

UNIVERSAL, REGIONAL, SUB-REGIONAL AND LOCAL PROVERBS

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Introduction

In a synchronic and global study including European, Asian and Black African (Bantu) proverbs, it soon appears that a number of them not only express the same basic idea, but also have a common form of expression. Provisionally, four categories could be distinguished.

1. **Universal proverbs** can be found everywhere, in numerous languages. Usually, these are independent inventions, expressions of common human ideas and experiences.
2. **Regional proverbs** are known only in certain regions and in corresponding languages, a considerable number of them being related to the cultural traditions of the area.
3. **Sub-regional proverbs** are known in certain areas of the region. Their appearance is partly due to the linguistic affinity and geographical proximity, facilitating human contacts.
4. **Local proverbs** are known in a community (or in some communities) maintaining close contacts in a smaller area of a sub-region. They are sometimes related to the local events or persons.

If the study is not global, but restricted e.g. to a region, the universal proverbs of this region would then certainly include the universal and the corresponding regional proverbs of the global study, while the corresponding sub-regional proverbs of the global study would become regional ones.

Note: The transliteration of Chinese is the official hanyu pinyin transliteration; that of the Japanese words is the Hepburn one, used in most cases in Japan, close to the English pronunciation.

1. Universal Proverbs

In the global study some proverbs appear in all the regions of the world. The following categories of them can be distinguished.

1.1. The metaphoric expressions of simple phenomena, common all over the globe. Some examples:

Constant dropping wears the stone. It means that steadfast work can achieve considerable results. It is known in 39 languages (in short: $\Sigma = 39$). In Latin: *Gutta cavat lapidem* (PGy-1.71). Also found in Chinese, Korean, Japanese and Vietnamese (PGy-2.1.11).

Walls have ears. One has to be careful as unauthorized and unfriendly persons may listen. $\Sigma = 39$ (PGy-1.22). Also known in Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Vietnamese, Thai (2.1.1.6), in Bā and Bakongo (KM-1.83/541).

In wine there is truth. Alcoholic drinks may relieve inhibitions and restraints, and drunken people express their real opinions. $\Sigma = 41$. It derives from the Latin: *In vino veritas* (PGy-1.41), and appears in Japanese where wine is replaced by sake: *Sake wa honshin wo arawasu* (sake is a strong Japanese rice beer, having up to 18 per cent alcohol) and Vietnamese (2.2.88), but also in Ovambo (*Sha popi onkolwi oye ende nasho* ‘A drunken man speaks out what he carried in his heart’) and Bakongo (KM-1.242/1818).

1.2. Simple maxims, like *Do not put off till tomorrow, that can be done today.* $\Sigma = 48$ (PGy-1.11). Also found in Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Vietnamese, Thai (2.1.23) and Ovambo (KM-1.230/1727).

1.3. Simple moral maxims, like *Do as you would be done by.* $\Sigma = 40$ (Bible: New Testament, Matthew 7,12; Luke 6,31; Old Testament, Tobit 4,16; see PGy-1.57). Its Far-Eastern equivalent can be traced back to the Confucian Analects, the Lún Yǔ (Japanese reading: Rongo) XII.2, or the “Mahabharata” (5.1517b, 1518a). Do not do to others what you do not want to be done to you. It can be found in Chinese, Korean, Japanese (*Onore no hossazeru tokoro wa / wo hito ni hodokosu nakare*), also in Persian and Pashto (PGy-2.1.3).

1.4. Proverbs appearing due to globalization, a well-known example being *Time is money*, coined by Benjamin Franklin in 1748. $\Sigma = 35$ (PGy-1.93). It is found in Japanese as *Toki wa kane nari*, in Korean *Siganun tonida* (PGy-2.4.), and according to the information received in Peking in 1996, about one third of the young Chinese used it by then as *Shíjiān shì qián*. It has already appeared in Central Africa, e.g. in Tanzania in Swahili as *Mda ni pesa*, according to the report by Michael Gati, and in Ghana in Ewe as *Gheyiyi nye ga*, according to the information provided by dr. Francis Momade. A recent newcomer in this category may be *Safety first*, known in many languages of Europe (including Hungarian: PGy-7.85), and as *Anzen dai-ichi* in Japanese (MK-32/1), *An-jon jee-il* in Korean (BJ) etc.

2. Regional Proverbs

Cultural ties, linguistic affinity and geographic proximity lead to the appearance of regional proverbs, which follow the pattern of loan words. Numerous loan-proverbs appear beside the indigenous ones. Part of them can be traced back to the classical literature of the region, e.g. in Europe these would include the Greco-Roman classics, the Greek and Hebrew Bible and Medieval Latin, and also in the early 16th century *Adagiorum Chiliades* by Erasmus, which deserves to be mentioned especially in this context. In the Far East such proverbs mainly originate from the Chinese and partly from the Sanskrit classics, first of all from the *Shí Jì* (Shiki), the Historical Records in 130 volumes from c 145–86 BC.

2.1. European proverbs. The book entitled “European Proverbs” (PGy-1) lists 106 proverbs found in 28 to 54 languages out of the 55 considered ones, spoken in Europe, including the universal proverbs as well. Some characteristic examples:

One swallow / starling etc. does not make a summer. (Aesop, Aristotle.) $\Sigma = 49$ (PGy-1.4).

All that glitters is not gold. (*Non omne quod nitet aurum est*, from Medieval Latin.) $\Sigma = 47$ (PGy-1.19).

The horse has four legs, still it stumbles. (*Errat interdum quadripes*, in Medieval Latin.) $\Sigma = 47$ (PGy-1.25).

You see a mote / hair etc. in another's eye but fail to see the beam in your own. (Bible: New Testament, Matthew 7, 3; Luke 6, 41.) $\Sigma = 47$ (PGy-1.20).

The master's eye makes the horse / cattle fat. (Aristotle, Plutarch.) $\Sigma = 40$ (PGy-1.61).

Let the cobbler stick to his last. (Pliny the Elder: *Ne sutor ultra crepidam*.) $\Sigma = 29$ (PGy-105).

A well-known European proverb of unknown origin is: *Each should sweep before his own door.* $\Sigma = 34$ (PGy-1.95).

In some cases the general European form appears in characteristic local variants, e.g. *Rome was not built in a / one day.* $\Sigma = 33$. In Hungarian, Rome is replaced by Buda, in Polish by Krakow, in German sometimes by Cologne, in Finnish by Turku etc. (PGy-1.100).

2.2. Black-African proverbs. Disregarding the northern part of Africa inhabited mainly by Arabs, it is possible to attempt assessing the Black-African proverbs on the basis of the collection by Matti Kuusi, entitled “Ovambo proverbs with African parallels” (KM-1). In case of each item he mentions the languages, in which the proverb in question is found. There are some proverbs found in 6 to 12 languages, like the following ones:

What you eat, you can keep, (what you save is taken by the chief's men). $\Sigma = 12$: Shona, Ewe, Haya, Kirundi, Lamba, Luganda, Nyika, Ovambo, Rwanda, Giryama, Sotho, Zulu (KM-1.235/1767).

You do not know the wisdom in a wanderer's (in other person's) breast / heart. $\Sigma = 11$: Duala, Ghwana, Haya, Kikuyu, Nago, Nyang, Kimbundu, Kosi, Mongo, Ovambo, Umbundu (KM-1.247/1818).

I killed an elephant with a clod of earth. (i.e. 'Much good was accomplished with little effort'.) $\Sigma = 9$: Duala, Kikuyu, Koshi, Lamba, Nyang, Ovambo, Sotho, Tsonga, Zulu (MK-1.221/1655).

The offended man does not forget, the offender forgets. $\Sigma = 6$: Bondei, Ewe, Haya, Ndebele, Ovambo, Zulu (KM-1.22/25).

You are always straightening others' fences; your own ones are leaning. $\Sigma = 6$: Bakongo, Duala, Kirundi, Ngbandi, Nyang, Ovambo (KM-1.299/2286).

2.3. Asian proverbs. A number of proverbs can be found not only in the Far-Eastern languages, but also in some languages of India and occasionally in other Asian languages as well. E.g.:

One cannot clap with one hand. (Hán Fēi Zǐ; Kanpishi; Panchatantra) $\Sigma = 21$. In Japanese: *Koshō narashi gatashi*, or *Koshō (wa) narazu* (PGy-2.3.1.1).

A frog in the well (cannot see the ocean). (Zhuāng Zǐ; Soji; Panchatantra) $\Sigma = 12$. In Japanese: *I(do) no naka no kawazu (taikai wo shirazu)* (PGy-2.3.1.2).

A group of blind men feeling the elephant. (Nié Pán Jīng; Nehangyō; The Nirvana Sūtra) $\Sigma = 8$. In Chinese, Korean, Japanese (*Gunmō zō wo nazu*), Vietnamese, Lao, Thai, Singhalese, and Tamil (PGy-2.3.2.8).

To play the lute / harp to the cow / ox / buffalo. (Zhuāng Zǐ; Sōji) $\Sigma = 10$: in Chinese, Korean, Japanese (*Ushi no mae ni koto wo hiku*), Vietnamese, Lao, Thai, Burmese, Bihari, Marathi, and Sindhi (PGy-2.2.64). Its European equivalent is: *To cast pearls to the swine.* (Bible: New Testament, Matthew 7,6.) $\Sigma = 10$.

One bitten by a snake fears a rotten / grass rope too. This proverb of unknown origin was found in Chinese, Korean, Japanese (*Hebi-ni kamareta kuchi-nawa ni ozu / ojiru*), Persian and Pashto (PGy-2.2.71).

3. Sub-Regional Proverbs

We could distinguish several groups of sub-regional proverbs in Europe, Africa and Asia. This aspect deserves a special detailed study. At present, only some characteristic examples could be quoted.

It is well known that e.g. in Europe there are many common proverbs in the related and neighboring languages, like Lithuanian and Latvian (GK), German, Dutch and Danish (RD), Italian and French (AA), Estonian and Finnish (KM-2), Spanish, Catalan and Portuguese (RD), Belorussian, Russian and Ukrainian (KMI). Mainly the lasting German cultural influence is responsible for the considerable number of equivalent proverbs appearing in Hungarian, Czech, Polish and Estonian. A number of Russian proverbs also appeared in Polish in the second half of the 19th century, known as the era of Russification.

3.1. European sub-regional proverbs. In the macro-region of Europe there are several closely related sub-regions, where common proverbs appear due to

the similarity of languages, e.g. Germanic, Romance, Slavonic or Uralic ones, and/or close economic, cultural and political ties (which may change in time) and geographic proximity. Some examples of the European sub-regional proverbs are presented further, being sometimes synonyms or variants of the European proverbs (due to the lack of space, the variants of the individual proverbs quoted are omitted).

All is not whalebone that is white. Danish, Swedish (PGy-1.19).

A good beginning is one third (two thirds) of the work. Irish, Welsh and Scottish Gaelic (PGy-1.40).

Two heads / brains are better than one even if they are two sheep's heads. Irish, Scots, Welsh (PGy-1.8).

Out of roasted eggs no chicken can hatch. German, Dutch, English, Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish (RD-1.332).

One's own hearth is gold worth. German, Dutch, Frisian, English, Danish, Icelandic, Swedish (RD-1.336).

If one has no lime, one has to build with mud. German, Dutch, Danish, Icelandic, Norwegian, Swedish (RD-1.860).

If a pig goes abroad [to study], a pig will return. Danish, Icelandic, Swedish, Finnish, Estonian (PGy-187).

Let the devil get into the church, he will mount the altar. English, Dutch, Danish, Swedish, German, Polish, Lithuanian, Latvian, Livonian, Estonian (PGy-1.36).

To buy a pig in a poke. English, Welsh, Scottish Gaelic, German, Swedish, Norwegian, Finnish, Karelian, Estonian, Livonian, Latvian, Lithuanian, and Albanian (PGy-1.69).

It is good to cut a belt from the skin of others. German, Dutch, Danish, Icelandic, English, Norwegian, Swedish, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian (RD-1.92).

Troubled water is a gain for the fisherman. Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese (PGy-1.83).

He that greases his cart helps his oxen. Spanish, Catalan, Portuguese (PGy-1.59).

A drowning man will catch at a hot nail. Spanish, Catalan, Portuguese (PGy-1.89).

Do not look a gift donkey in the mouth. Maltese, Albanian, Greek, Bulgarian, Romanian (PGy-1.5).

Collect white money for black days. Turkish, Serbian, Bulgarian, Romanian, and Hungarian spoken in Transylvania and Moldova (PGy-6.37/38, IN-115, VG-1.98/131).

We do not eat all kinds of birds. Arabic, Turkish, Greek, Serbian, Albanian, Slovenian, Bulgarian, Romanian, and Hungarian spoken in Moldova (IN-2165, PGy-1.19, PGy-4.38-39, PGy-6.40/67).

A bent head is not cut (by the sword). Turkish, Azerbaijani, Chuvash, Karachai, Kirghiz, Tatar, Uzbek, Greek, Albanian, Slovenian, Serbian, Bulgarian, Romanian, Hungarian spoken in Transylvania, Czech, Polish, Belorussian, Russian (PGy-5.201/3.5, VG-1.97/117).

The Emperor is far, God is high above (in Heaven). Bulgarian, Serbian, Czech, Slovak, Polish, Ukrainian, Belorussian, Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian, Votian, Russian (GK-111, KMI-22).

If a child does not cry, his mother does not know his needs. Serbian, Bulgarian, Hungarian, Slovak, Czech, Polish, Belorussian, Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian, Votian, Livonian, Russian (GK-523, KMI-109, VG-1.194/42).

Among many midwives the child is lost. Serbian, Hungarian, Czech, Slovak, Polish, Ukrainian, Belorussian, Lithuanian, Latvian, Russian (GK-43, KMI-262, PGy-7.46, VG-1.49/1).

For a drunken man the sea is only knee deep. Serbian, Polish, Ukrainian, Belorussian, Russian (AK-2.925/41, KMI-326).

Man proposes, but God directs the bullet. Czech, Slovak, Ukrainian, Polish, Lithuanian, Estonian, Russian (PGy-1.60).

Where there is no fish, the crab is fish. Bulgarian, Romanian, Czech, Polish, Belorussian, Ukrainian, Estonian (PGy-1.98).

A hunchback is cured only by the grave. Bulgarian, Czech, Polish, Belorussian, Ukrainian, Lithuanian, Latvian, Russian (GK-219, KMI-85).

An unbidden guest is worse than a Tatar. Czech, Belorussian, Polish, Latvian, Ukrainian, Russian (KMI-87, PGy-1.39).

Two bears cannot live in one liar. Bulgarian, Belorussian, Ukrainian, Russian (KMI-225).

In a silent marsh devils dwell. Bulgarian, Belorussian, Ukrainian, Russian (KMI-275).

Every snipe praises its marsh. Belorussian, Ukrainian, Russian (KMI-189).

If you hurry, you disturb the people. Belorussian, Ukrainian, Russian (KMI-218).

One fisherman recognizes the other one from far off. Belorussian, Ukrainian, Russian (KMI-2).

The cone does not fall far from the tree. Finnish, Estonian, Livonian, Votian (PGy-1.48).

The sea listens, the forest sees. Finnish, Estonian, Livonian, Votian (PGy-1.22) etc.

He, who slices the meat, is left only with his fingers. Finnish, Estonian (KM-2.739).

Save the share of the one who is sleeping, eat the share of the one gadding about. Finnish, Estonian (KM-2.742).

Where there are bulls, there are hooves. Finnish, Estonian (KM-2.745).

Innocent blood does not tremble. Finnish, Estonian (KM-2.750) etc.

3.2. Black-African sub-regional proverbs. Two examples from the central region of Africa will be mentioned:

You have stored, you do not hunger (or you will not starve). (*Wa pungula, ku si ndjala.*) $\Sigma = 6$: Bakongo, Kikuyu, Kimbundu, Lamba, Mongo, Owambo (KM-1.219/1639).

Do not eat raw fruit, wait until it is ripe. (*Ino ga lys egongwa, tega gu tiligane.*) $\Sigma = 3$: Bakongo, Ovambo, Swahili (KM-1.28/76).

3.3. Asian sub-regional proverbs. A large group of Asian sub-regional proverbs comprises the Far-Eastern proverbs. These are closely related to the Chinese proverbs and the Chinese classics, which are found in Chinese, Korean, Japanese, and often in other languages of East Asia, like Vietnamese or Malay as well. We present some examples from over 160 ones listed in PGy-2. Following the English translation, the source – if known – and the corresponding Japanese proverb is quoted. In some cases the equivalent European synonym is presented as well.

One should not be afraid to correct one's mistakes. (Lún Yǔ; Rongō; Confucian Analects I.8.) *Ayamatte aratamuru ni habakaru koto nakare*; also used in Vietnamese (PGy-2.3.2.1.).

One's eyes do not see the eyelashes. (Shǐ Jì; Shiki; Historical Records.) *Chikakute mienu wa matsuge*. European equivalent: *You can see a mote in another's eye but fail to see a beam in your own*, see in 2.1 (PGy-2.3.2.61).

Sai Weng has lost his horse. (Huái Nán Zǐ; Enanji). In Chinese: *Sài Wēng*, in Korean: *Sae Ong*, in Japanese: *Sai Ō*. (*Ningen banji*) *Sai Ō ga uma*; referring to a well-known story of alternating bad and good fortunes (PGy-2.3.2.61).

Man leaves behind his name, the leopard / tiger its hide. (Wǔ Dài Shǐ; Godaishi). *Tora / hyō wa shi shite kawa wo nokoshi / todome, hito wa shi shite na wo nokosu / todomu*. Also found in Vietnamese (PGy-2.3.2.44).

A large vessel is made until evening. (Lǎo Zǐ; Rōshi.) *Taiki bansei* (PGy-2.2.66). The European equivalent: *Rome was not built in a / one day*, see above.

One falling leaf [of the tree Paulownia imperialis, the Empress' tree] is a sign of coming autumn. (Huái Nán Zǐ; Enanji.) *Ichī yō ochite tenka no ai wo shiru*, or in short: *Kiri no hito ha* (PGy-2.3.2.53). This corresponds to “the first swallow” in Europe, which is supposed to be followed by others as spring is coming.

The fortune-teller does not know his own fortune (Hán Fēi Zǐ; Kanpishi.) *Ekisha / Onyōji / Uranaishi mi no ue shirazu* (PGy-2.2.52). The European equivalent: *Nobody is barer (worse shod) than the shoemaker's wife and the smith's mare* (ODEP-543/1). The Hungarian variant puts it simply: *The shoemaker wears shoes with holes in them* (*A szuster lyukas cipőben jár*, VG-1.224/105).

Do not look for a fish on a tree. (Mèng Zǐ; Mōshi.) *Ki ni yotte uo wo motomu*. Also used in Vietnamese (PGy-2.3.2.40).

When entering a village follow its traditions. (Lǐ Jí; Raiki.) *Gō ni itte wa gō ni shitagae* (PGy-2.2.67). The European equivalent: *In Rome do as the Romans do* (ODEP-683/1).

3.3.1. One sub-group of the Far-Eastern proverbs is formed by the Japanese-Korean proverbs. In Korean there are many proverbs of Chinese origin and – due to a lasting Japanese cultural influence – also a number of proverbs that could be traced back to the Japanese sources. These Japanese proverbs have no close equivalents in Chinese and could be regarded as Japanese loan-proverbs in Korean. Some examples quoting the transliteration of the Japanese texts follow, taken from PGy-2.3.3, where the original Japanese and Korean texts, and data of the Japanese sources are also presented (the Japanese source is given in brackets).

To catch a carp (or a sea-bream) with (a bait of) a shrimp. (Oshiegusa Nyobokatagi) *Ebi de tai wo tsuru*, or simply: *Ebitai*. In Korean: *Saeu mikkoro ingo nangunda*.

To count the age of a dead child. (Zokuhizakurige) *Shinda ko no toshi wo kazoeru*.

The dog reared for three years bites my hand. *Kai inu ni te wo kamareru / kuwaeru*. In the Korean equivalent *hand* is replaced by *leg*.

To extract the eyes of a living horse / ox / being. (Arokassen Monogatari) *Iki uma no me wo nuku*. In Korean: ‘of a living being’.

To hand over the key to the robber. (Genpei Seisuiiki) *Nusubito ni kagi (wo azukeru)*.

To look at the sky through the eye of a needle. (Rigenshuran) *Hari no ama / mimizu kare ten wo nozoku*.

The pepper is small but hot. (Kefukigusa) *Sansho wa kotsubu demo piriri to karai*. Note: Due to a mere coincidence there is a well-known Hungarian proverb, first recorded in 1598: *Kicsi a bors, de erős* ‘The pepper is small but hot’ (BD-3.8.8.8., VG-1.63/382).

After rain the soil becomes hard. (Kefukigusa) *Ame futte ji katamaru*.

[To make] out of a small needle a big staff. (Kōyōgunkan) *Shin shō, bō dai*, or *Hari hodo no koto wo bō hodo ni iu*. This proverb corresponds in meaning to the English one: *To change a fly into an elephant* (ODEP-270/2), or the German and Hungarian ones, replacing *fly* by *mosquito*: *A szúnyogból elefántot csinál* (VG-2.466).

To tap even a stone bridge before crossing it. (Godairikikoinofujime) *Ishibashi wo tataite wataru*.

To pour cold water on a frog. (Genji Monogatari in the 11th century, Kefukigusa 1643) *Kaeru no tsura ni mizu*. In Korean: *Kaeguri taegarie ch'anmul kkionki*. In Hungarian we say: *Falra hányt borsó* ‘Peas thrown against the wall’. It is a regional East-Central-European proverb, first recorded in Hungarian in 1598 (BD-3.1.6.4., 4.7.4.6., 4.9.6.4., VG-2.44/249).

Certainly the Japanese-Korean proverbs could be considered universal or regional ones in a study restricted to the Japanese proverbs in Japan. They became Korean proverbs as a result of the borrowing process, and thus could be regarded regional proverbs of a global study.

4. Local Proverbs

Local proverbs are those used in an area that – in the particular study – is not subdivided into different individual entities. So local proverbs may be Hungarian, Lithuanian, Japanese or American proverbs. If, however, special attention is paid to the certain characteristic regions of these areas, then Transylvanian (VG), Okinawan (SZ) or Vermont proverbs (WM), or even those of individual localities, like the proverbs of Magyaró in Transylvania (ZsJ) or Sárovar in Hungary (TN) can be

distinguished and studied. In this connection the study of the proverb lore of the national minorities, like that of the Hungarian Csángós in Moldova, or in Romania (PGy-6) may yield interesting results.

In the course of time *some* local proverbs may become regional ones. This applies even to the typical local proverbs referring to local characteristics, like persons, events, nature etc. *Sài Wēng shī mǎ* ('Sai Weng has lost his horse') was certainly a local Chinese proverb at first, then got into the Book of Huái Nán Zǐ (179-122 B.C.) and became known later in Korean as *Saeongjima*, gaining currency in Japanese too as *Sai Ō ga uma* (PGy-2.3.2.61).

4.1. Some Hungarian proverbs. The English translation is followed by the Hungarian text and the date of the first known recording is given in brackets.

The owl blames the sparrow for having a big head. Bagoly mondja verébnek, hogy nagyfejű (1890).

Pepper is small but hot. Kicsi a bors, de erős (1598).

The dry leaves do not rustle if no wind blows. Nem zörög a haraszt, ha nem fúj a szél (1788).

It is better to fear something than to get frightened. Jobb félni, mint megijedni (1810).

Bread borrowed should be returned. Kölcsönkenyér visszajár (1794).

Even Christ's coffin was not guarded for nothing. Krisztus koporsóját sem őrizték ingyen (1598). (This is a Hungarian loan-proverb in Slovak.)

The common horse has scars on his back. Közös lónak túros a háta (1598).

Many geese overpower a pig. Sok lúd disznót győz (1598).

Money talks, although the dog may bark. Pénz beszél, kutya ugat (1884).

Out of a foolish hole, a foolish wind blows. Bolond lyukból bolond szél fúj (1890).

The sack has found its patch. Megtalálta a zsák a foltját (1558).

Better a sparrow today than a bustard tomorrow. Jobb ma egy veréb, mint holnap egy túzok (1598) etc. (PGy-4.50-51).

4.2. Some Lithuanian proverbs.

Why should I cut out a (walking) stick if not to lean on it? Kamgi kirsčiau lazda, jei nepasiremčiau?

When there is bread, there is no juice / sap; when there is juice, there is no bread. (Something is always missing.) Duonos yra – sulos nėra, sulos yra – duonos nėra. Vis ko nors trūksta.

The tit for the smallest / weakest piglet is under the swine's tail. (The weakest piglet is treated badly.) Paskutiniam paršui papas po uodega.

We shall see when we touch bottom – when we put an end to it. (Everything will become clear when the job is done.) Pažiūrėsime, kai dugną dėsime.

God has dispensed with beetroot, why can't I dispense with a wife? (Let's not worry about things that we don't have.) Apsiejo Dievas be batviniu, apsieisiu aš be pačios.

You have not yet touched fingers with God. (You are not yet aware of God's conclusion.) *Dar su Dievu pirštais nesudūrei.*

The two-year-old turned out to be more cunning than the three-year-old. (A smart one outwitted by smarter one.) *Užējo dveigys treigī* (RR).

4.3. Some Ovambo proverbs. There are many Black-African proverbs, which Matti Kuusi found only in Ovambo. Three examples:

Out of a (hard) omoku tree no drum will be made, a chief cannot be taught. *Omokuku iha gu hokua (o)ntunda, amukuaniilua iha longua' ndunge* (KM-1.232/1748).

The efu knows its length, the viper knows its shortness. *Efu oli shi uule walyo, epili oli shi uufupi walyo* (KM-1.48/246).

You do not respect the councilman whose mother is known to you. *Elenga u shii ina, iho li fimanelce* (KM-1.40/176). This Ovambo proverb expresses the same idea as the European Biblical one: *A prophet is not without honor save in his own country.* $\Sigma = 39$ (Bible: New Testament, Matthew 13:57; Luke 4, 24, see PGy-1.65). Also, there is a Japanese equivalent: *The local God is not respected.* *Tokoro no kamisama arigatakarazu* (PGy-2.4.13).

5. The Composition of the Proverb Lore

If in a region or locality most of the known proverbs are recorded, and not only those characteristic to the particular area, then it is worth while investigating the proportion of proverbs of different origin. In this connection it might be useful to quote some data from a study of Hungarian, Estonian, and Japanese proverbs (PGy-3).

5.1. Hungarian proverbs. The basic source was the collection by Gabriella Vöö (VG-1), which gives the frequency (f) of the individual proverbs. The top 176 proverbs of $f_{\min} = 33$ were chosen for this study (f_{\max} was 256). The results are presented in the following table:

	Number	Per cent
1. Hungarian (local)	54	30.7
2. European (incl. German)	114	64.7
3. Slavonic	7	4.0
4. Turkish	1	0.6
Total:	176	100.0

Note: The 114 European proverbs include 6 Biblical ones and 35 found in more than 28 European languages, corresponding to 3.3 and 19.9 per cent respectively. The Turkish relations of Hungarian proverbs are discussed in PGy-5.

5.2. Estonian proverbs. The basic source was the *Proverbia Septentrionalia* collection by Matti Kuusi and his co-workers (KM-2). The top 152 Estonian proverbs of $f_{\min} = 101$ were chosen (f_{\max} was 430).

	Number	Per cent
1. Estonian (local)	18	11.7
2. European (incl. German)	89	58.6
3. Nordic (Finnish, Swedish)	27	17.8
4. Russian (no German equiv.)	15	9.9
5. Latvian (Baltic)	3	2.0
Total:	152	100.0

Note: The European group includes 21 proverb found at least in 28 languages and 2 Biblical ones, corresponding to 13.8 and 1.3 per cent respectively. According to these data, the proportion of European and Biblical proverbs is slightly smaller than in Hungarian, while the percentage of Slavonic ones – due to the longer and closer contacts – is higher and there is a reasonable and evident presence of the originally Nordic and Baltic proverbs.

5.3. *Japanese proverbs.* The basic source was the collection by Taiji Takashima (TT) including 800 proverbs. The results:

	Number	Per cent
1. Japanese (local)	592	74.0
2. Confucius, Mencius, Lao Tse	32	4.0
3. Other Chinese sources	153	19.1
4. Western	17	2.1
5. Various	6	0.8
Total:	800	100.0

Note: The considerable shift to the local group found in this case is likely due to the larger number of proverbs considered. This is corroborated by the investigation of the Maltese proverbs, based on the collection of Joseph Aquilina (AJ). In that study 60.2 per cent of the total of 2911 proverbs proved to be the local ones.

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UNIVERSALIOSIOS, REGIONINĖS, SUBREGIONINĖS IR LOKALINĖS PATARLĖS

GYULA PACZOLAY

Santrauka

Sinchroniškai tiriant pasaulio patarles, skiriamos universaliosios, regioninės, subregioninės ir lokalinės patarlės.

1. **Universaliosios patarlės** aptinkamos visame pasaulyje, tą pačią mintį jos išsako beveik tais pačiais arba labai panašiais žodžiais. Jų šaltinis – kaip antai metaforinių patarlių – yra paprasti, kasdieniški reiškiniai. *Lašas po lašo ir akmenį pratašo* vartojama 34-iomis Europos kalbomis, taip pat sako kinai, korėjiečiai ir japonai. Sentencijų tipo patarlės išreiškia visuotinius pamatinius žmonių elgesio ir moralės dėsnius. Patarlė *Neatidėk rytdienai to, ką gali padaryti šiandien* pasakoma 48-iomis Europos, taip pat kinų, korėjiečių, japonų, vietnamiečių, tajų ir Ovambo kalbomis. Posakio *Daryk kitam taip, kaip norėtum, kad tau darytų* šaknis Europoje siekia Bibliją, Azijoje – Konfucijaus analektus ir „Mahabharatą“. Dar viena tokių patarlių atmaina atsirado dėl globalizacijos įtakos. Gera žinomas pavyzdys būtų *Laikas – pinigai*; taip sakoma 35-iomis Europos ir keliomis Azijos bei Afrikos kalbomis.

2. **Regioninės patarlės.** Dalis jų kilusios iš klasikinės atitinkamo regiono literatūros: Europoje – iš graikų ir romėnų autorių, Biblijos bei vidurinių amžių lotyniškų veikalų, Azijoje – iš kinų klasikos (pvz., iš istorinių užrašų ir Konfucijaus analektų), o kartais – iš sanskritų tekstų, kaip antai iš „Pančatantra“. Tipiški pavyzdžiai būtų: *Dovanotam arkliui į dantis nežiūri* – žinoma 48-iomis Europos kalbomis, ir *Viena ranka nepaplosi* – vartojama 21 Azijos kalba. *Ką suvalgei, tas tavo, o ką sutaupei – vado vyrai atims* sakoma 12 juodaodžių Afrikos genčių kalbų.

3. **Subregioninės patarlės** dažniausiai apima tiksliai tam tikro regiono dalį. Europoje tokios laikytinos Šiaurės šalių, Balkanų, slavų, Azijoje – Tolimųjų Rytų arba bendros japonų ir korėjiečių, Afrikoje – Centrinės Afrikos patarlės.

4. **Lokalinės patarlės** neaptinkamos už tiriamos teritorijos ribų. Pavyzdžiui, tokios yra kai kurių straispsnyje minimos tiksliai vengrų, lietuvių arba Ovambo vartojamos patarlės.

Straipsnio autorius taip pat pateikia proporcingus duomenis apie vengrų, estų ir japonų patarlių repertuare esančių lokaliųjų, subregioninių, regioninių bei universaliųjų patarlių dalį.

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