

WOLFGANG MIEDER

PREFACE

It is always a special occasion to dedicate a new volume of *Proverbium* to a master paremiologist and paremiographer. This year, on July 21, 2014, we are celebrating the seventy-fifth birthday of the renowned Estonian folklorist and proverb scholar Arvo Krikmann, who is well known to the international scholarly community for numerous seminal publications (see my laudatio following these comments). It is utterly amazing what he has been able to accomplish at Tartu in the fields of folklore, humor, linguistics, paremiology, philology, semantics, and semiotics. His many studies on jokes and riddles are legendary, and he has also made innovative use of the computer to map the geographical distribution of texts together with an analysis of the density with which variants have been recorded. As far as paremiography is concerned, it was Arvo Krikmann and Ingrid Sarv who assembled the Estonian national treasure of proverbs in their monumental Estonian proverb collection *Eesti vanasõnad* (1980-1988) in five massive volumes. He was also a member of the international team of paremiologists who, under the direction of Matti Kuusi at Helsinki, published the unsurpassed comparative proverb collection *Proverbia septentrionalia. 900 Balto-Finnic Proverb Types with Russian, Baltic, German and Scandinavian Parallels* (1985). Of course, he is also known as a leading theoretical paremiologist, to wit the monograph *On Denotative Indefiniteness of Proverbs* (1974) and its sequel *Some Additional Aspects of Semantic Indefiniteness of Proverbs* (1974) which were reprinted in *Proverbium* in 1984 and 1985. Some of his major subsequent paremiological contributions have been reprinted in his book *Proverb Semantics. Studies in Structure, Logic, and Metaphor* (2009). It was published five years ago at the University of Vermont in celebration of Arvo Krikmann's seventieth birthday. This book belongs into the hands of anybody seri-

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ously interested in proverbs, and it can be obtained free of charge by contacting the *Proverbium* office at Burlington, Vermont.

This book appeared as volume 29 of the *Supplement Series of Proverbium* with the 36th volume on *Proverbs: Their Lexical and Semantic Features* (2014) by the Czech linguist and paremiologist František Čermák having just been published. Both these volumes and others are available, and so are volumes 24 (2007) to 31 (2014) of *Proverbium*. Please help us to spread the word so that these books can find new homes. They do not do anybody any good being stored away in boxes. If someone is teaching a seminar on proverbs with up to twenty students, we could send copies to the students at no charge. So please do your part in distributing these valuable resources.

Of course, it is also important to mention once again how much we appreciate it that you and your libraries continue to subscribe to *Proverbium*. We are all aware of the fact that libraries are dropping serial subscriptions, and this is, unfortunately, also happening to *Proverbium*. During the past year we have once again lost a number of subscriptions, and we have gained only three new subscribers. There are then times when we are worried about the future of *Proverbium*. Subscriptions are shrinking and the expenses are steadily increasing. We realize that the day might come that *Proverbium* will have to stop its printed format and become an electronic publication. But we have not yet reached this point, and as long as I am able to edit the yearbook, it will most certainly remain in print as an annual book publication. In a few years, when I will have to relinquish my editorship because of advanced age, *Proverbium* will most likely be produced only online due to expenses and libraries not purchasing serial publications like it any longer. But that time has not yet come, and we shall cross that bridge together when the print version of *Proverbium* can no longer be sustained. For right now we continue to go strong, and we appreciate your help and support in spreading the good word about our “beloved” *Proverbium*.

Let’s keep our spirits up and continue our scholarly work in the service of international paremiology. I thank Galit Hasan-Rokem, our Associate Editor in Jerusalem, and our Managing Editor Brian Minier and our Production Editor Hope Greenberg

here at the University of Vermont for all of their much-appreciated help and support. Thanks are also due the College of Arts and Sciences and the Bookstore at the University of Vermont for their generous financial support during the past three decades. Finally, I thank my colleagues and friends at Queen City Printers Inc. for their superb work in printing our attractive books. It all amounts to a serious and dedicated team effort, and as such, it is indeed a pleasure and honor to present the international community of paremiologists with yet another volume of *Proverbium*.

Wolfgang Mieder