

PROVERBIUM

Yearbook of International Proverb Scholarship



39:2022



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PREFACE

As the new chief editors, we feel extremely honored to follow in the big footsteps of Prof. Wolfgang Mieder, the founding editor of *Proverbium*. Wolfgang Mieder served as editor-in-chief from 1984 to 2021 and brought *Proverbium* wide international recognition, thanks to the high quality of published papers submitted by proverb scholars from various countries and institutions around the world. We are also very grateful to Prof. Mieder for having faith in us and we will do our best to maintain and increase the scientific value of the *Yearbook* in the subsequent years.

As it has already been announced, *Proverbium* is from this volume issued as an open access double-blind peer-reviewed online journal. It is hosted by the University of Osijek, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Croatia. The submission of papers, reviewing and editing is done online in the OJS (*Open Journal System*), which corresponds to the current demands regarding online journals. However, after careful consideration we have decided that not everything had to be new and that numerous valuable features and traditions established by Wolfgang Mieder should be carried forward in the same way. For instance, the volume numbers should be continued with, so the first volume edited by the two of us is numbered 39 (2022). We have also kept the well-known and very popular *Proverbium* layout, added some improvements and decided to continue to accept manuscripts in five languages - English, German, French, Spanish and Russian. The journal is open to original scientific papers, preliminary communications, obituaries, book reviews, and bibliographies dedicated to the broad field of paremiology. The newly launched website corresponds to the journal's policy

and is accessible in the journal's five languages as well. In the Archive section of the website, there are some older paperback issues currently available as full electronic .pdf files. All articles are planned to be displayed on the website as separate electronic files as well, with all the accompanying metadata, but all the volumes will continue to be available for download in a single .pdf file as well.

As the requirements for scientific journals have changed and become more rigorous, several important changes and innovations had to be introduced to meet the strict demands of the publishing and scientific world. *Proverbium* with its new website, publication and ethical standards, has fulfilled the strict criteria to be indexed in the MLA Directory of Periodicals and the Croatian Database of Scientific Journals (HRČAK), where you can find the last ten volumes of the *Yearbook*, even as the rest is planned to be uploaded presently. An international Editorial Board consisting of well-established paremiologists from fourteen different countries and three continents ensures that the articles submitted to the *Yearbook* maintain the scope and purpose of the journal, meet the high quality standard and report the latest developments and research results in the field of paremiology. In order to boost the citation and visibility of the articles published, *Proverbium* is using the ORCID numbers, and has become a member of the International Crossref Agency. This means that all manuscripts from the Articles sections will get assigned a unique DOI string, making them easier to cite and share through electronic media.

To sum it up, this is only the beginning, a very short summary of all the challenges *Proverbium* has faced in the last few months. There are many more to come which can be achieved with your help as well. It is our great hope that we can become worthy successors of Prof. Mieder and together, with his support and the support of fellow paremiologists all over the world, will carry on our beloved *Proverbium* with honor. We hope you will enjoy reading this, the 39th volume of *Proverbium*, as much as we enjoyed editing it and working on it.

Hrisztalina Hrisztova-Gotthardt and Melita Aleksa Varga

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ALMUTH DEGENER

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS IN PROVERBS FROM NORTHERN PAKISTAN

Abstract: Proverbs from Pakistan are one of the lesser-noted areas of paremiology. The article examines proverbs in five orally transmitted languages from northern Pakistan for statements about relationships and values within the family. Many clichés are confirmed: women are subordinate, and untrustworthy, children are wished for, but hard to raise, mothers are good, and stepmothers evil, the honour of the family must be protected. However, there are remarkably few proverbs about the stupidity of women and their talkativity. And the values depicted in the proverbs, despite cultural and geographical closeness, are not uniform. The emphasis on honour and family cohesion is much stronger in the Shina proverbs than in the proverbs of the other communities.

Keywords: Pakistan, women, family, Islam, oral, Gilgit-Baltistan

1. Introduction

1.1. Aims and limitations of this paper

Proverbs reflect notions about society and human behaviour, they express common observations and experiences as well as normative values. Their status as culturally transmitted and formalised figurative utterances qualifies proverbs as indicators of the values and habits predominant in given societies. Proverbs have been taken as material for comparisons between different cultures, often with a view to particular topics. One of the more

frequently found topics in studies of proverbs is the status of women. This paper joins the ranks of such studies; however, in order to avoid the risk of merely confirming preconceived notions about misogyny, we will look at proverbs that shed light on the structures and dynamics within the family. Through the relationships of different functionaries within the family, the complexity of social life comes to the fore, and the position of woman will emerge as embedded in the context of her relationships to the people with whom she is most involved in everyday life.

As to the geographical and cultural frame of our analysis, we have selected proverbs from several communities in a limited area in Northern Pakistan, with different languages and different, but partly related cultures. The restriction to proverbs from one geographical region guarantees that proverb equivalences can mostly be explained by a common origin, or by borrowing within a limited area. Surely comparison with similar proverbs from other parts of the world would give us a broader perspective, but the intention of this paper is neither to highlight gross cultural differences nor to confirm that “the ideas or notions presented in proverbs across the globe are the same” (Rasul 2015: 54). Neither is there any intention to formulate a new theory, or challenge an old one. The modest aim is to gain insight into cultural features within a particular geographically and culturally defined region. As will be explained later, this is orally transmitted material and the lack of contexts precludes a pragmatic analysis.

1.2. Geographical and Cultural Setting

Gilgit-Baltistan is a high-mountain area in northern Pakistan with harsh living conditions for its inhabitants. Agriculture is possible only in a small part of the area, and depends on irrigation. Agricultural products are barley, wheat, maize, apricots, apples and walnuts. In addition, there is livestock farming with sheep, goats and cattle. Most people are Muslims, belonging to different denominations within Islam.

The languages of our proverbs - Balti, Burushaski, Khowar, Shina, Wakhi - are the main regional languages, besides which there are several other languages in the area. Taking the city of Gilgit as a reference point, Shina is spoken in and around Gilgit, Khowar in the northwest, Wakhi and Burushaski in the north,

and Balti in the east. However, this is only a very rough delimitation. All these languages are spoken in different places and there is a lot of contact between the different communities. Urdu, the national language of Pakistan, serves as a lingua franca. The Shina proverbs quoted in this paper are from Gilgit. The Burushaski and Wakhi proverbs are from Hunza. The Khowar proverbs are from Chitral, which is not part of Gilgit-Baltistan but shares not only several languages but also much of its history and culture. The Balti proverbs were recorded in Islamabad.

As to the status of women, it will suffice for our purposes to quote Sökefeld (2014: 20):

Society in Gilgit-Baltistan is strongly gendered, although gender-relations vary greatly according to sect and region. Among Shias and Sunnis *pardah*, i.e. gender segregation, is a strict norm which, however, especially in villages where women are required to work outside the house in the fields is not always tightly enforced. In principle *pardah* (the Persian word for “curtain”) means that a woman should not have any interaction with men from outside of the close circle of her family. This means that a woman should largely be restricted to her house and compound. In any case, pre-marital and extramarital (sexual) relations are anathema. In parts of Gilgit-Baltistan, ‘relation’ in this context is a very broadly defined concept which may include a word or a wink between a man and a woman who are not related. Any suspicion and rumor that a woman might be engaged in such a ‘relation’ befouls her *izzat* (honor) and consequently the *izzat* of her family. Therefore, men are called to keep ‘their women’, in particular daughters and sisters, under very strict surveillance and control. In normal life this control is mostly executed by the mothers of the families, but also elder brothers play an important role.

The proverbs presented in this paper will confirm this account. They will also add some aspects of the ideas and concepts of women’s and family life.

1.3. Data basis: orally transmitted languages of Gilgit-Baltistan

The data are taken from published collections of proverbs in five different languages. Shina and Khowar are Indo-Aryan languages, Wakhi is an Iranian language, both belong to the large family

of Indo-European languages. Balti belongs to the Tibeto-Burman language family, and Burushaski is a language isolate. All these languages are spoken by people living in the region of Gilgit-Baltistan in the north of Pakistan. The proverbs thus belong to the Islamic world on the one hand, and to the Indian subcontinent on the other.

The collections we use are different from collections of other, in particular European proverbs, in that they are neither based on nor competing with written sources.

Mieder (2012: 26) points out that “regional ... collections are of considerably higher value if the proverbs were ... collected from oral sources.” All the proverbs used for this paper are in languages which have up to date been orally transmitted. There exist some written texts in Shina and Wakhi but one could hardly call them literary languages in the sense that a huge corpus of written literature exists and that writing is the dominant form of transmission. At the time when the proverbs were collected, even attempts to write the languages concerned were only just beginning. Mieder’s judgment was in the context of origin of proverbs. Of course, even with a collection based exclusively on oral sources, there is no guarantee that all the proverbs originate in the place where they were recorded. In fact, there is evidence that proverbs were borrowed from one of the dominant literary languages of the area, Persian or Urdu, and we can state with certainty that there has always been considerable exchange of literary topics, themes, and forms, including proverbs, among the unwritten languages of the region. We will not be concerned with the origin of the proverbs; many of them are found in similar form in neighbouring cultures, and it is often hard to tell in which direction the borrowing occurred, or if there is borrowing at all. The value of a proverb for the community where it is in use, is in any case not dependent on its origin.

All our proverbs were collected by linguistic fieldworkers among speakers of the respective languages in the 20th and early 21st century. While the proverbs were collected with the intention to learn more about the language and the linguistic community, none of these collections reflects the attempt to construct a national or ethnical heritage or identity. Several collections are part of books containing texts and grammatical sketches of

the respective language. Since all the languages concerned are among the lesser-known languages of the world, the researchers refrained from selection or rejection of data, but recorded whatever they could get hold of. This is a great advantage, but it makes certain analyses impossible.

There is no indication of the age or history of the proverbs collected, and given the random nature of the data, we should be cautious about making sweeping statements based on the number of proverbs attested in general or for a particular category. Above all, however, the context is lacking.

Proverbs may be used to direct, encourage, complain, warn, instigate, prescribe, console, condemn, or ridicule, but all of these and more functions will become apparent only in a given situation. It would be a fascinating and rewarding task indeed to evaluate the actual use of proverbs in Northern Pakistan in interaction between native speakers, but the data used for this paper are taken from collections which tell little if anything about the context. In fact, in most cases the linguist would probably have asked a native speaker for proverbs in his language, and be given a number of common proverbs or proverbial sayings out of context. Local language assistants did provide information about the “meaning” of some proverbs but since the range of meanings adopted by a particular proverb can only be grasped in its conversational context, the semantic and functional potential of the proverbs cited in this article will remain vague. We also have very little textual evidence for the function of proverbs. Again, this may partly be due to the fieldwork situation. Fortunately, for Shina we possess a document of language use without the interference of a foreigner (Buddruss and Degener 2012). In seven radio features, each with 25 minutes of airtime, fifteen proverbs are quoted by the protagonists. Practically none of them, however, is concerned with family relationships.

1.4. Methodology

Classification can never be neutral; the categories will shape the findings. Many proverbs, moreover, are multi-dimensional and polysemous, so that they fall into several categories. In order to achieve a certain accuracy in dealing with the material, and to obtain a *tertium comparationis* for the wealth of data from

five different linguistic and ethnic communities, we arrange the proverbs according to the typical protagonists within a family. For classification we use opposition pairs, mostly for role models, such as man : woman, mother : father, etc. The proverbs will be quoted in English translation. In the appendix, all the proverbs are given in the original language, arranged according to the numbers used in this paper. Wherever the Matti Kuusi database is quoted, the abbreviation Matti Kuusi is used.

2. Analysis of Proverbs

2.1. Individual : Family

The family, including brothers, sisters and cousins, the young as well as the older generations, is a haven of security and a network of mutual assistance. Typically, the widely known proverb “Don’t saw off the branch you are sitting on” (classified in Matti Kuusi as M3d about stupidity) is in Burushaski (6) interpreted to refer to one’s family: “One must not break one’s bond of blood” (Tiffou 1993: 91). For family unity is essential for survival: (7) “You can survive without livestock, without relatives you cannot.” A single person will achieve nothing: (11) “No oil comes from a single fruit stone”, a man’s authority and importance are based on his relatives: (15) “The tree is firm on its roots, man is firm on his relatives”, (16) “The stone is heavy in its own place.” This does not mean that there is always harmony, or that all the family members are equally liked, but the family belongs together under all circumstances: (4) “The broth is bitter, the meat tasty”, it cannot be divided: (3) “If you whip water, will it split?” Not always is it comfortable to stick to one’s home, and lack of food and other material goods has always been a very real threat in Gilgit-Baltistan. However, poverty at home is still better than to be dependent on others: (2) “Better to eat the millet bread of your own house than sugar and honey elsewhere.” As long as the family sticks together, it will not perish: (1) “When the house community is at one, even water will be digested”, and a relative, no matter how poor he is, can be a help in time of need, therefore (52) “May there be a relative even (if he is) under a thorn!”

Every member of the family is responsible for the others. There is no way to escape from the duty to support your family even if it means you have to sell your own son or a nephew to help another family member ((13) and (17)). In many cases, it will be one person who takes care of the whole family, and there can be a feeling that they are sacrificing themselves while everyone else is enjoying himself: (8) “One for earning, a hundred for dancing.” However, one’s relatives should never be regarded as a burden: (12) “Will its horns get too heavy for the markhor?” And ultimately, it is the whole family that benefits, including the breadwinner: (10) “If you put (something under the coat) through this sleeve, it will come out at the chest; if you put it through that sleeve, it will also come out at the chest.”

If one family member is wronged, unwell or suffers a loss, the whole family is affected: (19) and (20) “When the flesh is cut, there is pain in the bone.”

In contrast to criticism and praise within the family, one cannot rely on the judgement of strangers, because honest rebuke is better than dishonest flattery, and no one needs bad advice: (21) “(Other) people’s praise and the spit of one’s kin are the same”, and (22), (23) “If you listen to other people, they will lose your father’s corpse in the water.” A Wakhi proverb seems to refer to the same theme: (88) “A person will not let another person bury his father”, according to the editor, however, this would mean, you can’t please anyone.

Criticism can be levelled, for example, at weak personalities who cannot harm others and take out their frustrations on their own family, and at people who are able to help their own relatives but do not: (5) “A weak witch will eat her kin”, (18) “Clucking at my (house), the egg is with others.” To molest one’s family members is bad indeed, but much worse is misbehaviour outside the home, for (25) “If a single goat is bad, shame will come upon the whole flock” where the masculine form of the word for goat indicates that it is a general statement, not restricted to women.

In fact, the distinction between inside and outside, family and strangers, is crucial. If one can afford only one dress, it will be worn by the person who represents the family in public: (9) “Dressing is good for one, eating is good for all.” Whatever problems one may face, and no matter how divided the family

may be, never should any of this leak out. This is the explanation given for the Shina proverb (26) “The smoke of the house is known to the smoke hole of the house.” The same proverb is attested in Burushaski (14) “The pungency of the smoke is known by the smoke-hole.” The editor’s explanation “One must be involved to judge well of something”, shows the other side of the coin, so to speak: within the family everyone knows, but it should not get out.

The most vulnerable element is, of course, the female members of the household, especially the younger ones, because the virtuous behaviour of women is crucial for the reputation of the whole family. As a consequence, it is incumbent on the whole family to watch over them: (24) “The honour of the women is on all.” If, however, anything suspicious is noticed, it is better to keep it secret, because when it goes public, the family will be dishonoured: (27) “A hundred penalties on the one who has learned about his mother’s adultery.” This rule also applies to a wife’s unvirtuous behaviour. If a man notices a piece of cloth in a public place and recognizes it as belonging to his wife’s trousers, his honour is tainted, because she seems to have taken it off in an improper place. It is advisable not to recognise it: (70) “If you recognize it, it is the wife’s trousers, if you don’t, a piece of cloth from the bazaar.”

The importance of consanguinity within the family is addressed below under “Parents : Children”, where a clear distinction is made between own and adopted children. Almost all our proverbs about the unity of the family, about mutual responsibilities, and about the importance of upholding the family reputation, are Shina proverbs. This is conspicuous because the collection of Burushaski proverbs (Tiffou 1993) is no less comprehensive than that of Shina proverbs (Degener 2008), but family unity and family honour seem to be much more central in Shina society.

2.2. *Man : Woman*

This paragraph is concerned with men and women, irrespective of their specific roles as husband and wife or else in the family. It is not surprising that women are burdened with childbirth, but the juxtaposition of men and women in the proverbs (28) “woman in childbirth, man in battle” and (32) “One doesn’t know

where a woman will have her place (after marriage); one doesn't know where a man will have his grave" is also an expression of the cultural specificity that men's and women's spheres of labour are usually separated. Men have to provide the fire wood while women would bring water into the house. Consequently, (31) "In a house where there are many women, there will be no water; in a house where there are many men, there will be no wood." An interesting proverb attested both in Shina (29) and Burushaski (30) states that "There is no praise for the water carrier, neither is there blame for the one breaking the calabash." In neither version is there an indication of gender, but the Burushaski version (which is presumably the source of the Shina one) is explained as followed: "The women who were ill-treated could take refuge in the king's palace, where they were received and protected. They were in charge of ancillary jobs, one of them was to carry water."

Old age affects both men and women, but there are significant differences. One remarkable proverb refers to the low life expectancy of women: (36) "The flowering time of a young man is (until) three times 12 years, the flowering time of a woman is (until she has had) three children." The Balti proverb does not state at what age that would be the case but considering early marriage and childbirth, a woman's "flowering time" would probably turn to withering in her twenties, and that is confirmed by a Shina proverb: (35) "The lifetime of a woman and the lifetime of a peach tree are one", referring to peach trees which often do not become old. Old people tend to be respected in Pakistani society, but the low life expectancy of women is not the only reason that it is only men whose role as a repository of wisdom is referred to in proverbs. An interesting proverb recommends keeping an old man in hiding who can help with advice if needed: (37) (38) "Put the wise old man in a basket!" Never in her life will a woman be independent of her husband or male relatives: (33) and (34) "A woman, when she becomes old, needs a man; a man, when he becomes old, needs fire."

Her status increases after she has given birth to children, but even (39) „a woman who has borne twelve (children), does not have authority." The number is not random, for in traditional Gilgit society

When a woman has given birth twelve times, ... the husband gives her a turban. And he prepares entirely new clothes and dresses his wife in them. He says: "My wife has given birth twelve times", and gives people a feast of rejoicing as if it were a new marriage. (Müller-Stellrecht 1980: 24).

A woman has no claims: (40) "For women's spindle disc, there will be no room in the corner." Her words have no effect (41), and this is apparently a natural law, for (42), (43) "Does the dawn rise when the hen cackles?" (Matti Kuusi G5h25) If, however, a woman won't keep quiet and docile, nothing will help, what remains is a bad-tempered remark like (44) "You will stop water, you will stop a woman?" or (62) "A boot eating the foot, a wife eating the heart." Because woman by nature is obstinate and stupid: (45) "If you travel with a woman or with a donkey, it is the same", otherwise she would be a man: (46) "If woman had brains, wouldn't she grow a beard?"

And she is not only stupid, but also untrustworthy, and incapable of keeping secrets, therefore potentially dangerous: (47), (48) "Do not tell the secret of your heart to a woman", (49) "Woman is the knife of the bosom." Women are easily seduced by bad company, and when a woman has left the path of morality, shame and slander can drive her to suicide: (50)(51) "The immoral woman will drive the virtuous woman to despair."

2.3. *Wife : Husband*

Married life is a central topic of proverbs worldwide, but how it is fleshed out is culturally specific. In Gilgit-Baltistan, the focus is on hierarchy and responsibilities, but above all on the potential infidelity of the wife which threatens the honour of the house and requires strict control.

A Wakhi proverb says: (53) "If you get married, think about the house!", according to the editor the meaning is that one should think about building a separate house for one's family. No equivalent has been found in the other languages treated in this paper, and the function of this proverb is not clear. The Khowar proverb (60) "For man and wife a pear leaf is (enough) place" may point in the same direction, indicating according to the native speaker, that "a single family can live better. One can't sleep with another

person so comfortably as with own wife.” However, considering the lowly position of the son-in-law in his in-laws’ house (146), that would also be a motivation to move out as soon as possible. There are proverbs about the responsibilities of man and wife respectively in Shina and Burushaski (54), (55) “(The responsibility) of a good man, is the ox, that of a good wife, her husband.” The proverb does not refer to different tasks only, it also implies a hierarchy, where the man is clearly above the woman and has power over her. For (61) “The stirrup may be made of gold - but it’s still under the step.” That this is no mere metaphor becomes clear in (56) “To beat the mother, there is the father; who is there to beat the father?”, and even more clear in (57) where the woman serves to unload frustrations, whatever their origin: “When the ibex has escaped on the hunt, (the hunter), back in the village, beats his wife.” And yet, to be a wife means to be respected in society, and the wish of a young woman expressed in (58) “I would be even the mere friend of the good, I would not even be the wife of a bad one” will in most cases remain no more than a dream. On the other hand, a Shina proverb cautions that there are limits to ill-treatment, for a man’s wife is the guarantor of a happy future for the whole family: (59) “Of one who treats his ox badly, the field will dry up, of one who treats (his) wife badly, the offspring will go out.”

Men are warned not to pay too much attention to beauty, because what counts is not how nice a woman looks, but whether she contributes to the survival of the family, for (64) “You can’t put a pretty face on a plate.” Another proverb speaks of “luck”, although it remains unclear whether this refers to fate or marital happiness: (63) “When luck is not strong, (even) an assload of beauty is useless.” A group of similar proverbs have a more general meaning, but are mentioned here because even if used figuratively they have a bearing on the status of woman in the family: (65), (66), (67), (87) “From a woman one does not love, even the vegetables are tasteless”, and (68) “If your wife becomes distasteful to you, the night won’t come (to an end).”

One of the most important issues within married life is marital fidelity, especially the virtuous behaviour of the wife, because the honour of the husband and the whole family depends on it: (69) “The placenta of the cow is smeared on the face of the bull”.

A woman, by definition, cannot be trusted. (71) “A dog is more faithful than a woman”, because a dog may be despicable but it will not leave its owner. On the other hand, (72) “Woman and rifle will not be one’s own” (Matti Kuusi G5h 29), and, significant in the arid climate of Hunza, (77) “The loyalty of a woman is like the wetness of the rain.” For women tend to have lovers. If they have loved a boy in their childhood, marriage will make no difference, (74) “To whom a woman once gives her heart, to him she belongs.”, and while the husband leaves the house to earn bread for the family, his wife will think about how she can cheat on him: (73) “The husband is tied to loads, the wife is tied to (her) lovers.” Even when she seems to be worried about her son, it is only pretended, in reality she is thinking about her lover: (75) “Longing for the lover, ghost of the son.” As soon as she has a daughter, however, it will be her duty to prevent the girl from behaving in the same way: (76) “The mother behind the daughter, the daughter behind the lover.”

The stricter the husband is, the less danger there is that the wife will be disobedient or unfaithful: (78), (79) “Hard relatives - war, hard husband - virtuous wife”. If she does go astray, it will be the husband who is blamed for it, for only (83), (84) “When the dog is bad, the fox will come on the roof.” No wonder married life often seems a burden for a man: (85) “If you want to be ruined, marry!”

For the women of the palace, different rules may have been applied, but women in normal society are expected to observe *purdah* and not show themselves in public (86). However, since the husband is often absent, the control of his wife falls to the whole family: (80) “The husband of a wife is blind, they say.” It is important that a young wife learns to consider her husband’s home her own, otherwise she may be tempted to leave it. (81) “The foot of a woman who does not make (her husband’s) home (her own) will be lifted (to run away).” Therefore, young wives must not be allowed to visit their parents for a long time: (82) “Do not let the kid on the cliff, do not let the daughter to her mother!”

Here again, the large number of Shina proverbs compared to Burushaski (with an equally large data basis) is striking. The Shina proverb (71) contrasting a dog’s faithfulness with a wom-

an's unfaithfulness, exists in a variant in Wakhi, but typically it is not the woman's lack of fidelity, but her bossiness: (89) "From a dog fidelity, from a woman imperiousness".

Rarely does a proverb refer to the possibility of a man's infidelity (90), and even that would probably be used in a more general sense (Matti Kuusi H3ff 14). No proverb about man's infidelity has been found in Shina. Of course, it is not an issue, there is no danger to the family's honour. The Burushaski proverb (91) "If I stumbled, so I stumbled; but you, you will not stumble" is not explicit, but according to the editor, there may be a sexual connotation: "I may have relations with others, but not you, my wife."

A man who is not happy with his first wife may be tempted to get another one, but he should not make a hasty decision. (92) "The husband of two wives is known", in other words, (93) "The face of a man who has two wives is black", because he is always in trouble. (94) "The first wife (is) a patch of the soul, the second wife a patch of the knee", says a Khowar proverb, but a Shina proverb, in the same words, is about a widow's marrying again: ("The first wife (is) a patch of the soul, the second wife a patch of the knee." A woman who considers a second marriage should not forget, (96) "When you hug the horse, you hug the groom", in other words, if you marry a man, you also marry his family, including children from another wife.

2.4. Parents : Children

Children bring problems, (97) "Where there is no child, there is one worry, where there are children, a hundred." Not having children, however, is much worse: (98) (99) "In a house without offspring the mice will dance." It should preferably be a son, and even better, several ones, for one might die. (100) "A single male heir is bad for the parents", but (101) "When the brothers grow up, there is loneliness, when the sons grow up, there is a big family." However, a daughter is better than no offspring, and also better than a bad son (109), (110).

Everybody thinks their own offspring best ((102, (103), (104) Matti Kuusi H2d 17), but an adopted child can never be like one's own: (105), (106). (107) "If you raise an orphaned child, it will be a stone on your head, if you raise an orphaned

kid, there will be a garment for your body”, says a Shina proverb, but its Wakhi version, while being equally positive about the kid, acknowledges that the orphaned child will grow up to be a helper (108).

Within the family, wife and daughter have a subordinate position, but a mother is the most important person for a child, even more than a father (Matti Kuusi G1b 18): (111), (112), and (113) “The fatherless half-orphan is in a milk well, the motherless half-orphan is in the desert.” Even when the term is used figuratively, as it is in many proverbs, the qualities attributed to a mother’s character are revealing. This is the case in (114) (115) “The deaf person’s mother understands the deaf’s language”¹, (116) “As long as the child does not cry, the mother does not give milk”, (117) “Even with its muzzle bound, the calf remains under its mother”, (118) “If a poor (man’s) mother is not at the place for the one in charge, even he will not get any meat.” The stepmother has a bad reputation in proverbs around the world, including in Gilgit-Baltistan: (119) “From a stepmother no milk will come”, and (120) “Even the children of one’s enemy may not fall under a stepmother!”

Parents must serve their children’s needs, even if it involves great effort. (121) “Take the burden, do not take the child!” Children are demanding: (122), (123) “Who is harder to please: the king or the child?”, and they know how to persuade their parents to give them what they want: (124) “Even over the wolf its offspring have power”, often without regard to their poor economic situation: (125) “An abscess has no eyes, a daughter has no eyes”.

To raise a child is an investment in the future: (126) “Do not save on the seed of the field and on the child’s bread!” Nevertheless, several proverbs complain about ingratitude and lack of respect from children when their parents are old: (127) “when the beard of the young he-goat comes out, the value of the old he-goat will be broken”, (128) “When the kid has come out, the goat’s value will become less.” The children care more for ma-

1 Tiffou’s translation “dove’s” instead of “deaf’s” for *layáne* is unintentionally funny, mistaking German “taub” (deaf) in Berger’s translation of the Burushaski proverb, for “Taubé” (dove).

terial goods than for their old parents: (129) “The parents’ heart is after son and daughter, the children’s heart after stone and wood.” Therefore, (130) “Do not serve a child, it will forget, do not serve an old person, he will die”, and (131) “Better raise a lamb than a child.”

Parents are responsible for their children’s actions, (132) “Do not look at the dog, look at the master!” Education is necessary, for a man who is too stupid to educate his children, will have no help from them: (133) “Even if the ass has twelve foals, the load is on the ass.” (134) “If you don’t teach him at the age of a young twig, you won’t be able to do it when he has become a cudgel”, and it will be harder for the child to be taught by the hardships of life: (135), (136), (137) “When mother and father did not teach, wood and stone will teach.”

One of the duties of parents is to ensure that their children are married, (138) “A daughter who is not given a dowry, is not one’s own daughter; a son on whose heel colour is not applied (at the wedding), is not one’s own son.” Daughters should be married off early, otherwise they become rotten: (139) “Women (are like) a basket with meat.”

2.5. *Grandparents : Grandchildren*

Proverbs about grandparents exist only in Shina, and they testify to a close relationship between them and their grandchildren: (140) “marrow is tastier than bone”, which is explained to refer to sons (bones) and grandsons (marrow). Good or bad, their influence is considerable: (141) “If the grandmother is bad, the granddaughter becomes bald”, but they do not always get the respect they claim: (142) “The grandson will sell the grandfather.”

2.6. *Son-in-law : Daughter-in-law*

(143) “The son-in-law is weak among his wife’s relatives”, as long as he has to live in the house of his in-laws: (144) “Until one has taken out one’s hand from under the stone, one has to bear (the pressure)”. He does not even get control over his offspring: (145) “The billy-goat does not have kids”, and as the one who has to do the dirtiest work, he is called (146) “A shovel for the ashes, a wooden fire hook.”

The daughter-in-law is no better off: (147), (148) “The blood of a mother-in-law and a daughter-in-law will never mix together, even in a river.” Or is the proverbial bad mother-in-law just a pretext? (149) “For farting, peas are an excuse, for a bad daughter-in-law, the mother-in-law is an excuse.”

3. Conclusion

As one would expect, the role of women in Gilgit-Baltistan proverbs is that of mother, daughter, wife and daughter-in-law. Women are subordinate, dependent and inherently unfaithful. However, compared to proverbs worldwide, the emphasis is on the family rather than on women as individuals or as a gender group. And there is a clear emphasis on the considerable importance of women as labourers, vital in a region where the daily survival and continuance of the family depends on extremely hard work. For all the cultural similarities, here are certain differences between the evidence from the different communities. In the Shina proverbs, more than in the others, the prestige of the family is emphasised and warnings are given against female infidelity. Only in Khowar are there slight references to affection between husband and wife. While distrust of outsiders is widespread and warnings are given against the adoption of orphans in particular, in Wakhi blood relationship is relativised in that the adopted child is at least recognised as someone who contributes to the family’s livelihood.

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Appendix: List of Proverbs

Languages: Blt = Balti, Bur = Burushaski, Kho = Khowar, Sh = Shina, Wkh = Wakhi

Nr	Language	Proverb	Source
1	Sh	<i>goṭéi jamáat ek bile to wei ga jará bei</i> “When the house community is at one, even water will be digested.”	Degener 2008 Nr 1
2	Sh	<i>darú geé šákar mačhii khoóikyęjo toóm goṭéi ánei ṭiki miṣṭi hain theégyen</i> “Better to eat the millet bread of your own house than sugar and honey elsewhere.”	Degener 2008 Nr 138
3	Sh	<i>wéyei thuryáa digáa to je chíjey-a</i> “If you whip water, will it split?”	Degener 2008 Nr 68
4	Sh	<i>júuli číṭi, moós ispáao</i> “The broth is bitter, the meat tasty.”	Degener 2008 Nr 69
5	Sh	<i>atiuli rúui-se toóme kháai</i> “A weak witch will eat her kin.”	Degener 2008 Nr 354
6	Bur	<i>šaráṭe nuúruṭ čhe ayéti</i> “Don’t cut the branch on which you are sitting.”	Tiffou 1993 Nr 2036
7	Wkh	<i>bi mol úmyt, bi xiš náy</i> “You can survive without livestock, without relatives you cannot.”	Grjunberg 1976 Nr 4
8	Sh	<i>ek kamoóiky ga šal naṭhoóiky</i> “One for earning, a hundred for dancing.”	Degener 2008 Nr 2
9	Sh	<i>banoóiky ékeṭ šóo, khoóiky bútoṭ šóo</i> “Dressing is good for one, eating is good for all.”	Degener 2008 Nr 3
10	Sh	<i>ne bóo-i de arú wiigaa to ga kúčer, re bóo-i de arú wiigaa to ga kúčer theégyen</i> “If you put (something under the coat) through this sleeve, it will come out at the chest; if you put it through that sleeve, it will also come out at the chest.”	Degener 2008 Nr 7
11	Sh	<i>ek haníyeyi teél neé nikháai</i> “No oil comes from a single fruit stone.”	Degener 2008 Nr 6
12	Sh	<i>mayaá-reṭ jéek šiṇe hagúre béen-aa</i> “Will its horns get too heavy for the markhor?”	Degener 2008 Nr 64
13	Sh	<i>puč kiniṭ sawúwo nikhálé</i> “Free your nephew, selling your son!”	Degener 2008 Nr 94

14	Bur	<i>tháse yaqáyumkuş sayámar leél</i> “The pungency of the smoke is known by the smoke-hole.”	Tiffou 1993 Nr 1185
15	Sh	<i>tom multiěj agúro han, manúžo káamoj agúro han</i> “The tree is firm on its roots, man is firm on his relatives.”	Degener 2008 Nr 127
16	Sh	<i>bať toóm dišér hagúro béen</i> “The stone is heavy in its own place.”	Degener 2008 Nr 128
17	Bur	<i>guí ke gaş ne gusáyon</i> “After selling your son, there still remain your nephews.”	Tiffou 1993 Nr 1048
18	Sh	<i>kuk méi aál, haneé jagéi aál</i> “Clucking at my (house), the egg is with others.”	Degener 2008 Nr 10
19	Sh	<i>mozéj khaás to á-tyej jaák</i> “Cut in the flesh, pain in the bone.”	Degener 2008 Nr 8
20	Bur	<i>čhap khāās ke tin qhaās</i> „When the flesh is cut, the bone is also suffering.”	Tiffou 1993 Nr 1028
21	Sh	<i>jagéi šábaş ga tomakéi thúki parúli</i> “(Other) people’s praise and the spit of one’s kin are the same.”	Degener 2008 Nr 443
22	Sh	<i>jagéi móreť kon digáa-t maálei kúno wéi-de hararéen</i> “If you listen to (other) people, they will lose your father’s corpse in the water.”	Degener 2008 Nr 463
23	Bur	<i>jamípe bárči manáa ke gúuwe gútas uraáy oómaimi</i> “If you listen to foreigners, your father’s corpse will not get buried.”	Tiffou 1993 Nr 1109
24	Sh	<i>dií-sóo-čyei naň šišěj</i> “The honour of the women is on all.”	Degener 2008 Nr 119
25	Sh	<i>ek lač khačo búlu-t píuro donéť šaa~ wáai</i> “If a single goat is bad, shame will come upon the whole flock.”	Degener 2008 Nr 121
26	Sh	<i>goťei duím goťei sóomeť leél</i> “The smoke of the house is known to the smoke hole of the house.”	Degener 2008 Nr 131
27	Sh	<i>ma-yéi laš lamúteť báai chéye theégyen</i> “A hundred penalties on the one who has learned about his mother’s adultery.”	Degener 2008 Nr 428
28	Sh	<i>čei čáatareť- mušaa birgáaj</i> “Woman in child-birth, man in battle.”	Degener 2008 Nr 14

29	Sh	<i>wei waliitakeŋ šabaŋ ga nuš, ʔóki phuʔiitakeŋ thúki ga nuš</i> “There is no praise for the water carrier, neither is there blame for the one breaking the calabash.”	Degener 2008 Nr 493
30	Bur	<i>búpuš isárumé šabaŋ ke apí iqharume thúki ke apí</i> “One doesn’t praise the water carrier, but one does not blame her for breaking the jug.”	Tiffou 1993 Nr 1019
31	Sh	<i>bóde čéye han goóŋ wei neé bei, bóde mušée han goóŋ lei neé bei</i> “In a house where there are many women, there will be no water; in a house where there are many men, there will be no wood.”	Degener 2008 Nr 546
32	Bur	<i>gúsmo múyeéše leél apí, híre iltúse leél apí</i> “One doesn’t know where a woman will have her place (after marriage); one doesn’t know where a man will have his grave.”	Tiffou 1993 Nr 1057
33	Sh	<i>mušéeye jaryeéi agáareŋ, čéye jaryeéi mušáaŋ theégyen</i> “Men, when they have become old, (care for/ think of) fire, women, when they have become old, (think of) the man/ husband, they say.”	Degener 2008 Nr 18
34	Bur	<i>gus jaŋ numúman hírar; hir jaŋ niman phúwar</i> “A woman, when she becomes old, needs a man; a man, when he becomes old, needs fire.”	Tiffou 1993 Nr 1054
35	Sh	<i>čéyei úmar ga čukunáarei úmar ek theégyen</i> “The lifetime of a woman and the lifetime of a peach tree are one, they say.”	Degener 2008 Nr 32
36	Blt	<i>búsi harbáxpo lo-skór xsum - bostríni harbáxpo busá xsum</i> “The flowering time of a young man is (until) three times 12 years, the flowering time of a woman is (until she has had) three children.”	Söh- nen-Thieme 1994 Nr 28
37	Sh	<i>maphéer túnyer wii čhuré</i> “Put the wise old man in a basket!”	Degener 2008 Nr 208
38	Wkh	<i>lupə mə say tə wərgəšt yo di xə pərs yowə</i> “Hide the old man under the hen basket and seek his advice when needed.”	Karim Khan Saka 2010, 158
39	Sh	<i>báai čáai čeyei pan nuš</i> „(Even) a woman who has borne twelve (children) does not have authority.”	Degener 2008 Nr 16

40	Sh	<i>dii-sóo~çyei phurúkus khunér neé baáthei</i> „For women’s spindle disc, there will be no room in the corner.”	Degener 2008 Nr 17
41	Bur	<i>Mináli móoyar, rúli amúci</i> “Let Minali speak, don’t let her give orders!”	Tiffou 1993 Nr 2030
42	Bur	<i>gus qarqaámuc yariwáte be gon duwárçilá</i> “Does the dawn rise when the hen cackles?”	Tiffou 1993 Nr 3019
43	Sh	<i>karkaámuš bašili-t lóo neé bei</i> “If a hen cackles, there will be no morning.”	Degener 2008 Nr 15
44	Sh	<i>wei rathée, çei rathée</i> “You will stop water, you will stop a woman?”	Degener 2008 Nr 475
45	Bur	<i>gúsmo káa saphár étas ke jakúne káa saphár étas han bila</i> “If you travel with a woman or with a donkey, it is the same.”	Tiffou 1993 Nr 1055
46	Sh	<i>çéyei aql bei to dáai~ neé wáay-a</i> “If woman had brains, wouldn’t she grow a beard?”	Degener 2008 Nr 323
47	Sh	<i>toóm híyei mor géeneṭ neé de</i> “Do not give the word of your heart to (your) wife!”	Degener 2008 Nr 21
48	Blt	<i>snñ-támpo búla ma zér - snñ-tám bostrñ la ma zér</i> “Do not tell a secret to a boy, do not tell the secret of your heart to a woman!”	Söhnen-Thieme 1994 Nr 40
49	Kho	<i>kimeéri biçó kutéer</i> “Woman (is) the knife of the bosom.”	Buddruss 2003 Nr 58
50	Sh	<i>gaánis sili arr uçaréi</i> „The immoral woman will drive the virtuous woman to despair.”	Degener 2008 Nr 63
51	Wkh	<i>lanḏi-ep sawáe kórer ýárer goxt</i> “A whore will turn a chaste woman into rock and stone.”	Buddruss 1986 Nr 14
52	Kho	<i>qam zoxó mûla di bai</i> “May there be a relative even (if he is) under a thorn!”	Buddruss 2003 Nr 62
53	Wkh	<i>kánd-ot ýútay xun fikr car</i> “If you get married, think about the house.”	Grjunberg 1976 Nr. 21
54	Sh	<i>šoo mušái dóono, ši çéyei baráo</i> “Of a good man, the ox, of a good wife, (her) husband.”	Degener 2008 Nr 19
55	Bur	<i>gúsmo muríñ hir, hire uríñ har</i> “Man is woman’s hand, man’s hand is ox.”	Tiffou 1993 Nr 1056
56	Sh	<i>aáji zamoóiky baábo, baábo zamoóiky koó han</i> “To beat the mother, there is the father; who is there to beat the father.”	Degener 2008 Nr 13

57	Blt	<i>liñ-siñ ridáx bud na yúliñ óñse čhuñma rdúñ</i> “When the ibex has escaped on the hunt, (the hunter), back in the village, beats his wife.”	Söh- nen-Thieme 1994 Nr. 28
58	Sh	<i>šóokei šugili ga bešš, kháčakei géen ga neé bešš</i> “I would be even the mere friend of the good, I would not even be the wife of a bad one.”	Degener 2008 Nr 29
59	Sh	<i>dóoneŕ kháčí thítakei kúui šuše, čéyeŕ kháčí thítakei béel bújei</i> “Of one who treats his ox badly, the field will dry up, of one who treats (his) wife badly, the offspring will go out.”	Degener 2008 Nr 20
60	Kho	<i>mooš boókante ŕong čhána žayá boi</i> “For man and wife a pear leaf is (enough) place.”	Buddruss 2003 Nr 24
61	Blt	<i>ebčán xséri soñ na sá, rdoqpi oq</i> “The stirrup may be made of gold - but it’s still under the step.”	Söh- nen-Thieme 1994 Nr 3
62	Sh	<i>páa kháai kóori, hiyó kháai gujaali</i> “A boot eating the foot, a wife eating the heart.”	Degener 2008 Nr 28
63	Kho	<i>đang ki taléh no hoói xarwáara čstí abás</i> “When luck is not strong, (even) an assload of beauty is useless.”	Buddruss 2003 Nr 26
64	Wkh	<i>rúyi xšrúy se tbaq ná-kažən</i> “You can’t put a pretty face on a plate.”	Grjunberg 1976 Nr 27
65	Sh	<i>hiyeŕ neé áali čéyei šáa ga niláalo</i> “Even the vegetables from a woman one doesn’t love, are tasteless.”	Degener 2008 Nr 292
66	Bur	<i>móoras gúsmo hói yaqáyum</i> “The vegetables from a woman you intend to divorce are bitter.”	Tiffou 1993 Nr 1144
67	Kho	<i>laákawa kimério šax wexál</i> “The vegetables of a woman one intends to leave, is tasteless.”	Buddruss 2003 Nr 27
68	Bur	<i>guís góyam manú ke thap ačúci</i> “If your wife becomes distasteful to you, the night won’t come (to an end).”	Tiffou 1993 Nr 1059
69	Sh	<i>góoei jaráa dóonei mukhét laás</i> “The placenta of the cow is smeared on the face of the bull.”	Degener 2008 Nr 27
70	Sh	<i>daš thigáa-t géenei čanále, neé thigáa-t baazáarei páačo</i> “If you recognize it, it is the wife’s trousers, if you don’t, a piece of cloth from the bazaar.”	Degener 2008 Nr 120

71	Sh	<i>čéyejo šu~ wafadáar han theégyen</i> “A dog is more faithful than a woman, they say.”	Degener 2008 Nr 56
72	Sh	<i>čei ga ráfal toóme neé béen</i> “Woman and rifle will not be one’s own.”	Degener 2008 Nr 57
73	Sh	<i>baráo barót tak, géen jarót tak</i> “The husband is tied to loads, the wife is tied to (her) lovers.”	Degener 2008 Nr 58
74	Sh	<i>čei-se keéseř ek héeř hiyo deégi-t eései akí bíin</i> “To whom a woman once gives her heart, to him she belongs.”	Degener 2008 Nr 55
75	Sh	<i>júuk jaréi, já~č pučéi</i> “Longing for the lover, ghost of the son!”	Degener 2008 Nr 60
76	Sh	<i>maá~ dijé phátu, dii jaré phátu</i> “The mother behind the daughter, the daughter behind the lover.”	Degener 2008 Nr 54
77	Bur	<i>gúsmo wapháa, háralte huř</i> “The loyalty of a woman is like the wetness of the rain.”	Tiffou 1993 Nr 1058
78	Sh	<i>toóm hatéi náar čéyeř neé de, hatér deéгаа to čei baráwei řakěj phal bei theégyen</i> “Do not give the pulse of your hand to the woman, if you give it to her, the woman will ride on (her) husband’s neck, they say.”	Degener 2008 Nr 22
79	Sh	<i>uskúuni kúre birgá theégyen, baráo kúro géen siili theégyen</i> “Hard relatives - war, hard husband - virtuous wife.”	Degener 2008 Nr 26
80	Sh	<i>géenei baráo řéewo theégyen</i> “The husband of a wife is blind, they say.”	Degener 2008 Nr 23
81	Sh	<i>goót neé thei čhéyei páa babalá bei</i> “The foot of a woman who does not make (her husband’s) home (her own) will be lifted (to run away).”	Degener 2008 Nr 42
82	Sh	<i>čhaál čháareř neé wi, dii ma~yét neé wi</i> “Do not let the kid on the cliff, do not let the daughter to her mother!”	Degener 2008 Nr 53
83	Kho	<i>řéni ki řum hoi řou istáni goi</i> “When the dog is bad, the fox will come on the roof.”	Buddruss 1995 Nr 15
84	Sh	<i>toóm šu~ kháčo neé bulu-t tářej lo-i wáaya</i> “If your dog is not bad, will the fox come on the roof?”	Degener 2008 Nr 61
85	Sh	<i>gáراك boóiky rak han to gar the</i> “If you want to be ruined, marry!”	Degener 2008 Nr 34

86	Sh	<i>heṭ báameṭ čhardá nuš, raákei čéyeṭ pardá nuš</i> “There is no stallion for the mare who has been set free, there is not purdah for the women of the palace.”	Degener 2008 Nr 25
87	Wkh	<i>kṭáke xálge γazg-i truq</i> “For a man who wants to divorce, the vegetables are bitter.”	Buddruss 1998 Nr 103
88	Wkh	<i>xalg-ep xálge táte gur ṡak ne lécert</i> “A person will not let another person bury his father.”	Buddruss 1998 Nr 117
89	Wkh	<i>šačen wafá, xɯnánen jaṭá</i> “From a dog fidelity, from a woman imperiousness.”	Buddruss 1998 Nr 77)
90	Kho	<i>xuró bok yéča šieéli</i> “Another man’s wife looks beautiful to one’s eye.”	Buddruss 2003 Nr 46
91	Bur	<i>dáapirkanam ke dáapirkanam dáa un atúpirkaima</i> “If I stumbled, so I stumbled; but you, you will not stumble.”	Tiffou 1993 Nr 1036
92	Sh	<i>du čéyoo baráo sǰóono han</i> “The husband of two wives is known.”	Degener 2008 Nr 46
93	Kho	<i>ju-boóki moóšo mux ša</i> “The face of a man who has two wives is black.”	Buddruss 2003 Nr 59
94	Kho	<i>aweló azyál zána dasé juó azyál zána dasé</i> “The first wife (is) a patch of the soul, the second wife a patch of the knee.”	Buddruss 1995 Nr 20
95	Sh	<i>phatiino mušáa kútei kaále</i> “The second husband (is like a) patch on the knee.”	Degener 2008 Nr 45
96	Sh	<i>á-špeṭ šaá to aštóoneṭ šaá</i> “When you hug the horse, you hug the groom (as well).”	Degener 2008 Nr 70
97	Blt	<i>bučá medpi khokhólpo čik, yódpo bgyá</i> “Where there is no child, there is one worry, where there are children, a hundred.”	Söh- nen-Thieme 1994 Nr. 7
98	Sh	<i>auláad núšakei zindagaaniú nuš theégyen</i> “One who has no offspring, does not have a livelihood.”	Degener 2008 Nr 82
99	Sh	<i>béel gáu goṭér múzyye noóṭhen</i> “In a house without offspring the mice will dance.”	Degener 2008 Nr 84
100	Sh	<i>bíiro ekaálo khurúč maá~maáluṭ čhéi</i> “A single male heir is bad for the parents.”	Degener 2008 Nr 82
101	Sh	<i>záare baryeéi ekošaár, dáarye baryeéi sapuyaár</i> “When the brothers grow up, there is loneliness, when the sons grow up, there is a big family.”	Degener 2008 Nr 82

102	Bur	<i>yáar ke isk daltás</i> “Even crows find their offspring beautiful.”	Tiffou 1993 Nr 1065
103	Kho	<i>şagóyu tan náno yéça şieéli</i> “The black insect looks handsome in the eyes of its mother.”	Buddruss 2003 Nr 25
104	Sh	<i>har jéek jagéi ispáao, auláad toómi ispáai</i> “Everything of other people is sweet, (but) offspring, the own one is sweet.”	Degener 2008 Nr 90
105	Bur	<i>gáli-gátu jamípa, gok guíy guýmo</i> “An outfit of clothes belongs to others, your sons are your own.”	Tiffou 1993 Nr 1041
106	Blt	<i>žan-bú xsóse rañ-bú ma sòn - spyañkú xsóse zgo-khí ma sòn</i> “The child of someone else which you raise does not become your own; the wolf you feed does not become the farm dog.”	Söh- nen-Thieme 1994 Nr. 49
107	Sh	<i>jaróo baál uniigaa-t şişét bat, jaróo čhaál uniigaa-t đimét kat</i> “If you raise an orphaned child, it will be a stone on your head, if you raise an orphaned kid, there will be a garment for your body.”	Degener 2008 Nr 78
108	Wkh	<i>yeítme sel šarik, wúrke sel žytrik</i> “The rearing of an orphan (brings) partners, the rearing of a lamb wool threads.”	Buddruss 1998 Nr 68
109	Sh	<i>béel bujoókýejo šéei diik ga bóot</i> “Even a blind daughter is better than no offspring.”	Degener 2008 Nr 87
110	Sh	<i>kháčo pučéjo šéei dii yar hain</i> “A blind daughter is better than a bad son.”	Degener 2008 Nr 108
111	Sh	<i>maá~ hánakei maáo</i> “One who has a mother, (also) has a father.”	Degener 2008 Nr 50
112	Kho	<i>we-nānio sār khūr-nāni di jām</i> “Even a blind mother is better than having no mother.”	Buddruss 1995 21
113	Wkh	<i>náne yetim-i da žarže kyk, táte yetim-i trə dašt</i> “The fatherless half-orphan is in a milk well, the motherless half-orphan is in the desert.”	Buddruss 1998 Nr 69
114	Sh	<i>čáa-ţei báaş čáa-ţei maá~ pariújei</i> “The mute one’s mother understands the mute’s language.”	Degener 2008 Nr 580
115	Bur	<i>layáne báaş layáne ími dumóyalju bo</i> “The deaf person’s mother understands the deaf’s language.”	Tiffou 1993 Nr 1130

116	Sh	<i>šudaár neé roósaŋeŋ maá~s kareé ga dut neé dīin</i> “As long as the child does not cry, the mother does not give milk.”	Degener 2008 Nr 337
117	Bur	<i>bušošo imúpus ke tāāk nēe imi yáare</i> “Even with its muzzle bound, the calf remains under its mother.”	Tiffou 1993 Nr 1022
118	Kho	<i>γaribo nan tēka ki no astái, bo khyo pušúur di no taruúr</i> “If a poor (man’s) mother is not at the place for the one in charge, even he will not get any meat.”	Buddruss 2003 Nr 14
119	Sh	<i>lóogi ma~yéi dut neé wáai</i> “From a stepmother no milk will come.”	Degener 2008 Nr 51
120	Sh	<i>dušmánei dii-puç ga phatiini ma~yé khir neé póot</i> “Even the children of one’s enemy may not fall under a stepmother!”	Degener 2008 Nr 52
121	Sh	<i>baár gin, šudaár neé gin</i> “Take the burden, do not take the child!”	Degener 2008 Nr 116
122	Sh	<i>šudaár ga baačháa ek théégyen</i> “A child and a king are one and the same.”	Degener 2008 Nr 95
123	Bur	<i>tham zóora? giyáas zóor?</i> “Who is the harder to please: the king or the child?”	Tiffou 1993 Nr 3044
124	Bur	<i>úrkar ke jótis balando</i> “Even over the wolf its offspring have power.”	Tiffou 1993 Nr 1191
125	Kho	<i>i iŋpoólo sum yeč niki i žúuro sum yeč niki</i> “An abscess has no eyes, a daughter has no eyes.”	Buddruss 2003, Nr 21
126	Sh	<i>čhééçei bíi ga šudaréi čhupátej neé pasunyó</i> “Do not save on the seed of the field and on the child’s bread!”	Degener 2008 Nr 89
127	Sh	<i>čhatíilei dáái áali-t, mugaréi gáaç čhíjei</i> “When the beard of the young he-goat comes out, the value of the old he-goat will be broken.”	Degener 2008 Nr 210
128	Kho	<i>čhani ki nisái basiro wáaγ kam boi</i> “When the kid has come out, the goat’s value will become less.”	Buddruss 2003 Nr 2
129	Sh	<i>maá~maáloo híyo dii-puço phatú, dii-puço híyo baŋ-káaŋoŋ</i> “The parents’ heart is after son and daughter, the children’s heart after stone and wood.”	Degener 2008 Nr 91

130	Sh	<i>šudaréř xidmát neé the, amušii bújei, járeř xidmát neé the, mirii bújei</i> “Do not serve a child, it will forget, do not serve an old person, he will die!”	Degener 2008 Nr 381
131	Wkh	<i>cə mardém zman-en i wurk tarbiyá car bitár</i> “It is better to raise a lamb than a child.”	Grjunberg 1976 Nr. 17
132	Wkh	<i>šáče me táin, sohíbe táin</i> “Do not look at the dog, look at the master!”	Buddruss 1998 Nr 54
133	Sh	<i>zakunéi báai góke bíle to ga zakunéř baár</i> “Even if the ass has twelve foals, the load is on the ass.”	Degener 2008 Nr 115
134	Bur	<i>gačhékúši ayéikina ke dėmokuši akóomaima</i> “If you don’t teach him at the age of a young twig, you won’t be able to do it when he has become a cudgel.”	Tiffou 1993 Nr 1040
135	Bur	<i>gúuy-gúmiye bárči oómana ke hun-dáne góikiimini</i> “If your parents don’t teach you obedience, wood and stone will.”	Tiffou 1993 Nr 1061
136	Kho	<i>nan-tat ki no čhičhěru dar boxt čhičhěř</i> “When mother and father do not teach, wood and stone will teach.”	Buddruss 1995 Nr 40
137	Wkh	<i>tat-náne ki adáb ne kert, řet et wurt-ep adáb cart</i> “When father and mother do not teach, earth and stone will teach.”	Buddruss 1998 Nr 104
138	Sh	<i>dáap neé tolaái dii toómi neé bei, khúuriyeř roň neé řaáwo puč toómo neé bei</i> “A daughter who is not given a dowry, is not one’s own daughter; a son on whose heel colour is not applied (at the wedding), is not one’s own son.”	Degener 2008 Nr 97
139	Sh	<i>dii-soó-či mozéi karéi</i> “Women (are like) a basket with meat.”	Degener 2008 Nr 31
140	Sh	<i>á-tyeřo míu ispáao</i> “Marrow is tastier than bone.”	Degener 2008 Nr 93
141	Sh	<i>dadii khačéi, póoči phátakei</i> “If the grandmother is bad, the granddaughter will be bald.”	Degener 2008 Nr 114
142	Sh	<i>póoçuš dáado gáač dei</i> “The grandson will sell the grandfather.”	Degener 2008 Nr 212

143	Sh	<i>jamaçóó naló khir ašaáto han theégyen</i> “The son-in-law is weak among his wife’s relatives, they say.”	Degener 2008 Nr 41
144	Sh	<i>baṭé khiroo hat nikhaloósaṅ timinii thoóiky hin</i> “Until one has taken out one’s hand from under the stone, one has to bear (the pressure).”	Degener 2008 Nr 40
145	Sh	<i>thowét čhaál nuš theégyen</i> “The billy-goat does not have kids, they say.”	Degener 2008 Nr 39
146	Wkh	<i>párge pey, tárge tǝrgófč</i> “For the ashes, a shovel, a fire hook made of wood.”	Buddruss 1998 Nr 122
147	Sh	<i>šyaš ga nuzéi léel sinér ga neé mišlijei</i> “Of the mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law the blood will not be mixed, not even in a river.”	Degener 2008 Nr 43
148	Bur	<i>móoskus ke muḡhákinmo multán sindaulo ke káa oómairi</i> “The blood of a mother-in-law and a daughter-in-law will never mix together, even in a river.”	Tiffou 1993 Nr 1145
149	Wkh	<i>gánde šinr-i šax banái, šak stežr-i xšaš banái</i> “For farting, peas are an excuse, for a bad daughter-in-law, the mother-in-law is an excuse.”	Buddruss 1998 Nr 32

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SOME AMERICAN, POLISH, GERMAN, CZECH AND SORBIAN PROVERBS ABOUT A WOMAN'S PLACE AND THEIR HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

Abstract: This paper will concentrate firstly on American and European culture in the 19th and 20th centuries to illustrate the cultural context in which proverbs about women were used, which refer to the following themes: women's work, a woman's place is in the home and a woman makes a home, a man needs a woman, and smart women were then put to use. The main aim of the article is to show briefly the correlation between the history and culture of women in the U.S.A. and in Central and Eastern Europe (where the German, Polish, Czech and Sorbian languages were used) and the position of women in some American, German, Polish, Czech and Sorbian proverbs. The language material of this article is confirmed by statements from women who lived in the nineteenth century and also with scientific publications about women's place in society until now.

Keywords: proverbs, woman's Place, women's work, American proverbs, German proverbs, West Slavic proverbs

1. The Aim of the Paper

The history of women is full of changes and for many centuries life was easier if one was born as a man rather than as a woman. Although today the female sector of society has equal rights, there

was a long period in which this was not guaranteed. This paper considers proverbs and the way they depict women. As proverbs were very popular in the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth century this paper will concentrate firstly on the American and European culture of this century and those previous to illustrate in which cultural context they were then put to use. The main aim of the article is to show briefly the correlation between the history and culture of women in the U.S.A. and in Central and Easter Europe (where the German, Polish, Czech and Sorbian languages were used) and the position of women in some American, German, Polish, Czech and Sorbian proverbs.

2. Research Interest

We could say that there are two histories: the first is the history that we know, which is about wars, presidents and prominent people, who changed the world, but there is another history – the history of the women who didn't have such remarkable positions and stayed home taking care of their men and children. For many centuries, women lived in a male-dominated society and were forced to belong to subordinate categories together with minorities such as Latin Americans or indigenous Americans. At a certain moment in history, they didn't agree to fulfill this role. But when the debate about how to create a more just society began, there was no consensus concerning the definition of equality. The equality of result (the evening out of economic, social and political power) wasn't an objective of most Americans. Many of them wanted equality of opportunity, which means only equal chances (Mauk and Oakland 2000: 86).

From 1608 till the mid-1800s a woman after marriage existed in law only through her husband. She was economically dependent on the man (she couldn't, for example, own property). She shouldn't have a good education or show interest in politics. This insignificant position was supported also by the church (Mauk and Oakland 2000: 87–94). One of the leaders of the women's right movement in the U.S. – Elisabeth Cady Stanton – represented the opinion that the Bible (in the way as it was taught by the American church) was spreading misogynous behavior and attitudes (Mieder 2014: 103–117).

At the beginning of the 19th century, some American women started to strive for better education and more independence from men. They realized that the female's subordinate position could be changed. But still many male politicians didn't want to accept that women wanted to have much more of a say in social life than they had before. For example, Thomas Bernard (who was the Governor of the state of Massachusetts) had advised women to stay in their current situation and cherish their extraordinary position in a human society: to be active as mothers and wives (Bragdon, McCutchen and Ritchie 1994: 258).

The situation changed considerably in the middle of the nineteenth century. In 1848 in Seneca Falls, New York, Lucretia Mott and Elisabeth Cady Stanton led the first convention about women's rights. Soon women started to work as teachers, nurses and in offices but they still couldn't vote till the end of the nineteenth century (in some states) or at the beginning of the twentieth century (in other states) (Mauk and Oakland 2000: 87–94).

Proverbs, through their popularity and special role as a sentence which expresses wisdom in a concise, short form could have an impact on the listeners (Schindler 1993: 52). Elisabeth Cady Stanton herself often used proverbs in her speeches, for example (Mieder 2014: 35–52):

(1) am *Woman is the weaker vessel.* (1 Peter 3:7; Mieder 2014: 41).¹

(2) am *Do unto others as you would have them do unto you (golden rule).* (Matthew 7:12; Mieder 2014: 41).

(3) am *All men are created equal.* (Mieder 2014: 43).

(4) am *Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.* (Mieder 2014: 43).

But even when women could already use their permission to vote, not all of them had a political consciousness. The wife of (at that time) the future president of the USA, Eleanor Roosevelt

1 The stereotype of women as “weaker vessels” was popular in European culture since medieval times and also established through the opinions of philosopher Wilhelm von Humboldt, who wrote that the main trait of men is self-sufficiency and woman, sensibility (Bogucka 2005: 143–144).

who very actively worked for the benefit of women and children wrote in 1928 (Roosevelt 2010: 107–108):²

Women have been voting for ten years. But have they achieved actual political equality with men? No. They go through the gesture of going to the polls; their votes are solicited by politicians; and they possess the external aspect of equal rights. But it is mostly a gesture without real power. With some outstanding exceptions, women who have gone into politics are refused serious consideration by the men leaders. Generally, they are treated most courteously, to be sure, but what they want, what they have to say, is regarded as of little weight. In fact, they have no actual influence or say at all in the consequential councils of their parties (Roosevelt 2010: 108).

Initially they were not admitted as members of many unions for skilled workers, but after World War II many more women started to work. In the 1960s there loomed a new woman's movement and from the mid-1970s women had equal pay for equal work and access to higher education (Mauk and Oakland 2000: 87–94).

3. The background of the research

There are many publications on women's issues in proverbs. Proverbs about woman were written about in the English language by, for example: Mieder (1985), Litovkina (2019), Rittersbacher (2002) or Rani and Ranhja (2020).

Information regarding proverbs in the Polish language can be found in texts from: Balowski (2001); Długosz (2000); Gwuzd-Mizerová (2008); Jagielska (2004); Jędrzejko (1994); Krzyżanowski (1960); Perlińska (1996); Piotrowski (1997) and others.

A vision of women in German proverbs can be reconstructed based, for example, on the works of: Bebermeyer (2002); Breiner (1996); Daniels (1985); Glenk (1999); Hufeisen (1993); James

² Original Source: Eleanor Roosevelt, "Women Must Learn to Play the Game as Men Do", *Red Book Magazine*, 50 (April 1928), pp. 78–79, 141–142, available via The Eleanor Roosevelt Paper Project at <http://www.gwu.edu/~erpapers/documents/womenmustlearn.cfm>, retrieved on 1 June 2019.

(1982); Pilz (1998); Seiler (1922); Mieder (1992), Trokhimenko (2004) or Helliger and Bußmann (2003).

Czech proverbs were written about by Schindler (1993) or Zachová (2008).

Information on how women are depicted in Upper and Lower Sorbian proverbs can be found in the dissertation and articles by Gardoš (1965; 1967; 1979; 1982) and in articles by Nedo (Nedo 1961/1962; 1966) or Hose (1994; 1990).

There are also texts (or fragments of texts) which compare proverbs about women in two or more languages: Al-Jamal (1997) Arab and German; Coseriu (1979) French, German and Romanian; Koniuszaniec (1999) and Gondek (2007) – Polish and German; Kuusi (1985) – Finnish and Owambo; Majapuro (1996; 1999; 2001) German and Finnish; Pelletier (1996) Polish and French; Piirainen (1999a, 1999b, 2000, 2001, 2004) German and Dutch idioms (including proverbs); Samper (1997) – Latin American; Schipper (1996; 2006) – proverbs of many languages in their cultural context; Stantcheva (2007) – Bulgarian and German; Veneday (1842) – French and German; Wyżkiewicz-Maksimow (2012) – Polish, Serbian and Croatian; Yao-Weyrauch (1990) – German and Chinese; Zachová (2008) – West Slavic proverbs contained in the Čelakovský collection.

There are also many works dealing with the topic proverbs about women in other languages, for example Icelandic (Spiess 1991) or African languages: Igbo (Nwachukwu-Agbada 1989; Opata 2000), Yoruba (Yusuf 1994; Opata 2000), Idoma (Amali 2000); Fon (Dogbeh 2000).

The most popular publication dealing with proverbs about women around the world is the work: *Never Marry a Woman with Big Feet. Woman in Proverbs from Around the World* by Mineke Schipper (2006).

4. Women in the proverbs of the world – conclusions from the research

By analyzing proverbs about women coming from different languages and cultures, we come across many linguistic expressions that assess women directly or indirectly negatively, regardless of their age, social position or profession, while in the case of

proverbs about men it does not occur to this extent. Women are judged as bad or inferior to men (for example, as incomplete, imperfect creatures, requiring a man to look after them) on the basis of their gender identity. By examining this topic in many cultures, we find evidence that it is so not only in the English, German, Polish, Czech or Sorbian languages, but also in most of the world's languages, as confirmed by the scientific research mentioned below.

Writing about the proverbs about women in English culture, Wolfgang Mieder noticed that almost every proverb given in *The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs* portrays women in a negative way (Mieder 1985: 273). American proverbs can also be considered misogynistic (Mieder 1985b: 129).

The way women are portrayed in German proverbs is a "male subject". One of the experts in the field of German paremiology wrote that the authors and users of proverbs about women are men (Röhrich 1989: 357–370). Only in a very few proverbs about women are they positively depicted (Seiler, 1922: 351). The same opinion is represented through E. Jędrzejko, who emphasizes that in Polish proverbs all women are described as changeable and prone to betrayal and lying, especially towards old husbands over whom they are trying to rule. Polish proverbs stabilize a relatively small set of traits attributed to women, limited to qualities and vices that are important mainly for family life, and partly also for social reasons (Jędrzejko 1994: 163). Also in Czech proverbial literature do we find the opinion that the image of women in Czech proverbs is influenced by a society with a patriarchal system, where the belief is that women are inferior to men (Zachová 2008: 284). Sorbian researchers write that the proverbs of this small Slavic nation show women mostly negatively. They are only positive if the women depicted can fulfill their duties to families and men (Gardoš 1965: 213; Gardoš 1966: 85; Hose 1994: 54–56).

Considering the issue in the broader context, it can be noted that women represent similar negative features in proverbs around the world. Even in the case of German and Chinese cultures, women were described in proverbs in many ways in a similar way: as talkative, ambitious, changeable, and incapable. There were, however, differences in the presentation of

positive features. For example, some German proverbs, unlike Chinese, defined a woman as wise, joyful, thrifty, and respectable (Yao-Weyrauch 1990: 154). It is worth noting that there are cultures in which the woman is described in proverbs in an overwhelming number of statements in a positive way – for example in Icelandic proverbs (Spiess 1991).

In turn, the proverbs in Phon cultures are extremely misogynistic. They judge the woman as cheating, lying and materially focused. Many proverbs in this culture negatively depict old women, especially mothers-in-law (wife's mother). Young women are advised to keep their virginity, and older women to be faithful to their husband (Dogbeh 2000: 91–99). An elderly woman is also negatively assessed in the proverbs of the Igbo language (Nwachukwu-Agbada 1989: 75–89). The analysis of the above-mentioned articles on the proverbs of African languages allows the conclusion that even in closely related cultures, differences between the way women are represented in the proverbs may be significant. Amali describes the positive image of a woman present in the proverbs of the Idoma language (both Idoma and Yoruba are spoken in one country – Nigeria) (Amali 2000).

5. Sources and methods

The basis for this article will be the American-English proverbs about women from two collections (Kerschen L. 1998; Mieder W., Kingsbury S. A., Harder K. B. 1992) which refer to the following themes: women's work, a woman's Place is in the home and a woman makes a home, a man needs a woman, and smart women. German proverbs quoted in this text come from the collection of K. F. W. Wander (republished 1964), Polish from many sources, but the most important is the work of J. Krzyżanowski (1972), Czech from the collection of F. L. Čelakovský (2000, republished) and Sorbian from J. Radyserb-Wjela (1997, republished).

The language material is confronted with statements from women who lived in the nineteenth century and also with scientific publications about women's place in society till now.

A very interesting aspect of paremiology is the comparative research that makes it possible to see the differences between proverbs in different languages and cultures. In this paper, some similarities between proverbs in American-English, German, Polish, Czech and Upper Sorbian are shown. In some cases, there are also remarks about the modern-use or adaptations of proverbs about women.

The choice of these particular topics is justified through the socio-cultural context. Women's work and being devoted to home were actual themes of the women's movement in the U.S.A. Education leads to better work opportunities and therefore it is connected to previously mentioned topics. The need of a man to have a woman who supports him is also an extension of the topic "A woman's Place is in the Home".

6. Women's Work

Women always worked but usually their jobs were not so spectacular as the jobs of men. They were not emperors, warriors, or merchants. They were at home and were bringing up their children, taking care of the men's belongings, cooking, sewing, and weaving. For this reason, their work was imperceptible to many men (Miles 1989: 150)

The principal function of a woman was to satisfy and amuse her husband. Already the Church Fathers and religious writings ordered women to see in their husbands, godlike people to whom they must submit (Anderson, Zinsser 1988: 27–28).

Two following citations show the opinion that a man is the master of his wife and should be treated with great respect. The wife should not expect him to show her his affection or interest, particularly when he is tired. The wife's obligation is to accept the subordinate position in the marriage and support the man as the head of the family.

A sensible woman, to preserve the peace and secure of the affections of her husband, will often sacrifice her own inclinations to his: it may be her duty – it is always to her interest (...). (Lanfear 1824: 65)

(...) man sometimes returns home, at stated hours, wearied in body, exhausted in spirits, and not unfrequently irritable in temper. At these periods, patience and forbearance on the part of the female are peculiarly called for, and woe be to the imbecile and hapless fair one who, unaccustomed to think or act for herself on any occasion, however trifling, continues to tease her peevish lord with idle questions or petty cares, and then adds to his ill humour by fruitless complaints of his want of attention to her and to her concerns. (Lanfear 1824: 65)

She could perform this role, for example, by caring for the household. The man made the orders, but the woman was in charge of their enforcement. Also, very wealthy women were occupied with such activities as sewing, cooking, spinning, and weaving. There was a belief that idleness should be avoided, otherwise women would become depraved. We can find such an opinion, for example, in the "Instruction of a Christian Woman" by Juan Luis Vives, which was written for Catherine of Aragon as a mother's handbook after birth of her daughter Mary Tudor (Anderson, Zinsser 1988: 27).

Many believed that idleness could lead females to mischief, but women who had a lot to do will not try to cheat their husbands. Such a conviction is depicted in the following proverb:

(4) am. *Keep the ladies busy and that keeps them out of mischief.* (1908; New York; South Carolina) Ker 84.

In the difficult conditions of the West of the U.S.A., the women had to work very diligently. In the American Colonies wives had many duties: they were typically engaged in housework, taking care of the garden and the children, and writing letters to the family (Miles 1989: 151). Their work was hard and endless. They had to accomplish many different tasks in a short time, like feeding the baby, cooking, baking, and cleaning the house (Miles 1989: 152).

This situation is depicted in the proverbs:

(5) am. *Man works from sun to sun, but woman's work is never done.* (1570; New York, North Carolina) Ker 84.

(6) am. *Woman at her housework: that's what women are for.* (Mexican-American) Ker 85.

(7) ger. *Froensarbeit is behenne, nümmt aber nimmer 'n Enne* [Women's work is done quickly/fast, but there is no end to it.] Wan 1141.³

Czech and Sorbian equivalents are:

(8) cz. *Ženské dílo a ženská řeč nemá nikdy konce.* [Women's work and women's speech never end.] Č 476.

(9) us. *Žonineje roboty w domje žadyn kónc njeje.* [Women's work at home is never ending.] W 509.

The men who were working outdoors started at dawn and stopped when it got dark. For women who were working at home and could use artificial light their work was never finished, because they could still do something after the sun set. They could spin or sew by the light of a lamp or a fireplace (Miles 1989: 153).

It has to be mentioned that the black women in America were in a much worse situation than white ones. Till the end of the Civil War, they were working as slaves, and when the black families were already free, they understood that without women's work the family would not survive (Evans 1997: 119–121).

There are also other proverbs about women's diligence:

(10) pol. *Białogłowa ma być: rano nabożna, w dzień – pracowita, mądra – u stołu, zawsze – ochędzożna, miła – w pokoju.* [Women are supposed to be: devout in the morning, during the day – diligent, wise – at the table, always – orderly, nice – in the room]. N 79.

(11) cz. *Nechval ženino tilko, ale chval její dílko.* [Do not praise a woman's shirt, but her work.] Č 473.

(12) cz. *Touto pěknou přívídkou činívají hosté přání ženichovi a nevěstě. Jinak i taktó se nevěstě přává: Bůh dej, zdrává byla jak ryba, čista jak voda, vesela jak jarní doba, pracovita jak všechna a hojná jak země svatá.* [The guests tell this beautiful story as wishes to the groom and the bride. Otherwise, the bride is told

³ All English translations from German, Polish, Czech and Sorbian proverbs quoted in this paper are the translations by the author of this article or Wolfgang Mieder.

that she may be healthy like a fish, clean like water, cheerful like spring, hardworking like a bee and generous like the Holy Land.]
C 460.

(13) us. *Pěknou dušu z pilnej ruku, to mudry hólč we holcy pyta.* [A wise boy looks for a good soul with a diligent hand in a girl] W 169.

(14) ger. *Die Hausfrau hat fünf K zu besorgen: Kinder, Kammer, Küche, Keller, Kleider.* [The hostess has five c's to take care of: children, a cubby hole, a cookhouse, a cellar, and clothes.] DF 153.

(15) ger. *Wer eine schöne Frau will haben, suche sie Sonabends. (bei der Arbeit) zu Hause, aber nicht Sonntags beim Feste aus.* [He who wants a pretty woman, looks for her at home on Saturday evening (at work), and not on Sunday during the holiday.] Wan 1136.

(16) ger. *Ein Mädchen, das nichts thut, hat einen schlimmen Muth.* [A girl who does nothing is full of bad thoughts/intentions]. Wan 312 III.

(17) ger. *Ein Mädchen muss nach einer Feder über drei Zäune springen.* [The girl has to jump over three fences for one feather.] Wan 312 III.

7. *Angel at Home*

According to the ideal of the “True Woman” or “True Womanhood”, which existed in nineteenth century America, females were born to keep up morality at home. They should be interested mainly in giving birth to children, their upbringing, taking care of the family and cooking. They should protect religion at the time of industrialization and social changes. There was a belief that women are more physically and emotionally fragile than men and therefore they should avoid every effort and irritation. They needed to be protected by their fathers, brothers, and husbands. It is better for them to stay at home and not to be involved

in social activities in order to be healthy. In the upper class and middle class married women could use the financial status of their husbands and live in luxury spending money earned by their spouses. They were also accustomed to such a situation and saw their goal in upbringing children to make them successful descendants of the family.

Also, after this period, when women had already started to work in the offices, they could find only lower-position jobs like that of a typist. Those who were publicly engaged constituted a minority and were not accepted by everybody. We should note that the expression “public man” is unambiguously positive and means a man who works or acts in public. The term “public woman” has more meanings and one of them is “prostitute” (Cruea 2009: 188–196).

In the proverbs quoted below we can see how positive the stereotype is of a homely woman who spends most of her time at home, taking care of her family. This stereotype is also present in German, Polish, Czech and Upper Sorbian proverbs. A woman is compared to a cat spending a lot of time inside. More literal is the comparison with the chimney. That is the part of the house which can't be removed from inside. Otherwise, the house will collapse. The comparison of a woman and a cat, and of a man and a dog exist also in German proverbs.

(18) am. *A woman, a cat, and a chimney should never leave the house.* M 665.

(19) am. *The men and dogs for the barn, the women and cats for the kitchen.* (California) Ker 84.

(20) am. *A woman's place is in the home.* (1844) Ker 85; M 666.

(21) ger. *Die Hausfrau darf nicht sein eine Ausfrau.* [A housewife cannot be an outside woman]. DF 149.

(22) ger. *Das Weib und der Ofen sind Hauses Zier.* [Women and stoves are decorations of a house.] DF 149.

(23) ger. *Frauen und Katzen gehören ins Haus.* [Women and cats belong to a house.] Wan 1123.

(24) ger. *Das Weib gehört ins Haus, der Mann muss hinaus.* [The woman belongs to the house; the man has to leave it.] Wan 6 V.

(25) ger. *Eine häusliche Frau ist eine schöne Frau.* [The housewife is a pretty woman.] Wan 1117.

(26) ger. *Eine Frau ist am schönsten daheim.* [A woman is most beautiful at home.] Wan 1114.

(27) ger. *Der Mann gehört in den Rath, die Frau ins Bad.* [The man belongs in the council, the woman in the bathroom.] DF 137.

(28) ger. *Brave Hausfrau bleibt daheim.* [A good housewife stays at home.] DF 149.

(29) pol. *Niewieście siedzieć doma przystoi.* [Women should stay at home]. N 620.

(30) cz. *V klecech ptáčátka, a v domech děvčátka.* [Birds in cages and girls at home]. Č 496.

(31) cz. *Drž peníze v temnotě, a děvče v těsnotě.* [Keep the money in the dark and the girl in the dough.] Č 496.

(32) cz. *Dobře je, když každý o panně slyší, ale nekaždý ji vidí.* [It is good, that everyone hears about the virgin, but not everyone sees it.] Č 496.

(33) cz. *Vidaná panna měděná, a nevidaná zlatá.* [Virginité of body only has meaning where there is virginité of heart.] Č 496.

(34) us. *Šewc dale kopyta njechodź, ani dale kudžeze žona.* [A shoemaker goes not far away from an anvil, a woman goes not far away from home]. W 227.

The last one of these three American proverbs has an anti-proverb, which came into being during an election campaign, in which a woman was a presidential candidate. The traditional form *A woman's place is in the home* was changed to *A woman's place is in the house*, and it was written on the back of a picture of the White House (Mieder 1985a: 275–276).

Another proverb emphasizes how important a woman is for the home. The superior role of the female as a person who is the foundation of the family was for many centuries taken for granted. The proverb quoted below shows the idea of “Real Women” who are more morally advanced and play a leading function in social life:

(35) am. *Men build houses; women build homes.* (1938) Ker 84.

Although the ideal of “True Woman” was very conservative, it became the origin of feminism. Women should be “Angels at Home” and support their men. They believed in their own moral and religious superiority over men. Many housewives were engaged in their church because it was an extension of their role. As a moral example they should act against the prostitution and alcoholism which plagued their weak fathers, husbands, and sons (Cruea 2009: 188–189).

The following proverb shows that a woman’s role was meant to be only a support for a man for without her help he could not be successful in life:

(36) am. *Behind every great man there is a great woman.* (Mississippi). Ker 83.

It is interesting that this proverb is well known and it is used also in modern times, for example in a commercial for the brand Pierre Cardin, where we can find an anti-proverb “Behind every great woman, there is a man” (Mieder 1985a: 275–276). This anti-proverb is one of two most popular American anti-proverbs dealing with the topic of women (The second one is “A man is as old as he feels, [a woman as old as she looks]”) (Litovkina 2019: 42–43) and has many variations like:

(37) *Behind every successful man is a wife who tells him what to do, and a secretary who does it.* (Litovkina 2019: 43).

(38) *Behind every man who lives within his income is a wife who doesn't.* (Litovkina 2019: 43).

(39) *Behind every successful man is a wife who takes much of the credit, and a government that takes most of the cash.* (Litovkina 2019: 43).

(40) *Behind every successful mason is a dedicated wife and incredulous mother in law.* (Litovkina 2019: 43).

(41) *Behind every famous man there's a woman – telling him he's not so hot.* (Litovkina 2019: 44).

(42) *Behind every successful man is a woman – who hasn't enough closet space.* (Litovkina 2019: 45).

(43) *Behind every successful man is a woman complaining she has nothing to wear.* (Litovkina 2019: 45).

(44) *Behind every successful man is a woman who makes it necessary for him to make money.* (Litovkina 2019: 45).

The ideal of the “True Woman” who is devoted to living at home changed during the time of the Civil War when women were obliged to work in the positions of men who went to fight. There was also a high demand on medical personnel – nurses and volunteers. At this time, the attitude to women changed. They were no longer fragile and trying to support weak human beings. They were working in the same or similar positions as men, and they performed their jobs as well as their male colleagues. At this time the ideal of “True Womanhood” changed to “Real Womanhood”. From now on women could work to earn money for their own self-sufficiency, had more independence and were encouraged to go in for sports for the sake of their health. From the viewpoint of “Real Womanhood” females were biologically equal to men or in some contexts even superior to them. The new fashion reflected this change – without corsets and heavy dresses. Thanks to this change women could cherish more comfort in movements (Cruca 2009: 190–191).

8. *Smart Woman*

Although even before the twentieth century there were men who preferred well-educated women (like, for example, Sir Thomas More who wrote that a man should find a woman who is cultural or capable of being educated) there was a popular belief that woman should not be smarter or better educated than her husband. She should aspire to be a good associate for a man, but not to be equal with him. The education of woman had two objectives: to give her the possibility to manage her family in a proper way and to be intelligent enough to chat with her husband without boring him. Her duty was to accept the authority of her spouse in all issues (Anderson, Zinsser 1988: 27–28). This opinion is depicted in the following proverbs:

(45) am. *A man doesn't want a woman smarter than he is.* (North Carolina) Ker 84.

(46) am. *A wise woman never outsmarts her husband.* (Kansas, New York) Ker 85.

(47) am. *A mule that whinnies and a woman that talks Latin never come to any good.* Ker 84.

(48) am. *The noblest sight on earth is a man talking reason and his wife listening to him.* (Texas) Ker 84.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the ideal of “True Womanhood” was popular, in the U.S.A. middle-class girls were educated in religion and basic knowledge, which should help them to teach their children. Many people thought that a female who was intellectual couldn't be a “true woman” because at that time it was believed that emotions were more feminine than the mind (Cruea 2009: 188–189).⁴

In the high society in England, the USA and all other western-culture countries it was popular to educate young girls in

4 This belief was popular not only in the U.S.A. Well known European philosophers like Immanuel Kant, Wilhelm von Humboldt or Friedrich Hegel also wrote that woman's soul is more emotional than man's soul which was created for logical thinking (Bogucka 2005: 141–144).

French, music, dance and art. This form of schooling was known as a pass to the world of rich and cultural families. A deficiency in this respect could make it difficult for a girl to marry a descendant of a privileged family⁵ (Cruea 2009: 188–189). But this ideal was not popular in middle- and lower class-families.

In the following quotation we will find the opinion that for a woman it is very important to have practical knowledge, which helps her to be a good housewife. Such intellectual activities like learning languages, to play instruments or to paint were, according to this author, unnecessary:

Boarding school girls, more particularly those who, when at home, have been spoiled by flattery, are apt to be unduly vain of their school learning, and frequently fancy themselves superior to those who are not only older, but better informed on every subject of importance, than themselves: this error, originating in the ignorance and presumption of youth, is unfavorable to future improvement. (...) A young lady may have been highly educated, and yet be deficient in real knowledge; be very accomplished and at the same time destitute of every useful, amiable, and domestic quality; she may be able to read French and Italian, paint, draw, play on various instruments, write a delicate hand, and edit an elegant epistle (...) without knowing properly how to manage a family, instruct her children, or direct her servants; in short, without possessing either energy of mind or stability of character (Lanfear 1824: 26–27).

Later, in the time of “Real Womanhood”, the attitude to knowledge in a woman’s life changed. Girls were encouraged to learn to find an intelligent man and to be a proper partner for him. The well-educated woman was also able to work and earn money, if there was a need to support the family. Education was meant to fight depression and idleness (Cruea 2009: 192–193).

The fact that there was a negative assessment of women’s intelligence in the twentieth century could be explained by referring to the views about the nature of both sexes popular since the previous century. Evolutionary biology from the times of Herbert Spencer (1820–1903) and Charles Darwin (1809–1892)

5 In the opinion of Caroline Bingley from Jane Austen’s *Pride & Prejudice* it’s the most important part of female education (Austien 2019).

recognized that the relationship between the sexes was not complementary but based on domination and submission. The privileged position of men in society was the result of natural selection (Bock 2000: 125). The nineteenth-century thinker August Renner believed that the female soul felt more strongly but was weaker than a man's. Immanuel Kant, Wilhelm von Humboldt and Friedrich Hegel also wrote about female affection (Justus 1979: 20). Wolfgang Friedrich Hegel believed that a man's area of activity is outside the home, while a woman is supposed to spend time nurturing the home. Immanuel Kant, on the other hand, argued that science kills beauty in women and thus harms them. He added also that they are not and never will be equal to men (Bogucka 2005: 141–142).

The alleged lack of logic in the behavior of women served as an argument confirming the necessity to subordinate them to the power of men, also resulting from the Christian tradition⁶ (Justus 1979: 20). It was widely believed that some sciences (like mathematics) were not suitable for girls because the female mind cannot comprehend them. The view that knowledge is less useful in the life of women were sometimes propagated by women themselves (Lisak 2009: 301–305).

These views are reflected in the proverbs below:

8.1. *Women are not intelligent*

(49) pol. *U kobiety włos długi, a rozum krótki*. [A woman's hair is long and her mind is short]. N 89.

(50) pol. *Białogłowie pstro w głowie*. [Women are silly]. N 80.

(51) pol. *Ile białych wron, tyle mądrych żon*. [How many white crows, so many wise wives/women]. N 955.

(52) pol. *Babski rozum wart niucha tabaki*. [A woman's mind is worth a snuffle]. N 33.

(53) cz. *Dlouhé vlasy, krátký rozum*. [Long hair, short mind]. Č 472.

⁶ The creation of man (Genesis 2, 21–24); the curse of original sin (Genesis 3, 16).

(54) us. *Žónske maja dołhe wlosy a kuše mysle (kuši ro-
zom).* [Women have long hair and short brains.] W 313.

(55) ger. *Die Frauen haben langes Haar und kurzen Ver-
stand. Wan 1108./ Weiber haben langes Haar, aber kurzer
Sinn. Lat.: Sub longis tunicis, brevis est animus mulieris.*
[Women have long hair and short brains.] Wan 45 V.

(56) ger. *Die Weiber haben einen Witz mehr als die Gänse;
wenn's regnet, gehen sie in Trockene.* [Women have one
sense more than geese; when it rains, they go where it's dry.]
Wan 11 V.

8.2. *Women can not think logically*

(57) pol. *Niewiasta na zle – rozumna, pamiętna, na dobre –
glupia, zapamiętliwa.* [A woman for bad – intelligent, mem-
orable; for good – stupid, passionate]. N 618.

(58) ger. *Den Frauen ist das Beste zu schlecht und das
Schlechteste gut genug.* [For women, the best is too bad and
the worst is good enough]. Wan 1106.

(59) ger. *Die Frau und die Kuh sucht sich das schlechteste
aus.* [The woman and the cow choose the worst]. DF 9.

8.3. *Women's advice is mostly not good*

(60) pol. *Po radę do baby, a przez nią do czarta!* [Ask a(n)
old woman for advice and you will go to hell.]. A 8;

(61) cz. *Ženská rada bývá jen někdy dobrá.* [Women's advice
is only sometimes good.] Č 473.

(62) ger. *Frawenrath ist gut, aber nicht allzeit.* [Women's
advice is not always good.] Wan 1143.

(63) ger. *Frauensrath und Räuwsaat gerött man alle säber
Jahr.* [Female advice and raw seed bear a good crop only
once a seven years.] Wan 1143.

On the contrary old women were considered very clever and able to outsmart even the devil, what is reflected in the proverbs:

(64) am. *Where the devil can't go, he sends his grandmother.* (Alaska) M 148.

(65) am. *A woman knows a bit more than Satan.* M 666.

(66) pol. *Gdzie diabeł nie może, tam babę poszle.*
[Where the devil can not, he will sent the old woman]. N 35.

(67) pol. *Na współce z babą i diabeł źle wyszedł.*
[In the dealing with an (old) woman, the devil came out badly]. N 40.

(68) pol. *Diabła baba oszukala.*
[(Old) women have deceived the devil]. N 34.

(69) pol. *Kobiety, jak zechcą, to i samemu diabłu dadzą radę.*
[Women, if they want, can outsmart the devil]. N 88.

(70) ger. *Die Frauen sind über den Teufel.*
[Women are better then the devil]. Wan 1109.

8.4. Proverbs about wise women

(71) am. *A wise women is twice a fool.* Ker. 85.

(72) am. *A wise woman never outsmarts her husband.* (Kansas, New York) Ker 85.

(73) pol. *Mądry to ptaszek niewiasta, nie da się tak łatwo złowić.* [Woman is a wise bird, not so easy to catch] N 617.

9. Summary and conclusions

The language material which is cited in this article shows that women in American and Central European proverbs were depicted as diligent and very important persons for their families and husbands but not necessarily as persons well educated and

intelligent. This is a result of the situation for women in the 19th and 20th centuries. For a long time, women weren't profoundly educated. Most of them could learn only what was necessary for the household like cooking, sewing, weaving. The men had the best positions in the society, but women had to stay at home and support their husbands. They also had to take care of other people and be very compassionate and emotional. Without good education, they couldn't have a leading position in politics or other socially privileged roles. This situation manifests itself in many proverbs, which emphasizes the fact that females are emotional, warm, and supportive human beings.

Also, many proverbs depict the diligence of women who had to live in very difficult conditions. They had to take care of children and husbands and do all the housework, when men had finished their duties. Women of all social classes worked at home. Even those who were very rich and privileged had their occupations and duties. Although they were active and worked hard, their work was invisible to many men or regarded as not as important as the men's work.

In the proverbs, which were very popular through the nineteenth century, in times when not every person could afford to be a participant of high-culture through reading books or newspapers, the stereotypes about women manifest themselves, which are consequences of women's subordinate position and lower education status. In a few modern anti-proverbs, it is visible that this view is changing. A good example for this thesis is the proverb "Behind every great man there is a great woman. (Mississippi)" and this modern anti-proverb "Behind every great woman, there is a man" (Mieder 1985a: 275–276). This pair shows how stereotypes are actually changing: through the nineteenth century, women were beautiful, warm, and emotional "Angels at Home", who had to – as the main goal in their lives – support their husbands, children, and other people who needed her good heart. At the end of the twentieth century, when women could already reach privileged positions in politics, science and economics, there was also a place for strong and competitive women who were supported by their husbands. This proves the fact that some American and European proverbs about women depict the cultural and historical background of American and European life until the twentieth century.

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Abbreviations:

- A – Adalberg, Samuel. *Księga przysłów, przypowieści i wyrażen przysłowiowych polskich*, Warszawa: Drukarnia Emila Skińskiego, 1889–1894.
- am. – american
- Č – Čelakovský, František Ladislav. *Mudrosloví národu slovanského ve příslovích. Připojena je též sbírka prstonárodních českých pořekadel. Uspořádal F. L. Čelakovský*, Praha: Lika klub, 2000.
- cz. – czech
- D – Dobrovský, Josef: *Českých přísloví sbírka*, Praha: Nakladatelství Československé akademie věd, 1963.

DF – Reinsberg-Düringsfeld, Otto von: *Die Frau im Sprichwort*, Leipzig: Olms Verlag, 2013.

ger. – german

Ker – Kerschen, Lois. *American Proverbs About Women. A Reference Guide*, Westport, Connecticut, London: Greenwood, 1998.

N – Krzyżanowski, Jan, editor: *Nowa księga przysłów i wyrażen przysłowiowych polskich*, vol. 1–4, Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1972.

M – Mieder, Wolfgang, Stewart A. Kingsbury, and Kelsie B. Harder. *A Dictionary of American Proverbs*, New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.

pol. – polish

us – upper sorbian

Wan – Wander, Karl Friedrich Wilhelm. *Deutsches Sprichwörter-Lexikon. Ein Hausschatz für das deutsche Volk*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaft. Buchges., 1964.

W – Radyserb-Wjela, Jan: *Přisłowa a přisłowne hrónčka a wustowa Hornjolužiskich Serbow* : = *Sorbische Sprichwörter, sprichwörtliche Redensarten und Wendungen*, Bautzen: Ludowe Nakładnistwo Domowina, 1997.

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“TO SEE THE ELEPHANT”: MEANINGS OF THE PROVERBIAL PHRASE, AND ITS AGE

Abstract: Lexicographers and paremiologists have been struggling with the American proverbial phrase “to see the elephant” since the 1840s, attempting to establish its history and elucidate its meanings. Often those attempts have resulted in erroneous information and fanciful conclusions. At least two instances of the expression can be identified from early-modern England.

Keywords: American proverbs, English proverbs, historical lexicography, historical paremiology, California gold rush, American Civil War.

1. Introduction

The idiom or proverbial phrase *to see the elephant* (or *be shown the elephant* or *get a look at the elephant*) has not lacked for lexicographical attention. Since the middle of the nineteenth century, scholars and literate amateurs have busily pondered its meanings and its putative origin. Standard compilations of American proverbs include it. So do dictionaries of American slang and American dialects, as well as more general dictionaries.

However, several points of uncertainty and confusion remain. I shall briefly address some of those points. Then I shall reveal that the expression, thought to have originated in nineteenth-century America, has parallels as old as Elizabethan England.

The earliest philological notice of the phrase appeared in the first edition of John R. Bartlett’s *Dictionary of Americanisms* in 1848. Then it appeared in the 1860 edition of John Hotten’s *Dictionary of Modern Slang, Cant, and Vulgar Words* (which calls itself the second edition; there were numerous editions), in Maximilian Schele de Vere’s *Americanisms: The English of the New World* (1872); in Albert Barrère and Charles Leland’s *Dictionary of Slang, Jargon, and Cant*, vol. 1 (1889); in John Farmer’s *Americanisms, Old and New* (1889); in Farmer and W. E. Henley’s *Slang and Its Analogues*, vol. 2 (1891); in James Maitland’s *American Slang Dictionary* (1891); in Sylva Clapin’s *New Dictionary of Americanisms* (1902); and in R. H. Thornton’s *American Glossary* (1912). Some of those dictionaries borrowed heavily from their predecessors, and occasionally one compiler’s error or casual speculation became a later compiler’s confidently asserted fact.

According to Bartlett (1848: 290), the expression “means, generally, to undergo any disappointment of high-raised expectations.” Farmer (1889: 224) glossed it, “to see the world; to gain knowledge by experience. The cost is oftentimes understood to be more than the thing is worth.” Maitland (1891: 102) presented this definition: “to ‘do’ the town; to see the sights, especially those of an immoral character.”

More recently, the *Dictionary of American Regional English* (Cassidy et al. 1985- , s.v. *elephant* 1) gave a tripartite definition: “To see what there is to see; to experience something to the end; to become jaded or disappointed.” J. Rea, in an article in *Western Folklore* (1969: 22-25), carefully differentiated four related senses of the expression, which may be summarized this way: [**a**] ‘see all there is to be seen’; [**b**] ‘paint the town red; go on a boisterous spree’; [**c**] ‘have enough; become jaded or disillusioned’; [**d**] ‘survive hardships’. Another sense, which had been plausibly given by Hotten (1860: 136), can be further distinguished: [**e**] ‘be knowing, not “green.”’ Jonathan Lighter’s *Historical Dictionary of American Slang* (1994-97, 1:702) designated just two main senses, which do not seem wholly distinguishable: [**1**] “To see or experience all that one can endure” and [**2**] “to gain worldly experience or to learn a hard lesson from experience; lose one’s innocence; (hence) to see remarkable sights.” As a specialization

of the last sense, Lighter also gave [2.b] “(Mil.) to see combat, esp. for the first time.” Jonathon Green, in *Green’s Dictionary of Slang* (2010), has identified three senses: [1] “to see the world or something spectacular within it; usu. To have become bored and jaded by doing so; to be disappointed in one’s optimistic expectations”; [2] “to seek out excitement, esp. in the context of going slumming in poor and/or dangerous urban areas”; [3] “to be seduced, to be fooled.” The *OED* defines the phrase concisely: “to see life, the world, or the sights (as of a large city); to get experience of life, to gain knowledge by experience.” Other scholars (as we shall see), especially the early ones, have proffered other meanings, but those are problematical.

One early instance of the expression is a complete outlier. In *Christy’s Plantation Melodies, No. 2*, compiled by Edward Pearce Christy (c1853: 32), appeared a song titled “Poor Old Joe” (not to be confused with Stephen Foster’s song “Old Black Joe,” which sometimes goes by the title “Poor Old Joe”). Here is the final stanza:

Oh, where’s that old grey darkey gone, that used to work the hoe,
In Massa’s field to till the ground, long time ago?
You ask us where that darkey’s gone, that good old darkey, Joe—
He’s gone to see the elephant, down, down below.

No other reference to such a subterranean, post-mortem elephant seems to exist.

2. Can “see the elephant” specifically mean ‘drink (alcohol)’ or ‘get drunk’?

Bartlett (1848: 290) illustrated the expression with the summary of a court case from 1842, concerning “a man brought before the Recorder of New Orleans, charged with having been found drunk the previous night.” The hung-over defendant pleads, “Here I am in town without a rock in my pocket, without a skirt to my coat, or a crown to my hat; but, Squire, I’ll say no more, *I’ve seen the elephant*” (italics as shown). However, “I’ve seen the elephant” evidently refers here not just to the boozing binge per se but rather to the whole experience of coming to the city, succumbing to its exotic charms, and suffering the consequences. Though

unattributed and undated, Bartlett's quotation comes from the volume *Portfolio of the Reports of the New Orleans "Picayune,"* published in Philadelphia (*Picayune* 1846, 31).

Barrère and Leland (1889-90, 1:334-44) also obliquely associated the expression with alcoholic imbibery. They mentioned an unspecified review of a book titled *Seeing the Elephant*, "devoted to describing 'life' in New York," by the humorist Mortimer Thomson (pseudonym "Doesticks"). The reviewer is reported to have "remarked that the *elephant*, according to Mr. Thompson [sic], appeared to be bad brandy." The book is actually titled *The History and Records of the Elephant Club*, coauthored by Thomson and Edward F. Underhill (pseudonym "Knight Russ Ockside") in 1856; the leaf following the title-page announced, ". . . containing also the exultant record of their memorable success in eventually obtaining, each and every one, a sight of the entire and unadulterated Animal" (New York itself being the "metropolitan elephant" that out-of-towners came to "see"). The volume recounts a series of comical episodes of carousing, drinking, brawling, and other convivial behavior on the part of various members of the fictitious Elephant Club. The reviewer's remark, as quoted by Barrère and Leland, seems like a deliberately playful, ad hoc interpretation of the proverbial expression—not a gloss on it.

A joking quality also pervades a passage that Farmer and Henley (1890-1904, 2:357) quoted from the New York magazine *Puck's Library*: "Forepaugh says that elephants have a natural liking for whiskey. We have often wondered, when a man went out to SEE THE ELEPHANT, why he always brought back such a strange odour with him. This seems to explain it" (upper-case as shown). That is a facetious way of linking a reported oddity of elephant behavior with an oddity of American phrasing, ostensibly to explain a common observation about human life. Indeed, the joke is based on the speaker's prior unawareness (real or assumed) that *seeing the elephant* can entail alcohol consumption.

Berrey and Van den Bark (1942, §280.7) listed *see elephants* (but not the singular *see the elephant*) as a phrase meaning 'drunk'. That entry may have influenced Burton Stevenson. In a section of his *Home Book of Proverbs, Maxims and Familiar Phrases* headed "Drinking," (1948: 630) he quoted from

the American writer O. Henry's story "The Higher Abdication" (1907): "The drivers were scattered about town 'seeing the elephant and hearing the owl.'" Except when paired with *see the elephant*, the expression *hear the owl* is not well attested as a proverbial phrase. Perhaps it is related to the proverbial comparison *drunk as an owl* (*OED*, s.v. *owl* 2b, from 1764; Taylor 1954: 36) or the enigmatic "Drunk as a boiled owl" (Taylor and Whiting 1958: 272), which Barrère and Leland call a "very favourite simile for intoxication." Or, *hear the owl* could merely suggest *nocturnal* behavior, an embellishment of *see the elephant* in the sense of 'paint the town red'.

A query in *American Notes and Queries* asked about the linked expressions "I have seen the elephant; I have heard the owl," which, the author speculated, was "surely folk and perhaps political" in origin. He continued: "Although I have been familiar with the words all my life, I have not the remotest idea of their actual meaning. To me it means: I have been to the ends of human experience and am familiar with everything" (Hartin 1966: 56). Mac E. Barrick (1967: 120) replied, as regards *see the elephant*, by mentioning the entries in the *Dictionary of American English* (Craigie and Hulbert 1938: 44) and Taylor and Whiting's *Dictionary of American Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases 1820-1880* (1958: 119). Barrick also quoted an example of the linked expressions from the popular American television program *The Richard Boone Show* (NBC) for 14 January 1964: "I've been around. Ma'm, I have seen the elephant. I have heard the owl." Lighter (1994-97, 1:702 and 2:734) has included four instances of *hear the owl* linked with *see the elephant*, from 1893, 1968, and 1979 (and more of them unlinked). Neither Lighter's entry nor Hartin's query nor Barrick's reply suggests a specifically alcoholic interpretation of either *see the elephant* or *hear the owl*. Nor does O. Henry's story require such an interpretation of the phrase.

It is interesting to note that Benjamin Franklin in his *Drinker's Dictionary* (1737) listed *see the bears* in the sense of 'be drunk' (Franklin 1987: 267) and *see the French king* in the same sense (269). In 1622 Edward Taylor (nicknamed "The Water Poet"), in a booklet titled *The Water Cormorant*, gave a long, rhymed list of euphemisms for 'drunk': "You may not say hee's

drunk, though he be drunke, / For though he be as drunke as any Rat, / He hath but catcht a fox, or whipt the cat, / . . . / Or seene the Lyons . . .” (sig. B4^v).

In certain contexts, then—like parallel expressions featuring other fauna (owl, fox, rat, lion, French king)—a statement that someone was *seeing the elephant* might import that the person was tipping, or tipping along with other rowdy or dissipating activities. The same could be said of synonymous phrases like *painting the town red*, *living it up*, or even, simply, *having fun*. Of itself, the expression *see the elephant* probably never specifically denoted ‘drink’ or ‘get drunk’.

We must wonder, however, whether the idiom (or euphemism) *see pink elephants*, meaning ‘be drunk’ or ‘suffer delirium tremens (as a consequence of alcoholism)’—which Stuart Berg Flexner in *I Hear America Talking* (1976: 128) dated from the 1890s and the *OED* (s.v. *pink elephant*) from 1901—is related to the seemingly older expression.

3. Can “see the elephant” mean ‘act unchastely’ or ‘be seduced sexually’?

In 1889 Barrère and Leland (1:343-44) commented euphemistically, “Montaigne strangely enough seems to suggest that ‘to see *the elephant*’ was in his time connected with experience of life” (italics as shown). They concluded, “a girl is said to ‘have seen *the elephant*’ when she has lost her chastity” (italics as shown). They also cited a French expression *avoir vu* (or *connaitre*) *le loup* ‘seen the wolf’ in the same sense (cf. Farmer 1896: 176, s.v. *loup*). In another sense, *seen the wolf*, from classical times forward in several European languages, including English, has signified ‘being struck mute or otherwise suddenly becoming vocally impaired’; Stevenson 1948, 2554:1). Farmer and Henley (1890-1904, 2:356-57) appropriated Barrère and Leland’s information, glossing *see the elephant* as “To be seduced” and citing the lupine parallel in French. In 1916 Henry Nathaniel Cory’s *The Slang of Venery and Its Analogues* included this entry: “To see the elephant—To be seduced” (cited by Lighter 1994-97, 1:702). Berrey and Van den Bark (1942, §362) likewise gave the sense ‘be seduced’, as did Partridge (1949, s.v. *elephant*).

Alluding to that sense, Tamony (1968: 24) asserted, “in modern Europe, *to see the elephant* seems first to have been put into print in 16th century France by Montaigne (1533-92).”

No direct evidence exists that *see the elephant* has ever been used in the specific sense of ‘be (sexually) seduced’. Prior to Barrère and Leland (1889), such a sense was not recorded in any dictionary. Nor does it appear in modern dictionaries that are based on cited instances. Nor is that sense implied in any of the illustrative quotations given in the many dictionaries of proverbs or in my own files. Attributing the sense ‘be seduced’ to the expression *see the elephant* is not an observed usage but rather an artifact of lexicographical tradition that extends back to Barrère and Leland.

Furthermore, the purported Montaigne “source” for the phrase is bogus. Montaigne wrote:

Aux Indes orientales, la chasteté y étant en singulière recommandation, l’usage pourtant souffrait qu’une femme mariée se pût abandonner à qui lui présentait un éléphant; et cela avec quelque gloire d’avoir été estimée à si haut prix. (Montaigne 1967: 351)

In the East Indies, although chastity is singularly valued there, custom suffers a married woman to give herself to any man who presents her with an elephant—and not without glory for being so highly prized. (Montaigne 1991: 981-982)

Montaigne was explicitly paraphrasing a history of Alexander the Great by the Greco-Roman Arrian (C.E. 96-c180):

For the elephant in India is a royal mount . . . Their women, such as are of great modesty, can be seduced by no other gift, but yield themselves to anyone who gives an elephant; and the Indians think it no disgrace to yield thus on the gift of an elephant, but rather it seems honourable for a woman that her beauty should be valued at an elephant. (Arrian 1929-33, 2:357)

Certainly no equivalent of the phrase *see the elephant* occurs in Montaigne’s sixteenth-century French, any more than such an expression can be found in the second-century Greek of Arrian. Probably Farmer and Henley mistook a little encyclopedic digression by Barrère and Leland for information concerning com-

parative philology—and Partridge, Tamony, and others neglected to scrutinize and verify the assertions of their predecessors.

4. Can “see the elephant” specifically mean ‘indulge in gambling’?

As far as I am aware, no commentator has asserted that *see the elephant* can denote ‘gamble’ (as distinct from loose behavior in general). It may be worth mentioning, however, that the expression has occasionally been linked with *fight the tiger*, which does mean ‘gamble’—as derived from the game of faro, in which the “house” is referred to as the *tiger*. The *Dictionary of American English* (Craigie and Hulbert 1938, s.v. *tiger* 2b) quoted from the *Santa Fe Republican* for 17 September 1847, “Have you seen the *Elephant*, or fought the *Tiger*?” (italics as shown); and also from the *New York Commercial Advertiser* from c1877, “Strange, isn’t it, that so many countrymen who come to New York to ‘see the elephant’ will go and fight the tiger.” In an anonymous jocular essay of 1877, titled “The American Language,” in the New York magazine *Puck*, an uncomprehending (and caricatured) Englishman reports that some “American young spwigs asked me, while I was having dinner at my club, if I would like to ‘fight the tiger’ or ‘see the elephant.’ Now, how vewy widiculous, to be sure, as if I were so jolly gween as never to have seen an elephant . . .” (11). In 1879 an anonymous article “A Night on the South Platte,” in *Baily’s Monthly Magazine of Sports and Pastimes*, reports, “In those days the correct thing for the average English traveller, when he was injected for the first time into one of the eastern seaports [of America], was to see the elephant, fight the tiger, learn the ropes, and go the rounds of the city” (280).

See the elephant refers to loose or rowdy behavior of unspecified sorts. So it is no surprise to find the expression used in contexts that involve gambling as well as drinking and perhaps sexual disports. Furthermore, the preceding discussion has shown a tendency—perhaps motivated by a sense of parallelism—for both scholars and normal users of the language to associate the expression with other verb phrases featuring zoological objects. Later parts of this discussion will illustrate associations with *see the lions*, *see the king*, and other such phrases.

5. Can “see the elephant” specifically mean ‘engage in military combat’?

In 1987 Robert Hendrickson’s *Facts on File Encyclopedia of Word and Phrase Origins* treated the phrase *seeing the elephant* in this way (the entire entry is here quoted):

Soldiers in the [American] Civil War [1861-1865] adopted these words to describe their discovery of the savagery of combat, their experience of action for the first time. The phrase came from the language of farmers, who after attending a traveling circus often spoke awesomely of *seeing the elephant*. (472)

That entry is odd: An initial reading, in a volume purporting to explain phrase *origins*, implies that the phrase *originated* with the Civil War usage. Of course, the second sentence does acknowledge that the Civil War application was derived from earlier uses (perhaps *adopted* in the first sentence should read *adapted*). Still, Hendrickson’s entry leaves the impression that the earlier rustic use had a purely literal signification, and the soldiers in the 1860s were the first to apply the expression metaphorically to non-pachydermal concerns—even though Hendrickson had access to authorities from Bartlett (1848) forward who had quoted numerous figurative usages from the 1830s, 1840s, and 1850s.

The earliest of those, Bartlett (1848: 290), illustrated the expression with an application to the Mexican War of 1846-48, fifteen years prior to the Civil War: “For instance, men who volunteered for the Mexican war, expecting to reap lots of glory and enjoyment, but who instead found only sickness, fatigue, privations, and suffering, were said to have *‘seen the elephant’*” (italics as shown). Bartlett’s *for instance* reveals that he did not intend experience in combat as a specific, denotative reference of the phrase; he followed with the instance (quoted above) regarding a catastrophic night-on-the-town in New Orleans and still another concerning a trip to New York City by “merchants from the South and West.”

Without question, the expression was used in the Civil War. Taylor and Whiting (1958: 119) quoted from the diary of a Union colonel at the Battle of Shiloh in 1862: “The Twenty-fourth Ohio Volunteer Infantry had seen the elephant [i.e., been in battle] several times, and did not care about seeing him again unless

necessary” (the bracketed interpolation is Taylor and Whiting’s). Frank and Reaves’s monograph *“Seeing the Elephant”*: *Raw Recruits at the Battle of Shiloh* (1989: 2, 84, and 98) quoted four additional uses of the phrase from diaries and letters of 1862. Frank and Reaves (1989: 1-2) also surmised that the American writer Ambrose Bierce (1909-12, 1:235) was alluding to the expression when he recollected his own experience at Shiloh: “At the same instant was heard a dull, distant sound like the heavy breathing of some great animal below the horizon.” Jan Brunvand (1961, s.v. *animal*) cited a comparable battlefield allusion from 1848: “He thought he had seen the ‘big animal.’”

Lighter (1994-97, 1:702) has mustered a further instance from the Mexican War, three from the Civil War era, and some later ones referring to the Civil War, by way of illustrating the definition “to see combat, esp. for the first time.”

In a military context, then, *see the elephant* could certainly mean ‘engage in combat’ or ‘experience the horrors of battle’, as an application of any of three of the customary senses identified at the beginning of this discussion: ‘become disillusioned’, ‘survive hardships’, or ‘be knowing’. Even in a military context, however, the meaning was not necessarily limited to affairs of combat per se; in one instance cited by Taylor and Whiting (1958: 119), a wide-eyed Union recruit used the expression in reference to the remarkable scenes he viewed from the train en route from his mustering site in Ohio to the theater of operations in Maryland (Wiley 1952: 36). So, whether the military application of the phrase should be regarded as denotatively specific must remain an open question. I shall return to that question in the discussion of whether the idiom is now obsolete.

6. Does a proverbial phrase “to see the king” exist as a synonym—or as a variant—of “to see the elephant”?

The 1874 edition of Hotten’s *Dictionary of Modern Slang* (though not earlier editions) noted that “a modification of” *see the elephant* is *see the king* (156). Maitland (1891: 234) began his entry, “*See the elephant* or *See the king*.” Farmer and Henley (1890-1904, 2:356-57), in turn, reported that *see the elephant*, in the sense of ‘see the world’ (but not in the sense of ‘be seduced’),

is “sometimes” *see the king*. Partridge (1949: 743) echoed Hotten (whom he cited): *see the king*, glossed as “to be very experienced, knowing, alert,” is “an English [i.e. British] modification” of *see the elephant*. Partridge associated the dates 1870-90 with *see the king*, probably because in the early 1870s Hotten added the expression to his discussion of *see the elephant*, and most twentieth-century dictionaries did not record *see the king*.

Hotten, Farmer and Henley, and Partridge have all regarded *see the king* as a variant of *see the elephant*, just as *see the elephant* is possibly a variant or parallel of *see the lions*, an expression in use since the sixteenth century; in 1590 Robert Greene called it an “old proverb” (Greene 1881-86, 8:68; cf. Tilley 1950, L322, and Dent 1984, L322). In reference to *see the elephant* Tamony (1968: 24), echoing the *OED*, remarked, “An analogue in 16th century England was *to see the lions*. In that era, lions were chained in the Tower of London and became noted objects of curiosity, as kings have been, such being memorialized in *to see the king*.” However, while citing authorities who print actual instances of *see the elephant* and *see the lions*, Tamony did not direct his reader to any specific occurrences of *see the king*.

Tamony assumed that *see the king* would refer metaphorically to seeing a rare, spectacular, or interesting sight (like lions, or an elephant). Yet Hotten (1874: 155-156), who apparently initiated the association of *see the king* with *see the elephant*, offered a very different explanation: “When a man becomes aware that he has been cheated or imposed on, and does not mean to stand it any longer, he is said to have seen the king, i.e., to have seen his adversary’s best card, and to be prepared for it.” That explanation would be inapplicable to the alleged correspondence of *see the king* with *see the elephant*—and, in turn, with *see the lions*.

Except in its dubious association with *see the elephant*, no dictionaries or proverb collections appear to record or illustrate the expression *see the king* (not counting Benjamin Franklin’s *see the French king* ‘be drunk’, cited earlier). However, a bit of dialog in a Jacobean drama does suggest a connection. In Ben Jonson’s *Masque of Augures*, published in 1621, the character Notch boastfully declares, “I ha’ seene the Lyons ere now, and he that hath seene them, may see the King” (Jonson 1925-52, 7:629). This yoking of the proverbial *see the lions* with the par-

allel *see the king* moves Jonson’s character Slug to respond with a warning: “I thinke he may; but have a care ye go not too high . . . ; there is as much danger <in> going too neer the King, as the Lyons” (bracketed insert as shown). Slug is elaborating on the proverb “It is dangerous to play with lions,” found in English as early as 1564 (Dent 1981, L321.1; Dent 1984, L321.1). If Ben Jonson’s characters were swapping proverbs, then the likelihood increases that *see the king* itself was proverbial. Even if Notch intends *see the king* literally, his paralleling of that expression with *see the lions* seems noteworthy.

To compare danger from proximity to lions with danger from proximity to kings has its own history—aside from the point that both were rare and interesting sights. Thomas More’s Latin epigram titled “Ad Aulicum” (‘To a Courtier’), published in 1518, begins this way, in the standard modern translation (More 1984: 204-205):

You often boast to me that you have the king’s ear and often have fun with him, freely and according to your own whims. This is like having fun with tamed lions—often it is harmless, but just as often there is the fear of harm. Often he roars in rage for no known reason, and suddenly the fun becomes fatal. (More 1984, 204-205)

In 1524 a Latin colloquy by Erasmus, titled “Convivium Fabulosum” (‘The Fabulous Feast’), counseled:

It’s not safe, as I understand, to bandy jests with kings. For as lions sometimes submit quietly to stroking, they’re lions when the mood takes them—and goodbye playmate! In like fashion do princes grant favors. (Erasmus 1965: 262)

In fact, the Aesopic fable that underlies the English expression *the lion’s share*—in which a lion denies the other beasts in the hunting party any portion of the cooperatively slaughtered prey—was construed as a warning against imprudent association with the great. William Caxton in his 1483 English translation of Aesop moralized the fable thus: “this fable techeth to al folk / that the poure ought not to hold felauship with the myghty / For the myghty man is neuer feythfull to the poure” (Aesopus 1967: 77). Similarly, in 1624 John Brinsley declared that the fable is

about the “danger of dealing with mighty men” (Aesopus 1624, sig. B1).

7. Is “*see the elephant*” obsolete?

Partridge in 1949 (256) labeled the phrase *see the elephant* (in both of the senses he identified, ‘see the world’ and ‘be seduced’) “ob[solete].” The *OED Supplement* in 1933 (s.v. *elephant* 1d) and the *Dictionary of American English* (Craigie and Hulbert) in 1940, while neither specifies obsolescence, had both given as the latest instance a sentence from O. Henry’s story “Man about Town,” published in 1906. Rea in 1969 stated, “O. Henry in 1906 seems to have been one of the last to use it” (26). In fact, Rea could have discovered by consulting Stevenson (1948: 630 and 675) that O. Henry used the expression in two later stories, “The Higher Abdication” in 1907 and “The Passing of Black Eagle” in 1909.

Recording the expression in *Dialect Notes* in 1922, G. L. Hanford implied that *see the elephant* was still current at that date (174). In December 1925 an anonymous editorial in the *Kourier Magazine*—official organ of the Ku Klux Klan—bore the title “Seeing the Elephant” (17). Interestingly, the author assumed that the expression refers to the parable of the blind men and the elephant—in which each man “sees” the elephant differently. The racist editorial writer does not make clear whether any of the blind men saw a white elephant, but his confusion may give evidence that by 1925 the meaning and customary use of the expression was fading.

Nonetheless, B. J. Whiting, in *Modern Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases*, (1989, E62), gave a proverbial instance from 1959: “People said of him that he had been around. They also said that he had seen the elephant.” Tamony (1968: 25 and 27) cited four occurrences of the phrase in publications from 1949-55; each of those uses, however, specifically looked back to the California Gold Rush of 1849, an episode of American history that saw a great efflorescence of the saying.

8. *The California Gold Rush (and Other Western Connections)*

Taylor and Whiting (1958: 119) cited no examples of *see the elephant* from earlier than 1855. However, the *Dictionary of American English* (Craigie and Hulbert 1938-44, s.v. *elephant* 1) quoted two instances (1849 and 1850) from participants in the gold rush. The *Dictionary of American Regional English* (Casidy et al. 1985-2013, s.v. *elephant* 1) has added a third (from 1851), and Lighter (1994-97, 1:702) a fourth (from 1854). H. Lee Scamehorn et al. (1989: 77 and 86) gave two instances from 1849 diaries. J.S. Holliday (1981: 131, 149, 158, 165, 170, and 264) quoted six from 1849 diaries, and he asserted that "this special phrase" was "used by almost every gold rush diarist" (116). The expression also appears in numerous collections of letters from Forty Niners. Two contemporaneous cartoons featuring the California "elephant" (both dated c1850) have been reprinted: one by Tamony (1968: 26), by Layton (1976: 255), and by Axon (1976: 43); the other by Johnson (1974: 78), by Layton (1976: 256), by Reid (1980: viii), by Levy (1990, frontispiece), and by Kirk (1998-99: 175). A song titled "Seeing the Elephant" was published in a California songster about 1855 (Tamony 1968: 25); the song has been reprinted by Dwyer and Lingenfelter (1965: 53-55). Even prospective prospectors who took the ocean route to California seem to have used the phrase. Thornton (1912: 1:286) cited the title of an 1851 magazine article, "A Glimpse of the Elephant," which recounted the arduous crossing of the Isthmus of Panama; that, of course, was before the canal was constructed, and many ocean bound voyagers from the eastern states and Gulf states sought, by traversing the isthmus or even Mexico, to avoid the long and dangerous navigation around the "horn" of South America to the California coast.

Rea (1969: 21-22) established that a musical comedy titled *Seeing the Elephant*—a satiric adaptation of an earlier play of the same title, which had appeared in New York in 1848—opened in San Francisco in 1850. However, Rea exaggerated the influence of the comedy in popularizing the expression: "After the success of *Seeing the Elephant* at the Dramatic Museum on July 4, 1850, 'seeing the elephant' became a part of the slang of California and the West" (1969: 22). As illustrated in the preceding paragraph,

the expression already enjoyed wide use among gold-rushers in 1849.

In connection with the gold rush and other westward journeys, the expression has perhaps remained more-or-less alive, at least among history-buffs, journalists, and followers of current *belles lettres*. Countless books and articles about nineteenth-century California, in their titles or their texts, refer to the proverbial phrase.

The year 1993 marked the sesquicentennial of the opening of the Oregon Trail, a route that many Forty Niners and other pioneers took to California. Numerous journalistic accounts of commemorative pageants, reenactments, and other celebrations during that year quoted and commented on the phrase—most prominently Charles Kuralt on his “Sunday Morning” television and radio show (CBS) 1 Aug. 1993, a segment titled: “The Trip West Was Called ‘Going to See the Elephant.’”

So, even though the instances just referred to (which could easily be multiplied) come from modern sources, they are used in connection with events of the 1840s and 1850s. Even modern uses that do not specifically refer to the gold rush or other migrations still often occur in more general reference to the American frontier or the “Wild West.” In 1980 Forrest G. Robinson titled a scholarly article in the journal *American Studies* (21: 43-64) “‘Seeing the Elephant’: Some Perspectives on Mark Twain’s *Roughing It*.” A play by Karen Hansel and others, which premiered in southern California in 1986, was titled *Going to See the Elephant*; it is based on diaries of pioneer women of Kansas in the early 1870s (“‘Elephant’ Drama Realistically Staged at GWC [Golden West College],” *Orange Coast Daily Pilot*, 27 Nov. 1986). The play has since enjoyed considerable success on the stages of several American cities. In their dialogue the characters explain the proverbial expression.

In 1989 the play *Abundance*, by Beth Henley (acclaimed author of *Crimes of the Heart* and *The Miss Firecracker Contest*) premiered in Los Angeles. Set in the Wyoming Territory in the late 1860s, it features a female character named Macon Hill, who remarks to a new acquaintance, “After all, you’re like me. You’ve come out west to see the elephant. Hey, true or no?” (Henley 1992: 209-10). Bess answers, “Elephant. No.” Macon endeavors to clar-

ify: “To see what’s out there; whatever’s out there . . . It’s gonna be a whole new experience. We’re dealing with the lure of the unknown. Yeah, we’re hunting down the elephant! Bang! Bang! Bang!” The assumption here seems to be that the expression derives from elephant hunting—though, of course, both the phrase and the setting of the play antedate the vogue of big-game hunting in Africa or India by Europeans and Americans.

A 1989 newspaper story tells of an unemployed Ohio family who had recently moved to California in a wagon: “When people in the 1850s hitched their wagons and headed west, their friends and family who stayed behind asked why they wanted to leave. Unable to put their feelings into better words, the pioneers would reply, ‘To see the elephant’” (“Traveling Back in Time,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 24 Aug.).

On 5 February 1991, Richard M. Price of Control Data Corporation delivered a widely-cited speech at the International Business Conference in Durham, North Carolina; the speech was titled “Facing the Elephant” (Price 1991: 1-6):

The question, and the subject before this conference, is An Asian Trading Block [sic] Led by Japan: Opportunity or Threat? [¶] In thinking about that question, I was reminded of the phrase Seeing The Elephant. That’s a phrase that came into the American vocabulary in the mid-nineteenth century in the days of the expanding Western Frontier. It’s a phrase not many people use any more, but still, on hearing it, most people intuitively grasp its meaning . . . [¶] The elephant we face as we look West is no less daunting, no less real, than that “seen” by our predecessors more than a century ago. Now that we’ve seen “The Elephant,” are we willing to take the necessary risks? . . . [¶] With resourcefulness and determination in pursuing these priorities, we[,] like those westward venturers before us, can face “The Elephant” and turn threat into opportunity.

There is no evident awareness here that disillusionment commonly followed the westward venture of gold seekers and other pioneers—and that the expression often bespoke disappointment!

In 1993 the sportswriter Blackie Sherrod, discussing Notre Dame football—the “Irish”—used the paired-expressions dis-

cussed earlier: “In the words of some forgotten world-weary pioneer, I have seen the elephant and I have heard the owl I have borne witness to three Games of the Century” (“Irish’s Play Doesn’t Need an Encore,” *Dallas Morning News*, 17 Nov.).

In such modern instances, the saying is usually accompanied by some indicator that the writer expects present-day readers *not* to recognize and possibly not to understand the expression *see the elephant*: an explanation, a synonymous expression, an attribution, or surrounding quotation marks. Likewise, a survey of book reviews of modern publications with titles containing the expression (or an allusion to it) reveals that most often the reviewer pauses to explain the reference. Comparatively seldom is it regarded as current and familiar.

An interesting exception occurs in Dee Brown’s 1989 review of Ian Frazier’s *The Great Plains*: “One of the common characters of folklore is the wanderer who returns from some distant quest with a tale to tell, who may have seen the elephant and needs an audience to unburden the weight of the experience” (*Chicago Tribune*, 28 May). While the expression here may be obliquely related to pioneers or gold miners, there is little to suggest that, in the author’s assumption, the usage was anything other than current and familiar. Even here, though, the meaning can perhaps be roughly inferred from the context.

One possibility needs to be kept in mind: individuals sometimes *learn* old expressions from reading them—or encountering them on television, in motion pictures, in recorded songs—and then commence using the expressions orally, forgetful of their bookish or archaic character. From those individuals, other speakers may then learn the expressions. Oral tradition does not always exist as a linear continuum. Like individual words, proverbial sayings (as well as lengthier folkloristic texts) can dwindle from oral currency into the domain of literary or even scholarly usage—but from there be recovered orally and gain new currency.

As with the uses that relate to the settling of the American West, modern instances of *see the elephant* in reference to the Civil War continue to occur with some frequency—but again most often with indicators that the present-day reader may well be unfamiliar with the expression.

Evidence exists that the phrase *seeing the elephant* as applied to military activities has survived or been renewed in the Vietnam War era. Tom Dalzell’s *Vietnam War Slang: A Dictionary on Historical Principles* (2014, s.v. *elephant*) glosses *elephant* simply as ‘combat,’ noting, “usually in the phrase ‘see the elephant.’”

9. *How old is the expression “see the elephant”?*

The earliest occurrence of the expression cited by any of the authorities is in Augustus Baldwin Longstreet’s *Georgia Scenes*, 1835 (6). There it took the form of a wellerism: “That’s sufficient, as Tom Haynes said when he saw the Elephant” (Whiting 1945: 7). As with many wellerisms, the attribution invites us to imagine a prior narrative that culminates with the saying—in this case, with a character named Tom Haynes seeing an *actual* elephant and exclaiming, “That’s sufficient.” Possibly Tom had been relentlessly seeking (to purchase?) a larger and stronger farm animal when he finally encountered the elephant. It should be noted that the comic aspect—the *wit*—of a wellerism often results from the literal application of an expression that would ordinarily be used metaphorically. If such is the case here, then Longstreet’s narrator would be looking back to a still earlier, familiar use of the proverbial phrase.

The very next year the wellerism appeared in *Colonel Crockett’s Exploits and Adventures in Texas*, a fictional, pseudo-autobiographical memoir of the famous frontiersman David Crockett (1786-1836) often attributed to Richard Penn Smith. However, the entire episode containing the wellerism (Smith 1836: 35) is directly plagiarized from Longstreet.

It is not clear which—if any—of the recognized senses of *see the elephant* the wellerism would illustrate. That is, notwithstanding the information given in many reference works, the 1835 wellerism may not exemplify the proverbial phrase at all.

Bartlett, the first lexicographer to record the expression *see the elephant*, was evidently unaware of Longstreet’s Georgia wellerism. Bartlett included the expression itself in a group of phrases about which he remarked, in the first edition of his *Dictionary of Americanisms*, “The metaphorical and other odd expressions used first at the West, and afterwards in other parts of

the country, often originate in some curious anecdote or event” (1848: xxii). But evidence for the existence of such an “anecdote or event” remains scant.

The next recorded instance of *see the elephant* gives a rare and rather detailed account of an individual’s first encounter with an unfamiliar expression. George W. Kendall was a Northeasterner who founded the New Orleans *Picayune* newspaper in 1837. In 1841, eager “to make a tour of some kind upon the great Western Prairies” in order “to find new subjects upon which to write” (Kendall 1844, 1:13), he joined an expedition across Texas, which resulted in his *Narrative of the Texan Santa Fé Expedition*, published in 1844. On the night of 21 July 1841 Kendall learned a new proverbial phrase (1:108-10):

There is a cant expression, “*I’ve seen the elephant*,” in very common use in Texas, although I had never heard it until we entered the Cross Timbers, or rather the first evening after we had encamped in that noted strip of forest land. I had already seen “sights” of almost every kind, animals of almost every species . . . ; but I knew very well that we were not in an elephant range, and when I first heard one of our men say that he had seen the animal in question, I was utterly at a loss to fathom his meaning. I knew that the phrase had some conventional signification, but farther I was ignorant. A youngster, however, was “caught” by the expression, and quite a laugh was raised around a camp fire at his expense.

After recounting the youth’s naïve reaction to the expression and the mirthful response of his more savvy elders, Kendall confessed:

. . . I, too, joined in the merry outbreak yet in all frankness I must say that I did not fully understand what I was laughing at. The meaning of the expression I will explain. When a man is disappointed in anything he undertakes, when he has seen enough, when he gets sick and tired of any job he may have set himself about, he has “*seen the elephant*.”

Even though Kendall’s account assumes that Texans were generally acquainted with the expression, it was new to at least one other member of the party—and for all Kendall could have known, others besides himself might have remained covertly

clueless. Clearly he assumed that most readers of his account would be unacquainted with the phrase.

The New Orleans incident mentioned earlier, with its repartee that includes the proverbial phrase, occurred in 1842. Bartlett (1848: 290) quoted an account (indirectly) from the *New Orleans Picayune*, an article that was reprinted in *Spirit of the Times* for 3 Sep. 1842.

The *Historical Dictionary of American Slang* (Lighter 1994-97, 1:702) cites Lt. J. Henry Carleton’s logbook of the U.S. Army’s “dragoon campaign to the Pawnee villages in 1844” (Carleton 1983: 1). For 18 August, Carleton recorded: “Once fairly out of the Nemaha trap, we feel much lighter in spirits. No body has seen the ‘Elephant’ yet, although sometimes several were on the point of doing so—Mr. Jackson in particular We think at the rate *he* has gone on, he will probably see that animal tomorrow” (Carleton 1983: 33; italics as shown). Either Carleton himself or an early editor of his accounts (which first appeared in newspapers) asterisked the word *Elephant* and gave this footnote: “When one gets tired of the journey, and wishes to turn back, he has ‘seen the Elephant’—a cant phrase used by all voyageurs of Western Prairies” (1983: 33). On the one hand, the presence of that footnote attests to the general *unfamiliarity* of the phrase to readers of the 1840s; on the other hand, the note itself insists on the *commonness* of the phrase among Western travelers of the time.

The early popularity—if not the origin—of the expression is generally related to touring circuses, which attracted rural and small-town Americans to view the most exotic of beasts (Hammond 1964: 4-7; Tamony 1968: 23-29). As rustic Americans journeyed to the cities and eastern Americans migrated westward, *see the elephant* became a metaphor for encountering new circumstances and experiencing new ways of life. The California Gold Rush of 1849 and its disillusioning aftermath gave particular impetus to the proverbial saying in its expanded, figurative meanings (Rea 1969: 21-26).

Barrère and Leland (1889-90, 1:344-45) conjectured:

The phrase seems to have originated in an old ballad of a farmer who, while driving his mare along the highway, met with a showman’s elephant, which knocked him over, and spilt his milk and

destroyed his eggs. The farmer consoled himself for his loss by reflecting that he had at least “seen *the elephant*.”

And he said, “Now in future no one can declare
That I’ve not seen the elephant—neither mare.”

Regrettably, Barrère and Leland did not cite the source of their “old ballad” or date it; however, there is no reason to doubt its existence—especially in light of the quoted couplet. But it seems likely that the narrative was *alluding to* the expression *see the elephant*, not *originating* it. In other words, the comically undaunted farmer *plays on* the expression, wittily making literal what would customarily be a metaphor—in the same way that a writer in 1848 playfully literalized another figurative idiom when he titled a story “Fighting the Tiger”; the story, which is about an encounter with an *actual* tiger, ends, “Strangers, I thought I should a flummoxed right on the spot; but I got over it, and feel none the worse for ‘fighting the tiger’” (Oehlschlaeger 1990: 130-33). Also in 1948, an Amherst, New Hampshire, newspaper, the *Farmer’s Cabinet* for 13 January, ventured to explain “the origin of the now common and expressive phrase” There follows a lengthy account of a disastrous attempt to construct a life-size imitation elephant for a dramatic production in Philadelphia. The structure collapsed during the performance, resulting in uproarious laughter from the audience, “shrieking between every breath ‘*Have you seen the elephant?*’” (italics as shown; reprinted in the *Evansville [Indiana] Weekly Journal* for 18 May). It seems obvious that the unruly crowd was not *coining* the expression but rather using a *familiar* idiom in a taunting, unconventional way.

Picturesque Expressions: A Thematic Dictionary, by Laurence Urdang and his collaborators (1985: 324), asserted that “this American colloquialism probably stems from an old ballad,” and then summarized the ballad that Barrère and Leland referred to, presumably without corroborating the information.

Elisabeth Margo, in *Taming the Forty-Niner* (1955: 3), summarized a very similar (though rather witless) shaggy-elephant narrative, “a story going the rounds,” she reported, “just over a hundred years ago” (3); the source is not cited. In that version, apparently in prose, the farmer is preoccupied with a *lit-*

eral desire the see an elephant at a nearby circus; so when the accidental collision occurs, he exultantly exclaims, “I have seen the elephant.” Margo commented, “Both the forty-niners and the men who stayed home saw in this story a symbol of the gold rush; ‘seeing the elephant’ became contemporary slang for going to California.” It isn’t clear whether Margo was asserting that the expression itself or just certain applications of it originated with the story. Perhaps William W. Johnson, in *The Forty Niners* (1974: 80), misinterpreted Margo; recounting the same story, he specifically claimed that the expression “was said [*by whom?*] to originate in an old story about a farmer.” In any case, Margo’s 1955 dating of the story “just over a hundred years ago” would seem to place it later than the early 1840s, from when the expression is elsewhere abundantly attested.

In the absence of more information, we should probably not assume that the proverbial phrase *see the elephant* derived from the punch-line of a comical narrative in prose or verse.

10. *Two Early English Analogs*

Without insisting on any direct or evolutionary connection, I wish to point out two far earlier parallels of the nineteenth-century American expression *see the elephant*.

The Elizabethan poet Sir John Davies (1569-1626) wrote a humorous or satiric epigram titled “In Titum” (Davies 1975: 132):

Titus the brave and valorous young gallant,
Three yeeres together in this towne hath beene,
Yet my lord Chauncellors tombe he hath not seene:
Nor the New water worke, nor the Elephant.
I cannot tell the cause without a smile,
He hath beene in the Counter all this while.

The poem was not published in Davies’s lifetime. Most of his epigrams that can be dated come from the interval 1593-99. (One wonders what the rhyming of *gallant* with *elephant* suggests about the pronunciation of either word!)

Davies’s modern editor, Robert Krueger, noted that an elaborate tomb for the chancellor Sir Christopher Hatton at St. Paul’s Cathedral was completed in 1591, and that a new “water work”

to convey Thames water to private houses was built in 1594 (Davies 1975: 383). Anyone who had “seen the sights” of London in the mid-1590s would have been familiar with those two notable structures. Davies’s character Titus, however, has spent his London years in a debtors’ prison. Krueger assumed that the elephant was just another well-known London “sight,” and he mentioned several seventeenth-century references—but not sixteenth-century references—to elephants on exhibit (Davies 1975: 383-84). Quite possibly Davies’s remark that Titus “hath not seene . . . the Elephant” should thus be taken literally. Nonetheless, the fact that *seeing the elephant* was already being used as a metonymy (if not a metaphor) for ‘seeing the sights’ or ‘experiencing the cosmopolitan world’ or ‘being in the know’ is remarkable.

Several years later the minor poet William Basse, who died in 1653, wrote an undatable poem titled “The Walnut-Tree of Borestall”—a series of comical obsequies on a dead walnut tree, spoken by other trees. One section narrates the magical journey of a mighty oak tree to the site of the deceased walnut (Basse 1893: 336):

The youth of these our tymes, that did behold
This motion strange of this vnweildy plant,
Now boldly brag with vs, that are more old,
That of our age they no advantage want,
Though in our youths we saw the Elephant,
And hee’s no novice that did neuer see
The Lyons, if he saw this walking tree.

The linkage of “saw the Elephant” with the demonstrably-proverbial “see The Lyons,” in a similar sense, is especially noteworthy. And for a talking tree to say “in our youths we saw the Elephant” perhaps makes better sense figuratively than it does literally. The more figurative the usage, the farther such an expression had moved toward becoming proverbial.

11. Conclusion

I did not set out to study the proverbial phrase *to see the elephant* on account of any special difficulties entailed in discerning its evolution or its meanings. The expression has received more attention

than most sayings, and lexicographers and paremiographers have succeeded in assembling a great number of printed examples from the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries.

In fact, I began at the other end. In the course of my academic work, I do a lot of reading in the sub-canonical literature of the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries as it appears in such places as jestbooks, collections of fables and exempla, compendiums of *sententiae* and proverbs, miscellanies of epigrams, and textbooks that gathered ancient and modern wisdom for the delight, edification, and stylistic improvement of fledgling scholars. So I came across Sir John Davies’s epigram that uses—or anticipates—the proverbial expression *see the elephant*. Then I found the analog in the verses by William Basse. Then, knowing of the nineteenth-century expression that parallels the earlier phrase, I began examining what the available scholarship reveals about the age, the history, and the uses of the expression.

It was then that I realized how much interesting uncertainty and confusion prevail in the commentaries on the phrase.

We must keep in mind that the collectors and commentators have differed greatly one from another in their knowledge of folklore and philology, their diligence in finding evidence, and their skill in assessing the evidence. Sometimes proverbial expressions seem to fall through the crack that divides (or unites) the fields of linguistics and folklore, with lexicographers not knowing quite what to do with expressions comprising several words, and folklorists often not so expert in stating definitions or investigating etymologies.

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***THE DICTIONARY OF MODERN
PROVERBS: FOURTH SUPPLEMENT***

Abstract: This is the fourth 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 43 additional modern Anglo-American proverbs with historical dates and contextualized references.

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

Since the publication of our first, second, and third supplements to *The Dictionary of Modern Proverbs* (New Haven CT: Yale UP, 2012) in *Proverbium* 33 (2016) 85-120, 35 (2018) 15-44, and 37 (2020) 53-86, we have continued to gather addenda. As before, we must credit 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) comprises a continually expanding and meticulously researched repository of early datings for fixed expressions, including antedatings for some of our entries in *The Dictionary of Modern Proverbs*.

Of the recent 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 (occasionally, elliptical sentences), not mere phrases or similes or 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.

A reminder: The *key word* of a proverb, which governs the alphabetical placement of its entry, does not necessarily point to the “theme” or “subject” of the proverb; it is simply the *first noun* (in its singular form) present in the proverb as most commonly phrased (or, if no noun occurs, then the first *finite verb*).

(1) ***ACTION (always) beats reaction.***

1986 “Safe Driving Tips,” *Crossties* 67, no. 2 (Feb.) 30: “The art of defensive driving is thinking ahead Action beats reaction.” 1999 Roy Black, *Black’s Law: A Criminal Lawyer Reveals His Defense Strategies* (New York: Simon & Schuster) 75: “. . . [T]he winner of the gunfight is the person who draws first: ‘Action always beats reaction.’” 2000 *Press Democrat [Santa Rosa CA]*, 24 May: “. . . [P]olice officers are trained during life-or-death confrontations with aggressive subjects that ‘action beats reaction.’” 2005 *Herald Sun [Melbourne]*, 8 Apr.: “Findings reveal that the armed aggressor has a distinct advantage Action beats reaction every time.” 2006 *Ashville [NC] Citizen Times*, 5 Mar.: “The basic principle that’s taught at academies. . . is that action beats reaction.” 2010 *Daily Mail [London]*, 8 Oct.: “The firearms team mantra of ‘action beats reaction’ was now paramount.” 2014 *Morning Sentinel [Waterville ME]*, 12 Sep.: “. . . [H]is training has taught him action beats reaction.” 2019 *Border Wall [Albury-Wodonga, Australia]*, 23 Sep.: “Action beats reaction was our motto” 2016 *York [PA] Daily Record*, 21 Sep.: “‘I was trained action always beats reaction,’ said John Torres, who served 12 years in the Baltimore Police Department.”

(2) ***You can’t BE what you can’t see.***

1990 *St. Petersburg [FL] Times*, 5 Sep.: “‘You can’t be what you can’t see,’ said [Derrick] Miles, who has owned and managed

Derrick Electric for eight years ‘Most times minorities do not know other minority businesses exist,’ said Veronica Blake-ly.” 1993 Clifford A. Jones, *From Proclamation to Practice: A Unique African American Approach to Stewardship* (Valley Forge PA: Judson) 39: “Why does a brother hit a sister? Judge R. Eugene Pincham says it is because ‘he can’t be what he ain’t seen!’ . . . [I]f he’s not seen it, he can’t be it. You can’t be what you can’t see.” 1996 *Boston Globe*, 24 Nov.: “As Dr. Joycelyn Elders, . . . the former surgeon-general, said . . . , ‘You cannot be what you cannot see.’” 2007 *Rochester [NY] Democrat and Chronicle*, 20 Feb.: “That whole [*sic*. ?old] adage of ‘you can’t be what you can’t see’ is in play here” 2007 *Philadelphia Tribune*, 4 Mar.: “It lifts the sights of the students in order for them to live out what Judge R. Eugene Pincham says in his famous maxim: ‘You can’t be what you can’t see!’” 2015 *New York Times*, 28 May: “There’s an old saying, ‘You can’t be what you can’t see.’” 2015 *The Australian [Canberra]*, 3 Dec.: “There’s another adage that often gets an airing when the talk is about women and the path to power: you can’t be what you can’t see.” 2015 Maxine Benson, “Encouraging More Women into the Industry,” *Motor Transport* [Stratford-upon-Avon], 6 Dec., 16: “As the adage says: ‘You can’t be what you can’t see.’” 2017 *Daily Telegraph [London]*, 2 Feb.: “There are certain things about us that will never change It’s the old adage: you can’t be what you can’t see.” 2019 *The Guardian [London]*, 20 May: “In terms of demonstrating cricket as a viable path to players of a similar background, the adage goes that you can’t be what you can’t see.”

(3) *Bad BLOOD runs deep.*

1968 Joachim Joesten, *The Dark Side of Lyndon Baines Johnson* (London: Peter Dawnay) 254: “Yet for all his self-restraint and his professions of loyalty, the bad blood runs deep between Robert Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson.” 1976 Victor Perera, “Scenes from a Spanish Village,” *Atlantic* 238, no. 5 (Nov.) 66: “Socialism will never come to Maura There are too many scores to settle, and the bad blood runs deep.” 1986 *Toronto Star*, 14 Nov.: (title of article): “Bad blood runs deep in B.C. Dome’s a major factor as Bombers and Lions renew bitter rivalry.” 1995 *USA To-*

day [McLean VA], 9 May: “Bad blood runs deep. Only last Fall, [Rockne] Harmon drew a laugh at a DNA conference by flashing [Barry] Sheck and [Peter] Neufeld’s picture on the screen with the comment: ‘Princes of darkness.’” 1999 *Springfield [MO] News Leader*, 2 Aug.: “But bad blood runs deep with some residents, who say they are frustrated after trying for years to work with [Lee] McLean.” 1999 *Santa Fe New Mexican*, 28 Nov. (headline): “Scorpions vs. Buzzards: Bad blood Runs Deep.” 2004 *International Herald Tribune [Paris]*, 22 Oct. (headline): “Yanks and Red Sox: Unrivaled Rivalry / Bad Blood Runs Deep for Longtime Foes . . .” 2007 *Edmonton Journal*, 15 Apr.: “Bad blood runs deep in the town’s collective memory.” 2009 *Derby [UK] Evening Telegraph*, 21 Jul.: “Bad blood runs deep between the Merryweather and DeNoir clans . . .” 2018 The Last Exile (song), “Bad Blood Runs Deep,” on the album *Farm Festival* (Spection Music). 2019 Monty Helfgott, *Bad Blood Runs Deep* (Deerfield Beach FL: Trimark). 2019 *Irish Times [Dublin]*, 6 Dec.: “. . . [Y]ou would be forgiven to think bad blood runs deep between these two competitors.” Perhaps the proverb originated as an anti-proverb based on “Still waters run deep.”

(4) A BOY (man) cannot become a man until his father dies.

1995 Richard Olivier, *Shadow of the Stone Heart: A Search for Manhood* (London: Macmillan) 40: “Robert Bly answered him with a statement that froze me, ‘A boy cannot become a man until the day his father dies.’” 1998 Gail Sheehy, *Understanding Men’s Passages* (New York: Random House) 168: “They say you don’t truly become a man until your father dies.” 1998 *Providence Journal*, 25 Aug.: “. . . [A] friend of mine said to me, ‘You don’t become a man until your father dies.’ What a profound statement, because it’s true.” 2006 *Hartford [CT] Courant*, 14 Jun.: “. . . [I]t’s true that a boy does not become a man until his father dies . . .” 2007 Rosemary Poole-Carter, *Women of Magdalene* (Largo FL: Kunati) 144: “There’s an old saying, Robert: ‘A man doesn’t become a man until his father dies.’ Now it’s time for you to be a man . . .” 2008 *Vancouver Courier*, 14 Jun.: “A man can never really become a man until his father dies, or so the experts say.” 2010 Greg Ames, “Forgiving the Bench Warmer,” *Southern Review* 46: 295: “It’s been said that a boy

can't become a man until his own father is dead." Rod Mills, *The Bishop of South Park* (Bloomington IN: Xlibris) 68: "There's an old maxim, 'A man doesn't become a man until his father dies.' There's an element of truth to that." 2016 *Edmonton Sun*, 11 Mar.: "They say that you don't really become a man until your father dies, and I believe that's true." 2016 Butch Walker (song album), *You're Not a Man Until You Lose Your Dad*. 2021 Dave Parker and Dave Jordan, *Cobra: A Life of Baseball and Brotherhood* (Lincoln: U of Nebraska P) 357: "They say you don't truly become a man until your father dies"

(5) **No BRAIN, no headache.**

1991 *Chicago Tribune*, 3 May.: "'Headache? I don't have a headache,' [Don] August said. 'I guess no brain, no headache.'" 1992 *Morning Call [Allentown PA]*, 26 May.: "'Actually it wasn't that tough of a decision to make,' [Lenny] Dykstra conceded. 'It was one of those no brain, no headache deals.'" 1995 *Boston Globe*, 21 Feb.: "They say in baseball 'no brain, no headache,' but you still have to think about some things." 1997 Vicki Iovine, *The Girlfriends' Guide to Surviving the First Year of Motherhood* (New York: Penguin) 158: "You know what they say: 'No brains, no headache.'" 1998 Ruth Anne Kocour and Michael Hodgson, *Facing the Extreme* (New York: St. Martin's) 220: "Trying to put on a calm face and a smile, I teased Craig. 'Hey, no brain no headache.'" 2001 *Washington Post*, 23 Nov.: "As one idiotic character (does it really matter who?) says to another, revealing his secret for happiness: 'No brain, no headache.'" 2003 *Statesman Journal [Salem OR]*, 3 Jun.: "How did these people get elected? No brain, no headache, I guess." 2007 Kathleen Hamilton, *Sex after Baby: Why There Is None* (Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island: Acorn) 54: "You know what they say: 'No brain, no headache.'" 2008 Jack Driscoll, *How Like an Angel* (Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P) 186: "He's got all the bases covered, he says. No brain, no headache. Meaning the burden is his, no mine." 2015 Alpha Blondy (song), "No Brain, No Headache," on the album *Positive Energy* (VP Records). Cf. "No BRAIN, no pain."

(6) CHAOS creates opportunity.

1988 Blaise Cronin and Elisabeth Davenport, *Post Professionalism: Transforming the Information Heartland* (London: Taylor Graham) 231: “He [R. H. Waterman] concludes that chaos creates opportunity, ‘. . . opening the way for whoever is prepared to do something innovative.’” 1991 Jack Cummings, *Guide to Real Estate Exchanging* (New York: Wiley) 5 (section heading): “Why Chaos Creates Opportunity.” 2001 *Savannah Morning News*, 25 May: “But the president should follow the adage that chaos creates opportunity.” 2002 David Taylor and Alyse D. Terhune, *Doing E-Business: Strategies for Thriving in an Electronic Marketplace* (New York: Wiley) 173: “Contextual shifts create chaos, and chaos creates opportunity.” 2003 *Daily News [New Plymouth, New Zealand]*, 21 Aug.: “Chaos creates opportunity. Simple as that.” 2008 *Oakland Tribune*, 10 Mar.: “Chaos creates opportunity. And in this case, the opportunity may be John McCain.” 2009 *San Gabriel [CA] Tribune*, 5 Feb.: “One of the tenets of the business world is that chaos creates opportunity.” 2013 Dave Willis, “Voluntary Benefits Amid Chaos,” *Rough Notes* 156, no. 12 (Dec.) 75: “There’s a saying, ‘Chaos creates opportunity.’” 2020 Karin Slaughter, *The Silent Wife* (New York: HarperCollins) 23: “‘This feels like a crime of contingency. . . .’ ‘Chaos creates opportunity.’”

(7) CHEATERS are going to cheat (Cheaters gonna cheat).

1980 Frederick Crews, *Random House Handbook*, 3rd ed. (New York: Random House) 50 (exercise for students): “Which of the following items would you *exclude* from your *main evidence* in writing the essay [with the thesis *The honor system of unsupervised testing cannot survive*]? . . . [Item E:] Cheaters are going to cheat under any system” (italics as shown). 1997 *The Sun [Baltimore]*, 20 Jan.: “But the cheaters are going to cheat anyway, regardless of what you do.” 2000 *San Francisco Examiner*, 3 Aug.: “I don’t care what rules you put in The cheaters are gonna cheat, no matter what.” 2003 *Oakland Tribune*, 5 Nov.: “I think he was drawing attention to the fact that the cheaters are going to cheat” 2004 *Hartford [CT] Courant*, 25 Mar.: “No matter what the rules are, exploiters will exploit and the cheaters

will cheat.” 2004 *News Gazette [Champaign IL]*, 18 Jul.: “Nor is there a definitive cure for Dave Bliss and his ilk. Cheaters will cheat. That is their nature.” 2015 *The Guardian [London]*, 26 Feb.: “. . . [C]heaters gonna cheat, slave drivers gonna slave drive . . .” 2017 *Lansing [MI] State Journal*, 4 Mar.: “‘Will it lead to more cheating?’ ‘I think I can answer Cheaters are gonna cheat.’” 2019 *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 5 Mar.: “Cheaters are gonna’ [sic] cheat, and no one cheats more than rich people.” 2019 Justin Hopson, *If the First Lady Hired Me . . . A Private Eye’s Tell-All on Cheating in America* (Charleston SC: for the author) 37: “And when it comes to answering questions about faithfulness, ‘cheaters gonna cheat.’” 2020 Joe Prusaitis and Chris Haley, *Joe’s Rules: The Art of Trail Race Directing* (Austin TX: for the authors) 62: “Maybe cheaters gonna cheat, but dealing with them is the absolute low-point of race directing.” 2020 Karin Slaughter, *The Silent Wife* (New York: HarperCollins) 351: “Will didn’t have an answer this time. ‘Cheaters gonna cheat,’ Faith reminded him.” 2021 *London Free Press*, 11 Jan.: ‘My reaction to your story is basically this: Cheaters are going to cheat, liars are going to lie, and vengeful girlfriends are going to venge.’ Cf. “HATERS are going to hate.”

(8) *You don’t build a CHURCH for Easter Sunday.*

1969 *Higher Education Amendments of 1969: Hearings, United States Congress. House. Committee on Education and Labor. Special Subcommittee on Education* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1970) 1053: “As they say, you can’t build a church for Easter Sunday, it is obvious we are not going to be able to build institutions for the peak situation.” 1980 *Agricultural Transportation Services: Needs, Problems, Opportunities. The Final Report of the Rural Transportation Advisory Task Force* (Washington: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture) 28: “As representatives of the rail management pointed out at the hearings, ‘You don’t build a church for Easter Sunday.’” 1987 *New York Times*, 24 Oct.: “‘You don’t build the church for Easter Sunday,’ he [Hugo Quackenbush] said. ‘We have only so much capacity.’” 1997 *Electric Utility Industry Restructuring: Why Shouldn’t All Consumers Have a Choice?: Hearings before the Subcommittee on Energy and Power of the Committee on Commerce, House,*

One Hundred Fifth Congress, First Session (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office) 421: “Now many of you have heard the adage, never build a church for Easter Sunday, but . . . each utility has basically done just that.” 1998 *Rail Freight Transportation in North Dakota: Hearing before the Subcommittee on Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. Senate. One Hundred Fifth Congress, First Session* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1999) 33: “. . . [G]rain shippers don’t expect railroads to fill every car order at the drop of a hat in peak demand seasons. This is the old ‘You don’t build a church for Easter Sunday’ concept.” 2006 *Boston Globe*, 20 Apr.: “We sometimes subscribe to the adage that you don’t build the church for Easter Sunday.” 2016 *National Post [Don Mills, Ontario]*, 1 Oct.: “Yes, but it’s kind of like the old saying, you don’t build the church for Easter Sunday.”

(9) A hit (bit) DOG will (always) holler (howl).

1912 “From a Member of Pecan Lodge No. 484, Walnut Springs, Texas,” *Railway Carmen’s Journal* 17, no. 1 (Jan.) 86: “So let her go, Bill, who cares, the hit dog always howls, and I think we got hit.” 1924 James Thomas Heflin of Alabama, *Congressional Record, Senate: Proceedings and Debates of the First Session*, vol. 65, part 6 (4 Apr.): 5564: “. . . [E]very shot that has been fired by a Democrat has hit a crooked Republican official. Every time we fire a shot you can hear them whine and whimper, and Sam Jones used to say, it is the hit dog that hollers. You can throw a rock into a pack of dogs on a dark night and none but the hit dog will holler. Who is it that is hollering ‘Stop your investigations’? It is the dog that has been hit or expects to be hit.” 1994 *Orlando [FL] Sentinel*, 22 Aug.: “. . . [A]ll those people whining reminds me of the old adage, ‘The bit dog always howls.’” 1995 *Austin [TX] American Statesman*, 5 Mar.: “I am sure that not everyone who appeared at the Council that night feels that my comments were directed at them, but as my grandmother would say, ‘a hit dog will holler.’” 1998 *Atlanta Constitution*, 17 Feb.: “If people are offended, my grandmother used to say a hit dog will holler.” 2002 *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, 22 Dec.: “I guess my daddy told me true—‘a hit dog will holler.’ I guess the ‘hollering’

I'm hearing is from the Republicans who have been hit with the plain, straight truth." 2004 *St. Petersburg [FL] Times*, 23 Mar.: "After reading Justice Antonin Scalia's long-winded, self-serving statement . . . , I am reminded of what my high-school-educated farmer's daughter mother would say: 'A hit dog always howls!'" 2010 *Courier-Journal [Louisville KY]*, 22 Nov.: ". . . [A] hit dog will holler, the butt of a joke will take offense"

(10) ***When in DOUBT, wait it out.***

1987 *Newsday [Long Island NY]*, 24 Jan.: "But the union leader said he would not settle just to ease the pressure 'I have a slogan: When in doubt, wait it out.'" 1987 *Chicago Tribune*, 13 Dec.: "It all adds up to a good rationalization for sitting on their hands, biding their time When in doubt, wait it out." 1999 *Courier-Journal [Louisville KY]*, 18 Nov.: "Some perennials that seemed to disappear may simply have gone dormant early. When in doubt, wait it out." 2005 *Ottawa Citizen*, 23 Oct.: "The surprising end result is tolerance—when in doubt, wait it out" 2008 *Daily Miner and News [Kenora, Ontario]*, 11 Sep.: ". . . [I]f there's traffic coming, then they should wait for a gap, she emphasized: 'When in doubt, wait it out.'" 2011 *Cowichan News Leader Pictorial [Duncan, British Columbia]*. 20 Oct.: "There should be NO doubt in your mind about how fast someone is coming or how many seconds you have to turn in front of them. If in doubt, wait it out." 2013 Cathwren Hermon, *Why Weep and Wail?* (Bloomington IN: Xlibris) 143: ". . . [S]he subscribed to the old and wise maxim: 'When in doubt, wait it out.'" 2020 *North Bay [Ontario] Nugget*, 3 Sep.: "No one will thank you for showing up for school sick. When in doubt, wait it out"

(11) ***No EXCUSES, just (only) results.***

1985 *Austin [TX] American Statesman*, 9 Jan.: "I [football player Phil Simms] don't care about other quarterbacks That's the defense's job. No excuses, only results." 1986 Richard Berendzen, *Is My Armor Straight? A Year in the Life of a University President* (Bethesda MD: Adler & Adler) 119: "I ended by saying, 'I want action. No excuses, just results.'" 1987 Lee Gardenschwartz and Anita Row, *What It Takes: Good News from*

100 of America's Top Professional and Business Women (New York: Doubleday) 20: "This *No Excuses, Just Results* attitude is also found in a resilience that refuses to take no for an answer" (italics as shown). 1991 *Los Angeles Times*, 3 Nov.: "The team's slogan [Los Angeles Clippers] is, 'No Excuses, Just Results.'" 1996 Joan H. Rollins, *Women's Minds / Women's Bodies* (Upper Saddle River NJ: Prentice Hall) 471: "These successful women have a 'no excuses, just results' attitude" 1999 Wayne Chrebet and Vic Carucci, *Every Down, Every Distance: My Journey to the NFL* (New York: Doubleday) 240: "Basically, I don't wear a whole lot under my uniform besides the NO EXCUSES, JUST RESULTS T-shirt . . ." (small caps as shown). 2003 *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 26 Oct.: ". . . Jim Roddey spreads his campaign slogan: 'No Excuses. Just Results.'" 2010 *Star Tribune [Minneapolis]*, 8 Apr.: "No excuses, only results: That's the mantra Thomas Feeney Jr. lived out . . ." 2020 *Queensland Times [Ipswich, Australia]*, 25 Feb.: "'Do you [Corey Athanates] have a favourite saying or motto?' 'No excuses. Only results!'"

(12) *FAILING to prepare is preparing to fail (Failure to plan is a plan to fail).*

1969 Jack Lacy, "Midway U.S.A.—More Than a Slogan," *Kansas Business Review* 22, no. 5 (May) 5: ". . . [I]t is through such preparations that you will make your work lasting and meaningful. As Benjamin Franklin said, 'Failing to prepare is preparing to fail.'" 1972 Eldon E. Snyder, "Athletic Dressing Room Slogans as Folklore: A Means of Socialization," *International Review of Sport Sociology* 7: 94 (in a list): "By failing to prepare yourself you are preparing to fail." 1984 Robert L. Wolf, "Anticipating Trouble," *Marine Corps Gazette* 68, no. 2 (Feb.) 20: "The adage 'A failure to plan is a plan to fail' applies." 1994 *International Herald Tribune [Paris]*, 29 Nov.: ". . . [B]efore choosing your service provider, remember the showbiz adage: 'Failing to prepare is preparing to fail.'" 2003 Donald D. Bergh, "From the Editors: Thinking Strategically about Contribution," *Academy of Management Journal* 46: 136: "To borrow an old coaching cliché, failing to prepare is preparing to fail.' Authors, prepare your manuscripts with respect to the dynamics of the competition." 2006 Scott C. Holliday, "Back to Basics: Not Just

for Students,” *Fire Engineering [London]* 159, no. 2 (Feb.) 109: “The old adage ‘Failing to prepare is preparing to fail’ is of paramount importance to the fire service instructor.” 2009 *Daily Mercury [Mackay, Australia]*, 1 May: “The old adage that failure to plan is a plan to fail is true” 2011 *Sunday Gazette Mail [Charleston WV]*, 1 May: “We also learned it was essential to have a plan, that the old adage ‘Failure to plan is a plan to fail applies.” Versions of the proverb are sometimes attributed to the basketball coach John Wooden.

(13) *If you’re not FAILING, you’re not trying (hard enough).*

1985 Christopher R. Edginton, *Productive Management of Leisure Service Organizations* (New York: Macmillan) 339: “There is a saying that ‘if you’re not failing, you’re not trying anything new.”” 1998 *Chicago Tribune*, 8 May: “. . .[F]ailure is the first step to success. If you’re not failing, you’re not trying.” 2000 *Globe and Mail [Toronto]*, 16 Sep: “. . . [A]s they say in Hell—and frequently on TV—if you’re not failing, you’re not trying.” 2005 Mark Chussil, “With All This Intelligence, Why Don’t We Have Better Strategies?” *Journal of Business Strategy* 26: 31: “One side of the mouth says, ‘We encourage you to fail. If you aren’t failing you aren’t trying’ The other side of the mouth says, ‘We hold you accountable for results.’” 2008 Jesse Schell, *The Art of Game Design* (Burlington MA: Elsevier) 2: “If you aren’t failing, you aren’t trying hard enough, and you aren’t really a game designer.” 2010 Thomas S. Clay and Daniel J. DiLucchio, “The Time Has Finally Come,” *Of Counsel* 29, no. 4 (Apr.) 18: “As some would say, if you aren’t failing, you aren’t trying hard enough.” 2013 *Delta [British Columbia] Optimist*, 18 Sep.: “There is more failure in skateboarding than success, but if you aren’t failing, you aren’t trying.” 2015 *Charleston [WV] Gazette*, 3 Feb.: “. . . [E]veryone is saying, if you aren’t failing, you aren’t trying hard enough.” 2017 Cynthia McCloud, “Robotics Programs Benefit Kids, W.Va.’s Image,” *State Journal* 2 Oct.-8 Oct.: “Our motto is, ‘if you’re not failing, you’re not trying.’ . . .”

(14) *It FEELS good to do good.*

1925 Arthur B. Rhinow, "Bulletin Board (Wayside Pulpit) Sermonettes," *Homiletic Review* 90: 43 (list of sayings "on the bulletin board of Ridgewood Presbyterian Church, Ridgewood, New York City"): "Make God first. [/] You are no stronger than your faith. [/] "He lives most who gives most. [/] It feels good to do good." 1982 Byron Kennard, *Nothing Can Be Done, Everything Is Possible* (Andover MA: Brick House) 120: "It feels good to do good, no matter how unfashionable such sentiments have become in this demoralizing age." 1984 Willard Gaylin, *The Rage Within: Anger in Modern Life* (New York: Simon & Schuster) 72: "The fact that doing good feels good has become the sophistry of generations of undergraduates who have used this as an argument to prove that all behavior is selfish." 1994 Michael Schulman and Eva Mekler, *Bringing Up a Moral Child*, rev. ed. (New York: Doubleday) 98: "Parents, of course, need to do more than simply assert that living up to moral standards is the best way to live There are three good reasons you can give: . . . 2) because it feels good to do good" 1997 *Wisconsin State Journal [Madison]*, 13 Apr.: "Through the work with juvenile girls, [Mona] Wassow discovered what lies at the root of volunteer work 'Quite simply, it feels good to do good,' she said." 1999 *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, 21 Feb.: "They're motivated not by altruism but by guilt [I]t feels good to do good." 2004 *Home News Tribune [East Brunswick NJ]*, 22 Feb. (headline): "Content of Their Character: East Brunswick Kids Learn It Feels Good to Do Good." *New Hampshire Sunday News [Manchester]*, 10 Apr.: "It is the right choice and I have to say, it feels good to do good." 2011 Stef Kranendijk, "The Cherry Tree Makes Copious Blossoms and Fruit without Depleting Its Environment," *HR [Human Resources] Magazine* 25 (Oct.): 18: "Employee morale has risen The old saying is true: 'It feels good to do good.'"

(15) *If you aren't FIRST, you're last.*

1991 Merissa Piesman, *Personal Effects: A Nina Fishman Mystery* (New York: Simon & Schuster) 79: "Not your typical New York attitude. The city where if you're not first, you're last."

1993. Advertisement for the state of Massachusetts, *Forbes* 151, no. 13 (21 Jun.) 173: “In Massachusetts, Our Business Philosophy Is Simple. If You’re Not First, You’re Last.” 1999 *Detroit Free Press*, 10 Jan.: “According to industry insiders, early interest often translates into acquisition. The adage ‘if you’re not first, you’re last’ applies here.” 2006 In the motion picture *Talladega Nights* the character Ricky Bobby famously uttered the proverb. 2008 *Daily Mail [London]*, 12 Apr.: “The Irish challenger . . . says she lives by the motto: ‘If you’re not first, you’re last.’” 2010 Grant Cardone, *If You’re Not First, You’re Last: Sales Strategies to Dominate Your Market and Beat Your Competition* (Hoboken NJ: Wiley). 2012 *Sunday Herald-Sun [Melbourne]*, 1 Jul.: “Over here, there are no podiums; if you are not first you are last.” 2013 *Northern Echo [Darlington UK]*, 16 Apr.: “I [coach Andy Haslock] tell my lads when they are playing football if you are not first you are last.” 2019 Benjamin Jensen, “TECOM Warfighting Club,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 103, no. 6 (Jun.) 8: “In war, if you are not first, you are last.”

(16) ***Play stupid GAMES, win (get) stupid prizes.***

2015 *Gaston Gazette [Gastonia NC]*, 7 Jun.: “Play stupid games and win stupid prizes. So glad they didn’t kill an innocent person with their stupid shenanigans.” 2015 *Star Tribune [Minneapolis]*, 25 Nov.: “Play stupid games, win stupid prizes. Never should have trolled that protest so hard.” 2016 *Northwest Florida Daily News [Fort Walton Beach FL]*, 8 Mar.: “I love this. Frat kids getting their spring break ruined for doing something dumb. Play stupid games, win stupid prizes.” 2016 *South Wales Echo [Cardiff]*, 20 Dec.: “Play stupid games, win stupid prizes. They all knew ahead of time that pulling these little stunts was not on. It’s football, not a war.” 2017 *University Wire [Carlsbad NM]*, 7 Mar.: “If either of them had pled guilty, they most likely could have gotten less-harsh sentences. But as the saying goes: Play stupid games, win stupid prizes.” 2018 *Daily Beast [New York]*, 16 Oct.: “Proud Boy rhetoric also grew more belligerent, adopting mottoes like . . . ‘Play stupid games, win stupid prizes.’” 2019 Taylor Swift and Joel Little (song), “Miss Americana & the Heartbreak Prince,” on the album *Lover* (Republic): “The whole school is rolling fake dice / You play stupid games, you

win stupid prizes.” 2019 *Illawarra Mercury* [Wollongong, Australia], 18 Oct.: “Play stupid games, get stupid results! If you do that and get hit, then [it’s] your own fault.” 2019 *Calgary Sun*, 29 Nov.: “As a council-weary wag points out, when you play stupid games, you get stupid prizes.” 2021 *Washington Post*, 5 Jan.: “Play stupid games, win stupid prizes, the saying goes. Trump has somehow managed to play stupid games and lose the stupid prizes, too.”

(17) ***The GAME is the game (Let the game be the game).***

1980 *Boston Globe*, 16 Nov. “Maybe the game has changed. Changed? Be serious. The game is the game. . . . The game doesn’t change.” 1982 *Boston Globe*, 17 Oct.: “The game is the game, no matter how much [football team] owners and players louse it up.” 1986 *Chicago Tribune*, 20 Jan.: “The game is the game and will take care of itself.” 1987 *Houston Chronicle*, 31 May: “The game is the game, whether it’s at the high school level or the major-league level” 1987 *Orlando [FL] Sentinel*, 17 Oct.: “The game is the game. Silly as that sounds, it’s true. All of us are attracted to football. And we do not sympathize with any group that takes our game away from us.” 1993 *Windsor [Ontario] Star*, 27 Feb.: “Above all, let the game be the game. Don’t try to be the star. The game will be that.” 1997 *Palm Beach Post [West Palm Beach FL]*, 23 Dec.: “The game is the game, whether one person plays or 55 million play The odds never change, no matter how many people play [Lotto].” 1999 *Los Angeles Times*, “The game is the game, whether it’s in Pauley Pavilion or some dirt court in Compton.” 2002 *South Florida Sun-Sentinel [Fort Lauderdale]*, 4 Feb.: “Sunday he [sportscaster Pat Summerall] did his job as he’s been doing it forever. Understated. Let the game be the game.” 2002 *Ottawa Citizen*, 9 Oct.: “Just let the kids go out and play. Let the game be the game and not try to control it.” 2003 *New York Daily News*, 27 Jul.: “I think [baseball umpire] Dana DeMuth showed a lot of restraint. He let the game be the game.” 2007 *Detroit Free Press*, 6 Dec.: “There’s purity in our game [baseball]. Let the game be the game.” 2008 *Baltimore Sun*, 27 Aug.: “Let the game be the game. Let the game be pure in what it is.” 2009 *St. Petersburg [FL] Times*, 3 Feb.: “The game is the game, whether you’re playing summer hockey or

playing in the NHL. “ 2010 Paul Allen Anderson, “‘The Game Is the Game’: Tautology and Allegory in *The Wire*,” *Criticism* 52: 373-98. 2017 *Irish Times [Dublin]*, 11 Feb.: “S4C had been running highlights of Spanish and Italian soccer and it had done well for them. The game is the game, whatever language comes attached.” 2018 *The Advocate [Newark OH]*, 12 Sep.: “No more changes. Leave baseball alone. Let the game be the game.” 2019 *This Day [Lagos]*, 30 May (headline): “The Game Is the Game.”

(18) ***There is a GENE for everything.***

1984 Michael Levin, “Why Homosexuality Is Abnormal,” *Monist* 67: 281: “The last two paragraphs play on the fact that, in a suitably broad sense, there is a gene ‘for’ almost everything people do.” 1989 Kenneth Radu, *Distant Relations* (Ottawa: Oberon) 59: “Bad personality, like red hair, . . . was inherited. Surely. There was a gene for everything, the newspaper said as much.” 1996 *Vancouver Sun*, 17 Feb.: “There may be a gene for everything. At the dawn of a new century, it may be our last hope, our last damnation.” 1997 *Village Voice [New York]*, 30 Sep.: “In the popular mind, there is a ‘gene for’ everything from intelligence to criminality . . .” 1997 *San Francisco Chronicle*, 15 Dec.: “There’s a gene for everything else, so why not football?” 1998 *Scotland on Sunday [Edinburgh]*, 22 Feb.: “It is a message of naive genetic determinism: a gene for everything, and everything caused by a gene.” 2000 *The Independent [London]*, 29 Jan.: “There seems to be a gene for everything these days—alcoholism, homosexuality, being good at maths, a penchant for an occasional spliff.” 2001 *The Guardian [London]*, 23 Jan.: “After decades of hearing from such people that there would be a gene for everything, I admit to having felt a twinge of smugness.” 2001 *Weekend Edition Sunday [Washington: NPR]*, 11 Feb.: “If you think in a hard-wired fashion, . . . there must be a gene for almost everything associated with being human.” 2009 Bryan Vartabedian, *Colic Solved: The Essential Guide to Infant Reflux and the Care of Your Crying . . . Baby* (New York: Random House) 35: “With all the research on the human genome, it seems today that there’s a gene for everything, and reflux seems to be no exception.” 2010 *Independent on Sunday [London]*, 31 Jan.: “There has to be a cause for everything, a gene for ev-

everything. It's totalitarian." 2010 Nick Lane, *Life Ascending: The Ten Great Inventions of Evolution* (New York: Norton) 271: "In popular parlance, there's a gene for everything from homosexuality to Alzheimer's." Cf. the more recent "There is an APP for everything."

(19) Go (You have to go) with what you know.

1984 *Philadelphia Daily News*, 20 Jan.: "Go with what you know, not what you think you saw." 1985 *New York Times*, 16 Sep.: "You have to go with what you know, and, more important, with what you can teach." 1998 Chris Morris, "Alice's Cantrell Steps Out with Solo Set on Columbia," *Billboard* 110, no. 10 (7 Mar.) 10: "I always write from my own experience—it's that old saying, 'Go with what you know,' he [Jerry Cantrell] says." 2000 *St. Louis Post*, 12 Nov.: "As for composition, the old adage of 'go with what you know' serves the artist well." 2002 Lucinda Fleeson, "The Civilian Conundrum," *American Journalism Review* 24, no. 3 (Apr.) 22: ". . . [Steve] Inskeep had followed an old adage in war reporting: 'Only go with what you know yourself . . .'" 2003 *Sunday Times [London]*, 16 Nov.: "He [Richard Curtis] decided that his screenwriting destiny was to stick to London. 'You have to go with what you know.'" 2006 *The Record [Sherbrooke, Quebec]*, 27 Jan.: "An old writer's adage says, 'Go with what you know . . .'" 2006 Dweezil Zappa (record album), *Go with What You Know* (Zappy Records). 2008 *Arizona Republic [Phoenix]*, 31 Oct.: "Go with what you know. Isn't that the artist's mantra?" 2011 *Home News Tribune [East Brunswick NJ]*, 5 Jan.: "Go with what you know. Try to build on the experience and knowledge you already have." 2013 *News Mail Bundaberg [Australia]*, 3 May: "But it was Matt Kummerow's chocolate rum-and-raisin delight that won over the judges' tastebuds. . . . [Y]ou have to go with what you know,' a chuffed Mr Kummerow said." 2016 *The Record [New Westminster, British Columbia]*, 5 May: "There's an old proverb that says 'Go with what you know.'" 2018 *Daily Telegraph [London]*, 13 Dec.: "I once knew a therapist whose mantra was 'Go with what you know'—meaning there is no point in catastrophizing the unknown . . ."

(20) ***Good (Nice) guys don't win (win games).***

1951 Howard B. White, "Patriotism and the Citizen Soldier," *Social Research* 18:495: "It may be true, as Leo Durocher once said, that 'nice guys do not win ball games,' but the winners have to have something in common with the nice guys." 1965 William F. Haddad, "Mr. Shriver and the Savage Politics of Poverty," *Harper's Magazine* 231, no. 1387 (Dec.) 45: "In the Kennedy style, he [Sargent Shriver] dislikes weakness. Signs on his door at the Peace Corps read, 'Nice guys finish last,' and 'Good guys don't win ball games.'" 1972 Eldon E. Snyder, "Athletic Dressing Room Slogans as Folklore: A Means of Socialization," *International Review of Sport Sociology* 7: 93 and 96 (in lists): "Good guys don't win" and "Nice guys don't win ballgames." 1972 Peter Richard Knauss, *Chicago, a One Party State* (Champaign IL: Stipes) 9: "It is likely that is was during this gloomy period of American history that expressions like 'If you can't lick 'em, join 'em' were coined, as well as phrases like 'Good guys don't win ball games' and 'You can't beat City Hall.'" 1984 *Globe and Mail [Toronto]*, 30 Jun.: 'Mike [Nykoluk] is a helluva nice guy and they say nice guys don't win.'" 1986 *Los Angeles Times*, 13 Apr.: ". . . [P]eople are used to the idea that good guys don't win." 1996 *Sunday Times [London]*, 13 Oct.: "He [Chekhov] was also, incidentally, a cheering exception to the old adage that nice guys don't win" 1997 *The Sun [London]*, 3 Apr.: "Paul Cullen is taking great delight disproving the sporting adage that nice guys don't win." 1999 *Times [London]*, 1 Mar. (headline): "Good Guys Don't Win Prizes." 2001 *The Australian [Canberra]*, 27 Aug.: "Unfortunately the saying 'good guys don't win' is true." Cf "Nice GUYS finish last."

(21) ***Not all HEROES wear capes (Heroes don't all/always wear capes, Some heroes don't wear capes).***

1994 Constance O'Day-Flannery et al., *Secret Loves* (New York: Penguin) 209: "Today, I discovered that heroes don't always wear capes." 2006 Stefania Shaffer, *Heroes Don't Always Wear Capes* (Woodbridge CA: Pressman). 2008 *The Guardian [London]*, 3 May: "Technical assistants . . . will now wear T-shirts adorned with the slogan 'Not all heroes wear capes.'" 2014 *Gulf*

Daily News [Manama, Bahrain], 1 Dec.: “. . . [A]lways believe in yourself and reach the goal of becoming a hero because after all not every hero wears a cape.” 2015 *York [PA] Daily Record*, 21 May: “Heroes don’t always wear capes. Sometimes they wear badges, helmets, or every day clothing.” 2016 *Niagara This Week [Thorold, Ontario]*, 3 Feb.: “Some heroes don’t wear capes or masks; they don’t leap tall buildings in a single bound; instead they are there when a child needs a helping hand or ear to bend.” 2016 *The Advertiser [Adelaide]*, 17 July: “Some heroes don’t wear capes—they drive buses.” 2017 Adam Young (song), “Not All Heroes Wear Capes,” on the album *Cinematic* (Owl City). 2018 Jennifer Moore-Mallinos and Gustavo Mazali, *Not All Heroes Wear Capes* (New York: Rosen). 2018 *Sunday Business Post [Cork, Ireland]*, 18 Jan.: “But just as heroes do not always wear capes, gentlemen do not always wear suits.” 2018 *Free Press Journal [Mumbai]*, 24 Mar.: “True is the adage that not all heroes wear capes. Some wear uniforms!” 2020 *Bangalore [India] Mirror*, 16 Oct.: “Not all heroes wear capes, goes the popular adage. A 23-year-old covid survivor certainly proved that.”

(22) **Well INFORMED is well armed.**

2001 *BBC Monitoring Central Asia [London]*, 15 Mar.: “. . . [T]here is a famous expression: ‘Well informed is well armed.’ Will life become easier for us if like an ostrich we bury our head in the sand . . . ?” 2003 Ed Buice, “When the World Is Watching,” *Law & Order* 51, no. 1 (Jan.) 26: “We should all approach media relations the same way we do firearms training and be prepared for anything. When it comes to PIO [? public information office] skills, well informed is well armed.” 2005 *The Province [Vancouver]*, 29 May: “. . . [I]f you’re among those planning to upgrade, well-informed is well-armed , , , ,” 2007 [No author specified] *More Ultimate Healing* (Stamford CT: Bottom Line) 269: “Well informed is well armed . . . [T]here are many steps that you can and should take to protect yourself from dangerous side effects” 2011 Bruce Weinstein and Mark Scarbrough, *Lobsters Scream When You Boil Them* (New York: Simon & Schuster) 99: “Know the facts, talk to suppliers, and do some reading. Well informed is well armed” 2012 *Pittsburgh*

Post-Gazette, 26 Nov.: “Well-informed is well-armed and . . . the American people will be better able to grasp the future if they are better prepared for it.” 2016 Vikram Vithal Kamat, *Hotel Sales Magic* (Mumbai: BecomeShakespeare) 5: The standard sales formula for hotel sales people over the generations was, well informed is well armed.” 2017 *100 Mile House Free Press [100 Mile House, British Columbia]*, 8 Sep.: “Well informed is well armed, that saying has been around for a long time. It really is true.” 2020 *Washington Informer*, 30 Apr.: “There are . . . parts [of the book] that’ll give you hope and blow your mind, too, and since well-informed is well-armed, read it.”

(23) *On the INTERNET, nobody knows you’re a dog.*

1993 Peter Steiner, caption to a *New Yorker* cartoon (5 Jul.) 61, which depicts a dog sitting at a keyboard, addressing another dog: “On the internet, nobody knows you’re a dog.” 1997 Daniela Bertol and David Foell, *Designing Digital Space: An Architect’s Guide to Virtual Reality* (New York: Wiley) 64: “The famous joke, On the Internet no one knows you are a dog’ exemplifies the question of identity in cyberspace.” 1997 Bob Cotton et al., *Understanding Hypermedia 2.000* (London: Phaidon) 53: “The old quip that ‘on the Internet, nobody knows you’re a dog!’ may apply more forcibly to companies than it does to individuals.” 1997 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 Mar.: “After all, says [Martin] Levins, adapting the old cyberspace adage: ‘On the internet, no-one knows you’re a dog—or a Year 11 student.’” 2000 *New York Times*, 14 Dec.: “By now, it’s almost an old saying: ‘On the Internet, nobody knows you’re a dog.’ You can count on seeing it at the start of plenty of articles on Internet privacy and anonymity.” 2001 John Fontana, “Checking IDs in Cyberspace,” *ColoradoBiz* 28, no. 7 (Jul.) 40: “When the World Wide Web first started to gain momentum, there was a popular saying: ‘On the Internet nobody knows you’re a dog.’ The adage elicited a chuckle” 2012 J. Nicholas Hoover, “FBI Expands Cybercrime Division,” *Informationweek*, 30 Oct. (online): “Attribution of cybercrime has long been the bane of law enforcement As the adage says, on the Internet, nobody knows you’re a dog.” 2013 *Straits Times [Singapore]*, 20 Nov.: “The adage, ‘On the Internet, nobody knows you’re a dog,’ encapsulates the cloak of

anonymity that many netizens hide behind.” 2016 Aaron Brantly, “The Most Governed Ungoverned Space: Legal and Policy Constraints and Military Operations in Cyberspace,” *SAIS Review of International Affairs* 36, no.2 (summer/fall) 29: “The old adage, ‘on the internet no one knows you’re a dog’ is rapidly fading as anonymity fades away.” 2018 Catherine Powell, “Race and Rights in the Digital Age,” *AJIL Unbound* 112: 340: “The adage ‘on the internet nobody knows you’re a dog’ reflects a now naïve belief in the emancipatory potential of cyberspace.”

(24) *The more you know, the more you owe (The more we know, the more we owe).*

1915 William E. Gibson, “Duty or Debt,” *Washington News Letter* (Christian Science Church) 20:271: “Knowledge increases by use. Increase of knowledge also increases responsibility. The more we know the more we owe.” 1993 Bill Clinton, “Remarks on the National Service Initiative at the University of New Orleans”, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: William J. Clinton* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1994) 1:547: “It was Thomas Jefferson who first told the American people in essence that the more you know, the more you owe.” 1993 Luis J. Rodriguez, *Always Running—La Vida Loca: Gang Days in L.A.* (Willimantic CT: Curbstone) 11: “The more we know, the more we owe. This is a responsibility I take seriously.” 1995 *Los Angeles Sentinel*, 22 Feb.: “He [Ngao Damu] enjoyed reading and lecturing and firmly believed that the more you know the more you owe.” 1996 Joseph Marshall, Jr., and Lonnie Wheeler, *Street Soldier: One Man’s Struggle to Save a Generation* (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell) 226: “Mr. [Joseph] Marshall is always saying, ‘The more you know, the more you owe,’ and that’s the way I feel. That’s why I want to teach” 2003 *Edmonton Journal*, 6 Dec.: “You’ve said ‘the more you know, the more you owe.’ How vital is that to you?” 2007 *South Bend [IN] Tribune*, 16 Jan.: “[Joseph] Marshall repeated to the crowd what his grandma often said: ‘The more you know, the more you owe.’” 2007 Louis G. Mendoza, “Lengua Americana, Corazón Chicano: Finding a Lost Voice in America,” in *Telling Tongues: A Latin@ Anthology on Language Experience*, edited by Mendoza and Toni Nelson Herrera (Austin

TX: Red Salmon), 215: “An early credo I learned was the idea that ‘The more you know, the more you owe.’” 2008 Kenneth P. González and Raymond V. Padilla, *Doing the Public Good: Latin Scholars Engage* (Sterling VA: Stylus) 57: “‘The more you know, the more you owe’: this message was communicated loudly and clearly.”

(25) LEGENDS are not born, they are made (Legends are not born but made; Legends are made, not born).

1980 *Advertising Techniques* 15, no. 11 (Mar.) 20 (advertisement for Jeep): “Legends are made, not born.” 1984 *Clavier* 23, no. 1 (Jan.) 1 (advertisement for Bosendorfer pianos): “Legends are made, not born.” 1994 *Austin American Statesman*, 20 Mar.: “Asserting that legends are made, not born . . . the Petroleum Club dedicated its historical masterpiece . . .” 1994 Jeff Smith, “Driving a Legend: BFG Radial T/A,” *Hot Rod* 47, no. 11 (Nov.) 70: “In the performance-tire business, legends are made, not born.” 1994 Anne R. Kaplan, “Life into Legend: Stories of Benny Ambrose,” *Minnesota History* 54: 138: “Benny Ambrose and the stories that circulate about him are a good example of the legend-making process, for legends are made, not born.” 1996 *Boston Globe*, 19 Dec.: “No one understands better than Larry Bird that Celtics legends are made, not born.” 1997 Linda Ward Beech and Jerry Spinelli, *Maniac Magee* (New York: Scholastic) 5 (suggestion for teachers): “Write the phrase, ‘Legends are made, not born’ on the board.” 2006 *Detroit News*, 21 Nov.: “Legends are made, not born. Michigan has lost a great one—Bo Schembechler.” 2009 *The Guardian [London]*, 10 Jun.: The rough injustice he [Thomas Paine] suffered hammers home the point that legends are made, not born.” 2009 *Boston Herald*, 24 Apr.: “Jazz legends are made, not born.” 2010 *Hindustan Times [New Delhi]*, 5 Dec.: “Legends are not born but made, and when it comes to Sachin Tendulkar, he is a god in the world of cricket.” 2015 *Waterloo Region Record [Kitchene, Ontario]*, 7 Feb.: “Whatever true or hidden history lies behind them, their legends were made, not born.” 2016 *Press of Atlantic City*, 8 Apr.: “Many say that legends are made, not born, but in the case of animated characters such as Mickey Mouse, Bugs Bunny, and Sponge-Bob SquarePants, they are drawn.” 2017 *The Nation [Lahore,*

Pakistan], 24 Mar.: “They say legends are not born[,] they are made. One such person . . . has become a living legend . . .” Cf. “WINNERS are made, not born.”

(26) **LIFE (Everything) is a work in progress.**

1994 Noela N. Evans, *Meditations for the Passages and Celebration of Life* (New York: Bell Tower) 50: “Our life is a work in progress, and we each have our individual homework.” 1997 Kathy Mayer, “Local Counselor Pioneers New Woks Model,” *Lafayette Business Journal* 15, no. 33 (1 Sep.) 4 (quoting Betsy Brewer): “Since our life is a work in progress, we constantly mix and match . . .” 1997 David Siegel, *Secrets of Successful Web Sites* (Indianapolis: Hayden) 148: “Caveat 2: EVERYTHING IS A WORK IN PROGRESS. Much of what I’ve written in this book I didn’t know a year ago” [small caps as shown]. 2001 *The Gazette [Montreal]*, 10 Jul.: “Your perspective keeps changing all the time. It’s like life, everything’s a work in progress.” 2002 *Austin [TX] American Statesman*, 2 Jun.: “It was kind of like our lives;. It’s not what’s at the end. Everything’s a work in progress. There’s no goal.” 2004 Pat Nolan, “Prepared to Reenter Society?” *Law & Order* 52, no. 5 (May) 94-95: “. . . Dr. [Byron] Johnson identified five ‘themes’ that are associated with successful rehabilitation . . . 2) recognition that life is a ‘work in progress’ and that spiritual growth is a lifelong process.” 2004 *The Independent [London]*, 17 Jun.: “. . . [O]ne of Stuart Hampshire’s greatest strengths was his acceptance that life is a work in progress . . .” 2006 Lincoln Konkle, *Thornton Wilder and the Puritan Narrative Tradition* (Columbia: U of Missouri P) 47: “The roughness of form . . . lends an unfinished quality to their art, which is a textual manifestation of the Puritans’ belief that the soul, history, and the universe were unfinished; that is, everything is a work in *progress*” (italics as shown). 2012 *South China Morning Post [Hong Kong]*, 2 Nov.: “The idea of things being finished is a difficult concept . . . Everything’s a work in progress.” 2012 Lee Thayer, *Doing Life: A Pragmatist Manifesto* (Bloomington IN: Xlibris) 235: “Life is, until it ends, a work in progress . . . It’s not over until it is over.”

(27) *A MAN cannot become a man until his father dies.*

See “A BOY cannot become a man until his father dies.”

(28) *MORE is less.*

1971 “Corporate Utopia: RFD?” *Nation’s Business* 59, no. 10 (Oct.) 90: “He is finding that in urban America today, more is less.” 1974 Elizabeth Bardwell, *More Is Less: The Case Study of a City That May Be Growing Too Big for Its Citizens’ Good* (Madison WI: Capital Community Citizens). 1980 *Boston Globe*, 27 Jul.: “The emergence of light beer appeared to solve the problem. In this instance, more is less.” 1981 *New York Times*, 1 Feb.: “For us [diners on a cruise ship], it was a case of more is less.” 1981 *Boston Globe*, 10 Mar.: “. . . [Y]ou were had, and regrettably, have discovered that sometimes more is less.” 1981 *Globe and Mail [Toronto]*, 27 Jun.: “Remember that while travelling, more is less.” 1993 *Evening Sun [Baltimore]*, 24 Sep.: “He is proof of the old adage that more is less and less is more.” 1995 *Globe and Mail [Toronto]*, 30 Sep.: “Sequels are dangerous things—they often confirm the adage that more is less.” 2000 *The Scotsman [Glasgow]*, 12 Sep.: “A version of an old adage holds good: more is less.” 2000 *New York Times*, 26 Dec.: “. . . [T]he Pentium 4 [computer] is a prime example of that rarely heard adage ‘More is less.’” 2001 *Daily Telegraph [Surry Hills, Australia]*, 15 Jan.: “The old adage of more is less should apply.” 2002 *Chicago Tribune*, 3 Mar.: “Supporting the old adage ‘more is less,’ surely two [commentators] in a [sports broadcasting] booth . . . will be more effective.” 2006 *Albuquerque Journal*, 4 Mar.: “. . . [P]roving again the minimalist adage that ‘more is less.’” 2006 *Daily Telegraph [London]*, 18 Nov.: “[M]any artists have forgotten the adage that more is less.” 2014 *Business Times [Singapore]*, 21 Jan.: “This is where the adage ‘more is less’ rings true.” Obviously, “More is less” responds, in one way or another, to the older “Less is more.”

(29) *MORE is more.*

1975 *Ebony* 30, no. 6 (May) 131 (punning ad for More brand cigarettes): “What’s More? It’s a whole new look. A whole new feel . . . More is more by design.” 1980 *New York Times*, 9 Aug.: “It

was apparent that the person who runs the theater's sound system believes that more is more." 1980 *Boston Globe*, 17 Sep.: "... [C]urrent thinking in decorating falls into two camps[,] which can be roughly categorized as 'less is more' and 'more is more.'" 1981 *Christian Science Monitor [Boston]*, 15 Sep.: "We are bidding goodbye to the days of minimalist 'less is more' dressing 'More is more' comes closer to describing the season's lap-of-luxury clothes." 1981 *Boston Globe*, 12 Dec.: "'More is more' seems to be the thinking behind the lavish decor of the Boston Ballet's 'Nutcracker'" 1998 *Financial Times [London]*, 3 Mar.: "Not for them the adage that less is more. 'More is More' is their motto. . . ." 1998 *Austin [TX] American Statesman*, 19 Nov.: "When it comes to this mode of dressing, the adage to remember is 'more is more.'" 2003 *The Press [Christchurch, New Zealand]*, 22 Mar.: "More is less, less is more. No, more is more. Maureen [Day] has more plants of more varieties per square mile" 2003 *The Sun [Baltimore]*, 10 Dec.: "'There is an adage that more is more; that is true, particularly on the west side,' [Andrew] Frank said." 2004 *Daily Times [Salisbury MD]*, 6 Mar.: "The master bedroom is a thumbs up to the adage 'more is more.' 2010 *South Bend [IN] Tribune*, 18 Jan.: "Less is more sometimes. More is more sometimes." 2010 *Daily Mail [London]*, 23 Jan.: "... [C]omplaining about that more is more mantra just sounds cranky" 2010 *The Courier [Houma LA]*, 21 Jan.: "In architecture I [Madilynn Nelson] love minimalism, but in jewelry more is more." 2010 *Sunday Mail [Adelaide]*, 7 Feb.: "The choice of accessories seems to reflect the adage 'more is more'" "More is more" probably originated as an anti-proverb based on the older "Less is more."

(30) NAME it (You have to name it) to claim it.

1980 William C. Golz, Jr., "Minimize the Risk in Risk Management," *School Business Affairs* 46, no. 5 (Apr.) 10: "... [T]he burden of proof rests squarely on your shoulders. In other words, 'you have to name it—to claim it.'" 1991 Pat Pearson, *You Deserve the Best: How to Stop Self-Sabotage!* (Dallas: Connemara) 73 (chapter title): "Discovering What You Want: Name It To Claim It." 1997 *Times Union [Albany]*, 26 Aug. (headline): "Name It to Claim It." 1999 *Daily News [Truro, Australia]*, 26

Aug. (headline): “Life Law #10: You Have to Name It to Claim It.” 2002 *Jerusalem Post*, 31 May: “. . . [I]t is said by alcoholics, and drug abusers everywhere, you have to name it to claim it.” 2002 Mia Consalvo and Susanna Paasonen, *Women & Everyday Uses of the Internet* (New York: Lang) 156: “. . . [T]he viewer posts her thoughts in the ‘You Have To Name It to Claim It’ chat room” 2003 Laura Scott and Mary Kay Linge, *Complete Idiot’s Guide to Divining the Future* (Indianapolis: Penguin) 278: “So you’re going to have to learn how to ask! And the more specific your request, the better Name it to claim it!” 2004 Bobbi Kahler, “Never Let Others Determine Your Limitations,” in *Masters of Success*, edited by Ivan R. Misner and Don Morgan (Irvine CA: Entrepreneur) 101: “We’ve heard it said before that you have to ‘name it to claim it.’ I think it should be, ‘Once you name it, you have to claim it.’” 2008 Elizabeth Harper, *Wishing: How to Fulfill Your Heart’s Desire* (New York: Simon & Schuster) 92: “There is a saying ‘name it to claim it!’ This does not mean that by naming someone, they are yours.” 2012 *Morning Star [Vernon, British Columbia]*, 2 Sep.: “You have to name it to claim it, and claim it to take away its power.” 2014 “Dr. Phil” [McGraw]: “You Have to Name It to Claim It,” *O: The Oprah Magazine* 15, no. 5 (May) 44: “You deserve more, and you can have more, but first you have to name it to claim it.” 2016 *Washington Examiner*, 25 Mar.: “If we are to win the fight against radical Islam there has to be a declaration of war We have to name it to claim it.”

(31) ***There is always a PLAN B.***

1986 *Los Angeles Times*, 5 Jun.: “His [Patrick Mott’s father’s] was a planned life Always a safety net, always a Plan B.” 1987 *Chicago Tribune*, 15 Nov.: “No chocolate cake, try the chocolate ice cream. Fortunately, there’s always a plan B.” 1994 *Ottawa Citizen*, 7 Aug.: “. . . [P]lans were financially realistic and . . . there was always a Plan B in case of a disaster.” 1997 Dana Stabenow, *Breakup* (New York: Putnam’s Sons) 235: “‘Then he would have fallen back on plan B.’ ‘There was a plan B?’ ‘. . . [T]here is always a plan B for the Mark Stewarts of this world.’” 1999 *Irish Times [Dublin]*, 13 Mar.: “The truth is that there is always a ‘plan B,’ not to mention C, D and E.” 2002 *21st Cen-*

tury House of Commons Hansard Sessional Papers, Commons Sitting of Wed. 9 Jan. Sixth Series, vol. 377, col. 559: “Extension of Amnesty Period” (Lambit Öpic is speaking): “. . . [T]he Prime Minister made a mistake in saying there was no plan B in the Northern Ireland peace process. In fact, . . . there turned out to be a plan B. . . . I suspect that . . . there will always be a plan B, a plan C, and a plan D.” 2000 *Star Tribune [Minneapolis]*, 18 Sep.: “Once again, the Vikings [football team] proved that there is always a Plan B.” 2005 Andy Crowson, *The Value of Life* (Morrisville NC: Lulu) 126: “. . . [T]here was always a plan B. K was happy this time he didn’t need it.” 2008 Carrie Elizabeth Greene, *A Voice behind Thunder* (Columbus MS: Genesis) 66: “If things don’t work out, we will turn to Plan B Yes, my friend, there’s always a Plan B.” 2011 Gregory Dark, *Susie and the Snow-It-Alls* (Winchester UK: O-Books) 193: “‘There’s plan “b.”’ ‘What’s plan “b”?’ ‘There’s always a plan “b.”’” 2018 Richard Pagett, *Building Global Resilience in the Aftermath of Sustainable Development* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan) 159: “In the event that all the above fails, what then? Is there a Plan B? Well, there is always a Plan B.”

(32) ***There is a PROBLEM for every solution.***

See “For every SOLUTION there is a problem.”

(33) ***If you don’t like the RULES, don’t play the game.***

1964 Martin Millsbaugh, *Baltimore’s Charles Center: A Case Study of Downtown Renewal* (Washington: Urban Land Institute) 58: “If it is made clear from the beginning that it will be winner-take-all, . . . then no one who submits an entry can feel unfairly treated at the outcome. If you don’t like the rules, don’t play the game.” 1970 George Pollock (song), “Don’t Play the Game,” popularized by Waylon Jennings on the album *Waylon* (RCA Victor): “She’ll cause you sleepless nights and endless pain / But if you don’t like the rules don’t play the game.” 1978 Burton Hersh, *The Mellon Family: A Fortune in History* (New York: Morrow) 504: “If you don’t like the rules, don’t play the game. If you walked in at eight-fifteen, and dinner was at seven-thirty, you didn’t get dinner.” 1986 Sharon Liveten, “Album

Is Rereleased By Capitol: Great White Is ‘Back in the Swim,’” *Billboard* 98, no. 39 (27 Sep.), 22: “. . . [Jack] Russell says, ‘It’s all just part of the game. If you don’t like the rules, then don’t play the game.’” 2006 *Wall Street Journal Asia [Hong Kong]*, 7 Apr.: “‘This joint venture magazine won’t exist anymore,’ said Chen Li ‘If you don’t like the rules,’ he said, ‘you don’t play the game.’” 2008 *The Courier [Brisbane]*, 26 Feb.: “Why does Australia always have to be different from the rest of the world? If you don’t like the rules don’t play the game.” 2011 *Florida Times Union [Jacksonville]*, 11 Mar: “We have always, always preached to our kids, they have to follow the rules. If you don’t like the rules, don’t play the game!” 2014 *Sunday Star-Times [Wellington, New Zealand]*, 20 Jul.: “David [Cunliffe] says family is really important to him, and I get that, but the thing is if you don’t like the rules, don’t play the game.” 2020 *The Capital [Annapolis]*, 27 Sep.: “But that’s fishing. Things change, and if you don’t like the rules don’t play the game.”

(34) *It’s better to be SEEN than viewed.*

1995 *Northwest Florida Daily News [Fort Walton Beach]*, 21 Dec.: “People say it’s great to see me, and I tell them it’s better to be seen than viewed.” 2000 Doug Clark, *Heart to Heart: An Insider’s Guide for Open-Heart Surgery* (Toronto: Prentice Hall) 86: “For those who said it was good to see me, I agreed wholeheartedly it was better to be ‘seen’ than ‘viewed.’” 2005 *Deseret News [Salt Lake City]*, 27 Jun.: “‘Good to see you,’ says a classmate to Wilson Sornson ‘Better to be seen than viewed,’ Wilson answers.” 2008 *Florida Times Union [Jacksonville]*, 10 May: “. . . [A]mong Atlantans of a certain age, the saying is, ‘It’s better to be seen than viewed.’” 2012 Katie Joyce, *Better to Be Seen Than Viewed* (Morrisville NC: Lulu). 2012 *The Record [Bergen County NJ]*, 11 May: “. . . [A]n elderly patient put it to me this way, ‘Better to be seen than viewed.’” 2015 *Palm Beach Post [West Palm Beach FL]*, 25 Mar.: “‘So good to see you,’ many of them said. ‘Better to be seen than viewed,’ Jim Kelly regularly shoots back.” 2016 *Afro-American Red Star [Washington]*, 30 Jul.: “In the end, I was once told that it’s better to be seen than viewed.” 2016 Ron Willey, *Live Every Day as Though It Is Your Last* (Morrisville NC: Lulu) 27 (in a list of aphorisms):

“It is better to be seen than viewed.” 2018 *Washington Post*, 24 Apr.: “‘It’s better to be seen than viewed,’ Geneva ‘Miss Gee’ Curry says. Translation: When you’re lying in your casket, it’s no fun for anyone.”

(35) *What is SEEN can’t be unseen.*

See “You can’t UNSEE what you have seen.”

(36) *SIXTEEN will get you twenty.*

1970 Wallace L. Foss (song copyrighted), “Sixteen Will Get You Twenty,” *Catalog of Copyright Entries: Third Series* 24, part 5, no. 2, section 2: *Music, Name Index*, Jul.-Dec. (Washington: Library of Congress, 1971) 2779. 1975 Jim Harrison, *Farmer* (New York: Viking 1985) 90: “‘Sixteen will get you twenty.’ . . . He meant a sixteen-year-old equaled statutory rape and could net the offender twenty years.” 1985 Ted W. Kraynick, “‘Too Fast to Love,’” *Trailmix: A Tossed Assortment of Short Stories* (New York: Carlton) 10: “Watch that, you old goat—sixteen’ll get you twenty in this state.” 1993 Bell Biv Devoe (song), “Lovely,” on the album *Hootie Mack* (MCA): “Sixteen’ll get you twenty, / So call me when you get this many.” 1994 Louisa A. Fuentes, “The 14th Amendment and Sexual Consent: Statutory Rape and Judiciary Progeny,” *Women’s Rights Law Reporter* 16: 152: “Every male knows the old saying ‘sixteen will get you twenty,’ but failing to prohibit the same sexual encounters between women and little boys, ‘sixteen’ will not get women anything.” 2004 *Opinion of the Supreme Court of Wisconsin in the Case of State v. Jadowski* (2004 WI 68. 272 Wis 2d 418. 680 N.S. 2d 810) ¶ 44: “‘Sixteen will get you twenty!’ is a common exclamation expressing the widespread awareness of statutory rape laws and the strict liability aspect of the offence.” 2006 *Daily Mail [London]*, 7 Feb.: “Elvis [Presley] always said, ‘14 to 16 will get you 20,’ . . . meaning he was aware that if he had sex with a girl between 14 and 16 years old, he risked 20 years in jail.” 2006 Carolyn Cocca, “16 Will Get you 20: Adolescent Sexuality and Statutory Rape Laws,” in *Adolescent Sexuality*, edited by Cocca (Westport CT: Praeger). 2007 Charles Poling, *The Desert Remains* (Albuquerque: U of New Mexico P) 97: “Jailbait, man. Remember,

sixteen'll get you twenty.' 'She's almost eighteen, Les.'" 2007 *The Coasters* (song), "Sixteen Will Get You Twenty," on the album *The Mandala All Star Band* (K-Tel), vol. 1.

(37) *It's not the SIZE of the wand; it's the magic in it (the magic of the magician).*

1970 Kerrigan Almey, "In Other Words" (poem), *Canadian Forum* 50: 146: "[H]aving been assured / that it's not the size of the wand / which goes into the silk hat / but the magician who waved it / I am now auditioning / female recruits / for what promises to be / the greatest show on earth." 1976 David Galloway, *Melody Jones* (London: John Calder) 119: "Now I think big ones can be v.E.R.Y. stimulating but I also know it's not the size of the wand that makes the magic of the magician" 1979 Richard Milsten, *Male Sexual Function: Myth, Fantasy & Reality* (New York: Avon) 118: "What matters is not the length of the wand, but the magic in the stick [M]en compare themselves to others in a number of ways" 1983 Linda Levine and Lonnie Barbach, *The Intimate Male* (Garden City NY: Doubleday) 221: "Wayne . . . came away with more confidence from a college class in sexuality which taught him, 'It's not the size of the wand, it's the magic of the performance.'" 1985 Michael I. Gold, "Sexual Jokes," *Medical Aspects of Human Sexuality* 19: 214: ". . . [A] female patient . . . bought me an elaborately decorated T-shirt with the bold inscription: 'It's not the size of the wand, but the magic that counts.'" 1985 Francis Baumli, "Wising Up to Penis Size," in *Men Freeing Men*, edited by Baumli (Jersey City NJ: New Atlantis) 27: "'It's not the size of the wand, it's the magic in it.' . . . These aphorisms never gave me much comfort." 1989 "Zeos International LTD: Zeos 386-16," *PC Magazine: The Independent Guide* 8, no. 4 (28 Feb.) 170: "It's not the size of the wand that's important, but the magic of the magician. The number 64K isn't impressive these days." 1992 *Morning Call [Allentown PA]*, 8 Jul.: "About the fact that he [Chi Chi Rodriguez] hit the [golf] ball a long way in spite of his size: 'It's not the size of the wand that pulls the rabbit out of the hat; it's the performance of the magician.'" 1994 Anand Prahlad, "'No Guts, No Glory': Proverbs, Values and Images among Anglo American University Students," *Southern Folklore Quarterly* 51: 294: ". . .

‘[I]t’s not the size of the wand, but the magic in it’ . . . reflects . . . the pressure to be sexually active, virile and well-endowed.” 2004 *Daily Mirror* [London], 10 Oct.: “As the old saying goes, ‘It’s not the size of the wand, but the magic behind it.’” 2015 *Bay of Plenty Times* [Tauranga, New Zealand], 24 Oct.: “. . . [T]he obelisk [is] only half the size of Washington’s National Monument, but as the saying goes, ‘It’s not the size of the wand, but the magic it weaves.’”

(38) For every SOLUTION there is a problem (There is a problem for every solution.)

1953 Livingston T. Merchant, “Some Aspects of American Foreign Policy,” *Department of State Bulletin* 28: 913: “Someone, I’ve forgotten who, once defined a diplomat as ‘a man who can find a problem for every solution.’” 1958 Victor Mishcun and C. E. Bather, “The Current Problems of Prostitution,” *Medico-Legal Journal* 26: 80: “. . . I was reminded of that dictum of Lord Samuel [? Herbert Louis Samuel, 1st Viscount Samuel (1870-1963)] . . . [H]e remarked that civil servants would always be remembered for ‘producing a problem for every solution.’” 1961 Harriett P. Lindell, “Does the Editor Have a Ghost Writer?” *Product Engineering* 32, no. 29 (17 Jul.) 28: “Incidentally, my definition of an Engineer—a man who has a problem for every solution.” 1962 Elaine Winters (pseudonym Helen Kembel), *What You Should Know about the Law* (New York: Vantage) 12: “The lawyer may have a solution to the problem—although it is more often said that the lawyer has a problem for every solution.” 1984 *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 22 Jun.: “[John] Street’s remarks reminded us that the opposite is also true: For every solution, there is a problem.” 1988 Robin Jane Pardini, “A Problem for Every Solution: Perspective on the Study of University Administration,” *Journal of the Society of Research Administrators* 20, no. 1 (summer) 14. 1990 Gregory F. Teverton, “Recent Books on International Relations,” *Foreign Affairs* 69, no. 4 (Fall) 178: “For every solution there is a problem, de Gaulle is supposed to have said.” 1994 Lawrence A. Boland, “Scientific Thinking without Scientific Method,” in *New Directions in Economic Methodology*, edited by Roger E. Backhouse (London: Routledge) 161: “. . . [T]here may not be a solution for

every problem, but there is a problem for every solution.” 1995 *Washington Post*, 25 Aug.: “For every solution, there is a problem. Take the matter of automotive air bags.” 1999 *The Herald [Glasgow]*, 29 Apr.: “We might be throwing money at people who didn’t need it—but there’s a problem for every solution.” 2002 Lee Hazlewood (song album), *For Every Solution There Is a Problem* (City Slang). 2018 Robert L. Hutchings and Gregory F. Teverson, *Rebuilding Strategic Thinking* (Washington: Center for Strategic and International Studies) 10: “For every solution there is a problem, and the NIO [National Intelligence Office] structure was no exception.”

(39) ***SPEED never slumps.***

1987 *Christian Science Monitor [Boston]*, 21 Apr.: “‘I’ve heard the adage that speed never slumps,’ says [Whitey] Herzog, ‘but speed doesn’t do any good when you can’t get three runs.’” 1987 *Boston Globe*, 19 Oct.: “‘You know’ said [Whitey] Herzog, ‘there’s an old adage in baseball that speed never slumps.’” 1988 Whitey Herzog and Kevin Horrigan, *White Rat: A Life in Baseball* (New York: Harper & Row) 21; “. . . [S]peed is the most important factor in putting together a club. Speed never slumps, and a ball player who is fast is never too small.” 2010 *St. Cloud [MN] Times*, 4 Feb.: “An old-school sports adage is that speed never slumps.” 2012 *Press Democrat [Santa Rosa CA]*, 3 Mar.: “Newark Memorial is a testament to the adage—speed never slumps or takes a day off.” 2013 Frank Spaniol, “Baseball,” in *Developing Speed*, edited by Ian Jeffreys (Champaign IL: Human Kinetics) 90: “Speed never slumps is an adage often used in baseball.” 2015 Bo Durkac, *How to Become a Professional Baseball Player* (Jefferson NC: McFarland) 134: “There is an old saying in baseball that says, ‘Speed never slumps.’” 2019 Mark Allister, *Women’s College Softball on the Rise: A Season Inside the Game* (Jefferson NC: McFarland) 24: “As we well know, speed never slumps.”

(40) ***No one has ever drowned in (his own) SWEAT.***

1961 “Terse Verse,” *School Musician* 32, no. 5 (Jan.) 62: “This bit of truth do not forget: / No one has ever drowned in sweat.”

1964 *Athletic Journal* 45, no. 1 (Sep.), 4 (ad for “Slogans for your Bulletin Board,” each slogan on an 8”x10” piece of cardboard): “Examples: ‘No one ever drowned in sweat’” 1968 Chas. Messenger, *Conquer the World* (London: Pelham) 77: “For the cyclist, fitness can only be obtained by . . . training hard. Remember, no one has ever drowned in sweat!” 1972 Eldon E. Snyder, “Athletic Dressing Room Slogans as Folklore: A Means of Socialization,” *International Review of Sport Sociology* 7: 94 (in a list): “No one ever drowned in sweat.” 1986 Tom Clancy, *Red Star Rising* (New York: Putnam’s Sons) 276: “They say nobody ever drowned in sweat. On your feet, Marines” 1987 Daniel Da Cruz, *Boot* (New York: St. Martin’s) 110: “Most slow recruits can be coached . . . provided they’re willing to live by that old Marine Corps maxim: ‘Nobody ever drowned in sweat.’” 1990 *Los Angeles Times*, 11 May: “He [president George H. W. Bush] urged the winners [among small businesses] to keep striving to meet their goals. Said Bush: ‘No nation ever drowned in sweat.’” 1995 *Northwest Florida Daily News [Fort Walton Beach]*, 10 Dec.: “Old sayings like ‘nobody ever drowned in sweat’ reflect his [Jerry Alford’s] work ethic.” 2007 *Courier-Mail [Brisbane]*, 9 May: “A wise man once said ‘No one ever drowned in his own sweat’” 2007 *South Florida Sun-Sentinel [Fort Lauderdale]*, 24 Sep.: “Just remember this tip from billionaire H. Wayne Huizenga: ‘No one ever drowned in their own sweat.’” 2017 Scott Petinga, *No One Every Drowned in Sweat: G.R.I.T., the Stuff of Leaders and Champions* (Minneapolis: Timothy and Titus). 2018 *Sunday Independent [Dublin]*, 17 Jun.: “Ireland’s work-rate was the difference and, as the man says, no one ever drowned in sweat.” 2018 *The Advocate [Burnie, Australia]*, 4 Dec.: “One of the girls said ‘no-one has ever drowned in sweat,’ which is a great saying” Occasionally the saying is attributed to Thomas Edison or Lou Holtz.

(41) A TEAM is only a strong (good) as its weakest (worst) player.

1911 Beth Bradford Gilchrist (pseudonym John Prescott Earl), *Captain of the School Team* (Philadelphia: Penn Publishing Co.) 123: “Bob knew where the hole would be located, too. ‘A team is no stronger than its weakest point,’ he said aloud.” 1916 Ester

Birdsall Darling, *Baldy of Nome* (Philadelphia: Penn Publishing Co.) 210: “. . . [A]s a team is only as strong as its weakest member, surely they can realize that it is a matter of policy . . . for every driver to keep his dogs in the best possible condition.” 1945 E. E. Larson, “The Responsibility of the Regular Officer,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 29, no. 6 (Jun.) 56: A team is no stronger than its weakest player, or the reserves on the bench.” 1972 Eldon E. Snyder, “Athletic Dressing Room Slogans as Folklore: A Means of Socialization,” *International Review of Sport Sociology* 7: 98 (in a list): “A team is only as good as its worst player.” 1985 *Los Angeles Times*, 20 Aug.: “A team is only as good as its weakest member. One paddler eases off and the race is lost.” 1989 Linda W. Case, *Remodelers Business Basics* (Washington: National Association of Home Builders) 35: “A team is only as good as its weakest player. A remodeler is only as good as his/her weakest employee.” 1990 *Morning Call [Allentown PA]*, 6 May: “. . . [T]he cyclists race against the clock but as a team It’s said that a team is only as good as its worst rider.” 2018 *The Express [Liverpool]*, 26 Jun.: “There is a common expression in sporting circles that a team is only as good as its weakest player.” Cf. the older “A chain is only as strong as its weakest link.”

(42) TURN around; don’t drown.

2004 Patricia Barnes-Svarney and Thomas E. Svarney, *Handy Geology Answer Book* (Detroit: Visible Ink) 235: “. . . [T]his is the main reason most lives are lost in a flood. This is why the National Weather Service recent slogan is ‘Turn Around, Don’t Drown.’” 2007 Anna K. Schwab et al., *Hazard Mitigation and Preparedness: Building Resilient Communities* (Hoboken NJ: Wiley) 21: “To increase awareness of the dangers of shallow flooding, the NWS has initiated the ‘Turn Around Don’t Drown’ program” 2008 Texas Department of Public Safety, *Texas Drivers Handbook* (Austin: Texas Department of Public Safety) 9/12-13: “. . . [W]hen there’s water on the road: *Turn Around. Don’t Drown.* Saving your life is as simple as choosing an alternate route” (italics as shown). 2009 *Northwest Florida Daily News [Fort Walton Beach]*, 1 Apr.: “The old adage ‘turn around, don’t drown’ is very true.” 2011 *McClatchy Business News [Washington DC]*, 10 Mar.: “Fire and emergency officials remind

drivers they should not drive through high water and remember the adage, ‘Don’t drown, turn around.’ 2013 *Wall Street Journal [New York]*, 8 Aug.: When you’re in low-lying areas use that old adage, ‘turn around, don’t drown.’ 2019 *Daily News Journal [Murfreesboro TN]*, 21 Feb.: “The old adage ‘turn around, don’t drown’ sounds silly, but in truth, it’s very serious.” The slogan sometimes appears on official yellow road signs.

(43) *You can’t UNSEE what you have seen (What is seen can’t be unseen).*

1948 Bertolt Brecht, *The Life of Galileo*, first translated into English by Brecht himself together with the actor Charles Laughton and the scholar Eric Bentley, and performed in Los Angeles in 1948 but not published until 1966, as *Galileo* (New York: Grove) 112: “You can’t make a man unsee what he has seen”; a different translation, by Desmond I. Vesey, was published in 1960, Brecht, *Plays* (London: Methuen) 1:318: “And force cannot make unseen what has already been seen” (from Brecht’s German, c1938: “Und mit Gewalt kann man nicht ungesehen machen, was gesehen wurde”). 1952 Mary O’Hara, *The Son of Adam Wyngate* (New York: McKay) 238: “I have opened a door I cannot close again I wish I could, but you cannot unsee what you have seen” (ellipsis dots as shown). 1969 Abraham H. Maslow, *Journals*, edited by Richard J. Lowry (Monterey CA: Wadsworth, 1979) 2:1175 (journal entry): “We can’t unsee what we have seen or unknow what we know. We can’t become ‘innocent’ or naive or surprised the way a baby is.” 1969 Joseph McElroy, *Hind’s Kidnap* (New York: Harper & Row) 180: “. . . I say to you, . . . once you have seen this you bear always the burden of its sight. And . . . you can’t unsee it.” 1974 Hal Porter, *Fredo Fuss Love Life* (London: Angus and Robertson) 163: “Awake, asleep, midway, one cannot unsee what has been seen.” 1980 Marilyn Ferguson, *The Aquarian Conspiracy: Personal and Social Transformation in the 1980s* (Los Angeles: Tarcher) 224: “. . . [Y]ou just can’t defect from an insight; you can’t unsee what you’ve seen.” 1983 Sam Keen, *The Passionate Life: Stages of Loving* (San Francisco: Harper & Row) 164: “But there is no turning back. I cannot unsee what I have seen.” 1994 Nancy Bunge, “‘People Are Equal’: An Interview with William Stafford,” *Kansas Quarterly*

24, no. 4 / 25, no. 4, p. 19: “And I think of another great woman of our time . . . : Dorothy Day. When she came back from Cuba and I think they arrested her and wanted her to recant; she said, ‘I can’t unsee what I see.’” 2006 *Santa Fe New Mexican*, 7 May: “. . . [Y]ou can’t unsee what you’ve seen. And you can’t unread something once you’ve read it.” 2013 Lisa Scottoline, *Don’t Go: A Novel* (New York: Macmillan) 184: “If there’s one thing I’ve learned, it’s . . . you can’t unsee what you saw.” 2013 *Oakland Tribune*, 9 Jul. (in reference to Facebook): “The bad news is that what’s seen can’t be unseen.” 2018 *The Guardian [London]*, 22 Dec.: “Still, Earthrise must have changed something. What’s seen can’t be unseen.” 2020 Kevin Murphy (song), “Can’t Unsee What I Have Seen,” on the album *What Is This Life Supposed to Bring* (KevinMurphyOnly).

(44) *You have to eat your VEGETABLES before you get dessert.*

1942 Margaret Mead, *And Keep Your Powder Dry* (New York: Morrow) 38: “His [the American child’s] first encounter with puritan standards may come through his mother’s ‘If you don’t eat your vegetables you can’t have any dessert.’” 1985 *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 7 Nov. (headline): “There Won’t Be Any Encore until You Eat Your Vegetables.” 1994 *Wall Street Journal [New York]*, 14 Nov.: “Your mother told you to eat your vegetables before you get dessert. They [Republicans] want to eat dessert first.” 2000 *Daily Record [Morristown NJ]*, 28 May: “What do I spend my money on first? . . . As your mother probably told you, Eat your vegetables before you eat dessert.” 2005 Denise Szecsi, *Pocket Idiot’s Guide to Algebra* (New York: Alpha) 18: “Just as you have to look before you leap, and you have to eat your vegetables before you get your dessert, you have to multiply before you add.” 2008 *The Record [Bergen County NJ]*, 25 Jun.: “Eat your vegetables before dessert, my mother used to say. The same principle applies to home decorating.” 2010 *Clarion Ledger [Jackson MS]*, 26 Nov.: “You don’t get to do that [interrupt the rhythm of the opponent’s passing game in football] if you don’t stop the run. You have to eat your vegetables before you get to have your dessert.” 2016 *Courier-Mail [Brisbane]*, 2 Jul.: “Remember the age old adage, ‘no dessert until you’ve eaten your vegetables’?” 2016 Leonard Sax, “Don’t Ask the Kids,”

First Things: A Monthly Journal of Religion and Public Life, no. 266 (Oct.) 22: “When the doctor says that you have to get a Strep test, you get a Strep test. You have to eat your vegetables before you eat dessert.” 2018 *Warton [Ontario] Echo*, 27 Feb.: “Did your Grandmother insist that you eat your vegetables before you had dessert? If so, she likely would have made an excellent dog trainer.” 2018 *Orlando [FL] Sentinel*, 21 Sep.: “Getting rid of old furniture before you buy new stuff is right up there with eat your vegetables before dessert and don’t spend more than you make. Good rules to live by.”

(45) *WINNERS are made, not born (not born but made).*

1972 Eldon E. Snyder, “Athletic Dressing Room Slogans as Folklore: A Means of Socialization,” *International Review of Sport Sociology* 7: 94 (in a list): “Winners are made, not born.” 1975 Stan Smith and Bob Lutz, *Modern Tennis Doubles* (New York: Atheneum) 149: “Winners are made, not born, and that is probably as true at the club level in tennis as it is out on the circuit.” 1984 *Indian Country Today* [Oneida NY], 31 Oct.: “Every child is entitled to be a winner and winners are made, not born.” 1996 *New Straits Times* [Kuala Lumpur], 21 Apr.: “Success is not a function of academic achievement, intelligence, heredity or luck. Winners are not born, they are made.” 1998 *York [PA] Daily Record*, 12 Jun. (portion of a headline): “. . . Tim Shaffer’s [pit] crew drives home the fact that winners are made, not born.” 2006 *Waikato Times [Hamilton, New Zealand]*, 25 Feb.: “Winners are not born but made by realistic and positive reinforcement of personal gifts and abilities . . .” 2010 *Manila Times*, 28 Jun.: “Winners are made, not born. And they can come from a public school.” 2014 James D. Murphy, *Courage to Execute: What Elite U.S. Military Units Can Teach* (Hoboken NJ: Wiley) 18: “Winners are made, not born. Winning attitudes are gained, not inherited; earned, not given.” Cf. “LEGENDS are not born; they are made.”

(46) *Everything is a work in progress.*

See “LIFE is a work in progress.”

(47) *The harder you WORK, the luckier you get (The harder I work, the luckier I get).*

1965 Steve Stibbens, “Pacific Command,” *Leatherneck* [Quantico VA] 49, no. 11 (Nov.) 60: “. . . [T]he motto tacked to his [Gen. Victor Harold Krulak’s] wall in Honolulu is perhaps the understatement of the times. ‘*The harder I work,*’ it reads, ‘*the luckier I get*’ . . .” (italics as shown). 1972 Eldon E. Snyder, “Athletic Dressing Room Slogans as Folklore: A Means of Socialization,” *International Review of Sport Sociology* 7: 93 and 94 (in lists): “The harder I work the luckier I get.” 1980 *New York Times*, 2 Nov.: “Sam Lefrak has an interesting saying. He says ‘The harder you work, the luckier you get’ . . .” 1982 *Boston Globe*, 18 Apr.: “On the big [auto racing] tracks he needs some grinding off of the edges. The harder we work, the luckier we’ll get.” 1992 John Narcisco, “Confessions of a DP Contractor,” *Journal of Systems Management* 43, no. 9 (Sep.) 35: “Another old adage says, ‘The harder I work, the luckier I get.’” 1994 *The Guardian [Manchester UK]*, 19 Jun.: “Olsen and his Norwegians are following the old golf adage; on the basis that the harder they work the luckier they are likely to remain, they should be around for a week or two . . .” 1996 *New York Times*, 27 Oct.: “Treasury Secretary Robert E. Rubin gives true meaning to the adage that the harder you work the luckier you get.”

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EINFÜHRUNG IN DIE AFRIKANISCHE IDIOMATIK AM BEISPIEL DER FON-REDENSARTEN AUS BENIN

Zusammenfassung: Die Fon-Volksgruppe aus Benin südlich der Sahara hat wie viele afrikanische Völker die Schriftsprache relativ spät kennengelernt. Man kommunizierte alles mündlich. Eine besondere Würze dieser oralen Tradition sind Redensarten. Obwohl diese Form der Volkspoesie in der alltäglichen Kommunikation der Fon oft gebraucht wird, stellt man fest, dass sie wenig erforscht wird. Der vorliegende Beitrag setzt sich zum Ziel, in dieses unerforschte Forschungsgebiet einzuführen, indem er eine Auswahl von 17 Fon-Redensarten unter syntaktischem, semantischem und pragmatischem Blickwinkel untersucht. Er verschafft einen Überblick über die Kultur der Fon und ihre Weltanschauung.

Schlüsselwörter: mündliche Kommunikation, Fon-Redensarten, Bedeutung, Kommentar, Verwendungsbeispiele, Funktionen

Abstract: Like many African people, the Fon people from Benin south of the Sahara got to know written language relatively late. In the absence of writing, the main communication was through orality. One of the „ingredients“ that „spices up“ orality in West Africa or in Benin is the idiom. Although this form of folk poetry is often used in the everyday communication of the Fon, it is little researched. This paper aims to introduce this unexplored field of research by examining a selection of 17 Fon idioms from syntactic, semantic and pragmatic perspectives. It provides an overview of Fon culture and their worldview.

Keywords: Oral communication, Fon idioms, meaning, commentary, example of use, functions

1. *Einleitung*

Benin, wie viele andere afrikanische Länder, hat die Schriftlichkeit relativ spät – schätzungsweise Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts – kennengelernt. Man kommunizierte alles mündlich. Die orale Tradition spielt bis heute eine wichtige Rolle in den traditionellen Gesellschaften Afrikas:

The art of oratory is in West Africa carried to a remarkable pitch of perfection. At the public palavers each linguist [official spokesman] stands up in turn and pours forth a flood of speech, the readiness and exuberance of which strikes the stranger with amazement and accompanies his words with gestures so various graceful and appropriate that it is a pleasure to look on, [...]. These oratorical displays appear to afford great enjoyment to the audience, for every African native is a born orator and a connoisseur of oratory [...]. (Finnegan 2012: ohne Seitenangabe)

Eine besondere Würze dieser oralen Tradition sind Redensarten. Diese Form der Volkspoesie wird in der alltäglichen Kommunikation gebraucht, ohne dass der Redner bzw. die Rednerin sich dessen manchmal bewusst ist. Der vorliegende Beitrag interessiert sich für die Redensarten der Fon, einer Volksgruppe aus Benin. Die Wahl dieses Genres rechtfertigt sich dadurch, dass es bisher nicht nur in Benin, sondern in ganz Afrika nicht ausreichend erforscht ist bzw. es bei afrikanischen Wissenschaftlern wenig Beachtung findet und z. B. zugunsten von Sprichwörtern vernachlässigt (z. B. Atabavikpo 2003; Lanmadousselo 2019) oder sogar verwechselt wird. Ausgehend von einer Auswahl von 17 Fon-Redensarten aus der alltäglichen Kommunikation und dem Fon-Wörterbuch *Dictionnaire Fon-Français* (Segurolo und Rassinoux 2000) konzentriert sich dieser Beitrag auf die Bedeutung, die Erläuterung und die Verwendungsbeispiele ausgewählter Fon-Redensarten. Darüber hinaus verschafft er einen Überblick über die Weltanschauung der Fon.

2. *Vorstellung der Fon*

Die Fon kommen aus Benin, einem kleinen Land Westafrikas. Laut der Geschichte stammen die Fon ursprünglich aus Oyo und Ife, dem heutigen Nigeria. Von dort aus waren sie nach Tado,

dem heutigen Togo, gewandert und wiederum von Tado nach Allada, im heutigen Benin, weggezogen. Später im 17. Jh. gründeten sie das Königreich Danxomè, das bis heute das bekannteste Königreich Benins ist.

Die Fon wohnen hauptsächlich im Zentrum und im Süden Benins. Eine nicht unbedeutende Zahl der Fon ist aus beruflichen Gründen in ganz Benin verteilt.

In den Fon-Gebieten im Besonderen und im Südteil Benins im Allgemeinen bleiben die Temperaturen relativ hoch, aber stabil (vgl. Ahoyo 1976: 39; Ahoyos Schätzungen sind immer noch aktuell). Die Fon-Gebiete sind im Vergleich zu vielen Gebieten Benins schnell erkennbar an ihrem rötlich gefärbten Sand. Das Klima und die Fruchtbarkeit erklären, warum der Ackerbau die Hauptaktivität in der traditionellen Fon-Gesellschaft ist. Der Ackerbau basiert auf dem Anbau von Mais, Maniok, Bohnen, Yamswurzel, Okra, Palmennüssen, Erdnüssen etc. Bei den Feldarbeiten werden bisher zum großen Teil archaische Werkzeuge wie Hacke und Buschmesser benutzt. Neben dem Ackerbau widmen sich die Fon auch der Tierzucht, insbesondere der Ziege und des Geflügels. Eine geringfügige Zahl der Fon sind gemäß der Tradition Jäger, selbst wenn die Jagdaktivität in den letzten Jahrzehnten wegen der Abholzung, Entwaldung und des Buschfeuers und des daraus resultierenden Artensterbens stark zurückgegangen ist. Ein Teil der Fon betreibt Handel. Dieser Handel besteht aus den oben erwähnten Agrarprodukten und Zuchttieren.

Außerdem nahm und nimmt bis heute das Handwerk einen hohen Stellenwert im Leben der Fon ein. Dieses Interesse am Handwerk geht auf die Hierarchisierung des Königreichs Danxomè zurück, nach der bestimmte Familien bzw. Linien mit spezifischen Handwerksarbeiten beauftragt wurden.

Die Fon halten an ihren traditionellen Religionen fest. Die weltweit bekannte Religion der Fon ist Vodun. Es gibt eine Vielfalt von Vodun und dementsprechend vielfältige Bedeutungen.

Mit der Einführung des Christentums durch die katholische Kirche im Jahre 1861 (Balard 1999: Buchumschlag) ins Königreich von Danxomè widmen sich die Fon auch dem Christentum. Ein geringfügiger Teil der Fon gehört dem muslimischen Glauben an.

3. Zum Begriff der Redensart und ihre Abgrenzung gegenüber Sprichwörtern

Die Definition des Sprichworts ist unglaublich kompliziert. Man würde denken, dass es nichts Einfacheres gibt, aber es gibt regelrecht dutzende, wenn nicht hunderte von Definitionsversuchen. Ich würde sagen, man könnte ein Sprichwort so definieren, dass ein Sprichwort ein allgemein bekannter, fest geprägter Satz ist, der eine Lebensregel oder Weisheit in prägnanter, kurzer Form ausdrückt. Ein Sprichwort muss ein vollständiger Gedanke oder vollständiger Satz sein. Eine sprichwörtliche Redensart ist eher ein bildlicher Ausdruck, der keine Weisheit oder Allgemeingültigkeit beansprucht. (Mieder 2015)¹

So antwortet der namhafte Parömiologe Wolfgang Mieder auf die Fragen der Journalistin Kate Müser, was ein Sprichwort von einer Redewendung unterscheidet. Mieder zufolge ist das unterscheidende Hauptmerkmal zwischen dem Sprichwort und der Redensart die Allgemeingültigkeit. Somit meint er implizit, dass die Bedeutung vieler Redensarten kulturell bedingt ist bzw. auf eine feste Kenntnis der Lebensumstände, der Bräuche, der Vorstellungen ihrer Ursprungssprache verweist. Insofern ist die Wahl der Konstituenten der Redensart nicht dem Zufall überlassen, sondern das Ergebnis einer sorgfältigen Beobachtung aus der unmittelbaren Umgebung:

Ces expressions, comme ces dictons, sont nés dans une certaine société, essentiellement rurale, mais aussi maritime. Hérités des anciens pour la plupart agriculteurs, vigneron, éleveurs, marins-pêcheurs, ils sont partie du patrimoine culturel et linguistique. Ils sont le conservatoire de la langue; par leur caractère, leur couleur, leur pittoresque et leur saveur, ces expressions et dictons constituent un répertoire particulièrement riche [...]. (Camps 2007: 5)

(Dt.: Diese Ausdrücke, wie auch diese Sprüche, sind in einer bestimmten Gesellschaft entstanden, die im Wesentlichen ländlich,

¹ „No pain, no gain: Warum wir immer noch in Sprichwörtern sprechen.“ Interview mit Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Mieder am 28.10.2015. <https://www.dw.com/de/no-pain-no-gain-warum-wir-immer-noch-in-sprichw%C3%B6rtern-sprechen/a-18809256> [08.02.2022].

aber auch maritim geprägt ist. Sie wurden von ehemaligen Bauern, Winzern, Viehzüchtern und Fischern vererbt und sind Teil des kulturellen und sprachlichen Erbes. Sie sind das Konservatorium der Sprache; durch ihren Charakter, ihre Farbe, ihre Bildhaftigkeit und ihren Geschmack, bilden diese Ausdrücke und Redewendungen ein besonderes reiches Repertoire [...].

Dass die Redensart keine Allgemeingültigkeit beansprucht, kann weiterhin durch den Zeitfaktor erklärt werden. Allerdings stammen einige der Redensarten aus vergangenen Jahrhunderten, deren Tradition und Kultur heute überholt sind. Hierzu schreibt der wissenschaftliche Rat der Dudenredaktion im Vorwort zum *Wörterbuch der deutschen Idiomatik*:

Die Redewendungen stammen aus den verschiedensten Lebensbereichen, viele beziehen sich auf Lebensumstände, Bräuche, Vorstellungen vergangener Jahrhunderte, die uns fremd geworden sind, weil sich die kulturellen und gesellschaftlichen Verhältnisse gewandelt haben, etwa >jemanden in die Schranken fordern; jemandem den Fehdehandschuh hinwerfen; etwas im Schilde führen< (Rittertum und Turnierwesen), >Spießruten laufen; mit etwas hinterm Berg halten; ins Flintertreffen geraten< (Militärwesen), >auf den Busch klopfen; durch die Lappen gehen; auf den Leim gehen< (Jagd und Vogelfang), >seine Felle fortschwimmen sehen; aufpassen wie ein Heftelmacher; das schlägt dem Faß den Boden aus< (Handwerk) oder >den Stab über jemanden brechen; jemanden an den Pranger stellen; für jemanden, für etwas die Hand ins Feuer legen< (Rechtswesen). (Duden 1992: Vorwort ohne Seitenangabe)

Ein weiteres unterscheidendes Merkmal zwischen den beiden Oralgenres bezieht sich auf ihre Form:

Die Redensart ist also eine formelhafte Wendung, die in die Rede – ja wir müssen noch ein Stück weitergehen: in den Satz eingebaut wird. Dabei muss freilich noch einmal erinnert werden an den Formelcharakter der Sprache überhaupt, der es unmöglich macht, die Grenze genau zu markieren, an der die formelhafte Redensart beginnt. (Bausinger 1968: 93)

Dieser Definition Bausingers zufolge ist die Redensart ein fester Ausdruck, der im Vergleich zum Sprichwort ein Satzteil ist.

Sie wird in einen Satz eingebaut und lässt einen gedanklichen Zusammenhang fassen. Der formelhafte Charakter der Redensart verweist auf ihre stabile Form, was vermuten lässt, dass ihre Bestandteile sich nicht – oder sehr selten – verändern. Indem Bausinger darauf aufmerksam macht, grenzt er wie folgt die Redensart vom Sprichwort ab:

Redensart ist kein Hendiadyoin²; sie lassen sich formal auseinanderhalten [...] Die Redensart ist im Prinzip ein Satzteil, das Sprichwort ein abgeschlossener Satz. Zwar kann auch die Redensart zu einem ganzen Satz erweitert werden [...] Dabei handelt es sich dann aber um konkrete Sätze, meist auch mit konkretem Subjekt oder doch mit konkretem Bezug, während das Sprichwort als abstrakte, verallgemeinernde Sentenz erscheint. (Bausinger 1968: 92)

4. Die Fon-Redensarten: Kommentare, Bedeutungen und Verwendungsbeispiele

(1) Yónu ton non hú asinzen à

Wörtlich: [Gesäße; sein bzw. ihr; töten; Ameisen; keine]

Dt.: Seine bzw. ihre Gesäße töten keine Ameise.

Kommentar: Ameisen treten oft in den tropischen Gebieten wie Benin auf. Sogar in den Häusern bzw. Wohnzimmern sind sie manchmal zu finden. Nicht selten kommt es, dass man sich aus Unachtsamkeit auf sie setzt bzw. legt und sich stechen lässt, wobei die gestochene Person instinktiv aufsteht und sich in die Suche nach dem Ursprung des Stichs begibt. In der Redensart wird die Zeit zwischen dem Ameisenstich und dem Aufstehen der gestochenen Person in den Vordergrund gestellt.

Bedeutung: mobil sein, sich viel bewegen, viel unterwegs sein

Beispiel: Dieser Geschäftsmann hat viele Firmen im Ausland. Aus diesem Grund tötet sein Gesäß keine Ameise in seiner Heimat.

² die Ausdruckskraft stärkende Verbindung zweier synonymen Substantive oder Verben (z. B. bitten und flehen)“, <https://www.duden.de/rechtschreibung/Hendiadyoin> [08.02.2022].

(2) *Sor wè t'afor xo ton me á?*

Wörtlich: [Pferd; ist; reiten; sein bzw. ihr; Bauch; in]

Dt.: Ist ein Pferd in seinem bzw. in ihrem Bauch geritten?

Kommentar: Pferde sind vor allem im Norden Benins zu finden. Dort ist es eine ganze Tradition, Pferde zu Hause zu dressieren. Könige und ihre bedeutenden Hofleute benutzten und benutzen bei bestimmten Zeremonien immer noch Pferde als Verkehrsmittel. Bei den Fon, die im Süden Benins wohnen, spielt das Pferd keine so wichtige Rolle. Die Redensart bezieht sich zum einen darauf, dass das Pferd ein Dauresser (vor allem Heu und Stroh) ist. Allerdings ist das Pferd ein Enddarmfermentierer und verbringt ca 60% seiner Zeit mit dem Fressen.³ Zum anderen bezieht sich die Redensart auf einen Pferdetritt, der in der Regel lebensgefährlich sein kann. Im Sinne der Redensart wird die Schwere des Pferdefußes metaphorisch in den Vordergrund gestellt: Ein Pferdetritt in einen Menschenbauch kann eine schnellere Verdauung des Essens verursachen.

Bedeutung: nie satt werden, immer hungrig sein

Beispiel: Zweimal hintereinander hat der Bauer schon am Vormittag gegessen und ist trotzdem immer noch hungrig. „Ist ein Pferd in deinem Bauch geritten?“, fragte ihn seine Frau.

(3) *É dor awí mlon*

Wörtlich: [wie; schlafen; Katze; Schlaf]

Dt.: Wie eine Katze schlafen

Kommentar: Das Schlafverhalten bei Katzen lässt sich hauptsächlich aus zwei Phasen unterscheiden, nämlich aus der leichten Schlafphase und dem Tiefschlaf. Erstere dauert zwischen 15-30 Minuten, wobei die Katze jederzeit aufwachen kann, Ohren aufgestellt lässt, auf alle Umgebungsgeräusche reagiert, Fellnase ab und zu bewegt und ein Auge öffnet.⁴ Letztere dauert nur bis zu 6 Minuten.⁵ Bei der einen oder der anderen Phase schläft die Katze nicht lang und nicht tief genug. In der Redensart wird das

3 Vgl. <https://www.offenstallkonzepte.com/dauerfressen-offenstall/> [31.01.2022].

4 Vgl. <https://tractive.com/blog/de/gut-zu-wissen/katzen-aktivsten-warum-schlafen-katzen-viel> [31.01.2022].

5 Ebd.

Schlafverhalten der Katze mit dem eines Menschen in Vergleich gezogen.

Bedeutung: kurz schlafen, nicht tiefschlafen

Beispiel: Dieses Baby schläft in der Nacht wie eine Katze.

(4) *É bio vi vodun bó ji*

Wörtlich: [man; bitten um; Kind; Vodun; und; gebären]

Dt.: Zur Gottheit Vodun um ein Kind beten und es bekommen.

Kommentar: Der Begriff Vodun kommt aus der Fon-Sprache und bedeutet eine unerschöpfliche Quelle. Der Vodun vermittelt zwischen den Menschen und ihrem göttlichen Schicksal. Es gibt eine Vielfalt von Vodun und dementsprechend vielfältige Bedeutungen. Die Nähe des Vodun zu den Menschen liegt darin begründet, dass es sich um Naturbestandteile wie Donner, Wasser, Tiere, Erde, Bäume, Wald usw. handelt, die beseelt und verehrt werden; nicht nur bei den Fon, sondern im ganzen Süden Benins (Atabavikpo 2003: 21). Einige der Gottheiten des Fon-Pantheons sind z. B.: Dan (dt.: „Schlange“): Sie symbolisiert die Fortpflanzung, den Wohlstand; Legba: Hausbeschützer etc.

Bedeutung: übertriebene, außergewöhnliche, seltsame Charaktereigenschaften einer Person bzw. Personen denunzieren, kritisieren.

Beispiel: In dem beninischen Märchen *Der Junge, der sich für ein Mädchen ausgab* (Lanmadousselo 2018: 67 – 69) regiert ein König ein Königreich, in dem es einen bekannten Markt gibt. Auf diesen Markt dürfen nur Frauen gehen. Die Männer, die sich trauen, das Verbot zu übertreten, werden geköpft. Ein Junge namens Agbidi, dem seine Mutter von dem Verbot erzählt hat, will selber Augenzeuge sein. Er verkleidet sich in ein Mädchen und begibt sich auf den Frauenmarkt. Dort wird er aber von den Königsleuten festgenommen und seine Männlichkeit wird entdeckt. Sollte die Mutter diese übertriebene Verhaltensweise ihres Sohns kritisieren, könnte sie sich fragen: „Habe ich um dieses Kind zur Gottheit Vodun gebetet und es bekommen?“

(5) *É tor ganwu do kor*

Wörtlich: [man; nähen; eisernes Hemd; im; Hals]

Dt.: Ein eisernes Hemd anziehen

Kommentar: Ein Hemd aus Eisen zu nähen, ist ein gewagtes, wenn nicht gar unmögliches Unterfangen, ganz zu schweigen davon, es zu tragen.

Bedeutung: unnötige zusätzliche Probleme hervorrufen bzw. haben

Beispiel: Die USA beenden den am 7. Oktober 2001 begonnenen Krieg in Afghanistan. 2448 Soldaten sind dort gefallen, mehr als 20000 wurden verwundet. „Ich werde nicht eine weitere Generation von Amerikanern in den Krieg schicken“⁶, sagte US-Präsident Biden. Er hätte auch sagen können: „Die USA werden in Zukunft kein eisernes Hemd dieser Art mehr anziehen“.

(6) *Azan àton gbè tchô*

Wörtlich: [Tag; drei; an; Verzierung]

Dt.: Eine nicht länger als drei Tage währende Dekoration

Kommentar: Ein Dekor, der nicht länger als drei Tage währen kann, ist eine Täuschung, eine Illusion.

Bedeutung: illusorisch, nicht dauerhaft, nicht resistent, nicht original

Beispiel: Der Israel-Palästina-Konflikt dauert bereits über 50 Jahre an. Ein Ende des Konflikts in naher Zukunft ist nicht abzusehen, wenn die Großmächte nicht neutral und objektiv mit den beiden Staaten verhandeln. Wie bereits festgestellt, waren alle vergangenen Waffenstillstandsverhandlungen nur eine nicht länger als drei Tage währende Dekoration.

(7) *É goxò có gi wá honto*

Wörtlich: [schon; satt essen; bevor; Maisklöße; bringen; draußen]

Dt.: Schon satt essen, bevor die Maisklöße nach draußen gebracht werden.

Kommentar: Der Mais (Wiss.: *Zea mays*) ist das weltweit am häufigsten angebaute Getreide und stellt das Grundnahrungsmittel in Afrika und in den Entwicklungsländern dar (Aly et al. 2018: 122). In Benin z. B. ist der Mais eine traditionelle Kultur-

⁶ <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/afghanistan-usa-biden-1.5346471> [30.08.2021].

pflanze und der wichtigste Bestandteil der Ernährung der Bevölkerung (ebd.). Er wird in verschiedenen Formen von Speisen konsumiert. Eine davon, die bei den Fon beliebt ist, sind die Klöße („Lió, gui“), die traditionsgemäß öfters feilgeboten und ausverkauft werden. Im Sinne der Redensart symbolisiert „satt essen“ das Wohlleben, den Wohlstand, während „Maisklöße kaufen“ eine Notlage bedeutet.

Bedeutung: nicht in Not sein, etwas nicht brauchen, nicht bedürftig sein, im Wohlstand leben

Beispiel: Ein beninischer Politiker, der von seinen Gegnern der Veruntreuung öffentlicher Gelder beschuldigt wurde, erwiderte ihnen, dass er schon satt gegessen habe, bevor die Maisklöße nach draußen gebracht würden.

(8) *Adi é kpé tékan ji*

Wörtlich: [Seife; die; ausreichen; Schwamm; über]

Dt.: Die Seife, die im Kontakt mit einem Schwamm (oft aus Pflanzenfasern) unabgenutzt bleibt.

Kommentar: Beim Duschen werden nicht selten ein Schwamm und eine Seife benötigt. Da der Schwamm fester als die Seife ist, kommt es, dass die Seife schnell abgenutzt und somit verbraucht wird. Eine Seife, die beim häufigen Duschen im Kontakt mit einem Schwamm unabgenutzt bleibt, ist somit eine Ausnahme.

Bedeutung: hervorragend konkurrieren, widerstandsfähig sein, mit etwas vertraut sein

Beispiel: Angela Merkel ist eine deutsche Politikerin, die seit dem 22. November 2005 Bundeskanzlerin der Bundesrepublik Deutschland ist. In 2021 endete ihre 16-jährige Amtszeit, die ein Rekord ist. Sie ist die Seife, die, was die deutsche Politik angeht, im Kontakt mit einem Schwamm (ihren Gegnern) unabgenutzt bleibt.

(9) *É non té hú dada Gbèhanzin dò Góxó.*

Wörtlich: [man; stehenbleiben; länger; als; König; Gbèhanzin; in; Goxo]

Dt.: Länger abwarten als der König Gbèhanzin in Goho.

Kommentar: Gbèhanzin, auch bezeichnet als „Kondo, le requin“ (dt.: „Kondo, der Hai“), war der vorletzte König des Königreichs

Danxomè. Danxomè war zwischen den 17. und 19. Jh. das prominenteste Königreich Benins südlich der Sahara. Seine Bekanntheit verdankte Gbèhanzin dem Widerstand, den er gegen die französische Kolonialmacht leistete. Er war der König, dessen Regentschaft sich mit der französischen Kolonisation in Afrika überschneidet. Die Professionalität seiner Armee, die aus Soldaten und Amazonenleibgarden bestand, flößte den anderen Königreichen Westafrikas Angst und Respekt ein. Er war mit dem deutschen Kaiser Wilhelm II. befreundet. Dieser hat ihm während des Widerstandskrieges (1890–1892) gegen die französische Kolonialmacht Hilfestellungen geleistet (vgl. Lanmadousselo 2021: 227). Er hatte der einheimischen Armee nicht nur viele Kanonen ausgeliefert, sondern ihr auch vier Kriegsberater – darunter einen Belgier – zur Verfügung gestellt. Als Belohnung dafür erhielt Wilhelm II. Handelsvergünstigungen. Die vier entsandten Kriegsberater wurden von französischen Truppen hingerichtet, denn die Franzosen wollten nicht, dass die Deutschen ihre Einflussgebiete auf Danxomè ausdehnten. Im November 1892 marschierten die französischen Truppen in Abomey, der Hauptstadt von Danxomè, ein. Gbèhanzin ergab sich am 15. Januar 1894 am Platz Goxo in Abomey, der Hauptstadt des Königreichs. Am 10. Dezember 1906 verstarb er in Blida, Algerien, wohin er deportiert worden war. Auf dem Platz Goxo wurde eine Statue des Königs Gbèhanzin errichtet, die ihn mit erhobener linker Hand gegen den Angreifer zeigt. Auf die in der Statue dargestellte Position des Königs verweist die Redensart.

Bedeutung: ewig abwarten, auf einen bevorstehenden Misserfolg aufmerksam machen, vergebliche Mühe

Beispiel: Die afrikanischen Staaten müssen ihr Schicksal selbst in die Hand nehmen und dürfen sich nicht allein auf die Entwicklungshilfe verlassen, wenn sie sich entwickeln wollen. Ansonsten werden sie für ihre Entwicklung länger warten als der König Gbèhanzin in Goxo.

(10) *É yi hamè hú jigan*

Wörtlich: [Er bzw. sie; eingehen; Freundschaft; als; Sandfloh]

Dt.: Wenn es darum geht, sich Freunde zu machen, ist er bzw. sie bohrender als ein Sandfloh (Wiss.: Tunga penetrans).

Kommentar: Der Sandfloh kommt vor allem in den tropischen Gebieten vor. Er ist ein Insekt, das Säugetiere und Menschen beißt. Der Sandflohbiß löst im Vergleich zu den anderen Insekten einen stärkeren Juckreiz bei den Opfern aus. Sein Weibchen kann sich bei Säugetieren und Menschen in die Haut, vor allem am Fuß, einbohren und Eier legen.

Bedeutung: gut vernetzt sein, sich leicht und schnell Freunde machen

Beispiel: Der 1961 in Senegal geborene Karamba Diaby kam in den 1980er Jahren nach Deutschland. Seit 2013 sitzt er als afrodeutscher Abgeordneter Deutschlands für die SPD im Bundestag. Man sagt von ihm, er sei bohrender als ein Sandfloh, wenn es darum geht, sich Freunde zu machen, weshalb er sich leicht in Deutschland integriert hat.

(11) *Kpò é do awónnu gbà nu gbor lè wè or nè*

Wörtlich: [Knüppel; der; dabei sein; Nasenrand; brechen; die Ziegenböcke]

Dt.: Das ist der Knüppel, der die Ziegenböcke ins Gesicht trifft.

Kommentar: Der Knüppel wurde und wird immer noch zu verschiedenen Zwecken eingesetzt. Im Königreich von Danxomè südlich Benins z. B. wurden jene (vor allem Sklaven), die geopfert werden sollten, geknebelt, indem man ihnen einen Knüppel in den Mund steckte. Zum Knüppel wird auch gegriffen, wenn man Ziegenböcke (in Benin Haustiere) wegzagen will, die im Freien getrocknetes Getreide fressen. Ein Schlag mit dem Knüppel ins Maul ist in diesem Fall willkommen, denn er ist schmerzhaft und verhindert die Ziegenböcke wiederzukommen. Letzteres liegt offensichtlich der Bildung der Redensart zugrunde.

Bedeutung: Auf die Ursache bzw. die Konsequenz/en eines Handelns oder auf eine negative Situation verweisen bzw. darauf aufmerksam machen

Beispiel: Die Corona-Pandemie (COVID 19) ist derzeit der Knüppel, der weltweit die Ziegenböcke (die Menschen) ins Gesicht trifft.

(12) *Kpon zunta bo nyi gã*

Wörtlich: [anvisieren; die Mitte des Waldes; und; abschießen; Pfeil]

Dt.: Aus der Ferne den Mittelpunkt des Waldes anvisieren und einen Pfeil abschießen bzw. einen Pfeil halbherzig abschießen.

Kommentar: In Danxomé spielte die Jagd nicht nur eine ernährende Funktion, sie hatte auch eine magisch-soziale und politische Bedeutung. Je mehr der Jäger über magische Kräfte verfügte und zu Heldentaten fähig war, desto größer war die Wahrscheinlichkeit, dass er im Königreich aufstieg. Auch bis heute hat der Jäger zum Teil diesen Einfluss auf die traditionelle Gesellschaft Benins erhalten. Die Jagd wird bisher in den ländlichen Fon-Gebieten praktiziert, selbst wenn sie in den letzten Jahrzehnten wegen der Abholzung, der Entwaldung und häufiger Buschfeuer sowie des daraus resultierenden Artensterbens stark zurückgegangen ist. Eine der Hauptjagdwaffen ist der Pfeil, von dessen guter Handhabung die Geschicklichkeit des Jägers abhängt. Er soll z. B. dem zu tötenden Tier nah kommen, um es zielgenau treffen zu können. In diesem Sinne ist die in der Redensart angesprochene Handlung sehr ungeschickt.

Bedeutung: etwas tun, ohne zu überlegen, ohne Vorbereitung, ohne Vorarbeit

Beispiel: Angesichts der starken Zunahme von Terroranschlägen in Afrika südlich der Sahara müssen die Länder in dieser Region eng zusammenarbeiten, um eine wirksame Reaktionsstrategie festzulegen, anstatt aus der Ferne den Mittelpunkt des Waldes anzuvisieren und einen Pfeil abzuschießen, wie sie es derzeit tun.

(13) *É sor kin*

Wörtlich: [sie; nehmen; Stein]

Dt.: Einen Stein nehmen.

Kommentar: Steine sind Seelensitze und Orte der Herkunft der Kinder (vgl. Derungs 1994: 51). Einer Ostschweizerischen Mythologie zufolge markieren Steine Grabstätten und Eingänge zur Anderswelt, dort entsteht gemäß den alten Wiedergeburtsvorstellungen neues Leben.⁷ Auch nach den Fon-Glaubensvorstel-

⁷ Schallter, Christina. Steine und Sagen. <https://www.mythologie-atlas.de/thema->

lungen entstammen Kinder Steinen. „Stein“ bezeichnet in der Redensart die Eizelle einer Frau. Die Redensart verweist auf die Befruchtung: die Verschmelzung von Samen und Eizellen im Rahmen der geschlechtlichen Fortpflanzung.

Bedeutung: schwanger sein

Beispiel: Nach 5 Jahren Unfruchtbarkeit hat die Frau einen Stein genommen.

(14) *Sín konyi kpakpa nengbé*

Wörtlich: [Wasser; gießen; Ente; auf dem Rücken]

Dt.: Der Ente Wasser auf den Rücken gießen.

Kommentar: „Ente“ bezeichnet hier den weiblichen Vogel. Die Ente gehört zu der Familie der Entenvögel und ist ein Schwimm- bzw. Wasservogel. Als solcher ist die Ente an ein aquatisches Leben angepasst. Der geographische Einfluss der Redensart geht über die Sphäre der Fon-Sprache hinaus, denn sie entspricht der französischen Redensart „verser de l’eau sur le dos du canard“.

Bedeutung: vergebliche Mühe

Beispiel: Die Korruption in Benin zu bekämpfen, ist wie der Ente Wasser auf den Rücken zu gießen. Ungeachtet den Bemühungen der verschiedenen Präsidenten vergeht kein Tag, ohne dass man von einem Skandal hört.

(15) *É da afor cokotò dokpo or mè*

Wörtlich: [man; stecken; Fuß; Hose; dieselbe; die; in]

Dt.: Den Fuß in dieselbe Hose stecken.

Kommentar: In der Regel kann nur ein Mensch eine Hose tragen. Zwei Menschen können nicht gleichzeitig dieselbe Hose anziehen, ohne dass es zu einer Auseinandersetzung führt.

Bedeutung: mit jemandem streiten, um etwas rivalisieren

Beispiel: Bezüglich des Bürgerkriegs in Syrien legten und legen Russland und andere Großmächte für ihre eigenen Interessen den Fuß in dieselbe Hose hinein.

(16) *É gbè gbor bó yí nyì***Wörtlich:** [es; ablehnen; Zicklein; und; annehmen; Rind]**Dt.:** Das Zicklein ablehnen, um das Rind anzunehmen**Kommentar:** Hinter dieser Redensart versteckt sich die Fon-Glaubensvorstellung, nämlich die Orakelbefragung und das Opfern von Tieren. Die Orakelbefragung wird von den traditionellen Priestern mit dem Namen Bokonon verwendet, um die Zukunft vorherzusagen oder den Grund eines Unglücks zu erkunden. Die Orakelbefragung wird an Tieropfern durchgeführt. Das Huhn, das Zicklein und ausnahmsweise das Rind gelten als Opfergaben an die Gottheiten, um ein Unglück abzuwenden. In der Zeit, in der es z. B. keine Krankenhäuser in den Fon-Gebieten gab, pflegte die Bevölkerung zu den traditionellen Priestern, zu gehen, wenn sie krank sind. Das tun sie bis heute. Die traditionellen Priester fungieren als Heiler. Ihnen obliegen die Aufgaben, nach einer Orakelbefragung den Gottheiten Opfergaben anzubieten, damit die kranken Personen von ihrer Krankheit geheilt werden. Nicht nur die Fon-Angehörigen widmen sich diesem Brauch. Bei weiteren Volksgruppen südlich Benins und auch in vielen Ländern Westafrikas ist das Brauch. So meint der aus der Elfenbeinküste stammende Ethnologe Manou Kouassi:

Bei Krankheit und anderen wichtigen Anlässen sowie zur „Behebung“ von Unfruchtbarkeit ist der geistige Beistand vonnöten, der durch die Opferzeremonie erfolgen soll. Meist sind es Priester oder Hellseher, die die Opfer bestimmen; im Traum kann auch der Betreffende „sehen“, was er opfern soll. Muss jemand größere und im volkstümlichen Sinn wichtigere Tiere darbringen (sie reichen von Hühnern bis zu Rindern), so ist dies ein Hinweis auf den Ernst der Lage. (Kouassi 1986: 140)

Bedeutung: schlimmer werden, sich verschlechtern**Beispiel:** Trotz aller Maßnahmen, die die Regierenden gegen die Corona-Pandemie ergriffen haben, steigt die Zahl der mit Corona Infizierten immer weiter an. Die Lage hat das Zicklein abgelehnt, um das Rind anzunehmen.(17) *E húzu jè dò nusúnnú mè***Wörtlich:** [wie; werden; Salz; in der; Soße; in]

Dt.: Wie Salz in der Soße werden

Kommentar: Salz ist eine wesentliche Zutat nicht nur beim Verfeinern von Speisen, sondern auch bei der Herstellung von Lebensmitteln, in denen es sich auflöst.

Bedeutung: knapp, selten werden

Beispiel: Das alte Auto VW Typ 3 ist heute wie Salz in der Soße geworden.

6. Funktionswerte der Redensarten im Volksmund

Wie aus dem vorhergehenden Abschnitt hervorgeht, haben die Fon-Redensarten eine rhetorische Funktion. Sie tragen dazu bei, dem Gesagten Überzeugungskraft zu verleihen. Sie ermöglichen es auch, kompliziertere Sachverhalte zusammenzufassen. Dabei greifen sie auf verschiedene Stilmittel wie Kontraste, Gegensätze („Das Zicklein ablehnen, um das Rind anzunehmen“), Spott, Ironie („Eine nicht länger als drei Tage währende Verzierung“), Karikatur („aus der Ferne den Mittelpunkt des Waldes anvisieren und einen Pfeil abschießen), Humor („Länger abwarten als der König Gbèhanzin in Goho“), Vergleiche („Wenn es darum geht, sich Freunde zu machen, ist er bzw. sie bohrender als ein Sandfloh“), Burleske usw. zurück.

Außerdem bringt die Verwendung solcher Redensarten, vor allem in den immer noch oral geprägten Gesellschaften Afrikas wie der Benins, dem Redner Ansehen und Aufstieg. So auch in Burundi:

Speech is explicitly recognized as an important instrument of social life; eloquence is one of the central values of the cultural world-view; and the way of life affords frequent opportunity for its exercise ... Argument, debate, and negotiation, as well as elaborate literary forms are built into the organization of society as means of gaining one's ends, as social status symbols and as skills enjoyable in themselves. (Finnegan 2012: ohne Seitenangabe)

Solche Fon-Redensarten haben auch eine ästhetische Funktion. Diese fragt nach der Darstellung des sinnlichen Wahrnehmbaren und des Erdachten sowie nach der Wirkung der Redensarten auf die Zuhörerschaft bzw. ob Redensarten bei der Zuhörerschaft Gefühle erzeugen. Dass die Fon-Redensarten eine poetische und

eventuell affektive Dimension haben, zeigt sich in den kommentierten Redensarten im vorhergehenden Abschnitt.

Darüber hinaus haben manche Redensarten didaktische Funktionen. Sie machen den Zuhörer bzw. die ZuhörerIn auf eine anstehende Schwierigkeit aufmerksam oder vermitteln einen Rat, eine Auskunft, eine Rüge. Da eine Redensart in mehreren Kontexten verwendet werden kann, kann sie somit, je nach Kontext, verschiedene Botschaften vermitteln. Die Fon-Redensart „Eine nicht länger als drei Tage währende Dekoration“ kann z. B. einen Rat erteilen, wenn man sie vor einer zu kommenden Situation bzw. Aktion benutzt, z. B.: Kaufe diese Schuhe nicht. Sie ist eine nicht länger als drei Tage währende Dekoration. Hier wird auf die schlechte Qualität der Schuhe verwiesen. Wenn dieselbe Redensart z. B. nach der Kaufaktion eingesetzt wird, kann es eine Kritik sein. Manche Fon-Redensarten wie z. B. „Länger abwarten als der König Gbèhanzin in Goho“ werden oft präventiv verwendet, um den Gesprächspartner bzw. die GesprächspartnerIn auf den illusorischen Charakter einer Initiative aufmerksam zu machen.

Wie oben angesprochen, sind die Redensarten in einer bestimmten Gesellschaft entstanden. Sie tragen in sich somit die kulturellen Werte dieser Gesellschaft. Die Redensarten sind somit ein Medium kultureller Identität.

7. Schlussbetrachtung

Der vorliegende Beitrag hat sich bemüht zu zeigen, dass die Redensarten ein wesentlicher Teil der Fon-Sprache und -Kultur sind. Die Fon-Redensarten stimmen mit Merkmalen von Redensarten aus anderen Kulturen überein. Weiterhin hat die Analyse gezeigt, dass die ausgewählten Fon-Redensarten eine rhetorische, ästhetische, didaktische und kulturelle Funktion haben. Diese sind aber nicht kulturspezifisch und können z. B. mit europäischen bzw. amerikanischen Redensarten erweitert werden. Unter semantischem Aspekt betrachtet, sind die Fon-Redensarten durch die Fon-Kultur geprägt und darüber hinaus in der traditionellen Welt der Fon sehr verankert, was vermuten lässt, dass die Fon-Redensarten in den ländlichen Gebieten entstanden sind. Viele Lebensbereiche werden von diesen Redensarten berührt:

Gesundheit, Korruption, Geschichte, Konflikte etc. Die Fon-Redensarten gewähren somit einen Einblick in die Weltanschauung der Fon. Bemerkenswert ist der Analyse zufolge, dass manche Fon-Redensarten den europäischen⁸ entsprechen. Eine umfassende Studie über die Fon-Redensarten ist also erwünscht.

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A CONTRASTIVE STUDY OF GERMAN AND EGYPTIAN-ARABIC PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS WITH SOMATIC COMPONENTS

Abstract: The aim of this study is to find Egyptian-Arabic phraseological units with somatic components which are equivalent to the German phraseological units. The study also aims at finding the degrees of equivalence between the pairs of the phraseological units in this study. Based on analysing the semantic, syntactical, lexical aspects and also the aspect of imagery of the phraseological units with somatic components as such and in their relations among each other the phraseological units of the underlying corpus are divided according to the following degrees of equivalence, namely full and partial equivalence. On the basis of the findings two types of equivalence are added namely the phraseological units with asymmetric idiomatic meanings and others considered as “false friends”. The result of this study is that only 8,5% of the German phraseological units with somatic components have Egyptian-Arabic phraseological units with somatic components as equivalents. Phraseological units with full equivalence appear in 32 Egyptian-Arabic phraseological units (nearly 3%), partial equivalence in 19 Egyptian-Arabic phraseological units (nearly 1,8%) and phraseological units with asymmetric idiomatic meanings in 38 Egyptian-Arabic phraseological units (nearly 3,6%). The number of the “false friends” among the phraseological units is 10 (nearly 1% of the German corpus).

Keywords: contrastive analysis, German phraseological units with somatic components, Egyptian-Arabic phraseological units with somatic components, equivalence, asymmetric idiomatic meanings, “false friends”

1. Introduction:

This study deals with the phraseological units with one or several somatic components (henceforth PUS), also called somatisms (Costa 2012: 1044). PUS take up a relevant part in the phraseology. Mukharlyamova (2019: 5146) describes them as an “independent subsystem within the phraseology of any language”. The PUS have been target of numerous studies, which have been exploring their structural, semantic and lexical characteristics, their role in communication and their importance and difficulty in teaching languages. As they are considered expressions of “physical and psychological states, feelings and emotions of people” (Mukharlyamova 2019: 5146), various studies are also dedicated to exploring this side of the PUS.

Not only the study of PUS within the phraseology of a certain language but – as Mieder (2020: 131) states – there are even more studies dedicated to their comparison within two or more languages. Among others the German PUS have been compared with Italian (Kahl 2015), Albanian (Sadikaj 2009), Finnish (Talja 2019), Spanish (Holzinger 1993), Macedonian (Stankova 2017), Swedish (Krohn 1994), Turkish (Özbay 2010) and Serbian (Stamenković 2021) PUS. Finding equivalence often plays an important role in these contrastive studies.

Generally not the whole corpus of German PUS have been studied and analysed, but a number of them – even among the contrastive studies – have concentrated on only one or several body parts like “skin and hair” (Mieder 2020), “heart and hand” (Sadikaj 2009), “head” (Kempcke 1989), “hand and foot” (Krohn 1994), “hand and eye” (Özbay 2010) and “stomach” (Stamenković 2021). Some studies have been a combination of more than one aspect. For example the problem of equivalence has played an important role in the contrastive study of German and Italian PUS by Kahl (2015). The study is also dedicated to exploring the PUS as expressions of feelings.

For the Egyptian-Arabic PUS there is a very important collection by Sigrun Kotb in 2002, which contains nearly 1000 PUS and is written in German. (Mieder 2004: 423).

Trying to fill a gap in the study of Egyptian-Arabic PUS the underlying study is dedicated to the comparison of the German and Egyptian-Arabic PUS. It is to be noted that the study does

not consist of a comparison of German and Egyptian-Arabic PUS as a whole, but its aim is to find equivalent Egyptian-Arabic PUS to the German ones. The study is based on an empirical analysis of the underlying corpus. The corpus of the German PUS is based on a digital index of German phraseological units, namely the “Redensarten-index”. As for the Egyptian-Arabic PUS I have relied only on my own knowledge as a native Egyptian-Arabic speaker. Only Egyptian-Arabic phraseological units have been considered as equivalent that also contain at least one body part. Phraseological units are excluded, if a German PUS has an equivalent Egyptian-Arabic phraseological unit with the same idiomatic meaning but does not contain a body part. Proverbs including body parts are also excluded from this study, as the study concentrates on non-sentential phraseological units.

The main goal of this study – as shown above – is to find Egyptian-Arabic PUS that are equivalent to the German PUS. The following questions will be answered during the course of this study: Which Egyptian-Arabic PUS are equivalent to the German ones? How many equivalent PUS are there in Egyptian-Arabic and what is their percentage? What are the criteria for the classification of the different types of equivalence based on the corpus of this study? How can the pairs of PUS in German and Egyptian-Arabic be classified according to those different types of equivalence?

Considering the aim of the study the problem of equivalence plays a major role in this study. It is also important as equivalence is a very complicated phenomenon which affects both understanding and applying the PUS. Different scholars have studied the problem of equivalence not only in the field of phraseology but in the context of other fields especially in the field of translation. Panou (2013: 1) mentions “the most influential equivalence theories” by scholars like “Nida and Taber (1969), Catford (1965), House (1997), Koller (1979), Newmark (1981), Baker (1992), and finally, Pym (2010)”. They and others have contributed to this field. Despite these numerous studies and theories, Panou (2013: 1) writes the following words: “Nevertheless, it [the concept of equivalence H.M.] has been a rather controversial one, causing many heated debates among translators as to its nature, definition and applicability.”

The aim of the underlying study is neither to discuss the “problem of equivalence”, nor to choose one of the existing theories of equivalence as a basis of the study, but its aim is – according to the actual findings – to explore and thus determine the different relationships between the pairs of German and Egyptian-Arabic PUS that have the same idiomatic meaning.

In order to find the different relationships, the following steps have been taken. Equivalents to the German PUS are noted and analysed with the aim of discovering their relationship to the German ones, based on syntactical, semantic, lexical aspects and other aspects like imagery. Based on this analysis the study has the purpose of determining the different types of equivalence between the PUS. The different types of equivalence reach from full equivalence to partial up to zero equivalence. The zero equivalence will be disregarded in this study as the emphasis is on equivalent PUS, whatever type of equivalence they belong to. The variations in the group that belong to the partial equivalence have made it necessary to try to divide this type of equivalence into further subtypes based on the findings of this study.

Based on the corpus the following different types of equivalence are stated:

Full equivalence: The PUS in both languages have the same syntactical structure, the same literal and idiomatic meaning, the same imagery, the same lexical components. Example: The German PUS “*der rechte Arm von jemandem sein*” (literal meaning: be someone’s right arm) and the Egyptian-Arabic PUS “*derā‘u el-yēmīn*” (literal meaning: his right arm) with the common idiomatic meaning: “he is his support, his best help” show no differences between them. It is to be noted that “someone” in the German PUS is being replaced once it is put in a context. The same applies for the pronoun “his” in the Egyptian-Arabic PUS, so that they cannot be counted as different. Thus, this pair of PUS shows full equivalence.

On the basis of the findings a group of PUS will be added to the ones with full equivalence namely those that show a slight difference in their morphosyntactical structure. Example: The German PUS “*sich die Haare raufen / ausraufen*” (literal meaning: to pull one’s hair) and the Egyptian-Arabic PUS “*yeshid fī sha‘roh*” (literal meaning: to pull in his hair) have both the common idiomatic mean-

ing “to be very angry, to be desperate” . The difference between them are the reflexive verb together with the reflexive pronoun in the German PUS, which makes the noun “hair” an accusative object, whereas the noun “hair” in the Egyptian-Arabic PUS is a prepositional object. These morphosyntactical differences do not affect the grade of equivalence, which is in this case a full equivalence.

Partial equivalence has a number of variations. PUS with the same idiomatic meaning have partial equivalence if one or more of the following elements are different:

Partial equivalence is due to the different syntax and lexic. Example: the German PUS “eine spitze Zunge haben” (literal meaning: to have a sharp tongue) and the Egyptian-Arabic PUS “lisānoh mabrad” (literal meaning: his tongue (is) a nailfile) have the common idiomatic meaning “to make ridicule, polemical, sharp, critical, malicious remarks”. Here – according to the German syntax – the German PUS as a whole is the predicate, while the Egyptian-Arabic PUS consists of the “tongue” as subject with “nailfile” as predicate.

Partial equivalence is due to the different imagery. Example: The German PUS “mit verschränkten Armen dabeistehen (zusehen)” (literal meaning: stand by / watch with crossed arms) and the Egyptian-Arabic PUS “ḥaṭiṭ iḍuh fil-mayya el-bardā” (literal meaning: he is putting his hand in the cold water) have the same idiomatic meaning “to be passive, not to help”. The image of someone with crossed hands is different than the picture painted of someone with his hands in cold water.

Partial equivalence is due to the different lexic. Example: The German PUS “frisches Blut” (literal meaning: fresh blood) and the Egyptian PUS “dam gedīd” (literal meaning: new blood) have the common idiomatic meaning “new participant; a new (young) member”. The pair includes different lexical components. The adjective “fresh” is different from the adjective “new”.

In some cases the difference of lexic is due to different body parts in the pair of the German and Egyptian-Arabic PUS. The German PUS “etwas an einer Hand abzählen können” (literal meaning: can count something on one hand) and the Egyptian-Arabic PUS “yet‘ad ‘alā el-ṣawabe’” (literal meaning: it is counted on the fingers) have the common idiomatic meaning “a very little number”. The German body part “hand” is different than the body part “fingers” in the Egyptian-Arabic PUS.

A special group of partial equivalence include the ones with asymmetric idiomatic meanings. That means that the idiomatic meaning in one language is broader than the other or that both languages have extra idiomatic meanings, which are not included in the common idiomatic meaning. As many pairs of PUS – according to this study – belong to this type, they are regarded as a type of their own. Example: The German PUS “mit dem Rücken zur / an der Wand stehen” (literal meaning: stand with the back to / against the wall) and the Egyptian-Arabic PUS “ḏahroh lilḥēt” (literal meaning: his back to the wall) have the common idiomatic meaning “to be in great distress; in an emergency; under pressure”. Besides this common meaning the Egyptian-Arabic PUS also means: (having a problem that has no solution; reach a dead end).

Another example: The German PUS “mit einem Bein / Fuß im Grab sein / stehen” (literal meaning: to be / stand with one leg / foot in the grave) and the Egyptian-Arabic PUS “regloh wel‘abr” (literal meaning: his leg with the grave) have the common idiomatic meaning “to be near death, about to die soon, be terminally ill”. Besides this common meaning the German PUS also means: “be in danger of being killed”.

The equivalence of only the literal meaning can be counted as zero equivalence as the purpose of the display of the PUS – in the context of a contrastive study – is to have the same idiomatic meaning. PUS of this type show more or less the same syntactical structure, the same literal meaning, the same imagery, the same lexical components (same body parts), but have a different idiomatic meaning. This phenomenon is often referred to as “false friends” (Kahl, 2015, 108). The pair of the PUS that belong to this type are included in this study as they have among them all the types of equivalence on the side of the form and would easily be mistaken for having equivalent idiomatic meaning. This type called “false friends” will be regarded as a type of its own. Example: The German PUS “eine hohle Hand haben” (literal meaning: to have a hollow hand) and the Egyptian-Arabic PUS “ṛdoh makhrūmah” (literal meaning: his hand is hollow) do not have a common idiomatic meaning. Their idiomatic meaning is different. The German PUS means “being corrupt, accept bribes” while the Egyptian-Arabic PUS means “being too generous”. The same literal meaning could mislead the reader.

In the analysis, the PUS appears under the categories of the body parts which are listed alphabetically and not according to the sum or the scope of the equivalent pairs. This alphabetical order will also apply for the general table in the conclusion.

The German PUS will be quoted in their original form. The Egyptian-Arabic PUS will be transcribed according to ALA-LC standard transliteration of Arabic. Both will be followed by a word by word translation into English, as to show the literal meaning and the lexicon together with the syntactical structure and imagery. The abbreviations in the table will include: G. for German and E.g. for Egyptian-Arabic.

If a PUS is repeated with a different variation it will be left out and it will only appear once. PUS which include two or more body parts will appear in full under one of the body parts and will be referred to only in the English literal translation with a reference to its first appearance. These PUS with two or more body parts will be counted with every body part in the general table in the conclusion so as to show how many PUS there are for each body part.

2. List of equivalent German and Egyptian-Arabic PUS

2.1. Arm

Table 1. Arm: full equivalence

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“der rechte Arm von jemandem sein” (be someone’s right arm)	“derā‘u el-yēmīn” (he is his right arm)	He is his support, his best help	None

Table 2. Arm: partial equivalence

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“einen langen Arm haben” (to have a long arm)	“īduh tayla” (his hand is far reaching)	Having great influence	Different body parts: “arm” versus “hand”; different adjectives: “long” versus “far reaching”; different syntax

“mit verschränkten Armen dabeistehen (zusehen)” (stand by / watch with crossed arms)	“ḥaṭiṭ ṭduḥ fil-mayya el-bardā” (he is putting his hand in the cold water)	To be passive, not to help	Different syntax and different imagery; different lexic: “arm” versus “hand”
“die Beine / Füße unter den Arm / die Arme / in die Hand nehmen” (to take the legs / feet under the arm / in the hands)	“akḥad dēloh fi sēnānoḥ” (he took his tail in his teeth)	To run (fast), run away, to flee, be in a hurry	Different body parts “legs”, “arms” versus “teeth”; “tail” borrowed from animals

Table 3. Arm: false friends

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“einen langen Arm haben” (to have a long arm)	“ṭduḥ ṭāwilā” (his hand is long)	None	G.: having great influence Eg.: being a thief; different body parts “arm” versus “hand”

2.2. Back

Table 4. Back: full equivalence

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“hinter jemandes Rücken” (behind someone’s back)	“min wara ḡahroh” (from behind his back)	Secretly; without anyone’s knowledge	None
“jemanden im Rücken haben” (to have someone in the back)	“fi ḡahroh” (he is in his back)	To be supported by someone; to be able to rely on someone	None
“jemandem / einer Sache den Rücken kehren” (Turn your back on someone / something)	“edaloh ḡahroh” (he gave him his back)	To leave someone; turn away; give up something	None

Table 5. Back: asymmetric idiomatic meanings

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“mit dem Rücken zur / an der Wand stehen” (stand with the back to / against the wall)	“ḍahroh lilḥēt” (his back to the wall)	To be in great distress; in an emergency; under pressure	Eg.: having a problem that has no solution; reach a dead end

Table 6. Back: false friends

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“den Rücken beugen” (bend the back)	“ḍahroh enḥanā” (his back was bent)	None	G.: to submit oneself; Eg.: carry a great load; be overwhelmed by something bad

2.3. Blood

Table 7. Blood: full equivalence

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“jemanden bis aufs Blut aussaugen” (sucking someone down to the blood)	“maṣ damoh” (he sucked his blood)	Unscrupulously exploiting someone	Slight syntactical difference: G.: “down to the blood” (preposition) versus Eg. “blood” (direct object)
“ein Mensch aus Fleisch und Blut” (a person of flesh and blood)	“bani ādam min laḥm we dam” (a person of flesh and blood)	An actual human being; a physically existing human being; a person with his strengths and weaknesses; a person with his feelings	None

Table 8. Blood: partial equivalence

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“frisches Blut” (fresh blood)	“dam gedīd” (new blood)	A new participant; a new (young) member	Different lexic (adjectives): “fresh” versus “new”

Table 9. Blood: asymmetric idiomatic meanings

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“jemandem kocht das Blut in den Adern” (someone’s blood boils in their veins)	“damoh beyegh-li” (his blood is boiling)	He is very excited, angry	G. also: provoke sensual excitement
“jemandem ins Blut übergehen” (to pass into someone’s blood)	“biyegrī fi damoh” (It runs in his blood)	It has become a habit	G. also: a drilled activity; become self-evident; is fun (music); Eg.: not be able to let go of
“jemandes (eigen) Fleisch und Blut sein” (to be someone’s (own) flesh and blood)	“min damoh we laḥmoh” (from his blood and his flesh)	Someone’s own children	Eg. also: relatives in general
“jemandem steigt das Blut zu Kopf” (someone’s blood rises to head)	“el-dam ṭele‘ / ḍarab fi rāsoh / nāfuchoh” (the blood rose to / hit to his head)	Someone gets upset	G. also: someone turns red; Eg.: get very angry

Table 10. Blood: false friends

German PU	Egyptian-Arabic PU	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“etwas / jemanden im Blut ertränken” (drowning something / someone in the blood)	“ghar’ān fī damoh” (he is drowning in his own blood)	None	G.: to kill somebody; put down something bloody / brutally destroy; suppress something violently; murder; Eg.: someone is badly injured or dead, so that he is overflowed by his own blood.

2.4. Body

Table 11. Body: asymmetric idiomatic meanings

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“kein Herz (im Leib / Leibe) haben” (have no heart in the body)	“mā ‘andūsh ‘alb” (he has no heart)	Hard hearted, merciless, without sympathy	G. also: cold, rejecting

2.5. Bone

Table 12. Bone partial equivalence

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“nur (noch) Haut und Knochen sein” (only be skin and bones)	“be’ī lahm ‘alā ‘adm” (he became flesh on bones)	Become completely skinny	Different body parts: G.: “skin” versus Eg.: “flesh”

2.6. *Ear*

Table 13. Ear: asymmetric idiomatic meanings

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“jemandem das Ohr abkauen” (chew someone’s ear off)	“akal wednoh” (he ate his ear)	Talking continuously	G. also: Talk so much, that you get on someone’s nerves; to talk to someone trying to persuade him
“zum einen Ohr hineingehen / reingehen, zum anderen Ohr (wieder) hinausgehen” (go in in one ear and go out (again) to the other)	“wedn min fīn we wedn min ‘agīn” (one ear from mud and one ear from dough)	To ignore what was said	Different lexic and imagery. G. also: not to hear, not to listen, to forget immediately

2.7. *Face*

Table 14. Face: full equivalence

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“einen Schlag ins Gesicht” (a slap in the face)	“‘alam ‘ālā weshoh” (a slap on his face)	A serious insult	Eg.: only an insult
“jemandem etwas ins Gesicht sagen” (say something to someone’s face)	“‘aloh fe weshoh” (he told him in his face)	tell someone something to his face; tell someone the unvarnished / unpleasant truth; confront someone	None

Table 15. Face: asymmetric idiomatic meanings

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“jemandem nicht ins Gesicht sehen können” (can’t look someone in the face)	“mosh ‘ader yeboṣ fī weshoh” (he can’t look him in his face)	To have a bad conscience, to be embarrassed	Eg.: not to bear looking at someone, to hate looking at him
“jemandem die Tür ins Gesicht schlagen / werfen” (to slam / throw the door in someone’s face)	“‘afal elbāb fī weshoh” (he closed the door in his face)	Sharply reject someone	Eg. also: not to give someone a way out

2.8. Finger

Table 16. Finger: full equivalence

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“etwas mit dem kleinen Finger machen” (do something with the little finger)	“ye‘ meloh biṣbā‘oh elṣoghayar” (he will do it with his little finger)	Be able to do something on the side; do something without much effort; master something well	None

Table 17. Finger: partial equivalence

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“lange Finger machen” (make long fingers)	“‘idoh ṭāwīlā” (his hand is long)	To steal	Different body parts; different syntax

Table 18. Finger: asymmetric idiomatic meanings

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“den Finger in / auf die offene Wunde legen” (put the finger in / on the open wound)	“ḥaṭ ṯdoh / ṣobā’oh ‘alā el-garḥ” (he put his hand / his finger on the wound)	address a sore point	G.: to indicate an evil; emphasize the bad thing about something; Eg.: Find the painful truth

2.9. *Flesh*¹

Table 19. Flesh: asymmetric idiomatic meanings

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“ein Stachel im Fleisch sein” (to be a thorn in the flesh)	“shoka fī dahroh” (a thorn in his back)	A constant threat, warning, challenge; constant nuisance	G.: to be annoying, to accompany someone critically; observe critically; different body parts
“to be someone’s (own) flesh and blood” see 2.3.3.			

2.10. *Foot*²

Table 20. Foot: full equivalence

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“keinen Fuß mehr über jemand’s Schwelle setzen” (no longer set foot over someone’s threshold)	“regloh mosh hat’atib bētoh” (his leg will not enter his house)	No longer visit someone; to stop contacting someone	Very close imagery; lexic: G. “threshold” included in the verb in Eg.

1 For “Flesh: full equivalence” see “a person of flesh and blood” in Table 7.

2 For “Foot: partial equivalence” see “to take the legs / feet under the arm / the arms” in Table 26.

Table 21. Foot: asymmetric idiomatic meanings

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“mit einem Bein / Fuß im Grab sein / stehen” (to be / stand with one leg / foot in the grave)	“regloh wel-‘abr” (his leg with the grave)	To be near death, about to die soon, be terminally ill	G. also: in danger of being killed; different prepositions

2.11. Hair

Table 22. Hair: full equivalence

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“sich die Haare raufen / aus-raufen” (to pull one’s hair)	“yeshid fī sha‘roh” (he pulls in his hair)	To be very angry, to be desperate	None

Table 23. Hair: asymmetric idiomatic meanings

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“mehr Schulden als Haare auf dem Kopf” (to have more debt than hair on the head)	“be‘adad sha‘r rāsoh” (in the number of the hair of his head)	A great number	G. specific: have high debts

Table 24. Hair: false friends

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“sich (wegen etwas) keine grauen Haare wachsen lassen” (not to let gray hair grow because of something)	“sha‘roh shāb” (his hair became grey)	None	G.: not to worry about something; Eg.: he became so worried and scared, that his hair became grey

2.12. Hand

Table 25. Hand: full equivalence

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“Hand in Hand” (hand in hand)	“el-īd fil-īd” (the hand in the hand)	Together	Minimal differences: Eg. nouns with article.
“Hand auf etwas legen” (put the hand on something)	“ḥaṭ īdoh ‘ala” (he put his hand on)	To seize / own something	None
“Jemandes rechte Hand sein” (to be someone’s right hand) similar to 2.1.1.	“īdoh el-yemīn” (his right hand)	Somebody you trust very much, your most important coworker	None
“es liegt in Gottes Hand” (it lies in gods hand)	“el-ḥagah dī fī īd rabena” (this thing is in gods hand)	Something is out of reach of man, it cannot be influenced by man	None
“um die Hand einer Frau bitten” (ask for the hand of a woman)	“yotlob īd” (to ask for the hand)	To ask to marry, to propose; to ask for the blessings and approval	None

Table 26. Hand: partial equivalence

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“freie Hand haben” (to have a free hand)	“yotlo’ yadāoh” (he releases his hand)	To be allowed to act freely according to his own judgement	Different syntax
“die Hand aufhalten” (open the hand)	“yemid īdoh” (to stretch his hand)	To want money, to ask for money	The verbs in G. and Eg. are very similar.
“alle Karten in der Hand haben / halten” (have / hold all cards in the hand)	“kol el-awrā’ fī īdoh” (all papers (documents) are in his hand)	Have all means of power	“Cards” and “papers” are similar.

“etwas an einer Hand abzählen können” (can count something on one hand)	“yet ‘ad ‘alā el-ṣawabe” (it is counted on the fingers)	A very little number	Different body parts: G. “hand” versus Eg. “fingers”; plural versus singular
“to take the legs / feet under the arm / the arms” see 2.1.2.			

Table 27. Hand: asymmetric idiomatic meanings

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“etwas liegt in jemandes Hand” (something lies in someone’s hand)	“el-ḥagah dī fī ṯdoh” (this thing lies in his hand)	Something depends on someone’s actions and decisions; he has influence on it.	G.: in someone’s field of expertise; Eg.: in someone’s power
“die Hand gegen jemandem erheben” (to raise the hand against someone)	“rafa ‘ ṯdoh ‘ala” (he raised his hand on)	To hit someone	G. also: to threaten someone, to resist someone
“seine Hand auf etwas haben” (to have his hand on something)	“ḥaṭ ṯdoh ‘ala ḥaga” (he put his hand on something)	To have power / control over something	Eg. also: have a clue
“in die Hand beißen, die einen füttert” (bite in the hand that feeds one)	“ye ‘oḍ el-ṯd ellī itmadetloh” (he bites the hand that has reached out for him)	To behave ungratefully towards a person that was giving him in a generous way	G. also: to act against your own interests; same imagery, same lexic, different verbs: “feed” versus “reach out to”
“alle Fäden (fest) in der Hand haben / halten” (to have / hold all the threads (tight) in the hand)	“kol el-khoyūt fī ṯdoh” (all the threads are in his hand)	To have control over.	G. also: be the leader, have the power to make decisions, to have an overlook on everything

Table 28. Hand: false friends

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“eine hohle Hand haben” (to have a hollow hand)	“īdoh makhrūmah” (his hand is hollow)	None	G.: be corrupt, accept bribes; Eg.: be too generous
“sich für jemanden die Hand abschlagen lassen” (to have your hand cut off for someone)	“ye’ta’ derā’oh in ...” (he will cut off his arm if ...)	None	Similar imagery but different meaning: G.: to fully trust someone; to vouch, stand up for someone, to be liable for someone. Eg.: to be so sure of something that you are ready to cut off your arm if it does not happen
“die Hand in anderer / fremder Leute Taschen haben / stecken” (have / put the hand in other people’s pockets)	“īdoh fī gēb el-tāni / ghēroh” (his hand is in the pocket of the other / others)	None	G.: steal, live at the expense of others, behave parasitically Eg.: everyone takes from the other

2.13. Head

Table 29. Head: full equivalence

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“von Kopf bis Fuß” (from head to foot)	“min rāsoh li-sāsoh” (from his head to his foot)	From top to bottom, fully, through and through	Minimal difference: Eg. possessive pronouns

“einen harten Kopf haben” (have a hard head)	“rāsoh nashfah” (his head is hard)	Stubborn, strong-willed, unyielding	Slight syntactical difference
“sich etwas in den Kopf setzen” (put something in the head)	“yeḥoṭ ḥagah fī demāghoh” (to put something in his head)	To have /want to do something; take on something firmly	Minimal difference: G. reflexive pronoun

Table 30. Head: asymmetric idiomatic meanings

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“sich keinen Kopf machen” (to make no head for himself)	“sharī / mekabar demaghoh” (he has bought / enlarged his head)	Not being worried	Different lexic; imagery. G. also: not be hesitant, be thoughtless
“Jemandem nicht in den Kopf gehen wollen” (not going into someone’s head)	“el-ḥāga mosh dākhlā demāghoh” (something does not enter into his head)	Not to understand, not to realise something, not to be convinced of something; something does not make sense	G.: not being able to keep / notice something; G. someone versus Eg. something
“someone’s blood rises to head” see 2.3.3.			

Table 31. Head: false friends

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“Augen im Kopf haben” (to have eyes in the head)	“‘ēnēh fī rāsoh” (his eyes are in his head)	None	G.: see through, notice something, be able to judge; Eg.: be very careful
“den Kopf hoch tragen” (carry the head high)	“rafe ⁱ rāsoh” (he is carrying his head high)	None	G.: be haughty; Eg.: be proud

2.14. Heart

Table 32: Heart full equivalence

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“ein großes Herz haben” (to have a big heart)	“‘alboh kēbīr” (his heart is big)	To be generous, helpful, humane	None
“ein Herz aus Stein haben” (to have a heart of stone)	“‘alboh ḥagar” (his heart is stone)	To be heartharted, rejecting, merciless, without sympathy, without compassion	G.: “heart” + preposition, Eg.: “heart” predicate
“jemandem das Herz stehlen” (to steal someone’s heart)	“khataf ‘alboh” (he kidnapped his heart)	Make someone in love	The verbs “steal” and “kidnap” are very similar.
“jemandem das Herz brechen” (to break someone’s heart)	“kasar ‘alboh” (he broke his heart)	To cause someone great grief; make someone unhappy; to leave someone, who loves you	None

Table 33: Heart asymmetric idiomatic meanings

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“mit Herz” (with heart)	a)“bi’alboh” (with his heart) b)“min ‘alboh” (from his heart)	a)With feeling, sympathy b) with conviction	G. includes the idiomatic meaning of both Eg. PUS
“jemandes Herz schmilzt” (someone’s heart melts)	“‘alboh ra” (his heart became soft)	Someone gives in, becomes yielding	G.: someone gets into a romantic, loving compassionate, sympathetic mood
“jemandem das Herz öffnen” (to open the heart to someone)	“fataḥloh ‘alboh” (he opened his heart to him)	To talk openly about his thoughts; to show someone his feelings; to speak out; to confide in someone	G. also: soft-hearted; humane, generous

“jemandem steht das Herz still” (someone’s heart stands still)	“‘alboh we’if” (his heart stood still)	Someone is very scared	G.: someone is very excited
“etwas nicht übers Herz bringen” (not to bring something over the heart)	“‘alboh mosh metāw’oh” (his heart does not obey him)	Do not have the guts to do something	G. also: have scrupels, be sentimental
“jemandem rutscht / fällt / sinkt das Herz in die Hose” (someone’s heart slips / falls / sinks in his pants)	“‘alboh we’e’ fi reglēh” (his heart fell in his legs)	Someone suddenly becomes very scared, gets a great fright	G.: someone is excited; someone feels a thrill; different lexic: “pants” versus “legs”
“have no heart in the body” (see 2.4.1.)			

2.15. *Knee*

Table 34. *Knee*: full equivalence

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“weiche Knie haben / kriegen” (Have / get weak knees)	“rokāboh sābet” (his knees gave way / became weak)	Getting scared	Full equivalence inspite of different syntax: G.: “knees” object, Eg.: “knees” subject

Table 35. *Knee*: asymmetric idiomatic meanings

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“jemandem schlottern die Knie” (someone’s knees are shaking)	“rokāboh bit-khabaṭ fi ba’d” (his knees are clapping against each other)	Someone is very scared	G.: someone is freezing

2.16. *Leg*³2.17. *Mouth*

Table 36. Mouth: partial equivalence

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“etwas (ständig / dauernd / oft) im Mund führen” (carry something (constantly / continuously / often in the mouth))	“zay ellibāna fī bo’oh” (like a chewing gum in his mouth)	To talk a lot about something; to use a word all the time	Different imagery; different lexic

Table 37. Mouth: asymmetric idiomatic meanings

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“in aller Mund sein” (be in everyone’s mouth)	“sirtoh ‘alā kol lesān” (his reputation (is) on everyone’s tongue)	Being something that is talked about a lot	G.: to be very well known, or be a hot topic; Eg.: talked about in a negative way

2.18. *Neck*

Table 38. Neck full equivalence

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“Ich könnte ihm den Hals umdrehen” (I could twist his neck)	“hayo’tom ra’ab-toh” (he will break his neck)	Exclamation when you are very angry about someone	Similar verbs: G. “twist” versus Eg. “break”

3 For “Leg: partial equivalence” see “to take the legs / feet under the arm / the arms” in Table 26.

For “Leg: asymmetric idiomatic meanings” see “to be / stand with one leg / foot in the grave” in Table 21.

2.19. *Nose*

Table 39. Nose: full equivalence

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“die Nase in etwas stecken” (to stick the nose in something)	“ḥāsher mānākhiroh fī” (he sticks his nose in)	To get involved, be nosy	Verbs very similar

Table 40. Nose: partial equivalence

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“die Nase hochtragen” (carry one’s nose up)	“mānākhiroh fil-samah” (his nose (is) in the sky)	To be haughty, conceited, arrogant	Different lexic, imagery, syntax. G.: only high (part of the verb); Eg.: in the sky (noun + preposition)

Nose 41. Nose: asymmetric idiomatic meanings

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“von etwas die Nase vollkriegen” (to get the nose full of something)	“rōḥoh fī mānākhiroh” (his soul is in his nose)	To get fed up with something	Different lexic, different imagery; G.: to be disgusted

2.20. *Shoulder*

Table 42. Shoulder: full equivalence

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“Schulter an Schulter” (shoulder on shoulder)	“elkitf filkitf” (the shoulder in the shoulder)	Close together	Slight differences: G. preposition “on” versus Eg. “in”; nouns with article in Eg.

Table 43. Shoulder: asymmetric idiomatic meanings

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“Schulter an Schulter” (shoulder on shoulder)	“kitfi fi kitfoh” (my shoulder in his shoulder)	Solidarity and support	G.: being close to somebody

2.21. Skin

Table 44. Skin: partial equivalence

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“eine dicke Haut haben” (to have a thick skin)	“geldoh samīk” (his skin is thick)	To be insensitive	Eg. possessive pronouns; the G. PUS as a whole is object, Eg. consists of the “skin” as subject with the adjective “thick” as predicate
“only be skin and bones” see 2.5.1.			

Table 45. Skin: asymmetric idiomatic meanings

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“mit heiler Haut davonkommen” (get away with a healthy skin)	“nafad bi-gildoh” (he got away with his skin)	Survive unharmed	G.: survive without being punished

2.22. Stomach

Table 46. Stomach: full equivalence

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“etwas dreht einem den Magen um” (something turns somebody’s stomach)	“hāgah ‘alabetloh me‘detoh” (something turned his stomach)	Something causes nausea	None

Table 47. Stomach: partial equivalence

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“jemandem knurrt der Magen” (someone’s stomach growls)	“‘aṣāfir baṭnoḥ betsawsaw” (the birds of his stomach are chirping)	be hungry	Different imagery, lexic; G.: his own stomach is making noises, Eg.: the birds of his stomach are making noises.

2.23. Tongue

Table 48. Tongue: full equivalence

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“jemandem etwas / Worte auf die Zunge legen” (put something / words on the tongue of someone)	“ḥaṭ kalām ‘ala lisānoḥ” (he put words on his tongue)	Get someone to say something	None
“jemandem die Zunge rausstecken” (stick your tongue out at someone)	“tala ‘loh lisānoḥ” (he stuck out his tongue to him)	To stick out the tongue, to show to express disregard, malicious joy	None
“die Zunge lockert sich” (the tongue loosens)	“lisānoḥ felet” (his tongue escapes (loosens))”	One becomes talkative	None

Table 49. Tongue: partial equivalence

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“eine spitze Zunge haben” (to have a sharp tongue)	“lisānoḥ mabrad” (his tongue (is) a nailfile)	To make ridicule, polemical, sharp, critical, malicious remarks	Different lexic; different syntax

Table 50. Tongue: asymmetric idiomatic meanings

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“jemandem liegt etwas auf der Zunge” (someone has something on the tongue)	“ḥāga ‘ala lisānoh” (something is on his tongue)	Someone would like to say something that does not come to his mind at this moment; someone has a short-term memory gap	G.: someone wants to say something, but holds back at the last moment

Table 51. Tongue: false friends

German PUS	Egyptian-Arabic PUS	Common idiomatic meaning	Differences
“eine schwere Zunge haben” (have a heavy tongue)	“lisānoh te’il” (his tongue is heavy)	None	G.: aggressive, contradicting himself; Eg.: be sick, paralysed, not to be able to answer

2.24. *Vein*⁴

3. Conclusions

The two main aims of this study are to find Egyptian-Arabic somatic equivalents to the German PUS. Only those German PUS are included in the study that have Egyptian-Arabic PUS as their equivalences. The second aim is to find criteria for the classification of equivalence which have been extracted from the corpus of this study as there exist in the field of phraseology a number of other classifications of equivalence which generally play an important role in the contrastive study of phraseological units but are not taken up in this study. After analysing the syntactical, lexical, semantic aspects and also the imagery of these PUS and their relationship with each other the different categories of

⁴ For “*Vein*: asymmetric idiomatic meanings” see “someone’s blood boils in their veins” in Table 9.

equivalence to which each pair of PUS belongs have been determined.

The following table will sum up the results of the contrastive analysis of this study. The number of the German PUS in the table are based on the digital index of German phraseological units the “Redensarten-index”. The sum of the PUS under each body part are named in order to reach the total number of German PUS which appear in the index and are the basis of the underlying study. Only those German PUS are analysed which have an Egyptian-Arabic equivalent. As for the number of the Egyptian-Arabic PUS only the ones are considered which are equivalent to the German ones. Our aim is not to offer a collection of the Egyptian-Arabic PUS but to finding ones which show some kind of equivalence with the German ones. Dividing the Egyptian-Arabic PUS on the basis of their type of equivalence serves as a further demonstration of the results of the analysis.

Table 52. General table with the results of the analysis.

Name of the body part in the PUS	Number of German PUS	Number of Egyptian-Arabic PUS with full equivalence	Number of Egyptian-Arabic PUS with partial equivalence	Number of Egyptian-Arabic PUS with asymmetric idiomatic meanings	Number of Egyptian-Arabic PUS considered as “false friends”
Arm	16	1	3	-	1
Back	34	3	-	1	1
Blood	33	2	1	4	1
Body	33	-	-	1	-
Bone	20		1	-	-
Ear	26	-	-	2	-
Face	43	2	-	2	-
Finger	39	1	1	1	-
Flesh	12	1	-	2	-
Foot	38	1	1	1	-
Hair	14	1	-	1	1
Hand	147	5	5	5	3
Head	186	3	-	3	2

Heart	88	4	-	7	-
Knee	11	1	-	1	-
Leg	25	-	1	1	-
Mouth	59		1	1	-
Neck	67	1	-	-	-
Nose	63	1	1	1	-
Shoulder	17	1	-	1	-
Skin	28	-	2	1	-
Stomach	17	1	1	-	-
Tongue	40	3	1	1	1
Vein	4	-	-	1	-
Total	1060	32	19	38	10

The sum of the German PUS that serve as the basis of this study are 1060. The table shows that there are 89 equivalent Egyptian-Arabic PUS, that means less than 8,5% of the German corpus. This number is divided into different degrees of equivalence, as full equivalence appears in 32 Egyptian-Arabic PUS (nearly 3%), partial equivalence in 19 Egyptian-Arabic PUS (nearly 1,8 %) and PUS with asymmetric idiomatic meanings in 38 Egyptian-Arabic PUS (nearly 3,6 %). The 10 false friends among the PUS (nearly 1% of the German corpus) were left out of the following statements as they do not show idiomatic equivalence at all. Their literal meaning – based on the outward form – is equivalent, but not their idiomatic meaning.

Considering the findings, it can be stated that only 3% of the analysed corpus have full equivalence in the true sense of the word. Added to them are the ones with partial equivalence, which also can be considered as equivalent as they have the same idiomatic meaning in common and can be used as equivalents. The different syntactical, lexical aspects and also the different imagery and literal meaning do not affect the common idiomatic meaning. This means that nearly 4,8% of the Egyptian-Arabic PUS can be understood and applied within the same contexts. The pairs of PUS with asymmetric idiomatic meanings, which take up nearly 3,6% of the corpus, should be thoroughly examined, so that the reader is sure that the common idiomatic meaning is realised in the context and not a meaning which only belongs to either the German or Egyptian-Arabic PUS.

Based on the analysis it can be stated that only a small number of German PUS have equivalent Egyptian-Arabic PUS. Only the Egyptian-Arabic PUS equivalent to the German ones are taken up in this study. This does not mean that the Egyptian-Arabic PUS are restricted to the ones mentioned here. The Egyptian-Arabic phraseology also has a great number of PUS among the phraseological units. Those which show no equivalence with the German ones far exceed the ones with equivalence. Studying and comparing the German and the Egyptian-Arabic PUS that have no equivalence among them will surely lead to interesting results and contribute to the study of phraseological units with somatic components as an important part of the study of phraseology.

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WOLFGANG MIEDER

**“BLACK IS BEAUTIFUL”
HANS-JÜRGEN MASSAQUOI’S
PROVERBIAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY
DESTINED TO WITNESS (1999)**

Abstract: Hans-Jürgen Massaquoi’s (1926-2013) autobiography *Destined to Witness. Growing up Black in Nazi Germany* (1999) appeared simultaneously in German translation as *Neger, Neger, Schornsteinfeger. Meine Kindheit in Deutschland* (1999, 2006 as a film). The bestseller recounts Massaquoi’s birth in 1926 at Hamburg as a biracial child of a German mother and a black father from Liberia who returns to Africa leaving his wife and Afro-German son to fend for themselves in a working-class neighborhood. Their struggle to survive Nazi Germany is described in numerous small chapters that are informed by the journalistic as well as literary style that Massaquoi became accustomed to once he became established in the United States as managing editor of the African American magazine *Ebony*. The book is replete with proverbs and proverbial expressions that add metaphorical expressiveness to this emotional and informative account of survival among prejudice, stereotypes, and racism. Many of the proverbs, often quoted by Massaquoi’s mother, are cited in German with English translations or only in English. Thus the book is a telling example of how proverbs function in a family and beyond as social strategies to carve out a marginalized existence between 1926 and the early 1950s in Germany, Liberia, and the United States. Numerous contextualized references are cited, and there is also a large index of 509 (645 counting 136 duplicates) proverbial texts.

Keywords: Afro-German, autobiography, Hans-Jürgen Massaquoi, prejudice, racism, stereotype

Several decades ago nobody could have foreseen that Black German Studies would become an important subfield of *Germanistik* (Blackshire-Belay 1996; Nenno 2016). By now it has been ascertained that “there exists a wide range of texts by Black Germans that covers the colonial period through the Third Reich and up to the present. The proliferation of autobiographical texts by Black Germans and Germans of African descent – as well as by migrants from Africa – illustrates the heterogeneity of Black Germans’ experiences” (Nenno 2019: 169). A particularly valuable autobiography is Hans-Jürgen Massaquoi’s sizable *Destined to Witness. Growing up Black in Nazi Germany* (1999) that appeared simultaneously in German translation as *Neger, Neger, Schornsteinfeger. Meine Kindheit in Deutschland* (1999, 2006 as a film). The bestseller recounts Massaquoi’s birth in 1926 at Hamburg as a biracial child of a German mother and a black father from Liberia who returns to Africa leaving his wife and son to fend for themselves in a working-class neighborhood in that large city. Their struggle to survive Nazi Germany is described in numerous small chapters of two to three pages that are informed somewhat by the journalistic style that Massaquoi became accustomed to once he became established in the United States as managing editor of the African American magazine *Ebony*. His troublesome survival at school with teachers and others mistreating him as a non-Aryan black youngster, his strenuous attempt to fit in, his early romantic experience, his development into a skilled metal worker, and his survival at the catastrophic bombing of Hamburg in 1943 are all told in vivid language that includes plenty of Germanisms. After all, German is his native language, but by 1946 he has also learned some English and leaves for Liberia for two years in 1948. There he meets his father and other relatives, but once again is confronted with not quite fitting in as an Afro-German (Campt 2004: 8-9). At the age of twenty-four his ardent wish of emigrating to the United States becomes a reality with the help of relatives on his mother’s side. And yet, his idealized image of America being the country of freedom and liberty is shattered as he experiences racism once again, wondering how he will ever find his identity. In due time his mother, whom he respects and adores to the point that his account “is more or less a love letter” (Nganang 2005: 235) to

her, joins him outside of Chicago and lives to see him become a respected and accomplished journalist who at his death in 2013 in Jacksonville, Florida could look back at a remarkable life's journey that deserved and needed to be told.

The autobiography is thus divided into three parts. About three quarters of the book (1-332) deal with his life and survival in war-torn Germany, his time in Liberia fills not quite hundred pages (333-411), and his early experiences in the United States take up a mere thirty pages (411-443). Clearly then, readers “are provided with the fascinating case of a mixed-race man, considered ‘black’ by the Nazi regime (and in the United States) seeking to survive and make his way to adulthood in one of the most racist and anti-black regimes that the world has produced” (Barkin 2009: 259). As he writes proverbially in the prologue: “As a black person in white Nazi Germany, I was highly visible and thus could neither run nor hide, to paraphrase my childhood idol Joe Louis” (xii). Indeed, the famous boxer Joe Louis (1914-1981) supposedly first uttered “You can run but you can’t hide” in 1946 with the meaning that evasion will not avert a defeat. Due to his popularity it quickly became a common proverb in the United States (Doyle et al. 2012: 221).

It took Massaquoi years to write his significant account. It began with a trip in early 1966 to his old hometown Hamburg as an aspiring staffer of the *Ebony* magazine that resulted in the two lengthy accounts “A Journey into the Past” with numerous illustrations in its February and March issues (Massaquoi 1966). Just as a somewhat later autobiographical sketch (Massaquoi 1984), they contain several reminiscences of his socialization process that reappear in the autobiography (Walden 2004). In addition, colleagues and friends, notably Alex Haley of *Roots* (1976) fame, encouraged him to expand his memories into a full-fledged book. Frank Mehring explains that Massaquoi’s “tricultural background, his racial encounters in Nazi Germany, Liberia, and the United States made him suspicious of the American dream of liberty, equality, and opportunity” (Mehring 2009: 66-69, Mehring 2014), and yet, his second autobiography, published unfortunately only in its German translation as *Hänschen klein, ging allein ... Mein Weg in die Neue Welt* (2004), tells about his professional success – from rags to riches – as an American jour-

nalist (Mehring 2014: 275). From a sociolinguistic point of view it is interesting to note that he mastered both German and English eloquently with all their cultural nuances. While he clearly was not schizophrenic, he certainly had two mother-tongues, so to speak, that make his autobiographies so special as he “wrestles with the vicissitudes of racial identity formation” (Hodges 2001: 54) as an Afro-German eventually living among African Americans in the United States. As Elaine Martin has observed so eloquently in her remarkable scholarly review of *Destined to Witness*: “This somewhat peripatetic life results in a revelatory juxtaposition of three different cultures, their attitudes toward race, and the author’s complex identity shifts in accordance with an ever-changing milieu. [...] he remains irrevocably an outsider, culturally, linguistically, and even physically. In the United States seeming and being are similarly at odds: he is taken for an American black, but neither of his parents is American, and English is not his native language” (Martin 2001: 91-92; see also Nganang 2005: 235). As Massaquoi states: “I kept being dogged by my old habit of not fitting in” (261) and “I realized that I was still light-years away from feeling that I belonged” (413).

Speaking of language, Martin is an isolated literary critic who does at least in one sentence say something about Massaquoi’s impressive linguistic register: “The narrative tone belongs to the tradition of oral literature, often using colloquial or clichéd expressions (‘[he] hated my ten-year-old guts,’ ‘the ripe old age of 88.’ ‘in sunny California’) as well as numerous phrases and short sentences in German” (Martin 2001:94). Alexandra Lindhout in her otherwise revealing article on Massaquoi’s autobiography as an “act of identity formation” also singles out Massaquoi’s use of numerous German expressions but merely gives a few individual words as examples (2006: 3). And Frank Mehring in his otherwise superb analysis of Massaquoi’s two autobiographies ignores any linguistic, folkloric, or phraseological matters altogether (Mehring 2014). And yet, Massaquoi’s appealing and intriguing style is richly informed by his word choices, his allusions to folkloric matters, and his effective employment of German and English proverbs, proverbial expressions, and other phraseologisms. These materials are without doubt part of making his unique autobiography such a compelling narrative. Re-

alizing that it contains 509 (645 counting 136 duplicates) fixed phrases, it is clearly worthwhile to have a closer look at Massaquoi’s proverbial style.

As one might expect, Massaquoi employs some of the standard Nazi vocabulary for titles and offices, but there are also colloquial German terms that come to him naturally as they belong to his native language. This sort of explanatory comments adds much to this macaronic style, as the following contextualized examples show:

(1) *Among the more intriguing neighborhood events was the occasional sighting of a siren-blaring police paddy wagon, nicknamed **Grüner August** because of its dark green color.* (20)

(2) *My mother would invariably dress me up in my **Sonntagsanzug** (Sunday suit) and we would head outdoors.* (23)

(3) *It was through the newsreels that I received my first, albeit lopsided, impression of the **Land der unbegrenzten Möglichkeiten** (land of unlimited possibilities), as the United States was called.* (51)

(4) *I gave her my **Ehrenwort** (word of honor) and sealed my promise with a solemn handshake. German boys, it had been drilled into me from as far back as I could remember, never break their **Ehrenwort**, no matter what.* (58)

(5) *“The Brown Bomber [the boxer Joe Louis] turned out to be a **Flasche**,” another boy chimed in, using the derisive street term for “weakling.”* (117)

(6) *“What **um Himmels Willen** (in heaven’s name) was on your mind when you decided not to show up for work as you had been ordered?”* (223)

(7) *I thanked my good Samaritan who, in turn, wished me “**Hals und Beinbruch**” (neck and leg fracture) – a German expression for **Good luck**.* (237)

(8) *“Anyone who has a problem with that is an **Arschloch** (asshole) and can go straight to hell.”* (418)

Massaquoi is also steeped in German folkloric references that he picked up as a child growing up in his native Germany. An especially interesting case early in the book is his description of a scene with his beloved African grandfather in pre-war Hamburg:

(9) *There were even times when Momolu had my mother wake me up after I had already gone to bed because he wanted me to demonstrate my linguistic prowess to some African and German dinner guests. On such occasions, the old man would ask me to sing a German nursery song, such as “**Hänschen Klein Ging Allein**” (Little Hans Walked Alone), and I would be only too happy to oblige. For my trouble, I could bask in the adulation of the guests, who never failed to be impressed by the fact that not only did I speak accent-free German, but that I did so with unmistakably Hamburgian brogue. (14)*

The memory of this song remained with him for seventy years, using its beginning as the title of his second autobiography in 2004 to describe his life's story as an immigrant to the United States. But speaking of language, in his revealing chapter “Mis-taken Identity” (233-237) he gets out of a scrape by communicating in solid German with a police lieutenant: “When I told him what had happened to me at the plant, he soon became convinced that, my brown skin notwithstanding, my unadulterated Hamburger dialect was unmistakably homegrown” (236). Speaking of color identity, his self-assured African aunt Fatima is a model for young Hans-Jürgen of accepting and dealing with his blackness:

(10) *Tante Fatima, on the other hand, loved nothing more than being the center of attention, and deliberately dressed and acted in a way that made it impossible for her to be overlooked. Long before I made the discovery that black was beautiful, she wore an Afro so huge it would have aroused the envy of a Fiji Islander. (60)*

While Massaquoi does not draw any special attention to the proverb “Black is beautiful,” it must have been on his mind when working on his autobiography. In fact, in the year of his birth Langston Hughes (1902-1967) had declared it the “duty of the younger Negro artist [...] to change [...] that old whispering ‘I want to be White,’ hidden in the aspiration of his people, to ‘Why

should I want to be white? I am a Negro – and beautiful’.” One year later in 1927, the first reference of the proverb appeared in a newspaper: “Marcus Garvey [1887-1940, Jamaican-born political activist and journalist] made black people proud of their race. In a world where black is despised he taught them that black is beautiful” (Doyle et al. 2012: 22). Perhaps Massaquoi had come across Hughes’s statement, but no matter what, he most certainly was conversant in the slogan turned modern proverb. It doubtlessly played a significant role in his decision to identify himself as an African American in due time.

It comes as a surprise then that Hans-Jürgen Massaquoi agreed to have the German translation of his autobiography appear with the title *Neger, Neger, Schornsteinfeger*, a stereotypical children’s chant directed against black people out of mischievous ignorance. At the end of his second autobiography he explains the choice of the title of his first book as follows:

(11) *Der Verleger von Scherz [Verlag]. Peter Lohmann, war so begeistert, dass er persönlich nach New Orleans kam, um mit mir die Einzelheiten des Projektes zu besprechen. Wir mussten uns vor allen Dingen einen Titel einfallen lassen, der in Deutschland funktionieren würde. Stundenlang zermarterten wir uns das Hirn, bis Lohmann schließlich vorschlug, mein Buch **Neger, Neger, Schornsteinfeger!** zu nennen, was mir in der Kindheit andere Kinder hinterher gerufen hatten. Zuerst war ich entsetzt, Das Wort „Neger“ weckte in mir eine Fülle schmerzhafter Erinnerungen, und auch sein englisches Pendant **Negro** war bei Afroamerikanern in den USA genauso unbeliebt. Doch Lohmann meinte, wenn der Titel mit Anführungsstrichen als Zitat kenntlich gemacht würde, wäre es nicht beleidigend, er würde sogar noch stärker veranschaulichen, was ich als Kind durchgemacht hatte. Da ich keine bessere Idee hatte, erklärte ich mich zögerlich einverstanden.* (Massaquoi 2004: 256-257)

The controversial title did indeed draw attention to the book and helped it on its way to become a bestseller in Germany. But be that as it may, here is the heart-wrenching way he describes his first encounter with the racist expression, and it is well to remember that the black-clad chimney sweep in German folklore can also represent the devil (Röhrich 1991-1992: III, 1397-1398, Rölleke 1993):

(12) *Instead of the friendly glances and flattering comments I had been used to, I suddenly drew curious, at times even hostile stares and insulting remarks. Most offensive to me were two words that I had never heard before and that I soon discovered were used by people for the sole purpose of describing the way I looked. One word was Mischling, which, after pressing Mutti for an explanation, she defined as someone who, like me, was of racially mixed parentage. The other word was **Neger** – according to Mutti, a misnomer as far as I was concerned, since she insisted that I was definitely not a **Neger**, a term that she applied only to black people in America. But street urchins, who were my worst tormenters, apparently did not know, or care, about such fine distinctions. As soon as they spotted me, they would start to chant, “**Neger, Neger, Schornsteinfeger** (Negro, Negro, chimney sweep)!” and they would keep it up with sadistic insistence until I was out of their sight. (18, additional references on pp. 37, 431, and 433)*

There is a fascinating quite similar autobiographical account by the African medical student Martin Aku, who was confronted by the stereotypical expression “Neger, Neger, Schornsteinfeger” in the mid-1930s at Bremen:

(13) *Nun war ich also in Bremen [aus Afrika angekommen]. Meine Träume verflogen, und an ihre Stelle trat die Wirklichkeit. [...] Auf der Straße versetzte meine Erscheinung die Leute in Aufregung. Finger deuteten auf mich, und unzählige Augen waren auf mich gerichtet, neugierig, mitleidsvoll. Die Kinder schrien hinter mir her: „Neger, Neger, Schornsteinfeger“, und sangen noch andere Lieder dazu. Ich kam mir wirklich wie ein Weltwunder vor. Unter diesen Leuten als einziger Farbiger zu leben, dieses Bild Tag für Tag, wißt ihr, was das bedeutet für einen Menschen [...]? (Westermann 1938: 270-271)*

And there is also Karl Gengenbach’s account from his youth that begins with the expression followed by a linguistic “joke” and an explanatory comment:

(14) ***Neger, Neger, Schornsteinfeger**
Weißer zum Neger: Du schwarz
Neger zum Weißen: Ich weiß*

Diesen Spruch habe ich als Junge immer wieder aufgesagt. Nach dem Krieg waren amerikanische Soldaten in Pforzheim stationiert und ein großer Teil davon schwarz. Diese Schwarzen waren für uns Neger. Das Wort Nigger kannten wir überhaupt nicht, das kam von den weißen Amerikanern. (Gengenbach 2016: 108)

There is then no doubt that the expression was quite current some decades ago, and it is surprising that it has not been recorded in any scholarly collections. In any case, children being children, things changed in due time for the better for Hans-Jürgen Massaquoi with friendships resulting with other children:

(15) *Luckily, after a short time, the status and taunts became fewer as the novelty of my appearance began to wear off. Soon, some of the kids who had shouted the loudest became my closets pals. To my great relief, it seemed as if all of a sudden they had become oblivious to the visual differences that set us apart. (18)*

(16) *One is inclined to ask why some adults to this day have not learned to be blind to color and race? Why can people not be convinced “that true human decency is [...] simply a matter of the heart?” (419).*

But here then are a few more textual examples of Massaquoi’s remembrance of German folklore that he had encountered as a child and student in Germany. The stereotypical names for chocolate pastries in the first statement remained part of German culture well into the 1960s (Yeo 2011: 119; Mehring 2014: 257) when they began to be sold under the innocuous term of “Schaumküsse (Foam kisses)”:

(17) *Each time Tante Fatima came around, she insisted on taking me out to some nearby **Konditorei** for a pastry and whipped cream treat. [...] Neither of us was amused when at one **Konditorei** the waitress snidely suggested that we try some of the establishment’s delicious **Negerküsse** (Negro kisses) or **Mohrenköpfe** (Moors’ heads), two popular chocolate-coated pastries. (60-61).*

(18) *The mere thought of being seen in the street with a violin case – that we kids contemptuously called a **Kindersarg** (children’s coffin) – gave me the creeps. (74)*

(19) *Ironically, among my favorite books during my formative years were those that dealt with the old Germanic legends of Siegfried, the fairest of fair knights, which provided much of the National Socialists' racial mythology.* (80)

(20) *Dozens of young men carrying small swastika streamers marched up and down Salza's Hauptstrasse, shouting and rabble-rousing and singing "Muss i denn zum Städtele hinaus," the traditional German farewell song.* (90)

(21) *Mirror, mirror on the Wall.* (91, chapter heading)

(22) *We would sing "Das Lied vom Guten Kamerad (The Song of the Good Comrade)," Germany's traditional military burial song.* (96)

(23) *Somehow the scene reminded me of the conclusion of that old German fairy tale when the seven little goats dance with their mother around the well in which the big bad wolf has just drowned.* (259)

But there are also references to English folklore and classical mythology that are part of Massaquoi's writing style steeped in cultural literacy. These allusions do not just appear as curiosities, but are cited as parallels of his own situation:

(24) *When I reached the school and saw my mother's eyes light up as I presented her with my treasures – a couple of chocolate bars, some sardine cans, and a few bars of soap – I felt like Robin Hood must have felt when he robbed the rich to give to the poor.* (250)

(25) *At one point I lost my grip on my suitcase and it slipped down the muddy hill, causing me to repeat part of my strenuous climb all over. It reminded me of the legendary King Sisyphus of Greek mythology, whom the gods condemned to push a huge rock to the top of a steep hill in Hades, only to have the rock slip from his grasp and roll back down the hill, forcing him to start his backbreaking labor over again. I recalled that Sisyphus, a former Mount Olympus insider, had offended the gods by cheating death, and wondered what I had done to suffer a similar fate.* (378)

Turning to the proverbial language, the conjecture might be appropriate that Massaquoi had been introduced to it by his reading obsession, as he mentions in a two-page mini-chapter on “Books to the Rescue” (79-80):

(26) If the relentless barrage of Nazi propaganda to which we were constantly exposed [as school children] failed to close my mind permanently, it was because of a childhood habit of mine that reached compulsive proportions. As soon as I had learned to read, my mother fostered my interest in books, and by the time I was eight years old, I had become hopelessly addicted to reading books – any books. (79)

Among other authors he mentions having read Cervantes’ *Don Quixote* with its amassments of proverbs (Mieder 2016) as well as works by Charles Dickens (Bryan and Mieder 1997) and Mark Twain (West 1930) whose novels are replete with proverbs and proverbial expressions. Of course, journalistic writing is also often informed by proverbial phrases as catchy titles and as expressive metaphors throughout (Mieder 2004: 150-153). His predisposition towards phraseologisms of all types is apparent from the headings of some of his short chapters:

- (27) The Good Life at the Alster (12-16)*
- (28) The New Kid on the Block (17-23)*
- (29) Head Start (28-30)*
- (30) Hitler Strikes Home (54-56)*
- (31) Mutti’s Inner Circle (83-85)*
- (32) Making Ends Meet (88-89)*
- (33) Life Goes on (145-148)*
- (34) Forbidden Fruit (187-191)*
- (35) The Beginning of the End (196-200)*
- (36) Operation Gomorrah (201-207)*
- (37) No Room at the Inn (242-247)*
- (38) Free at Last! (250-261)*
- (39) The Razor’s Edge (262-264)*
- (40) Home, Sweet Home (265-267)*
- (41) Reconciliation in the Nick of Time (390-395)*
- (42) In the “Home of the Brave” (411-430)*

It is of interest to note how Massaquoi with an ironic twist superimposes well-known American expressions on his German predicament. Thus he employs “Free at Last!” that is based on an African American spiritual that was popularized by its use at the end of Martin Luther King’s “I Have a Dream” speech of August 28, 1963 (Mieder 2010: 194-201), to describe the newly found freedom at the news of Hitler’s death on April 30, 1945. Understandably so, it is also in this chapter where he overcomes his insider/outsider German identity (Nganang 2005: 235-237):

(43) *I was now “on the other side.” It dawned on me that in one fell swoop I had ceased to be what I had always considered myself – a German. But somehow the thought didn’t bother me. The Germans never let me fully share in their happy past. Now I didn’t need any part of their miserable present. I concluded that I had reached a watershed in my life. I could sense that the pendulum of fate was swinging my way for a change and wondered what had taken it so long. For the first time in years, I felt totally free of the paralyzing fear that my pride had never permitted me to admit to anyone, least to myself, but that had stalked me relentlessly by day and by night. It was not an ordinary kind of fear, such as the fear of being killed in a bombing raid or in a Nazi concentration camp. Instead, it was the fear of being humiliated, of being ridiculed, of being degraded, of having my dignity stripped from me, of being made to feel that I was less a human being, less a man than the people in whose midst I lived. Suddenly, that fear was lifted from me like a heavy burden I had carried without being fully aware of it. (257-258)*

With this significant watershed behind him, “Life goes on” (145-148), as the title of an earlier chapter expresses it proverbially. Thus, his account of having found a basement abode in a bombed-out building for him and his mother gets the uplifting proverb title “Home, Sweet Home” even though it is infested with fleas and does in no way represent the tender claim of the song from 1823 with that title by J.H. Payne (1791-1852). Massaquoi might also have cited the proverb “Be it ever so humble, there’s no place like home” that has its origin from that very song (Mieder et al. 1992: 304). And finally, when Massaquoi, the “confirmed Americophile” (308), deals in the third part of his autobiography in but thirty pages with his life in the United

States, he uses the partial line of “The land of the free and the home of the brave” from Francis Scott Key’s (1779-1843) “The Star-Spangled Banner” (1814, see Shapiro 2006: 424)) as the title: “In the ‘Home of the Brave’” (411). There is some bitter disappointment as he experiences racism and discrimination as he states later in that chapter by quoting the entire line from the national anthem: “I no longer felt the need to idealize the United States. For the moment, I felt terribly disappointed and betrayed regarding my view of ‘the land of the free and the home of the brave’” (421). Earlier in his autobiography, he had made a similar observation: “It took me a while to psychologically digest my introduction to the American dilemma – America’s inability, or unwillingness, to live up to its creed of ‘liberty and justice for all’” (318-319) And yet, Hans-Jürgen Massaquoi did eventually find a positive identity:

(44) After several years of paying dues, including journalism studies at two universities, things started to look up and fall into place. Ever so slowly, I began to see the light at the end of the long, long tunnel. I knew I had not only survived but succeeded when I went on my first major assignment for Ebony, to interview President Sekou Touré of newly independent Guinea at the Libertyville, Illinois, home of UN Ambassador Adlai Stevenson. When the two world figures sat down for an animated chat with me, the “racially inferior” dead-end black kid from Nazi Germany, it seemed to me that my coming to America had not been such a bad idea after all.
(430)

In fact, as thousands of immigrants before and after him, he learned to make his peace with his new homeland: “After scuffling and ‘paying dues,’ [...] I had found my American dream” (431) as a top-notch journalist with a wife and two sons in a nice neighborhood of Chicago.

The last two quotations from Massaquoi’s autobiography reveal his proverbial style! The proverbial phrase “to pay one’s dues” appears twice, but there are also three more such phrases: “to fall into place,” “to be a light at the end of the tunnel,” and “to be a at a dead end.” Such proverbial groupings are no rarity. In a chapter with the proverbial title “Head Start” (28-30) Massaquoi tells about the unexpected event of his childhood-playmate Erika

(they are but four years old) having exposed herself to him that gets the youngsters into obvious trouble: “Literally caught with her panties down by her nonplussed grandmother, Erika shifted into reverse and started to cry” (29). After this playful use of the proverbial phrase “to be caught with one’s pants down,” he ends his account with three additional proverbial phrases:

(45) *The lessons I gleaned from this traumatic interlude were (1) that there was a distinct anatomical difference between boys and girls, (2) that there was something about that difference that for some unfathomable reason made grown-ups uptight, and (3) that a girl could get a fellow into a whole lot of trouble. Having had my share, I decided to leave well enough alone and in the future to avoid girls like the plague. But the best-laid plans of men and mice sometimes go awry, so eventually did mine.* (29-30)

Not only are the three proverbial phrases “to have one’s share,” “to leave well enough alone,” and “To avoid like the plague” strung together here, but he adds the proverb “The best-laid plans of men and mice often go astray” to boot, assuring his readers with an ironic smile that he later learned to deal plenty well with the opposite sex.

Massaquoi’s descriptions of his terrible experiences at school having to listen to racial slurs that at times became physical are especially disturbing, but these stereotypical insults are lessened by the comradery that existed among the school children who could not deny that their black outsider had plenty of intelligence:

(46) *Even though I breezed through most subjects with customary ease, there were two subjects that gave me a run for my money – English and math. In math, I at least managed – by hook or by crook – to get a passing grade, mainly by convincing Tom Shark that I really tried. In English, on the other hand, I was completely over my head. Since I had joined the class of Frau Dr. Fink, the only teacher in the entire grade school with a doctorate, my progress in English had ground to a complete halt.* (133)

Clearly Massaquoi enjoyed writing this passage, especially in light of the fact that English became a second “mother tongue” to him in due time. And, of course, he knows all the right five

colloquial phrases to add expressiveness to his prose: “to breeze through something,” “To give someone a run for his money,” “by hook or by crook,” “To be over one’s head,” and “to grind to a halt.” The popular twin formula “by hook or by crook” (Gallacher 1970) reappears at the beginning of the proverbially entitled chapter “The Razor’s Edge” (262-264) where Massaquoi once again interweaves several proverbial phrases:

(47) *Nothing could convince me that things would not get better for me now that the Nazis were gone and the war was over. The latest setback was simply a reminder that nothing would be handed to me on a [silver] platter. But I was quite willing to do whatever it took to make things happen, although at the moment, I hadn’t the foggiest idea what my options were. All I knew was that, if I could help it, I would never work in anybody’s machine shop again. I was grateful to my mother, who had sacrificed to give me the opportunity of learning a trade, but after four years of growing calluses while risking life and limb with backbreaking labor amid lung-blistering stench and ear-shattering noise, I was more than ready for a change. By hook or by crook, I was determined to make the transition to the white-collar class; in what capacity, I wasn’t quite sure.* (262)

It is a bit surprising that Massaquoi does not include the word “silver” in his use of the proverbial expression “To be handed on a silver platter.” In any case, he adds the phrases “to not have the foggiest idea,” “to risk life and limb”, and “by hook or by crook” to express the vicissitudes of his precarious situation that he is determined to change to a meaningful existence.

The following example may well serve as a final example of such phraseological run-on comments. It is of special interest since it shows once and for all that Massaquoi is keenly aware of language as he is confronted with new American-English idiomatic phrases:

(48) *I had begun to notice that Americans – especially the black Americans I had met – spoke a language that bore little resemblance to the one taught by my English teachers Herr Harden, Herr Neumann, and Frau Dr. Fink. When, at the urging of Smitty, I filled his colleague in on my life under Hitler, Slim was moved to interrupt from time to time with “I dig,” “Can you beat that?,”*

“Get a load of that,” and “Ain’t that a bitch?,” none of which made a great deal of sense to me. (297)

There is no doubt that Massaquoi steadily relies on metaphorical expressions throughout his spell-binding account of survival as a biracial person in three countries in which he cannot escape the unfortunate reality to be a misfit no matter how hard he tries to fit into the social fabric riddled by racial prejudices. The following contextualized examples are representative of this stylistic *modus operandi* with many more to be found in the attached index of proverbial texts that can unfortunately only list them without contexts due to space restraints:

(49) *As a dyed-in-the-wool arch-Nazi, [the school principal Heinrich] Wriede was on a constant alert to weed out anything that conflicted with his deeply entrenched conviction of German superiority. (71)*

(50) *There were a few [teachers], who – sensitive to my particular plight [harassment] – went out of their way to make my life a little easier. Among the latter was Herr Schneider, a goateed man with erect, military bearing who taught us zoology, biology, botany, and, in a roundabout way, about the birds and the bees. (73)*

(51) *When all of us agreed that at least five minutes had elapsed and there was still no sign of him [teacher Harden], we dispersed like rats leaving the sinking ship. (77)*

(52) *Now the cat was out of the bag and I realized how [principal] Wriede had been setting me up. (103)*

(53) *This relatively quick disillusionment with the HJ – which, as a matter of sour grapes, I welcomed from the bottom of my heart – did not occur in my class alone but was manifest throughout my school and, I suspect, throughout the city and beyond. (104)*

(54) *By the time I had reached my second apprenticeship year, I no longer considered working as hard and as long as a full-grown man such a harsh reality. It had simply become reality. Yet, even under those conditions, my life was not all work and no play. (159)*

(55) *It had been drummed into our heads by our teachers that, in the Führer's National Socialist state, men ran the show with women as their helpmates. (171)*

(56) *I always made sure to bring a buddy along as a decoy [on a date with his girl-friend Gretchen]. I reasoned that a threesome appeared like a more ambiguous, therefore less suspicious, relationship than a twosome. To make the deception work, I would always position myself in such a way as to lead the uninitiated observer to believe that I, not the decoy, was our trio's "fifth wheel." (172)*

(57) *Looking at several dozen pairs of hostile eyes and realizing too late that he had opened the wrong can of worms, the soldier let go of my lapel. Thoroughly humiliated, he awkwardly moved to the exit. (227)*

(58) *Nazi Germany had clearly and incontrovertibly reached the point when it desperately needed "the likes of me," not to win the war, but merely to buy itself a few days of time before it would be crushed by the Allied juggernaut. The shoe, I decided, was clearly on the other foot. (232)*

(59) *"I'll cross that bridge when I get to it," I told myself. Fortunately, my luck held out again and the bridge remained uncrossed. (233)*

(60) *Having been totally isolated from other non-Aryans, I had developed a false sense of security. Egon [a Jewish friend] made me realize that we were all in the same boat, and that at any moment the boat could be sinking. (239, Mieder 2005: 187-209)*

(61) *Trying not to look like cats that swallowed the canary, we busied ourselves with furiously sweeping the garage floor. (249)*

(62) *I was confident that in the new era of Allied occupation, my color would be less of an obstacle than it had been so far and that, one way or another, I would find a way to put bread on the table for my mother and myself. (272)*

(63) *As a victim of Nazi racial hate, I, too, favored the approach of the Soviet troops, who, it was widely known, purged the Nazis in their zone of occupation with an unforgiving head-for-an-eye policy. But my orientation was too Western and my knowledge of and interest in dialectic materialism too vague for me to throw out the baby with the bathwater and abandon my American dream.* (286, Mieder 1993: 193-224)

(64) *This “little white lie” [that his father was an American and not a Liberian], I had discovered, could make the difference between cordial acceptance as a brother and cold rejection as an unwelcome stranger.* (316)

(65) *Cautioning us to hang on, he [an American army captain] floored the gas pedal and, to our great delight, the vehicle took off like a bat out of hell.* (318)

(66) *My father promised to help me make up my educational deficiencies by having me attend college, perhaps in the United States. His words were music to my ears, and I intended to do everything I could to earn his continued support and trust.* (357)

(67) *They [some young people] made me realize how much of my own youth I had lost struggling merely to survive. I also envied the way their careers, and often their future marriages, had been carefully arranged by their families while I had to keep flying by the seat of my pants.* (363)

(68) *Eventually, I realized that perhaps I should be the one to extend the olive branch [to his father who had neglected him].* (390)

(69) *For me, however, it was utterly ludicrous that a nation that prided itself on its democratic traditions and looked down on the Nazis for their racial attitudes would segregate soldiers who served in the army and who were expected to fight the same enemy. Despite my misgivings, I learned to take the bitter with the sweet.* (428)

Massaquoi had been warned by a friend that he “might never get used to that side of the ‘American Way’” (412), but as his second

autobiography about his successful personal and professional life in the United States shows, he did not acquiesce and joined the civil rights movement with word and deed as an engaged and responsible citizen. Reflecting on the two-thirds of his life spent in the United States he writes at the end of his first autobiography with justified pride and measured humility:

(70) There was no better way I could have repaid my mother for all she had done for me than to “make something of myself” and to present her with two grandsons, Steve Gordon and Hans Jürgen, Jr., who likewise have made something of themselves. Following Steve’s graduation from Harvard Medical School and the enrollment of Hans at the University of Michigan Law School, nothing gave her more pleasure than to brag about “my grandson, the doctor, and my other grandson, the soon-to-be lawyer.” As she always used to say, “Ende gut, alles gut.” (443)

As the good son that he was, he gives his dear mother the last word by quoting one of her favorite German proverbs who, once Hamburg was in the hands of the British occupational forces, had put her life into the hands of her dear son:

(71) She surprised me by formally turning the reins of our small “family” over to me. “You are in charge now,” she told me. “With this new British occupation, I don’t know my way around anymore. So from now on, you make the decisions for us both.” I was deeply touched and honored, and resolved to skipper our little boat as best I could. The question was, where could we go” (264)

Indeed, they were together in the same familial boat, to cite the proverbial expression that appears some twenty-five pages earlier with its metaphor standing for the common fate of Massaquoi and other persecuted victims of Nazi Germany.

To a certain degree, Massaquoi’s autobiography is also the biography of his mother who is depicted as a gifted proverbialist throughout the book. Her proverbial prowess, more than the proverbs her son might have gleaned from reading Cervantes, Dickens, and Twain, appears on many pages of this lively account, with her last proverb “Ende gut, alles gut” being only the crescendo of it all. As the following pages with numerous proverb examples will show by way of German and English proverbs,

Massaquoi's mother has had a major influence on his magnificent book with its many actual proverbs in addition to the multitude of proverbial phrases. It all starts early in the book in the chapter "The New Kid on the Block" (17-23) with its proverbial title. Having found "a tiny, one-room, cold-water, attic flat on the third floor of a tenement building" (17) for them, his working mother tries her best to raise her little boy :

(72) *She was a kind and soft-hearted woman, who, although somewhat gruff in demeanor, never spanked me or in any way became physical when I stepped over the line. She didn't have to. For those not altogether rare occasions, she had a handy deterrent that never failed to do the trick. Intoning the old German proverb "He who doesn't listen must feel" [Wer nicht hören will, muß fühlen], she'd reach into her broom closet and fetch her notorious **Rute**, consisting of a bundle of thin twigs tied together at one end, which, she claimed, Santa Claus had left behind for precisely such occurrences. Just waving this vaunted instrument of mayhem in my face was all she needed to do to make me return in a hurry to the straight and narrow path of righteousness. (22-23)*

Not only does this short paragraph include the three phrases "to step over the line," "to do the trick," and "to be a straight and narrow path," but it also contains the first example of his mother's rich repertoire of German proverbs that Massaquoi cites in English. But he does not shy away from confronting his English readers with quoting proverbs in German to which he adds the English translation in parentheses to assure proper understanding. This is the case in a scene where his mother, who had lost her job, is asking for support from an administrator who desires favors in return:

(73) *"I am positive that I can arrange for you to get your job back," he added with an encouraging smile. "You do understand, however, that I can't go out on a limb for a person with your – let's say – past without you showing me some cooperation. **Eine Hand wäscht die Andere**. (One hand washes the other)." (56)*

Here it is a despicable man who is using the internationally disseminated proverb from ancient Rome (Paczolay 1997: 174-178) to coerce his mother into a quid pro quo relationship but she,

“beginning to smell a rat about the size of the administrator” (56) will have no part of it. The proverbial expression “to smell a rat” is fittingly expanded here to a metaphor describing the manipulative bureaucrat.

Doubtlessly Massaquoi had learned the proverb from his mother and that is also the case for the proverb “Man muß gute Miene zum bösen Spiel machen” (“You have to grin and bear it”) that also exists in the form of the proverbial phrase “gute Miene zum bösen Spiel machen” that appears in this next reference: “I made *gute Miene zum bösen Spiel* (smiled in the face of adversity), to quote Mutti, and resigned myself to the inevitable” (75). It is clear that Massaquoi recalled his mother’s proverbial speech throughout the many years that he was working on his autobiography. This brings to mind observations that the psychoanalyst Theodor Reik (1888-1969), a student of Sigmund Freud, has made in his article on “The Echo of the Proverb” (1939). Just like Massaquoi, he remembers how he heard proverbs during his childhood and how they are recalled in later life:

(74) *In recalling those proverbs and phrases heard in early youth, the memory of the people who used them is easily evoked. Many beloved phantoms rise up from the shadowy past, and many hated ones as well. These proverbs were uttered on various occasions by our parents, relations, friends, and acquaintances, but most of them, by far, came from our grandfather. [...] Something said in passing often reappears after many years as an echo. The hoard of proverbs and idiomatic phrases overheard by us children [...] will return more and more frequently the older we grow. They demand that we should listen to them and obey them. What is their purport? To remind us of our childhood, or our parents and grandparents, who once upon a time pronounced them.* (Reik 1940: 233-234, 238, 241)

There is no doubt that his mother’s proverbs were deeply engrained in Massaquoi’s mind. This comes to the fore in a truly remarkable chapter “Words of Wisdom” (81-83) that might just as well have been entitled as “My Mother’s Proverbs” or “Mutti’s Proverbs.” It includes eight German proverbs cited in English translation to which I have added the texts in their original language. They represent a testimony to Massaquoi’s mother whose

proverbial wisdom helped shape her son's personality and appear to have been guideposts during his impressive life's journey:

(75) *Words of Wisdom*

Of the many characteristics that defined my mother, one of the more pronounced ones was her incurable optimism. This was most apparent in her high expectations for me in spite of the dim outlook imposed by Nazi racial laws. Nothing could shake her conviction that, quite apart from race, I had exceptional potential and that some day – Nazis or no Nazis – I would make something of myself. [...] She convinced me that an engineering career would be within my reach, if only I reached hard enough. To encourage me to do just that, she would say, "If you want to become a hook, you'll have to start bending early" [Was ein Häkchen werden will, krümmt sich beizeiten].

[...] Instead of religious dogma, she had at her command an inexhaustible supply of proverbs, rhymes, and maxims to which she adhered. There was one for every occasion a person might possibly encounter in a lifetime – advice of how to manage money, how to treat friends, why it pays to be punctual, and on and on. It was a legacy from her mother, one she was determined to pass on to me. By the time I started first grade, I already knew that "lies have short legs" [Lügen haben kurze Beine], especially after having been caught in a lie. When she tried to teach me the benefits of a righteous life, she'd say, "A good conscience is a soothing pillow" [Ein gutes Gewissen ist ein sanftes Ruhekissen]. To instill modesty and politeness in me, she'd say, "With hat in hand, you can travel through the entire land" [Mit dem Hut in der Hand kommt man durchs ganze Land]. To keep me from treating a school chum meanly, she'd warn, "If you dig a hole for others, you'll fall into it yourself" [Wer andern eine Grube gräbt, fällt selbst hinein]. When I seemed unappreciative of a money gift because it was smaller than I expected, she would remind me that "he who doesn't honor the penny doesn't deserve the dollar" [Wer den Pfennig nicht ehrt, ist des Talers nicht wert]. Although, unlike the Ten Commandments, they lacked divine endorsement, these little morsels of German folk wisdom have lost nothing of their validity since I became a man, something I've tried to impress upon my two sons. Today, nothing pleases me more than to hear them quote their Omi (granny) or me when making a point. [...]

Mutti loved to sing – anything from operatic arias to tunes from movies and operettas, folk songs and hit tunes from her youth. One of her frequent laments was that she didn't have a beautiful voice. That realization, while perhaps true, did not make her any less inclined to fill our apartment with songs, whether she was knitting, crocheting, or doing the laundry. “Where there's music, settle down,” she would say, “for evil people have no songs” [Wo man singt, da laß dich nieder, böse Menschen haben keine Lieder].

Generous to a fault, Mutti would spare no effort to help a needy friend in distress. [...] She was a courageous, stubborn, and combative woman who didn't mind confronting anyone, high or low, who she felt had done her or me wrong. But if ever someone she had trusted crossed her in a major way, she would put that person out of her life for good with no possibility of reconciliation. She was of the opinion that “trash fights and trash makes up” [Pack schlägt sich, Pack verträgt sich].

Unbounded resiliency enabled her to get through the many ups and downs of her long life. Strong and determined, she used to quip, “Weeds don't perish” [Unkraut vergeht nicht]. whenever someone noted her remarkable ability to bounce back from adversity.

*Despite her outspokenness that spared no one, Mutti was well liked and, in turn, liked people. Frequently on weekends, our tiny attic was packed with her friends, mostly fellow hospital and factory workers, who gathered for a **gemütlichen Abend** (cozy evening) of talking, singing, laughing, eating, and coffee drinking, all of which were her favorite pastimes. [...] (81-82, in the German translation with the title “Worte der Weisheit” on pp. 100-103)*

In addition to this unique proverbial collage Massaquoi lets his mother expound proverbs throughout his book as he recalls her wise words of behavioral advice. There are a few paremiological studies that have looked at such proverbial traditions in American (Lindahl 2004, Newall 1994, Robinson 1991, Wiener-Piepho 1991), French (Chiche 1983), Jewish (Ben-Amos 1995, Lévy and Zumwalt 1990), Italian (Bornstein 1991, Filippini 1999), Portuguese (Marbot-Benedetti 1989), Russian (Fomina 2006), and Spanish (Chahin et al. 1999) family settings, usually attesting that the wisdom is handed down from grandparents or parents to children (Mieder and Holmes 2000, Mieder 2017).

Just as is evident from Massaquoi's recollection of his mother's frequent use of proverbs, these studies deal with family relationships, didacticism, ethics, socialization, tradition, transmission, values, and worldview (Mieder 2009). Hans-Jürgen Massaquoi with his African American wife and his two sons might have been especially interested in Dennis Folly's "Getting the Butter from the Duck': Proverbs and Proverbial Expressions in an Afro-American Family" (1982), Mary Page and Nancy Washington's "Family Proverbs and Value Transmission of Single Black Mothers" (1987), and Linda McWright's *African-American Mothers' Perceptions of Grandparents' Use of Proverbs in Value Socialization of Grandchildren (Intergenerational)* (1998). Finally mention must also be made of Derek Williams' study "Everything that Shine Ain't Gold': A Preliminary Ethnography of a Proverb in an African American Family" (2003) that looks at but one proverb with a particular dominance in a family. As is obvious, the proverb under discussion is an African American variant of the medieval European proverb "All that glitters is not gold" (Paczolay 1997: 125-130).

In any case, here are a few more contextualized references that show the effective use of proverbial language by Massaquoi's amazing mother who as a single mother coped through years of hardship and raised her biracial son to be an exemplary person who respected, admired, and loved her to the end. In the first reference his Mutti remembers her mother, Massaquoi's grandmother, having employed the proverb as family wisdom:

(76) *Like most German women of her generation, she avoided going into debt, convinced like her mother that **borgen macht Sorgen** (to borrow makes sorrow). Consequently, she categorically never bought anything on credit. (88)*

(77) *Even the corroborating testimony of my story by several of the perpetrators [the boys had shot paper gliders from the balcony during a church service] could not sway him [Pastor Ottmer] to let me off the hook. I remembered my mother's dictum, **Mitgefangen, mitgehungen** (caught together, hanged together). With 20/20 hindsight, I could see that she had been right. Even though I had not participated in the glider caper, I had put myself in the company of goof-offs on the balcony and thus gotten myself into a mess. (147)*

(78) *Morris's [his Liberian brother] shack made our basement refuge in bombed-out Hamburg look inviting. I had trouble concealing my shock at the squalid conditions in which my brother had been living and shuddered at the thought of having to call this hovel my home. But I decided not to sound too negative. Besides, I had long ago learned from my mother that "in a pinch, the devil eats flies" [In der Not frißt der Teufel Fliegen]. (380)*

(79) *Although I hadn't touched a lathe since I worked for Lindner A.G. in Nazi Germany, it took only a short while to feel at home behind the cranks and levers of the machine in front of me. My mother was right, **gelernt ist gelernt** (learned is learned). (417)*

Massaquoi does not always mention his mother when citing a German proverb, but he almost definitely learned them from her. Here is a telling example in which he applies a well-known proverb to himself:

(80) *That evening I scrubbed and dressed with extra care in preparation of the adventure ahead. Whatever second thoughts cropped up in my mind, they were quickly dispelled by my hopeless state of anticipation. With near-fatalistic resignation, I invoked the old popular German proverb that holds – quite illogically, I think – that **Wer A sagt muss auch B sagen** (he who says A must also say B). I certainly had taken step A, and nothing could stop me from taking a crack at step B. If everything worked out according to my plan, today – July 31, 1941 – would go down in history as the day when I learned the true meaning of making love. Much later I discovered that it was also the day on which **Reichsmarschall Hermann Göring** issued the first known written order for the murder of all Jews living under Nazi rule, an action he referred to as the **Endlösung** (Final Solution). (190)*

Having been brought up with a barrage of German proverbs, Massaquoi developed his own fondness of proverbial wisdom and incorporates it repeatedly in his autobiographical narrative. But as an adult journalist living in the United States communicating in excellent oral and written English, he obviously built up his own repertoire of proverbs in that language. One is inclined to change the old proverb “Like father, like son” to the befitting anti-proverb “Like mother, like son.” Right at the beginning

Massaquoi talks about his German grandfather and includes the proverbs “Charity begins at home” and “Last hired, first fired” with the latter being a modern American proverb having originated in 1918 (Doyle et al. 2012: 121; Mieder 2019: 129):

(81) *While he [Hermann Baetz, his mother’s father] felt no animosity toward the foreigners [Italian laborers], he was a patriotic German of simple principles, which included the firm conviction that charity begins at home. For years, several Italians had worked at the quarry when jobs were plentiful. But the unwritten rule had always been that they were the last to be hired and, if there was a shortage of jobs, the first to be fired.* (6)

The proverb “Absence makes the heart grow fonder” appears quite differently twice in the autobiography, with the second text negating the proverb to describe his troubled relationship with his father who had abandoned him and his mother. Together these two proverb instantiations show clearly that proverbs exhibit polysituativity, polyfunctionality, and polysemanticity and that they are not necessarily cited in their traditional wording (Mieder 2004: 9):

(82) *Although I had become extremely sensitive about displaying affection and emotions in public since I entered school, I made an exception when I let my mother hug and kiss me to her heart’s content. It was at that point that I discovered the old verity that absence makes the heart grow fonder.* (66-67)

(83) *A flood of conflicting emotions took hold of me as I prepared to open the letter [from his father], the first tangible link in almost eighteen years with the man my mother had taught me to call **father** despite the fact that from the time he left us, while I was still a little boy, he had been largely a stranger to me. Time and absence had not made my heart grow fonder of him. If I felt anything about him, it was detached curiosity.* (333)

But here are a few more examples of Massaquoi’s effective and expressive integration of proverbs that underscore his trials and tribulations as a biracial youngster in Nazi Germany, as a young adult in Liberia, and eventually as an immigrant in America:

(84) *Herr Harden [his English teacher] was a fanatic practitioner of the “spare the rod and spoil the child” philosophy, and – backed by a system that condoned, if not encouraged, corporal punishment – literally made the rod the centerpiece of his pedagogy. As a result, he was the most despised and feared teacher on the Kätnerkamp faculty. He was also the first teacher who got a piece of my hide during my eventful eight-year elementary school career. (75-76)*

(85) *Sometimes her [his mother] methods of instilling values in me and indelibly impressing on my young mind that crime doesn’t pay were as creative as they were effective. It didn’t take me long to realize that her wheels of justice turned swiftly and inexorably. (87)*

(86) *When a pupil referred to my scholastic and athletic abilities to refute [teacher] Dutke’s contention that people of other than “Aryan blood” were both intellectually and physically inferior, Dutke dressed down the pupil for daring to disagree with him. He then lectured the class that my case was merely the exception that proved the rule, and suggested that whatever “normal characteristics” I displayed I had definitely inherited from my Aryan parent. (110)*

(87) *Then, after suggesting that in every barrel of apples, there are a few rotten ones, he [school principal Wriede] continued, with a withering stare in my direction, that there would be some boys who, for one reason or another, would be found unworthy of the honor of wearing the uniform of a German soldier. For them, he said, he had only one piece of advice: to get out of Germany while they could. (129-130)*

(88) *By an odd coincidence, shortly after I joined the boxing club, Hitler made boxing lessons an integral part of all schools’ athletic curricula, since he was convinced that boxing built character and bolstered self-confidence. By the time the first boxing classes were taught in my class by a teacher who had to take a crash course in the sport’s fundamentals, I was already an accomplished amateur boxer. Since in the land of the blind, the one-eyed man is king, I was hailed immediately as a boxing phenom. (137-138)*

(89) *On the wall above the workbench was a large poster with an illustration of a blond Siegfried-type worker with rolled-up sleeves and bulging muscles, holding a heavy hammer in his right hand. ARBEIT ADEL (Work ennobles)! the poster claimed in large letters against the backdrop of a swastika flag. If the poster's intent was to inspire us, it had totally missed its purpose with me. All I could see in my immediate future was a lot of toil and drudgery and very little, if any nobility. (151-152; This is actually an anti-proverb of "Tugend adelt" ("Virtue ennobles") and a clear sign of proverb manipulations by Nazi propaganda; see Mieder 1993: 225-255)*

(90) *From the few times I had met Hans's parents, I had always assumed that they were just an ordinary working couple whose biggest adventure in life was watching their only child achieve victories in the boxing ring. But I soon learned never to judge a book by its cover. (157)*

(91) *But since we had no role models by which to judge our performance, we "jitterbugged" to our hearts' content behind Herr Lucas's [dance instructor] back, and in the process proved beyond a shadow of doubt that ignorance is truly bliss. (180)*

(92) *Following a brief "short-arm inspection and rubdown with a dry towel [in a Hamburg brothel], she pulled out a fresh condom and, before I could say **Danke schön**, had me all suited up and ready to go. Without further ado she flung herself backward on the bed, spread her ample thighs, and reminded me in a querulous voice that time was money and that five marks didn't entitle me to spend all night. (187)*

(93) *I decided to play hooky from my gig [as a musician] at the Alkazar the following day and instead return to the **Appleton Victory**. Hard times had long taught me to not pass up an opportunity to make hay while the sun shines. (302)*

(94) *I now understood what he [his father] meant when he told me about the advantages of being a big frog in a little pond, like Liberia, versus the other way around. (369-370)*

(95) *The wheels [of a demolished car], it appeared, had already been picked clean of tires by “salvagers,” as was the interior of the van, which showed no trace that it had been loaded with rice. It reminded me of the old saying, “One man’s meat is another man’s poison.” For the hungry bellies of the poor villagers of Ganta [in Liberia], my father’s accident and several thousand pounds of rice must have been a welcome windfall.* (392)

(96) *At least Karl [a childhood friend] was spared the indignity suffered by many German POWs who, upon their return home, found their wives had replaced them with an English or American soldier – true to the saying, “To the winner go the spoils.”* (442)

These selected references are ample proof of Hans-Jürgen Massaquoi’s virtuosic employment of proverbs that he integrates in their traditional wording or in innovative alterations. At times he only cites them partially or merely alludes to them as in “being a big frog in a little pond” cited above. *The Dictionary of Modern Proverbs* (Doyle et al. 2012: 78 and 64) lists two complete variants: “Better a big fish in a little pond (puddle, pool) than a little fish in a big pond (mighty ocean)” from 1903, and “It is better to be a big duck in a little puddle (pond) than a little duck in a big puddle(pond)” from 1934 (Mieder 2020: 199-200). To this can now be added Massaquoi’s third variant that in its entirety must be “It is better to be big frog in a little pond than a little frog in a big pond.” In any case, as the attached index of proverbial texts shows, his autobiography, in addition to its intrinsic value as a personal account of survival and struggle for identity, is also a paremiological and paremiographical treasure trove.

Finally, then, it comes as no surprise that Hans-Jürgen Massaquoi, who “stuck it out in the United States and became a leading journalist after graduating from the University of Illinois” (Barkin 2009: 263) very appropriately cites the proverb “You can’t go home again” that has become a modern proverb with its start as the title of Thomas Wolfe’s (1900-1938) novel published posthumously in 1940 (Doyle et al. 2012: 123). It appears in pretty much the last chapter on “Germany Revisited” (430-436) that relates his visit to his original homeland in 1966 that resulted in the two already mentioned descriptive and reflective essays published in that year in *Ebony*. Having forged a new existence

for sixteen years by then, it must have been a heart-wrenching experience for him to fly to Frankfurt and then travel on to his native Hamburg. Here is but one lengthy paragraph of his moving account with the proverb at its end:

(97) *Visiting my former neighborhood on the north side of town, I stood stunned before a crate-littered vacant lot where on that memorable summer night twenty-three years earlier my home had been razed in an air attack. It seemed that the “[new economic] miracle” hadn’t quite reached this point. Briefly, I paused at the site of the air-raid shelter where I had survived the crucial attack that had turned my neighborhood into an inferno. I remembered the charred corpses of the unfortunate people who had been unable to reach the shelter in time. On that site there now stood a spanking-new housing development with green play lots and children playing the same old games I had played as a little boy. As I watched them, I wished, somehow, that at least one of them would give me once again the old **Neger, Neger, Schornsteinfeger** routine, just for old time’s sake. But either German children had changed, or I no longer rated. Like a latter-day Rip van Winkle, I walked the vaguely familiar-looking streets where once I had known just about every lamppost, every tree, and every face, unrecognized by the people I met and recognizing none of them. For me, who had once been a celebrity of sorts in Barmbek [suburb of Hamburg], whom everybody had known, if not by name, certainly as der **Negerjunge**, it was an unfamiliar feeling. At that moment the full truth of Thomas Wolfe’s famous assertion hit me: you can’t go home again. (432-433)*

Amazing, how Massaquoi experiences a strange longing to hear that children’s rhyme “Neger, Neger, Schornsteinfeger” in a bizarre nostalgic moment, perhaps forgetting for an instant what a terrible stereotype it was. Surely, he had no intention to return to Germany, but one senses some love for it despite the horrors that had been brought to thousands of innocent people by way of the Holocaust and otherwise. By the mid-sixties he had found his identity as “an African American with deep German ethnic roots” as he described it in a letter from 2005 (Lindhout 2006: 4). America had been his dream and it became the new homeland for him as a former Afro-German and his mother. Thus, indeed,

there is plenty of truth in the proverb that “You can’t go home again,” but the old German proverbs appeared in Hans-Jürgen Massaquoi’s life as echoes of the past and wisdom for the future.

Nota bene

I thank my colleague and friend Helga Schreckenberger from the University of Vermont for giving me Hans-Jürgen Massaquoi’s autobiography as a Christmas present in 2020. The book means more to me as a German immigrant to the United States in 1960 than words can express. As far as my life as a paremiologist (proverb scholar) is concerned, *Destined to Witness* represents the best there is regarding proverbs as meaningful wisdom and worldview.

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Index of Proverbial Texts

The following list of phraseologisms (proverbs, proverbial expressions, proverbial comparisons, twin formulas, idioms, and a few quotations), alphabetically arranged according to keywords, registers all 509 proverbial texts (645 counting 136 duplicates) with their page numbers from Hans J. Massaquoi’s autobiography *Destined to Witness. Growing up Black in Nazi Germany*. New York: Harper Perennial, 1999. 443 pp. An asterisk * identifies actual proverbs.

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(Zarah Leander in the film *Die Grosse Liebe*)

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COVID-19 (POST)PROVERBIALS: TWISTING THE WORD AGAINST THE VIRUS

Abstract: This study fields a range of radical and newly-formed sayings, which are derived almost directly from traditional sayings, in a number of African languages, in reaction against or engagement with the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic. The set of proverbial creations, otherwise referred to as COVID-19 postproverbials, showed the ingenuity of the human mind in its creative powers as a regenerative, defensive and even playful forge against the choleric force of illnesses. The radical imagination in these proverbial creations in particular language communities are evident of the philosophy of engagement with the pandemic, ranging from admonition and deflation to derision of the pandemic as well as the promise of triumph against the illness. Beyond their structural and lexical formations, a general analysis of the body of COVID-19 postproverbials indicates certain common reflections on the reality of the pandemic, the experience of lockdown, social distancing and hygiene as well as the invocation of the morbid potential and presence of the virus across in communities. Thus, COVID-19 postproverbials are creative expressions of the awareness of the virus as much as they are verbal jousts with the realities of its virulence and trauma.

Keywords: COVID-19, Postproverbials, Proverbs, African Languages, Pandemic, Virus

“Already we are familiar with the concern generated by “nervous diseases,” and the awareness that man becomes more delicate in proportion as he perfects himself. As the century advanced, the concern became more pressing, the warnings more solemn. Already Raulin had observed that “since the birth of medicine...these illnesses have multiplied, have become more dangerous, more complicated, more problematical and difficult to cure.” (Foucault 1989: 211)

1. Preamble: Tracing the Virus

COVID-19 stands for “Coronavirus Disease 2019”, a transmissible respiratory disease caused by a novel coronavirus which first broke out in the city of Wuhan, Hubei Province, China, on November 17, 2019.¹ COVID-19, caused by the SARS-CoV2, is a new strain of SARS-CoV, i.e. Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome coronavirus. It was identified as an epidemic in 2002 in the city of Guangdong, China, affecting 26 countries with 8000 documented cases.² Unlike SARS-CoV, COVID-19 (SARS-CoV2), with over 2.4m cases in 210 countries across the world, has attained the status of a pandemic barely 150 days after its outbreak, with over 2.4m cases in 210 countries across the world.³

As researches on the origin, nature and volatility rate of the contagion continue, there have also been concerted, international efforts to contain its spread with the race for the vaccine to conquer the virus. While medical responses have been the most obvious to contain the pandemic, there have also been other responses to the ravaging illness, ranging from trado-medicinal, homeopathic, and the religious, to other conspiracy theorems, including the scare of the Biblical Armageddon, the end of days, the interrelation of the scourge with 5G wavelength radiation, and the counter-accusations of bio-terrorism which suggest an economic Third World War between the USA and China. Thus, the responses to COVID-19 have been notably medical, spiritual, philosophical, economic, political, sociological and soci-

¹ <https://www.livescience.com/first-case-coronavirus-found.html>; retrieved on September 14, 2020.

² <https://www.who.int/ith/diseases/sars/en/>; retrieved on September 14, 2020.

³ <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>; retrieved on September 14, 2020.

olinguistic. Across the African continent, following healthcare instructions, most national governments introduced a combination of testing, contact tracing, social distancing, face-masking, sanitization, hand washing and, total or partial lockdown of the citizenry as measures to mitigate the pandemic.⁴ According to a United Nations Habitat Report (2020), the control measures of most African countries to curtail the spread of COVID-19 included “restrictions on inter-regional movements to total lockdowns at the local, provincial or national level” (<https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>).

2. Breaking the Outbreak

In the ascendancy of COVID-19, different categories of creative materials including memes, video and audio skits, GIFs, quips and proverbs are produced in the social media as parts of the larger sociological and psychological (motivational) responses to the disease. Particularly, some inventive turns have been served on a number of proverbs that they can be categorized as novel creations of the postproverbial imagination given the strains noticeable in the breaking and re-composition of the words. The concept of “postproverbial” is derived from the phenomenon of twisting and extending the forms of the conventional proverbs. It is an interesting, even if instinctive and inventive, practice among the users of the given proverbs in a given language. By extending or twisting the proverbs, by cutting off and replacing parts of the original proverb, the proverb is invariably revised and postponed. The term “postproverbial” is, therefore, a reference to both the theory and practice of proverbial transformations, and it is an apparent parallel to the term, “anti-proverb”, which was first used and popularized by Wolfgang Mieder and Anna Litovkina in their works on proverb transformation in European and American scholarships.⁵

⁴ The first confirmed case of COVID-19 in Africa was found in Egypt on February 14, 2020; Nigeria had its first case on February 27, 2020; the first case in South Africa was announced on March 5, 2020; and in Ghana, the first two cases were reported on March 12, 2020. Details of country information are accessed from <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>.

⁵ Essays on postproverbials and anti-proverbs are listed in a section of this article.

Amidst the challenge and containment of the affliction, the strains of invented proverbs are phenomenal reactions of the people to the outbreak, deserving of attention and analysis. The radical imagination of the users of the proverb texts, within particular language communities, is evident of their philosophy of engagement with the pandemic. The postproverbial text itself is a cultural-linguistic ‘outbreak’, an *outgrowth* of the conventional text, thus, symbolically, a response to the viral outbreak.

3. Focus: In Search of the Deviant Text

The focus of this essay is to draw on the available range of post-proverbial responses to COVID-19, that is, the manner in which reactions to the scourge have been reconfigured in particular proverbial utterances in some African communities. An open call for contributions (OCC) was shared on March 15, 2020 on social media, including WhatsApp, Twitter and Facebook platforms.⁶ Respondents were not limited to the number of entries that they could supply. In selecting the entries for this study, a consideration was given to appropriateness, logic and translation. In some cases where clarifications were needed, direct correspondence with particular respondents was initiated as follow-up. The proverbs were collected within four weeks (March 16 - April 15, 2020) by means of question and sampling from respondents. In addition to the open call, other examples or illustrations of coronavirus-related proverbs were drawn from available sources in news reports, Twitter and other platforms. Furthermore, permission was sought to cite all the collated entries only for academic purpose.

This study contains twenty-three postproverbials related to COVID-19 in six African languages including Hausa, Ibibio, Iggede, Igbo, Yoruba and Zulu. As it will be evident in the interpretation section of this essay, the collected samples are radicalized sayings (in the season of anomie), emerging as decidedly playful but instructive fabrications out of the welter of traditional African proverbs. Also, given the ethnic background of most of the

⁶ All the respondents who supplied examples of coronavirus-related proverbs did so freely and approved of the use of the illustrations. The interpretations of the postproverbials are without any prejudice to the respondents’ own comments and suggestions.

respondents, examples from Yoruba language are more predominating, representing up to three-quarter of the total number of the proverbs collected. The preliminary observation is that the collected responses are admonitions which draw attention and awareness to the dangers of the pandemic, and in other cases, they are verbal jousts against the virus itself. In relation to the basic principles of rift, suture and super(im)position of the theory of postproverbials, these are absolute creations of the radical imagination, with new values, new functions and different significations.

4. The Postproverbial Order

Transgressive paremiology is the study of innovations and transformations in contemporary proverb scholarship. Its crucial interest is to deal with significant structural violence done to traditional or conventional proverbs, the deconstruction of the idiomatic pathogen of the conventional utterance which invariably affects its meaning, transmitted knowledge and the overarching philosophy of life.

To be sure, conventional proverbs have never been dismissed as jaded, outworn or clichés in spite of their ubiquitous and repetitive use. Yet, the human penchant for creativity, modernist or iconoclastic energies, coupled with a critical detachment from the heritage of traditional wisdom, have questioned the sacrosanct status of the proverbial text in culture. The term, “*antisprichwort*” (German for “anti-proverb”), was first used by Wolfgang Mieder in 1983.⁷ Mieder would collaborate later with Anna Litovkina, the Hungarian sociolinguist, to publish the first major work on the tradition of innovation in the use and making of proverbs by publishing *Twisted Wisdom: Modern Anti-Proverbs* (1999). In European and Anglo-American studies, proverb scholars have drawn on the label, “anti-proverb”, to signify alterations, transgressions and transformations. It is *anti(-)proverb* in French, *антипословица* in Russian, and *anti(-)proverbium* in Hungarian. In African proverb scholarship, the term “postproverbial”, was first coined in 1995 by Aderemi Raji-Oyelade in

⁷ Mieder, W. *Antisprichwörter*. Band I. Wiesbaden: Verlag für deutsche Sprache, 1983.

an essay that would be published later in *Research in African Literatures* in 1999.⁸

5. COVID-19 Postproverbials: Interpreting the Twisted Word

The set of COVID-19 postproverbials collected so far are verbal reflections on the reality of the pandemic, the experience of lockdown, social distancing, hygiene as well as the invocation and reification of the morbid potential and presence of the virus in the community. The interpretive minimum which runs through all but one of these radicalized texts is the personification of the coronavirus as subject and agency. As organized, each pair of proverb text for analysis contains the conventional proverb and the postproverbial retort engendered by the disease. Thus, the commentary that follows serves as contextual explication of the interrelation of the given proverbemes. In the basic structural pattern of the postproverbial act, a part of the conventional proverb – clausal, phrasal or lexical – is suspended and replaced by a newly extracted clause, phrase or lexis which directly presents coronavirus as an agent. In other cases, the conventional proverb remains intact but supplemented by a postproverbial retort. The double act of suspension and superimposition which takes place brings about a structural fissure, albeit, a locking down or twinning of the old with a new artifice which thus gives birth to a hybrid or rogue text.

⁸ Relevant publications on postproverbials or anti-proverbs include:

Raji-Oyelade, A. "Posting the African Proverb: A Grammar of Yoruba Postproverbials, or Logophagia, Logorrhea and the Grammar of Yoruba Postproverbials." *Proverbium: Yearbook of International Proverb Scholarship* 21(2004): 299-314; T. Litovkina, A. and Mieder, W. *Old Proverbs Never Die, They Just Diversify: A Collection of Anti-Proverbs*. Burlington & Veszprém: The University of Vermont & The Pannonian University of Veszprém, 2006; Mieder, W. "Anti-Proverbs and Mass Communication: The Interplay of Traditional and Innovative Folklore". *Acta Ethnographica Hungarica* 52.1 (2007): 17-46; Aleksa, M. and Hrisztova-Gotthardt, H. & T. Litovkina, A. "The Reception of Anti-Proverbs in the German Language Area", in Soares, R. & Lauhagankas, O. (eds.), *Actas ICP08 Proceedings*. Tavira: Tipografia Tavirense, 2009. pp. 83-98; and Raji-Oyelade, A. *Playful Blasphemies: Postproverbials as Archetypes of Modernity in Yoruba Culture*. Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, 2012.

5.1. On Lockdown

The first set of proverbial retorts to the pandemic are devoted to the people's reaction towards the sudden change of lifestyle caused by the official declaration of lockdowns in most countries around the world. The lockdown was the first major regulatory act of governments and attendant upon it were other restrictions including self-isolation, quarantine, face-masking and social/physical distancing. Medical tourism, the practice of travelling for therapeutic treatment, became downgraded, and in its place was medical curfew, the restriction of movement of persons across state borders in order to control the acute contagion.

(1)

p1: *Ibi orí dá'ni sí làá gbé.*

A man's home is where he should reside.

p2: *Ibi orí dá'ni sí làá gbé, níí gba'ni l'ówóọ àtánkálẹ̀ kòró.*⁹

A man's home is where he should reside. Thus, one is saved from the spread of coronavirus.

Comment: The conventional saying is a philosophical reference to the destiny as well as the contentment of man who must submit to the natural order of birth. In troping on this, the postproverbial retort directly points at the need for man to remain within his location (locus) in order to be saved from the uncharted rout of the virus. The sense of the spiritual (fate) in the first proverb is replaced by the sense of the physical (home) in the prosthetic proverb. This truly is a lockdown postproverbial.

(2)

p1: *Akpa sangha isang isi diagha se mbon ufok edia.*

The one who walks about does not eat what those at home consume.

p2: *Akpa sangha isang abi m^m COVID-19.*¹⁰

It is the one who walks about that will contract COVID-19.

Comment: This is an apt example of a postproverbial that is induced by the sense of precaution. Whereas the conventional proverb points at the adventurous nature of man, the radical

⁹ Supplied by a respondent, @Olushola-Excel Oyadiji (Yoruba).

¹⁰ Supplied by a respondent, @Hanson Utibe-Abasi (Ibibio).

response in COVID-19 addresses the danger of indiscriminate wandering.

(3)

p1: *Ukwu n'aga wam wam wam marakwa na anya n'aga wam wam na eleya.*

The leg that walks about should know that the eye that looks around is watching it.

p2: *Ukwu n'aga wam wam wam mara kwa na COVID-19 na eche ya.*¹¹

The leg that walks about should know that COVID-19 is waiting for it.

Comment: In this example of a lockdown postproverbial, a person is admonished against aimless wandering and transgression that could lead to infection. The restrictive tone of the original proverb is retained in the new proverb; the warning is not about extra vigilance (“of the eye that looks around”) as it is about the presence of the virus (COVID-19) that lurks around the corner for the wanderer.

5.2. On Social Distancing

The act of lockdown, with the creation of physical and social boundaries, was the direct cause of the condition of isolation and dissociation. The popular term for the practice of regulated spacing and dissociation is social distancing. Social distancing is the accepted measure of remoteness between persons and groups of people, with a view to reducing or canceling any act of intimacy, especially for the purpose of medical (psychological or psychiatric) healing. It is noteworthy that most of the postproverbial creations in the season of the coronavirus reflect directly or indirectly on the logic and necessity of safe distancing.

(4)

p1: *Ká rìn ká pò, yíyẹ níí yẹni.*

Moving in unison brings honour and respect.

p2: *Ká rìn ká pò, pípa níí pani.*¹²

¹¹ Supplied by a respondent @Miracle Francis (Igbo).

¹² Composed in a special song released by Jubal Music entitled “Koro”; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kqYnB9T9rUU>

Moving in unison brings death.

Comment: The original proverb here reflects on the joy of communal relations and association but the postproverbial admonishes against the danger of crowding which increases the rate of viral infection in COVID-19 time. The radicalized proverb is already used as part of a musical composition entitled “Koro” which was released on April 16, by Jubal Music (2020). The song is itself a persuasive melody drawing on the lesson of good hygiene, social distancing, counsel against overcrowding in the home and in public places. It is as well as an invocation of spiritual protection and hope for the future.¹³

(5)

p1: *Ara kii sá f'ára, bíí ti kúrúnà kọ́.*

Bodies do not run from bodies, not with scabies infection.

p2: *Ara kii sá f'ára, bíí ti kófídi kọ́.*¹⁴

Bodies do not run from bodies, not with the outbreak of COVID-19.

(5c): *Ara kii sá f'ára, bíí ti kórónà kọ́.*

Bodies do not run from bodies, not with coronavirus infection.

Comment: In the conventional proverb, a bacterial skin disease is the referent effect of non-cautionary physical interrelations; in the postproverbial creation, the discomfort of scabies is replaced by the stigma of coronavirus. Thus, COVID-19 is figured as the symptomatic repercussion of bodily interactions. The other post-proverbial variant here – *Ara kii sá f'ára, bíí ti kórónà kọ́* – is a direct pun of the phonetic similarity of corona/korona (English) and kúrúnà (Yoruba).

(6)

p1: *Ìsúnmóni, là á mò ẹ̀e ẹ̀ni.*

Close association brings understanding.

p2: *Ìsúnmóni, àrùn níí dá sára.*¹⁵

Close association breeds illness.

¹³ In popular imagination, coronavirus is shortened as “koro” being the colloquial form of corona/korona.

¹⁴ Supplied by a respondent, @Tolulope Akinrinde (Yoruba).

¹⁵ Supplied by a respondent, @Ope Oyetunji (Yoruba).

Comment: This is a proverb on the virtue of close interpersonal relations and how affiliations make understanding and awareness of a person's character possible. But the postproverbial creation becomes a warning, a counsel about social distancing as crucial mitigation of the danger of infection and its spread. Therefore, as in the previous example, close physical association is a veritable source of illness and death.

(7)

p1: *Òde kii yá aláṣọ rẹ.*

Partying never tires the dresser.

p2: *Òde kii yá aláṣọ rẹ, l'áyé kòró kọ.*¹⁶

Partying never tires the dresser, not in the time of coronavirus.

Comment: The conventional proverb is apparently a praise of the material possessions of someone with a chest of clothes and who is, therefore, never tired of going to parties. A general stereotype of the Yoruba is that of a people given to hedonism and lavish celebrations. One of the effects of the lockdown is the absolute absence of social gathering. The supplement of the postproverbial text is predictably cautionary, inferring that interaction or partying is no longer fanciful or virtuous in the age of the coronavirus.

(8)

p1: *Igi gogoro má gùn mii lójú, àtòkèrè la tí n'wó.*

That we may not be blinded by the tall, pointed tree, one must watch it from afar.

p2: *Igi kòró má gùn mii lójú, àtòkèrè la tí n'júbà.*¹⁷

That we may not be blinded by the tall, corona tree, it takes a salute from a distance.

Comment: While the original proverb expresses the need for extra caution and prudence in all proposals and actions, the postproverbial discourages socialization and encourages extra care. In the new proverb, there is an attribution, the qualification of the presence of the virus in a material object of nature – “igi kòronà” (corona tree).

¹⁶ Supplied by a respondent, @Wale Oyedeji (Yoruba).

¹⁷ Supplied by a respondent, @Adeshewa Adekoya (Yoruba).

5.3. On Spread and Awareness

By the context of their creation and use, some postproverbials have served as disseminators of the existence of the pandemic in the society. They also serve as verbal evidence, admonitions or confirmation of the aggressive virus with its morbid power of fear and death among the people.

(9)

p1: *Ó jọ gáte, kò jọ gáté, ó fi ẹ̀sẹ̀ méjì lé lẹ̀ gáte-gáte!*

So steadily, so unsteadily, the matter plants its feet wobbly in the land!

p2: *Ó jọ gáte, kò jọ gáté, kòró má ò fi ẹ̀sẹ̀ mú lẹ̀!*¹⁸

So steadily, so unsteadily, the coronavirus is planting its feet solidly in the land!

Comment: In this example, both the proverb and postproverbial call attention to the awareness of a crucial matter or event, within the community, with the potential of becoming permissive and endemic. In the conventional proverb, reference is to an unnamed matter or situation; in the radical proverb however, the situation becomes known and named. Also, its presence is described as potentially grounded in the community.

(10)

p1: *Oun tó wà l'ẹ̀yìn Òfà, ó ju Òjé lọ.*

What is after the border of *Ofa* is more than the encampment of *Oje*.

p2: *Oun tó wà l'ẹ̀yìn kòró, ó ju ikọ̀ lọ.*¹⁹

What comes after the coronavirus is more than coughing.

Comment: The traditional proverb here is usually uttered as a caution against an action that has repercussions should the warning be ignored. In its historical context, *Ofa* was a Yoruba settlement in the northern border of old Oyo Empire; it used to be a major garrison of the warriors before the Fulani Jihad of 1804; beyond the old garrison was *Oje*, another settlement which later developed into a huge encampment for warriors on strategic missions. It is therefore said, in military sense, that when a battle

¹⁸ Supplied by a respondent, @Lanre Oladoyinbo (Yoruba).

¹⁹ Supplied by a respondent, @Remi Akinpelu (Yoruba).

rages and ends in *Òfà*, there is a greater one with greater repercussion waiting in *Oje*. Thus, in the postproverbial turn of the conventional saying, the infection of the coronavirus is the initial battle but the minimum symptom of cough is itself the euphemism for death.

(11)

p1: *Ong ole kojuwa hwume gen gen ka gba chu gbei.*

Whatever is making the bush to shake must come to the road by and by.

p2: *Okumu nyi koro ole kowe hume gen gen aka dai lo gba chu gbei ka.*²⁰

The corona masquerade that is shaking the bush must eventually appear on the road.

Comment: The conventional proverb here notes that whatever is hidden even for a long time will eventually be revealed. But the postproverbial turns the general (“whatever”) into the specific presence of the pandemic which is personified as a masquerade (“okumu nyi koro”). This is a radical proverb not only about the awareness of the virus, but more about its impending outbreak and danger.

(12)

p1: *“Mai zan yi da abinda ya gagare wuta,” inji kishiyar konania.*

“I have no business with a fire fighter,” says the co-wife of a burnt woman.

p2: *“Mai zan yi da abinda ya gagare wuta,” inji kishiyar mai korona.*²¹

“I have no business with a fire fighter,” says the co-wife of a corona patient.

p2: *“Ba ruwana da asibiti,” inji kishiyar mai korona.*

“I have no business with the hospital,” says the co-wife of a corona patient.

Comment: “*Mai zan yi da abinda ya gagare wuta,* inji kishiyar konania” is a proverb that is generally used to address neg-

²⁰ Supplied by a respondent, @Maria Ajima (Igede).

²¹ Supplied by a respondent, @Rahila Luka (Hausa).

ligence and indifference. Its postproverbial other (“Mai zan yi da abinda ya gagare wuta, inji kishiyar mai korona”) addresses the negligence of the Kano State people towards the outbreak of COVID-19. Whereas the original proverb dwells on the negligence, as well as the complicity, of the wife in the misfortune of the co-wife, the postproverbial is used to focus on the reported cases of negligence and even denial of a cross-section of Kano State youths. In the third week of April 2020, there was a spike of mystery deaths in Kano, the main hub of the economy of Northern Nigeria. A record number of over 150 mortalities were reported within three days, followed by counter-statements about the cause of the death, especially of the elderly and high-profile individuals in the city.²² Weeks before the outbreak of deaths, scenes of crowds in different parts of the city defying the stay-at-home order were familiar and displayed in online sites and reported in conventional news channels. A virus-defying song was even composed by the predominantly youthful population: “Malam ya ce babu korona, muma mun ce babu korona” - “Malam says there is no corona, we also say there is no corona”.

(13)

p1: Girman kai rawanin tsiya.

Pride is the turban of trouble.

p2: Girman kai rawanin mai karya korona.

Pride is the turban of a corona denier.²³

Comment: In the symbolic use of an abstract characteristic as a sign for another condition, the original proverb is as metonymic as its postproverbial other. The attribute of pride (girman) in both proverb and postproverbial is employed as agency and cause. In the conventional proverb, pride is the crown (rawanin) of trouble; but in the postproverbial, pride becomes the handle, the carriage for the denial of the existence of the coronavirus.²⁴

²² <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/28/nigerian-authorities-deny-wave-of-deaths-is-due-to-covid-19>

²³ Supplied by a respondent, @Rahila Luka (Hausa).

²⁴ ‘Rawanin’ is the Hausa word for the emir’s turban, which has the connotation of ‘crown’; ‘karya’ means lie, so the word used for denial in Hausa is karya, i.e. claiming that something is not true.

5.4. *On Invocation*

With its confirmation as a qualifier of the new normal in societies, the coronavirus becomes a major referent in daily dialogues and conversations that it becomes easily invoked and named in place of other material elements. Thus, a number of the post-proverbials supplied by respondents sound like invocation or qualification of the embodiment of coronavirus as an infectious disease which is drug-defying and has become a pandemic which is open to awe or derision according to the perspective of the particular speaker. The invocation of the virus itself points at its agency, volatility and morbidity.

(14)

p1: *Òkùnkùn kò m'eni òwò.*

Darkness does not recognize the noble person.

p2: *Òkùnkùn kò m'eni òwò, kòró lẹ́ ń'ke sí.*²⁵

Darkness does not recognize the noble person, the praise-name of coronavirus.

Comment: This is another classic example of a postproverbial text composed with a supplement. The conventional proverb is used to qualify the state or area of darkness as a place of anonymity which does not respect an individual's importance or class. In the postproverbial, the quality of darkness is invoked as the power or praise-name of coronavirus. As it were, the disease is thus infused with the epithetic and descriptive agency of "darkness" over man, irrespective of their standing, stature or status.

(15)

p1: *Uwar kishiya, kwadon kulle mai yawon banza.*

The mother (matriarch) of co-wives is a padlock for the restless wanderer.

p2: *Korona, kwadon kulle ma yawon banza.*

Corona, the padlock that keeps the restless wanderer at home.

²⁵ Statement made by an unidentified speaker on a live call-in radio programme (Yoruba).

Comment: Like the example before this, the Hausa postproverbial here is created as an invocation of the power of the coronavirus. In the conventional proverb, the “mother of co-wives” is actually the matriarch of the home, literally the senior wife who controls the home, and therefore described as “the padlock” to the restlessness of the co-wives. In the postproverbial, the power of the matriarch is attributed to coronavirus, signified as the padlock which restricts and confines the restless wanderer at home.

(16)

p1: *Nala kungheko iquhude liyasa.*

Even when the rooster is not present, the day breaks.

p2: *Nala Ukorona ekhona, usuku liyasa.*²⁶

Even when the corona is present, the day breaks.

Comment: The conventional proverb reflects on the eternity and constancy of nature in spite of other conditions, opportunities or challenges. The postproverbial is itself no less different in the philosophy of the natural law of existence that, in spite of the invocative morbidity of the coronavirus, the day will still break. In other words, the pair of proverbs here deflates the power of the disease with an underlying sense of optimism that, in spite of the darkness, the day will break.

(17)

p1: *Eni éégún ñlé, kó máa r'ójú; bó ti ñ're ará ayé náà ló ñ're ara òrun.*

He who is pursued by the masquerade should endure; as the human tires so does the spirit tire.

p2: *Eni éégún kòró ñlé, kó máa r'ójú, bó ti ñ're ará ayé náà ló ñ're ara òrun.*²⁷

He who is pursued by the corona masquerade should endure; as the human tires so does the spirit tire.

Comment: In this example, the deflation of the power of coronavirus is the subject of the postproverbial utterance. Both proverbs establish the importance and necessity of endurance in the face of adversity. The masquerade in the conventional proverb

²⁶ Supplied by a respondent, @Bernice Badal (Zulu).

²⁷ Supplied by a respondent, @Adetutu Olubummo (Yoruba).

becomes the corona masquerade in the radical proverb, but the impermanence of trials is the constant trope of the (post)proverbial text.

5.5. *On Hygiene*

In the new normal, one of the precautions against coronavirus is the hygiene of man and environment. In addition to social distancing and lockdown, the main measures of that precaution include the covering of mouth and nose with face masks and the regular washing and sanitization of hands. The responsibility to prevent the transmission of the virus, which is tied to hygienic orientation, has also been a subject of postproverbial creativity.

(18)

p1: *Àgbájọ ọwọ la fi ní'sọ àyà.*

[With] All hands together we beat the chest in solidarity.

p2: *Àgbájọ ọwọ la fi ní'wẹ ọwọ.*²⁸

[With] All hands together we wash (the hands) to cleanliness.

p2: *Àgbájọ ọwọ la fi ní'sọ àyà; l'áyée kòró kọ́.*²⁹

[With] All hands together we beat the chest in solidarity; not in the age of coronavirus.

Comment: In the conventional proverb, the focus is on solidarity and collective action; whereas the first postproverbial points at the indexical and individual action of hand hygiene, the second example of the postproverbial functions as a declamation of the collective physical activity.

(19)

p1: *F'ọ̀tún w'òsì, f'òsì w'ọ̀tún, lẹwọ fi ñmọ.*

Washing the left with the right, washing the right with the left, makes the hand clean.

p2: *F'ọ̀tún w'òsì, f'òsì w'ọ̀tún, ló ní'lé kòró lọ.*

Washing the left with the right, washing the right with the left, lays off the coronavirus.

²⁸ Supplied by a respondent, @Charles Akinsete (Yoruba).

²⁹ Supplied by a respondent, @Morounfolu Akinpelu (Yoruba).

Comment: This is a pair of proverbs that focuses on the physical activity of hand washing as a manual process of hygiene. While the conventional proverb is predictively embedded with the metaphor of solidarity and cooperation, the postproverbial directly affirms the necessity of hand hygiene as a crucial way of preventing coronavirus infection.

(20)

p1: *Tí ará ilé ẹ̀ni bá ń'jẹ̀ kòkòrò burúku, tí kò bá r'ẹ̀ni sọ fun un, hùrùhẹ̀rẹ̀ rẹ̀ kò ní jẹ̀ kí ará ilé gbádùn.*

When one's relation feeds on a forbidden insect without being warned, his restive reaction will not allow the neighbours to rest.

p2: *Tí ará China bá ń'jẹ̀ kòkòrò burúku, tí kò bá r'ẹ̀ni sọ fun un, kòrò kò ní jẹ̀ kí gbogbo àgbáye gbádùn.³⁰*

When the Chinese feeds on forbidden animals without being warned, the coronavirus will not allow the whole world to rest.

Comment: Literally speaking, this is a proverb that anticipates the symptomatic effect of harmful food-intake; it also draws attention to how a strain of poisonous food/object consumed by one person can affect the well-being of the other people around. In the postproverbial, the subject becomes specified as “the Chinese”, apparently echoing the widespread insinuation that the coronavirus disease emanated from an exotic animal market in China. Thus, the radical proverb is as cautionary as much as it is accusatory.

5.6. On Morbidity

The very absolute repercussion of coronavirus infection and spread is death. This is an awareness that has been a part of the scary reality of living with the pandemic. Therefore, through a number of postproverbials, the creative imagination is devoted to the fearful connotation of death and the sense of morbidity connected to the agency of the virus which is yet unyielding to the science of vaccine production.

³⁰ Supplied by a respondent, @El-Nasir Al-Amin (Yoruba).

(21)

p1: *A kii gbé'lé ẹni ká f'òrùn rọ.*

One cannot stay at home and get injured.

p2: *A kii gbé'lé ẹni ká f'òrùn rọ, òwe kòró kọ. F'owọ ẹ!*³¹

One cannot stay at home and get injured, no such proverb in corona time. Wash your hands!

Comment: The conventional proverb here is a terse figuration of the home as a place of comfort, security and safety. It is a philosophical assumption that no one gets involved in a ghastly accident while within the confines of their own residence. The accident is specified, that is, having a forced sprain to the neck (“f’òrùn rọ”). In the postproverbial utterance, the home is no longer given as safe or insulated from the scourge of the coronavirus. The original proverb is extended and doubly troped upon: first, there is the declamatory clause (“òwe kòró kọ”), followed by a full imperative statement which counsels physical hygiene (“F’owọ ẹ!”). In the postproverbial, the impact of injury (to the body or bones) is replaced with the trauma of an infection so that it is inherently implied in the radical utterance that the injury is not a somatic but a viral one.

(22)

p1: *Àtéléwọ ẹni kii tan ni je.*

One’s palm does not betray the bearer.

p2: *Àtéléwọ ẹni a má pa ni je.*One’s palm can become one’s deathtrap.³²

Comment: In the conventional proverb, the palm (àtéléwọ) is the symbol, the metonym for a person’s destiny; it is also the manual representation of the person’s ability by which his industry is determined. Thus, it is said that a man’s success or failure is dependent on the effort of his hand/palm. However, in the postproverbial text, the epistemic base of the original proverb is deflated such that the palm is no longer imagined as symbolic. Instead, the palm is taken literally as the inner surface of the hand between the wrist and fingers used for washing and cleans-

³¹ Supplied by a respondent, @Lanre Oladoyinbo (Yoruba).

³² On Twitter, <https://twitter.com/ajankoro/status/1250390293662380033?s=20> (April 15, 2020).

ing things. The palm is the site for physical hygiene and sanitization; if it is not duly taken care of, it may turn to the carrier of infection and death. In its brevity, the postproverbial utterance contains the dual resonance of counsel and threat: the palm can save, the palm can kill.

(23)

p1: *Bàòkú, ìṣe ò tán.*

When there's life, activity does not cease.

p2: *Bàòkú, ìṣekúṣe ò tán.*³³

When there's life, lustfulness does not end.

Comment: Here, the conventional proverb is otherwise rendered as “when there's life, there's hope”. In its radical form, it is turned over, punned on and infused with sexual undertones. Whereas the original proverb is motivational and positivist, the postproverbial stresses the possibility of promiscuity and the potential of lasciviousness *as long as there is life*. Contextually, being sexual or sensual is taken as an inevitable or primary human activity (even in corona times). This postproverbial creation was a direct inference from an unverified news item ascribed to a top official of the Ministry of Health in Uganda who reported that some quarantined coronavirus patients had been having sex with each other.³⁴ In spite of the possibility of being fake news, such seedy scenario is better left imagined as precarious and dangerously indulgent.

6. Values of the Postproverbials

The limitation of the study is that the data for analysis is highly topical: the postproverbials are volatile and, like the virus in its period of infection, incubation and spread, the deployment and significance of COVID-19 postproverbials would probably be active and virtually meaningful within the marked period of invention, currency and inscription. But ultimately, the values of COVID-19 postproverbials reside in the general attempt to create paramedical awareness against the pandemic, to express wis-

³³ Shared by a Nigerian author, Tade Ipadeola (April 15, 2020).

³⁴ <https://weetalknaija.com.ng/news/breaking-govt-raises-alarm-says-those-in-quarantine-have-started-having-sex-with-each-other.html>

dom in social or physical distancing, to underscore the danger of overcrowding and signify on the importance of sanitization, tracing, self-isolation, self-preservation and community hygiene.

7. Conclusion

Finally, I assert that these are inexhaustive samples of invented proverbs in the age of the coronavirus. There are four cardinal stems that may be added to conclude the interrogation of these strains of contemporary radical sayings, viz:

(a) As a category of postproverbials, they are the eponymous type, in the sense that they are deliberately invented proverbs identified with their initial “authorship” or traceable to particular individuals as referenced in this essay.

(b) As formalized utterances, these entries are essentially retorts, reactions or bluffs to extant African proverbial thoughts. Indeed, they are ingenious responses to the experience of medical affliction through the artifice of proverb-making. Thus, it can be said that the typical COVID-19 postproverbial is a verbal innovation in the age of illness.

(c) As literary and cultural materials in the possession of their users, they undergo a form of “genetic manipulation” and they become chromosomal mutants, aesthetically speaking, in relation to the conventional proverbial text.

(d) As sociolinguistic verbal acts, they bear the therapeutic functions of jest and relief, deployed as a coping or healing strategy against the choleric season with its attendant condition of trauma. Pragmatically so, these postproverbials are verbal communicative strategies of living with the life-threatening force of the respiratory virus.

In its creation, the typical COVID-19 postproverbial is invariably volatile and, like the virus in its virtual period of infection, incubation and spread, the deployment and significance of the radical text will probably be active within the lifespan of its invention, currency, inscription and usage.

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“BLACK POWER” AND BLACK RHETORICAL TRADITION: THE PROVERBIAL LANGUAGE OF STOKELY CARMICHAEL

Abstract: This essay explores some of the proverbs, sayings, and proverbial expressions used by Stokely Carmichael (1941-1998) that are found in writings such as: *Black Power the Politics of Liberation in America* (1967), *Stokely Speaks: From Black Power to Pan-Africanism* (1971), and his autobiography, *Ready for Revolution: The Life and Times of Stokely Carmichael* (2003). In the process of analyzing traditional language used by Carmichael, this essay also: (1) seeks to identify sources from which Carmichael’s sayings are derived, (2) examine some of the contexts in which they are used, (3) determine the extent that they illustrate Carmichael’s ever-evolving political philosophies and worldview during the Civil Rights Era (1954-1968) and the African Independence Movement (1950-1975) respectively, (4) and it also seeks to categorize Carmichael’s proverbs, sayings, and proverbial expressions based on origin, structure, and traits (such as word count and subject matter). (5) Additionally, this essay considers the extent that his proverbial language is used to establish, reinforce, and regulate both personal and professional relationships throughout his entire life.

Keywords: Black studies, Civil Rights Movement [CRM], Diaspora, folklore, human rights, proverbs

1. Introduction

Stokely Standiford Churchill Carmichael [Kwame Ture] (1941-1998) played many important roles during the Civil Rights Era (1954-1968). Carmichael was: a political activist, an effective community organizer, an author, a valuable teacher (who taught voting rights, literacy, and black history in the Deep South), a dynamic public speaker and philosopher, and a ground-breaking revolutionary. Another important talent and aspect of Carmichael's life that often goes unmentioned by scholars is that he was also a master of proverbs or "concise traditional statements of apparent truths with currency among the folk" and proverbial language, and he used this inimitable skill in at least three unique ways (Mieder 2004: 4; Mieder 2019: 264). First, his proverbial mastery helped him to learn and impart important life lessons; meaning that he internalized the proverbial wisdom of others and then shared these axioms liberally throughout his entire life through conversation, and through his speeches and writings. Secondly, his use of proverbial language is as an overt expression of the pride that he had in his black identity, and because Carmichael attributes many of his sayings to black people from all over the world including: Trinidad, Jamaica, West India, Nigeria, Egypt, Ghana, Guinea and also the American Deep South, they simultaneously demonstrate his belief in Pan-Africanism or the notion that all black people around the world share in one common struggle against forces of colonialism and imperialism. Lastly, Carmichael's proverbial language is an important tool that he used to establish, reinforce, and regulate relationships with family, friends, colleagues, students, and audiences.

2. Origins of the "Black Power" Saying

The most important expression that Carmichael is remembered for is "black power." He unveils the expression at the Meredith Mississippi Freedom March (1966). Many who know of Carmichael associate him with this slogan, but many people cannot determine why he is so important to the Civil Rights Movement. Carmichael's own son, Bokar Ture, would not learn much about his famous father's life as a political activist until he went to college and did his own research. In the CNN documentary, *Black in*

America 2 (2008), Bokar Ture explains his predicament. He had no idea that his father had become a symbol of black militancy because like so many survivors of the Civil Rights Era, Carmichael did not discuss it: “He never told me what he did, really. He just told me what was good to do: ‘Work for your people’” (Blake 2008). Carmichael’s son goes on to explain that he had internalized many of the same misconceptions about the movement as others. He says:

I had not understood how brutal the movement was. I saw it as a Disney movie—people marching in the sunshine, King speaking, and victory. But it was war. Many of these front-line activists lived under the constant threat of death. Several lost friends. Some were tortured in jail. Several were disowned by their families. Their memories were too painful to share with their children. (Blake 2008)

Fortunately, today Carmichael’s connection to the movement is well documented, and by examining some of the material, one can easily determine why, after so many decades have past, the expression “black power” still retains so much of its historical significance.

The saying was first heard at the Meredith Mississippi Freedom March (1966) which began as the Meredith March Against Fear. It was established by James Meredith (b.1933-), the first African-American to be admitted to the University of Mississippi. On the historic day that he was admitted (October 1, 1962), it would take dozens of federal troops to keep the peace. Meredith’s admittance would be a small victory in an ongoing war against what Carmichael defines as “institutional racism” or “racism [which] relies on the active and pervasive operation of anti-black attitudes and practices” (Ture and Hamilton 1967: 4). The march came about because Meredith wanted to demonstrate that it was possible for a black man to walk through the Deep South without being afraid of racial violence. Meredith embarked on the two-hundred-twenty-mile trek from Memphis, Tennessee to Jackson, Mississippi alone, aside from some onlookers and a few members of the press. On the second day of his journey Meredith is attacked and badly wounded by an angry shotgun wielding racist. After hearing about the ordeal, the Student Nonviolent

Coordinating Committee (SNCC) decides to continue the march on Meredith's behalf, only this time there are two major changes. First, they rename it the Meredith Mississippi Freedom March. Secondly, as opposed to a single person or a single organization, SNCC would be joined by thousands of black people from a range of different organizations, universities, and church groups, one of the most important attendees being the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. who starts the march off "by reading a contentious manifesto that describes Mississippi as a living symbol of 'every evil that American Negroes have long endured'" (Joseph 2014: 108). In *Ready for Revolution* (2003) Carmichael recounts the moment that he decides to utter the expression that would gain him international attention: "As I passed Mukasa [Willie Ricks], he said, "Drop it now. The people are ready. Drop it now" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 507). The famous speech is not recorded, but it is recounted by SNCC member Cleve Sellers (1944-) who attended the event. Sellers asserts that after taking the podium Carmichael says:

This is the twenty-seventh time I have been arrested—and I ain't going to jail no more! "The crowd exploded into cheers and clapping." The only way we gonna stop them white men from whuppin' us is to take over. We been saying freedom for six years and we ain't got nothing. What we gonna start saying now is Black Power! "The Crowd was right with him. They picked up his thoughts immediately." Black Power! "They roared in unison. Willie Ricks (1943-), who is good at orchestrating the emotions of a crowd as anyone I have ever seen, sprang into action. Jumping to the platform with Stokely, he yelled to the crowd," What do you want? Black Power! What do you want? Black Power! What do you want? Black Power!! Black Power!!! Black Power!!!! "Everything that happened afterward was a response to that moment." (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 507)

For Carmichael and the other protesters, "Black Power" is a call against his unjust incarceration which takes place only moments before he takes the podium. It is also a call against the constant harassment by police and state troopers who beat marchers, and hit them with tear gas on a number of occasions in efforts to force them to give up the march. By demanding "black power" as op-

posed to the traditional chant of “freedom,” he is connecting the civil rights struggle to his broader philosophical notion, Pan-Africanism. Furthermore, Carmichael is making a demand for “political, economic, and cultural self-determination” (Joseph 2014: 115). According to historian, Peniel E. Joseph, “Carmichael’s speech on June 16th, 1966, instantly transformed the aesthetics of the black freedom struggle and forever altered the course of the modern civil rights movement” (Joseph 2014: 115).

3. Familial Proverbs and Sayings

“Black Power” is Carmichael’s most widely known expression, but it is not the only powerful expression in his vast array of meaningful traditional communicative language. Carmichael uses many proverbs, sayings, and expressions that he learns from a number of different sources. In fact, some proverbs that Carmichael learns are first heard in his own home. As a young child growing up in Trinidad, Carmichael spent the majority of his time with his paternal grandmother, Cecilia Harris Carmichael, and she was full of proverbial wisdom. Of Grandma Cecilia, Carmichael says:

Grandma Cecilia was the major influence on my young personality, the adult with whom I spent most of my time and with whom I was closest. She was a devout woman. A pillar of Trinity Anglican Church, close friend and adviser to the parish parson, she was entrusted with the baking of the communal wafers each week. My earliest and most enduring ethical instruction came from her. (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 24)

Carmichael then shares some of the lessons that he learns from Grandma Cecilia:

‘Don’t ever lie, always speak the truth. Think of others always. Remember the less fortunate. Never waste food. Never waste anything that someone else might need. Waste not, want not.’ And so forth. And the ‘memory gems’ so much a part of any respectable colonial child’s training, (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 24, 25)

The fundamental lesson about frugality contained in the proverb “Waste not, want not” (Mieder, Kingsbury, and Harder 1991: 641; Speake 2015: 341) is very important to Carmichael, so much

so, that it brings to mind two more important “memory gems” of Grandma Cecilia which he feels are equally significant. Carmichael continues: “If you in the morning throw minutes away, you can’t pick them up the course of the day” and “Whatsoever you set your hand to do, do it with all your might” (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 25). The possibility that the recollection of one proverb may lead, or even help one to remember others has been considered by other proverb scholars. According to folklorist, Betsy Bowden “...ruminating upon one proverb might lead into the depths of personal experience. Thereby a thinker comes to reconstruct other oral or written contexts containing that same sentence: relevant stories, sermons, commentaries, and so on... one proverb can lead to recall of other ones memorized along with it elsewhere and lead ultimately to all of those other proverbs’ additional contexts as well” (Bowden 1996: 442). If what Bowden says is correct, then proverbs may have served as important mnemonic devices that helped Carmichael to remember scenes from his eventful life as he constructed his autobiography.

3.1. Fatherly Wisdom

Carmichael’s father also liked to share precepts in the form of proverbs. Adolphus Carmichael, a hard-working and skilled carpenter, valued honesty and integrity, and he tried to instill these principles in his son:

...my father was so scrupulously, resolutely, and unambiguously honest man. ‘If you didn’t work for it,’ he’d say, ‘don’t look for it. If you didn’t sweat for it, don’t even think of it.’ In all the time we lived together, I never knew him to deviate in the slightest from that principle. (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 69)

Another saying that his father liked to use seems so didactic and moralizing that young Carmichael spends ample time ruminating on its’ meaning:

My late father had a much used saying that, because it seemed so unforgiving, puzzled me greatly as a young boy. It occurs to me that... it was about: integrity. ‘You can tell the truth every day of your life,’ my father would say, ‘and if, on the day of your death,

you tell a lie...that is what will matter’. (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 71)

Adolphus Carmichael did not have much formal education, but he did value learning, and he instilled this value in his children as well. His father also did not waste words, and he knew how to deliver extraordinarily strong messages by using brief sayings. In the following passage Carmichael describes his father’s often repeated lesson on learning:

His words were always thoughtful. He was not verbose, but we always knew that whatever our father said in his quiet voice, he truly meant. We never disobeyed him. At dinner he’d always ask each of us, ‘Well, what did you learn today?’ If someone came up shaky, he’d shake his head. ‘You know, the day on which you learned nothing is a wasted day. Enough of those and what’ve you got? A wasted life. (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 77)

3.2. Problem Solving with Proverbs

Even when his father was faced with difficult problems on his job as a carpenter, Adolphus could remedy the issue with an axiom:

Nothing, and in particular, no problem in carpentry or craftsmanship ever seemed to intimidate him. ‘Well now,’ he’d say as he studied the problem. ‘There’s always more’n one way to skin a cat.’ Sooner or later he came out with an approach—often not the conventional one—but one that would get the job done, and often more efficiently. (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 78)

The proverb, “There is always more than one way to skin a cat” is used by Carmichael to describe his father’s unparalleled confidence as a carpenter, and it also effectively describes the thinking process that his father applies when faced with complex issues. (Mieder et al. 1991: 644; Speake 2015: 342) Carmichael learns a number of important values from his father and the proverbs that Adolphus uses helps Carmichael to remember the lessons and the man.

4. Political Proverbial Language

Carmichael also uses the proverbs and sayings of several famous political leaders. According to paremiologist Wolfgang Mieder: “All political leaders are faced with addressing heterogenous audiences, and they must find a common denominator in their rhetoric that will be grasped and appreciated by the largest possible number of people both here in the United States and throughout the world” (Mieder 2019: 58). Based on this information, it is no surprise that Carmichael frequents proverbs and sayings from such an eclectic mixture of leadership. He employs the proverbial language of leaders such as: Elijah Muhammad (1897-1975), Malcolm X (1925-1965), the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-1968), President John F. Kennedy (1917-1963), Oliver Wendell Holmes (1841-1935), Rabbi Hillel (110 BC- 10 AD), African President(s) Sékou Touré (1922-1984), and Dr. Kwame Nkrumah (1909-1972), and Italian diplomat, Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527). In some cases, he frequents the proverbial language of leaders as an ode to their leadership qualities, their valuable political instruction, and even their friendship, such as in the case of Dr. King. In many instances, proverbs from important leaders provide some keen insight into issues that may plague black communities.

4.1. The Proverbial Wisdom of Malcolm X

Malcolm X was one leader who was known for imparting such words of wisdom on anyone who would listen. Carmichael recounts an anecdote that illustrates a moment when Malcolm X offers an important point of cultural criticism to some black youth who appear to be wasting their lives hanging out on street corners. The insightful cultural criticism that Malcolm X shares is then punctuated by a proverb from Malcolm X’s mentor, religious leader Elijah Muhammad:

According to the story, Malcolm was driving along and saw a group of young brothers shooting craps on a sidewalk. He stopped the car and approached the game. He either seized or put his foot on the dice. Of course, the players started to get into they bags. Malcolm froze them with that look he had. My young brothers, you know what this building is? He asked. Yeah, I thought so. You

don't know, do you? This is the Schomburg Collection. It's got damn near everything ever written by or about black people. And what you doing? Instead of being inside learning about yourself, your people, and our history, you out here in darkness shooting dice. That's what's wrong with us, why Mr. Muhammad says: “If you want to hide something from the black man, put it in a library.” (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 105)

The famous saying of Elijah Muhammad, “If you want to hide something from the black man, put it in a library” has become so well-known that it is indeed regarded as a proverb. In this case the anecdote that comes along with it appears to be just as legendary as the proverbial wisdom being shared. Carmichael was not there to watch this fascinating scene unfold, but simply hearing the story from others and remembering the saying was enough to encourage young Carmichael to frequent the library as often as he could: “Now, I was not among those crapshooters. But the story impressed on me the importance of the Schomburg and I began to spend many a profitable hour there” (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 105).

Another anecdote involving Malcolm X appears at a point in the narrative when Carmichael discusses a march that is staged by SNCC in order to bring the senseless murder of SNCC Summer Project volunteer, Louis Allen, to the attention of U.S. Attorney General Bobby Kennedy (1925-1968). SNCC planned to march from the Howard campus to the Justice Department carrying a coffin and deposit the coffin on Kennedy's desk. As SNCC and just over a thousand students are in route to their destination, they notice Malcolm X watching so they invite him to join the march. After Malcolm X respectfully declines their offer, a SNCC member asks Malcolm X what he thinks about the march. Malcolm X then shares an analogy with them that is punctuated by a proverb:

Now, if I see a long line of cats and mice all marching toward the same hole. If the cats ask me “how we doing?” I gotta say it sure look like you doing fine, right. But now, if the mice ask me...well, now, you know I gotta give ‘em a different answer.” (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 356)

After hearing this brief analogy the SNCC members aren't quite as confident about their mission. If Malcolm X's brief anecdote injures their pride, the proverb that Malcolm X shares with them next does not do them much good either. Malcolm X then says: "Remember now, just because you see a man throwing worms into the river, don't necessarily mean he a friend to the fish" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 356). In employing the proverb, Malcolm X is basically warning them to proceed with caution because politicians often have ulterior motives. The marchers are not discouraged enough to abandon their mission, but due to Malcolm X's parable and proverb, one must imagine that they proceeded on that afternoon with much more discretion.

In October of 1969 Carmichael writes a speech that is delivered on his behalf by Howard Fuller, for the opening ceremony of Malcolm X Liberation University in Durham, N.C. In the speech Carmichael asserts that the African race will never be strong unless they educate their own people. For Carmichael, the suppression of black thought is at the heart of what he believes is an ensuing race war evidenced by the widespread racial violence that overtook much of the country in the 1960s. He employs a proverb from Malcolm X to make his point:

When we begin to move militarily on all fronts, it will be an all-out race war, Africa versus Europe. This may not seem pleasant to some of our brothers and sisters, but it is a question of who is going to survive—they or us. I think that the natural law of survival will answer that, even for those of us who recoil and do not want to face what is coming. I am reminded of what Brother Malcolm said in Chicago, way back in 1962: "What's good news for some is bad news for others." (Stokely 1971: 179)

The proverb from Malcolm X "What's good news for some is bad news for others" is used to try to instill a sense of militancy in his audience. He wants them to feel motivated to take control of their own destiny by making Malcolm X Liberation University a successful enterprise. Carmichael seems to believe that if black people do not educate themselves, they will ultimately be wiped out. In this instance the proverb underscores Carmichael's "us or them" attitude.

Another Malcolm X saying appears in *Stokely Speaks* in chapter fourteen which is entitled “Pan Africanism.” In this chapter Carmichael explains some of Kwame Nkrumah’s philosophical tenets. He argues that Nkrumah embodies Pan-Africanism and that his leadership in Ghana was deposed by colonial forces for this very reason:

I know you would not understand this because you haven’t been allowed to read books by Kwame Nkrumah. There must be a reason for that. They called him a traitor, they called him a tyrant, they called him everything that is bad in the world, but Brother Malcolm X told you when they say something bad about a man then that’s the man you should run to. The white boy seeks to destroy the leaders in our movement. (Carmichael 1971: 216)

The Malcolm X saying “when they say something bad about a man, then that’s the man you should run to” is used to explain the nature of the political coup in Ghana that displaced Kwame Nkrumah. According to Carmichael, Nkrumah was deposed for refusing to be an ally of colonial forces that sought to exploit African natural resources. The Malcolm X saying also calls attention to the fact that political slander was the primary tool that they used to facilitate the overthrowing of the Ghanaian government.

4.2. Political Sayings Adorning the Halls and Dorms of Bronx Science and Howard University

At another point in Carmichael’s narrative, he says that young activists of his day liked powerful proverbs and sayings that spoke to the spirit of the civil rights revolution that was ensuing. He describes the scene on the campus of Howard University in 1960 when he arrived there as a freshman:

One thing that reflects the spirit of the times among that generation of activist youth—white and black—is the recurrence of certain favorite quotations, ideas that spoke to collective human responsibility. These quotes were prevalent during my high school and early college years. Later in the decade these would be replaced by more overtly revolutionary slogans from people like Che, Malcolm, and Uncle Ho. But when I was a freshman, a lot of the people I knew would have some combination of these high-minded quotes up

somewhere in their room. I remember three of these quotations. (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 144)

The three quotes that Carmichael largely remembers gracing the walls of Bronx Science and Howard University dorm rooms must have definitely made a huge impression on him in order for him to remember them so many decades later. He says:

One was from Dr. King's *Stride Toward Freedom* to the effect that "If a man hasn't discovered something that he will die for, he isn't fit to live." The second was from the white jurist Oliver Wendell Holmes: "As life is action and passion, it is required of a man that he should share the passion and action of his time at peril being judged not to have lived." But the most common one—which I would later occasionally use to end speeches—was Rabbi Hillel's famous quote: If I am not for myself, who is for me? And when I am for myself what am I? And if not now, when? (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 144)

In many ways these sayings collectively describe Carmichael's attitude as he took part in the activism that the Non-Violent Action Group (NAG) and the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) became known for.

4.3. *Proverbs in Response to Middle-Eastern Politics*

On another occasion Carmichael employs a proverb from King to justify SNCC taking a position on the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. Many people including the media felt that to take a position on the situation in the Middle East was not SNCC's role and that they should stay silent on the issue. Carmichael employs a proverb from King in order to rationalize the need for the group to be vocal against Zionism. He says:

So obviously, there would be a price to pay. It would have come down to priorities. But as Dr. King said, 'There comes a time when silence is tantamount to consent.' But in any event that discussion never took place. Had the process not been short-circuited, I'm sure the overwhelming sentiment would have been to make a statement, a moral statement, on justice for the Palestinian people while trying hard not to offend or alienate our Jewish friends on a personal level. (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 561)

Carmichael contends that he is neither anti-Semitic nor anti-Judaic, but like many others, Carmichael believes that Zionism should be equated with colonialism, and that it is imperative for any political organization committed to social justice to speak out against it. Carmichael also references an anti-Zionist saying from G. Neuberger that he first heard in 1976 while attending an international conference in Libya: “If one is a good Jew, one cannot be a Zionist. If one is Zionist, one cannot be a good Jew” (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 562). Carmichael asserts that while Neuberger’s words are not absolute truth they do speak to the pain and destruction from war that has been caused in-part by Zionist thinking in the Middle-East.

4.4. The Political Proverbial Rhetoric of John F. Kennedy

Carmichael often referenced the words of President John F. Kennedy. Like many black Americans Carmichael was very skeptical about the effectiveness of both of the major political parties in the United States, but one may assume that he must have seen wisdom in some of Kennedy’s language, or perhaps he noticed an air of authenticity in Kennedy’s statements because he references him on several occasions. At one point Carmichael says:

In January of 1960—I was still in high school then—the administration in Washington changed. Democrats replaced Republicans. A “vigorous, progressive, young’ president, so they told us, took over. He proclaimed a new challenge of energetic and progressive activism when Americans should ‘ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country.’ It was a great speech...until you really studied what he was saying. But many of us heard what we wanted to hear. And some of us believed him. So, soon indeed, we would test the sincerity of those words about defending freedom and paying any price. (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 177).

Each time that Carmichael references Kennedy’s language, it is indeed as if he is testing the limits of Kennedy’s political stances. For instance, when he discusses Kennedy’s reluctance to enforce laws banning segregation in facilities used for interstate travel such as gas stations and rest stops, he invokes another Kennedy statement that has also grown to become proverbial: “The new

Kennedy administration had come into office mouthing rhetoric about the national government's responsibility toward the constitutional rights of all Americans. CORE's plan would test their sincerity and their resolve, for in JFK's famous phrase, was not 'sincerity always subject to proof?'" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 179)

The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) plan that Carmichael discusses would be known as the 1961 Freedom Rides. The Freedom Riders were a group of integrated students and civil rights activists that challenged laws which banned integrated facilities for interstate travel in the South. To force systemic change, they simply boarded busses and traveled along highways in the South where segregation was most vehemently enforced. They also stopped at illegally segregated establishments. While their efforts gained them international attention, they also suffered many indignities and abuses. They were often attacked by racist whites and Ku Klux Klan members who were eager to: impart physical and verbal abuse, throw fire-bombs, and pummel Freedom Riders with sticks and bottles as they exited busses. In Jackson, Mississippi Carmichael and eight other riders were arrested and sent to the infamous Parchman Prison Farm in Sunflower County where they remained jailed for forty-nine days. They also suffered verbal and physical abuse at the hands of prison guards. Carmichael was a nineteen-year-old freshman at Howard when this happened, and while it was his first time being arrested in the name of the movement, it would certainly not be his last. Carmichael would be arrested dozens of times before his life as a political activist would end.

Carmichael also invokes Kennedy's famous plea to the nation as he describes the process of organizing the Freedom Rides. He helped the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) organize the integrated group of college students from around the country to participate in Freedom Rides to desegregate all public facilities along Route 40, which was the main interstate out of D.C. They received such an overwhelming turnout of white supporters at a Baltimore church that Carmichael is certain that Kennedy's famous maxim is a motivating factor: "Students from schools across the Northeast—Brandeis, Harvard, Yale, Cornell, New York University, and Johns Hopkins—answered CORE's call.

When we and the Morgan State students arrived, the church was already half filled with white students (good ol' CPT?). I suspect many of these white students were youthful 'New Frontiersmen,' inspired by JFK's injunction to 'ask what you can do for your country' and eager to put an end to their president's international embarrassments" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 164-165). Carmichael believes that progressive white students, inspired largely by Kennedy's language, sought to dedicate themselves to redeeming their country's tarnished image through activism.

At another point in Carmichael's narrative, he uses Kennedy's famous saying about serving the country again, but this time it is to express pure skepticism concerning the government's intentions when the Freedom Riders are invited to meet with attorney general Bobby Kennedy (1925-1968):

Even while some of us were still penned up in Parchman, Bobby Kennedy's emissaries had begun sending out feelers to the student movement? Git outta here. What was he up to? Was he now talking to 'extremist on both sides'? Maybe it was 'ask not what your country can do you for you; ask what you can do...' time, huh? I wasn't about to cut him any slack at all, Jack. On Parchman death row, we had talked about him like a dog. Hey, wasn't it because of their failure to enforce their own laws that we were sitting in that hellhole in the first place? And for what, buying a ticket and riding a bus? C'mon. Gimme an ever-loving break, bro. That hadn't been everyone's reaction, but it was most people's and it sure was mine. (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 218)

The notion of continuing the Freedom Rides is abandoned after SNCC meets with the Kennedy administration. They are promised funding and support if they stop and take up the cause of voter registration instead, which they agree to do. Subsequently, SNCC would remain committed to the cause of voter registration for the entire duration of the Civil Rights Movement. In the summer of 1964 many SNCC members embark on the Mississippi Summer Project which is designed to help disenfranchised Mississippians and impoverished sharecroppers (many of whom were illiterate) to register to vote, but first SNCC conducts interviews to determine if volunteers are mentally and physically fit to serve. They only want intelligent volunteers who know

exactly what they are getting into, due to the physical dangers, including the possibility of death, which southern racism poses in the Mississippi Delta. Carmichael says:

We ended up with an impressive group of young Americans at their most idealistic. Interesting people, serious people, political activists, Peace Corps volunteers, seminarians. No pun intended, but in 1964 the country's 'best and brightest' were headed for Mississippi, not Southeast Asia, and were genuinely to 'ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country.' Y'all remember that? (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 359)

This time there is a tinge of irony and sarcasm in Carmichael's words as he again invokes Kennedy's famous saying. While the U.S. government was recruiting scores of young black and white men to fight against the spread of communism in the Vietnam War (1969-1973), SNCC was recruiting young people of all races to fight against racism and social and economic injustice here in the United States.

4.5. The Political Proverbial Rhetoric of Niccolò Machiavelli

In *Stokely Speaks*, chapter seven entitled "Dialectics of Liberation," he describes the negative impact that colonization had on Zimbabwe, and he employs an important saying from Italian diplomat, Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527) in the process:

If a few settlers left England to go to Zimbabwe, there was no reason for them to rename that country Rhodesia, after themselves, and then force everybody to speak their language. If they'd had respect for the cultures of other people, they would have spoken the language of those people and adopted their religions. But the West was powerful—that's the word nobody wants to talk about, power. It was only power that made people bow their heads to the West. They didn't bow because they liked Jesus Christ or because they liked white folks. Machiavelli said a long time ago that "people obey masters for one of two reasons. Either they love them, or they fear them." I often ask myself whether the West believes the Third World obeys them out of love." (Carmichael 1971: 81-83)

The Machiavellian saying: "People obey masters for one of two reasons. Either they love them, or they fear them" is employed

to help his audience to conceptualize the effects that colonialism and imperialism has on the African psyche. Carmichael wants black people to see the negative consequences of European exploits on other continents and he wants to identify them as causes for many of the world’s problems.

4.6. The Political Proverbial Rhetoric of Kwame Nkrumah and Sékou Touré

Carmichael also uses proverbs and sayings from his mentor, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah (1909-1972) who was the president of Ghana. In 1969 Carmichael would expatriate to Africa where he learns more about political organizing as a personal assistant to Nkrumah who was named co-president of Guinea by President Sékou Touré (1922-1984) after Nkrumah was deposed by a U.S. backed coup in Ghana. Sékou Touré worked tirelessly to make a return to power in Ghana possible for Nkrumah, but this vision would never fully materialize. Nkrumah (also known affectionately as Osagyefo, redeemer of his native land) is most famous for his ideas concerning the liberation of the African continent which he expresses in his *Handbook of Revolutionary Warfare* (1968). To advance his vision of a unified African continent, free of colonial and imperial exploitation, Nkrumah and Sékou Touré launched the All-African People’s Revolution Party (AAPRP) which had memberships from 62 African countries. As an ode to the African leaders, Carmichael changed his name to Kwame Ture. Carmichael’s move to Africa ultimately helps him to expand his mentor’s philosophy of Pan-Africanism, the notion that all black people around the world, as members of the black Diaspora, have a responsibility to share in the struggle to unify and liberate the African continent from colonial powers.

Nkrumah’s prolific use of proverbs may reflect an increased value placed on proverbs in African societies. According to paremiologist and folklorist, Anand Prahlad: “proverbs have traditionally played a much more central role in the everyday speech of Africans than in that of African-Americans. All researchers of African proverbs seem to agree on the absolute proliferation of items throughout individual [African] societies” (Prahlad 1996: location 426). Additionally, proverbs are commonly employed in Africa as “verbal art and are used in all manner of situations as a

means of amusement, in educating the young, to sanction institutionalized behavior, as a method of gaining favor in court, in performing religious rituals and association ceremonies, and to give and add color to ordinary conversations” (Messenger 1959: 1; Prahlad 1996: location 426). Based on research, Nkrumah, in sharing proverbs, is also passing down his knowledge of an ancient African oral tradition which has many different purposes.

At one point in his narrative Carmichael discusses the impact that broken promises had on newly freed African-Americans during the Reconstruction Era (1865-1877) and he invokes a saying from Nkrumah in the process:

And we should not lightly dismiss that forty acres and a mule either. Later Kwame Nkrumah would tell me, “All liberation begins with land.” Working in the Delta, we began to see clearly how the withholding of those forty acres had been no trivial blow. In fact, almost exactly a hundred years later, the lasting, visible, painful consequences of that betrayal were still indelibly etched in our people’s condition. Of the many, many betrayals and disappointments Africans had suffered at the hands of this republic, I began to see how Congress’s failure to make good on its promise of those forty acres to the freedmen was arguably the most far reaching and injurious. No doubt about it. (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 288).

Nkrumah’s axiom that “All liberation begins with land” is used to explain why it was necessary for SNCC volunteers to travel to the Mississippi Delta in the first place. They were there to help liberate Mississippi’s poor black population by teaching them how to procure political power through the voting process, but as Carmichael asserts, black Mississippians would have already had some political and economic independence if freedmen had been afforded the forty acres and a mule promised to them by Union General William Tecumseh Sherman at the end of the Civil War in 1865. The order is known as Special Field Order No.15, and it was quickly reversed after Lincoln’s assassination.

Carmichael also describes the impact that the killing of one his closest friends, SNCC volunteer Jonathan Daniels had on him and the movement. Daniels had been working alongside Carmichael and other SNCC members as an organizer and instructor in Freedom Schools which were designed to teach Mississip-

pi's uneducated poor, literacy, civics, black history, and voting rights. Daniels was a dedicated Episcopal seminarian who was murdered in cold blood by an enraged shotgun wielding racist as he shielded another SNCC volunteer, seventeen-year-old Ruby Sales from gunfire. Afterwards Daniels become a martyr of the Civil Rights Movement. His murder caused Carmichael and other SNCC members to reconsider the role of white volunteers in the movement because they were targeted more intensely by Southern white racists. In reference to Daniels's killing, he says: "The Osagyefo [Kwame Nkrumah] used to tell me, 'The only people who never make mistakes are people who never do anything.'" I've made mistakes and I'm sure I'll make some more 'cause I'm not finished working. We made a mistake with Jonathan. One that I always remember with regret" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 470-471; Speake 2015: 166). Carmichael shared responsibility for Daniels's murder with the rest of the SNCC organization who felt that they should have done more to keep Daniels out of harm's way, but as Carmichael explains, Daniels's murder "backfired" on the angry racists who wanted to scare SNCC into abandoning their organizing efforts in Lowndes County:

Organizing the [Lowndes County Freedom Organization] became much easier after that. Now all of the people could see that the Democratic Party—"Hey them ain't nothing but some night-riding, cross-burning, no-count, low-life snakes"—was not for them. Could be that I channeled my anger into work, but I became tireless, almost driven. I was determined that this evil system had to be destroyed, and that only the people themselves could do it. (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 471)

Due to Daniels's murder, the people were able to see a clear need for new political representation, and Carmichael became even more determined to help them bring this dream to fruition. From these examples one can see how the sayings of Kwame Nkrumah help Carmichael to formulate a new perspective by which he is able to view his experiences as a political organizer in the Deep South.

After becoming a full-fledged Pan-African revolutionary, Carmichael returns to America from Africa only to have his passport seized by the U.S. government. While sidelined in the

U.S. he is determined to continue his mission of organizing for the political organizations, United Front, and the All-African People's Revolution Party (AAPRP). To explain his rationale for continuing his work he employs another saying from his mentor Nkrumah:

I didn't have time to worry about the government's little games. I mean, what was this passport seizure supposed to do? Intimidate me? Demonstrate their power and control over me? American *baasskap*? What? All it meant is that I wouldn't be returning to Guinea as quickly as I had planned, that's all. Hey, I had plenty to occupy me in America. Until the passport situation was resolved with the lawyers, I'd just keep on working...Nkrumah always said, 'A revolutionary makes a positive out of a negative.' (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 640)

The Nkrumahism, "A revolutionary makes a positive out of a negative" is a mantra that Carmichael would live by his entire life. He was always willing to work with limited resources, and he frequently took advantage of opportunities to organize, and to deliver political speeches on behalf of the Party in any place that he visited.

In one of their first meetings Nkrumah explains to Carmichael that the two greatest threats to the All-African People's Revolution Party (AAPRP) are a lack of consciousness and a lack of unity. Nkrumah asserts that people need to be aware that "the Afro-American struggle is inextricably linked to the struggle in Africa and vice versa" and that this is the primary reason that capitalist forces such as the media profit by keeping black people "confused and divided" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 674-675). Carmichael punctuates this message with another one of Nkrumah's universal apothegms: "There is another maxim the Osagyefo [Nkrumah] was fond of: action without thought is blind; thought without action is empty" (Mieder, Kingsbury, and Harder 1991: 6; Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 675). This proverb speaks to the need for black activists to be organized and united, and to be fully aware of the organization's purpose. As Carmichael asserts, without organization "we leave ourselves open to the oppressors' tactic of 'divide and conquer' or 'divide

and rule”” (Mieder et al. 1991: 112; Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 678).

When Carmichael expresses his desire to help Nkrumah return to power in Ghana, Nkrumah tells him that an effective political organizer sometimes needs to demonstrate patience. Nkrumah communicates this message to Carmichael using a brief story which he then accentuates with a saying that Carmichael presumably remembers for the rest of his life:

But y’know, you do remind me of a man standing on the shore watching a boat approach. Now he *knows* the boat is coming. He can clearly see it coming. But he is impatient. He must wade out to meet it. Which in no way speeds up the boat’s arrival. At best, the man is soaked; at worst, he drowns. The boat’s progress is not affected in the slightest. All impatience is selfishness and egotism. Remember that. (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 691)

Carmichael repeats the saying: “All impatience is selfishness and egotism” again as he ruminates over Nkrumah’s untimely death from cancer, his own bout with cancer, and how the possibility of death would ultimately affect the Pan-African movement:

And, you know, a lot of my attitude toward the cancer comes from his influence. Let me reflect carefully because I’ve never said this publicly...But when I look at all his movements, I really think that Nkrumah knew—long before we did—that the cancer he had would not allow him to return to Ghana. But he was confident that the African revolution would triumph, whether he was here or not. (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 694).

At this point Carmichael reminds the reader of Nkrumah’s wise words and the meaning behind them:

I told you his example of the boat approaching and me wanting to plunge in and him saying, ‘All impatience is selfishness and egotism’? His attitude was, look, this is a struggle. The enemy will do anything in his power to target generals. If you are out front, you must expect to be attacked. Survival is not guaranteed, but whatever happens to you personally, the struggle will go on. I think about his attitude often. (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 694)

Ultimately Nkrumah's saying "All impatience is selfishness and egotism" does at least three things for Carmichael: (1) It helps Carmichael to understand more fully his place as a leader in the Pan-African struggle. (2) It demonstrates an appropriate attitude to have as a political organizer, and (3) it provides Carmichael with an effective model for coping with his own bout with cancer.

A number of proverbs and sayings that Carmichael uses come from Nkrumah, but his other political mentor, Sékou Touré does not seem to communicate using aphorisms. A language barrier more than likely prevented Carmichael from communicating with Sékou Touré on the same level as Nkrumah. Touré primarily spoke French while Carmichael did not, but they were still able to understand one another to some extent through the use of common political terms such as Marxism, socialism, etc. because they are essentially the same in any language. Despite the language barrier, Carmichael incorporates one important saying into his narrative which he uses to characterize the political philosophy of Touré. Carmichael says: "Culture is politics; politics is culture" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 702). He then says that he really began to understand what this saying meant when he moved to Guinea and witnessed the philosophy in action firsthand and saw that Guinean President Sékou Touré valued African culture, so much so, that culture and politics became intrinsically connected in Guinea:

...the party clearly understood that the traditional culture was a key element from which to mold an African character to the revolution. So they took concrete steps to preserve, develop, and institutionalize nationally many, many traditional forms. So they supported dance groups and schools, musicians, artists, and the famous griots and so on. But not just the arts, also the ethics and values of traditional culture, an *African* sensibility that I called African humanism. (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003:702)

4.7. *Pan-African Political Proverbial Rhetoric*

At another point in *Stokely Speaks*, Carmichael is explaining the rationale behind Pan-Africanism:

We must understand the concept that for us the question of community is not geography, it is a question of us black people, wherever we are. We have to consciously become a part of the 900 million black people that are separated over this world. We are separated by *them*. We are blood of the same blood and flesh of the same flesh. We do not know who is our sister, who is our brother, or where we came from. They took us from Africa and they put thousands of miles of water between us, but they forgot—blood is thicker than water. (Stokely 1971: 128)

Carmichael employs the Biblical proverbial expression “blood of the same blood and flesh of the same flesh,” and then reinforces his message of black unity with the proverb “blood is thicker than water.” (Mieder et al. 1991: 57; Speake 2015: 31) The imagery invoked by Carmichael’s proverbial language is striking. Together they imply that one’s ties of kinship are far more important than any physical distance. In the minds of readers, the thousands of miles of water separating African-Americans from Africa may become obsolete when one considers the wisdom contained in the adage.

5. *Proverbial Wisdom from Fellow NAG and SNCC Members*

Carmichael also uses a number of proverbs and sayings that he attributes to other activists and members of the Non-Violent Action Group (NAG) and the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) including: Junebug Jabbo Jones, Hartman Turnbow (1905-1988), Joyce Ladner (b. 1943-), Bill Mahoney, Courtland Cox, Chuck McDew (1938-2018), and Gloria Richardson (b.1922-). Carmichael includes them in his narrative because they are talented organizers who were important to the movement. Furthermore, remembering the proverbs and sayings that certain SNCC members shared from time-to-time may have also helped Carmichael to “reconstruct other oral and written contexts” that may be relative to the narrative (Bowden 1996: 442).

One important proverb that effectively characterizes the mindset of the Non-Violent Action Group (NAG) in the 1960s is “A free black mind is a concealed weapon” (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 254). This saying which became proverbial within the group over time, basically describes the value that (NAG) members place on learning and knowledge: “So our generation never expected to find much that represented what Dr. Du Bois had called ‘our spiritual strivings’ in the American media. The exclusion of racial minorities generally, and militant and intelligent black voices in particular, was near total. We used to say in NAG, ‘A free black mind is a concealed weapon.’ And someone would always add, ‘Yeah, an’ the media going make darn sure it *stay* concealed too” (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 254). The SNCC proverb is similar to the proverb “A little learning is a dangerous thing” (Mieder et al. 1991: 367). By sharing the proverb “A free black mind is a concealed weapon” they are reminding themselves that their education is viewed largely as a threat to white establishments, many of which still support institutional racism despite the growing movement. Ultimately the proverb helps them to motivate one another to succeed.

Another proverb shared by the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) also shares a similar message. At one point in Carmichael’s narrative, he describes a moment when SNCC spent time debating whether they should speak out about growing tensions in the Middle East: “One of SNCC’s mantras was ‘Knowledge is power.’ So, as we learned, we shared our political education with other field secretaries. We discovered that many SNCC people already harbored serious doubts about the media’s official version of events in that region of the world” (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 559). In this case the proverb “Knowledge is power” (Mieder et al. 1991: 354; Speake 2015: 174) describes the mutual distrust held by most SNCC members concerning the media. Instead of taking the media’s information at face value, they instead decide to find out what is happening in the Middle East for themselves before sharing the information with other colleagues. In sharing their research, they are also sharing the power to influence global politics.

Several sayings in Carmichael’s narrative are attributed to Junebug Jabbo Jones. Jones is an African-American southern

fictional character that was created and performed by SNCC member, John M. O’Neal (1940-2019) who worked as SNCC’s field secretary and coordinator of the Freedom Schools. O’Neal was also a very talented actor and playwright who created and performed as the Jones character. One may say that O’Neal’s character *grew out of* and also *with* the movement. (SNCC Legacy Project) SNCC worked with many poor sharecroppers that lacked the same educational opportunities as many of the SNCC volunteers (many of whom attended prestigious universities). O’Neal created Jones as a way of capturing and expressing the straightforward folk wisdom that sharecroppers demonstrated despite their lack of any formal education. One may only imagine how many late night SNCC meetings were enlightened by insights that SNCC members would attribute to this southern folk persona. The character became so popular that O’Neal would go on to found Junebug Productions, Inc. after his work with SNCC was done.

One of the very first sayings that Carmichael attributes to Jones appears as he is describing the social and political climate at Howard University in the 1960s:

Howard presented me with every dialectic existing in the African community. At Howard, on any given day, one might meet every black thing...and its opposite. The place was a veritable tissue of contradiction, embodying the best and the absolute worst values of the African-American tradition. As Junebug Jabbo Jones (may his tribe increase) loved to say, “Effen yo’ doan unnerstan’ the principle of eternal contradiction, yo’ sho ain’t gonna unnerstan’ diddly about Howard University. Nor about black life in these United States neither.” (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 113)

Jones’s saying means that as a freshman at Howard Carmichael quickly learned that he was going to have to “take the good with the bad.” For instance, on the one hand, there were black students at Howard who were extremely class conscious—only wanting to learn to increase their personal wealth. Additionally, some student organizations still practiced colorism, or the notion that lighter skin, in and of itself, carries a higher degree of prestige, therefore barring darker skinned people from joining their groups. On the other hand, there were also many students like

Carmichael, who displayed higher levels of social consciousness and wanted to learn to help improve social and economic conditions for all black people and not just for themselves. Carmichael's proverbial expression "every black thing...and its opposite" signals to the reader in advance that Junebug Jabbo Jones's "principle of eternal contradiction" is applicable at Howard.

Carmichael also explains what SNCC members learn from Howard professor, Herbert Reed, about conducting themselves as young student activists in the Non-Violent Action Group (NAG) and the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). After describing some necessary personality traits such as always being goal oriented, polite, and knowledgeable, Carmichael asserts that Reed told them that a good activist should also maintain a good sense of humor. He accentuates his last point concerning humor with another saying from Junebug Jabbo Jones. As Junebug Jabbo Jones (may his tribe increase) says: "What us Africans need most is a lot of patience and a sense of irony" (Carmichael 2003: 149). Carmichael goes on to explain that he and his SNCC comrades would quickly learn that these attributes would only be beneficial at Howard and would not work with "armed barbarians or irrationally savage racists. Or with an inflexible government establishment whose 'interests,' as they understand them, give a low priority to justice for your people or the alleged guarantees of the Constitution. We would have to find that out to our great sorrow" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 149).

Carmichael also describes the process by which he became SNCC chairman. He says that when SNCC members initially voted, John Lewis (1940-2020) (who would later become a U.S. congressman) actually won the election, but many members who knew and liked Carmichael wanted him to replace Lewis (whom they felt had become increasingly focused on his own political ambitions), so they forced a recount, and to Lewis's dismay Carmichael won the election. In a side note, the editor, former SNCC activist, Ekwueme Michael Thelwell (b. 1939-) describes the debate that took place between himself and Carmichael concerning the issue of including Lewis's sentiments regarding the election in Carmichael's autobiography. They are ambivalent on the issue. To negotiate, Carmichael employs another popular saying

from Junebug Jabbo Jones. Carmichael says: "Okay, Thelwell. We'll hold that one. Leave it the way it is for now. Junebug used to say, 'Inside every Negro there lurks a potential black man.' Let me think about it. Later when we get to that chapter in the book, we can fight about it..." (Carmichael 2003: 483). The saying "Inside every Negro there lurks a potential black man" insinuates that Carmichael believes that whether Lewis ever expressed any negative sentiments or not, he may still deserve the benefit of the doubt. Carmichael and Thelwell never got the opportunity to "fight about it," but Thelwell's editor's note gives readers a glimpse into their writing process and their mindset.

Carmichael also uses a variation of this saying in *Stokely Speaks: From Black Power to Pan-Africanism* (1971) except in this instance it is not attributed to Jones. In Chapter eleven, "A New World to Build," he says: "There's another concept we're trying to put out around the country: every Negro is a potential black man. This concept is not only necessary, it is revolutionary..." (Carmichael 1971: 148-149). Here Carmichael is using the saying to characterize a potential epiphanic moment which may happen when a black person becomes a revolutionary thinker who fully acknowledges and embraces his African roots. Later in the same chapter Carmichael presents the proverb as one of three important concepts that black people must learn in order to resist the culturally divisive forces of colonialism:

We must have an undying love. We must have an undying love for our people. (2) Every Negro is a potential black man. (3) For black people the question of community is not simply a question of geographical boundaries but a question of our people and where we are. (Carmichael 1971: 153)

Presented as one of three important tenets, the proverb emphasizes the need to abolish self-hatred in black communities in America. It also highlights the need to reconsider the physical and mental boundaries that are traditionally imposed to demarcate blackness.

Carmichael also describes the effect that his freshman English teacher, Toni Morrison had on him as a student at Howard. Years later Morrison would become a Nobel laureate, and as an editor at Random House she would also edit two of Carmi-

chael's books, *Black Power* (1967) and *Stokely Speaks* (1971). After emphasizing the fact that Morrison was an extremely rare combination of literary talent and good looks, Carmichael uses a saying from SNCC member, Chuck McDew to call attention to the assumed luck that the hiring committee at Howard must have had in finding such a genius as Morrison:

Ms. Toni Morrison was clearly one of the committee's more inspired choices. Brother Chuck McDew sometimes says, 'Even a blind pig will pick up a fat acorn evrah now'n den.' I hear that Sister Morrison is on record as remembering me as 'something of a rascal in class.' Perhaps, no doubt. But they say what goes round comes round. Ms. M., don't look now, but your 'rascal' just called you the blind committee's 'fat acorn.' Only metaphorically, of course. (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 130)

Carmichael follows up McDew's saying with an age-old aphorism of his own when he says "what goes round comes round." The playful banter that Carmichael sustains through proverbs and sayings illustrates the warm-hearted sentiments that Morrison and Carmichael held for one another.

Another important proverb that Carmichael includes comes from SNCC member, Hartman Turnbow as he recalls describing to Turnbow, the brutality that some of the Freedom Riders are faced with as they travel through Mississippi: "The one day I told Mr. Hartman Turnbow how three generations of movement women—Mrs. Hamer, Annelle Ponder, and June Johnson (my little sister)—had been beaten in the Winona jail, his face grew overcast, his voice thoughtful. Y'know son," he mused, "water seek de low places but power seek de weak places" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 287). Turnbow's response is meant to both console Carmichael and to help him understand the nature of the political struggle that had consumed much of the Deep South. Furthermore, the proverb is Turnbow's way of communicating to Carmichael that SNCC had become immersed in a battle for power, and much like low-lying water on the Mississippi, Delta plains, racist whites sought to absorb and overtake any political influence that SNCC or any poor sharecropper could ever hope to obtain.

The proverb “water seek de low places, but power seek de weak places” communicates such an important lesson to young Carmichael that he refers to it a number of times. At another point in the narrative, he explains some of the complicated logistics behind SNCC’s voter registration drive:

Now the bad part. SNCC was entering its third year in voter registration and had staked out the hard places. Those “black belt” counties in the Delta of Mississippi, Arkansas, Alabama, and southwest Georgia. We had agreed that CORE could have Louisiana. We were working where Africans were in the majority and the vote could theoretically make a real difference. Which is why the repression was so desperate. As Mr. Turnbow said when I explained this, ‘Power seek tha *weak* places, water seek tha *low* places, but SNCC done seek the *hard* places, seem like t’me. (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 326)

In this instance, Carmichael extends the proverb by adding his own phrase to the end “but SNCC done seek the *hard* places, seem like t’me” (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 326). Carmichael’s addition is used to emphasize the extent that SNCC had to contend against racial terrorism. The Kennedy administration made promises of funding and support in order to convince SNCC to abandon the Freedom Rides in favor of voter registration drives, and now that they faced even worse threats of terrorism in the Deep South: “...the federal government—the Justice Department, the FBI, those Kennedy liberals who had promised so much—where were they? Nowhere to be found” (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 326).

Carmichael would include this proverb at another point in *Ready for Revolution* as an epigraph to chapter twenty-two. The epigraph is attributed to Hartman Turnbow, Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party leader, and reads: “We gotta make this our Mississippi, Jes’ as water seek the low places, Power seek the weak places” (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 501). In this instance, the addition of the phrase “We gotta make this our Mississippi” causes the proverb to read more as a rallying call for African-American people to unite for the common cause of political independence.

Carmichael also describes a family like atmosphere that existed among members of the Non-Violent Action Group (NAG) and Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). The long meetings that they would have were often made longer by disagreements, but as Carmichael explains, the disagreements were a necessary part of their growing process: "But similarities in fundamental attitudes notwithstanding, we were in no way intellectual clones of each other. Folks were stubbornly independent; therefore arguments and disagreements could be fierce, passionate and unending" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 145). He then includes a popular saying from SNCC member Joyce Ladner that effectively describes the intellectual climate of the group: "As Joyce Ladner famously said, 'SNCC folk would argue with a street sign'" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003:145). He then adds: "Well, NAG folk would argue with the sign *post*. But the strident rhetoric never managed to conceal a deep mutual respect" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003:145). Ladner's humorous saying and Carmichael's snappy retort depicts an atmosphere that is mentally challenging on the surface, but also fueled by a strong family-like bond.

Another saying that Carmichael uses comes from SNCC member Bill Mahoney. As Carmichael explains, the process of challenging Howard's administration through organizations like the Non-Violent Action Group (NAG) and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) was a great learning experience that taught him and other members how to negotiate "from a position of no real power" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 147). Additionally, the minor battles that they engaged in with administration would effectively prepare them for far more challenging obstacles. Carmichael uses a saying from Bill Mahoney to emphasize this point: "As Bill Mahoney would sometimes say, 'Today the administration, tomorrow the state'" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 147). It is a brief saying that fully describes the future oriented attitudes of both organizations.

SNCC member, Courtland Cox, a fellow Trinidadian from New York, would also popularize a saying. Carmichael describes him as "Another big dude... who was always thoughtful, deliberate, and given to aphorisms" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003:158). The saying that he attributes to Cox reads: "Black-

ness is necessary. But it is not sufficient" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 158-159). It is a powerful statement that speaks to the perceived connection between racial identity and political organizing. Some people mistakenly believe that simply being black qualifies them to speak on behalf of all black people, but as Cox's aphorism asserts, blackness is "not sufficient." One must also be willing to gain knowledge from books and other sources about the history of the black experience.

Another important saying comes from Howard Alumna, Gloria Richardson (b.1922-) who led the Cambridge Nonviolent Action Committee (CNAC). Richardson uses a saying as a way of conceptualizing the ramped racial violence that occurred during the Cambridge Movement (1961-1964). In the spring of 1963, Cambridge Maryland had become a virtual powder keg due to a combination of conservatives who were growing increasingly intolerant of black political organizing in the area and black community members who were quick to retaliate. Racial tensions reached a boiling point on July 14th when racist whites began driving through black neighborhoods firing liberally into black people's homes. Blacks retaliated with an "organized defense." And subsequently, "sustained fire was returned from various points, off roofs, out of windows, behind cars and trees, etc. That exchange lasted more than an hour" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 339). At a meeting, Gloria Richardson would denounce the violence, but she would not denounce black people who were defending their own lives. Richardson employs a saying to make her point: "When you are attacked by a rabid dog... you don't run or throw away the walking stick you have in your hand" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 339-340). This saying was not well received by the press and all of the black and white leaders who were proponents of non-violence, but Richardson had established herself as one of few militant black females in the movement that could get the Kennedy Administration's attention. Subsequently, Richardson and (CNAC) would have several private meetings with Attorney General, Robert F. Kennedy. Ultimately, her efforts led to her being one of the signatories of the Treaty of Cambridge which desegregated all public facilities and implemented provisions to improve equities in housing and education.

6. West Indian and African Proverbial Wisdom

Many proverbs and sayings that Carmichael includes in his narrative are attributed to West Indians, Africans, or various African tribes. Some of them involve animals thus reflecting his experiences with agrarian lifestyles that many black people live around the world. Through these sayings Carmichael makes a number of important points concerning life, truth, and human nature.

One African proverb appears at a point in the narrative when Carmichael says he and a group of friends at Bronx Science were discussing the Pythagorean Theorem when they are suddenly approached by a man whom Carmichael describes as a “hobo-looking old dude” (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003:109). The man tells them that the Pythagorean Theorem was not discovered by Pythagoras the Greek, as most people believe. He tells them that the famous formula was instead discovered by Africans in Egypt. Carmichael and his friends initially dismiss the old man as crazy, but after he checks the facts for himself in the library, he realizes that what the man tells him is indeed the truth and he uses two proverbs (one of which is African) and a proverbial expression to communicate this learning experience to readers.

The first mistake that Carmichael says he made is to dismiss the man simply because of his unruly appearance: “Thou seest that man’s fall, but thou knowest not his wrassling” (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 109). This universal proverb that Carmichael does not attribute to any particular person basically means that it is wise not to judge people based on their outward appearances because one has no way of knowing what an individual may have been through. Carmichael goes on to say: “That lesson would be reinforced time and again when as a young man I was organizing sharecroppers in the rural South. Especially with our elders. Knowledge and sometimes wisdom can come from the most unlikely of sources. The stone that the builders rejected...” (Cambridge and Thelwell 2003: 109). The proverbial expression “the stone that the builders rejected” further speaks to the notion that one does not have to be formally educated to learn. Knowledge may also be gained through unconventional means. Carmichael then employs an African proverb to accentuate this important message: “And of course, in Africa, in the villages, the same thing. A proverb I heard stayed with me: ‘Truth is like a goatskin

bag: each man carries his own' (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 109).

At another point in the narrative Carmichael is discussing the overwhelming amount of support that he received after being elected SNCC Chairman. Dr. King congratulates him and tells him that he always believed that Carmichael would eventually be called upon to lead the organization. Contrarily, his former teacher and Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) co-founder, James Farmer expresses a more ambivalent attitude towards Carmichael's new role. In fact, he warns Carmichael of some of the perils of leadership. Farmer asks Carmichael if he was familiar with the "West Indian proverb about the high-climbing monkey?" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 485). Carmichael responds: "My grandmother used to say it all the time." (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 485; Speak 2015: 151). An editor's side note reveals the West Indian proverb that Farmer is referring to: "The higher the monkey climb, the more he expose he behind." Referencing the proverb is Farmer's way of warning him that as the new leader of SNCC, Carmichael will be under much more scrutiny and observation than he ever was as a regular member. In addition to the West Indian proverb, Farmer also tells him that he must grow "some calluses on [his] soul" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 485) which is a proverbial expression meaning that he would have to maintain a mature attitude when faced with an abundance of criticism. Farmer then leaves Carmichael with another proverb. He asks Carmichael if he recalls the saying "uneasy lies the head" which is derived from Shakespeare's *King Henry IV*. (Mieder et al. 1991: 128) The line reads: "Uneasy lies the head that wears the crown." A Shakespearean at heart, Carmichael would sometimes sit-in on Shakespeare lectures at Howard, so one may assume that he is well-versed. Carmichael responds by saying: "that [doesn't] apply since SNCC didn't have no crowns no how." In using the proverb reference, Farmer is more than likely testing his former student, and if that is indeed the case, Carmichael passed with flying colors in reminding the civil rights veteran of SNCC's primary purpose which is to organize communities, so that they could eventually lead themselves. (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 485)

At another point in the narrative Carmichael describes a time when he returned home to visit his mother after being away for an extended amount of time. His mother tries to convince him to stay awhile, and after much pleading, he finally concedes to her wishes. He uses an African proverb to justify his decision to take a much-needed break from organizing. He says: "As we say in Africa, 'Why is man better than animals? Because we have kinfolk'" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 731). A variation of this proverb also appears in another section as a caption that accompanies a 1989 photo of Carmichael surrounded by his nieces and nephews. The caption reads: "'*Why are humans better than animals? Because we have kinsmen.*' Igbo proverb" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003).

As Carmichael explains the effect that his political saying, "Black Power" had on the media, he says that it is always misinterpreted and attacked by political leaders that do not have a full grasp of its meaning. While Carmichael intends for the slogan to be a rallying cry for black political, social, and economic independence, many press outlets and politicians misinterpret the call as an overt expression of racial hatred. According to Carmichael: "one famous public intellectual, James Wechsler of the *New York Post*, worried that we 'were killing the dream'... that 'the cause of Civil Rights was floundering'... 'the visions of the freedom movement are imperiled'... 'some deeply dedicated [*but obviously confused*] men are setting the stage for the destruction of the noblest cause of our time.'" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 525). So many people felt offended or threatened by his new "Black Power" mantra that Carmichael had no way of knowing who to attack and employs a proverb to describe the situation. The narrative reads: "West Indian proverb: 'When you throw a stone into a pigsty, the one that bawl is the one you lick'" (Carmichael and Thelwell: 2003 525). The proverb basically describes his attitude towards all the political backlash that he receives. Carmichael clearly believes that the most outspoken opponents are also the enemies who are determined to impede the progress of the movement, and those are the ones that he doesn't mind insulting with his mantra.

At another point in the narrative Carmichael describes the effect that being SNCC Chairman had on him. While he explains

that it did not have a negative effect on his personality or attitude towards the movement, it did pull him away from all of the things that he really enjoyed most, such as political organizing, and taking part in all of the "day-to-day running of the organization" which ultimately had to be left for others to accomplish because of his heavy speaking and touring schedule (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 540). To explain his complicated predicament, Carmichael employs an African proverb which sounds much like Junebug Jabbo Jones's theory of contradiction:

Where one thing stands, something else will stand beside it. That's an African proverb I've always liked. This ancestral wisdom deals with duality and contradiction, complexity. Nothing is ever entirely one thing or even simply what it seems. Another, different thing will stand beside it and behind it. A particular thing will often include its opposite. (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 540)

The African proverb "Where one thing stands, something else will stand beside it" speaks to the convoluted nature of Carmichael's issue. Most people assumed that the world-wide attention that Carmichael received as SNCC chairman was what he wanted, but the proverb illustrates that he also had a strong passion to go back to the job that he loved most which was political organizing. Carmichael would eventually return to political organizing after his chairmanship ended, but he never truly gave up one set of duties for the other.

Towards the end of his career when Carmichael receives student papers about the Freedom Movement sent to him by the son of famed sociologist, Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois (1868-1963), David Du Bois, Carmichael sends him a thank you letter that describes the experience as humbling. Carmichael is "humbled" by Du Bois's student's interests in the Freedom Movement, and he is also "humbled" by the honesty that the students express in their papers. Carmichael then uses two proverbs, one which is a favorite of his famous friend and mentor Dr. King, and the other he attributes to Egyptians: "But we were humbled to see the honesty of your students in facing contradictions which challenge life-long opinions. That made Martin Luther King come alive with his oft-repeated 'truth crushed to the earth shall rise again.' Or as the Egyptians say, 'struggle is like a rubber ball: the

harder it is smashed into the dirt, the higher it rebounds into the sky” (Mieder et al. 1991: 616; Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 595-596; Mieder 2010: 512). Carmichael includes these powerful proverbs as a way of saying that the students are now also a major part of the Freedom Movement, and their work is simply a manifestation of this bond.

As a citizen of Guinea, Carmichael explains an ordeal that he experiences when his passport nearly expires. After the death of Guinean President Sékou Touré, Carmichael feared that he would be denied a new passport by the new regime and therefore would no longer be allowed to travel. He says that he was able to obtain a new one from the minister of the interior before it expired by being creative. Since he recognized the minister from when the minister was just a low-level officer, he was able to use his knowledge of the man’s love for American hip-hop and attractive women to convince him to expedite the handling of his passport. Previously the young man had asked Carmichael to critique the English used in a rap song he had written. The minister remembers Carmichael’s favor, and after a few laughs and some small talk Carmichael receives his new passport, thereby reducing a process that usually takes several months to only thirty minutes. As Carmichael leaves the minister’s office, he promises to send many attractive women to his office in return. Carmichael says: “He was still laughing as I left his office that day” (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 724). In addition to this humorous anecdote, Carmichael informs the reader that the same minister was later executed for plotting a government take-over. Carmichael uses an African proverb to describe the young minister’s revolutionary spirit. He says: “As the Ashanti proverb says, ‘A log may lie in the river for ten years, but it will never become a crocodile’” (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 723-24). He also adds: “He once was a most impressive young warrior and he taught me a lot. Peace be unto him” (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 724). The anecdote and the Ashanti proverb work together to express the notion that if one believes that one is destined to be a revolutionary then that is what one will ultimately become regardless of any other title that may be bestowed upon them.

At another point in the narrative Carmichael describes his strategy for cancer treatment. While he always allowed trusted

medical professionals to treat him, he also tried several experimental treatments. He describes his reaction after being exposed to some of these alternative remedies: "I was surprised both at the extent and the variety of these enterprises. It was collectively an underground mini-industry, at least some of which seemed transparently fraudulent, the contemporary equivalents of snake oil salesman preying on frightened people at their most vulnerable. An exploitation of the drowning-man-and-the-straw syndrome, the profit motive at its absolutely most despicable" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 769). The proverbial expression "the drowning-man-and-the straw" is a reference to the proverb "A drowning man will clutch at a straw." (Mieder et al. 1991: 169; Speake 2015: 84) While this may not be attributed to a specific group it helps to prepare the reader for another proverb which Carmichael does attribute to African people:

But the few that, although unorthodox, appeared to be serious scientific initiatives with some potential to benefit somebody came surrounded by a flotilla of the obviously fraudulent. And how to distinguish between them? The task of sorting out and sifting through fell to Dr. Justice, assisted by Eric, Winky, and my sister Nagib. As our proverb says, 'Hungry belly make monkey eat red pepper.' Well, necessity has made me an expert on experimental cancer treatment. (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 769)

In this instance, Carmichael's use of a proverb and a proverbial expression calls attention to the troubling situation that he was forced into by the insidious disease, cancer, and as the proverb illustrates desperate times call for desperate measures. Due to the expert care that Carmichael receives after his initial diagnoses, he lives another two years. He succumbs to the disease in 1998.

7. Proverbs and Sayings Reflecting Various Branches of Learning

Carmichael also uses several proverbs and sayings that reflect various disciplines or fields of study such as: philosophy, history, English, political science, and engineering. At one point in the narrative he says: "That Greek philosopher Heraclitus was wrong in our case: Africans in America seem always to be cross-

ing and recrossing the same river” (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 204). While Carmichael’s statement may not be a proverb, it is a reference to a saying that was popularized by Heraclitus who was known for his writings about paradox and incoherence which he argues arises naturally alongside constant change. Heraclitus’s original statement reads “No man ever steps in the same river twice, for its not the same river and he’s not the same man.” Heraclitus’ saying aptly applies to Carmichael who entered Howard as a pre-med student, but quickly discovered his passion for philosophy after becoming involved with the movement. Carmichael’s reference to it: “Africans in America seem always to be crossing and recrossing the same river” is but one of many examples of Carmichael applying his fervor for philosophical insight to the civil rights struggle.

Another saying that Carmichael incorporates into his narrative which also illustrates his enthusiasm for philosophy appears at a point in the narrative when he describes a need for black people in the Deep South to have their own political parties which would enable them to elect their own candidates on the local and state levels. Recognizing the limited success of the newly established Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP), Carmichael explains that another party is necessary: “The MFDP was one model, but we needed at least a second one. As someone famous said, ‘Let a thousand flowers bloom and a thousand schools of thought contend’” (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 438). In this case Carmichael’s philosophical aphorism is used to describe a pivotal moment in the movement that would result in the founding of the Lowndes County Freedom Organization (LCFO).

Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in America (1967) includes a proverb that may serve as an explanation for why the MFDP may not have been successful in accomplishing its mission of unseating the racist Democratic Party at the 1964 Democratic National Convention. The passage reads: “Law is the agent of those in political power; it is the product of those powerful enough to define right and wrong and to have that definition legitimized by ‘law.’ This is not to say that ‘might makes right,’ but it is to say that might makes law. The MFDP was operating from a base of powerlessness; thus, they could be declared ‘illegal’”

(Ture and Hamilton: 1967). The proverb "Might makes right" is used in this instance to emphasize the reason why the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) was not strong enough to unseat the traditional all white racist Democratic Party. According to paremiologist, Wolfgang Mieder, "might makes right" is one of the most highly cited proverbs of the English tradition, appearing in the works of figures such as Abraham Lincoln, Frederick Douglass, Martin Luther King, William Shakespeare, and others. (Mieder 2019: 269) The proverb means that in the game of politics, it is always the stronger party that wins. This fact is accentuated even further by the anti-proverb "might makes law" which proceeds it. Anti-proverbs are defined as "those reactions to common proverbs...which are humorous, ironic, or satirical modifications that contain new insights and generalizations, with the possibility of becoming new proverbs" (Mieder 2019: 15). If the proverb "might makes right" represents any specific field, in this instance, it is unquestionably the field of political science. (Mieder et al. 1991: 510; Speake 2015: 207)

At another point in the narrative Carmichael seems to have a war of words with a reporter or better yet, a war of proverbs. The reporter says to Carmichael: "You know, Mr. Ture, they say journalism is the first draft of history" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 501). Carmichael, unimpressed responds: "Napoléon had something to say about that." (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 501). The reporter having no clue as to what Napoléon says about history is mocked even further by Carmichael who then says: "You mean you don't know? C'mon, I thought you guys knew everything. [Napoléon] said history is nothing but lies commonly agreed upon. You saying you the first draft of that?" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 501) The reporter who is beginning to feel insulted asks Carmichael if he is accusing him of being a liar. Carmichael responds by saying: "Oh no, but I may be calling you a historian." This brief exchange illustrates Carmichael's penchant for philosophical thinking and his ability to view academic disciplines from a macroscopic perspective. Carmichael is primarily concerned with learning how different schools of thought function and how that knowledge can be applied to the movement.

Perhaps the previous exchange with the reporter inspires Carmichael to include a similar saying in a speech that he delivers at the University of California, Berkeley, October 1966. In the introduction of the speech Carmichael says: "Incidentally, for my friends and members of the press, my self-appointed white critics, I was reading Mr. Bernard Shaw two days ago, and I came across a very important quote that I think is most apropos to you. He says, 'All criticism is an autobiography.' Dig yourself. OK" (Carmichael 1971: 45). The saying which he employs in the Berkeley address may be interpreted as an invitation to the media to continue to criticize him and his ideas. He is telling the media outlets that are present, that the negative press that they generate is only contributing to his legacy as a black revolutionary. The saying may also help to defer any negative criticism that he may receive for that particular speech.

More proverbs and proverbial language concerning Carmichael's philosophical views on history appear in *Stokely Speaks: From Black Power to Pan-Africanism* (1971). In chapter four, *Toward Black Liberation*, Carmichael describes the failures of Reconstruction: "We have repeatedly seen that political alliances based on appeals to conscience and decency are chancy things, simply because institutions and political organizations have no consciences outside their own special interests. The political and social rights of Negroes have been and always will be negotiable and expendable the moment they conflict with the interests of our 'allies.' If we do not learn from history, we are doomed to repeat it, and that is precisely the lesson of the Reconstruction" (Carmichael 1971: 37). The use of the proverb: "If we do not learn from history, we are doomed to repeat it" speaks to a history of failed promises that the U.S. government has made to black people since the end of the Civil War. Carmichael uses the aphorism to illustrate the fact that it is one's own responsibility to learn about these unfortunate historical occurrences to prevent them from happening again.

Carmichael echoes the very same point in chapter fifteen "From Black Power Back to Pan-Africanism." He explains that black people should learn about the history of Africa that predates the Trans-Atlantic slave trade:

This parochial thinking must cease. Our starting point in history must precede the period of colonialism and slavery; it must precede the Arabic and European invasions. This is not to say we want to rest on the past glory of African civilization, which contributed immensely to world civilization; but in order to map out the future we *must* clearly understand the past. More importantly, this interpretation allows us to view the effects these events had on us. (Carmichael 1971: 222)

The saying “in order to map out the future we *must* clearly understand the past” is nearly identical in meaning to the proverb “If we do not learn from history, we are doomed to repeat it.” The main difference is that the former does not attempt to foresee or predict any of the negative consequences that may result from ignoring history. Carmichael’s use of the proverb and the saying is indicative of his belief that all revolution begins with education.

Another saying that Carmichael uses a number of times is attributed to the field of engineering. As Carmichael describes some fundamental differences between the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), he asserts that SCLC was in some ways pigeonholed because they continued to depend on marches and government support even when federal support was unlikely and even when marches were viewed as being detrimental to the physical and mental well-being of all of its members who were often attacked by racist conservative groups and state troopers. Carmichael uses a proverb to explain the rationale behind this kind of thinking: “You know there is a saying among engineers: “If all you have is a hammer, the whole world will look like a nail to you” (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 446; Speake 2015: 142). He repeats this proverb again as he ponders how Dr. King, after leading successful marches in Selma, will alter his political tactics as he prepares to mobilize SCLC to take on northern territories beginning with Chicago. As Carmichael explains, Chicago will require new tactics and it will also pose new dangers. He emphasizes this point to readers using the very same proverb:

The sheer scale of the city, its ethnic neighborhoods, its politics, the infamous Daley machine, the entrenched industrial capitalism.

How responsive would these be to SCLC's nonviolent, mass mobilization marches and cries for integration. I wasn't sure. A brother in engineering once told me. "If the only tool you have is a hammer, then the whole world will look like a nail. I wished Dr. King well, but I wondered what tactical changes he was preparing for his first Northern campaign. I had my doubts. (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 538; Speake 2015: 142)

This proverb which he attributes to the engineering field is used to explain to the reader that SNCC's purpose was to provide black people with other viable alternatives that were not being offered by SCLC or other conservative groups. As the proverb implies, a single political organization will never be adequate in all situations.

8. Proverbs and Sayings About Motion and Progress

There are also several proverbs and sayings that equate physical movement with personal growth and development. They are implemented for at least a couple of different reasons. First, they help to characterize the learning process—seeming most appropriate at various points in the narrative when people are faced with difficult learning situations. Secondly, proverbs and sayings regarding motion and movement are used at times to discuss the progress of African people.

One proverb that Carmichael uses that equates movement with learning is "All motion is not progress." The first time that he employs this proverb he is remembering the annual Carnival celebration in his native homeland of Trinidad, and how much he enjoyed the Calypso music of steel bands, and the float and costume competitions. As a young child, he and his family would view the float building process and enjoy bickering over which costume would take home the year's grand prize. Carmichael says that the event has now become marred by capitalism:

Today, so I'm told, the steel bands come lavishly attired and equipped courtesy of their multinational corporate sponsors, the marriages of capitalism and local culture. The Shell Oil Invaders and Mobil Corp's Casa Blanca? Somehow it doesn't ring quite right, given the militant history out of which the bands evolved. All motion is not Progress. (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 41)

The oil manufacturers are products of European colonial forces that sought to exploit the island's people and their natural resources. The steel bands evolved as a form of subversion. When colonists forbade native workers from playing drums, they resorted to secretly designing their own instruments from discarded oil containers. Over the years, the drum making process evolved into the specialized sounds that can be heard from Calypso bands today. In this instance, the proverb "All motion is not progress" describes the irony demonstrated in the fact that a loved Carnival tradition which was designed to subvert colonial forces, is now, through corporate sponsorship, being used to promote them.

Carmichael uses the proverb again in describing the impact of the landmark *Brown vs. Topeka Kansas Board of Education* (1952-1954) decision on the Deep South. On the one hand, many African-Americans celebrated the fact that segregation would finally be outlawed, and they looked forward to more opportunities to receive equal education. On the other hand, due to racist backlash, (which often appeared in the form of Ku Klux Klan activity, lynching, and mob violence) celebrations surrounding the landmark *Brown* case would be short lived. Carmichael asserts that the worst part about the deteriorating racial climate was the government's subdued response: "From the rest of the nation and the national government, silence. Things were in fact worse. All motion is not progress" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003:175).

In describing the influence that exploitation had on black people in the film industry, Carmichael contends that there were a number of positive and powerful images of blackness in Hollywood in the early 1960s. He names important black figures such as: Harry Belafonte, Yaphet Kotto, William Marshall, Woody Strode, Ivan Dixon, and former NFL running back Jim Brown. (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 267) He goes on to say that these positive images were quickly overshadowed by stereotypical imagery that became pervasive during the blaxploitation era of the early 1970s. He says: "The ...wave of blaxploitation films showed us graphically that not all motion is progress. Particularly for black folks in Hollywood" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 267). In this instance, Carmichael uses the proverb "All motion is not progress" to pinpoint moments in history that are marked by moral regression.

Carmichael also describes the impact that his “black power” slogan had on the Civil Rights Movement. He explains that the movement was transforming in the 1960s and would have continued to evolve with or without a popular political slogan which could never create change in and of itself. In making this clear to the reader he employs the proverb again:

Yeah, the movement was changing. Had to change. Struggle is, after all, a dynamic, complicated, and organic process. And not all motion is progress. But, c'mon, gimme a break. We certainly did not change the entire direction of the black movement or the attitudes of black America merely by combining two simple words at a rally in Greenwood, Mississippi. That's silly and absurd, even for the American media. (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 524)

Even though Carmichael's black power saying did not change the movement on its own, it still marks a major turning point in American history. When Carmichael unveils the saying near the tail end of the Meredith Mississippi Freedom March (1966) it basically illustrates that the abuse that marchers suffered at the hands of state troopers only strengthened their resolve. As Carmichael points out “All motion is not progress,” but many black people were satisfied with the direction that the movement was heading in following that important march.

A motion-oriented proverbial expression that Carmichael uses is “lift as you climb.” It is an expression that speaks to a sense of unity in the African-American community. Carmichael discusses the strong legacy of activism and scholarship that he encountered as a 19- year-old freshman at Howard University in 1960: “In D.C. I was truly in touch for the first time with all aspects of the culture of Africans from the South. While at school I was also being exposed in a systematic and critical way to our intellectual tradition and the history of the struggle of those ‘many thousands gone,’ who as they proudly said always ‘lifted as they climbed.’ All of which could not help but have a serious effect on any young person searching for an honorable role for himself and his people in the world” (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 133). Carmichael is saying that learning about black culture at Howard was instrumental in shaping his own identity as an ac-

tivist and black revolutionary thinker and he is also saying that it is a value that he intends to pass on to others.

At another point in Carmichael's narrative, he discusses his reaction to the book, *The Rage of A Privileged Class*. He describes the tone of the book as being completely out of touch with the Civil Rights Movement. He explains that the book's subject is "the anger, frustration, alienation, and despair prevalent among Africans born in America, who although 'supremely qualified' found themselves underappreciated, rarely promoted, and insufficiently rewarded in the American corporate world" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 770). He goes on to discuss some of the sentiments of disappointment expressed by the book's author: "'We accepted *all* their terms,' they wail, 'and *did everything they required* of us: the 'right' schools, the 'right' degrees, the 'right' résumés, so why now do we feel so alienated, underutilized, and isolated?" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 770). Carmichael then explains that what this person is interpreting as racism may simply be a symptom of capitalism which is experienced by many people in the corporate world: "In all likelihood, I thought, a great many of their white colleagues in offices next door who could not claim an ethnic or culturally determined 'glass ceiling' were probably equally victim to the very same ennui and disaffection and for much the same reasons: the craven abandonment of their community and culture in thoughtless pursuit of the sterility of the corporate American dream, cum nightmare, and for *acceptance* and status in that predatory culture" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 770). Here Carmichael is defining what he considers to be a common attitude found among the black bourgeoisie. He says that it is an unwarranted feeling of entitlement that is not at all connected to civil rights struggles. He then poses the question: "Whatever happened to 'lifting as ye Climb?'" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 770). Carmichael uses the proverbial expression "lift as ye climb" here to draw a stark comparison between the effects of capitalism and the effects of racism. He makes it very clear to the reader that they are two very distinct entities.

Another motion-oriented proverbial expression appears as he describes the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) at its inception. He asserts that Ms. Ella Josephine Bak-

er (1903-1986) at the Southwide Youth Leadership Conference at Shaw University in Raleigh, N.C. (1960) convinced sit-in movement attendees that their new organization could be independent and operated solely by students. Despite this declaration, there were still many questions left unanswered after the initial meeting. Questions concerning structure, location, and funding continued to arise. Carmichael employs a variation of the proverbial expression “to learn to fly on the way down” to explain their unique predicament: “as Chuck Jones put it, we had to learn to fly before hitting the ground, we also had to decide the style and trajectory of that flight: Just what kind of bird were we, buzzards or falcons?” (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 299).

After SNCC is established, they still found themselves at times facing situations for which they had no preparation or planning. As they were organizing their major voter registration drive in the Mississippi Delta (known as Freedom Summer), they were faced with issues such as communities of black people who were too terrified to participate due to racial violence. Carmichael explains that it was “another one of those critical moments of decision in which we had no clear guidelines or precedents or guarantees. Another one of those ‘learning to fly on the way down’ situations” (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 354). “Learning to fly on the way down” simply means that they were forced to make decisions without having any idea of what the results may be.

Carmichael would describe the Black Panther Party (BPP) in the same way. After Eldridge Cleaver and Huey P. Newton gained Carmichael’s permission to use the popular panther symbol from Carmichael’s Lowndes County Freedom Organization (LCFO), the California based group spread and grew exponentially across the nation, but as an organization they faced some serious drawbacks. None of the Panther members were well educated, they had no previous political leadership experience, and Carmichael declined their invitation to play any significant role aside from allowing them to use him as a figurehead symbol as their Honorary Prime Minister. As he explains, the BPP also suffered from a lack of organization and a lack of leadership:

And the Panthers, what was their interest? At the time they were beginning to have high media visibility, albeit of a dubious kind,

and a growing national image. As a consequence, the Black Panther Party was spreading rapidly among Northern African youth who'd grown up listening to Malcolm, seeing SNCC on TV, and feeling deprived of their opportunity to be involved in the kind of struggle SNCC and Dr. King had waged in the South. But the Panther leader lacked real political experience. This was an organization literally with no history and no precedent in American politics. (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003:661)

Carmichael contends that the Black Panther Party suffers from many of the same ailments that SNCC suffered from in its early days. He then says: “they found themselves in midair, ‘learning to fly on the way down’” (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003:661). Due to some of the inefficiencies that Carmichael identifies, the organization struggled for a while and then eventually dissipated.

A similar moment occurs during Freedom Summer after SNCC activists; Mickey Schwerner, James Chaney, and Andy Goodman are murdered by the Ku Klux Klan. Days after they are discovered missing, the charred frame of their vehicle is found. Carmichael accompanied by two other SNCC members embark on a mission to find their friends. Having no clear plan in place for navigating the Mississippi Delta swamps, forest, and farmlands, Carmichael remains optimistic that they can solicit some help from Native Choctaw hunters: “We hoped maybe we could blend in with them on the reservation and take advantage of their knowledge of the terrain. Admittedly not a fully formulated plan, but we were again learning to fly on the way down” (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 375). Carmichael and his friends never employ the services of the Choctaw, and they are not successful in locating their friends. However, weeks later, after authorities receive tips from a Ku Klux Klan informer, the remains of Schwerner, Chaney, and Goodman are discovered buried underneath tons of dirt on a farm in Mississippi. Carmichael in explaining what would be described as one of the lowest points of the Freedom Movement, employs the proverbial expression, “learning to fly on the way down” to explain the feeling of being thrown into such a desperate situation for which there would be no clear guide for escaping.

At another point in the narrative Carmichael describes the experience of convincing his mentor, Kwame Nkrumah that

Nkrumah's Pan-African organization, the All-African People's Revolution Party (AAPRP) should be endorsed heavily throughout the United States as well as Africa. Carmichael is honored when Nkrumah finally agrees to allow him to oversee expanding the Party. Their goal is to spread the belief that: "All African-descended people living in 113 countries on the continent and in the diaspora...share history, culture, and common enemies—racism, imperialism, neocolonialism, and capitalist exploitation" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 675). Furthermore, they teach the notion that it is the entire diaspora who endures "disunity, disorganization, and ideological confusion" (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003:675). While Carmichael realizes that the job of organizing for the Party will be no easy task, he expresses optimism, and he captures his sense of hopefulness with a proverb:

Of course, this is ambitious, a vast ongoing enterprise. A general vision, direction, and commitment. The cumulative work of many lifetimes, an incremental and continuing struggle. We understood that clearly. But we were young and, as they say, 'a journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step.' (Carmichael and Thelwell 2003: 675)

The proverb: "a journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step" equates physical travel with personal growth and it also illustrates that from a mental standpoint, Carmichael is very well prepared for the difficult task of trying to convince black people around the globe that they share one common plight. (Mieder et al. 1991: 594; Speake 2015: 166) The proverb also conveys a sense of accomplishment in even beginning a project of this magnitude. The All-African People's Revolution Party (AAPRP) will provide future generations of revolutionaries with a stable foundation on which they may continue to build.

9. Conclusion

Carmichael uses an expansive variety of proverbs, sayings, and proverbial expressions. Collectively they illustrate his philosophical growth, and they also demonstrate some of the various ideological revolutions that he experiences throughout his lifetime. While this study is not meant to include every proverb or

saying that was ever uttered or written by Carmichael, it does provide one with a sizable sample of the kind of proverbial language that was a part of Carmichael's verbal repertoire.

The important role of proverbial language in civil rights struggles may not be overstated. As Carmichael asserts, activism and political organizing required multitudes of people to think and act as one, and the movement's many proverbs, sayings, proverbial expressions, and mantras helped unification become possible. Whether embracing a humorous saying from Junebug Jabbo Jones or sharing a powerful saying such as "Black Power," they helped people to bond, and the insight contained in the messages gave people a shared sense of purpose. Proverbs, proverbial expressions, and sayings were also a way of sharing political strategy and worldview while providing Non-Violent Action Group (NAG) members and Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) members with a clear goal and vision for moving forward.

Carmichael's penchant for proverbial language leads one to pose some important questions. Could Carmichael have become such a master of proverbial language if he had not become so accustomed to proverbial language as a child? Likewise, could Carmichael have been such an effective political organizer without applying this unique skill so liberally? Evidence revealed in this essay points one towards the negative in both cases. As Carmichael demonstrates, proverbs, sayings, and proverbial expressions can become so engrained in the human psyche that they may influence countless other aspects of human interaction including memory, interpersonal relationships, and even an individual's and entire people's world view.

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Index of Proverbs, Sayings, and Proverbial Expressions

(In the order in which they appear)

- (1) *Black power!*
- (2) *Waste not, want not.*
- (3) *If you in the morning throw minutes away, you can't pick them up the course of the day.*
- (4) *Whatsoever you set your hand to do, do it with all your might.*
- (5) *If you didn't work for it, don't look for it.*
- (6) *If you didn't sweat for it, don't even think of it.*
- (7) *You can tell the truth every day of your life, and if, on the day of your death, you tell a lie...that is what will matter.*
- (8) *You know, the day on which you learned nothing is a wasted day. Enough of those and what've you got? A wasted life.*
- (9) *There is always more than one way to skin a cat.*
- (10) *If you want to hide something from the black man, put it in a library.*
- (11) *Just because you see a man throwing worms into the river, don't necessarily mean he a friend to the fish.*
- (12) *What's good news for some is bad news for others.*

- (13) *When they say something bad about a man then that's the man you should run to.*
- (14) *If a man hasn't discovered something that he will die for, he isn't fit to live.*
- (15) *As life is action and passion, it is required of a man that he should share the passion and action of his time at peril being judged not to have lived.*
- (16) *If I am not for myself, who is for me? And when I am for myself what am I? And if not now, when?*
- (17) *There comes a time when silence is tantamount to consent.*
- (18) *If one is a good Jew, one cannot be a Zionist. If one is Zionist, one cannot be a good Jew.*
- (19) *Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country.*
- (20) *Was not sincerity always subject to proof.*
- (21) *People obey masters for one of two reasons. Either they love them, or they fear them.*
- (22) *All liberation begins with land.*
- (23) *The only people who never make mistakes are people who never do anything.*
- (24) *A revolutionary makes a positive out of a negative.*
- (25) *Action without thought is blind, thought without action is empty.*
- (26) *Divide and conquer!*
- (27) *All impatience is selfishness and egotism.*
- (28) *Blood of the same blood and flesh of the same flesh.*
- (29) *Culture is politics; politics is culture.*
- (30) *Blood is thicker than water.*
- (31) *A free black mind is a concealed weapon.*
- (32) *A little learning is a dangerous thing.*
- (33) *Knowledge is power.*
- (34) *Every black thing...and its opposite.*
- (35) *Effen yo' doan unnerstan' the principle of eternal contradiction, yo' sho ain't gonna unnerstan' diddly about Howard University. Nor about black life in these United States neither.*
- (36) *What us Africans need most is a lot of patience and a sense of irony.*
- (37) *Inside every Negro there lurks a potential black man.*
- (38) *Even a blind pig will pick up a fat acorn evrah now'n den.*

- (39) *What goes round comes round.*
- (40) *Water seek de low places but power seek de weak places.*
- (41) *SNCC folk would argue with a street sign.*
- (42) *Today the administration, tomorrow the state.*
- (43) *Blackness is necessary, but it is not sufficient.*
- (44) *When you are attacked by a rabid dog...you don't run or throw away the walking stick you have in your hand.*
- (45) *Thou seest that man's fall, but though knowest not his wrassling.*
- (46) *The stone that the builders rejected.*
- (47) *Truth is like a goatskin bag: each man carries his own.*
- (48) *The higher the monkey climb, the more he expose he behind.*
- (49) *Uneasy lies the head that wears the crown.*
- (50) *Why is man better than animals? Because we have kinfolk.*
- (51) *When you throw a stone into a pigsty, the one that bawl is the one you lick.*
- (52) *Where one thing stands, something else will stand beside it.*
- (53) *Truth crushed to the earth shall rise again.*
- (54) *Struggle is like a rubber ball: the harder it is smashed into the dirt, the higher it rebounds into the sky.*
- (55) *A log may lie in the river for ten years, but it will never become a crocodile.*
- (56) *A drowning man will clutch at a straw.*
- (57) *Hungry belly make monkey eat red pepper.*
- (58) *No man ever steps in the same river twice, for its not the same river and he's not the same man.*
- (59) *Let a thousand flowers bloom and a thousand schools of thought contend.*
- (60) *Might makes right.*
- (61) *If we do not learn from history, we are doomed to repeat it.*
- (62) *In order to map out the future we must clearly understand the past.*
- (63) *Journalism is the first draft of history.*
- (64) *History is nothing but lies commonly agreed upon.*
- (65) *All criticism is an autobiography.*
- (66) *If all you have is a hammer, the whole world will look like a nail to you.*
- (67) *All motion is not progress.*
- (68) *Lifting as you climb.*
- (69) *Learning to fly on the way down.*
- (70) *A journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step.*

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LINGUO-CULTURAL PICTURE OF “TRUTH” AND “LIE” IN LITHUANIAN AND ENGLISH PROVERBS

Abstract: This study aims to reconstruct the linguistic-cultural image of TRUTH and LIE encoded in Lithuanian and English paremia by presenting their semantic and axiological content. The research is a part of the linguistic-cultural reconstruction of the concepts of TRUTH and LIE in both languages. It was carried out through the analysis of paremia, in the framework of the S-Q-T methodology proposed by the Ethnolinguistic School of Lublin. More precisely, proverbs and sayings were analysed by distinguishing their semantic aspects, viewed from certain interpretational perspectives, and grouping them into the semantic profiles. The data was selected from the main national sources of proverbs and sayings: the systemic catalogue of Lithuanian proverbs and sayings, collected by the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore, *The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs* and *A Dictionary of American Proverbs*. It has also been attempted to compare the Lithuanian and English ethno-conceptualization of TRUTH and LIE by distinguishing their common and culturally specific features.

Keywords: truth, lie, linguistic worldview, conceptualization, paremia

1. Introduction

The values of truth and lie have always been at the centre of human interest: from first attempts to define the truth by the ancient philosophy to a new phenomenon of post-truth in modern poli-

tics. The concepts of TRUTH and LIE¹ are universal, present in all cultures and languages, however, as further research demonstrates, different cultures perceive and value them somewhat differently. This article aims to restore the linguo-cultural pictures of the concepts of TRUTH and LIE entrenched in Lithuanian and English proverbs, compare them, and distinguish their common and culturally specific characteristics. The research aims to reveal a subjective, naïve worldview,² naïve perception of the objects analysed, entrenched in traditional proverbs and sayings. It does not strive to answer the questions on the essence of truth and lie as phenomena (which is the domain of philosophy), but tries to show how these values are perceived and valued in traditional Lithuanian and English worldview, reflected in proverbs. Most attention is paid to their semantic and axiological content.

The study applies a linguistic research perspective which is relatively new in the analysis of the values mentioned, when proverbs and sayings are used as a research source, and ethno-linguistic analysis as a methodology. Ethnolinguistics is particularly interested in traditional axiology, viewing values as the basis of every culture, as they are closely associated with our perception of reality. In general, values are invisible until they become evident in behaviour, and ethnolinguistic research tries to show their position in the worldview of a sentient and thinking language user. Language is seen not only as a tool for valuation, but also a source providing information on the values of a certain cultural-linguistic society.

2. Theoretical background of the research

Current research belongs to the field of cultural linguistics, which emerged as a counterbalance to structural linguistics. Structuralism is primarily interested in a language's structure, separate from its cultural and psychological context, while cul-

1 Uppercase is used when the objects are understood as concepts; lowercase is applied for their general sense.

2 In ethnolinguistics, a “naïve worldview” is traditionally opposed to a “scientific worldview”; the term *naïve* refers to a stereotypical understanding of a certain concept by ordinary members of a certain culture (Papaurelyté-Klovienė 2007: 24–25; Bartmiński 1987: 18).

tural linguistics is aimed at demonstrating that linguistic code is strongly associated with other codes, such as body language and behaviour, as well as social and cultural contexts. The first wave of cultural linguistics, with the pioneering ideas of Franz Boas, Edward Sapir, and Benjamin Lee Whorf, emerged in the USA, including the ideas of cultural and linguistic relativity, later followed by cognitivism and conceptual metaphor analysis. According to James W. Underhill, the term *worldview* is associated primarily with the Whorf-Sapir hypothesis, according to which a language's difference results in a different intellectual and affective structuring for the mind of the speaker of a language community. The term is traced back to the works of the German philosopher Wilhelm von Humboldt, who contemplated languages and tried to draw some bold conclusions about their nature (Underhill 2013: 14).

In the 7th decade of the 20th century, the foundations of Moscow Ethnolinguistic School were laid by Nikita I. Tolstoy. Russian ethnolinguistics is based on the idea of language and culture isomorphism and mutual dependence. It extended the boundaries of traditional linguistics to the analysis of national culture, its customs, psychology, and mythology. The most recent school of ethnolinguistics was founded at the end of the 20th century in Poland, Lublin, by Jerzy Bartmiński. Polish ethnolinguistics places a particular emphasis on the cultural aspect as well, but is more synchronous, less focused on the diachronic phenomena, such as folklore and customs. Polish ethnolinguistics studies language not only as a means of communication, but also as an integral part of the culture, which expresses the ways of conceptualizing and categorizing objects and phenomena and reflects national axiological systems (Rutkowska et al. 2017: 25).

Polish ethnolinguistics places a particular interest in reconstructing the linguistic worldview, which J. Bartmiński defines as:

[...] a language-entrenched interpretation of reality, which can be expressed in the form of judgements about the world, people, things, events. It is an interpretation, not a reflection; it is a portrait without claims to fidelity, not a photograph of real object. The interpretation is a result of subjective perception and conceptualization of reality performed by the speakers of a given language; thus, it is clearly

subjective and anthropocentric but also intersubjective (social). It unites people in a given social environment, creates a community of thoughts, feelings and values. It influences (to what extent is a matter for discussion) the perception and understanding of the social situation by a member of the community” (Bartmiński 2009/2012: 23).

The theory of linguistic worldview can be perceived within the framework of the theory of Cultural Models, which are defined as “presupposed, taken-for-granted models of the world that are widely shared by the members of a society and that play enormous role in their understanding of that world and behaviour in it” (Quinn and Holland 1987: 4). Both theories rely on W. von Humboldt’s ideas about the interdependence of mind, culture and language, deal with the analysis of mental structures and patterns based on joint experience, shared by the members of a certain ethnic or social culture, and connected with the system of values of these cultures. Cultural Models are realized through cultural artifacts, traditions, and patterns of daily behaviour, and can be expressed linguistically or non-linguistically. The reconstruction of linguistic worldview, based on the analysis of linguistic data, can be perceived as an excellent source of information on certain Cultural Models. In order to reconstruct the linguistic worldview, the Ethnolinguistic School of Lublin developed the S-Q-T methodology, based on the analysis of three types of data: (1) the systemic data, selected from all available lexicographic sources, including the entire lexical semantic network: paradigmatic relations (hypernyms, hyponyms, antonyms, synonyms, derivatives etc.), syntagmatic relations (collocations, phraseology, etc.); (2) cognitive questionnaires including open questions, the aim of which is to check how contemporary language users understand a concept and (3) textual data, consisting of archaic (mainly folklore and pemia) and contemporary texts. Such research, attempting to seize the full meaning of a concept through the analysis of all three data types would require a PhD thesis-length study and is not the aim of this article, which is limited to the analysis of just one data subtype, namely, the pemia.

Being an integral part of a culture, proverbs and sayings serve as a particularly valuable material for concept analysis. They are generally regarded as repositories of folk wisdom, being the source of insight into the areas of common experience

(White 1987: 152–153). According to renowned paremiologist Wolfgang Mieder, proverb's traditionality (i.e. its age and popularity) is one of its main features. Proverbs are pieces of created wisdom, accepted and widely used by a group of people over a period of time (Mieder 2004: 4–5). Being fixed, repetitive and passed down from generation to generation they express the collective social opinion, generalised knowledge, especially on moral norms and values, and their analysis can be viewed as “cultural archeology”, providing information on cultural models of experience (White 1987: 152).

Proverbs and sayings perform numerous functions, described by many paremiologists (Honeck 1997; Obelkevich 1994; Zaikauskienė 2010). However, their main and most important function is moral and educational. Having implicit or explicit evaluative claim, proverbs are essentially concerned with morality, with the evaluation and shaping of the courses of action, and thus are frequently used in contexts of moral argumentation. They are also applied as a directive force for a desired course of action (White 1987: 151). Therefore, proverbs influence thinking by explaining a situation and teaching people how to act. With the acquisition of one's mother tongue a person also takes over its paremia with all the didactics they contain. All these factors show that paremia are an excellent source for linguo-cultural research.

3. *Research design*

In this research, proverbs and sayings are analysed applying the methodology and tools of the ethnolinguistic research developed by the Ethnolinguistic School of Lublin, distinguishing semantic aspects,³ viewed from certain points of view,⁴ imposing certain

3 The aspect (in some texts the term *facet* is used synonymously) is one of concept analysis methodology tools, a unit of semantic categorization. It consists of a set of features that correspond to some common characteristic, e.g. material, shape, activity, appearance, location, etc. and is applied in the explication of a concept. It is distinguished through the analysis of the data and perceived as a network that handles the material, facilitating the comparison of the objects studied (Niebrzegowska-Bartmińska 2015: 32). Aspects as methodology tools have been applied in *The Axiological Lexicon of Slavs and their Neighbours*, published by the Ethnolinguistic School of Lublin.

4 The point of view is a subjective-cultural factor from which an object is observed.

interpretive perspectives, and grouping them into semantic profiles.⁵ The first part of the research provides the analysis of Lithuanian proverbs, continuing with the analysis of English ones, and finally providing the comparison of Lithuanian and English data, distinguishing universal and culturally specific features.

The data was collected from the main national sources of proverbs and sayings: (1) Lithuanian proverbs were selected from the systemic catalogue of Lithuanian proverbs and sayings, collected by the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore; (2) English proverbs were selected from two sources: *The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs* (ODEP) and *A Dictionary of American Proverbs* (DAP). Both Lithuanian and English sources provide a similarly large number of proverbs on truth and lie – about 300.

The data sample contains not only the proverbs with the lexemes *truth* and *lie*, but also their derivatives, synonyms and the associated context, i.e. the proverbs that do not contain the lexemes *truth* or *lie*, but describe the situation of lying or verifying the truth (e.g. *The proof of the pudding is in the eating*). Maximum objectivity was sought by checking the explanations of proverbs provided in the sources, however, it must be noted that there is no single classification rule. It happens that the semantics of several proverbs is similar, and sometimes the same proverb can be interpreted differently depending on the situation and context. According to the Lithuanian paremiologist Kazys Grigas, absolute accuracy cannot be achieved in the analysis of such heterogeneous and varying material as folklore (Grigas 1987: 11), which can also be applied to the analysis of paremia.

In contemporary Lithuanian and English lexicographic sources⁶, *truth* is generally defined as something that corre-

It determines what features are seen as relevant, how the object is categorised etc. E.g. an object can be viewed from functional, perceptual, cultural, and other points of view. The interpretive perspective correlates with the point of view and to some extent is the result of it (Bartmiński 1990: 112).

5 The profile is understood as a variant of an object's picture, formed through the selection of aspects (facets) and their arrangement according to the rules of implication (Niebrzegowska-Bartmińska 2020: 116).

6 The definitions have been checked in the following contemporary language dictionaries: The Dictionary of Contemporary Lithuanian, Collins English Dictionary,

sponds to reality, i.e. the actual state of being. What concerns *lie*, contemporary Lithuanian and English lexicographic sources define it primarily as a false statement made with the intent to deceive. The latter definition to a greater or lesser extent corresponds with the definition of a “prototypical lie” proposed by the American linguists Linda Coleman and Paul Kay: “the speaker (S) asserts some proposition (P) to an addressee (A). The main requirements: P is false; S believes P to be false; in uttering P, S intends to deceive A” (Coleman and Kay 1981: 28). As can be seen, the lexicographic prototypical definition of lie includes no moral assessment. This was later taken into account in Anna Wierzbicka’s explicatory model, written in natural semantic metalanguage:

X lied to Y =

X said something to Y.

X knew it was not true.

X said it because it wanted Y to think it was true.

[people would say: if someone does this, it is bad]

(Wierzbicka 1996: 152)

As can be observed, lexicographic definitions provide a central, basic meaning of the lexemes and are usually based on traditional generative and structuralist “checklists” of semantic features that constitute necessary and sufficient conditions for set-membership in the category denoted by a word (Sweetser 1987: 43). However, these necessary and sufficient conditions do not fully reveal the naïve linguistic picture of the concepts analysed, e.g. they contain no evaluative aspects. Further analysis of the concepts of TIESA / TRUTH and MELAS / LIE in proverbs aims to reveal several profiles of this naïve linguistic picture by showing how these values are seen in proverbial wisdom.

Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, Cambridge Dictionary, Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, and Macmillan English Dictionary. Contemporary definitions from Oxford English Dictionary were also taken into account.

4. *The analysis of the concepts of TIESA [TRUTH] and MELAS [LIE] in Lithuanian proverbs*

TIESA is one of the highest values in Lithuanian axiological system, mentioned even in Lithuanian national anthem. This platonic view of truth as the greatest good, *summum bonum*, is also reflected in Lithuanian proverbs, TIESA is primarily viewed from an axiological-ethical perspective: it is considered one of the highest national values, a precious thing. Its valuation is expressed through the comparison of TIESA with the material assets, e.g. gold (1) and social or spiritual values, e.g. unity, wisdom, goodness, and the sacred (2–5). There is a very salient metaphorical conceptualization of TIESA AS LIGHT: it is presented as shining, bright, illuminating the darkness and being the source of light itself (6–8). Lithuanian proverbs often manifest Kantian deontology of lie, declaring that TIESA must be told at all costs, even when it is worse than MELAS or life-threatening (9, 10).

- (1) *Tiesa už auksą brangesnė* [**Truth** is pricier than gold]⁷
- (2) *Vienybė, o dar teisybė – mūsų galybė* [Unity and the **truth** is our power]
- (3) *Kas teisingas – išmintingas* [Who is **truthful** is wise]
- (4) *Šventa teisybė* [Sacred **truth**]
- (5) *Dievą mylėk, tiesą kalbėk* [Love God, speak the **truth**]
- (6) *Teisybė už saulę šviesesnė* [**Truth** is brighter than the sun]
- (7) *Tiesa ir patamsy žiba* [**Truth** shines in the darkness]
- (8) *Be tiesos nėra šviesos* [There is no light without **truth**]
- (9) *Geriau bloga tiesa negu geras melas* [A bad **truth** is better than a good lie]
- (10) *Už teisybę nebaisu ir galvą padėti* [There's no fear to die for the **truth**]

Analogically, MELAS in Lithuanian folklore is also seen from the axiological perspective and compared with various sins and flaws of human nature. What is striking however, is that Lithuanian proverbs give no direct evaluation of MELAS as an anti-value; though it may be observed from its opposition with TIESA.

7 The provided translation of the Lithuanian proverbs is mainly word-for-word in order to render the original semantics.

If TIESA is presented as a positive light, MELAS is compared to a damaging fire (11). Etymologically lexeme *tiesa* is associated with *tiesus* ‘straight, direct’, what is also observed in Lithuanian proverbs, depicting TIESA as something straight and MELAS as something curved, deviating from the straight road (12, 13). Lithuanian proverbs also provide a strong derogatory evaluation of liars, who are compared not only to thieves (that view is rather international, borrowed from the Latin proverb *Mendax est fur*), but also associated with some derogatory animals (dog, snake) or darkness (14–18). In Lithuanian proverbs, liars are often othered, seen from the semantic opposition “own – stranger”, when a liar is presented either as a member of a different nationality (usually a neighbouring one) (19–22) or as a representative of a higher social class: a priest or a landlord (23). It should be noted that the picture of priests and landlords in Lithuanian folklore is generally derogatory, they appear as dishonest and greedy subjects (it can be observed in numerous proverbs, to quote just some of them: *Kunigas – vilnų kirpikas, ponas – kailio lupikas* ‘A priest is a wool shaver, a landlord is a skin flayer’, *Ar ponas, ar šuo – abu kanda* ‘Both a lord and a dog bite’, *Dvaro ponas – tai šėtonas* ‘The lord of a manor is the devil’). This is the typical peasant worldview, which in Lithuanian folk culture is usually opposed to the bourgeois and aristocratic worldviews.

- (11) *Tiesa – šviesa, melas – ugnis* [Truth is light, a lie is fire]
- (12) *Teisybė vingiuotais keliais nevaikšto* [Truth does not walk on winding roads]
- (13) *Suktas vyras tiesaus žodžio nebegirdi* [A curved man (a cheat) does not hear a straight word (the truth)]
- (14) *Kas melagis, tas ir vagis* [Who is a liar is also a thief]
- (15) *Nemeluok, ba vogti pradėsi* [Don’t lie, as you will start stealing]
- (16) *Melagis meluoti, o šuva loti – lygiai gali* [A liar can lie as a dog can bark]
- (17) *Melagio liežuvis dvilinkas* [A liar has a double tongue]
- (18) *Melagio puodas visada juodas* [A liar’s pot is always black]

- (19) *Meluoja kaip lenkas / Lenko tiesą velnias raistuose jodo* [One is telling **lies** like a Pole / A Pole’s **lie** is ridden by the devil in a swamp]
- (20) *Teisingas kaip žydo liežyvis / Nerasi teisybės pas žydą* [As **true** as a Jew’s tongue / You will not find the **truth** with a Jew]
- (21) *Meluoja kaip čigonas / Čigono amatas meluoti* [One is telling **lies** like a Gypsy / **Lying** is a Gypsy’s trade]
- (22) *Ir latvis teisingas, kai apgauti negali* [Even a Latvian is **fair** when they cannot **cheat**]
- (23) *Kunigo / pono teisybė kaip nakties šviesybė* [A priest / a landlord has as much **truth** as there is light at night]

In Lithuanian proverbs, there is a salient aspect the duration of TIESA and MELAS: TIESA is portrayed as eternal and omnipotent (24–27), resistant to time and change, whereas MELAS is presented as temporary, sooner or later revealed (28–30). MELAS is presented as having certain anthropomorphic traits or tell-tale signs giving it out (31, 32). Proverbs also state that lie cannot be absolute, as even a successful deception remains obvious in the eyes of God (33).

- (24) *Teisybė nei skęsta, nei dega* [**Truth** neither drowns nor burns]
- (25) *Viskas keičiasi, tik teisybė lieka* [Everything passes but the **truth** remains]
- (26) *Už teisybę pyksta, bet ji niekadęs nenyksta* [People are angry about the **truth**, but it never perishes]
- (27) *Teisybė neteisybę visados pergali* [The **truth** always conquers the **untruth**]
- (28) *Melo kojos trumpos* [**Lie**’s legs are short]
- (29) *Su melu netoli tenueisi* [You will not go far with a **lie**]
- (30) *Melą pavysi greičiau negu šlubą šunį* [**Lie** is caught faster than a limb dog]
- (31) *Melagį iš akių pažinsi* [You will recognise a **liar** from his eyes]
- (32) *Melagį iš kalbos pažįsta* [**A liar** is recognised from his speech]
- (33) *Melas prieš žmones, o ne prieš Dievą* [**Lie** is against people, not against God]

TIESA and MELAS are often seen from the perspective of relativity, described in Aristotelian and Christian philosophy, when TIESA is presented as absolute, and MELAS – as relative and subjective. Lithuanian proverbs state that TIESA should be absolute and integral, and all cases of subjective or partial truth are depicted as MELAS (34). The relativity of MELAS is also seen from the aspects of number, partitivity and gradation: MELAS is sometimes presented as numerous (often used in plural) and partial (35–38). The conceptual metaphor of the QUANTITY OF MELAS is widespread in Lithuanian folklore, e.g. a hero of a Lithuanian miraculous tale “Zuikių piemuo” (“The Shepherd of Bunnies”) is given a task to produce a full bag of lies. MELAS is also presented as gradable: not all lies are equally malign, they can be better or worse, depending on who is lying and for what purpose (39, 40). The proverbs provide no number, partitivity and gradation aspects of TIESA: it is always presented as single, unique, and integral.

- (34) *Nepilna tiesa greit tampa netiesa* [A **truth** that is not full and integral, becomes false very soon]
- (35) *Šimtas klaidų, o tarp jų yra viena tiesa* [There are one hundred **mistakes**, but only one **truth**]
- (36) *Devyni melo, vienas praudos žodis – to ir teisybė* [One word of the **truth** is right even among nine words of a **lie**]
- (37) *Primelavo pilną maišą* [to **lie** a full bag]
- (38) *Primeluoti devynias bačkas ir aštuntą* [to **lie** nine barrels and the eight one]
- (39) *Melas melui nelygu* [A **lie** does not equal a **lie**]
- (40) *Gėda senam meluoti, o turtingam vogti* [It's a shame to **lie** when one is old and to steal when one is rich]

The axiological assessment of TIESA and MELAS in Lithuanian proverbs is more complex than it might look like from the first sight. Although these values are usually juxtaposed as polar opposites, when TIESA is seen as a value and MELAS as an anti-value, more or less the same number of proverbs reflect the reverse view, when TIESA is presented as having negative traits, and MELAS as positive. E.g. the pragmatic perspective reveals that MELAS is usually more attractive than TIESA (41–44).

There are many proverbs justifying and even encouraging MELAS, presenting it as a value improving people’s life (45–48). Lithuanian paremia even contain very specific sayings for a liar to fight back against the accusations of lying (49). Accordingly, TIESA is presented as both unprofitable and often unwise (50–52). Many proverbs portray TIESA not only as unattractive, but also unpleasant and unfair: yielding to power, influence, or even corrupt (53–58). Lithuanian proverbs express a frequent perceptual metaphorisation of TIESA as something painful and unpleasant (sharp, burning or bitter) (59–62). Here are some of the typical examples:

- (41) *Tiesa – melo pastumdėlė* [**Truth** is a **lie**’s dogsbody]
- (42) *Melą pamilęs, tiesą užmirši* [If you fall in love with a **lie**, you forget the truth]
- (43) *Melas atjoja ant balto žirgo, o tiesa ateina pėsčiomis* [A **lie** rides a white horse, and the **truth** walks]
- (44) *Teisybė su gelda, melas su karieta* [The **truth** goes in a tub, a **lie** goes in a carriage]
- (45) *Meluok ir save vaduok* [**Lie** and save yourself]
- (46) *Nemeluosi – neparduosi* [No **lie**, no sell]
- (47) *Nemelavęs nebūsi teišus* [If you don’t **lie**, you will not be right]
- (48) *Melagis palakęs, begėdis paėdęs* [A **liar** and a brazen feel satiety]
- (49) *Aš melagis, tu vagis* [If I am a **liar**, you are a thief]
- (50) *Už teisybę nakvynės negausi* [You will get no bed for the **truth**]
- (51) *Tik kvailas ir mažas tiesą tepasako* [The little and the stupid say the **truth**]
- (52) *Bobai teisybė sakyti negalima* [Never say the **truth** to a woman]
- (53) *Kas stipresnis, tas gauna visados tiesą* [The stronger always get the **truth**]
- (54) *Pinigas ir netiesą tiesa paverčia* [Money can turn **false** to **true**]
- (55) *Turtingo ir melas teisingas* [The **lie** of the rich is true]
- (56) *Teisybė sarmatos neturi* [**Truth** has no shame]
- (57) *Yra ant svieto teisybė, bet kad akla* [There is **truth** in this world, but it is blind]

- (58) *Teisybės yra akys išbadytos (išvarvėjusios)* [**Truth's** eyes are poked out]
 (59) *Teisybė skaudi* [**Truth** is painful]
 (60) *Tiesa akis bado* [**Truth** is eye-poking]
 (61) *Teisybė kaip ugnis – degina* [**Truth** burns like fire]
 (62) *Teisybė – karti patrova* [**Truth** is a bitter dish]

Prudence is in general seen as a positive thing; however, numerous Lithuanian proverbs and situational sayings criticize incredulous and suspicious people (63–65). They show that being too distrustful and suspicious of lie is reprehensible, as illustrated below:

- (63) *Jei netiki, širdies neparodysiu* [If you don't believe me, I can't show my heart]
 (64) *Jei netiki, Dievo neparodysi* [If you don't believe me, I can't show God]
 (65) *Mušk velnią per galvą, jis vis tiek netikės* [Beat the devil on his head, he will not believe it anyway]

In Lithuanian proverbs, both TIESA and MELAS are also presented from the negative aspect of result. However, the consequences of MELAS seem to be insignificant and often presented humorously (66–68), when compared with the far graver consequences of TIESA, which imposes the risk of enmity and hostility or causes adversity (69, 70) e.g.:

- (66) *Melagiui ir tiesą sakant niekas netiki* [No one believes a **liar** even if he says the **truth**]
 (67) *Nemeluok, liežuvis plaukais apaugs* [Don't **lie**, you will have a hairy tongue]
 (68) *Kas meluoja, kojom tabaluoja* [Who is **lying** is dangling his legs]
 (69) *Pasakyta teisybė neprietelius daro* [**Truth** told out makes enemies]
 (70) *Teisybę pasakyt, kaip širšių kulinį prakabint* [To tell the **truth** is like to stir up a hornet's nest]

There are many Lithuanian proverbs that are highly ambivalent and even contradictory (71–74). Such manifestation of opposing elements is an innate feature of the paremiological system (Chlebda 1993: 233). James Obelkevich calls proverbs “situa-

tional strategies” (Obelkevich 1994: 218), i.e. they are applied to interpret and explain complex, enigmatic situations, and suggest the best solution. Therefore, proverbs are paradoxical: being ambiguous in themselves, they are used to dispel the ambiguity of situations (Lieber 1994: 99–101). There are many proverbs, in which the semantic boundary between TIESA and MELAS disappears: they are no longer presented as polar opposites, but undergo the semantic and even axiological merge (75, 76). Some proverbs speak of the situation “in between” – the possible balancing between TIESA and MELAS, i.e. neither lying nor saying the truth (77, 78). Consider the following examples below:

- (71) *Ir velnias kai kada teisybę pasako* [The devil sometimes tells the **truth**]
- (72) *Ir pas Dievą nėra teisybės* [Neither God has the **truth**]
- (73) *Su teisybe netoli tenueisi* [You will not go far with the **truth**]
- (74) *Su teisybe visą pasaulį pereisi, o su melu – ligi vartų* [The **truth** will help you cross the world, when a **lie** will let you reach the gate]
- (75) *Vieno tiesa, kito – nemelas* [What is **true** for one person, may be just not a **lie** to another]
- (76) *Kas seniau buvo teisybė, šiandien – pasaka* [What used to be **true** is a **fairytale** today]
- (77) *Tiesos nesakyk, bet ir nemeluok* [Don’t say the **truth**, but don’t **lie** either]
- (78) *Meluoti nemoku, teisybės nežinau* [I can’t **lie**, nor I know the **truth**]

The analysis of Lithuanian proverbs shows that TIESA is a very high value in Lithuanian axiosphere, what is stated directly, however, in pragmatic reality it is portrayed as heavy and uncomfortable, therefore sometimes succumbing to money or power. The proverbs express a similar attitude to MELAS: it is generally seen as anti-value, with the acknowledged derogatory view; however, in ordinary life situations MELAS is justified and even encouraged, seen as a pragmatic asset. Such view is most probably associated with Lithuanian historical reality: in numerous occupations and the harsh life of the Lithuanian peasantry lies often served as the only way to survive.

The analysis of the Lithuanian proverbs has revealed that these two concepts can be grouped into two main profiles: (1) TIESA as an absolute, cardinal value / MELAS as an anti-value, considered unethical, reprehensible and avoidable; (2) TIESA as pragmatically-psychologically disadvantageous / MELAS as pragmatical-psychological craftiness, justified or even encouraged as an indispensable part of life. The following section will deal with the English proverbs on truth and lie, and their analysis.

5. The analysis of the concepts of TRUTH and LIE in English proverbs

The English axiological system, as well as the Lithuanian one, places TRUTH among the highest values. According to Roumyana Petrova, in Anglo-American proverbs, TRUTH takes the fifth leading position in the American axiosphere after GOD, THE WORLD AND SOCIETY, HAPPINESS, CHILDREN and FREEDOM (Petrova 2019: 330). In fact, the axiological perspective of TRUTH is one of the most salient in English proverbs. TRUTH is considered one of the greatest, most noble values: a precious, royal rarity, a divine, evangelical virtue, and the highest ideal (79–82). English proverbs also express the Platonic triad of three cardinal values: the true, the good and the beautiful (83). The importance of TRUTH in human life and its nobility is particularly emphasised by the fact that it is said in the face of death (84).

- (79) *Truth is a rare commodity* (DAP: 617)
- (80) *There is nothing so kingly as kindness and nothing so royal as **truth*** (DAP: 618)
- (81) *Truth is God's daughter* (ODEP: 844)
- (82) *True (soothe) as Gospel* (ODEP: 840)
- (83) *We grow like what we think so let us think of the good, the **true** and the beautiful* (DAP: 613)
- (84) *Dying men speak **true*** (ODEP: 841)

In English proverbs TRUTH is also observed from an ethical-moral perspective, when it is considered not only an absolute, ultimate value, but also an instrumental one, making the foundation for other virtues, such as heroism, justice and perfection (85–87). TRUTH is also depicted as liberating (88), and

it serves as a moral litmus test, setting a clear boundary between the good and the evil (89).

- (85) *Truth is the spring of heroic virtue* (DAP: 617)
- (86) *Truth is the gate of justice* (DAP: 617)
- (87) *Truth is the basis of all excellence* (DAP: 617)
- (88) *(The) Truth shall make you free* (DAP: 616)
- (89) *Truth always brings division between right and wrong* (DAP: 616)

Analogically, English proverbs express a very negative attitude to LIE from both axiological and ethical-moral perspectives. LIE is primarily viewed as moral evil, not only a sin in itself, but the foundation of other sins (90). A visual metaphor comparing LIE to an apple rotten at the core shows that mendacity may seem deceptively attractive, but in fact is neither good nor pleasant (91). Its negative image is strengthened by its metaphorical association with the darkness (92). Even the common collocation *white lie*, expressing a relative attitude to the concept analysed, has equally negative evaluation (93, 94). Liars appear as derogatory characters with negative reputation: thieves, cowards, debtors (95–97). One proverb illustrates the traditional folk opposition “own – stranger”, when a liar is compared to a Scot (98), however, this view is rare in English paremia. Proverbs also express the Kantian view that LIE primarily harms the liar himself (99–101). Several proverbs provide a negative metaphorical comparison of LIE with a nettle or a spider’s web in which the subject of LIE catches himself (102, 103).

- (90) *Sin has many tools but a lie is the handle which fits them all* (DAP: 372)
- (91) *Falsehood is a red apple rotten at the core* (DAP: 373)
- (92) *Falsehood is the darkness of faith* (DAP: 373)
- (93) *A white lie leaves a black spot* (DAP: 372)
- (94) *No lies are white, they are all black* (DAP: 372)
- (95) *Show me a liar and I will show you a thief* (ODEP: 458)
- (96) *None but cowards lie* (DAP: 373)
- (97) *Debtors are liars* (ODEP: 458)
- (98) *As false as a Scot* (ODEP: 243)
- (99) *Lies do harm only to them that tells ‘em* (DAP: 372)

- (100) *Liars begin by imposing upon others, but end by deceiving themselves* (ODEP: 457)
- (101) *It is better to be **lied** about than to **lie*** (DAP: 373)
- (102) ***Deceit** is a spider's web which traps the **deceiver*** (DAP: 140)
- (103) ***False** is a nettle that stings those who meddle with it* (DAP: 197)

English proverbs reveal the aspect of origin of both TRUTH and LIE. Anna Wierzbicka argues that Anglo-American worldview is characteristic of a very strong cult of fact, which is regarded as more important than emotions, feelings or any other subjective experience (Wierzbicka 2010). Barbara Shapiro also states that the concept of fact became central to English culture and philosophy, and we can reasonably speak of English as a 'culture of fact' (Shapiro 2000: 167). The analysis of proverbs also reveals the empirical, factual nature of TRUTH, which is a reflection of the British empirical philosophy of the 17th century (Francis Bacon, John Locke, David Hume). English proverbs reveal the empirical view that the most reliable and real TRUTH is found in facts (figures, statistics), i.e. everything that is tangible, easily proven and therefore considered true (104). Clarity and factual simplicity is the main attribute of TRUTH: it is found in clear, simple situations and plain speech (105–107). The proverbs also emphasize the importance of a realistic and sober approach to TRUTH, when critical thinking is presented as the best way to reach it (108–111). Blind trust is seen as neither good nor reasonable.

- (104) *Facts don't **lie*** (DAP: 194)
- (105) *The expression of **truth** is simplicity* (DAP: 616)
- (106) ***Truth** has no need of rhetoric (figures)* (ODEP: 843)
- (107) ***Truth** gives a short answer, but lies go round about* (DAP: 616)
- (108) *Where doubt is, **truth** is* (DAP: 617)
- (109) *Trust is the mother of **deceit*** (ODEP: 842)
- (110) *He that **deceives** me once shame fall him, if he **deceives** me twice, shame fall me* (ODEP: 175)
- (111) *None are **deceived** but they that confide* (DAP: 141)

According to English paremia, TRUTH originates in facts. Analogically, LIE originates in various unclear situations (112), gos-

sip (113, 114), wordy speeches (115, 116). It usually comes from the second-source information, which is full of misunderstanding, as provided below:

- (112) *Misunderstanding brings **lies** to town* (DAP: 372)
- (113) *Almost and very (well) nigh saves many a **lie*** (ODEP: 12)
- (114) *The biggest **liar** in the world is the man who starts out by saying “they say”* (DAP: 370)
- (115) *In many words a **lie** or two may escape* (ODEP: 460)
- (116) *Loaded words are like loaded dice: they never roll **true*** (DAP: 614)

English proverbs also reveal the aspect of relativity, when TRUTH is usually presented as absolute: eternal, extremely powerful, victorious, and omnipotent. It is commonly metaphorically conceptualised as the conqueror (117–119). TRUTH is also resistant to time and is impossible to hide (120–125). Therefore, time is presented as a litmus test for what is really true (126). The proverbs metaphorically compare this characteristic of TRUTH with an ever-green tree (127, 128).

- (117) ***Truth** is mighty and will prevail* (ODEP: 844)
- (118) ***Truth** shall conquer all* (DAP: 617)
- (119) *The **truth** is mightier than the sword* (DAP: 617)
- (120) ***Truth** never perishes* (DAP: 617)
- (121) ***Truth** crushed to earth, will rise again* (DAP: 616)
- (122) ***Truth** creeps out of the ground* (DAP: 616)
- (123) *The **truth** will out* (DAP: 616)
- (124) ***Truth** and oil are ever above* (ODEP: 843)
- (125) ***Truth** never grows old* (DAP: 617)
- (126) *Time brings the **truth** to light* (OCDP: 327)
- (127) *There is nothing that keeps its youth, but a tree and **truth*** (DAP: 688)
- (128) *The **truth** is always green* (ODEP: 844)

The concept of duration brings the opposition of TRUTH and LIE: TRUTH is presented as much more durable than LIE (129–131), which is usually temporary and impossible to conceal (132–135), e.g.:

- (129) *A **lie** stands on one leg, **truth** on two.* (DAP: 618)

- (130) *A **lie** runs until it is overtaken by **truth*** (DAP: 618)
 (131) *There is no **lie** spun so fine, through which the **truth** won't shine* (DAP: 618)
 (132) ***Lies** have short (no) legs (wings).* (ODEP: 461)
 (133) *A **liar** is sooner caught than a cripple* (DAP: 370)
 (134) *A **lie** will give blossom but no fruit* (DAP: 372)
 (135) *A **lie** is the most difficult thing in the world permanently to conceal* (DAP: 371)

The relativity of LIE is also seen from the aspects of number and gradation: TRUTH is single and unique, whereas LIES can be numerous and of a great variety (136, 137). TRUTH is also presented as integral, whereas LIES may vary, be partial and of different level: better or worse, bigger or smaller (138, 139), e.g.:

- (136) *There are a thousand ways to tell a **lie** but only one way to tell the **truth*** (DAP: 372)
 (137) *One seldom meets a lonely **lie*** (DAP: 372)
 (138) *A great **lie** is the best* (DAP: 371)
 (139) *White **lies** save your soul, black ones damage your soul* (DAP 372)

English proverbs also view TRUTH and LIE from a pragmatic perspective. TRUTH is usually presented as very beneficial: useful, friendly and faithful (140–143). Though the proverbs admit that it might be unpleasant, its advantages outweigh the disadvantages (144). Analogically, LIE is seldom presented as useful, and its harm usually outweighs the benefit (145, 146), e.g.:

- (140) ***Truth** is a useful idea* (DAP: 617)
 (141) *The **truth** always pays* (DAP: 616)
 (142) *Tell the **truth** all the time and you won't have to remember what you said* (DAP: 615)
 (143) ***Truth** never hurt the teller (anyone)* (DAP: 617)
 (144) ***Truth**, harsh though it be, is a faithful friend* (DAP: 616)
 (145) ***Liars** never prosper* (DAP: 370)
 (146) *Sooner or later all politicians die of swallowing their own **lies*** (DAP: 372)

English proverbs also reveal the aspect of result of both TRUTH and LIE, which is rather negative: both TRUTH and LIE may have equally negative outcomes (147–149), e.g.:

- (147) *Tell a **lie** once you are always a **liar** to that person* (DAP: 372)
- (148) *It is **truth** that makes a man angry* (DAP: 615)
- (149) *Follow not **truth** too near the heels, lest it dash out thy teeth* (ODEP: 272)

English proverbs often view TRUTH from a philosophical-existential perspective, when real truth means being faithful not only to others, but primarily to oneself. It is the truth pursued in a person’s life, acting according to one’s values and inner principles (150–152). Such truth is compared to being authentic and sincere. If the rules of such truth are broken, a person falls into self-deception (153). This is a very special type of LIE, in which its object (the deceived) coincides with its subject (the deceiver), and a person does not realize the deception. In such a case the aspect of intentionality is absent.

- (150) *Live **truth** instead of professing it* (DAP: 615)
- (151) *This above all: to your own self be **true**. You cannot then be false to any man* (DAP: 613)
- (152) *Principle is a passion for **truth** and right* (DAP: 485)
- (153) *To **deceive** oneself is very easy* (ODEP: 175)

English proverbs also express the psychological aspect of TRUTH and LIE, when LIE seems to be psychologically more attractive than TRUTH, which is presented through the conceptual metaphors of feelings: pain (154), taste (155), weight (156), and view (157, 158). Accordingly, LIE is presented as diplomacy, which is sometimes necessary and makes one’s social life both comfortable and pleasant (159–163). Very truthful people are seen as tactless, they may live a heroic, but lonely life (164). Here are some of the typical examples:

- (154) *The **truth** hurts* (DAP: 616)
- (155) ***Truth** tastes bitter* (DAP: 617)
- (156) ***Truth** is heavy; therefore few wear it.* (DAP: 617)
- (157) ***Truth** has a good face, but bad (ill) clothes* (ODEP: 843)

- (158) **Truth** has a scratched face (ODEP: 843)
 (159) It is better to **lie** a little than to be unhappy much (DAP: 373)
 (160) White **lie** is harmless, so is a necessary one (DAP: 372)
 (161) Telling **lies** is a fault in a boy, an art in a lover, an accomplishment in a bachelor, and second nature in a married woman (DAP: 372)
 (162) A man who won't **lie** to a woman has very little consideration to her feelings (DAP: 372)
 (163) Some people have tact, others tell **truth** (DAP: 579)
 (164) Flattery begets friends, but the **truth** begets enmity (DAP: 214)

A few English proverbs present the boundary between TRUTH and LIE as very vague. TRUTH is presented as fragile, easily turned into LIE (165, 166), e.g.:

- (165) *The first casualty when war comes is **truth*** (DAP: 617)
 (166) *Hour perhaps divides the **false** and **truth*** (DAP: 197)

The analysis of English proverbs shows that TRUTH is a very important value in Anglo-American axiosphere. Though it is sometimes seen as unprofitable and undiplomatic, its importance and necessity is not questioned. English proverbs express strong philosophical empiricism. TRUTH is mainly associated with facts and clarity, and is achieved through critical thinking and testing. LIE is directly presented as an anti-value, what is also visually expressed through numerous conceptual metaphors. LIE is also seen as unclear and opposite to facts and obviousness. English proverbs also provide the psychological view of TRUTH, although, it is less salient. Such TRUTH is associated with being faithful to one's pursued values and convictions, whereas LIE is associated with self-deception, which is breaking one's inner convictions.

The analysis of English proverbs has pointed out to four main profiles of the concepts: (1) TRUTH as one of the highest values / LIE as an anti-value, considered unethical, reprehensible and avoidable; (2) TRUTH as psychologically-socially disadvantageous, tactless, hindering successful and diplomatic functioning in a society / LIE as psychologically-socially necessary, jus-

tified as the element of diplomacy and tact; (3) TRUTH as a fact, which is logical, reasonable and clear/LIE as something complicated, unclear, associated with loquacity and unsubstantiated information; (4) TRUTH as being faithful to oneself, avoiding self-deception and living according to one's inner values / LIE as self-deception.

6. Conclusion

The paremic picture of TRUTH and LIE gives new glimpses on these values, and supplements the lexicographic definitions, created in accordance with strict assumptions of taxonomic semantics. As can be observed, the paremic picture in both languages contains strong evaluative, moral and sometimes didactic aspects, expressing a moral stance of a naïve society towards the objects analysed. Pragmatic aspect is also very salient, which means that proverbs also reflect situational wisdom, serving as guidelines in everyday life and teaching prudence. As seen from the research findings, both truth and lie in Lithuanian and English proverbs are very polysemantic and ambiguous, seen and evaluated from different perspectives. The ambivalence of paremia is most likely related to their origin and usage: proverbs are born from people's experience and used in the variety of situations, hence they are often contradictory, depending on the situation they are used in.

The analysis has shown that some of the characteristics of TRUTH and LIE are entrenched in both Lithuanian and English proverbs and sayings. Both Lithuanian and English proverbs contain a very similar axiological aspect (both cultures see TRUTH as one of the highest and most noble values, and LIE as an anti-value), duration aspect (in both cultures TRUTH is presented as eternal and omnipotent, and LIE is temporary), the aspect of relativism (in both cultures real TRUTH is presented as absolute, integral, single and unique, whereas LIE is relative, may be numerous, partial and gradable), the aspect of result (both TRUTH and LIE may have negative results in both cultures) and psychological (in both cultures TRUTH is sometimes seen as psychologically negative and LIE as something comfortable and necessary).

There is also a number of aspects that highlight the traits specific to one culture, which are defined by the viewpoint and hierarchy of values adopted by particular linguistic-cultural community. English proverbs express strong empiricism: they originate TRUTH from facts and associate it with clarity, whereas Lithuanian proverbs reveal no factual origin of TRUTH and mainly associate it with spiritual values. English proverbs encourage critical thinking and condemn blind trust as leading to deception, whereas Lithuanian proverbs criticise distrustfulness. Lithuanian proverbs also view TRUTH as pragmatically negative, hindering life, whereas English proverbs notice many more useful pragmatic traits of TRUTH.

Although the general axiological evaluation of LIE in Lithuanian proverbs is negative, the pragmatic aspect is very strong: the proverbs reveal the benefits of LIE, portraying it as life-saving craftiness. LIE presented in English proverbs is also seen from the pragmatic perspective, but it is reflected as diplomacy and tact rather than a life-saving necessity. What is more, the boundary between TRUTH and LIE is much fuzzier in Lithuanian proverbs than in English. English proverbs also speak of the philosophical-existential aspect of TRUTH and LIE, when TRUTH is seen as the avoidance of self-deception; Lithuanian proverbs provide no such view. Lithuanian proverbs also express a strong national and cultural othering of liars, who are often depicted as representatives of other nationalities (e.g. the Poles, the Jews, the Gypsies, the Latvians) that have traditionally lived side-by-side with the Lithuanians; or they belong to the social sphere beyond the peasantry (the world of aristocracy and intelligentsia). English proverbs do not express such a strong cultural or national othering, but rather associate liars with the characters of negative reputation (e.g. thieves, cowards, debtors).

It should be noted that the sketches of the concepts of TRUTH and LIE in Lithuanian and English proverbs are not exhaustive, but make a part of their linguistic worldview, namely, they present a historical image of TRUTH and LIE, which is, however, limited and stagnant. In general, concepts are not closed, but open cognitive units, undergoing continuous change, embracing new experience, therefore, neither study of concepts can be seen as finite. Nevertheless, the analysis of paremia can definitely serve

as the basis for further research in this area, and opens horizons for further analysis of TRUTH and LIE in lexicographic sources, contemporary texts and spoken language.

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NUOSU PROVERBS: AESTHETICS AND ARTISTRY IN FORM

Abstract: Much scholarship has looked at the uses, functions, and origins of proverbs. This study describes the form of proverbs in Nuosu, a Tibe-to-Burman language spoken in southwest China. A preliminary analysis demonstrates that the carefully crafted form of Nuosu proverbs reflects intricate artistry and multiple aesthetic features of the Nuosu language, making their proverbs memorable and transmissible across generations. One unusual feature of Nuosu proverbs to surface in the study is frequent negative polarity. Findings from this study provide a deeper understanding of the Nuosu language, as well as a window into linguistic aesthetic features shared with languages in the region and beyond. The research adds to our understanding of the breadth of strategies that languages employ in order to animate discourse.

Keywords: Nuosu Yi, cultural proverbs, oral literature, literary couplets, grammatical parallelism, grammatical aesthetics

1. Introduction

Proverbs are the shortest poems in a language, densely packed with artistic features. The collection and study of Chinese proverbs has a long history and active scholarship (An 2021; Chen 2021). This study contributes to our understanding of proverbs of one of the minority languages spoken in China, allowing those who read English but not Chinese to understand.

During my years of living in Liangshan and studying the Nuosu language, I discovered that Nuosu people love their proverbs. Their interest prompted me to study them as well. This analysis of Nuosu proverbs demonstrates that their carefully crafted form reflects intricate artistry, making their proverbs memorable and transmissible across generations.

Nuosu proverbs exhibit multiple aesthetic features of the Nuosu language. Some of these features, such as sound art through rhyme, are commonly found in proverbs from languages around the world; other features, such as reduplicated elaborate forms, are areal linguistic features seen in proverbs of related languages. Still other characteristics, such as frequent negative polarity, are more novel to proverb scholarship.

This preliminary analysis of the form of Nuosu proverbs contributes to our understanding of features that characterize proverbs in general and strategies languages employ to animate discourse. The artistry evident in Nuosu proverbs is what makes them memorable and allows them to endure from one generation to the next, touching on fields of language and culture vitality, sustainability, and preservation.

The Nuosu people are a subgroup of a large ethnic group in southwest China officially designated as Yi (彝). Numbering between 2 and 3 million, the Nuosu live mostly in the Liangshan (凉山, Cool Mountain) region of southern Sichuan and bordering areas of northern Yunnan and western Guizhou.

Proverbs and sayings are a rich part of the Nuosu language, a Tibeto-Burman language with its own long-standing script. For Nuosu people, being able to appropriately quote a proverb is a mark of distinction, showing mastery of the language and deep cultural knowledge. Nuosu people love to learn and use their proverbs. For some of them, a desire to know and master their proverbs is the driving motivation for learning to read and write the Nuosu script (Walters 2021). Nuosu proverbs transmit a shared understanding of the way the world is and one's place in it. The Nuosu hear these proverbs as the voice of their cultural past speaking into the present, as if their ancestors or elders were in the room.

The proverbs this paper discusses fall into one emic set, those sayings that Nuosu people refer to as 𑄎 𑄎 𑄎 (lu³³ pɿ³⁴ lu³³ tɛi³³).

Each proverb is given with an interlinear translation, followed by a short discussion of its artistic features and brief notes on the proverb's usage.

2. *The Artistry of Nuosu Proverbs*

The emic category that Nuosu refer to as *lubyx luji* (𐄂𐄃𐄄𐄅, Nuosu proverbs) or simply *lubyx* (𐄂𐄃) aligns with commonly held definitions of proverbs as being short, formulaic, metaphorical and artistic articulations of folk wisdom, having been passed down from generation to generation without a specific known author (Mieder 2004). For a Nuosu saying to belong to the category of *lubyx luji* (𐄂𐄃𐄄𐄅, Nuosu proverbs), in addition to these characteristics, certain formal features are expected, most importantly, parallelism and syllable count.

The corpus of Nuosu traditional proverbs, called *lubyx luji* (𐄂𐄃𐄄𐄅, hereafter translated simply as Nuosu proverbs), “are the crystallized life experience” of the Nuosu and “the very measure of their life and deportment” (Liu 2001:106). Nuosu proverbs can be found in their revered epic classics: *Nuosu Book of Origins* (𐄆𐄇𐄈𐄉 *hnewo tepyy*), *Nuosu Book of Instruction* (𐄊𐄋𐄌𐄍 *hmatmu tepyy*), and *Mother's Daughter* (𐄎𐄏𐄐𐄑 *axmo hnixsse*). These have been transmitted both orally and in written form from one Nuosu generation to the next over centuries (Walters 2021).

One Nuosu college student described their proverbs as “ancient poems.” He went on to report, “You use one of these sayings, and the old people will think you are pretty impressive. They'll have a very different view towards you. They'll say ‘Ah! *Ssahuo* (𐄒𐄓, impressive)!” (Walters 2021:118). Nuosu proverbs are often used in semi-formal occasions such as weddings and funerals as a means of teaching right behavior or expressing truths about life and the world. The proverbs' succinct distillation of broader thought makes them rich in meaning. Because of their formulaic structure and artistry, they are easy to remember, making them effective carriers and repositories of significant aspects of Nuosu culture. A Nuosu speaker will often first quote a proverb, and then expand in prose on the point the proverb has made so cleverly.

Nuosu proverbs are most often formed as brief declarative statements; they are seldom imperatives and almost never in the form of questions. Some rhetorical devices common in proverbs of other languages, such as personification, are rarely used in Nuosu proverbs. The following is an inventory of stylistic devices common to Nuosu proverbs.

2.1. *Parallelism*

The basic structure of Nuosu proverbs is fairly rigid. Most Nuosu proverbs are couplets, with strict parallelism: two clauses of equal length, each one having corresponding syntactic slots, often with repeating elements.

Proverbs having the form of couplets with parallel syntactic slots have also been described in languages in the region including other Chinese minority languages such as Bouyei (Snyder 1998) and Zhuang (Zhou 2017). A study of proverbs in Lahu, a Tibeto-Burman language spoken in China, Thailand, Myanmar, Vietnam and Laos, pointed out that “the overwhelming majority” of their proverbs have a bipartite construction with parallel syntactic structure (Matisoff 2011:278). Likewise, a study of sayings and proverbs in Wa, a Mon-Khmer language spoken mainly in northern Burma and in neighboring parts of China and Thailand, concluded that “the great majority of the sayings in this collection consists of two syntactically parallel phrases” (Watkins 2013:32). However, the importance of a fixed syllable count is not discussed in these studies. A few studies, such as Snyder (1998), mention it. She wrote that many Bouyei proverbs “have the same number of syllables in each of their two lines,” though the number varied by proverb. For Nuosu proverbs, a fixed syllable count is one of the important defining features.

2.2. *Syllable Count and Compounding*

As well as having parallel syntactic slots and repeating elements, Nuosu proverbs almost without exception consist of couplets with lines of precisely 5, 7, or 9 syllables. In written Nuosu this corresponds to the number of characters because Nuosu script is a syllabary in which each symbol represents one syllable. The 3,000 proverbs in the collection *Nuosu Proverbs* (Zhu Deqi

1985) overwhelmingly conform to this syllable count pattern (5, 5; 7, 7; 9, 9). All 15 of the proverbs in my data also conform to this pattern.

Having the same number of syllables in each of their two clauses, creates a rhythm which is pleasing to the listeners. Though not as specific as Nuosu syllable count, a study in Akha, a related Tibeto-Burman language spoken in southwest China and Burma, noted that ritual language—unlike Akha’s modern speech—employs a metrical pattern in which each line has an odd-number of syllables (Hansson 2014). Hansson went on to note that the language uses prefixes, suffixes, and filler syllables to ensure the desired meter and maintain the parallel syntactical structure. In ritual language “the language has to a certain extent been manipulated or stretched in its possibilities to make it fit into the requirements of the metrical pattern” (Hansson 2014:285).

Nuosu proverbs seem to do a similar thing by compounding. Grammatical function words help establish the rhythm and structure of Nuosu proverbs by demarcating syntactic slots and creating an ideal meter. Many Nuosu function words, such as nominalizers, topic markers, and classifiers, are single-syllable forms which can be appended to other single-syllable morphemes for a pleasing two-syllable cadence.

For Nuosu proverbs, the meter of choice is to begin with a two-syllable form. Of the 15 proverbs in this data sample, with the exception of Proverb (7) and Proverb (8), all of them begin with a two-syllable item in the first syntactic slot (A and A prime). When there otherwise would be a single-syllable morpheme in that initial slot, another single-syllable morpheme will attach: a pronoun (see Proverb 10), an adjective (see Proverbs (1), (6), (9)), or most frequently, a single-syllable grammatical marker, such as the nominalizer \ddagger (su³³) or topic marker \Downarrow (li³³) (see Proverbs (2), (3), (12), (13), (14)).

Common grammatical function words that are crafted into Nuosu proverbs include nominalizers (see Proverbs (3), (9), (13), and (15)), topic markers (see Proverbs (2), (12), and (14)), and classifiers (see Proverb (2)). Nuosu language’s rich inventory of nominalizers indicates information such as the place of action, manner of action, instrument of action, result of action, and degree of action (Walters 2015:115–16). These suffixes attach

to roots, and are used in proverbs to fix morphemes into parallel patterns. The Nuosu topic marker 卩 (li³³) is used in Nuosu proverbs to clearly establish syntactic slots. It is usually repeated in both lines of the proverb appended to the first element and indicates a contrast between the first elements in each line of the couplet (A and A prime). Additionally, the large inventory of Nuosu classifiers, words used alongside nouns when they are counted or specified, adds flavor when different ones are juxtaposed where other elements remain the same (see Proverb (2)).

2.3. *Word Play*

The point of a Nuosu proverb often hinges on a clever word play. The same character used in both clauses may be compounded with or used in connection with different lexical items so that the meaning is significantly altered, highlighting something unexpected (see Proverb (4)). Another type of word play evidenced in Nuosu proverbs occurs when two opposing items fall in corresponding syntactic slots, for example ‘my kin’ and ‘my enemy’ in Proverb (10).

2.4. *Lexical Choice*

Lexical choices used in Nuosu proverbs are intentional, full of color and nuance which add to the depth of the proverb. Many Nuosu proverbs use paired items, often converse terms such as father-mother or above-below.

Another form of artistry in Nuosu proverbs is the skillful coupling of differing verbs from one semantic family. Verbs in Nuosu are rich elements, carrying many details. Walters and Atqi list thirteen different existential verbs in Nuosu, all of which might be translated in English with simply the verb ‘to be.’ Each Nuosu verb “contains additional information as to the nature of the referent in existence, the nature of the space in which the referent exists, and the posture of that existence” (see Walters and Atqi 2006: 142). Nuosu also has a large inventory of directional verbs, distinguishing vertical direction as well as movement to or away from the speaker (Walters and Walters 2003). In Nuosu proverbs, frequently the verb in each line is unique but comes from the same semantic family, for example, pairs of motion

verbs (see Proverb (7)) or existential verbs (see Proverbs (11) and (12)). The specific verbs chosen and paired with each other suggest important details that flavor the meaning and impact of the proverb.

2.5. *Reduplicated Elaborate Expressions*

Reduplication is such a productive pattern in the language that the Nuosu script has a dedicated symbol for it. In writing, Nuosu uses the symbol ㄩ to indicate that the previous syllable is repeated. The language uses various patterns of reduplicating syllables to create more vivid forms of nouns, verbs, and adjectives. These more artistic forms are often crafted into Nuosu proverbs. Literature on various other Tibeto-Burman languages describes expressions formed by reduplication or partial repetition similar to those in Nuosu. These forms have been called “elaborate expressions” (Matisoff 2011; Peterson 2014) or simply “expressives” (Wheatley 2014). In Khumi, spoken in southeastern Bangladesh, these reduplicated expressions are a stylistic choice and “speakers regard use of them as a sign of good speaking” (Peterson 2014:225). Nuosu has more than one category of reduplicated elaborate expressions.

2.5.1. Four-syllable Nouns and Verbs

Four-syllable alternate forms of nouns and verbs are created by specific reduplicating patterns in Nuosu. For example, the basic word for relative (kin) is $\text{ㄩ} \text{ㄩ}$ ($\text{tei}^{21} \text{ei}^{33}$), but the term often used in songs or poetry is $\text{ㄩ} \text{ㄩ} \text{ㄩ} \text{ㄩ}$ ($\text{tei}^{21} \text{mo}^{21} \text{tei}^{21} \text{ei}^{33}$). “Compared to two-syllable words, the meaning of the four-syllable forms are more vivid and are frequently the preferred forms in classical literature as well as modern colloquial speech” (Ma et al. 2008:9). These four-syllable elaborate expressions are often used in Nuosu proverbs (see Proverb (8)). The inherent reduplication in these forms contributes to the cadence of the proverbs.

Studies of proverbs in related languages also reference similar reduplicated elaborate forms. Matisoff (2011) pointed out the use of four-syllable elaborate expressions in the proverbs of Lahu. Research on Wa proverbs revealed “a strong tendency in the language generally for four-syllable elaborate expressions”

which had “internal rhyme and internal syntactic symmetry” (Watkins 2013:32–33). These more vivid reduplicated elaborate expressions are an areal linguistic feature which seems to naturally surface in artistic forms such as local proverbs.

2.5.2. Three-syllable Adjectives

Another artistic elaborate form in Nuosu is their vivid three-syllable adjectives made by reduplicating the final syllable of a two-syllable form. For example, the default word for ‘black’ is (a³⁴ nɔ³³). But Nuosu’s three-syllable forms are more descriptive: 𑄎𑄏𑄗 (nɔ³³ tshɿ²¹ tshɿ²¹) denotes “deep black, what one sees when looking inside a cave or deep hole;” 𑄎𑄗𑄗 (nɔ³³ da³³ da³³) conveys the meaning of “black and thick (e.g., of a Nuosu woman’s braided hair);” and 𑄎𑄗𑄗 (nɔ³³ bu³³ bu³³) describes something “deeply black with a shiny appearance (e.g., of lacquerware)” (Ma et al. 2008). These three-syllable elaborate expressions adorn many Nuosu proverbs (see Proverbs (8) and (10)) instead of their single or two-syllable more prosaic counterparts.

2.6. Sound-based Art

Sound art through rhyme is commonly found in proverbs from languages around the world (Thompson 2020). Wheatly (2014) pointed out that while sound-based art in languages like English is based on matching initials or rhyming final syllables, Burmese uses compounding to enliven discourse. Similarly, Nuosu does not seem to lean heavily on rhymes. However, sound-based art (such as assonance and alliteration) is still evident. Some Nuosu proverbs utilize sound correspondences, either matching initials (consonants) or finals (the vowel part of the syllables) both seen in Proverb (9): tʂu²¹ la³³ lo³⁴ (𑄎𑄗𑄗, spread-come-exchange) and tʂu⁵⁵ la³³ ɲo⁵⁵ (𑄎𑄗𑄗, shrivel-come-shrink).

2.7. Tonal Art

Another kind of sound-based art is tonal art. Tonal patterns and symmetry can be seen in languages from varying regions including Asia (Huang 2019; Kordas 1990; Snyder 1998; Unseth 2017) and Africa (Kröger 2009; Owomoyela 2005). Nuosu proverbs also show tonal art. Sometimes the tonal patterns of the two

halves of the couplet match exactly (Proverb (1)), and sometimes there is a near match (see Proverbs (2), (4), (8), (9), (12), and (15)).

2.8. *Litotes and Negative Polarity*

Another feature common to Nuosu proverbs is the use of negative polarity. Nuosu proverbs contain a high number of negative particles. In my small corpus of 15 proverbs, six of them include negative polarity, five proverbs using 𑄎 (a^{21} , not) in the indicative (Proverbs (1), (7), (12), (13), and (15)) and one using the negative imperative 𑄏 (tha⁵⁵, don't) (see Proverb (3)). In each of those proverbs the negative polarity is used in parallel in both halves of the couplet.

A count in the curated, printed collection *Nuosu Proverbs* (𑄎𑄏𑄐𑄑 *Nuosu lubbyx*) (Zhu Deqi 1985) revealed that out of the 3,000 proverbs, 1,072 of them employ the negative 𑄎 (a^{21} , not) in parallel in both lines of the couplet—some of them using multiple instances of the negative in both lines. As well as the indicative negative 𑄎 (a^{21} , not), there were also 28 proverbs with the negative imperative 𑄏 (tha⁵⁵, don't) also usually matched in both lines of the couplet, and one use of the older literary negative 𑄒 (ma^{21} , not), making the total negative polarity of the corpus of 3,000 proverbs, 36.7%. The overwhelming preference for the negative 𑄎 (a^{21} , not) over the negative imperative 𑄏 (tha⁵⁵, don't) also reveals the preference for Nuosu proverbs to be crafted as indicative statements of reality rather than as grammatical (negative) imperatives.

In many cases, Nuosu proverbs with the negative 𑄎 (a^{21} , not) are employing litotes, a rhetorical device that makes an emphatic understatement by expressing the negative of its opposite. For example, Proverb (15) says “there is no wrong-talking” and “there is no wrong-eating and drinking.” The use of the negative 𑄎 (a^{21} , not) in conjunction with the negative meaning inherent in the word “wrong” is more naturally translated in the affirmative in English: “say, eat, and drink anything you want.” Of course, Proverb (15) could be stated prosaically in Nuosu with a bland affirmative, but the use of litotes adds artistry and ring.

2.9. *Semantic Themes and Metaphors*

Considering Wa proverbs, Watkins wrote that “the first half presents a scenario which serves as a metaphor or analogy for the real-world generalization in the second half.” (Watkins 2013:34). Many Nuosu proverbs also contain concrete images in one half of the couplet. In this paper’s corpus, “iron,” “liquor,” “brooms,” “grain,” “magpies,” and “sheep” are used as metaphors. The ways that these items respond to outside forces and how they are valued provide analogies of the same for people. Differing from propositional prose, the use of metaphor has a retarding effect, prompting listeners to ponder possible connections. Metaphor requires their active participation to arrive at meaning.

Nuosu people tend to define themselves as members of a group rather than as individuals. The clan system affects every aspect of life including naming, marriage, and social order (Harrell 2001). “The clan, not the individual, is the fundamental unit of Nuosu society” (Walters 2015:4). Many Nuosu proverbs revolve around family relations, with kinship terms being key (see Proverbs (2), (4), (6), (7), (8), (9), (10), and (14)). An important assumption for the Nuosu is that the generations are mutually indebted. The older generation works for the growth and success of their children; it is hoped that children will rise up to become successful, bringing honor to their parents and their clan as a whole.

Very closely connected with ideas of kinship and family are issues of honor and shame. Honor and shame are shared by group members simply by virtue of association, not necessarily earned by individual actions and choices. Many Nuosu proverbs touch on themes of honor and shame (see Proverbs (9) and (14)). Nuosu proverbs also reinforce the wisdom, love, and sacrifice of the elder generation and call for them and their wisdom to be valued. Nuosu proverbs speak about how children reflect on their elders, bringing either honor or disgrace.

Some of the themes in Nuosu proverbs overlap with themes in proverbs of related languages. Topics in Wa proverbs include poverty and wealth; hosting guests; marriage and courting; and nature (Watkins 2013). Lahu semantic themes include unity; poverty/hunger and cold; ecology/the natural environment; the importance of education; age and youth; obligations of younger people toward their seniors; and speech and silence (Matisoff 2011).

3. *Examples of Nuosu Proverbs*

The features of Nuosu proverbs described in section two are illustrated in the 15 Nuosu proverbs presented in this section. I have categorized the proverbs into three groups: synonymous, antithetical, and descriptive. By synonymous I mean that the parallelism of the two phrases restates the same idea using different words, or by giving a more concrete image. Proverbs I classify as antithetical use the parallelism inherent in the proverb to show a contrast. They make their point by presenting two opposing images. Proverbs in the descriptive group make their point by stating two parts of an idea, or giving two perspectives to a notion. Each line of the couplet adds to the whole.

Every proverb is listed with an interlinear translation. Grammatical glosses are listed in all caps, for example, “FUTURE” or “NEGATIVE”. When syntactic slots are referenced in the text, they are shown with capital letters beneath the glosses. Each different capital letter represents a different syntactic slot; the prime marker indicates a different element in the slot. Each proverb is followed by a discussion of its form and brief notes on the meaning and context or occasion in which the proverb is typically used. Note that in the Nuosu language, grammatical subjects and objects precede the verb in a clause.

3.1. *Synonymous Proverbs*

In synonymous proverbs each line of the couplet states the same thing. Often one line points out a human trait or abstract concept and the other line supports this by giving a concrete example or image from the natural world. In Nuosu proverbs, the order of the two parts is not rigid. In some proverbs, the concrete metaphor comes first, in others the generalization comes first, and in yet others, the two halves of the couplet may be stated in either order.

Proverb (1): 𐌀𐌃𐌆𐌇𐌈𐌉𐌊𐌋𐌌𐌍, 𐌎𐌏𐌐𐌑𐌒𐌓𐌔𐌕。 (5, 5)

“It’s no use teaching a stubborn person; it’s no use welding poor quality iron.”

The two clauses of Proverb (1) are interchangeable, giving the physical image of iron either first or last.

- | | | | | | |
|------|---------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| (1a) | <i>tsho</i> ³³ | <i>di</i> ³³ | <i>hi</i> ²¹ | <i>a</i> ²¹ | <i>kha</i> ⁵⁵ |
| | <i>person</i> | <i>bad</i> | <i>teach</i> | NEGATIVE | <i>effective</i> |
| | A | | B | C | D |
| (1b) | <i>ʂu</i> ³³ | <i>di</i> ³³ | <i>tsɿ</i> ²¹ | <i>a</i> ²¹ | <i>kha</i> ⁵⁵ |
| | <i>iron</i> | <i>bad</i> | <i>weld</i> | NEGATIVE | <i>effective</i> |
| | A' | | B' | C | D |

Proverb (1) illustrates the identical syntactic slots and syllable count structures in the two clauses of the proverb: 5, 5. These form the setting in which to clearly frame the word play where 𐄂 (*di*³³, *bad*) has two distinct meanings prompted by the lexical item it follows, 𐄃 (*tsho*³³, *person*) and 𐄄 (*ʂu*³³, *iron*). The first syntactic slot, A and A prime, are filled with a two-syllable item, the cadence of choice for Nuosu proverbs. The proverb employs negative polarity 𐄅𐄆 (*a*²¹ *kha*⁵⁵, *not effective*) instead of stating its point in the affirmative. Note the tonal pattern is identical in both halves of the couplet.

A tool, such as a plow, which breaks because of poor quality iron is of no use. Proverb (1) is used to criticize a person who will not listen to reason or advice. It is also used in response to someone who is not teachable, explaining why they do not reform.

Proverb (2): 𐄇𐄈𐄉𐄊𐄋, 𐄌𐄍𐄎𐄏𐄐。 (5, 5)

“One capable son [is enough], one bowl of liquor [is enough].”

- | | | | | | |
|------|---------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| (2a) | <i>zu</i> ³⁴ | <i>li</i> ³³ | <i>ho</i> ³³ | <i>tshɿ</i> ²¹ | <i>ma</i> ³³ |
| | <i>child</i> | TOPIC | <i>capable</i> | <i>one</i> | CLASSIFIER |
| (2b) | <i>ndzɿ</i> ³⁴ | <i>li</i> ³³ | <i>mbo</i> ²¹ | <i>tshɿ</i> ²¹ | <i>tʂu</i> ²¹ |
| | <i>liquor</i> | TOPIC | <i>tasty</i> | <i>one</i> | CLASSIFIER |

The Nuosu word 𐄑¹ (*zu*³⁴, *son*) can refer in a broader sense to a child of either sex. However, male children are vital to the Nuosu because they are needed to perpetuate the family name and line. In Nuosu culture, not to have a son is unthinkable. Not having a son is reason enough to take another wife. Unlike daughters, who

¹ The underlying word is 𐄑 (*zu*³³) with a mid-level tone. Because of a tone change prompted by the context, it is written here as a mid-high tone marked with a diacritic 𐄑¹ (*zu*³⁴).

marry into the husband's clan, sons are expected to take care of you in your old age and hold a ceremony after your death to secure your spirit's safe journey to the homeland of the ancestors.

The adjective 𐄎 (mbo²¹) 'delicious and good' describes liquor in Proverb (2). Though often collocated with food and drink, the word can attribute general positive qualities to many things, including people, denoting wholesome and upright. In the parallel slot of the couplet, the adjective 𐄎 (ho³³) 'capable' describes 'son.' The term 𐄎 (ho³³) can be placed after a noun or verb to indicate being or doing the former well, being capable at some activity. Here it describes someone who excels at being a son. This son not only fulfills all the expected filial duties, but excels in his work and family as well. Such a son brings honor to his elders. Thus the first image in Proverb (2), 'an excellent son,' is the standard of honor. Not having a capable son is disgraceful.

For the Nuosu, drinking liquor brings to mind fond images of Nuosu festivities, and the forging and reinforcing of relationships. Proverb (2) is used when someone is envious of a family with many children. The hearer might respond with this proverb meaning that having just one good son is enough. With one son, you have already attained honor. No more are needed.

Proverb (3): 𐄎𐄎𐄎𐄎, 𐄎𐄎𐄎𐄎; 𐄎𐄎𐄎𐄎, 𐄎𐄎𐄎𐄎。 (5, 5; 5, 5)
***“Don't look down on young people, they will grow up (wise);
 Don't look up to young people, they will grow old (weak).”***

Proverb (3a) can be used alone, but it is sometimes also paired with a second couplet as shown here.

- | | | | | | | |
|------|---|---|---|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| (3a) | <i>dzɿ⁵⁵ su³³</i> | <i>hu²¹ tha⁵⁵</i> | <i>dzɿ⁵⁵ su³³</i> | <i>zɿ³³</i> | <i>la³³</i> | <i>lu³³</i> |
| | | <i>di³³</i> | | | | |
| | <i>young</i> | <i>don't look</i> | <i>young</i> | <i>grow</i> | <i>FUTURE</i> | <i>certainly</i> |
| | <i>people</i> | <i>down on</i> | <i>people</i> | | | |
| (3b) | <i>zɿ³³ su³³</i> | <i>hu²¹ tha⁵⁵</i> | <i>zɿ³³ su³³</i> | <i>mo²¹</i> | <i>la³³</i> | <i>lu³³</i> |
| | | <i>zɿ³³</i> | | | | |
| | <i>adults</i> | <i>don't look</i> | <i>adults</i> | <i>old</i> | <i>FUTURE</i> | <i>certainly</i> |
| | | <i>up to</i> | | | | |

Proverb (3) has two parallel strings. The negative imperative 𐄂 (tha⁵⁵, don't) is repeated in parallel constructions 𐄂 𐄂𐄂 (hu²¹ tha⁵⁵ di³³, don't look down on) and 𐄂 𐄂𐄂 (hu²¹ tha⁵⁵ zɿ³³, don't look up to), showing again Nuosu proverbs' penchant for communicating emphatically by stating something in the negative. The words for 'young people' (𐄂𐄂, dzɿ⁵⁵ su³³) and 'adults' (𐄂𐄂, zɿ³³ su³³), constructed with the general nominalizer 𐄂 (su³³), show sound-based art having a matching vowel and similar initial in their first syllable.

Proverb (3) is used to express the truth that things change. Though you are poor today, you might someday be rich. The proverb encourages people not to take the present situation as the final word.

Proverb (4): 𐄂𐄂 𐄂𐄂 𐄂𐄂 𐄂𐄂 𐄂𐄂, 𐄂𐄂 𐄂𐄂 𐄂𐄂 𐄂𐄂 𐄂𐄂。 (7, 7)

“If you sweep too hard, it makes the grain jump; if a mother-in-law is fierce she makes the daughter-in-law leave.”

- | | | | | | |
|------|-----------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------------------------|------------------|
| (4a) | ze ³⁴ sɿ ³³ | kɔ ³⁴ | nu ³³ | dza ²¹ ma ³³ | pɛ ³³ |
| | broom | hard | if | grain | jump |
| (4b) | a ³⁴ bo ³³ | kɔ ³⁴ | nu ³³ | ɛɿ ²¹ mo ²¹ | pɛ ³³ |
| | mother-in-law | fierce | if | daughter-in-law | leave |

Identical syntactic slots and syllable count structures in the two clauses of Proverb (4) are the setting in which to clearly frame two word plays. First, the word 𐄂 (kɔ³⁴, strong) has two distinct meanings in the two clauses, 'hard' and 'fierce,' prompted by the lexical items they follow, namely 'broom' and 'mother-in-law'. Secondly, the final word in each clause 𐄂 (pɛ³³) means 'jump' in conjunction with the lexical item 𐄂𐄂 (dza²¹ ma³³, grain), and 'leave' in collocation with 'daughter-in-law' (𐄂𐄂, ɛɿ²¹ mo²¹). These double meanings direct the listeners clearly to the point of the proverb.

Traditional Nuosu houses have dirt floors. Sacks of grain are stacked on the floor. If you sweep with too much force—angrily—dust may fly and grain may scatter. If a mother-in-law is too fierce, the daughter-in-law will leave. Proverb (4) admonishes that being unpleasantly severe causes problems. Harsh people

cannot get along for the long haul; they will undoubtedly disagree with each other and have conflict.

Proverb (5): 𐄂𐄃𐄄𐄅𐄆𐄇𐄈𐄉𐄊𐄋, 𐄌𐄍𐄎𐄏𐄐𐄑𐄒𐄓𐄔𐄕。 (9, 9)

“If a magpie starts to build its nest early, he will finish building it early; If people get up early, they will finish work early.”

(5a)	<i>a</i> ³³ <i>tʂa</i> ⁵⁵	<i>khu</i> ³³ <i>zu</i> ³⁴	<i>ʒɿ</i> ³⁴	<i>nu</i> ³³	<i>khu</i> ³³ <i>dzi</i> ³⁴	<i>ʒɿ</i> ³³
	<i>magpie</i>	<i>build nest</i>	<i>early</i>	<i>if</i>	<i>finish nest</i>	<i>early</i>
	A	B	C	D	E	C
(5b)	<i>vo</i> ³³ <i>tsho</i> ³³	<i>i</i> ⁵⁵ <i>tu</i> ²¹	<i>ʒɿ</i> ³⁴	<i>nu</i> ³³	<i>ŋo</i> ²¹ <i>du</i> ³³	<i>ʒɿ</i> ³³
	<i>people</i>	<i>rise</i>	<i>early</i>	<i>if</i>	<i>finish work</i>	<i>early</i>
	A'	B'	C	D	E'	C

Interestingly, Proverb 5 has a common variant form with 5 syllables in each line: 𐄂𐄃𐄄𐄅𐄆𐄇, 𐄈𐄉𐄊𐄋𐄌𐄍 (a³³ tʂa⁵⁵ khu³³ zu³⁴ lu³⁴, vo³³ tsho³³ ŋo²¹ mu³³ lu³⁴, Magpies put off building their nests; people put off their labor.) (Yi Language Dictionary Compilations Committee (彝语大词典编纂委员会编著) 1997:65). Proverb (5) and its variant demonstrate that while there is flexibility in word choice and meaning, the fixed syllable count of 5, 7, or 9 remains an important feature of Nuosu proverbs. Both Proverb (5) and its common variant fall into one of the expected patterns of syllable counts (9,9 and 5,5). For Nuosu proverbs, while words can be rearranged, the aligning of the couplets and their syntactic slots is fixed.

Proverb (5) employs the topic marker 𐄎 (nu³³), in this case suggesting a conditional case, which in English I translate ‘if.’ The proverb also illustrates the use of repetition as seen in identical syntactic slots (C) in both lines of the couplet.

The elements which are different in the two clauses draw the listeners’ attention to the point of the proverb, people rising with the result that their work gets finished. Magpies are a bird common to Nuosu people; they show up in Nuosu folktales as well. Proverb (5) is used to encourage the listeners not to be lazy but diligent and hardworking.

Proverb (6): སྤྱོད་ལོ་སྤྱོད་ལྷན་པོ་ལྷན་པོ་ལྷན་པོ་ལྷན་པོ་ལྷན་པོ་ (9, 9)

“The mom of the bad son hopes her bad son will become capable; The owner of the weak sheep hopes his weak sheep will become strong.”

(6a)	<i>zu³³ di³³</i>	<i>a²¹ mo²¹</i>	<i>zu³³ di³³</i>	<i>hɔ³⁴</i>	<i>ho³³ lo³³</i>
	<i>son bad</i>	<i>mother</i>	<i>son bad</i>	<i>capable</i>	<i>hope</i>
	A	B	A	C	D
(6b)	<i>zo³⁴ dzi³³</i>	<i>si²¹ pho³³</i>	<i>zo³⁴ dzi³³</i>	<i>tu²¹</i>	<i>ho³³ lo³³</i>
	<i>sheep weak</i>	<i>owner</i>	<i>sheep weak</i>	<i>rise</i>	<i>hope</i>
	A'	B'	A'	C	D

As well as the standard matching syntactic slots and syllable count structures in the two clauses of the couplet, Proverb (6) also repeats element A and A' within each clause. This repetition adds cadence to the proverb.

The mother of the son with bad habits hopes he will rise up through hard work and become capable (C, hɔ³⁴), skilled, and accomplished. The focus of the meaning of Proverb 6 can either be on the mother or the son: the **mother** has done so much for her son and yet he still is bad; or the **son** does not meet the mother’s hopes and expectations. The proverb compares a mother’s care for her children to the experience all Nuosu have in taking care of their animals. The mother has good hopes for her son, like owners have for their sheep. A good son brings honor to the family; strong, healthy sheep provide the family with material needs. The mother cannot control the outcome of her son just as people cannot ultimately control the health and wellbeing of their sheep.

Proverb (7): མཚན་མཚན་མཚན་མཚན་མཚན་མཚན་ (7, 7)

“If you don’t listen to your father, you run ten valleys; if you don’t listen to your mother, you cross five valleys.”

(7a)	<i>pha⁵⁵</i>	<i>do²¹ a²¹ mu³³</i>	<i>tshi³³ lo³³</i>	<i>tɕɿ³⁴</i>
	<i>father</i>	<i>not obey</i>	<i>ten valleys</i>	<i>run</i>
(7b)	<i>mo²¹</i>	<i>do²¹ a²¹ mu³³</i>	<i>ŋu³³ lo³³</i>	<i>ŋga³³</i>
	<i>mother</i>	<i>not obey</i>	<i>five valleys</i>	<i>cross</i>

In Proverb (7), identical syntactic slots highlight the converse items 𐄀 (pha⁵⁵, father) and 𐄁 (mo²¹, mother). The converse items are not contrasted with each other, but used jointly to refer to parents or one's elders. Once again negative polarity is used, the negative 𐄂 (a²¹, not) being infixing into the two-syllable verb 𐄃 𐄄 (do²¹mu³³, obey). There is repetition of 𐄅 (lo³³, valley) in both halves though the attached number in the two clauses varies, ten and five respectively—both numbers carrying the same level tone, 33. Rather than being a pointed difference, this difference is akin to the poetic richness of picking two different words from the same semantic family, a beautiful way of saying the same truth from a nearby angle. We see this in the choice of the two verbs at the end of the clauses, also two items from one semantic set, verbs of motion.

Herding and raising crops, the Nuosu live on rugged mountains of Liangshan at elevations of 1,000-3,000 meters. These mountain slopes are crisscrossed with paths. Making a wrong turn at one point will mean that eventually you are far off from your destination. You end up putting out much more effort than necessary without achieving a satisfying outcome. Proverb (7) is used to capture the importance of listening to your mother and father. It instructs the young to heed their elders.

3.2. *Antithetical Proverbs*

A second category of Nuosu proverbs consists of couplets with contrasting meanings but no overt conjunction. In these asyndetic constructions, the contrast is made obvious simply by placing the two phrases side by side without a connector. Similarly, in Lahu proverbs the two clauses of a couplet “are usually simply juxtaposed, with nothing overtly suggesting that there is a basis for comparison between them” (Matisoff 2011:282). The two opposing points of view emphasize the main point, showing two sides of a matter. This type of Nuosu proverb may also contain one clause which is an example from the natural world.

Here again we see the theme of the older generation receiving honor because of the children. The word 𐄂𐄃 (zu³³ mu³) refers to a child who is obedient and capable, one who can resolve problems and accomplish needed tasks. But Proverb (9) portrays a contrast in the second half of the couplet. Shame can be brought on a mother by a disgraceful son (𐄂𐄄, zu³³ di³³).

Only two syntactic slots have contrasting items: A:A' and C:C'. Because of a difference in the sons (A:A'), the lot of their mothers (C:C') varies greatly. In one case the mother 𐄂 (tʂu²¹) 'spreads out' and 𐄃 (lɔ³⁴) 'exchanges', gaining a better place. She blossoms, is fruitful, relaxed, and confident to go about. In the second case the mother 𐄄 (tʂu⁵⁵) 'shrivels' and 𐄅 (ŋɔ⁵⁵) 'shrinks'. She withers, becomes small and tight, unable to move about and is stuck sitting in one place with her shame. Proverb (9) also artfully utilizes sound correspondences, matching in the slots C and C': 𐄂𐄃 𐄄 (tʂu²¹ la³³ lɔ³⁴) and 𐄄𐄅 𐄃 (tʂu⁵⁵ la³³ ŋɔ⁵⁵). The first set of paired verbs have the same initial consonant sound 'tʂ'; the second set of paired verbs have the same vowel sound 'o'.

Proverb (9) is often used by the older generation to instruct kids to study hard so they will be a credit to their family and bring honor to the clan.

Proverb (10): 𐄂𐄃 𐄄 𐄅 𐄆 𐄇 𐄈 𐄉 𐄊, 𐄋 𐄌 𐄍 𐄎 𐄏 𐄐 𐄑 𐄒. (9, 9)

“Wherever my relative is, is bright; wherever my enemy is, is dark.”

(10a) *i⁵⁵ tɕi²¹ kha³⁴ dzo³³ mu³³ khu³⁴ bo²¹ lo³³ lo³³*
my relative wherever place bright

(10b) *i⁵⁵ dzi³³ kha³⁴ dzo³³ mu³³ khu³⁴ nɔ³³ dzɿ⁵⁵ dzɿ²¹*
my enemy wherever place dark

Proverb (10) juxtaposes the two words 'kin' (𐄂, tɕi²¹) and 'enemy' (𐄃, dzi³³), a startling juxtaposition. Soundwise, the two words are only differentiated by a voicing contrast and a tone change. However, semantically speaking the two are at extremes of the relationship scale. Nuosu regard kin as the closest and most valued relation; enemies, historically, would be routinely beheaded.

The first person pronoun 𠵼 (*i*⁵⁵) used with both of those items 𠵼𠵼 (*i*⁵⁵ *tei*²¹, my kin) and 𠵼𠵼 (*i*⁵⁵ *dzi*³³, my enemy) is not from the basic set of Nuosu pronouns, but rather the first person logophoric pronoun, sometimes referred to as the reported speech pronoun. These pronouns convey a sense that there is a speaker external to the current one (Gerner 2013; Liu and Li 2016). That is, the current speaker is reporting something that someone else has said. This aligns with the general view of Nuosu proverbs as being authorless wisdom, not novel text sprouting from the current speaker's mouth.

Proverb (10) also makes use of Nuosu language's vivid three-character elaborate expressions. In parallel clause-final syntactic slots, the two three-syllable reduplicated adjectives 𠵼𠵼𠵼 (*bo*²¹ *lo*³³ *lo*³³, bright) and 𠵼𠵼𠵼 (*no*³³ *dzi*⁵⁵ *dzi*²¹, dark) paint converse images.

Proverb (10) can be used when somebody comes to a new place they have never been. Because they are with someone they know, they feel at ease. Being with kin turns a strange place into a familiar one. Proverb (10) affirms the high value of kinship connections among the Nuosu.

3.3. *Descriptive Proverbs*

A third category of Nuosu proverbs are those used to simply describe a situation, phenomenon, or an aspect of life. Like other Nuosu proverbs, these proverbs are also composed of two clauses with matching syntactic slots and syllable count. Descriptive proverbs consist of two clauses that are saying the same thing, looking at something from more than one point of view, or looking at more than one aspect of the same thing.

In these proverbs we still find the use of opposites or converse lexical items to show breadth and add emphasis, for example, sky-road in Proverb (12) and mother-in-law-daughter-in-law in Proverb 14. Descriptive proverbs, perhaps because they are essentially asserting that something exists or is a certain way, often make use of the rich repertoire of existential verbs available in the Nuosu language.

Proverb (11): 𐄂𐄃𐄄𐄅𐄆, 𐄇𐄈𐄉𐄊; 𐄋𐄌𐄍𐄎𐄏𐄐𐄑𐄒。 (5, 5; 5, 5)
“One may have the appearance of a monkey (weak), but the heart of a tiger (strong). A tree can grow straight on the outside, but be rotten on the inside.”

- (11a) *a*³³ *ŋu*⁵⁵ *kha*³³ *ŋɔ*³³ *ndi*⁵⁵ *la*⁵⁵ *mo*²¹ *ko*³³ *lo*³³ *ŋi*³³
monkey face EXISTEN- tiger inside EXISTEN-
TIAL TIAL
- (11b) *vo*²¹ *lu*³³ *zu*³³ *tɛɛ*³³ *dzo*³⁴ *ko*³³ *lo*³³ *zɪ*³³ *tʂhɪ*³⁴ *dzi*²¹
kind of grow straight inside corrupt become
tree

Like Proverb (3), Proverb (11) has parts that can be used independently. Line (11a) can stand alone as a proverb in its own right. Line (11b) can be paired with a different couplet. In the pairing presented in this paper, each individual couplet is antithetical within itself, asyndetically contrasting weak-strong and straight-corrupt, but used in parallel, the proverb describes something about the way the world is.

There are several pairs of matched items in Proverb (11): monkey-tiger, face (outside)-inside; straight-corrupt. The proverb elegantly ends three of its clauses with three different existential verbs, all with matching vowel sounds: the verb 𐄎 (ndi⁵⁵) is used for things which hang from or attach to larger things. The verb 𐄊 (ŋi³³), used with animate creatures, conveys a sense of a sitting posture. The verb 𐄑 (dzi²¹) is often used with large immobile things, but here also connotes an aspect of becoming (Walters and Atqi 2006:139).

Proverb (11) means that while the surface may look good, the inside may not be. The proverb describes the unknowable nature of something’s core from its exterior.

Proverb 12: 𐄓𐄔𐄕𐄖𐄗, 𐄘𐄙𐄚𐄛𐄜。 (7, 7)

“The sky above is clear with no clouds; the road below is good with no stones.”

- (12a) *tho*⁵⁵ *li*³³ *mu*³³ *sa*³³ *ti*³³ *a*²¹ *ndi*⁵⁵
above TOPIC sky clear cloud NEGATIVE EXISTENTIAL

- (12b) *o*⁵⁵ *li*³³ *ga*³³ *sa*³³ *lu*³³ *a*²¹ *dzu*³³
below TOPIC road good stone NEGATIVE EXISTENTIAL

Both clauses in Proverb (12) come from nature. In converse relation to each other, the rhyming words with both matching vowels and tones, 𐄂 (tho⁵⁵) ‘above’ and 𐄃 (o⁵⁵) ‘below,’ encompass all of nature. The use of the negative makes a stronger case than would the positive declarative form. The final verbs in each line of the couplet are chosen from the same semantic family (existential verbs), but are not identical, the variety adding poetry to the proverb. The existential verb 𐄄 (ndi⁵⁵), discussed in Proverb (11), is juxtaposed to the existential verb 𐄅 (dzu³³) which “is mostly used with inanimate referents such as bones, stones, silver, plows, and corpses” (Walters and Atqi 2006:136).

Proverb (12) cleverly repeats the identical element 𐄆 (sa³³, pleasant, good) compounded with two different lexical items: 𐄇 (mu³³, sky) and 𐄈 (ga³³, road) respectively, again inspiring the listener to sit up and pay attention to what he is hearing and the nuances of meaning. This clever word play also signals the theme: 𐄆 (sa³³) ‘pleasant, good, happy, satisfied.’

Proverb (12) is used to describe a beautiful environment or a happy occasion. It can be appropriately used, for example, on a wedding day, celebrating the event’s joy by declaring that everything is right with the world. Proverb (12) signifies harmonious peace and wellbeing, the absence of problems and worry.

Proverb (13): 𐄉𐄊𐄋𐄌𐄍, 𐄎𐄏𐄐𐄑; 𐄒𐄓𐄔𐄕, 𐄖𐄗𐄘𐄙。
“If there is no shepherd, the farmer will die of cold; If there is no farmer, the shepherd will die of hunger.”

- (13a) *lu*⁵⁵ *su*³³ *a*²¹ *ɲu*³³ *ɲi*³³ *mo*³³ *su*³³ *gɔ*³³ *li*²¹ *sɣ*³³
shepherd NEGATIVE EXISTENTIAL if farmer cold die
- (13b) *mo*³³ *su*³³ *a*²¹ *ɲu*³³ *ɲi*³³ *lu*⁵⁵ *su*³³ *mi*⁵⁵ *dzi*³³ *sɣ*³³
farmer NEGATIVE EXISTENTIAL if shepherd hunger die

Proverb (13) is made up of two couplets, each composed of two strings of 5 syllables. The two main items in the proverb are the two most common Nuosu roles: shepherd and farmer. By suffix-

ing the nominalizer 𠵹 (su³³) onto two verbs, 𠵹 (tu⁵⁵, plow) and 𠵹 (mo³³, herd), the nouns for ‘farmer’ and ‘shepherd’ are formed. More literally, this could be read as ‘one who plows’ and ‘one who herds’. What stands out from the repetition of identical elements in the two lines is the change in position of ‘shepherd’ and ‘farmer,’ and the change from ‘cold’ to ‘hunger.’ The last three syllables are parallel forms indicating the manner of death: ‘die-of-cold’ versus ‘die-of-hunger.’

Nuosu people’s main work is farming and herding. The shepherd without the farmer will die because he is lacking the food that the farmer can grow. Without the shepherd, the farmer will die because he does not have the wool to weave into the Nuosu traditional felt capes. Proverb (13) is used to show that both roles are important; neither one is more important than the other. People must rely on each other.

Interestingly, Proverb (13) has another well-known form with the same meaning in which the elements have been rearranged into a 9, 9 syllable pattern: 𠵹 𠵹 𠵹 𠵹 𠵹 𠵹 𠵹 𠵹 𠵹, 𠵹 𠵹 𠵹 𠵹 𠵹 𠵹 𠵹 𠵹 𠵹. (tu⁵⁵su³³ a²¹ŋu³³, vo³³ tsho³³ ɣo³³li²¹sɿ³³; mo³³su³³ a²¹ŋu³³, vo³³ tsho³³ mi⁵⁵dzi³³sɿ³³), “If there is no shepherd, people will die of cold; if there is no farmer, people will die of hunger.” (Yi Language Dictionary Compilations Committee (彝语大词典编纂委员会编著) 1997:664). Again, this demonstrates the foundational nature of the syllable count and parallelism of Nuosu proverb structure.

Proverb (14): 𠵹 𠵹 𠵹 𠵹, 𠵹 𠵹 𠵹 𠵹. (5, 5)

“The mother-in-law does wrong, but the daughter-in-law carries the bad name.”

- | | | | | |
|-------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| (14a) | ndi ⁵⁵ | li ³³ | a ³⁴ bo ³³ | ndi ⁵⁵ |
| | mistake | TOPIC | mother-in-law | mistakes |
| (14b) | mi ³³ | di ³³ | ɛɿ ²¹ mo ²¹ | pɿ ²¹ |
| | name | bad | daughter-in-law | carry |

Proverb (14) speaks of 𠵹 (mi³³, name). This term is broader than the English gloss suggests. It refers to one’s reputation, with either honor or shame attached. The first half of the couplet uses

the word 𐄂 (ndi⁵⁵) twice. The first 𐄂 (ndi⁵⁵, mistake) is used as a noun, the wrong choice. The second 𐄂 (ndi⁵⁵, to make a mistake) is used as a verb. The repetition gives the proverb pleasant, poetic wording, and fills out the syllable count.

The final verb 𐄃 (pɿ²¹, carry) is one of many different Nuosu verbs which indicate methods of carrying. For example, to carry using a pole is indicated with the verb 𐄄 (thi³³); the word 𐄅 (tɛɛ³³) means to carry on one's shoulders. The Nuosu verb 𐄃 (pɿ²¹) is used for the action of carrying a load on one's back. Rural Nuosu peasants going from their fields to home or to market in the Nuosu mountain region daily carry (𐄃, pɿ²¹) large, loosely woven baskets of potatoes, other produce, or one-hundred-pound sacks of seed on their backs. The heavy loads are borne as part of the necessary work of life. Proverb (14) depicts a daughter-in-law, through no wrong of her own doing, continually bearing the weight of a bad reputation.

Proverb (14) points out that there are injustices in life. Sometimes it is not the one who does wrong who carries the shame; another does. The proverb is not an indignant value judgement on this situation, to either praise the willing bearer of another's shame, or to criticize the one who does not carry his own disgrace. The proverb simply states that this is the way things are.

Proverb (15): 𐄆 𐄇 𐄈 𐄉 𐄊 𐄋 𐄌 𐄍 𐄎 𐄏 𐄐 𐄑 𐄒 𐄓 𐄔 𐄕 𐄖 𐄗 𐄘 𐄙 𐄚 𐄛 𐄜 𐄝 𐄞 𐄟 𐄠 𐄡 𐄢 𐄣 𐄤 𐄥 𐄦 𐄧 𐄨 𐄩 𐄪 𐄫 𐄬 𐄭 𐄮 𐄯 𐄰 𐄱 𐄲 𐄳 𐄴 𐄵 𐄶 𐄷 𐄸 𐄹 𐄺 𐄻 𐄼 𐄽 𐄾 𐄿 𐅀 𐅁 𐅂 𐅃 𐅄 𐅅 𐅆 𐅇 𐅈 𐅉 𐅊 𐅋 𐅌 𐅍 𐅎 𐅏 𐅐 𐅑 𐅒 𐅓 𐅔 𐅕 𐅖 𐅗 𐅘 𐅙 𐅚 𐅛 𐅜 𐅝 𐅞 𐅟 𐅠 𐅡 𐅢 𐅣 𐅤 𐅥 𐅦 𐅧 𐅨 𐅩 𐅪 𐅫 𐅬 𐅭 𐅮 𐅯 𐅰 𐅱 𐅲 𐅳 𐅴 𐅵 𐅶 𐅷 𐅸 𐅹 𐅺 𐅻 𐅼 𐅽 𐅾 𐅿 𐆀 𐆁 𐆂 𐆃 𐆄 𐆅 𐆆 𐆇 𐆈 𐆉 𐆊 𐆋 𐆌 𐆍 𐆎 𐆏 𐆐 𐆑 𐆒 𐆓 𐆔 𐆕 𐆖 𐆗 𐆘 𐆙 𐆚 𐆛 𐆜 𐆝 𐆞 𐆟 𐆠 𐆡 𐆢 𐆣 𐆤 𐆥 𐆦 𐆧 𐆨 𐆩 𐆪 𐆫 𐆬 𐆭 𐆮 𐆯 𐆰 𐆱 𐆲 𐆳 𐆴 𐆵 𐆶 𐆷 𐆸 𐆹 𐆺 𐆻 𐆼 𐆽 𐆾 𐆿 𐇀 𐇁 𐇂 𐇃 𐇄 𐇅 𐇆 𐇇 𐇈 𐇉 𐇊 𐇋 𐇌 𐇍 𐇎 𐇏 𐇐 𐇑 𐇒 𐇓 𐇔 𐇕 𐇖 𐇗 𐇘 𐇙 𐇚 𐇛 𐇜 𐇝 𐇞 𐇟 𐇠 𐇡 𐇢 𐇣 𐇤 𐇥 𐇦 𐇧 𐇨 𐇩 𐇪 𐇫 𐇬 𐇭 𐇮 𐇯 𐇰 𐇱 𐇲 𐇳 𐇴 𐇵 𐇶 𐇷 𐇸 𐇹 𐇺 𐇻 𐇼 𐇽 𐇾 𐇿 𐈀 𐈁 𐈂 𐈃 𐈄 𐈅 𐈆 𐈇 𐈈 𐈉 𐈊 𐈋 𐈌 𐈍 𐈎 𐈏 𐈐 𐈑 𐈒 𐈓 𐈔 𐈕 𐈖 𐈗 𐈘 𐈙 𐈚 𐈛 𐈜 𐈝 𐈞 𐈟 𐈠 𐈡 𐈢 𐈣 𐈤 𐈥 𐈦 𐈧 𐈨 𐈩 𐈪 𐈫 𐈬 𐈭 𐈮 𐈯 𐈰 𐈱 𐈲 𐈳 𐈴 𐈵 𐈶 𐈷 𐈸 𐈹 𐈺 𐈻 𐈼 𐈽 𐈾 𐈿 𐉀 𐉁 𐉂 𐉃 𐉄 𐉅 𐉆 𐉇 𐉈 𐉉 𐉊 𐉋 𐉌 𐉍 𐉎 𐉏 𐉐 𐉑 𐉒 𐉓 𐉔 𐉕 𐉖 𐉗 𐉘 𐉙 𐉚 𐉛 𐉜 𐉝 𐉞 𐉟 𐉠 𐉡 𐉢 𐉣 𐉤 𐉥 𐉦 𐉧 𐉨 𐉩 𐉪 𐉫 𐉬 𐉭 𐉮 𐉯 𐉰 𐉱 𐉲 𐉳 𐉴 𐉵 𐉶 𐉷 𐉸 𐉹 𐉺 𐉻 𐉼 𐉽 𐉾 𐉿 𐊀 𐊁 𐊂 𐊃 𐊄 𐊅 𐊆 𐊇 𐊈 𐊉 𐊊 𐊋 𐊌 𐊍 𐊎 𐊏 𐊐 𐊑 𐊒 𐊓 𐊔 𐊕 𐊖 𐊗 𐊘 𐊙 𐊚 𐊛 𐊜 𐊝 𐊞 𐊟 𐊠 𐊡 𐊢 𐊣 𐊤 𐊥 𐊦 𐊧 𐊨 𐊩 𐊪 𐊫 𐊬 𐊭 𐊮 𐊯 𐊰 𐊱 𐊲 𐊳 𐊴 𐊵 𐊶 𐊷 𐊸 𐊹 𐊺 𐊻 𐊼 𐊽 𐊾 𐊿 𐋀 𐋁 𐋂 𐋃 𐋄 𐋅 𐋆 𐋇 𐋈 𐋉 𐋊 𐋋 𐋌 𐋍 𐋎 𐋏 𐋐 𐋑 𐋒 𐋓 𐋔 𐋕 𐋖 𐋗 𐋘 𐋙 𐋚 𐋛 𐋜 𐋝 𐋞 𐋟 𐋠 𐋡 𐋢 𐋣 𐋤 𐋥 𐋦 𐋧 𐋨 𐋩 𐋪 𐋫 𐋬 𐋭 𐋮 𐋯 𐋰 𐋱 𐋲 𐋳 𐋴 𐋵 𐋶 𐋷 𐋸 𐋹 𐋺 𐋻 𐋼 𐋽 𐋾 𐋿 𐌀 𐌁 𐌂 𐌃 𐌄 𐌅 𐌆 𐌇 𐌈 𐌉 𐌊 𐌋 𐌌 𐌍 𐌎 𐌏 𐌐 𐌑 𐌒 𐌓 𐌔 𐌕 𐌖 𐌗 𐌘 𐌙 𐌚 𐌛 𐌜 𐌝 𐌞 𐌟 𐌠 𐌡 𐌢 𐌣 𐌤 𐌥 𐌦 𐌧 𐌨 𐌩 𐌪 𐌫 𐌬 𐌭 𐌮 𐌯 𐌰 𐌱 𐌲 𐌳 𐌴 𐌵 𐌶 𐌷 𐌸 𐌹 𐌺 𐌻 𐌼 𐌽 𐌾 𐌿 𐍀 𐍁 𐍂 𐍃 𐍄 𐍅 𐍆 𐍇 𐍈 𐍉 𐍊 𐍋 𐍌 𐍍 𐍎 𐍏 𐍐 𐍑 𐍒 𐍓 𐍔 𐍕 𐍖 𐍗 𐍘 𐍙 𐍚 𐍛 𐍜 𐍝 𐍞 𐍟 𐍠 𐍡 𐍢 𐍣 𐍤 𐍥 𐍦 𐍧 𐍨 𐍩 𐍪 𐍫 𐍬 𐍭 𐍮 𐍯 𐍰 𐍱 𐍲 𐍳 𐍴 𐍵 𐍶 𐍷 𐍸 𐍹 𐍺 𐍻 𐍼 𐍽 𐍾 𐍿 𐎀 𐎁 𐎂 𐎃 𐎄 𐎅 𐎆 𐎇 𐎈 𐎉 𐎊 𐎋 𐎌 𐎍 𐎎 𐎏 𐎐 𐎑 𐎒 𐎓 𐎔 𐎕 𐎖 𐎗 𐎘 𐎙 𐎚 𐎛 𐎜 𐎝 𐎞 𐎟 𐎠 𐎡 𐎢 𐎣 𐎤 𐎥 𐎦 𐎧 𐎨 𐎩 𐎪 𐎫 𐎬 𐎭 𐎮 𐎯 𐎰 𐎱 𐎲 𐎳 𐎴 𐎵 𐎶 𐎷 𐎸 𐎹 𐎺 𐎻 𐎼 𐎽 𐎾 𐎿 𐏀 𐏁 𐏂 𐏃 𐏄 𐏅 𐏆 𐏇 𐏈 𐏉 𐏊 𐏋 𐏌 𐏍 𐏎 𐏏 𐏐 𐏑 𐏒 𐏓 𐏔 𐏕 𐏖 𐏗 𐏘 𐏙 𐏚 𐏛 𐏜 𐏝 𐏞 𐏟 𐏠 𐏡 𐏢 𐏣 𐏤 𐏥 𐏦 𐏧 𐏨 𐏩 𐏪 𐏫 𐏬 𐏭 𐏮 𐏯 𐏰 𐏱 𐏲 𐏳 𐏴 𐏵 𐏶 𐏷 𐏸 𐏹 𐏺 𐏻 𐏼 𐏽 𐏾 𐏿 𐐀 𐐁 𐐂 𐐃 𐐄 𐐅 𐐆 𐐇 𐐈 𐐉 𐐊 𐐋 𐐌 𐐍 𐐎 𐐏 𐐐 𐐑 𐐒 𐐓 𐐔 𐐕 𐐖 𐐗 𐐘 𐐙 𐐚 𐐛 𐐜 𐐝 𐐞 𐐟 𐐠 𐐡 𐐢 𐐣 𐐤 𐐥 𐐦 𐐧 𐐨 𐐩 𐐪 𐐫 𐐬 𐐭 𐐮 𐐯 𐐰 𐐱 𐐲 𐐳 𐐴 𐐵 𐐶 𐐷 𐐸 𐐹 𐐺 𐐻 𐐼 𐐽 𐐾 𐐿 𐑀 𐑁 𐑂 𐑃 𐑄 𐑅 𐑆 𐑇 𐑈 𐑉 𐑊 𐑋 𐑌 𐑍 𐑎 𐑏 𐑐 𐑑 𐑒 𐑓 𐑔 𐑕 𐑖 𐑗 𐑘 𐑙 𐑚 𐑛 𐑜 𐑝 𐑞 𐑟 𐑠 𐑡 𐑢 𐑣 𐑤 𐑥 𐑦 𐑧 𐑨 𐑩 𐑪 𐑫 𐑬 𐑭 𐑮 𐑯 𐑰 𐑱 𐑲 𐑳 𐑴 𐑵 𐑶 𐑷 𐑸 𐑹 𐑺 𐑻 𐑼 𐑽 𐑾 𐑿 𐒀 𐒁 𐒂 𐒃 𐒄 𐒅 𐒆 𐒇 𐒈 𐒉 𐒊 𐒋 𐒌 𐒍 𐒎 𐒏 𐒐 𐒑 𐒒 𐒓 𐒔 𐒕 𐒖 𐒗 𐒘 𐒙 𐒚 𐒛 𐒜 𐒝 𐒞 𐒟 𐒠 𐒡 𐒢 𐒣 𐒤 𐒥 𐒦 𐒧 𐒨 𐒩 𐒪 𐒫 𐒬 𐒭 𐒮 𐒯 𐒰 𐒱 𐒲 𐒳 𐒴 𐒵 𐒶 𐒷 𐒸 𐒹 𐒺 𐒻 𐒼 𐒽 𐒾 𐒿 𐓀 𐓁 𐓂 𐓃 𐓄 𐓅 𐓆 𐓇 𐓈 𐓉 𐓊 𐓋 𐓌 𐓍 𐓎 𐓏 𐓐 𐓑 𐓒 𐓓 𐓔 𐓕 𐓖 𐓗 𐓘 𐓙 𐓚 𐓛 𐓜 𐓝 𐓞 𐓟 𐓠 𐓡 𐓢 𐓣 𐓤 𐓥 𐓦 𐓧 𐓨 𐓩 𐓪 𐓫 𐓬 𐓭 𐓮 𐓯 𐓰 𐓱 𐓲 𐓳 𐓴 𐓵 𐓶 𐓷 𐓸 𐓹 𐓺 𐓻 𐓼 𐓽 𐓾 𐓿 𐔀 𐔁 𐔂 𐔃 𐔄 𐔅 𐔆 𐔇 𐔈 𐔉 𐔊 𐔋 𐔌 𐔍 𐔎 𐔏 𐔐 𐔑 𐔒 𐔓 𐔔 𐔕 𐔖 𐔗 𐔘 𐔙 𐔚 𐔛 𐔜 𐔝 𐔞 𐔟 𐔠 𐔡 𐔢 𐔣 𐔤 𐔥 𐔦 𐔧 𐔨 𐔩 𐔪 𐔫 𐔬 𐔭 𐔮 𐔯 𐔰 𐔱 𐔲 𐔳 𐔴 𐔵 𐔶 𐔷 𐔸 𐔹 𐔺 𐔻 𐔼 𐔽 𐔾 𐔿 𐕀 𐕁 𐕂 𐕃 𐕄 𐕅 𐕆 𐕇 𐕈 𐕉 𐕊 𐕋 𐕌 𐕍 𐕎 𐕏 𐕐 𐕑 𐕒 𐕓 𐕔 𐕕 𐕖 𐕗 𐕘 𐕙 𐕚 𐕛 𐕜 𐕝 𐕞 𐕟 𐕠 𐕡 𐕢 𐕣 𐕤 𐕥 𐕦 𐕧 𐕨 𐕩 𐕪 𐕫 𐕬 𐕭 𐕮 𐕯 𐕰 𐕱 𐕲 𐕳 𐕴 𐕵 𐕶 𐕷 𐕸 𐕹 𐕺 𐕻 𐕼 𐕽 𐕾 𐕿 𐖀 𐖁 𐖂 𐖃 𐖄 𐖅 𐖆 𐖇 𐖈 𐖉 𐖊 𐖋 𐖌 𐖍 𐖎 𐖏 𐖐 𐖑 𐖒 𐖓 𐖔 𐖕 𐖖 𐖗 𐖘 𐖙 𐖚 𐖛 𐖜 𐖝 𐖞 𐖟 𐖠 𐖡 𐖢 𐖣 𐖤 𐖥 𐖦 𐖧 𐖨 𐖩 𐖪 𐖫 𐖬 𐖭 𐖮 𐖯 𐖰 𐖱 𐖲 𐖳 𐖴 𐖵 𐖶 𐖷 𐖸 𐖹 𐖺 𐖻 𐖼 𐖽 𐖾 𐖿 𐗀 𐗁 𐗂 𐗃 𐗄 𐗅 𐗆 𐗇 𐗈 𐗉 𐗊 𐗋 𐗌 𐗍 𐗎 𐗏 𐗐 𐗑 𐗒 𐗓 𐗔 𐗕 𐗖 𐗗 𐗘 𐗙 𐗚 𐗛 𐗜 𐗝 𐗞 𐗟 𐗠 𐗡 𐗢 𐗣 𐗤 𐗥 𐗦 𐗧 𐗨 𐗩 𐗪 𐗫 𐗬 𐗭 𐗮 𐗯 𐗰 𐗱 𐗲 𐗳 𐗴 𐗵 𐗶 𐗷 𐗸 𐗹 𐗺 𐗻 𐗼 𐗽 𐗾 𐗿 𐘀 𐘁 𐘂 𐘃 𐘄 𐘅 𐘆 𐘇 𐘈 𐘉 𐘊 𐘋 𐘌 𐘍 𐘎 𐘏 𐘐 𐘑 𐘒 𐘓 𐘔 𐘕 𐘖 𐘗 𐘘 𐘙 𐘚 𐘛 𐘜 𐘝 𐘞 𐘟 𐘠 𐘡 𐘢 𐘣 𐘤 𐘥 𐘦 𐘧 𐘨 𐘩 𐘪 𐘫 𐘬 𐘭 𐘮 𐘯 𐘰 𐘱 𐘲 𐘳 𐘴 𐘵 𐘶 𐘷 𐘸 𐘹 𐘺 𐘻 𐘼 𐘽 𐘾 𐘿 𐙀 𐙁 𐙂 𐙃 𐙄 𐙅 𐙆 𐙇 𐙈 𐙉 𐙊 𐙋 𐙌 𐙍 𐙎 𐙏 𐙐 𐙑 𐙒 𐙓 𐙔 𐙕 𐙖 𐙗 𐙘 𐙙 𐙚 𐙛 𐙜 𐙝 𐙞 𐙟 𐙠 𐙡 𐙢 𐙣 𐙤 𐙥 𐙦 𐙧 𐙨 𐙩 𐙪 𐙫 𐙬 𐙭 𐙮 𐙯 𐙰 𐙱 𐙲 𐙳 𐙴 𐙵 𐙶 𐙷 𐙸 𐙹 𐙺 𐙻 𐙼 𐙽 𐙾 𐙿 𐚀 𐚁 𐚂 𐚃 𐚄 𐚅 𐚆 𐚇 𐚈 𐚉 𐚊 𐚋 𐚌 𐚍 𐚎 𐚏 𐚐 𐚑 𐚒 𐚓 𐚔 𐚕 𐚖 𐚗 𐚘 𐚙 𐚚 𐚛 𐚜 𐚝 𐚞 𐚟 𐚠 𐚡 𐚢 𐚣 𐚤 𐚥 𐚦 𐚧 𐚨 𐚩 𐚪 𐚫 𐚬 𐚭 𐚮 𐚯 𐚰 𐚱 𐚲 𐚳 𐚴 𐚵 𐚶 𐚷 𐚸 𐚹 𐚺 𐚻 𐚼 𐚽 𐚾 𐚿 𐛀 𐛁 𐛂 𐛃 𐛄 𐛅 𐛆 𐛇 𐛈 𐛉 𐛊 𐛋 𐛌 𐛍 𐛎 𐛏 𐛐 𐛑 𐛒 𐛓 𐛔 𐛕 𐛖 𐛗 𐛘 𐛙 𐛚 𐛛 𐛜 𐛝 𐛞 𐛟 𐛠 𐛡 𐛢 𐛣 𐛤 𐛥 𐛦 𐛧 𐛨 𐛩 𐛪 𐛫 𐛬 𐛭 𐛮 𐛯 𐛰 𐛱 𐛲 𐛳 𐛴 𐛵 𐛶 𐛷 𐛸 𐛹 𐛺 𐛻 𐛼 𐛽 𐛾 𐛿 𐜀 𐜁 𐜂 𐜃 𐜄 𐜅 𐜆 𐜇 𐜈 𐜉 𐜊 𐜋 𐜌 𐜍 𐜎 𐜏 𐜐 𐜑 𐜒 𐜓 𐜔 𐜕 𐜖 𐜗 𐜘 𐜙 𐜚 𐜛 𐜜 𐜝 𐜞 𐜟 𐜠 𐜡 𐜢 𐜣 𐜤 𐜥 𐜦 𐜧 𐜨 𐜩 𐜪 𐜫 𐜬 𐜭 𐜮 𐜯 𐜰 𐜱 𐜲 𐜳 𐜴 𐜵 𐜶 𐜷 𐜸 𐜹 𐜺 𐜻 𐜼 𐜽 𐜾 𐜿 𐝀 𐝁 𐝂 𐝃 𐝄 𐝅 𐝆 𐝇 𐝈 𐝉 𐝊 𐝋 𐝌 𐝍 𐝎 𐝏 𐝐 𐝑 𐝒 𐝓 𐝔 𐝕 𐝖 𐝗 𐝘 𐝙 𐝚 𐝛 𐝜 𐝝 𐝞 𐝟 𐝠 𐝡 𐝢 𐝣 𐝤 𐝥 𐝦 𐝧 𐝨 𐝩 𐝪 𐝫 𐝬 𐝭 𐝮 𐝯 𐝰 𐝱 𐝲 𐝳 𐝴 𐝵 𐝶 𐝷 𐝸 𐝹 𐝺 𐝻 𐝼 𐝽 𐝾 𐝿 𐞀 𐞁 𐞂 𐞃 𐞄 𐞅 𐞆 𐞇 𐞈 𐞉 𐞊 𐞋 𐞌 𐞍 𐞎 𐞏 𐞐 𐞑 𐞒 𐞓 𐞔 𐞕 𐞖 𐞗 𐞘 𐞙 𐞚 𐞛 𐞜 𐞝 𐞞 𐞟 𐞠 𐞡 𐞢 𐞣 𐞤 𐞥 𐞦 𐞧 𐞨 𐞩 𐞪 𐞫 𐞬 𐞭 𐞮 𐞯 𐞰 𐞱 𐞲 𐞳 𐞴 𐞵 𐞶 𐞷 𐞸 𐞹 𐞺 𐞻 𐞼 𐞽 𐞾 𐞿 𐟀 𐟁 𐟂 𐟃 𐟄 𐟅 𐟆 𐟇 𐟈 𐟉 𐟊 𐟋 𐟌 𐟍 𐟎 𐟏 𐟐 𐟑 𐟒 𐟓 𐟔 𐟕 𐟖 𐟗 𐟘 𐟙 𐟚 𐟛 𐟜 𐟝 𐟞 𐟟 𐟠 𐟡 𐟢 𐟣 𐟤 𐟥 𐟦 𐟧 𐟨 𐟩 𐟪 𐟫 𐟬 𐟭 𐟮 𐟯 𐟰 𐟱 𐟲 𐟳 𐟴 𐟵 𐟶 𐟷 𐟸 𐟹 𐟺 𐟻 𐟼 𐟽 𐟾 𐟿 𐠀 𐠁 𐠂 𐠃 𐠄 𐠅 𐠆 𐠇 𐠈 𐠉 𐠊 𐠋 𐠌 𐠍 𐠎 𐠏 𐠐 𐠑 𐠒 𐠓 𐠔 𐠕 𐠖 𐠗 𐠘 𐠙 𐠚 𐠛 𐠜 𐠝 𐠞 𐠟 𐠠 𐠡 𐠢 𐠣 𐠤 𐠥 𐠦 𐠧 𐠨 𐠩 𐠪 𐠫 𐠬 𐠭 𐠮 𐠯 𐠰 𐠱 𐠲 𐠳 𐠴 𐠵 𐠶 𐠷 𐠸 𐠹 𐠺 𐠻 𐠼 𐠽 𐠾 𐠿 𐡀 𐡁 𐡂 𐡃 𐡄 𐡅 𐡆 𐡇 𐡈 𐡉 𐡊 𐡋 𐡌 𐡍 𐡎 𐡏 𐡐 𐡑 𐡒 𐡓 𐡔 𐡕 𐡖 𐡗 𐡘 𐡙 𐡚 𐡛 𐡜 𐡝 𐡞 𐡟 𐡠 𐡡 𐡢 𐡣 𐡤 𐡥 𐡦 𐡧 𐡨 𐡩 𐡪 𐡫 𐡬 𐡭 𐡮 𐡯 𐡰 𐡱 𐡲 𐡳 𐡴 𐡵 𐡶 𐡷 𐡸 𐡹 𐡺 𐡻 𐡼 𐡽 𐡾 𐡿 𐢀 𐢁 𐢂 𐢃 𐢄 𐢅 𐢆 𐢇 𐢈 𐢉 𐢊 𐢋 𐢌 𐢍 𐢎 𐢏 𐢐 𐢑 𐢒 𐢓 𐢔 𐢕 𐢖 𐢗 𐢘 𐢙 𐢚 𐢛 𐢜 𐢝 𐢞 𐢟 𐢠 𐢡 𐢢 𐢣 𐢤 𐢥 𐢦 𐢧 𐢨 𐢩 𐢪 𐢫 𐢬 𐢭 𐢮 𐢯 𐢰 𐢱 𐢲 𐢳 𐢴 𐢵 𐢶 𐢷 𐢸 𐢹 𐢺 𐢻 𐢼 𐢽 𐢾 𐢿 𐣀 𐣁 𐣂 𐣃 𐣄 𐣅 𐣆 𐣇 𐣈 𐣉 𐣊 𐣋 𐣌 𐣍 𐣎 𐣏 𐣐 𐣑 𐣒 𐣓 𐣔 𐣕 𐣖 𐣗 𐣘 𐣙 𐣚 𐣛 𐣜 𐣝 𐣞 𐣟 𐣠 𐣡 𐣢 𐣣 𐣤 𐣥 𐣦 𐣧 𐣨 𐣩 𐣪 𐣫 𐣬 𐣭 𐣮 𐣯 𐣰 𐣱 𐣲 𐣳 𐣴 𐣵 𐣶 𐣷 𐣸 𐣹 𐣺 𐣻 𐣼 𐣽 𐣾 𐣿 𐤀 𐤁 𐤂 𐤃 𐤄 𐤅 𐤆 𐤇 𐤈 𐤉 𐤊 𐤋 𐤌 𐤍 𐤎 𐤏 𐤐 𐤑 𐤒 𐤓 𐤔 𐤕 𐤖 𐤗 𐤘 𐤙 𐤚 𐤛 𐤜 𐤝 𐤞 𐤟 𐤠 𐤡 𐤢 𐤣 𐤤 𐤥 𐤦 𐤧 𐤨 𐤩 𐤪 𐤫 𐤬 𐤭 𐤮 𐤯 𐤰 𐤱 𐤲 𐤳 𐤴 𐤵 𐤶 𐤷 𐤸 𐤹 𐤺 𐤻 𐤼 𐤽 𐤾 𐤿 𐥀 𐥁 𐥂 𐥃 𐥄 𐥅 𐥆 𐥇 𐥈 𐥉 𐥊 𐥋 𐥌 𐥍 𐥎 𐥏 𐥐 𐥑 𐥒 𐥓 𐥔 𐥕 𐥖 𐥗 𐥘 𐥙 𐥚 𐥛 𐥜 𐥝 𐥞 𐥟 𐥠 𐥡 𐥢 𐥣 𐥤 𐥥 𐥦 𐥧 𐥨 𐥩 𐥪 𐥫 𐥬 𐥭 𐥮 𐥯 𐥰 𐥱 𐥲 𐥳 𐥴 𐥵 𐥶 𐥷 𐥸 𐥹 𐥺 𐥻 𐥼 𐥽 𐥾 𐥿 𐦀 𐦁 𐦂 𐦃 𐦄 𐦅 𐦆 𐦇 𐦈 𐦉 𐦊 𐦋 𐦌 𐦍 𐦎 𐦏 𐦐 𐦑 𐦒 𐦓 𐦔 𐦕 𐦖 𐦗 𐦘 𐦙 𐦚 𐦛 𐦜 𐦝 𐦞 𐦟 𐦠 𐦡 𐦢 𐦣 𐦤 𐦥 𐦦 𐦧 𐦨 𐦩 𐦪 𐦫 𐦬 𐦭 𐦮 𐦯 𐦰 𐦱 𐦲 𐦳 𐦴 𐦵 𐦶 𐦷 𐦸 𐦹 𐦺 𐦻 𐦼 𐦽 𐦾 𐦿 𐧀 𐧁 𐧂 𐧃 𐧄 𐧅 𐧆 𐧇 𐧈 𐧉 𐧊 𐧋 𐧌 𐧍 𐧎 𐧏 𐧐 𐧑 𐧒 𐧓 𐧔 𐧕 𐧖 𐧗 𐧘 𐧙 𐧚 𐧛 𐧜 𐧝 𐧞 𐧟 𐧠 𐧡 𐧢 𐧣 𐧤 𐧥 𐧦 𐧧 𐧨 𐧩 𐧪 𐧫 𐧬 𐧭 𐧮 𐧯 𐧰 𐧱 𐧲 𐧳 𐧴 𐧵 𐧶 𐧷 𐧸 𐧹 𐧺 𐧻 𐧼 𐧽 𐧾 𐧿 𐨀 𐨁 𐨂 𐨃 𐨄 𐨅 𐨆 𐨇 𐨈 𐨉 𐨊 𐨋 𐨌 𐨍 𐨎 𐨏 𐨐 𐨑 𐨒 𐨓 𐨔 𐨕 𐨖 𐨗 𐨘 𐨙 𐨚 𐨛 𐨜 𐨝 𐨞 𐨟 𐨠 𐨡 𐨢 𐨣 𐨤 𐨥 𐨦 𐨧 𐨨 𐨩 𐨪 𐨫 𐨬 𐨭 𐨮 𐨯 𐨰 𐨱

In Proverb (15), the highlighted element C, which is different in the two halves of the couplet, uses two four-character elaborate expressions with a reduplicated verb 𐄂 (zo⁵⁵, to err) and the nominalizer 𐄃 (du³³) suffixed on the end. Each half of the couplet makes use of litotes, making emphatic understatements: ‘say anything you want,’ and ‘eat or drink anything you want.’

Hosting and being guests are important aspects of Nuosu culture with specified behavior and etiquette attached to each role. A host can use Proverb (15) to show his generosity as he encourages guests to eat, talk, and enjoy themselves. Proverb (15) is particularly appropriate at weddings or during the Nuosu New Year time when each family slaughters a pig and feasts together. The proverb encapsulates the joy of the collective and celebrates their life together.

4. Conclusion

The carefully crafted form of 𐄂 𐄃 𐄂 𐄃 (lu³³ pɿ³⁴ lu³³ tɛi³³, Nuosu proverbs) reflects intricate artistry and multiple aesthetic features of the Nuosu language, making them memorable and transmissible across generations. A defining feature of these sayings is their fixed syllable count and syntactic parallelism. Nuosu proverbs are couplets with matching lines of odd-numbered syllables, either 5, 7, or 9. The rhythm this pattern engenders, coupled with marked parallel syntactic slots, adds symmetry and enables people to clearly see correspondences and contrasts in meaning. Nuosu proverbs employ typical literary devices such as analogies, metaphors, and rhyming. A more careful look, however, uncovers additional formal features such as compounding, word play, lexical choice, reduplicated elaborate expressions, sound-based art, tonal art, litotes and negative polarity.

The artistic form of Nuosu proverbs intensifies the impact of what is said and provides enjoyment, satisfying the human longing for beauty and craftsmanship. The proverbs add Nuosu cultural essence to traditional occasions and group ceremonies such as weddings and funerals. The earthy images used in the proverbs reference common experiences the Nuosu share as a cultural community. These short pithy sayings prescribe proper behavior, teach values, and give inspiration to the Nuosu people.

Understanding the deeper meanings under the surface of Nuosu proverbs gives us a glimpse into the minds and hearts of the Nuosu people; understanding the proverbs' form shows their beautiful artistry. Looking carefully at the form of Nuosu proverbs can facilitate comparisons across languages and the discovery of new linguistic features in proverbs. It can also deepen our understanding of strategies languages use to enrich and embellish discourse and the role that formulaic sayings play in preserving cultural traditions and values across centuries.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to my Nuosu friends for sharing their proverbs with me and to my colleagues Peter Unseth, Heidi Cobbey, and Donna Snyder who have reviewed and made helpful suggestions to earlier drafts of this article.

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WOLFGANG MIEDER



ROSEMARIE GLÄSER
(10. September 1935 – 26. August 2021)

Kurz vor ihrem 86. Geburtstag ist die bekannte Anglistin Prof. Dr. Rosemarie Gläser in ihrer Heimatstadt Dresden gestorben. Sie hat sich als Linguistin, Phraseologin und Parömiologin an der Leipziger Universität große Verdienste gemacht. Sie ist besonders durch ihre vielen Studien zur Lexikologie, den Fachsprachen und Fachstilen des Englischen weit über Deutschland hinaus international bekannt geworden. Als alleinstehende Person hat sie im wahrsten Sinne des Wortes ihr Leben der Wissenschaft, ihren Kolleginnen und Kollegen sowie Studentinnen und Studenten gewidmet, die sich mit Dankbarkeit und Anerkennung an Rosemarie Gläser erinnern. Dazu gehöre auch ich im fernen Vermont in den Vereinigten Staaten, denn seit den späten siebziger Jahren haben mich ihre phraseologischen und parömiologischen Schriften beeinflusst. Ich erinnere mich gerne daran, dass

ich während eines Besuches in meiner ursprünglichen Heimatstadt Leipzig im Jahre 1987 in einem großen Bücherladen auf ihr monumentales Buch *Phraseologie der englischen Sprache* (Leipzig: VEB Verlag Enzyklopädie, 1986) gestoßen bin. Zum Glück konnte ich es damals erwerben und mit Begeisterung und Gewinn lesen. Ich kann mir gut vorstellen, wie sie sich gut dreißig Jahre später gefreut hat, als eine ihrer besten Doktorandinnen, inzwischen Prof. Dr. Sabine Fiedler in Leipzig, ihre Bücher *English Phraseology. A Coursebook* (Tübingen: Gunter Narr, 2007) und *Englische Redewendungen und Sprichwörter in der Praxis* (Leipzig: Engelsdorfer Verlag 2012) vorlegte, die den Einfluss ihrer Mentorin erkennen lassen und ihr Werk weiterführen.

Dass ich Rosemarie Gläser nach unserem jahrelangen Brief- und Schriftenaustausch schließlich auch persönlich kennenlernen durfte, verdanke ich der Einladung Sabine Fiedlers, am 12. Juli 2013 in Leipzig einen Gastvortrag über „The World's a Place': Zur (inter-)nationalen Sprichwortpraxis Barack Obamas“ zu halten. Welche mich ehrende Überraschung, dass Rosemarie Gläser aus Dresden angereist war. So konnte sie mir Bilder von ihren Reisen sowie ihrem so geliebten Garten zeigen, wir gingen zu dritt in ein Konzert, und schließlich winkten wir ihr auf dem einmaligen Leipziger Bahnhof auf Wiedersehen. Dieses Erlebnis werde ich nie vergessen, doch das gilt ebenso von den Publikationen der beigefügten Liste, die alle hier in meinem Internationalen Sprichwortarchiv an der Universität von Vermont vorliegen.

Die frühen Arbeiten befassen sich mit der Syntax, Semantik und Klassifizierung englischer Phraseologismen, wobei Sprichwörter nur nebenbei Erwähnung finden. Es geht um Fragen der Idiomatik, wobei auch die Onomastik Erwähnung findet. Im Allgemeinen handelt es sich also um Vorstudien zu Rosemarie Gläasers bahnbrechendem Buch *Phraseologie der englischen Sprache* (1986), das zur Pflichtlektüre in der deutschsprachigen Anglistik wurde und weiterhin als Basiswerk Geltung hat. Schließlich geht es darin um folgende Aspekte, die ich in einer meiner Bibliographien einmal mit folgenden Wörtern umschrieben habe: „allusion / antiquity / Bible / bibliography / classification / comparative / context / definition / English / equivalence / function / genre / German / grammar / idiom / idiomaticity / journalism / lexicology / linguistics / literature / mass media / modification / newspaper /

phraseological unit / phraseology / proverbial expression / quotation / rhetoric / routine formula / semantics / sententious remark / slogan / structure / syntax / terminology / translation / twin formula / typology / variation“ (*International Bibliography of Paremiology and Phraseology* [Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2009], I, 250).

In anderen Arbeiten geht es Rosemarie Gläser um sprachvergleichende Studien zur Phraseologie des amerikanischen, australischen und südafrikanischen Englisch. Auf diesem Gebiet gibt es noch viel zu tun, obwohl inzwischen inhaltsreiche Sammlungen vorliegen. Gegenseitige Beeinflussungen in der Form von Entlehnungen, die heutzutage durch die Medien verbreitet werden, müssten eingehender untersucht werden. Es ist bekannt, dass das amerikanische Englisch einen enormen Einfluss auf das Englisch anderer Länder hat, aber es wäre natürlich auch von Interesse, ob und welche Phraseologismen sagen wir von Australien nach Nordamerika gelangen. Das hat alles auch Bedeutung für den Fremdsprachenunterricht, und auch mit diesem Thema hat sich Rosemarie Gläser eingehend beschäftigt. Natürlich kommt dann auch gleich das Problem der Übersetzbarkeit phraseologischer Einheiten hinzu, was Rosemarie anhand von englischen und französischen Übersetzungen einiger Werke von Christa Wolf untersucht hat. Von großer Bedeutung sind auch mehrere Forschungsberichte zur Phraseologie allgemein und zur Fachphraseologie, wobei Rosemarie Gläser als „Mutter“ für das inzwischen erhebliche Interesse an Phraseologismen aus den verschiedensten Fachbereichen zu gelten hat.

Nachdem Rosemarie Gläser mich mit ihren weit ausholenden Schriften zu verschiedenen Arbeiten angeregt hatte, kann man sich vorstellen, welche Freude es für mich war, als sie sich seit etwa 2013, also als längst emeritierte Wissenschaftlerin, in konzentrierterer Weise mit Sprichwörtern und sprichwörtlichen Redensarten im politischen Diskurs befasste. Auch hat sie mir gesagt und geschrieben, dass mein damaliger Obama-Vortrag in Leipzig und meine derartigen Bücher zu Martin Luther King, Willy Brandt, Helmut Schmidt und anderen sie zu diesen Studien geführt haben. Es war dann für mich eine ganz besondere Ehre, ihre letzten Arbeiten zur sprichwörtlichen Rhetorik von Margaret Thatcher, Nelson Mandela und Roman Herzog in dem von mir herausgegebenen *Proverbium: Yearbook of international*

Proverb Scholarship zu veröffentlichen. Zu guter Letzt schickte Rosemarie Gläser mir 2019 noch einen Beitrag zur sprichwörtlichen Sprache eines Buches über Brexit, womit sie zeigte, dass sie trotz ihres Alters wissenschaftliches sowie menschliches Interesse am Zeitgeschehen hatte.

Wissenschaftlichkeit und Menschlichkeit, das sind die beiden Begriffe, die das Leben und Wirken von Rosemarie Gläser bestens umschreiben. Dazu gehört vor allem ihr Interesse am Aufrechterhalten der Erinnerung an den Dresdner Romanisten Victor Klemperer (1881-1960) und seinen Ehefrauen Eva und Hedwig Klemperer. Immer wieder hat sie Vorträge über seinen zweibändigen Bericht *Ich will Zeugnis ablegen bis zum letzten. Tagebücher 1933-1945* (1995) gehalten, einem einmaligen Zeitdokument über das Dritte Reich aus der Sicht des Opfers. Bekanntlich hatte Klemperer bereits in seinem wichtigen Buch *LTI. Notizen eines Philologen* (1947) eine bis heute bahnbrechende Studie über die „Lingua Tertii Imperii“ vorgelegt, und seine Tagebücher enthalten weiteres Material über die Sprache des Nationalsozialismus, das der jüdische Literatur- und Sprachwissenschaftler während dieser Zeit unter ständiger Lebensgefahr gesammelt hat. Zufälligerweise hatte ich mich ebenfalls mit Victor Klemperer in deutsch- und englischsprachigen Aufsätzen sowie meinem Buch *„In lingua veritas. Sprichwörtliche Rhetorik in Victor Klemperers Tagebüchern 1933-1945* (Wien: Edition Praesens, 2000) beschäftigt. Wie aus unserer Korrespondenz verschiedentlich hervorgeht, hat unser gemeinsames Interesse an und Engagement für Victor Klemperer unsere Freundschaft besiegelt, auch wenn wir uns interessanterweise bis zuletzt siezten – ein Unding meiner Meinung nach.

Und wie werde ich diese Briefe vermissen, die ich alle in meinem Archiv aufgehoben habe! Rosemarie hat bis zu ihrem Lebensende nicht mit dem Computer oder gar mit E-Mail gearbeitet. Oh nein, ihre Manuskripte wurden an den Schreibdienst von Martina Börning gegeben, die sie dann perfekt abgetippt und elektronisch an mich weitergeleitet hat. Ihre handgeschriebenen Briefe kamen immer mit Luftpost und schönen Sonderbriefmarken hier bei mir zu Hause an, und wenn ich dann von der Universität heimkam, hatte meine liebe Frau jeweils die nett gemeinte sprichwörtliche Aussage „Du hast Post von Deiner Freundin“

auf Lager. Der Umschlag enthielt dann nicht nur zwei, drei oder gar vier Seiten, sondern es gab auch Fotos und Belege aus Zeitungen und Zeitschriften, die Sprichwörtliches für mein Archiv enthielten. So war es alle drei Monate etwa ein Fest, wenn ein neuer Briefumschlag angekommen war. Ich zitiere hier einen ihrer Briefe, der ihr letztes Sprichwortmanuskript betrifft, sowie meine begeisterte Antwort:

Dresden, den 7. Februar 2020

Lieber Herr Mieder,

da die Luftpostbriefe zwischen Deutschland und den USA in der Regel 10 Tage unterwegs sind, möchte ich Ihnen schon heute mitteilen, dass mein Aufsatz über das Thema „Sprichwörter, geflügelte Worte und Zitate als Motti in dem Buch *Brexit* von Rudolf G. Adam (2019)“ fertig ist und am 20. Februar vom Büro von Frau Börning auf den Weg gebracht werden soll. Ich habe lange daran gearbeitet und hoffe, dass Sie mit der Konzeption und Materialverteilung einverstanden sind. Die Seitenzahl habe ich geringfügig überschritten. Aber bei der endgültigen Formatierung für das Jahrbuch *Proverbium* 2020 wird sich manches ausgleichen lassen. Es ist mir aus aktuellem Anlass und aus persönlichen Gründen wichtig, dass mein Aufsatz dieses Jahr und nicht erst im nächsten Jahrbuch (2021) erscheint.

Beiliegend finden Sie Zeitungsausschnitte auch mit Karikaturen und der Abwandlung von Texten deutscher Weihnachtslieder. Inzwischen ist das Jahr 2020 schon vorangeschritten, und die Tage werden erfreulich länger und heller. In unserem Teil Sachsens hatten wir in diesem „Winter“ noch keinen einzigen Schneeschauer – geschweige denn eine Schneedecke. Es fehlt auch an durchdringendem, länger anhaltendem Regen, der die unteren Bodenschichten erreicht. Das vergangene Jahr war viel zu heiß und zu trocken. Es gab große Ernteverluste in mehreren Gegenden Deutschlands. Der Klimawandel ist längst spürbar.

Für Mai habe ich dieses Jahr eine einwöchige Busreise nach Südengland gebucht. Winchester, Salisbury, Isle of Wight (Osborne House), Erinnerung an Queen Victoria, die voriges Jahr ihren 200. Geburtstag hatte.

Für den Rest des Winters wünsche ich Ihnen, Ihrer Gattin und den Hunden robuste Gesundheit und Lebensfreude. Mit den besten Grüßen vom Dresdner Elbhang [wo ihr Garten lag],

Ihre Rosemarie Gläser

Meine folgende Antwort kam bald darauf aus dem wie immer zu dieser Jahreszeit verschneiten Vermont:

Burlington, den 24. Februar 2020

Liebe Rosemarie Gläser!

Sicherlich hat die Dame vom Schreibdienst Ihnen bereits mitgeteilt, daß Ihr Manuskript über „Sprichwörter, geflügelte Worte und Zitate als Motti in dem Buch *Brexit* von Rudolf G. Adam (2019)“ gut bei mir angekommen ist. Alles war wie immer in perfekter Gestaltung, und so kann Ihre so informationsreiche Arbeit dann Anfang August 2020 (also wie gewünscht in diesem Jahr!) im 37. *Proverbium*-Band erscheinen. Ich danke Ihnen für diese hoch aktuelle Arbeit und freue mich, erneut einen Beitrag von Ihnen herauszubringen.

Ich möchte mich auch gleich für Ihre Briefe vom 19. Januar und 7. Februar 2020 bedanken. Sie enthielten Fotos von Ihnen und wie immer etliche wunderbare Belege, worüber ich mich stets sehr freue. Es ist wirklich liebenswürdig von Ihnen, mir all Ihre „Funde“ zu schicken.

Schön, daß Sie sich mit Sabine Fiedler in deren Dienstzimmer treffen konnten. Das erinnert mich an unsere Begegnung in Leipzig. Gerne würden meine Frau und ich wieder nach Leipzig und auch nach Dresden kommen. Vielleicht klappt es ja in diesem Sommer. Falls ja, melde ich mich natürlich [wegen Covid haben wir uns dann auch 2021 leider nicht wiedergesehen].

Hier herrscht noch Winter – oft sehr kalt mit bis zu minus 22 Grad Celsius. Schnee haben wir auch genug, und da Vermont ja am Wintersport verdient, ist das alles recht so. Heute sind aber dennoch um 7 Grad plus, und auch darüber freuen wir uns. Unser Winter geht ja noch bis Ende März.

Ich biete dieses Semester u.a. einen Novellenkurs an, und meine Studentinnen und Studenten sind begeistert von Annette von Droste-Hülshoffs *Die Judenbuche*. Antisemitismus leider überall, und jetzt besteht die Sorge, daß es damit leider kein Ende nimmt.

Und was wird aus unserem Land hier? Die Gefahr besteht, daß der schlimme Donald Trump wiedergewählt wird. Eine Schande, und wir schämen uns.

Nun gut, ich grüße Sie ganz herzlich, auch von meiner Frau, und wünsche Ihnen weiterhin alles Liebe und Gute,
Ihr Wolfgang Mieder

Wie gesagt, gibt es Dutzende solcher Briefe, die oft bedeutend länger ausfallen. Man spürt daran, wie wichtig neben wissenschaftlichen Erörterungen eben auch das persönliche Mitteilungsbedürfnis unter befreundeten Professoren ist. In unserem Alter stellt sich dann noch eine gewisse Vereinsamung ein, weil man nach den vielen Jahren der so befriedigenden Lehrtätigkeit den Universitätsbetrieb mit den einem am Herzen liegenden Studentinnen und Studenten vermisst. Und dann kommen die schwarz umrandeten Briefe einer Todesnachricht, die mit zitternden Händen geöffnet werden. So haben wir in der letzten Zeit unsere lieben parömiologischen Freunde Arvo Krikmann, Annette Sabban, Peter Grzybek und Stanisław Prędoła verloren, und nun hat Rosemarie Gläser uns auch verlassen. Wenn es nun auch keine weiteren Schriften und Briefe mehr von ihr gibt, so lebt Rosemarie Gläser durch ihr wissenschaftliches Werk und als Beispiel eines guten Menschen in unseren Arbeiten, Gedanken und Herzen weiter.

Phraseologische und parömiologische Publikationen

„Syntactico-Semantic Aspects of the Phraseological Unit”. *Zeitschrift für Anglistik und Amerikanistik*, vol. 26, 1978, pp. 351-355.

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- „Idiomatik und Sprachvergleich“. *Sprache und Literatur in Wissenschaft und Unterricht*, 16, Heft 56, 1985, pp. 67-73.
- Phraseologie der englischen Sprache*. Leipzig: VEB Verlag Enzyklopädie, 1986, pp. 198.
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- „The Stylistic Potential of Phraseological Units in the Light of Genre Analysis“. *Phraseology: Theory, Analysis, and Applications*. Hrsg. A.P. Cowie. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998, pp. 125-143.
- „Indigenous Idioms and Phrases in Australian and New Zealand English“. *Form, Function and Variation in English. Studies in Honour of Klaus Hansen*, herausgegeben von Uwe Carls and Peter Lucko, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1999, pp. 155-168.
- „Zur Wiedergabe von Phraselogrammen in englischen und französischen Übersetzungen ausgewählter Prosawerke von Christa Wolf“. *Phraseologie und Übersetzen. Phrasemata II*, herausgegeben von Annette Sabban, Bielefeld: Aisthesis Verlag, 1999, pp. 99-118.
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- „Phrases and Idioms of South African English as Cultural Identity Markers“. *Language: Context and Cognition. Papers in Honour of Wolf-Dietrich Bald*, herausgegeben von Synil Scholz, Monika Klages, Evelyn Hantson und Ute Römer, München: Langenscheidt-Longman, 2002, pp. 99-109.
- „Fachphraseologie“. *Phraseologie. Ein internationales Handbuch zeitgenössischer Forschung*, herausgegeben von Harald Burger, Dmitrij Dobrovolskij, Peter Kühn und Neal R. Norrick, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007. I, 482-505.
- „Phraseological Units in Standard Varieties of English as Indicators of Cultural Identity“. *Cross-Linguistic and Cross-Cultural Approaches to Phraseology*, herausgegeben von Tatiana Fedulenkova, Aarhus, Denmark: Pomorsky State University, 2009, pp. 86-99.

„We Have Ceased to Be a Nation in Retreat‘: Redewendungen und Sprichwörter in Margaret Thatchers Rhetorik“. *Proverbium*, vol. 31, 2014, pp. 279-316.

„Die Rhetorik Margaret Thatchers in phraseologischer Sicht“. *„Gegengabe“ in Paremiology, Folklore, Language, and Literature. Honoring Wolfgang Mieder on His Seventieth Birthda*, herausgegeben von Christian Grandl und Kevin J. McKenna, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2015, pp. 555-568.

Dass Rosemarie Gläser diesen Beitrag für meine Festschrift geschrieben hat, war eine besondere Freude. Ich schrieb Ihr dann am 9. März 2014: „Nun ist mein runder 70. Geburtstag auch überstanden, und es wird Zeit, dass ich Ihnen meinen herzlichsten Dank für Ihre so lieben Wünsche, das Buch *Fernöstliche Weisheiten*, die zahlreichen Zeitungsbeiträge und natürlich Ihren vorzüglichen Beitrag über „Die Rhetorik Margaret Thatchers in phraseologischer Sicht“ in der mir gewidmeten Festschrift ausspreche. Sie haben mich so reich beschenkt, und ich habe mich über all Ihre Gaben mächtig gefreut [...]“

„Our Children Are the Rock on Which Our Future Will Be Built, Our Greatest Asset as a Nation‘: Maximen, Sprichwörtliches und Zitate in der Rhetorik Nelson Mandelas“. *Proverbium*, vol. 32, 2015, pp. 163-204.

„A Tribute to Anthony Paul Cowie (19 June 1931 – 22 November 2015)“. *Proverbium*, vol. 34, 2017, pp. 405-410.

„Durch Deutschland muss ein Ruck gehen‘: Sprichwörter und bildhafte Redewendungen in der Rhetorik des deutschen Bundespräsidenten Roman Herzog (1934-2017)“. *Proverbium*, vol. 35, 2018, pp. 45-104.

„Sprichwörter, geflügelte Worte und Zitate als Motti in dem Buch *Brexit* von Rudolf G. Adam (2019)“. *Proverbium*, vol. 37, 2020, pp. 107-134.

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Review article

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OLGA B. ABAKUMOVA

Anna T. Litovkina, Hrisztalina Hrisztova-Gotthardt, Péter Barta, Katalin Vargha, Wolfgang Mieder. *Anti-Proverbs in Five Languages: Structural Features and Verbal Humor Devices*. Cham: Palgrave MacMillan, 2021. 257 p. ISBN 978-3-030-89061-2 ISBN 978-3-030-89062-9 (eBook) <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-89062-9>

Phraseology has enjoyed considerable boom within linguistics over the last few decades (Sinner 2021:236). Many scholars include proverbs into the phraseological systems of language, though there are those who consider them as units of a separate fund, as folklore texts; the third group of researchers discuss them as having both linguistic, textual and logical features. We define proverbs as the most complicated language sign (phraseologism with the structure of a sentence) with textual characteristics and pragmatic functions, possessing the special generalized meaning, deductive function and in actualized form used as an indirect speech act in the everyday communication (Абакумова 2012, Abakumova, Korostenski 2020). As Carsten Sinner and Encarna Tabares point out, the “studies aimed at unravelling the intricacies of phraseologisms between two or more languages are still scarce” (Sinner 2021:236).

In this background the contribution of the authors of this book is of much interest. This book contains comparative analysis of English, German, French, Russian, and Hungarian anti-proverbs, based on well-known original proverbs in the proverbial funds of the given languages. The authors pay much attention to transformations and modifications that occur on the surface level and are connected with grammatical and phonetical changes, as well as the changes in the semantics, stylistics, pragmatics and func-

tioning of the anti-proverbs that convey different types of verbal humour. The differences they brought out give opportunity to make certain general if not universal conclusions.

Part 1 of the book (chapters 1-5) is devoted to discussion of anti-proverbs' emergence as a result of alternations of most popular and internationally known proverbs. The types of proverbs alterations are singled out. The most attention is given to three basic types: addition, omission, and substitution, with some examples illustrating them and their subgroups (Chapter 2,3,4). Chapter 5 is devoted to blending of proverbs.

Dealing with the formal alternations of traditional proverbs (transformations in grammar, morphology and phonology) they single out and discuss the following issues: 1) the components that are changed (sound, word, clause or punctuation); 2) the quantity of items that may appear; 3) the location of the changed items (at the beginning/inside/ at the end of a word or sentence/ at multiple place).

The analysis of omission and addition has shown some trends: 1) omission is less common than addition, as it prevents from identification of original proverb, and addition of clauses is popular way to parody. In case of clause omission, the first part will usually remain.

When examining substitution, the trends are the following: 1) word order reversal happens most with nouns; 2) the consonants change more often than vowels; 3) the sound change occurs more frequently at the beginning of the word; 4) in case of clauses it is mostly the second part that is substituted.

Blended proverbs prefer to retain the 1st part of the proverb utterance rather than the 2nd. Mechanisms of variation in proverbs are often combined in various ways. Proverbs blending is considered by the authors as a qualified case of *intertextuality* (cf. Norrick 1989:117) as it refers to several original phraseological units at the same time. The comparative study showed: twin blending in Hungarian and in English are less common than in other languages; the French prefer original proverbs with large number of words.

Part II covers the problems of description and analysis of anti-proverbs and verbal humour. Proverbs have a "broad" meaning, which is concretized only in a given speech situation or

context. Besides their traditional didactic function, they convey certain pragmatic values that are realized in the given speech situation: they can be used to express warning, persuasion, consolation, confirmation, and so on.

Proverbs often serve as a basis for language play and pun, that is how many anti-proverbs are born. The authors pay most attention to three main types of punning: paronomasia, polysemy, homonymy and homophony in anti-proverbs.

Grammatical, lexical, semantic, and pragmatic features of proverbs create certain expectations. The transformed form of anti-proverb does not fulfill these expectations, it continues or ends the utterance in a surprising, twisted way, often by a language play.

Paronomasia turned to be the most common pun in anti-proverbs. In each of the languages examined some proverbs were found which have a number of paronymic modifications based on the same word. The study shows that different languages use similar procedures in this field: substituting a word, adding, substituting or omitting one or two sounds, replacing one sound with two, and vice versa; reversing the order of sounds within the word.

Polysemy, homonymy and homophony analysis showed no difference between the five languages under study. The data revealed that some proverbs or the key words inside the proverbs are more suitable for this type of word-play. In the case of homophony, languages with phonetic and non-phonetic writing form two groups: German, Russian, Hungarian vs English and French. No parody was found based on homography. Anti-proverbs based on homonymy, polysemy and homophony are less frequent than those based on paronomasia.

Besides those three well-known types of pun, several special types were found out by the authors based on the data of five languages. They are the following: 1) word boundaries (popular in French, rare in German); 2) splitting a word into two or three parts; 3) merging two or three words and moving the word boundaries while keeping a number of words (“linking pun”); 4) play on proper nouns (the change of a common noun on a proper noun is very common in proverbs); 5) play with foreign languages (mother tongue is mixed with one foreign language,

now mostly English); 6) double pun (affects several elements of the anti-proverb, mostly based on paronomasia).

Then the authors turn to some other types of linguistic humor that can be observed in anti-proverbs (Chapter 7). Here they focus their attention on such tropes and stylistic devices as repetition, rhyme, metaphor, onomatopoeia. As their analysis has shown, repetitive element (identical or phonetically similar word or sound) can be repeated twice, three times or even more. It can be an addition or part of the original proverb. Repetitive puns are both mnemonic and stylistic tools, based on homonymy and paronomasia. The authors claim that the metaphorical nature of proverbs is particularly suitable for parody. Countless twisting achieves the humorous effect by a literal interpretation of metaphorical proverbs. The study showed that rhymed and non-rhymed original proverbs can form rhymed and non-rhymed anti-proverbs.

When summarizing the results of the study (Chapter 8), the authors stress that parody is only effective if one recognizes the original proverb behind it. If the original proverb is not recognized the twisting is not successful, and it is not possible to speak of the anti-proverb as a result. Although an opinion exists that proverbs are old-fashioned “fossilized texts” and express the out of date wisdom, the authors convincingly state that they are adapted to the modern use of language, mentality and context of each age.

One cannot deny that anti-proverbs alter and distort traditional texts. But in linguistic aspect their transformations are very significant as they show “the extent to which a proverb can be mutilated so that it can be identified and a new superstructure can be erected on the “ruins” (Lendvai 2001:765). Making the formal approach only there is no much difference between the traditional variants of the proverb and antiproverbs (cf. Kozintsev 2014, Krikmann 2015).

Though most of the data in the 5 languages fixed in the book show the linguistic means of play on words, anti-proverbs very often move beyond the fun to comment on the important problems and aspects of society, for example, AIDs, education, politics, love, sex, money etc. As an example, the contrastive analysis of Russian and English proverbs and anti-proverbs with

gender components was given in publications (Kiriukhina, Abakumova 2019). And in this respect, as great paremiologist W. Mieder points out, “even the anti-proverbs become moralistic if not didactic statements to a degree” (Mieder 1989a:243). As A. Litovkina and W. Mieder put it, “the ‘anti’ component is not directed against the concept of “proverb” as such. Proverbs and their wisdom continue to be of much value in modern society. But some anti-proverbs have become new proverbs with their own wisdom that is perfectly appropriate for the modern age” (Litovkina, Mieder 2006:5). Here are some examples: *Absence makes the heart grow wander* (*cf. Absence makes the heart grow fonder*); *Do unto others before they do unto you* (*Do unto others as you would have them do unto you*); *Expedience is the best teacher* (*Experience is the best teacher*); *Better late than pregnant* (*Better late than never*), *Home is where the mortgage is* (*Home is where the heart is*), *If at first you don't succeed, try reading the instructions* (*If at first you don't succeed, try, try again*) (The Dictionary of Modern Proverbs 2012).

The authors presented and analyzed the great abundance of Anglo-American, German, French, Russian and Hungarian anti-proverbs and claim that many of new anti-proverbs are being created daily. This fact proves that proverbs continue their life in the language and are still used as effective means of communication in modern society. “And even if some of them seem obscene, vulgar or flat, they prove human creativity, and must be collected and studied, as well as their transformations (Walter, Mokienko 2005:4).

The work summarized in this book poses many possibilities for future research. Besides already mentioned aspects of anti-proverbs' study there is one very promising: interplay between the modified proverb and the visual element (in modern media, Internet, photos, meme template). The start was given in publication (Hrisztova-Gotthardt, Aleksa Varga, T. Litovkina, and Vargha 2020).

In conclusion, I should point out that The contributions of the book reviewed here are very significant as they open the way to new research in the field of contrastive paremiology and anti-proverbs in particular. It is a precious contribution providing

a lot of important information and material for the study of anti-proverbs and proverbs as a part of phraseology in general.

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Review article

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PETER UNSETH

Kapchits, G. *Qaamuuska Casriga Ah: ee Maahmaahda Soomaaliyeed. A Modern Dictionary of Somali Proverbs*. Laashin, 2020. Pp. 347. ISBN: 9785020180765.

Georgi Kapchits is clearly the most prolific scholar studying Somali proverbs. His writings about Somali proverbs have covered a variety of topics. (He modestly does not list all of his works in the Bibliography at the end.) The present book combines his scholarly study of Somali proverbs and their structures, together with a collection of *circa* 5,000 proverbs.

I must say at the beginning, this review is written by a proverb scholar for an audience interested in proverbs, not written by a Somali scholar for a Somali audience.

Much of Kapchits' work is based on the pioneering work of Grigorii Permiakov (also spelled as Permyakov), the peerless Russian paremiologist. For those who cannot read Russian but can read English, the most accessible source is a translation of one of his articles in *Proverbium* (Permiakov, Grigorii L'vovich. "On the question of a Russian paremiological minimum." *Proverbium* 6 (1989): 91-102). Scholars such as Kapchits, writing in English about Permiakov's work, use the word "cliché" with a technical meaning, not the definition popularly used by English speakers. "Cliché", in this technical sense, is used for an established saying, a phrase or sentence that is commonly used as a whole. Permiakov's influence is clearly reflected in the first six chapters, a total of 25 pages.

The first chapter is "Sign nature, themes and logico-semantic classification of Somali paremias". It is built on Permiakov's work, but only briefly summarizes some of its distinctives, such as 28 relation types, etc. This system includes sets of opposites, such as "Usualness – Unusualness" and "Friendliness – Hostility."

The book continues with some short studies on Somali proverbs, such as structures and categories. In section 6, he examines

“Variants and variations of Somali paremias.” In a list of 249 common proverbs that he had collected by questionnaires from Somali speakers, he found that variant forms were submitted for each one. He also argues that in some cases, the original form of a proverb is now less used, rather a variant is displacing it (p. 28).

The largest parts of the book involve lists of proverbs. The first list is a list of the 315 most familiar proverbs among the Somalis, ranked by familiarity. Many scholars discuss how and whether to calculate the “paremiological minimum”, the best-known proverbs in a language. But Kapchits has actually done it, and clearly explains his methodology. By necessity, the collection of data for this was done with ethnic Somalis who lived in Europe.

The next list is the general collection of about 5,000 Somali proverbs, alphabetized. These are given in their Somali forms only, with no translation. This is a disappointment to people like me, but his intended audience clearly includes Somalis, not just scholars. This list of proverbs also includes variant forms of proverbs or gives cross-references to those with similar meanings under many of the entries, e.g. *Labaatanjir intuu geed ka booduu talo ka boodaa* is followed by a cross reference to *Nin yari intuu ka boodo ayuu arin ka boodaa* (p. 186). This is very useful for those who speak and read Somali.

This is followed by lists of proverbs under three categories. In the first, he lists 30 proverbs that contain quotations, a category that includes both wellerism proverbs and dialogue proverbs. Grouping these two categories under a broader category recognizes a commonality that is sometimes overlooked.

The second category lists 27 question and answer proverbs, differentiated from dialogue proverbs. Again, I think Kapchits is showing a potentially important distinction by separating these from dialogue proverbs, though they do share an important feature.

This is followed by a third list, enumerating/listing proverbs, such as: “Do not make friends with three [kinds of] men: he who does not allow anyone to be ahead of him, he who does not leave food for anyone, and he who does not talk to anyone.” Many of these are built with three items that were chosen not only for their thematic logic but also because they share some poetic feature. For example, the one just translated lists the three qualities, each with *ma-* and a root-initial *h-* and then three syllable words: *Saddex lama raaco: ma-horreeye, ma-hambeye iyo ma-haasaawshe* (pp. 15, 320).

Of these 294 enumerating proverbs, 223 (>75%) are based on lists of three things. There are 43 proverbs based on the number two. From four through seven, the number of examples drops greatly (four 15, five 6, six 3, seven 3), then only one example with a list of ten.

Kapchits has recognized the richness of these enumerating proverbs, discussing them early in the book (pp.12-18). He has also given a paper on this subset of proverbs at the annual Interdisciplinary Colloquium on Proverbs at Tavira, Portugal in 2018. This distinctive type of enumerating proverb is also documented in Gujarati of western India, e.g. “There exist three things which must be controlled: lust, mind, and anger” (Doctor 1993:58). “Three” is the most common number of items in both Kapchits’ Somali and Doctor’s Gujarati data. Is this because a comparison of three items is psycholinguistically more powerful? Or, since Somalia and India face each other across the Arabian Sea, is the use of lists of three items the result of contact? Or is it a combination of the two factors? Collections of data such as this will enable scholars to study this issue.

Somalis are rightfully and proudly known for having and using many proverbs. This book documents this for scholars and also equips Somalis in the diaspora to continue their use of them. I’ve already cited it in a manuscript I am preparing. By compiling this book, Georgi Kapchits has given us a multifaceted gift.

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WOLFGANG MIEDER

INTERNATIONAL PROVERB SCHOLARSHIP: AN UPDATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

For Minas A.I. Alexiadis and Aristeides N. Doulaveras

It appears that the pandemic has also reduced the number of new paremiological publications during the past year. But it gives me much pleasure to list 303 articles, books, and dissertations that have appeared throughout the world in numerous languages. It is no easy task to hunt down these diverse items, and I want to thank Pete Unseth and Brian Minier for their untiring help in making this bibliography as complete and perfect as possible. Let me also state once again that I only list those publications for which I have obtained hard copies in order to add them to my International Proverb Archive here at the University of Vermont. Purchasing monographs and essay volumes can be quite expensive, but I continue to be committed to keeping the archive up-to-date. Obviously, I appreciate it when colleagues and friends send me their most recent scholarly work as presents, but I am also very willing to pay for them and the postage. When attaching articles to e-mail messages, please make sure that you include the complete bibliographical information.

The titles of the 303 publications listed below indicate the high intellectual level of international paremiology. I have so often stated that proverbs are truly everywhere, and so it should not be a surprise that they are studied by scholars and students from various disciplines. I might note in particular that there is now a broad interest in modern proverbs and the role that proverbs play

in all spheres of the present age. There are even studies listed dealing with the role of proverbs during the pandemic! In any case, proverbs are surely never out of season and deserve our scholarly attention in every walk of life.

As can be imagined, the International Proverb Archive contains literally thousands of proverb collections and scholarly studies. Over the years, I have had visiting professors and graduate students from numerous countries coming to Burlington in Vermont in order to make use of these rich materials. The best way to make such a research stay possible is to apply for a Fulbright scholarship. I am glad to support your applications and if successful will welcome you with open arms and assist you with your work as best as I can. The city of Burlington in our beautiful rural state of Vermont is an ideal place to spend several months working on paremiological and phraseological matters.

Finally, I would like to dedicate this year's bibliography to my two Greek friends Prof. Minas A. Alexiadis and Prof. Aristeides N. Doulaveras. I shall never forget the days that my wife Barbara and I spent at Athens in 2014 at the occasion of receiving an honorary doctorate from the prestigious University of Athens (see no. 179 below). I owe this great honor to my two friends who as paremiologists *par excellence* have enriched our knowledge of ancient as well as modern Greek proverbs.

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WOLFGANG MIEDER

INTERNATIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHY OF NEW AND REPRINTED PROVERB COLLECTIONS

For George Schumm

During this past pandemic year I have been able to add only twenty-six proverb collections to my International Proverb Archives at the University of Vermont. A few additional collections have come to my attention, but I have not been able to obtain them thus far. Please remember that I have always only listed those collections that I have in fact been able to purchase or that have been sent to me as presents. So let me repeat my annual plea to send me new or reprinted proverb collections at my expense. I am also glad to pay for the expensive international postage as well.

I would like to draw special attention to Henry Rosen's massive volume *Vox Populi: Proverbs and Sayings. A Comparative Collection of English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, German, Italian, Romanian, Esperanto, Latin, Russian, Yiddish and Hebrew Proverbs* (Columbus, Ohio: Gatekeeper Press, 2020). I shall never forget the day when H. Rosen contacted me from Israel, asking me to write a preface for this unique international proverb collection. It was a special and much-appreciated honor for me, and it is my sincere hope that the book will find its way into many libraries and homes throughout the world.

Permit me to dedicate this small bibliography to my American brother George Schumm, Professor Emeritus of Philosophy of The Ohio State University. As a bibliophile he has delighted me with an annual Christmas gift of an old proverb collection. During the past years I have received the first (1670), third

(1742), and fourth (1768) edition of John Ray's invaluable *A Collection of English Proverbs*. And this year he presented me with the second (1678) edition, thus completing the entire set for me. What a paremiographical treasure, with hardly a day going past that I do not look at the four old volumes. They add a tremendous historical and pecuniary value to my over nine thousand volumes that are now housed in the Billings Library at the University of Vermont after I donated them to my beloved university. Let it be known that quite a few of the invaluable collections from old times found their way into this archive by way of the generosity of my brother George Schumm.

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