

so worthy as the author believes. In that time G. Flaubert predicted with foresight: "The world is entering an era of nonsense, militarism and Americanism." The negative sense of the latter notion is quite obvious. Therefore the title of book can hardly be recognized as successful or, at least, it is rather motivated.

Nevertheless Cantor's book will certainly attract the attention of the historians, philosophers and other scholars as an interesting and in many respects successful attempt to interpret the deep tendencies of the 20th century through a prism of the analysis of its cultural contents.

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PROFANTOVÁ, Zuzana: *Little Fish are Sweet. Selected Writings on Proverbs*. Bratislava, Ústav etnológie SAV (Institute of Ethnology, Slovak Academy of Sciences), 1997; 109 pp. ISBN 80-967781-5-3.

The attractive scholarly work deals with the enchanting world of popular wisdom and the inexhaustible treasury of its verbal manifestations. The book consists of seven chapters, introduction (Instead of Introduction), Editorial Note and Selected Bibliography.

The historical survey (To the Beginnings of Paremiology in Slovakia) is followed by a study devoted to the classification of paremiological material, from the first Slovak collectors (A.P. Zátorecký, P. Dobšínský) to the present time (On Classification of the Slovak Paremiological Treasury).

In the following chapter (Concerning One Possibility of Logical-Semiotic Invariants of Weatherproverbs) methodologies used in paremiological investigations (O. Zich, Z. Kanyó, G.L. Permjakov, and others) are analysed. The author warns against an undue identification of folk proverbs with folk philosophy and discusses the implications of a similar approach. In the subsequent analysis of weatherproverbs, *implication* is considered as basic logical formula. The predominant implicative structure of weatherproverbs is manifested in expressing relevant dependences between thematically associated phenomena, such as weather, crops and agricultural work, like crop rotation, tillage, manuring, digging, etc. The *if-then* scheme may be either explicitly expressed or tacitly understood.

The chapters that follow deal with related topics (Christian standards in the Slovak proverbial tradition; antithesis as a functional means of expression; ethnoidentification in conversational genres of folklore; semantic gesture of death).

Thematic relationships, as assumed for weather-related proverbs and popular sayings, may apparently be much broader than those presented as typical in the present work, and may considerably exceed their purely material and economical context to resume a social or even jocular ring, as in the following Italian proverb:

Quando piove e luce il sole
Tutte le vecchie vanno in amore (Aquilina 1972: 511).
"When it rains and the sun shines,
all old women fall in love."

The rain, sunshine and innocent love affairs of grandmothers are favourite themes of a great number of proverbs, humorous sayings and doggerels in the whole Siculo-Maltese Mediterranean area, as in (Maltese examples are presented in official Romanized orthography):

Ix-xita u x-xemx,
In-nanna u San Lawrenz,
In-nannu jilgħab il-boċċi,
In-nanna tilgħab il-lewż.
"It's raining, it's shining,
Grandmother and St. Lawrence,
Grandfather playing bowls,
Grandmother playing at almonds" (ib.).

The old-women weather-inspired romance may sometimes adopt a less innocent and more explicit ring, as in:

Ix-xita u x-xemx,
In-nanna taħt Lawrenz,
Tlabtha biċċa ħuta,
T'atni daqqa ta' lembuba.

"It's raining, it's shining, Grandmother under Lawrence, I asked her for a piece of fish,
She struck me with her rolling pin" (ib.).

Implicative scheme seems to back up most weatherproverbs and perhaps folk proverbs in general. Some implicatively structured weather- and season-related proverbs from the Siculo-Maltese area:

Meta l-fula tnawwar, il-berghuda tfawwar "when broad beans begin to blossom, fleas begin to abound" (ib., 562);

Izra' l-kemmun f' Jannar u bigħu bil-qantar "sow cummin seed in January and (you'll) sell it in cantars" (ib., 554);

Berqa waħda f' Jannar, stenna maltemp kbir warajha "after one flash of lightning in January, expect a great storm" (ib., 527);

Frar fawwar, tal-bidwi għana fid-dar "a February abounding in rain enriches the farmer's house" (ib., 558; comp. Spanish: *Agua de febrero llena el granero*);

Hrit il-ħmar ma jagħtix sandar, hrit il-baqar jimla l-andar "ploughing by donkey is profitless, ploughing by cows fills the threshing floor" (ib., 544; comp. Sp.: *burros para la arada no valen nada*);

Meta tara l-ħuttaf, tkun għejja x-xita "when you see swallows, rain is approaching" (ib., 544), etc.

The same structural background may be found with proverbs reflecting a wide range of other phenomena, such as:

(astronomical events): *Nistrok u tistorni* "I'll keep your secret so that you may keep mine (if I keep your secret, you will keep mine)" (Said by someone who sees a shooting star flying through the sky, since he believes that he must not tell anyone that he saw it: if he does, misfortune is sure to follow) (ib., 499; variant 512);

(bodily features): *Mara għajnejha zoroq issaħħar it-toroq* "a blue-eyed woman enchants (bewitches) the streets" (ib., 497; in Malta and among the Arabs, blue-eyes have been originally associated with the evil eye); etc.

Substantially the same picture may be found in proverbs of the present structural type on the Muslim side of the Mediterranean area (Tunisia):

Ukif yabda rāba' yam māl'ām aħad yisdallu-'la-šlūhīt-el'ām "qand le quatrième jour de l'année est un dimanche, on en tire augure qu'elle sera bonne" (if the fourth day of the year falls on Sunday, a prosperous year may be expected) (Takrouna, 1307);

Weather-coloured proverbs of the present type must not necessarily be bound with any type of forecasting and may be applied ironically (Korean):

Soul-nom'in piman onyōn p'ung-nyōn-ira handa "die Leute von Seoul sagen, wenn es nur regnet, es sei ein fruchtbares Jahr (iron.: Städter verstehen nichts von Landwirtschaft)" (Lewin-Kim 1974, 143).

The small collection of studies, the result of research work protracted through a longer span of time, is an ambitious and truly inspiring contribution to the paremiological investigation. By their challenging nature, the studies included are both answering questions and asking them. The sweetness of *Little Fish* lies primarily in its readiness and ability to open a fruitful dialogue with a wide community of fellow-ethnologists and folklorists.

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