

# Short narratives and folktale variation in Greek folk culture

Marianthi Kaplanoglou  
University of Athens  
mkaplanog@phil.uoa.gr

## ABSTRACT

*The study of folktale variation in Greek folk culture shows that, in the process of their oral transmission, certain plots and themes are transformed into shorter and more stereotyped narratives. Thus, stories which belong to different subgenres of the folktale (the fable, the magic tale or the anecdote) can evolve to a shorter or simpler form, like a proverb, a parable or an allusion. This is, for example, the case of the paroimiomythoi (proverbs derived from tales) to use the term coined by Demetrios Loukatos. It is also the case of international folktale types which are presented in the Greek corpus not as tales but as proverbial phrases. The main objective of this paper is, therefore, to study some examples of these short stories and analyze not only their explicit images and allegorical meanings but also their adaptations to modern social and cultural conditions. The paper is based on the findings of the Catalogue of the Greek Folktale as well as micro-data recently collected during field research mostly on the Aegean islands and in northern Greece.*

## KEYWORDS

*folktale, proverb, symbolic codification, expansion of folklore, playful aspect of folklore*

## RESUM

*L'estudi de la variació de les rondalles en la cultura popular grega mostra que alguns arguments i temes, en el procés de la seva transmissió oral, s'estan transformant en narracions més curtes i estereotipades. Així, les històries que pertanyen a diferents subgèneres de la rondalla (la faula, la rondalla meravellosa o l'anècdota) poden evolucionar a una forma més curta o més simple, com un proverbi, una paràbola o una al·lusió. És, per exemple, el cas de la paroimiomythoi (proverbis derivats de rondalles) d'acord amb el terme de Demetrios Loukatos. També és el cas dels tipus internacionals de rondalles que es presenten al corpus grec no com a rondalles sinó com a frases proverbials. L'objectiu principal d'aquest article és, per tant, estudiar alguns exemples d'aquestes rondalles analitzant les seves imatges explícites i els significats al·legòrics que se'ls assignen, així com les seves adaptacions a les modernes condicions socials i culturals. L'article es basa en les conclusions del Catalogue of the Greek Folktale, així com en micro-dades recentment recopilades durant el treball de camp, majoritàriament a l'illa del mar Egeu i al nord de Grècia.*

## PARAULES CLAU

*rondalla, proverbi, codificació simbòlica, expansió del folklore, aspecte lúdic del folklore*

THE PHENOMENON OF BRIEF OR EVEN LACONIC EXPRESSION can assume different forms in Greek folk culture: in the framework of folktale variation, it can be either a procedure for simplifying storytelling from more complex to simpler versions with fewer episodes in the framework of the same plot, or transforming longer and more complicated narratives to shorter and more elliptic or cohesive ones (for example a folktale into a proverb).

At first glance, these brief or laconic texts could be described as fragmentary, mutilated or unfinished. They could also be attributed to memory failure on the part of the storyteller or to the overall decline of traditional storytelling and oral communication in contemporary society. As the above categories show, however, they represent a tendency in Greek folk speech that certainly exists even though it may not be generalized. The comparison of the findings of the *National Catalogue of Greek Tale-types* (Megas *et al.* 2012) with material recently collected from field research (Kaplanoglou 2002 and 2004) indicates that briefness or simplicity in storytelling is a more recent development. Again, this may not be the case, since this shift in folktale variation may be the result not of a shift in storytelling but of a shift in the researcher's perspective: older collections of folktales tended to gather only the texts while more recent ones concentrate on the micro-data produced at the local level, in a particular community or region, and about its narrators, audience and social context, where these variations are more easily observed and coined down.

On the basis of these preliminary remarks we should therefore study the two phenomena of brief narratives in Greek folk culture.

## 1. Simplification of a folktale

Simplification in folktale variation means the creation of shorter and more coherent versions instead of lengthy folktale plots with many episodes. It is, therefore, an evolution from more complicated to simpler versions with fewer episodes (sometimes only one). Nevertheless, simplification does not mean impoverishment since the simplicity of the basic narrative schema does not mean lack of detail in plot development.

Local communities seem to be relatively open to a variety of narrative traditions since the movement of people causes stories to circulate as well. Nonetheless, fieldwork on the living systems of folklore shows that some stories or combinations of stories, in the process of their oral transmission, became traditional in some geographical areas (Kaplanoglou 2002: 113-138). These areas can be large, such as a complex of islands, or more restricted, such as a village or several neighboring villages, and as a result are told by many narrators in more or

less the same way. The spread of a tale over a local area tends to lead to stability, while spread on a wider scale leads to variation. As a result, the versions of a tale told in a small area can have a stable and repetitive narrative pattern, different from the ways that the tale is told in other parts of Greece. In the narrative corpus of a community, some tales become more popular than others and through numerous retellings by different narrators acquire certain characteristics that define this particular narrative corpus. The more popular a tale becomes, the more restricted storytellers are in their narrative choices, since they are telling a story that has a strong impact on the collective memory. Nonetheless, this repetitiveness does not become monotonous because it is balanced by the personal style of each narrator, the context of the performance and the richness of the local and personal repertoires.

Additionally, an old narrative pattern can be used in different ways to address contemporary social and moral issues. This can lead to the disappearance, the expansion or the transformation of certain folktales. Therefore, more complicated versions of a folktale-type may exist in parallel with simpler ones for grown ups or for children, according to the context of dissemination. In this framework the simplification of a folktale can be regarded as part of a constant procedure of adapting an established narrative pattern to a local context. This can result in a new variation on a known theme, which can be designed as an oikotype or a local oikotype.<sup>1</sup> Folktale simplification, therefore, can usually be observed not on a panhellenic scale but on a local scale.

In this framework folk narrators tend to narrate:

- a) Only the introduction of a folktale. For example, this is the case of versions of the folktale-type ATU 700 *Kontorebithoulis* or *Misokolakis* (*Thumbling*) which village women in the Dodekanesian islands of southern Greece still narrate to their grandchildren and which they are proud to say is received with joy.
- b) The first part of a tale. This is the case of versions of ATU 402 and ATU 409A told in the island of Calymnos, an island with quite specific narrative traditions. In these versions, the burning of the magic wife's animal skin (cat in the versions of ATU 402, crow in the versions of ATU 409A) does not lead to the disappearance of the magical wife and to the adventures of the husband who sets off to search for her but to a ritualistic dialogue between the hero and his wife, which consists of a short reminiscence about the episode of the disappearance and search.
- c) Only one folktale, not in combination with other folktale types (as in the case of ATU 709).

Simplification led not only to morphological changes but also to semantic ones. As is mentioned in the *Catalogue of Greek Magic Folktales*, a characteristic of the Greek form of folktale ATU 707 is that in around half the versions the third major episode is missing, where the sister (after prodding by her persecutor) sets difficult tasks for her brothers (they usually have to go in search of a magic bird or Beauty [the Fair One of the World]).

1. A local oikotype is defined as the version of an oikotype that is disseminated across a limited geographical area (Kaplanoglou 2004).

It should also be pointed out that in some versions from the Aegean islands the simplification or omission of the episode about the search is counterbalanced by the extension of the initial episode about the three girls who spin and talk and the following episode about how the third girl is mistreated by her mother in law. So a morphological change led to a change in meaning, since the emphasis is now not on the adventures of the children – quite common in the epic context of a magic tale – but on the far more realistic adventures of their mother (first as an unmarried girl and then as a young bride and mother).

Some versions of the folk tale type 514C\* told by the women from the island of Skopelos in the Aegean evolve in a similar way: originally a tale of magic, it is the story of a girl doing *nichter*i (some sort of female work during the night) and so as not to fall asleep she talks to *Ypnos* (Sleep) by reciting a stereotyped poem in which she asks him to wait so that they can go and sleep together. The neighbours accuse her of being the girlfriend of the king's son, whose name is *Ypnos* (Sleep). The queen sends her presents and wants to see her baby, since she believes that the girl is pregnant. The girl dresses a piece of wood as a baby but, on her way to the palace, she meets the three Moires (Fates) who laugh at her and transform the wood into a real child. Finally, she marries the king's son. The modern variant, as told in Skopelos, retains the initial activity of the girl making the traditional costume for women in Skopelos during her *nichter*i as well as the stereotyped formula by which she asks *Ypnos* to wait so that they can sleep together when she finishes her night work. But the magical element is totally absent. The story, again in its simplified form, continues with the efforts of her social environment (neighbours, other women, the young man who loves her) to find out if she has a lover and the final proof of her innocence, which nevertheless does not lead to her marrying a royal husband.

In the above paradigms simplification means a process of adaptation by which the local versions of a folktale type are increasingly stripped of their magical elements (even though they were originally tales of magic) which are substituted for more realistic ones.

## 2. The transformation of a folktale into a proverb

Of the phenomena of brevity mentioned above, Greek folklorists have paid most attention to the transformation of a folktale (a longer and multi-episode narrative) into a proverb (a short narrative or phrase). The term coined by Nikolaos Politis was “tales turned into proverbs” or “tales shortened to proverbs” (Politis 1899: ma and 457; Politis 1917, 643 and 646). Stipon Kyriakidis characterized these stories as “proverbial anecdotes” or proverbial tales (Kyriakidis 1923: 236) while Georgios Megas wrote that “many proverbs originate from the abbreviation of tales through the removal of one of their characteristic phrases which becomes independent” (Megas 1975: 194). This phenomenon was discussed in detail by Demetrios Loukatos in his book *Modern Greek Proverbs Derived from Tales* in which he notes that “people maintain their experiences and project them as paradigms. Initially they narrate the whole stories, then they express them in shortened

form in a more practical way as proverbs, while finally they just mention them as a simple allusion (*similes*)” (Loukatos 1978: k).<sup>2</sup>

This relation was also studied by the Russian paremiologist Permyakov (1979). He also notes that “instead of incoherently describing some frequently-encountered situations at length, for example ‘If something gives birth to another thing, then the properties of the thing which has been given birth are similar to the properties of that which gave birth,’ we simply say ‘The apple does not fall far from the apple tree.’ And everyone who knows his native language immediately understands what we have in mind” (Permyakov 1989: 91-102). Therefore, these clichés are actually special kinds of language signs, and most of all signs of typical (and logical) situations or of standard relations between objects. Permyakov shows that many long folk narratives have currency as short phraseological remnants (allusions) (Mieder 2004: 128).<sup>3</sup>

In folk speech abstract notions are not mentioned directly but are usually inferred through concrete experiences, images and objects (Meraklis 2007: 26-27). Consequently every image or object which is used in the framework of folk speech can have, as well as its literal meaning, a metaphorical one. The creation of more laconic narratives or phrases presupposes, therefore, a higher degree of codification of their metaphorical references among the members of a folk group or community. This procedure can be the result of a certain degree of canonization of the symbolic equivalence between an object and its metaphorical meaning, through numerous repetitions.

For example, the contrast between white and brown bread was established in both folk narrative genres and colloquial speech. The former is produced from wheat, is called *xasiko* and is the bread of the rich. Therefore, it is connected with wealth and prosperity. The latter, on the other hand, is produced from barley, is called *krithino* and is the bread of the poor. Therefore, it is connected with poverty and misery. In versions of Cinderella from Mani (Southern Peloponnese), the bad stepmother makes the heroine spin all day long and gives her *krithino* bread and little water. In a *rebetiko*<sup>4</sup> love song, on the other hand, written by Markos Vamvakaris, the woman for whom he writes the song is “like *xasiko* bread”.

This canonization, however, did not prevent the opposite procedure: that is, the multiplication of the symbolic meanings of an object depending on the context of use. For example, these two different kinds of bread gave rise to another colour-based metaphor in everyday conversations: women working in a

2. Loukatos also wrote about the relationship of the proverb with the folktale in such other essays as “Le proverbe dans le conte” (1964). Other Greek paremiologists and folklorists also dealt with this issue (Doulaveras 2010: 52-54; Chatzitaki-Kapsomenou 2002: 153; Kontaxis 1998).

3. In his classic study on the proverb, Archer Taylor focuses not only on the relations between proverbs and longer narratives, especially the fable, but also on the process of a proverb developing into a tale (Taylor 1931: 27-32). As Dan Ben-Amos notes, “subject to theoretical positions and analytical methods the relations between proverbs and tales have been described in causal, analytical, structural and rhetorical terms” and, as well as being present in literary Aesopic fables, “proverbs may occur in narrative texts in different positions, serving different functions” (Ben-Amos 2007: 407).

4. *Rebetika* are the songs of the urban lower classes first written at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and mainly after the arrival of the Greek refugees from Asia Minor during 1922-24 in the big urban centres of Greece, like Athens and Thessaloniki.

textile factory on the island of Rhodes referred to their husbands or fiancés who waited for them when they finished work as *xasiko* or *krithino* bread depending on whether they were blond or dark. In this way they could talk about them without being noticed by their boss.

This procedure of the symbolic codification not only of single words or objects but of more extended narrative forms could lead, through numerous repetitions in the communicative process, to the creation of shorter stories (for example, proverbs instead of folktales) and even to laconic phrases:

For example, there is a dialogical proverb told by the inhabitants of the town of Kozani:

—What do you call hot bread in your hometown?

—*Sitzak ekmek*.

—What about cold bread?

—We don't let it get cold!

This dialogue, which had already been abbreviated from a tale or incident evolved into an even more laconic phrase: "All hot?". Here the phrase is so laconic that the first social or empirical images from which the story was derived are no longer obvious to an outsider (Kaplanoglou, G.-Kaplanoglou, M. 2012: 211).

Likewise from a folktale (ATU 545B *Puss in Boots*) a single expression remained (*My lord Tristampeis*): it was derived from the name of the hero *Tritsampis* in the Greek versions, which means the owner of three bunches of grapes. Today this phrase is used by mothers from the island of Rhodes to refer to their little sons with tenderness and pride.<sup>5</sup>

Some folk expressions, which survived in such codified and laconic forms, could again be subject to a procedure of expansion:<sup>6</sup> their morphological changes led to semantic ones since they enabled a story to survive by constantly adapting to new social and cultural environments. In other words, by becoming shorter, a folk expression was more easily adaptable to different metaphorical meanings according to the context of use. Thus, the abbreviation of folk expressions contributed to the commodification of folk culture as well: that is, to its circulation among hegemonic cultural groups in political and journalistic speech, in advertisements, in mass culture and consumption, in school, in urban

---

5. It should be pointed out that the slight difference between *Tritsampis* and *Trisampeis* is justified by the connexion with the phonetically similar word *mpeis*, a Turkish authority during the Ottoman occupation which is used even nowadays along with other similar phrases like *pasas* or *agas* as praise or mockery.

6. In the 1960s new theoretical perspectives in folklore studies contrasted folklore in the contemporary consumer and media society with the romantic study of traditional culture as a corpus of survivals and relics, which would disappear in contact with urban and technological civilisation. In this framework, Hermann Bausinger introduced a systematic theory of the expansion of folk culture by emphasising the historical dimension of the folk phenomena and studied modern folklore matters (urban folk culture, revival of folk culture, commercialization of tradition, new folk narrative genres, etc). Under this new theoretical perspective folk culture was understood as a multidimensional and ever changing system in which new and older elements were mixed. Furthermore, it was noticed that for many individuals and social groups folk culture represents an "ideal" world of old values and symbols (thus defining their identity) juxtaposed to the expanded, modern and technological society (Bausinger 2005).

settings, on the internet. This is the case of an international tale (ATU 1015 *Forging a Hiss [previously Whetting the Knife]*)<sup>7</sup> which only exists in Greece in the form of a popular proverbial phrase: “One makes from a plowshare a needle”.

This proverb, as well as the tale it originates from, initially referred to the work of a blacksmith and presupposed a certain empirical knowledge of the world of blacksmiths. It functioned as a warning about everyday activities. In its original form it referred to the incompetent blacksmith or other craftsman, who does not know how to make proper use of a piece of metal. However, now that the proverb has left its initial social context of use and has been incorporated into new oral or literary contexts and folk groups, it must be transferred to a higher level of abstraction. It is thus dissociated from the world and activities of blacksmiths to become a metaphor of particular human behavior. The proverb now refers to any person who wastes an asset or sacrifices something valuable in order to gain something without worth. During the Greek Enlightenment, the proverb had already gained this level of abstraction. In the work of moral philosophy *The lantern of Diogenis or Moral Characters* (Vienna, 1818) written by Charisios Megdanis, this proverb is used to describe a prodigal man who spends his fortune or destroys something valuable in order to fulfil humble needs. Nevertheless, the new use and understanding of the metaphorical meaning of the proverb still required some knowledge of what is described on the literal level (that is, the world of blacksmiths).<sup>8</sup>

In a further stage of its expansion, in which modern versions of the proverb in oral and written speech assumed new metaphorical meanings, the same proverb can refer to a miser who ends up paying more, a liar, a person who exaggerates, unsuccessful investors or those who take a lot of trouble to no avail. It appears in newspaper reports on activities of state agents whose incompetence or deliberate actions damage public interest. A different version of the proverb is found in football jargon: “Shall we give a *Porsche* to get a bike?” about buying and selling players.

In this procedure of expansion understanding the literal image of a proverb is no longer necessary to understand its metaphor. In other words, the users of a folk expression potentially know its metaphorical meaning but are unaware of its literal meaning, the experiences, the words or the objects from which it

7. ATU 1015 *Forging a Hiss (previously Whetting the Knife)* is a professional anecdote about blacksmiths in which a youth is sent to a blacksmith to learn how to forge metal objects simply by watching him. After a time of “apprenticeship”, he wants to use a piece of metal to forge a plowshare for a farmer. He hammers and hammers so that the metal becomes too thin for a plowshare. So he decides to forge an axe, then a knife and then an awl. Finally from the tiny piece of metal that is left, he tells the farmer that he will forge him a hiss. He throws the iron into the water, where it sinks with a hissing sound.

8. This is obvious from the fact that Megdanis and therefore his audience or readers seemed familiar with other phrases taken from the activities of blacksmiths: in the same book there is another proverb about blacksmiths which again refers to tightfisted people: “he wants to pay for the needles the same money he would pay for the raw metal of the same weight”. Needles, having been processed by the blacksmith, are of course worth much more than the raw iron, but are still very cheap. Wanting to buy them at an even lower price shows the magnitude of his meanness. The metaphorical meaning of the proverb remained constant outside its initial frame of use as is obvious from the title of *Exintavelonis* “sixtyneedle” which is the Greek name of the hero in the translation of Molière’s comedy *L’Avare* published in 1816 by Konstantinos Oikonomos.

originates. Here, the separation of the proverb's metaphorical meaning (which is known) from its empirical image (which is not known) has disassociated it from the empirical reality from which it was produced. Students in my class on folklore explained that the metaphorical meaning of the proverb "his tongue is like a *rodani*" refers to a person who speaks too much and too quickly, yet they did not know the meaning of the word *rodani* (which is the part of a spinning wheel around which the thread is rolled). In this case there is no need to understand the proverbial image to understand the metaphorical meaning of the proverb, so there is a complete dissociation of the proverb from its original linguistic and social context. This dissociation can have a "freezing" effect on folk culture, whose richness is based on the interrelation between empirical images and the poetical metaphors that are constantly produced by these images. In our last example, a proverb or many other proverbs or phrases become stereotyped collective knowledge, inserted into a paremiological minimum, to use Permjakov's term (1971; 1973; 1989). This dissociation also limits the scope of their application, according to the distinction made by Arewa and Dundes between knowing and applying proverbs in the framework of an ethnography of speaking (Arewa-Dundes 1964: 70).

To sum up, these brief folk expressions show that folk speech evolves from longer (descriptive and detailed) forms to shorter (abstract and deductive) forms. These new forms in a traditional society demonstrate a higher degree of symbolic codification of folk speech among the members of a given folk group. But when cultural expressions previously confined to particular folk groups are caught in the procedure of expansion, they can gradually become alienated from the particular experiences, traditions and images from which they were produced, thus becoming independent from the objects themselves and the social conditions of their reference. In this way, the interplay between literal and metaphorical meanings cannot be continued.

This argument enables us to provide an alternative explanation for the procedure described by 19<sup>th</sup> century folklorists as "the disappearance of tradition". This "disappearance" can be explained by the connection of folk culture with the societies of the past, which makes their symbols incomprehensible in the present. But it can also be explained by the alienation of the symbols of folk culture from their traditional ties with particular objects, which, through empirical observation, were inserted in a folk worldview and had their symbolic aspects codified in the collective thought.

Nevertheless, new symbolic relations – that is, new folk metaphors – are shaped from new images and experiences. These new images can potentially be of more local origin, connected with local names, events of micro-history, particular people or incidents. Conversely, new folk phrases reflect a globalized society: for example, in order to describe a catastrophe we use the phrase "it was as in Korea, or as in Lebanon or as in the twin towers".

This dynamic use of images and symbols by particular social groups and the constant play between literal and metaphorical meanings shows both the complex and the subversive dimension of folk culture which, instead of confirming stereotypes, social order and established social relations, can symbolically reverse them. This is the case of a large number of folktales and language jokes and anecdotes which concentrate on this play with words by

misunderstanding metaphorical speech or literally interpreting a phrase meant to be interpreted only metaphorically (Loukatos 1960). These have been common themes ever since Aesop and are usually connected with figures of wise fools or socially underestimated heroes (like servants).

But besides the subversive element, this play with words shows another dimension of folk culture: a playful one. In Greek families short expressions of folk wisdom, like proverbs, were used only by the grown ups (as acquired wisdom), while children had to prove that they could understand them (wisdom which they gradually conquer).

This playful aspect of folk speech can be traced back to the gradual understanding of metaphorical speech during childhood. A child initially does not understand the use of metaphors. A 4 years old kid, when called a “homecat” (meaning someone who prefers to stay at home instead of getting out and about), will ask “Why are you calling me a cat?”. The child gradually masters the use of metaphors, and their complex and multiple meanings. Thus, when an older child asks for an ice-cream and his parents answer “You want a groom and you want him now?”, the child is in a position to understand the metaphorical meaning of the phrase (which refers to anyone who is in a hurry to buy or do something). In an even later stage, when children have already fully understood the meaning of metaphors, on occasion they might intentionally return to the previous stage of ignorance by pretending not to understand, explain a metaphorical phrase in a literal sense and laugh at it. For example, when my ten-year-old niece realised that she had lost a sweet which had fallen out of her pocket when she was on the beach, she started looking for it. Her mother told the proverb “Don’t look for fleas in the straw”. She answered “But here there are neither fleas nor straw”. And they both laughed.

This example shows that by reversing the elements of everyday life the game with folk metaphors, can still be entertaining or it can exemplify the conciseness that characterizes folk expressions of particular folk groups or places.

### 3. References

- AREWA, E. Ojo; Alan DUNDES (1964): “Proverbs and the Ethnography of Speaking Folklore”. *American Anthropologist* no. 66 / issue 6, Pt. 2 (December 1964): 70-85.
- BAUSINGER, Hermann (2005): *Volkskultur in der technischen Welt*. Frankfurt/Main: Campus Verlag.
- BEN-AMOS, Dan (2007): *Folktales of the Jews (Volume 2 Tales from Eastern Europe)*. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society.
- CHATZITAKI-KAPSOMENOU, Chrysoula (2002): *To neohelliniko paramythi* [The neohellenic folktale]. Thessaloniki: Institute of Modern Greek Studies (Manolis Triandaphyllidis Foundation).
- KAPLANOGLOU, Georgios K.; Marianthi G. KAPLANOGLOU (2012): *Paroimies tis Kozanis. Themata-chrisis-erminies* [Proverbs of Kozani. Themes, uses, meaning]. Athens: auto-edition.

- KAPLANOGLOU, Marianthi (2002): *Paramythi kai afigisi stin Ellada. Mia palia techni se mia nea ephi* [Folktale and Storytelling in Greece: An Old Art in a New Era]. Athens: Patakis.
- (2004): *Kokkini klosti klosmeni. Laika paramythia kai afigites toy Aigaiou* [“Red thread tied”, Folktales and Folk Narrators in the islands of the Aegean Sea]. Athens: Patakis Publications.
- KONTAXIS, Kostas D. (1998): *Simasiologiki proseggisi paroimias kai paramytiou* [Semantic analysis of the proverb and the folktale]. Agrinio.
- KYRIAKIDIS, Stylpon (1923): *Elliniki Laographia* [Greek Folklore]. Athens.
- LOUKATOS, Démétrios (1960): “Glossikes eutrapeles diigisis [Languages jokes]”. In *Afieroma sti mnimi tou Manoli Triantafillidi*. Thessaloniki, p. 233-255.
- (1965): “Le proverbe dans le conte”. [IV International Congress for Folk-Narrative Research in Athens (1-6.IX.1964)] *Laographia* no 22 (1965): 229-233.
- (1978). *Neohellinikoi paroimiomythoi* [Modern Greek Proverb derived from Tales]. Athens: Estia.
- MEGAS, Georgios A. (1975): *Eisagogin eis tin Laographian* [Introduction to Folklore]. Athens.
- MEGAS, Georgios A.; Anna ANGELOPOULOS; Aigli BROUSKOU; Marianthi KAPLANOGLOU; Emmanouela KATRINAKI (2012): *Catalogue of Greek Magic Folktales*. Folklore Fellows’ Communications 303. Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia.
- MERAKLIS, Michalis G. (2007): *Paroimies ellinikes kai ton allon balkanikon laon* [Greek Proverbs and proverbs from the other peoples of the Balkans]. Athens: Patakis Publications.
- MIEDER, Wolfgang (2004): *Proverbs. A Handbook*. Westport/Connecticut/London: Greenwood Publishing Press.
- PERMIAKOV, Grigorii L’vovich (1971): *Paremiologicheskii eksperiment. Materialy dlia paremiologicheskogo minimuma*. Moskva: Nauka.
- (1973): “On the paremiological minimum of language”. *Proverbium* n° 22 (1973): 862-863.
- (1979): *From Proverb to Folktale: Notes on the General Theory of Cliché*. Moscow: Nauka.
- (1989): “On the Question of a Russian Paremiological Minimum”. *Proverbium* n° 6 (1989): 91-102.
- POLITIS, Nikolaos G. (1899-1902): *Parimoiai* (Proverbs). 4 vols. Athens.
- POLITIS, Nikolaos G.: “Mythoi metapesontes eis paroimias”(Tales turned into proverbs). *Laographia* no 6 (1917-1918): 643-652.
- TAYLOR, Archer (1931): *The Proverb*. Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- UTHER, Hans-Jörg (2004): *The Types of International Folktales. A Classification and Bibliography. Based on the System of Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson*. 3 vols. Folklore Fellows’ Communications 284-285-286. Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia.