community. The validity of this approach has been debated for years (and will likely to continue to be debated), but Petrova gives the general form of a method that can be applied to a corpus of proverbs to produce a list of values found in a corpus of proverbs. This chapter is meant to introduce a number of concepts that are not (yet) widely known by proverb scholars. It informs all readers, and will likely ignite the attention of some. It is a welcome addition to the global study of proverbs, presenting an approach that is still developing.

12. Proverbs in Literature. Charles Clay Doyle

Doyle says on his first page that proverbs “belong to the province of *oral* tradition” (emphasis in original), but he goes on to show how they have been used in a wide variety of *written* literature. His examples range from classical antiquity to the writings of Shel Silverstein (1974).

The body of the article is the use of proverbs in each of four classes of literature: poetry, prose fiction, plays, “other kinds of literature”. In the last category, he includes genres as diverse as essays, movie scripts, political speeches, newspaper advice columns. For each of the four general classes of literature, Doyle lists some prominent examples of proverb use, some important paremiological literature, then some authors whose work in that class of literature has been neglected by proverb scholars. He reminds readers, “The desideratum of studying proverbs in literature, then, is not merely to identify the *occurrence* of proverbs in poems, plays, stories, or novels (however useful that activity can be) but rather to examine the *artistry* of proverb use in literary contexts” (emphasis in original) (p. 267).

13. Proverbs in Mass Media. Anna Konstantinova

Konstantinova’s article has many insights, but she spent too much space (over two pages) simply documenting that proverbs are used in mass media, a point that many readers know to be true.

Sadly, the organization of the article is not always clear. Proverbs as song titles are covered twice (p. 287), other points are not clearly differentiated from each other (nonce proverbs *vs.* anti-proverbs, p. 282).

Konstantinova compares the use of traditional proverbs *vs.* modified proverbs in the media. She states that the use of modified proverbs is “predominant” over traditional proverbs (p. 281). I assume she is right, but I would like to see evidence to support this claim. Konstantinova recognizes a difference between proverbs used “on the structural level of media texts” and “on the semantic level”. The first category is about the use of proverbs that frame a text, such as in a title. The second category is about the use of proverbs to support a topic or theme. This is a useful distinction, one that should be applied to studying proverbs in all forms of literature.

14. Proverbs and Foreign Language Teaching. Sabine Fiedler

Fiedler addresses teaching and learning proverbs in foreign language classes, pointing out the need, and also giving suggestions for helpful steps, to teach and measure proverb learning. It is useful to note that she does not think of proverbs as an isolated part of language, but rather as a subset of phraseology, an area where language teachers are spending increased attention. The field of *phraseodidactics* (the teaching of fixed phrases), and the lesser-studied field of *Paremioididactics* (the teaching of proverbs), is of interest to more scholars in Europe than in North America, but North Americans can benefit from this approach to language teaching/learning. Fiedler, coming from Europe, has a much higher expectation of what language learners will achieve than the low expectations of too many in American universities.

She believes that teaching proverbs in language classes is useful, presenting such evidence as the opinions of published scholars, the motivational potential for students, their usefulness in understanding a culture, increased fluency and understanding, etc. Most readers of *Proverbium* will happily agree that learning the proverbs of a language is important.

She spends several pages on the matter of deciding which proverbs to teach. This leads to a discussion of the PM, a topic that all agree is important, but few agree on how to determine its content. (She includes her list of 100 English proverbs that should be

taught.) One of her guidelines in choosing which English proverbs to include in her teaching list is whether the proverbs are frequently used in modified ways and as anti-proverbs. When teaching students to be able to function in another language and culture, this is important.

Not surprisingly, in testing she finds that proverbs are better understood in a context than proverbs in isolation on a test. I do not join her in concern that students who learn proverbs in another language well may identify too strongly with the second language and culture. The purpose of language teaching is to give students the skills to learn languages well, not to withhold key elements. They will make their own choices about what to do with their acquired skills. Her five points at the end give clear applications for language teaching/learning of proverbs.

15. Anti-Proverbs. Anna T. Litovkina

Litovkina's chapter on anti-proverbs is a very good, comprehensive introduction to anti-proverbs. It includes a definition of anti-proverbs, a history of the study of anti-proverbs, lists of collections of anti-proverbs in some European languages (German, Hungarian, Russian, French, English), lists of techniques used in forming anti-proverbs, topics that are often touched on by anti-proverbs, and topics for further research. She believes that anti-proverbs are used in every sphere of life and that collecting anti-proverbs should also be part of paremiography, and I heartily concur.

In this excellent chapter I find a mysterious omission, two volumes of Russian anti-proverbs collected by Andrey Reznik, published as supplement volumes to *Proverbium* in 2009 and 2012.

Glossary and index

The glossary contains 95 entries defining some specialized terms used in the book. In light of the disagreements about defining "proverb", cited in the first three chapters, it is not surprising that the glossary does not have an entry "Proverb". I found the definition for "Cliché" difficult. At least in North American English, the common definition is "a trite or overused expression". The glossary aims at a more technical definition, one more in keeping with the usage of the word in the translated title of Permjakov's book, *From Proverb to Folk-Tale: Notes on the Gen-*

eral Theory of Cliché. Even knowing that, I found the definition difficult.

The definition of “Counter-proverb” is not clearly distinguished from that of “Anti-proverb”. I prefer to follow Doyle’s distinction (2012:33,34) that a *counter proverb* has a meaning that contradicts another, e.g. “Look before you leap” vs. “He who hesitates is lost.” Such proverbs are not based on modification of form, as is done in contradictory *anti-proverbs*, such as “Life is a bowl of cherries” vs. “Life is not a bowl of cherries.”

Summary

All of the chapters will be helpful to scholars and graduate students. Some chapters, because of their topic or their depth of investigation, are beyond the reach of many undergraduate students, though some are accessible such as 2, 5, 10, 12. This book will become a standard resource for all who study proverbs from any backgrounds. We owe a debt to the editors and authors. So will scholars of the future.

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WOLFGANG MIEDER

INTERNATIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHY OF NEW AND
REPRINTED PROVERB COLLECTIONS

For George Schumm

This past year yielded the relatively small number of 66 proverb collections that I was able to add to my International Proverb Archives at the University of Vermont in Burlington, Vermont (USA). There can be no doubt that I missed some collections, and I therefore plead once again with all paremiographers to inform me of their new publications. It would be most kind of you to send me a copy since it is at times extremely difficult to obtain the valuable collections from faraway places. I am more than happy to pay you for the books and postage.

Let me refer to one collection in particular that I was able to add this year: Hugo O. Bizzarri, *Diccionario de paremias cervantinas*. Alcalá de Henares: Universidad de Alcalá, 2015. 621 pp. It is a magisterial and voluminous as well as richly annotated collection of the proverbs and proverbial expressions found in Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra's (1547-1616) works. It appeared just in time to remember the death of this famous author of world literature four hundred years ago.

There is also a personal surprise that I would like to mention in these short introductory remarks. When my dear wife Barbara and I opened a Christmas package from my American brother George Schumm, Professor Emeritus of Philosophy at Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio (USA), I found an incredible treasure wrapped in beautiful paper in it: John Ray, *A Compleat Collection of English Proverbs; Also the most celebrated Proverbs of the Scotch, Italian, French, Spanish, And other Languages. To which is added, A Collection of English Words Not Generally Used*. Third Edition. London: H. Slater, 1742, 469 pp. Words cannot express my surprise and delight to find this important proverb collection in mint condition as if it had just come off the press. I should also state how much it has meant to me to send George my

newest proverb publications each Christmas and, even more significantly, how much I have appreciated his wise and critical responses to them. In order to show my dear brother my sincere appreciation and to indicate to him what he, our brother Thomas, and our parents George and Catherine Schumm (my American parents) have meant to me, I dedicate this little bibliography to George Schumm.

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WOLFGANG MIEDER

INTERNATIONAL PROVERB SCHOLARSHIP:
AN UPDATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

For Julia Sevilla Muñoz

It is with much scholarly pleasure that I present these 510 bibliographical references that I have been able to add to my International Proverb Archives at the University of Vermont in Burlington, Vermont (USA) during this past year. It is considerable labor to hunt them down, and I thank my lucky star for all of the help that my colleague and friend Peter Unseth from the Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics at Dallas, Texas, has once again provided to me. His invaluable help is very much appreciated, and we are all greatly indebted to him. Of course, I also wish to thank those colleagues and friends who have sent me their newest publications. Please continue this valuable practice and keep in mind that I am perfectly willing to reimburse you for the materials and postage.

As always, most of the entries are of very recent origin, but there are also a few items that have hitherto escaped my attention. For the most part the references stem from 2014 and 2015, and since there are so many, I shall refrain from singling any particular publication out for special recognition. Instead, I would like to draw attention to the fact that the present bibliography is particularly rich in publications written in Spanish. This is in part due to a number of essay volumes that have appeared, but there are also two volumes of *Paremia, la primera revista española de refranes*, 23 (2014), 232 pp. and 24 (2015), 236 pp. This paremiological yearbook was started in 1993 by Prof. Julia Sevilla Muñoz at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid in Spain. She has masterfully edited these incredibly important volumes ever since, and paremiologists throughout the world appreciate and treasure her valiant efforts. As would be expected, Julia and I have been colleagues and friends for all these years, and by dedicating my annual bibliography to her, I would like to express my respect and admiration of her and all of her colleagues. There can be no doubt that Julia Sevilla Muñoz is a true pioneer in international paremiography and paremiology!

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