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PARADIGM SHIFT IN THE REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN ANGLO-AMERICAN PAREMIOLOGY – A COGNITIVE SEMANTICS PERSPECTIVE[1]

Abstract. The present paper, adopting some of the tools offered by Cognitive Linguistics, namely the mechanisms of conceptual metaphor and metonymy, is a qualitative study of a sociolinguistic nature. Its overall purpose is an attempt at exhibiting a paradigm shift in the representation of women in Anglo-American proverbs. Combining the potential of the cross-fertilisation between Cognitive Linguistics and paremiological studies, the study appertains to the sense-threads embedded in the figurative language of proverbs, with the main focus on a cognitive semantic analysis of selected Anglo-American paremias directed towards women and animals. The main goal of the research is the juxtaposition of the meaning coded in two proverbs of traditional status, as representatives of a larger group of paremiological units (i.e. *A woman, a cat, and a chimney should never leave the house*; *A whistling girl and a crowing hen always come to no good end*), reflecting the deep-rooted gender-biased ideology in patriarchal Anglo-American society, with the content of the selected anti-proverb (i.e. *The early bird gets up to serve his wife breakfast in bed*) and a contemporary proverb (i.e. *A woman without a man is like a fish without a bicycle*), serving as sample evidence of the heralds of a paradigm shift in the issue of gender stereotyping stored in paremiological wisdom. The paper shows that the motivation behind the use of the analysed proverbs is to be accounted for by reference to the mechanism of metaphor-metonymy interaction, while the rise of new gender-related proverbs can be regarded as a sign of socio-cultural changes. Specifically, through the medium of modern paremiology, asymmetrical representation of male and female gender, coupled with traditional masculine and feminine characteristics as well as social roles, appears if not endangered then, at least, to be taking a promising path.

Keywords: women-related proverbs, metaphor, metonymy, metaphtonymy, paradigm shift

1. Introduction

The power of metaphor and metonymy has long been debated within the field of cognitive semantics. In the core analytical section of the present article, there is yet another scientific endeavour appertaining to the messages embedded in the figurative language of proverbs, with the main focus on a cognitive semantic analysis of selected Anglo-American paremias directed towards women and animals. To put it more accurately, the paper offers a metaphor-metonymy-based (see Goossens, 1990 for metaphor-metonymy interaction) analysis of two traditional proverbs (*A woman, a cat, and a chimney should never leave the house* (Kerschen, 1998, p. 72); *A whistling girl and a crowing hen always come to no good end* (Litovkina, 2019, p. 188)), one anti-proverb (i.e. *The early bird gets up to serve his wife breakfast in bed* (Safian, 1967, p. 35)), and one modern proverb (i.e. *A woman without a man is like a fish without a bicycle* (DMP, p. 279)) which merely exemplify a wealth of proverbs whose motivation may be accounted for in analogical terms.

The overall objective of the research reported in this paper is to investigate the meaning, role, and communicative function of the given metaphor-metonymy-based paremias in the linguistic representation of the female gender. Nevertheless, the goal of the research is a juxtaposition of the messages encoded in two traditional proverbs exemplifying a number of others which can be accounted for in analogical terms and reflecting the deep-rooted gender-biased ideology in patriarchal Anglo-American society, with the content of the selected anti-proverb and contemporary proverb testifying to the heralds of a paradigm shift in the subject matter of gender stereotyping reflected in paremiology. In accordance with that, the rationale behind the analysis in question is based on the premise that the general awareness of gender imbalance present in paremiological lore of the western cultures – more accurately in Anglo-American linguo-culture – is gradually progressing to the point that conventional gender-based perceptions and stereotypical role distinctions are becoming less conspicuous in the modern world and its communicative linguistic tools. Apparently, such *a status quo* is the result of the battle against sexism in the English language carried by, among others, feminists of the 1970s and political correctness advocates of the 1990s (see e.g. Key, 1975, Maggio, 1991). Thereupon, the sociolinguistic fight with androcentrism in Western societies diminished the overt sexism, yet, regrettably, replaced it with a more sophisticated covert sexism. This is where the new feminism emerged to change women's attitude in the new social and economic realities at the turn of the 21st century (Walter, 1999, p. 3–4).

In order to illustrate the anticipated significant changes stored in the present-day paremiographical wisdom, the present article addresses both the Anglo-American proverbial and anti-proverbial picture of the world pertaining to women. The research choice of both traditional proverbs as well as modern proverbs and anti-proverbs is premeditated by the fact that modern paremiology constitutes an abundant information medium attesting to the potential changes in the perception of contemporary social issues.[2]

For the clarity of arguments raised in the present study and hence better readability, brief definitions of the above-mentioned notions seem requisite to include. A *proverb* is understood here as "a short, generally known sentence of the folk which contains wisdom, truth, morals, and traditional views in a metaphorical, fixed and memorizable form and which is handed down from generation to generation" (Mieder, 2004, p. 3), as in e.g. *A whistling girl and a crowing hen always come to no good end* (Litovkina, 2019, p. 188). A *modern proverb*, in contradistinction to the traditional one, is a proverb coined after the year 1900 (e.g. *A woman without a man is like a fish without a bicycle* (DMP, p. 279)), which is, however, a date that is somewhat arbitrarily chosen in the given qualification (Mieder, 2020, p. viii). In turn, an *anti-proverb* is a general label for deliberate proverb innovations (also known as *alterations*, *mutations*, *parodies*, *transformations*, *variations*, *wisecracks*, *deliberate proverb innovations*, or *fractured proverbs*) (Litovkina, 2019, p. 26) which might reveal humorous or satirical speech play with traditional proverbial wisdom (Mieder and Litovkina, 1999) or serve as a sharp tool of criticism, a means of expressing irony, sarcasm or manifestation of disapproval of certain contemporary issues (Szutkowski, 2019, p. 174), as in e.g. *The early bird gets up to serve his wife breakfast in bed* (Safian, 1967, p. 35).

The paper is organised as follows. Section 2 discusses previous studies on proverbs. Section 3 attempts to outline the theoretical apparatus used in the paper with particular reference to the motivation of proverbs. Section 4 constitutes a semantic analysis of traditional proverbs/modern proverbs/anti-proverbs with a gender component. One of the aims of the section is to show that from the cognitive perspective, a number of proverbs listed and analysed in the paper seem to be motivated by the general conceptual metonymy SPECIFIC FOR GENERIC exemplified by its instantiations verbalised as A DESPISED (FEMALE) HUMAN BEING FOR A HUMAN BEING, A PERSON LACKING CERTAIN CHARACTERISTICS FOR A WOMAN, A PERSON POSSESSING CERTAIN (DESIRABLE) CHARACTERISTICS FOR A WOMAN/MAN and possibly a number of other metonymies or metaphors realized by individual elements of the proverbs targeted. The analytical discussion begins with a short refer-

ence to the stereotypical image of women embedded in traditional proverbs of the English language (subsection 4.1) indicating anti-feminist ideology in society so as to later proceed to more modern language signs in the discussed thematic category (subsection 4.2). Here, it is demonstrated that numerous modern-day Anglo-American proverbs and deliberate proverb innovations, notwithstanding, reflect and thus reinforce the stereotypical perception of the sexes. In turn, subsection 4.3 is directed with a view to providing the textual evidence of Anglo-American culture for the research thesis posited in the present study. The purpose of section 5 is to contribute a substantial research backup for the semantic categorization of female-centred proverbs delineated in section 4. More specifically, the focus of this section is on the mechanism of metaphor-metonymy interaction motivating four exemplary paremias out of a number of others which can be analysed in a similar way, two traditional and two modern ones, deriving from Anglo-American linguo-culture. The selected sample of paremiological material which represents a larger group of proverbs to be accounted for in analogical terms and, most importantly, its conceptual motivation, may provide a richer repertoire of meaning interpretations and therefore facilitate understanding of the discussed complex social issue. Section 6 closes the paper by offering some concluding remarks and implications for future research.

It is worth mentioning at this point that the proverbial and anti-proverbial vision of the world is a cognitive structure as it reflects, among others, cultural characteristics of language users, along with social changes and the development of a given linguo-culture. Notably, contrary to traditional paremiological units, many new/modern proverbs – in particular a special type of anti-proverbs – are no longer perceived in terms of moral and ethical guidance but rather tend to be applied for mere humorous wordplay or puns, as well as perhaps being used to convey criticism, irony and satire (Mieder, 2004, p. 153; Litovkina, 2019, p. 27). Additionally, in some cases, recently coined anti-proverbs are aimed at deliberately shocking the recipients. In essence, however, the discussed innovative transformations are supposed to manifest dissatisfaction with the surrounding reality (Szutkowski, 2019, p. 174) and activate people into overcoming the naïve acceptance of traditional wisdom (Mieder, 1993, p. 90).

2. Previous studies on proverbs and future vistas[3]

With reference to proverb comprehension, in contemporary paremiology one can encounter a sort of dichotomy or, more correctly, two oppos-

ing theories taking different angles looking at different layers that manifest proverbial expressions. The first approach is taken by the cognitive camp, with those who advocate cognitive/universalist theories of proverb comprehension (see e.g. Temple and Honeck, 1999; Gibbs, Colston and Johnson, 1996a, 1996b; Sullivan and Sweetser, 2010), while the other one is a culture-specific camp, represented by folkloristic proverb scholars who investigate proverbs in their cultural envelope (see e.g. Arewa and Dundes, 1964; Bauman and McCabe, 1970; Mieder, 1982).

The supporters of the cognitive camp argue that proverbs should be examined in isolation and they place emphasis on the universal principles of proverb interpretation and their psychological functions, such as the categorization of our experiences. In the literature on the subject, one may find references to a number of studies undertaking the discussion of proverbs in the cognitive spirit. By way of illustration, Szpila's (2005) paper focuses on metonymic operations involving the use of body parts in Polish proverbs. Bierwiaczonek (2014) conducted an analysis of proverbs with the aid of the mechanism of conceptual blending as understood by Turner and Fauconnier (1995). In turn, Maalej (2009) investigated proverbs in English and Tunisian Arabic in the light of the theory of the Great Chain Metaphor proposed by Lakoff and Turner (1989) as well as the Extended Conceptual Base Theory defended by Honeck and Temple (1994). One may also encounter studies, such as that of Moreno (2005), in which proverbs are interpreted as cases of metaphor-metonymy interaction. In section 5 of this paper, an attempt will be made to account for the paradigm shift in the representation of women in paremiology in terms of metaphtonymic operations. To the best of our knowledge, there is a dearth of cognitively-oriented publications targeted at this particular aspect of proverbs (to mention but a few, Moreno, 2005, Masegosa, 2010).

With reference to the cultural camp, in turn, its proponents emphasize proverbs' traditionality and their role in creating and preserving social meanings and functions. Following this line of argumentation, it is worth quoting the opinion voiced by Szpila (2003, p. 64) in which a direct reference to proverbs and tradition is made: "proverbs are not only exponents but also carriers of traditional views. They serve the continuity of tradition provided that they are passed down from generation to generation". Therefore, the folkloristic proverb scholars investigate proverbs in their cultural envelope from which they cannot be abstracted without serious change (Bradbury, 2002, p. 263). Such a train of thought accords both with the folkloristic and linguocultural viewpoint, according to which the proverb system of a language is viewed as a linguistic portrayal of the lifestyle and

values of the people speaking a common language, i.e., of their *linguoculture* (Petrova, 2014, p. 850).

Nevertheless, as underscored by, among others, Moreno (2005) and Buljan and Gradečak-Erdeljić (2013), the two opposing theories offered by the cognitive and the cultural camps can be reconciled by an integrated approach in which both the cognitive and the cultural principles can be combined to account for proverb interpretation.[4] The given concluding holistic approach accords with a declaration fostered earlier by Honeck and Welge (1997, p. 608) where the authors assert that before fulfilling a social function proverbs must perform psychological work in terms of categorizing events and motivating thoughts and behaviour. Another relevant observation which refers to the discussed point is made by Honeck (1997, p. 35), as documented in the following quotation:

> [...] proverbs are generated from universal human knowledge about ideals, standards, and norms, which act as reference points in evaluating events. These reference points are intuitive forms of perfection. Cultures develop idiosyncratic linguistic means of expressing the perfection. Thus, proverbs from other cultures may be hard or impossible for a nonnative to interpret, but once the cultural code is broken, the proverbs can be seen to have a species-wide significance.

In a similar vein, Petrova (2014, 850) argues that in accordance with the cognitive linguistic viewpoint, "there seems to exist a common mental core underlying the proverb lore of all people"; however, pursuant to the assumptions of Linguistic Culturology there are certain specific differences which characterise each nation's individual proverb system making it exceptional and unique. In view of this there are various linguo-cultures whose:

> 'intuitive forms of perfection' can be described more or less fully by studying their proverb systems, where each proverb text is a generalisation (i.e. a sign) of a situation typical of this particular culture, and where the images employed point to typical aspects of the environment and everyday life of a given ethnic or national group of people. (Petrova, 2014, p. 850)

With reference to the above-mentioned linguo-cultural perspective on proverbs interpretation, it needs to be underscored that the Anglo-American paremiological stock – constituting the corpus for the analysis in the present article – is the outcome of the countries' historical and cultural inheritance, which, nonetheless, if used with reference to women's linguistic portrayal, might provide an accurate reflection of a more general worldwide tendency observed in other western linguo-cultures.

Taking into account both approaches to the study of proverbs, the article in question introduces the theoretical considerations and analytical attempts at reconciliation between Cognitive Linguistics and other frameworks used in the research on proverbs. To put it more accurately, cognitive linguistics serves as a framework for studying both the universal and culture-specifics in proverbs. Such a rapprochement, which in earlier times met with some resistance, might indubitably shed light on the contentious issue of proverb comprehension (Buljan and Gradečak-Erdeljić, 2013).

3. The theoretical framework and the motivation of proverbs

As noticed above, the theoretical framework adopted in this paper is that of Cognitive Linguistics which, among others, underscores the role of conceptual metaphor, metonymy and the interplay between the two termed by Goossens (1990) as metaphtonymy – the conceptual mechanisms that have been accounted for by many linguists (see, among others, Bierwiaczonek, 2013; Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; Kiełtyka, 2020; Kövecses, 2008, 2015, 2018; Lakoff, 1987; Lakoff and Turner, 1989; Littlemore, 2015; Radden and Kövecses, 1999; Ruiz de Mendoza and Díez, 2002 and others). Undeniably, proverbs are part and parcel of our everyday communication. They contain and transmit knowledge and wisdom anchored in language and culture and the Cognitive Linguistics paradigm is able to show that the language we use mirrors patterns of thought and the mind's conceptualisation of the surrounding reality.

In this account, we wish to argue that proverbs may be accounted for with the aid of the tools offered by the cognitive framework, especially the mechanisms of conceptual metaphor and metonymy. In cognitive terms, metaphor is conceptual in nature, which means that it mirrors mental patterns. As pointed out by Kövecses (2015, p. ix), "conceptual metaphors consist of sets of systematic correspondences, or mappings between two domains of experience and [...] the meaning of a particular metaphorical expression realizing an underlying conceptual metaphor is based on such correspondences". The usefulness of this comprehension of metaphor emerges when we bear in mind that this approach helps to account for the way in which complex or abstract phenomena such as life or time may be easily understood because conceptual metaphor is a tool employed in organizing and structuring the unfamiliar and the unknown in terms of the familiar and known. In other words, a more complex domain of life (known as a target domain) may be understood through reference to the source domain

of journey in the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY, while the abstract target domain of time may be better comprehended in terms of the more material source domain of money in the conceptual metaphor TIME IS MONEY. Specifically, the meanings of such linguistic expressions as *We are at a crossroads in our life* and *He invested all his time in this enterprise*, which underlie the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY and TIME IS MONEY, respectively, are based on correspondences/mappings between the source and the target.

In contrast to metaphor, conceptual metonymies involve only one domain of experience. Kövecses (2008, p. 381), taking into consideration Langacker's (1993) idea, emphasizes the fact that the mechanism of metonymy is usually employed "to provide mental access to a domain through a part of the same domain (or vice versa) or to a part of a domain through another part in the same domain". In turn, Littlemore (2015, p. 9) explains that metonymy involves a relationship between two entities within a given knowledge network. In this account, we follow a more comprehensive definition proposed by Kövecses (2006, p. 99) according to whom: "Metonymy is a cognitive process in which one conceptual element or entity (thing, event, property), the vehicle, provides mental access to another conceptual entity (thing, event, property), the target, within the same frame, domain or idealized cognitive model (ICM)". Metonymies are, therefore, similar to metaphors in that they are conceptual in nature. Another point of similarity between the two mechanisms is that "conceptual metonymies are revealed by metonymic linguistic expressions" (Kövecses, 2002, p. 145). For example, the sentence *The hired hand fixed the fence* represents the conceptual metonymy PART FOR WHOLE, in which a person's *hand* is the source/vehicle providing mental access to a person's body, the target. On the other hand, the sentence *The trumpet is not in the best mood today* realizes the conceptual metonymy AN OBJECT USED FOR THE USER (see Kövecses, 2002, p. 145) in which *the trumpet*, the source, provides mental access to the person playing this particular instrument, the target.

What is vital for the analysis conducted in this paper is the fact that metaphor and metonymy may co-occur. In section 5, an attempt will be made to illustrate the two conceptual mechanisms underlying the structure of proverbs. The mutual operation of metaphor and metonymy, known as metaphtonymy, was first analysed by Goossens (1990), while various patterns of metaphor-metonymy interaction have been studied by, among others, Barcelona (2000), Ruiz de Mendoza and Díez (2002), Diez (2001–2002), Moreno (2005), Lai (2008), Masegosa (2010), Ruiz de Mendoza and

Galera (2014), Ruiz de Mendoza (2021). Barcelona (2000, p. 10–12) distinguishes two types of metaphtonymy: one of them operates on the conceptual level and the other one refers to a textual co-occurrence of metaphor and metonymy in the same linguistic expression. As far as the metaphtonymy present on the conceptual level is concerned, let us pay attention to the sentence *He's in high spirits today* illustrating the HAPPINESS IS UP metaphor motivated by the EFFECT FOR CAUSE metonymy in which a body posture is a source providing mental access to the target of emotions. In turn, metaphtonymy involving merely textual interaction occurs in those linguistic expressions where the two conceptual mechanisms operate in two stages. A case in point is the sentence *The violin couldn't stop horsing around* in which the PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS metaphor co-occurs with the AN OBJECT USED FOR THE USER metonymy, but both of them can function separately. The working of metaphtonymy as a joint mechanism motivating a number of proverbs will be presented in section 5.

The concept of dehumanizing metaphor was investigated by, among others, Mussolf (2012, 2017), Costello (2012), Costello and Hodson (2014), Prażmo (2019), Prażmo and Augustyn (2020). This type of metaphor helps to understand the mechanism of human manipulation and the way people may influence the viewpoints of others. For example, Mussolf (2017) discussed the portrayal of immigrants in animal terms underlain by the IMMIGRANTS ARE PARASITES metaphorical schema. Owing to the application of conceptual metaphors, people may employ various linguistic expressions with reference to certain groups, such as immigrants, which may, in turn, exert an influence on human perceptions about those who represent these groups.

Since human beings are believed to be superior to animals, plants and inanimate entities, the use of language connected with flora, fauna and inanimate imagery and targeted at other people is often aimed to derogate, degrade and humiliate them. The mutual relations among different entities may be easily understood by referring to the so-called Great Chain of Being which stems from ancient Greek philosophy (see, among others, Krzeszowski, 1997; Lakoff and Turner, 1989; Rigato and Minelli, 2013). As pointed out by Barcelona (2003, p. 111), the Great Chain of Being (GCB) "is a cultural model defined by attributes and behaviour which typically apply to each form of being (humans, animals, plants, complex objects, and natural physical things) in a hierarchy". For instance, due to the working of the GENERIC IS SPECIFIC metaphor, which highlights common generic structure in specific concepts, it is possible to view and understand animals' instinctive behaviour in terms of human character. To be more specific, the instinctive

behaviour of a fox, lion or ostrich may be understood in terms of human slyness, courage or cowardice, respectively.

As far as the dehumanizing metaphor is concerned, one may encounter countless examples of linguistic expressions aimed at debasing and stigmatizing certain groups of people by equating them with animals. A case in point is the IMMIGRANTS ARE PARASITES metaphor scrutinized by Musolff (2012) which serves as a dramatic example of the derogation and stigmatization of the Turkish minority in Germany. In the sections to come, an attempt will be made to show that many traditional female-targeted proverbs may be interpreted as cases of dehumanizing metaphor in which women are denigrated by being equated with representatives of lower levels of the Great Chain of Being.

In the relevant literature, one may point to two contrastive perspectives as far as the motivation of proverbs is concerned. There are publications such as that of Lakoff and Turner (1989) in which proverbs are viewed as metaphorically conditioned. On the other hand, more recent studies interpret them as metonymic in nature. Such researchers as Kövecses and Radden (1999), Panther and Thornburg (1999), Szpila (2005), Bierwiaczonek (2014), Lemghari (2019) posit that metonymy plays an important role in the interpretation of proverbs. Ruiz de Mendoza (2001) argues that the relationship which holds between the two so-called Idealised Cognitive Models (ICMs) present in proverbs, referred to as the specific and the generic, are in a stand-for relationship. This means that instead of the GENERIC IS SPECIFIC metaphor identified by Lakoff and Turner (1989), we actually have the SPECIFIC FOR GENERIC metonymy. In other words, as Szpila (2005, p. 403) puts it, "the level of situational specification and the level of generalization belong to the same conceptual realm, which means that the specific situation contained in a proverb instantiates the general meaning extracted from it". In this account, we support the view advocated by the authors mentioned above who view proverbs as metonymic in character, however, as shown in section 5, we believe that individual elements of proverbs may also be metaphorically conditioned and as such they result from metaphor-metonymy interaction. This view is also shared by Lemghari (2019, p. 41), according to whom "[...] the most promising way to describe coherently the semiotic nature of proverbiality would be [...] to take for granted that any proverb is a two-level mapping. Metonymic mapping is attributable to the SPECIFIC FOR GENERIC metonymy and metaphoric mapping to the LEVEL-FORM metaphor." From the above, it follows then that proverbs result from metonymy-metaphor interaction. "The reason that any proverb entails metonymic mapping is due to the SPECIFIC FOR GENERIC metonymy"

(Lemghari, 2019, p. 41). In turn, the metaphoricity of proverbs is to be accounted for by reference to metaphoric mappings detectable between various levels of the Great Chain of Being, which lead to the construal of such conceptual metaphors as, for example, HUMANS ARE ANIMALS or HUMANS ARE OBJECTS.

Therefore, apart from the fact that proverbs as such are to be viewed as metonymic in nature, individual elements of proverbs, when given independent or semi-independent status and analysed semantically, can individually be interpreted as metonymic or metaphoric. By way of example, the proverb *A faithless wife is the shipwreck of a home* uttered in a specific context and with reference to a particular woman can be interpreted metonymically in terms of the SPECIFIC FOR GENERIC metonymy according to which, "the specific situation contained in a proverb", that is a specific wife being faithless, provides mental access to the group of faithless females in general. This seems to be in accordance with the claim put forward by Norrick (1981: 35) in that "any specific instantiation of a class calls forth the whole class." In a similar way, Lakoff and Turner (1989, p. 163) pointed out that "proverbs such as *Blind blames the ditch* describe a specific situation but convey a general understanding, which again is applied to a specific situation at hand." However, in the case of the proverb *A faithless wife is the shipwreck of a home*, the very fact that a woman is equated with a shipwreck is an example of the general dehumanising conceptual metaphor HUMAN BEINGS ARE INANIMATE ENTITIES, while in the proverb *Frailty, your name is woman*, the noun *frailty* 'weakness' provides mental access to 'a person showing weakness' and is a realization of the metonymy STATE FOR THE PERSON THAT REPRESENTS IT.

4. Semantic analysis of traditional proverbs/modern proverbs/ anti-proverbs with a gender component

4.1. Negative stereotypes of women in traditional paremiology

To begin with, the subject matter of gender stereotyping in paremiology has been repeatedly raised and researched in a variety of ways (see e.g. Petrova, 2002; Hussein, 2005; Sanauddin 2015[5]; Kochman-Hałady j, 2020). Regarding stereotypes of women in the contemporary world, the picture of a woman, her position and role in human culture moulds both individual experience and the many hundred-year-old collective experience consolidated by, among others, national and regional customs, religion, law and art. More accurately,

> the main deeply-rooted factors that contributed to the negative portrayal of a woman were characteristics that were justifiably or unjustifiably thought to be part of the very nature of a woman, the world of ancient images and certain clearly female-downgrading elements present in Christianity. (Kochman-Haładyj, 2009, p. 61)

What is conclusively proven in the literature on the subject is the conviction that there exists a multitude of Anglo-American traditional proverbs whose content may be labelled as markedly pejorative, misogynist and downgrading towards women (see e.g. Kerschen, 1998; Petrova, 2002; Rittersbacher, 2002; Schipper, 2006; Kirsanova, 2018; Litovkina, 2019; Litovkina and Mieder, 2019). Furthermore, it should be noted that this conspicuous paremiological tendency constitutes an accurate reflection of an overall concept of gender bias and sexism as well as gender asymmetry and androcentricity (an orientation towards men) of the English language (see, e.g. Lakoff, 1975; Spender, 1980). Presumably the reason for that ideological abuse on a female category, including for instance the disproportionate share of negative sayings on women is the fact that the human civilisation has truly been a man's civilisation, for the major part and – consequently – men must have coined most of gender proverbs (Kochman-Haładyj, 2011, p. 232). In what follows there are four categories of traditional female-related paremias which present stereotypical perception of women and these are: proverbs reflecting unfavourable assessment characteristics of women, proverbs exhibiting behavioural personality traits of the female kind, proverbs in which women are discussed in terms of various family relationships and specific social roles, and finally the group where paremias emphasise men's expectations towards women.

In actual fact, semantic analysis of the asymmetrical representation of male and female gender in Anglo-American proverbial lore – constructed through an androcentric lens – leads to the observation that there are numerous proverbs presenting male mindsets about women, in which the portrayal of women is characterised by a variety of unfavourable assessment characteristics (Kirsanova, 2018, p. 72). One may therefore venture a claim that from the cognitive perspective, a number of proverbs to be listed and analysed in what follows seem to be motivated by the general conceptual metonymy SPECIFIC FOR GENERIC exemplified by its instantiation verbalised as A DESPISED (FEMALE) HUMAN BEING FOR A HUMAN BEING (IN GENERAL) and possibly a number of other metonymies or metaphors realized by individual elements of the proverbs specified in what follows. Our intention is, however, not to argue that there is a special link between the conceptual

mechanisms of metaphor and/or metonymy and men's pejorative attitude against women, but one of the objectives of this paper is to corroborate the conceptual nature of the analysed proverbs, whose evaluation is either positive or negative in that at least some of them may portray men's negative bias against women.

The exemplary outwardly negative female features, both moral and psychological ones, exposed in proverbs of the Anglo-American discourse are, among others, the following (there are 8 proverbs in the category, most of which are motivated by metonymy): evil, e.g. *Women are necessary evil* (STATE FOR THE PERSON THAT CAUSED IT > *EVIL* FOR 'A PERSON CAUSING EVIL') 1721 (Mieder et al., 1992, p. 669);[6] vanity, e.g. *Vanity thy name is woman* (STATE FOR THE PERSON THAT CAUSED IT > *VANITY* FOR 'A PERSON SHOWING VANITY') (Kerschen, 1998, p. 46); unfaithfulness, e.g. *A faithless wife is the shipwreck of a home* (HUMAN BEINGS ARE OBJECTS metaphor) (Kerschen, 1998, p. 138); weakness, e.g. *Frailty, your name is woman* (STATE FOR THE PERSON THAT CAUSED IT > *WEAKNESS FOR* 'A PERSON SHOWING WEAKNESS') 1600 (Kerschen, 1998, p. 37); cunning, e.g. *The cunning wife makes her husband her apron* (CUNNING FOR SHOWING CUNNINGNESS) 1866 (Schipper, 2006, p. 208); unreliability, e.g. *Women are as fickle as April weather* (HUMAN BEINGS ARE ABSTRACT CONCEPTS metaphor) (Kerschen, 1998, p. 95); ill-nature, often verging on the concept of a witch, e.g. *You get a woman mad and her blood good and hot, better let her blood cool for she'll sho' hurt you* (BLOOD FOR TEMPER metonymy) (Mieder et al., 1992, p. 669); lack of intelligence/stupidity, e.g. *Long hair, little brains* (*INTELLIGENCE* FOR 'A PERSON SHOWING INTELLIGENCE') (Litovkina, 2019, p. 74). With reference to females' supposed low mental abilities, it is worth mentioning that the number of proverbs touching upon a lack of intelligence in women is not much greater than the number of the paremias referring to men's. Yet, it is a noteworthy fact that stupidity is frequently regarded as a universal vice, and intelligence is mostly viewed as a male characteristic (Kirsanowa, 2018, p. 73).

In the case of the metonymic projection A DESPISED (FEMALE) HUMAN BEING FOR A HUMAN BEING (IN GENERAL), referring to the meanings emerging from the proverbs provides mental access to negative female features which deviate from behavioural, moral or psychological standards. Using terminology from the cognitive linguistics paradigm, we may say that the source A DESPISED (FEMALE) HUMAN BEING presupposes a number of entailments needed to access other entailments specifying the target. All in all, given the proverbs listed above, we may formulate the metonymy verbalized as A DESPISED (FEMALE) HUMAN BEING FOR A HUMAN BEING (IN GENERAL).

The motivation behind the semantics of the proverbs referring to despised human beings seems to be determined by the fact that psychologically or morally neutral/positive features become negative features and properties typical of the targeted beings. In other words, both human beings in general and despised human beings may be viewed as displaying certain characteristics; however, their axiology may be either positive or negative in the case of human beings as such, that is when they are unmarked in terms of gender, and they become negative when equated with female human beings. As noticed by many linguists (see, for example, Kirsanova, 2018; Litovkina, 2019; Litovkina and Mieder, 2019), axiologically negative female-specific proverbs are ubiquitous and productive to a considerable extent cross-linguistically and they may concentrate on and emphasise a number of questionable and morally deviant human properties. Being created by males, these proverbs degrade and dehumanise the targeted female human beings. True enough, understanding females' morality, behaviour and other properties in terms of those characteristics of beings/entities, which are placed on the peripheries of the level occupied by men in the Great Chain of Being, is frequently conceived of as an act of dehumanisation and derogation of women.

Proverbs exhibiting behavioural personality traits of the female kind represent another category in which female-specific paremias portray pejoratively-loaded sense-threads. In this case one may speak of the working of the general conceptual metonymy SPECIFIC FOR GENERIC exemplified by the lower-level metonymy A WOMAN BEHAVING IN A CONTEMPTIBLE MANNER FOR A WOMAN, CONTEMPTIBLE (FEMININE) BEHAVIOUR FOR HUMAN BEHAVIOUR and possibly a number of other metonymies realized by individual elements of the proverbs specified in what follows. The discussed negative behavioural female features connoted by the proverbs' content are, among others (the category includes 13 metonymy-motivated proverbs): puissance, e.g. *Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned* (A DEFINING PROPERTY OF A CATEGORY FOR A CATEGORY > PUISSANCE FOR AN INFURIATED WOMAN) 1625 (Kerschen, 1998, p. 34); talkativeness, e.g. *It is not the nature of the female tongue to be silent* (OBJECT INVOLVED IN ACTION FOR ACTION metonymy > *TONGUE* FOR 'TALKATIVENESS') 1792 (Schipper, 2006, p. 211); gossip, e.g. *Tell a woman and you tell the world* (ACTION FOR RESULT > *TELL* FOR 'GOSSIP'; MEMBER OF A CATEGORY FOR THE CATEGORY > *A WOMAN* FOR 'PEOPLE IN THE WORLD'; CATEGORY FOR MEMBERS OF THE CATEGORY > *THE WORLD* FOR 'PEOPLE IN THE WORLD') 1700 (Mieder et al., 1992, p. 667); wastefulness, e.g. *A woman can throw out of the window more than a man can bring in at the door* (ACTION FOR RESULT > *THROW OUT* FOR 'WASTE'; *BRING IN* FOR

'SAVE') 1831 (Mieder et al., 1992, p. 665); manipulation, e.g. *A woman's in pain, a woman's in woe; a woman is ill when she likes to be so* (ACTION/STATE FOR RESULT > BEING IN PAIN/WOE/BEING ILL FOR MANIPULATION) (Kerschen, 1998, p. 96); opportunism, e.g. *Trust your dog to the end, a woman to the first opportunity* (AN OPPORTUNISTIC WOMAN FOR A WOMAN) (Kerschen, 1998, p. 95); frivolousness, e.g. *The exercise a woman likes most is running up bills* (ACTION FOR RESULT > *RUN UP BILLS* FOR 'SPEND') (Kerschen, 1998, p. 96); troublemaking, e.g. *There was never a conflict without a woman* (A TROUBLEMAKING WOMAN FOR A WOMAN) 1639 (Mieder et al., 1992, p. 668).

Additionally, representation of women in traditional paremiology points at other female behavioural characteristics, such as: treacherous tearfulness. e.g. *Women have tears at command* (ACTION/STATE FOR RESULT > *HAVING TEARS AT COMMAND* FOR TREACHEROUS TEARFULNESS) 1712 (Kerschen, 1998, p. 184); obsessive vengefulness. e.g. *A woman's vengeance knows no bounds* (A VENGEFUL WOMAN FOR A WOMAN) (Kerschen, 1998, p. 34); changeability, e.g. *Winter weather and women's thoughts change often* (A CHANGEABLE WOMAN FOR A WOMAN) 1450 (Kerschen 1998: 96); curiosity, e.g. *Woman, thy name is curiosity* (A CURIOUS WOMAN FOR A WOMAN) 1600 (Schipper 2006: 235); excessive preoccupation with beauty, e.g. *She's painted up like a wild Indian* (A VAIN WOMAN FOR A WOMAN) (Kerschen, 1998, p. 163).[7] In the case of the metonymic projections (A WOMAN BEHAVING IN A CONTEMPTIBLE MANNER FOR A WOMAN IN GENERAL, CONTEMPTIBLE (FEMININE) BEHAVIOUR FOR HUMAN BEHAVIOUR IN GENERAL, referring to the meanings emerging from the proverbs provides mental access to various negative aspects of feminine behaviour which deviates from accepted behavioural standards. Using the terminology of Cognitive Linguistics, we may say that the source CONTEMPTIBLE (FEMININE) BEHAVIOUR presupposes a number of entailments, such as: TALKATIVENESS, GOSSIP, MANIPULATION, etc needed to access other entailments specifying the target. All in all, given the proverbs listed above, we may formulate the CONTEMPTIBLE (FEMININE) BEHAVIOUR FOR HUMAN BEHAVIOUR IN GENERAL metonymy. The motivation behind the semantics of the proverbs referring to CONTEMPTIBLE (FEMININE) BEHAVIOUR seems to be determined by the fact that certain axiologically neutral/positive aspects of human behaviour become negative patterns of behaviour. To put it differently, both human behaviour in general and feminine behaviour may be viewed as displaying certain characteristics; however their axiology may be either positive/neutral or negative in the case of human beings as such, that is when they are unmarked in terms of gender, and they become negative when equated with female human beings.

Apart from the afore-mentioned overall stereotypical gender characteristics embedded in Anglo-American paremiological lore, negatively-loaded perception of the female gender is also conveyed by proverbs in which the image of women undergoes semantic categorisation in terms of various family relationships and specific social roles ascribed to them. These are proverbs in which the notions of, *inter alia*, 'wife', 'mother-in-law', 'daughter-in-law', 'widow', 'spinster' constitute the basic element of meaning. The outwardly negative and self-explanatory connotations of paremias included in this category are illustrated by reference to, among others (there are 6 metaphor- or metonymy-motivated proverbs): wife, e.g. *When a man takes a wife, he ceases to dread hell* (WIFE IS DEVIL metaphor) (Kerschen, 1998, p. 171); mother-in-law, e.g. *There is only one good mother-in-law and she is dead* (A DEAD PERSON FOR A GOOD MOTHER-IN-LAW metonymy) (Kerschen, 1998, p. 54); daughter-in-law, e.g. *A bad daughter-in-law is worse than a thousand devils* (DAUGHTER-IN-LAW IS DEVIL metaphor) (Kerschen, 1998, p. 54); widow, e.g. *He that marries a widow and four children marries four thieves* 1576 (A THIEF FOR A CHILD OF A WIDOW metonymy) (Schipper, 2006, p. 126); spinster, e.g. *A bachelor is to be admired, a spinster is to be pitied* (A SPINSTER FOR A PERSON TO BE PITIED metonymy) (Litovkina, 2019, p. 11).

Last but not least there is a group of Anglo-American paremias which emphasise men's expectations towards women, talk about their status and duties in a man's world. The messages encoded in two exemplary proverbs: *A woman, a cat, and a chimney should never leave the house* (A HOUSEWIFE FOR A WOMAN metonymy) (Kerschen, 1998, p. 72), *A whistling girl and a crowing hen always come to no good end* (A WOMAN BEHAVING ACCORDING TO SOCIAL NORMS ESTABLISHED BY PATRIARCHAL SOCIETIES FOR A WOMAN metonymy) (Litovkina, 2019, p. 188) testify to the all-pervading male-dominated power in the patriarchal social system, and restrict female presence to the home and home-related environment as well as the whole panorama of family and home-related activities.

4.2. Stereotyped perception of woman reinforced in new/modern proverbs and anti-proverbs

New/modern proverbs and anti-proverbs appertaining to women still preponderate over the number of proverbs related to men and for the most part, as before, reflect a ubiquitous androcentric worldview (Kirsanova, 2018, p. 74–75). Furthermore, messages encoded in them in the vast majority, despite the rise of women's social status, tend to reinforce an adverse image of women projected in the paremiological wisdom (Litov-

kina, 2019). These proverbs also seem to realize the conceptual metonymy A DESPISED (FEMALE) HUMAN BEING FOR A HUMAN BEING (IN GENERAL). Moreover, they are categorised in the same way as in the case of traditional proverbs presenting negative stereotypes of women and these are the following: new/modern proverbs and anti-proverbs exhibiting unfavourable feminine characteristics and behavioural traits, new/modern paremias and proverb parodies which convey messages in which women are categorised on the basis of the assigned social roles and family relationships, and finally exemplary paremias of modern paremiology which express men's expectations towards women.

To name but a few ironic representative texts, let us look at the following stereotyping transformations where proverbs depict various negatively-tinted feminine characteristics and behavioural traits (7 metonymy-motivated proverbs exemplifying the SPECIFIC FOR GENERIC metonymy metonymy), such as, among other things, promiscuity and lasciviousness, e.g. *Chorus girls: Never leave off till tomorrow what you can take off today* (Safian, 1967, p. 47) (A PROMISCUOUS WOMAN FOR A WOMAN) (*Never [Don't] put off till [until] tomorrow what you can do today*); stubbornness, e.g. *Where there's a woman, there's a way – and she usually gets it* (Esar, 1968, p. 856) (A STUBBORN WOMAN FOR A WOMAN) (*Where there's a will, there's a way*); stupidity and talkativeness, e.g. *A woman's place is in the home because that's where the telephone is* (A TALKATIVE WOMAN FOR A WOMAN) (Esar, 1968, p. 799) (*A woman's place is in the home*); vanity and materialism, e.g. *Man proposes and the girl weighs his pocketbook and decides* (Loomis, 1949, p. 355) (A VAIN/MATERIAL WOMAN FOR A WOMAN) (*Man proposes, God disposes*); laziness and lack of punctuality, e.g. *A woman on time is one in nine* (AN UNPUNCTUAL WOMAN FOR A WOMAN) (*A stitch in time saves nine*) (Safian, 1967, p. 36); vindictiveness and wiliness, e.g. *Beware of women bearing gifts: remember Eve* (A VINDICTIVE WOMAN FOR A WOMAN) (*Beware of Greeks bearing gifts*) (Esar, 1968, p. 275); domineeringness and manipulation, e.g. *The early bird gets up to serve his wife breakfast in bed* (A DOMINEERING WOMAN FOR A WOMAN) (*The early bird catches the worm*) (Safian, 1967, p. 35) (for more examples see Litovkina, 2014, 2019).

Similarly to the content of traditional female-related proverbs, stereotypical anti-proverbs concerning women are also categorized on the basis of the assigned social roles as well as various family relationships. In this category, proverb parodies express antifeminism and female derogation, as portrayed in the following five metonymy-based cases referring to: wife, e.g. *Man's castle is his home, and his wife has the keys to all the rooms* (Safian, 1967, p. 16) (A BOSSY WOMAN FOR A WOMAN metonymy) (*A man's*

home is his castle), where wife is perceived as being bossy, nosy, manipulative and demanding; mother, e.g. *The hand that rocks the cradle is usually too busy to rule the world* (Esar, 1968, p. 105) (A PERSON LACKING POWER FOR MOTHER, PART FOR WHOLE – A HAND FOR A PERSON) (*The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world*), which no longer shows that women are more influential than men but rather gives a message expressing the fact that mothers cannot always exercise power and influence; mother-in-law, e.g. *No man is a hero to his mother-in law* (AN ENEMY OF MAN FOR A MOTHER-IN-LAW) (Esar, 1952, p. 220) (*No man is a hero to his wallet*), describing her as an enemy of man; spinster, e.g. *Spinsters live longer than married women because where there's hope there's life* (Esar, 1968, p. 759) (A LONG-LIVED HOPEFUL PERSON FOR A SPINSTER) (*Where there's life there's hope*), where spinsters are rated as wishing for fulfilment through one of the main roles a woman has in society: to find a suitable man and get married; widow e.g. *Many a widow finds it easy to marry again because dead men tell no tales* (Esar, 1968, p. 865) (A PERSON WITH HIDDEN SECRETS FOR A WIDOW) (*Dead men tell no tales*), which suggests that negative aspects of a widow's nature and behaviour might remain secret to her second husband (for more examples see Litovkina, 2014, 2019).

Finally, yet importantly, there is a category of anti-proverbs expressing men's expectations towards women. In this aspect once again in modern paremiology "women face a lot of trouble if they try to step out of bounds of restrictions and tight codes of conduct to enter areas men dominate and want to hold on to" (Litovkina, 2019, p. 188). Cases in point are two representative proverb transformations about women drivers which embody the conceptual metonymy A BAD DRIVER FOR A WOMAN: *Among women drivers, one bad turn deserves another* (Esar, 1952, p. 215) (*One good turn deserves another*), in which women are treated scornfully as being unable to drive; *Time, tide and women drivers wait for no man* (Safian, 1967, p. 37) (*Time and tide wait for no man*), the message of which depicts women drivers as inconsiderate and impatient.

4.3. Paradigm shift in Anglo-American new/modern proverbs and anti-proverbs

Interestingly, in the contemporary academic discourse in paremiology one can encounter a paradigm shift in gender-related issues (see e.g. Kirsanova, 2018, p. 68; Litovkina, 2019, p. viii, 196–198; Kochman-Haładyj, 2020, p. 80–81). The discussed concept reflects the profound change in the overall perception of women and men in different cultures of the modern world, as it is faithfully stored and mirrored in, *inter alia*, the

paremiological stocks of various languages. The challenge of firmly established gender stereotypes has been particularly observed in the economically developed English-language western societies, such as, among others, Great Britain and the United States. Accordingly, the corpus of Anglo-American proverbial occurrences will serve as the basis for the semantic analysis of new/modern proverbs and deliberate proverb innovations to manifest the evidence of the changing position of women and men leading to the progressing linguo-cultural equality of genders.

The first part of this section of the paper is primarily based on *The Dictionary of Modern Proverbs* (2012) (henceforth DMP) compiled by Charles Clay Doyle, Wolfgang Mieder and Fred R. Shapiro.[8] The dictionary offers a rich collection of 1,400 individual current Anglo-American proverbs and anti-proverbs (mostly coined not earlier than in the 20th and 21st centuries) assembled through both the use of electronic full-text databases, such as newspapers, songs, films, etc. and traditional methods of proverb research. Notably, the entries included in the dictionary comprise *bona fide* proverbs coming from North America; Great Britain and Ireland; Australia and New Zealand; and Anglophone parts of Asia, Africa, South America, Central America and the Caribbean. The additional reference sources of the proverbs quoted in the research part to come constitute three Supplements to *The Dictionary of Modern Proverbs* (2012) which appeared in *Proverbium 33* (2016), *35* (2018) and *37* (2020), and which in total register 195 proverbial texts.

The linguistic material from the above-mentioned corpora subject to the semantically-oriented examination in the study is selected on the grounds of a gender component embodied in the wording of the proverbial texts. If such a constitutive element is absent in their content, then the correlation with the discussed theme is a necessary condition for the inclusion of the paremias into the analytical part of the work. This being the case, the majority of the analysed modern proverbs and anti-proverbs contain gender-marked lexical items, such as *man/woman*, *boy/girl*, and kinship terms, including *wife/husband*, *mother/father*. The overall conceptual meaning of the discussed proverbs is related to the character and behaviour of men and women, and gender relationships. The number of all the proverbial utterances examined in the paragraphs to come is thirty-five. The analysed proverbs are metonymically conditioned and, as shown in section 5, at least some of them can be interpreted as cases of metaphor-metonymy interaction.

First and foremost, the visible linguistic herald of the paradigm shift with reference to gender-related issues embodied in contemporary paremi-

ology is manifested by the fact that modern women do have their proverbs about men. The tendency which is, though, observed in this area is women's ironic view of men in terms of their social and behavioural characteristics. The aforementioned observation may be illustrated by the following recently coined Anglo-American proverbial texts embodying the conceptual metonymy A PERSON POSSESSING CERTAIN (NEGATIVE) CHARACTERISTICS FOR A MAN where, additionally, men are presented in an unfavourable light: *The (only) difference between men and boys is the price of the toys* (DMP, p. 55); *You have to kiss a lot of frogs (toads) to find a prince*[9] (DMP, p. 89); *A good man is hard to find*[10] (DMP, p. 157); *Men are from Mars, women are from Venus* (DMP, p. 157); *Men are like buses; if you miss one, another will come along* (also A PERSON IS AN OBJECT metaphor) (DMP, p. 157); *Men are only good for one thing* (DMP, p. 157); *Men are only good for one thing – and sometimes they aren't even good for that*[11] (DMP, p. 157); *Men (All men) are pigs* (also A PERSON IS AN ANIMAL metaphor) (DMP, p. 158).

Furthermore, the linguistic evidence for a changing role and position of the female in the present-day Anglo-American paremiographical assemblage constitute proverbs appertaining to women whose messages are overtly positively-loaded, as documented by the following paremias motivated by the working of the conceptual metonymy A PERSON POSSESSING CERTAIN DESIRABLE CHARACTERISTICS FOR A WOMAN: *Life is not life without a wife* (*There's no life without a wife*) (DMR, p. 143); *If mama ain't happy, ain't nobody happy* (*When Mama is happy, everybody is happy*) (DMR, p. 155); *Whatever (What) Mama wants, Mama gets* (DMP, p. 155); *A girl with her skirt (dress) up can run faster than a man with his pants down* (Doyle and Mieder, 2018, p. 23); *A woman with her skirt (dress) up can run faster than a man with his pants down* (Doyle and Mieder, 2020, p. 43); *Anything boys can do girls can do better* (DMP, p. 25); *Happy wife, happy life* (DMP, p. 275); *The best man for the job may be a woman* (DMP, p. 156); *A woman's place is any place she wants to be* (DMP, p. 279). Regarding the latter anti-proverb, the expansion of women's activities is brought to the fore. Note that in traditional proverbs, such as, for instance, *A woman's place is in the home* (Mieder et al., 1992, p. 856), *Men build houses, women build homes* (Mieder et al., 1992, p. 525) the only sphere of activity available to women is housekeeping.

Another linguistic testimony to the progressing linguo-cultural balance of genders in modern paremiological wisdom is the observed tendency displaying the state of affairs which testifies to the fact that some proverbs exist in an identical or similar wording for a *man* and for a *woman* or

other gender-marked opposing components. The discussed trend is exemplified by the following contemporary anti-proverbs which seem to be motivated by a more extended version of the conceptual metonymy alluded to above, that is A PERSON POSSESSING CERTAIN DESIRABLE CHARACTERISTICS FOR A WOMAN/MAN: *A man without a woman is like a fish without a bicycle*[12] (DMP, p. 159); *A man without a woman is like a fish without a tail* (DMP, p. 159); *A man without a woman is like a ship without a sail* (DMP, p. 160) / *A woman without a man is like a fish without a bicycle* (*A woman needs a man like a fish needs a bicycle*) (DMP, p. 279); *A woman without a man is like a fish without a net* (*A woman needs a man like a fish needs a net*) (DMP, p. 279). Notably, the two latter deliberate proverb innovations declare that the independence of women and the lack of usefulness of marriage are also visible signs of deconstructing gender stereotypes. Other modern paremias which in the same or similar wording and message appertain to both sexes and embody the same conceptual metonymy (A PERSON POSSESSING CERTAIN DESIRABLE CHARACTERISTICS FOR A WOMAN/MAN) are: *A good man / woman is hard to find* (DMP, p. 157, 278); *Inside every fat man / woman there's a thin man / woman trying to get out* (DMP, p. 157, 278); *Inside every old man / woman, there's a young man / woman* (DMP, p. 157, 278); *Girls (Guys / Boys)*[13] *just want to have fun* (DMP, p. 98); *Men are like buses: if you miss one, another will come along / Never run after a woman or a streetcar* (*Girls are like buses*); *if you miss one, another will come along* (DMP, p. 157, 278).

Residual cases of proverbs and anti-proverbs current in modern times extracted from the corpora subject to analysis which challenge the stereotyped gender roles and perception – questioning male dominance by their implication of female superiority – constitute the last differentiated category, which might be exemplified by: *Blondes have more fun* (DMP, p. 23); *Well-behaved women rarely (seldom) make history* (DMP: 279); *Sisters before misters* (DMP, p. 231); *Chicks before dicks*[14] (DMP, p. 37). These proverbs seem to represent the working of the conceptual metonymy A PERSON SHOWING GENDER DOMINANCE FOR A WOMAN.

5. Metaphtonymic analysis of proverbs with female and animal components

As previously noted, one of the most widespread manipulation techniques employed in order to shape perceptions about a certain social group of people is the application of dehumanizing animalistic metaphors. Impor-

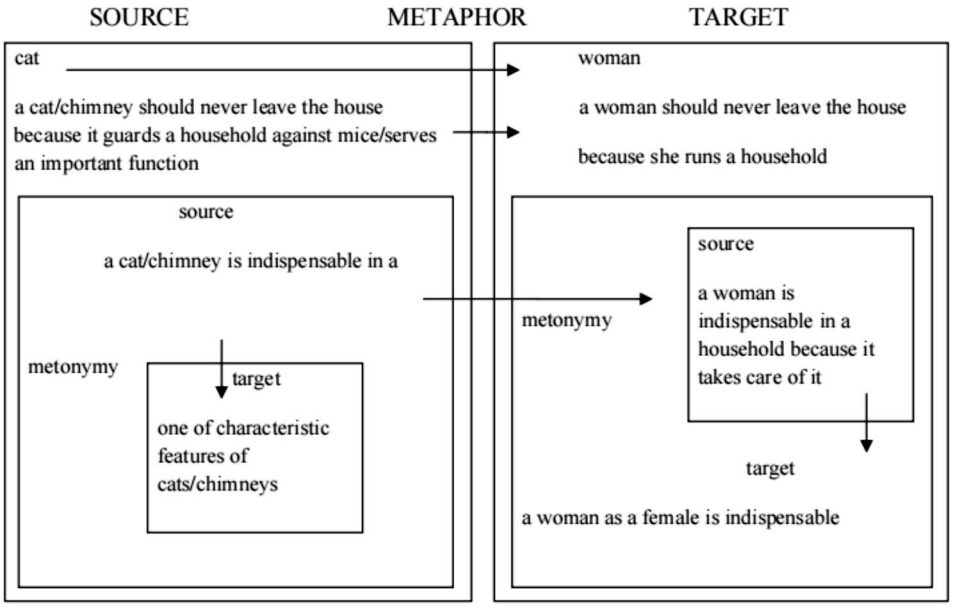
tantly, the usage of animals in various linguistic units, including proverbs, is a deliberate way of conceptualizing non-dominant groups of people in a metaphorical way. Needless to say, human beings are superior to non-human beings, claiming a privileged position in the Great Chain of Being, with first God and then angels in the topmost positions. In the conceptual metaphor theory, animals are chosen as a source domain in order to describe the humans in the target domain.

In the paragraphs to come there follows a cognitive semantic analysis of selected paremias that constitute a certain linguistic fragment confirming a specific pattern of thinking about women, which, as intended, accords with the main arguments posited in the present research paper. The section begins with two traditional anti-feminist proverbs referring to women and animals that are well entrenched in Anglo-American culture (i.e. *A woman, a cat, and a chimney should never leave the house*; *A whistling girl and a crowing hen always come to no good end*) which undermine the importance of women and weaken their social position. In the subsequent parts attention is devoted to one anti-proverb (i.e. *The early bird gets up to serve his wife breakfast in bed*) and one modern proverb (i.e. *A woman without a man is like a fish without a bicycle*) whose messages substantiate the claim of a linguo-cultural paradigm shift in attitudes towards women.

1. *A woman, a cat, and a chimney should never leave the house*

Over the centuries, women have been required to serve their husbands and children. What is even worse, they have been traditionally expected not to leave the house being restricted to their role as housewives. Such a low social status of women is linguistically reflected in many metaphors encoded in traditional proverbs, which localize them or, to put it more emphatically, chain them to the place where they belong or ought to remain. Strictly speaking, women are confined to the house and ordered to stay there, preferably until the end of their lives (Schipper, 2006, p. 288). This is an indication of separate spaces for women and men which are to be respected as the appropriate order of things inside and outside the house. An example of an Anglo-American proverb which equates women with animals that stay at home or stick to one and the same place is *A woman, a cat, and a chimney should never leave the house* (Kerschen, 1998, p. 72). This particular adage might be viewed as motivated by the mechanism of metaphtonymy, that is an interplay of metaphor and metonymy. It seems that the starting point is the HUMANS ARE ANIMALS metaphor followed by a metonymic projection. One can, therefore, propose an analysis which involves two stages as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Metaphor-metonymy interaction motivating the proverb *A woman, a cat, and a chimney should never leave the house*



The diagram presented in Figure 1 is a joint representation of the metonymic reduction of one of the correspondences of a metaphoric source and the metonymic expansion of one of the correspondences of a metaphoric target. Specifically, it is feature-highlighting in the source domain of the metaphor that manifests the metonymy. That is, a particular feature in the animal domain, the fact that a cat protects a household against mice, and a particular feature in the inanimate domain, the fact that a chimney serves a very important function in a household, are profiled which results from the metonymic reduction of one of the correspondences of a metaphoric source. What is interesting is that both a predatory instinct of a cat used in eliminating mice in a household and a function of a chimney to drive the smoke from a fireplace away are characteristic features to be expected from both the former and the latter. Hence, such typical characteristics of a cat and a chimney, respectively, are mapped to the target domain of a woman. Now, the invariance principle[15] of metaphorical mapping will give rise to resembling characteristics to be highlighted in the target domain, the fact that a woman is indispensable in a household as a cat and a chimney are and hence, she should never leave it. This desirable, at least in patriarchal circles, pattern featuring the place of women in a household is projected to other situations in which women's presence is completely indispensable and

this results from the metonymic expansion of one of the correspondences of a metaphoric target; or SPECIFIC FOR GENERIC metonymy.

Therefore, in the metaphorical stage couched in terms of the schemas HUMANS ARE ANIMALS – A WOMAN IS A CAT and HUMANS ARE INORGANIC ENTITIES – A WOMAN IS A CHIMNEY, we notice the working of the so-called dehumanising metaphor as discussed by, among others, Mussolf (2012, 2017), Costello (2012), Costello and Hodson (2014), Prażmo (2019), Prażmo and Augustyn (2020). Both animals (e.g. a cat) and inorganic entities (e.g. a chimney) occupy lower positions in the GCB hierarchy, therefore women equated with animals and inanimate objects are presented as worse beings. True enough, in many patriarchal cultures, one may encounter a number of proverbs that tend to stigmatize women and depict them metaphorically as representatives of lower levels of the GCB.

The metaphorical stage is followed by a metonymic projection based on the universal human knowledge according to which, in patriarchal cultures, a stereotypical and prototypical *woman* is one who first and foremost takes care of her family, brings up children and spends most or all of her time on household chores. If one follows this line of reasoning, one is tempted to argue that only stay-at-home women are stereotypically viewed as prototypical women, while those who leave their houses for work seem to deviate from the prototype "in terms of degrees of resemblance to it" (Lakoff, 1987, p. 83–84).

Therefore, as Figure 1 illustrates, in the interpretation of the proverb *A woman, a cat, and a chimney should never leave the house*, metaphor (HUMANS ARE ANIMALS – A WOMAN IS A CAT; HUMANS ARE INORGANIC ENTITIES – A WOMAN IS A CHIMNEY) precedes metonymy (A MEMBER OF A CATEGORY FOR THE WHOLE CATEGORY – A HOUSEWIFE FOR A WOMAN) which is in accord with the claim advocated by Ruiz de Mendoza and Díez (2002, p. 522) in that "metonymy is always subsidiary in conceptual interaction to metaphor".

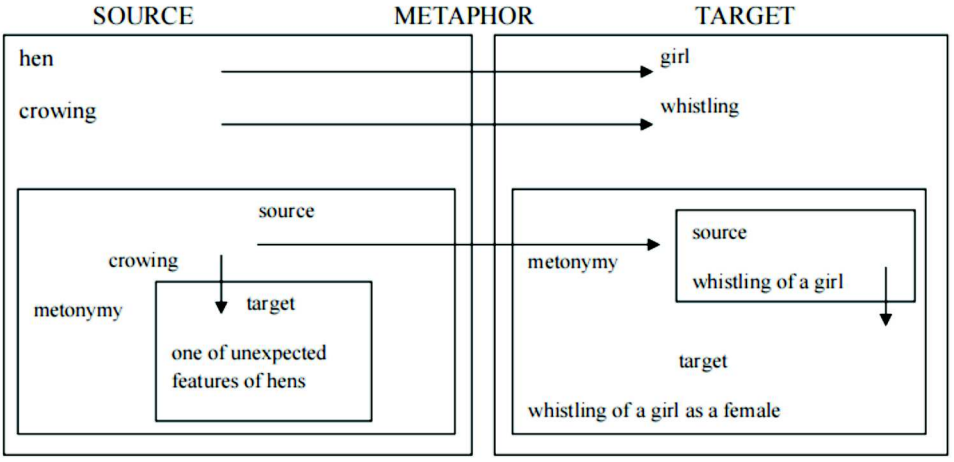
2. *A whistling girl and a crowing hen always come to no good end*

As hinted in the foregoing, traditional proverbs explicitly address the place of a woman in a man's world. They unequivocally define borders around the woman so that she is kept in a tight sphere of duties and expectations. They also connote a direct message of warning to a woman who would dare step out of bounds and do something against the expected social norms and principles. By way of illustration, according to one of the most chauvinistic Anglo-American proverbs *A whistling girl and a crowing hen always come to no good end* (Litovkina, 2019, p. 188), a woman is not supposed to whistle because this is an activity strictly reserved for boys

and men. The whistling of a girl, as an inappropriate and unsuitable action, is compared to the crowing of a hen. Moreover, the proverb indicates the primary concern that "if girls do whistle, then somebody other than rooster could rule the roost" (Kerschen, 1998, p. 81). If such a situation happens, then it cannot be tolerated because girls are restricted by tight codes of conduct which keep them from exploring areas that men wanted to keep for themselves. Additionally, such a possibility leads to another underlying fear that the crowing hens might silence the cock entirely. This state of affairs is taken from the barnyard to illustrate the idea that reordering of the position of women to have a say, as it is for hens to crow, may seem unnatural.

The given proverb might also be interpreted as a linguistic realization of the interplay of two conceptual mechanisms – metaphor and metonymy. As in the case of the paremia analysed in Figure 1, the starting point is also the HUMANS ARE ANIMALS metaphor followed by a metonymic projection. The metaphtonymic interpretation of the proverb *A whistling girl and a crowing hen always come to no good end* is portrayed in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Metaphor-metonymy interaction motivating the proverb *A whistling girl and a crowing hen always come to no good end*



The diagram presented in Figure 2 is a joint representation of the metonymic reduction of one of the correspondences of a metaphoric source and the metonymic expansion of one of the correspondences of a metaphoric target. Specifically, it is feature-highlighting in the source domain of the metaphor that manifests the metonymy. That is, a particular feature in the animal domain, that of crowing, is profiled which results in the metonymic reduction of one of the correspondences of a metaphoric source. What is interesting is that crowing is not a prototypical behaviour to be expected from

a hen, unlike laying eggs, for instance. Hence, such an unexpected behaviour is mapped to the target domain of a girl. Now, the invariance principle of metaphorical mapping will give rise to resembling behaviour to be highlighted in the target domain, her whistling behaviour. Such an unexpected inappropriate behaviour to be seen in a girl then is projected to the girl as a female which results in the metonymic expansion of one of the correspondences of a metaphoric target or as what is discussed in Stage 2 below: SPECIFIC FOR GENERIC metonymy.

Stage 1. The metaphorical schema:

HUMANS ARE ANIMALS – A WHISTLING GIRL IS A CROWING HEN

Stage 2. The metonymic projection:

SPECIFIC FOR GENERIC – A WOMAN (NOT) BEHAVING ACCORDING TO SOCIAL NORMS ESTABLISHED BY PATRIARCHAL SOCIETIES FOR A WOMAN (IN GENERAL)

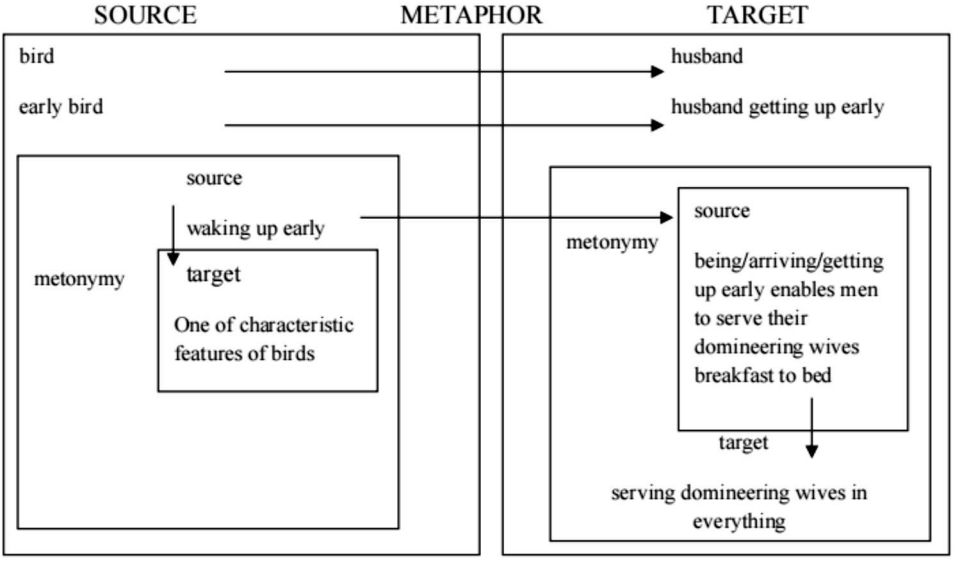
3. *The early bird gets up to serve his wife breakfast in bed*

The anti-proverb *The early bird gets up to serve his wife breakfast in bed* (Safian, 1967, p. 35) is based on a traditional proverb *The early bird catches the worm*, which, as reported by Manser (2002, p. 70), implies that "those who are late to act, arrive, or get up tend to miss opportunities already seized by those who came earlier", as exemplified in *To be sure of getting the best-quality produce, you need to be among the first to arrive at the market – remember that the early bird catches the worm.*

The Anglo-American deliberate proverb innovation, *The early bird gets up to serve his wife breakfast in bed*, depending on the context, might indicate that a wife is perceived as being bossy, manipulative and demanding. Such a proverbial message, still, reflects a negative portrayal of women. Its implicit content signifies that "food preparation, one of the most stereotypical female activities, might be delegated by bossy women to their husbands and become their duty, especially if they wake up early" (Litovkina, 2019, p. 108). The husband simply turns into his wife's underling. By the usage of a metaphor the husband is depicted as 'the early bird' waking up before his wife and diligently working in the morning, preparing breakfast for her, "thus contributing to an idyllic picture of matrimonial union for a wife" (Litovkina and Mieder, 2019, p. 93). The transformation also reflects the idea that it is a weak man who helps his wife with household chores. Historically, it was the husband who was the breadwinner and it was he who was the main financial provider in the family. The analysed anti-proverb points to the fact that this trend is changing nowadays and thus might serve as an example of a paradigm shift in the issue of linguocultural gender representation.

Figure 3, presented below, exhibits the interpretation of the paremia *The early bird gets up to serve his wife breakfast in bed*. As one can notice, the analysis also involves two stages, those of metaphor and metonymy. The metaphor stage is centred around the HUMANS ARE ANIMALS schema, which is followed by the metonymy stage verbalized as SPECIFIC FOR GENERIC – SERVING BREAKFAST FOR SERVING IN EVERYTHING.

Figure 3. Metaphor-metonymy interaction motivating the proverb *The early bird gets up to serve his wife breakfast in bed*



The diagram presented in Figure 3 is also a joint representation of the metonymic reduction of one of the correspondences of a metaphoric source and the metonymic expansion of one of the correspondences of a metaphoric target. Specifically, it is feature-highlighting in the source domain of the metaphor that manifests the metonymy. That is, a particular feature in the animal domain, that of waking up early, is profiled which results in the metonymic reduction of one of the correspondences of a metaphoric source. What is interesting is that this time waking up early belongs to prototypical behaviour to be expected from birds, on a par with the ability to fly, for instance. Hence, such a typical avian behaviour is mapped to the target domain of a man. Now, the invariance principle of metaphorical mapping will give rise to resembling behaviour to be highlighted in the target domain, men's being/arriving/getting up early to serve their domineering wives breakfast to bed. This somewhat unexpected, at least in patriarchal circles, behaviour of some men is projected to other situations in which

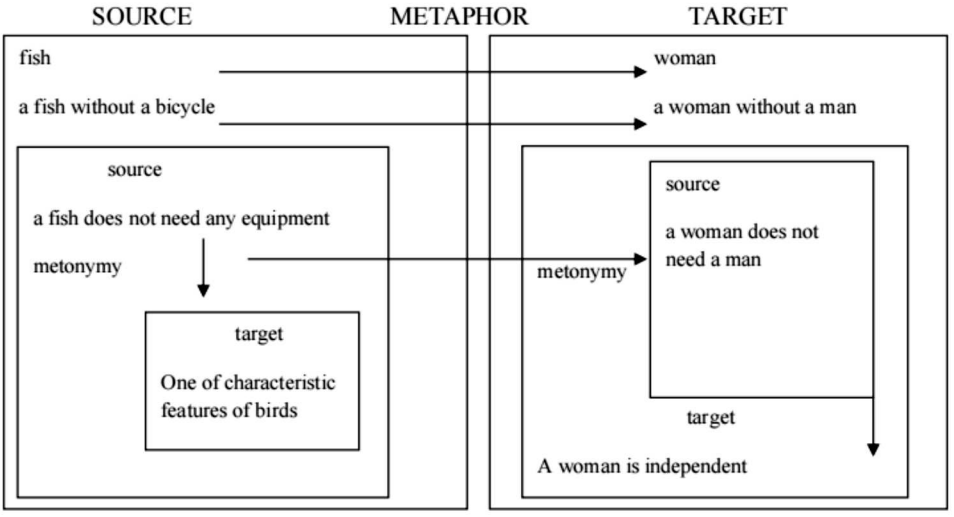
men serve their domineering wives in everything which results from the metonymic expansion of one of the correspondences of a metaphoric target or SPECIFIC FOR GENERIC metonymy.

4. *A woman without a man is like a fish without a bicycle*

The modern proverb *A woman without a man is like a fish without a bicycle* (alternative form: *A woman needs a man like a fish needs a bicycle*) (DMP, p. 279) is a well-known feminist slogan coined in 1970 by the Australian filmmaker, social activist, and writer Irina Dunn. Its original phrase appears to be *A man without faith is like a fish without a bicycle*, made up earlier and published in an article in the *Swarthmore Phoenix* (*Wiktionary*[16]).

In contemporary discourse, the analysed modern proverb is used in a figurative and humorous way with reference to 'a woman who is capable of living a complete and independent life without a man' (*Wiktionary*). To put it differently, by means of a simile, the paremia humorously expresses the view that a woman can live her life perfectly well without a man (*The Phrase Finder*[17]). Furthermore, as indicated by Lotovkina (2019, p. 101), through the discussed proverbial utterance, it is shown that nowadays, women might achieve fulfilment not only by getting married and having children but, for instance, through a meaningful and successful career, indicating, among others, their financial independence. As Figure 4 shows, this proverb may also be interpreted as metonymy from metaphor.

Figure 4. Metaphor-metonymy interaction motivating the proverb *A woman without a man is like a fish without a bicycle*



The diagram presented in Figure 4 is also a joint representation of the metonymic reduction of one of the correspondences of a metaphoric source and the metonymic expansion of one of the correspondences of a metaphoric target. Specifically, it is feature-highlighting in the source domain of the metaphor that manifests the metonymy. That is, a particular feature in the animal domain, the fact that fish do not need any equipment to survive, is profiled which results from the metonymic reduction of one of the correspondences of a metaphoric source. What is interesting is that lack of equipment is a characteristic feature to be expected from fish, on a par with the ability to swim, for instance. Hence, such a typical characteristic of fish is mapped to the target domain of a woman. Now, the invariance principle of metaphorical mapping will give rise to resembling characteristics to be highlighted in the target domain, the lack of necessity of being accompanied by men. This somewhat unexpected, at least in patriarchal circles, behaviour of some women is projected to other situations in which women are completely independent and this results from the metonymic expansion of one of the correspondences of a metaphoric target or SPECIFIC FOR GENERIC metonymy.

What we can see in the metaphorical stage HUMANS ARE ANIMALS – A WOMAN IS A FISH is put under the rubric of metaphor but it is in fact an example of the simile *a woman is like a fish*. The presence of the dehumanizing factor is again attributed to the working of animal imagery and the equation of women and fish. The metonymic stage portrays the projection SPECIFIC FOR GENERIC – AN INDEPENDENT WOMAN FOR A WOMAN (IN GENERAL) owing to which the view of an independent woman as advocated by feminist circles is regarded as a paragon of a modern female being completely independent of male dominance and one who can freely and without any obligations pursue her own career.

Our objective here was to emphasise the fact that the proverbs analysed in this section of the paper have a similar structure and they can be interpreted as cases of metaphor-metonymy interaction. What is worth emphasizing, however, is the fact that they portray a gradual paradigm shift. The first two proverbs (*A woman, a cat, and a chimney should never leave the house* and *A whistling girl and a crowing hen always come to no good end*) exhibit a traditional, stereotypical view in which women serve an inferior role in the male-dominated world. The anti-proverb *The early bird gets up to serve his wife breakfast in bed* is an interesting case, a turning point in the perception of women, in that through the prism of animal imagery targeted at men it depicts an attitude of a domineering female towards her husband. One may argue that this serves as a concealing mechanism by

means of which female domination over men is emphasized and ridiculed. The verb *serve* itself may be interpreted in two different ways. One of them is the neutral use of the expression *to serve breakfast* and the other one is the evaluatively negative meaning referring to being somebody's servant. Finally, and most importantly, the modern proverb analysed at the end, that is to say *A woman without a man is like a fish without a bicycle*, indicates that women are breaking through the glass ceiling and becoming independent of men. In the present world, as the proverbial text denotes, it is entirely normal for a woman not to get married and by doing so she will not become an object of derision or pity. All of this means that the proverb's unambiguous content obviously manifests the desired final stage of a transition towards a paradigm shift in the Anglo-American linguo-cultural representation of women. Be that as it may, the question of why we are witnessing the discussed linguistic change can constitute a compelling and challenging subject for future studies.

6. Conclusion

The present paper, emphasising the conceptual nature of proverbs which are motivated by the working of conceptual metaphor and metonymy, is a qualitative study of a sociolinguistic character. Combining the potential of the cross-fertilisation between Cognitive Linguistics and paremiological studies it attempts to cast some light on the linguistic representation of women.

The empirical section of the study – based on the messages embedded in the figurative understanding of a number of selected proverbs and anti-proverbs – examines certain linguo-cultural aspects of women's lives through the equation of them with representatives of the animals' world. To put it another way, specific animal behaviours and characteristic features described in proverbs are applied as source domains in order to conceptualise women's attributes in the target domains. Such a dissection into the figurative content of the paremias and, in particular, their complex metaphtonymic nature, might facilitate not only understanding of the concept of dehumanisation through language, but also, as targeted, an additional testimony to the remodelling of the contemporary gender relationships in the linguo-culture subject to analysis.

The objective of the paper was to show that proverbs are metonymic in character and as such, they visualise the general conceptual metonymy SPECIFIC FOR GENERIC. On the other hand, individual elements of proverbs

may be motivated by metaphor or metonymy. For example, our interpretation of proverbs in section 5 shows that some of them may be viewed as cases of metaphor-metonymy interaction understood as a joint representation of the metonymic reduction of one of the correspondences of a metaphoric source and the metonymic expansion of one of the correspondences of a metaphoric target.

To conclude, let us emphasise the fact that the conceptual mechanisms offered by the cognitive approach may successfully be employed to explain the motivation behind the figurative application of gender-related proverbs exhibiting socio-cultural changes. One may venture a claim that by means of modern paremiology asymmetrical representation of males and females, along with traditional masculine and feminine characteristics as well as social roles, appears if not endangered then, at least, to be taking a promising path. As far as future research is concerned, it needs to be underscored that only a more comprehensive cognitive analysis in a given language and gathering data from other linguo-cultures supported by socio-cultural implications can make a significant contribution to the apprehension of discussed mechanisms embodied in such linguistic elements as proverbs.

NOTES

[1] The authors of this paper are greatly indebted to two anonymous reviewers for their inspiring and thought-provoking remarks.

[2] For information concerning the distinction between traditional and modern proverbs see Szpila (2017).

[3] Some parts of the subchapter which follows are based on Kochman-Hałady j (2021), though, they have been paraphrased and supplemented with additional information.

[4] Note that Moreno (2005) carries out contrastive cognitive and sociolinguistic analysis between English and Spanish proverbs showing how they share common underlying schema of cognition, while they reflect different cultural beliefs. In turn, Buljan and Gradečak-Erdeljić (2013), in their practical realization of an integrated approach to studying both the universal and the culture-specific in proverbs, contrastively analyze a selection of English and Croatian proverbs from a cognitive linguistic point of view.

[5] Available at: http://theses.gla.ac.uk/6243/1/2015SanauddinPhD.pdf

[6] Note that traditional paremias presenting the stereotyped portrayal of the genders included in the present article are extracted from various written American and English paremiographical and paremiological sources. It is also to be noted that after the exemplary proverbs, wherever possible, the date/year of their earliest known written source is provided.

[7] For many more examples of Anglo-American proverbs that show both moral and psychological as well as behavioural qualities devaluing and discriminating against women, see Litovkina (2019).

[8] Note that *Dictionary of Modern Proverbs* (2012) is the third latest collection of Anglo-American anti-proverbs. The first such compilation in the English language is the book

titled *Twisted Wisdom: Modern Anti-Proverbs* (1999) by Mieder and Tothne Litovkina and the second one is *Old Proverbs Never Die, They Just Diversify: A Collection of Anti-Proverbs* (2006) by Litovkina and Mieder.

[9] As one can read in DMP (2012, p. 89), the proverb most frequently refers to the difficulty of a woman's finding a suitable male companion, but it can also apply to other kind of searches as well.

[10] As indicated by DMP (2012, p. 157), the proverb is the 20th century incarnation of the older proverb *Good men are scarce*.

[11] The proverb originated as an anti-proverb based on *Men are only good for one thing* (DMP, 2012, p. 158).

[12] According to DMP (2012, p. 159), the proverb may have originated as an anti-proverb based on either *A man without a woman is like a fish without a tail* or *A woman without a man is like a fish without a bicycle*.

[13] As one can read in DMP (2012, p. 98), the variant 'guys' or 'boys' may have developed as an anti-proverb based on *Girls just want to have fun*.

[14] Note that the slang term *chicks* is used in relation to 'girls or young women', whereas *dicks* is a slang anatomical reference, a synecdoche for 'men'. The modern proverb, uttered from a woman's point of view asserts the preferability of female companionship, cf. *Bros before hos* (DMP, p. 37).

[15] According to the Extended Invariance Principle proposed by Ruiz de Mendoza (1998), "generic structure of the source domain of a metaphor should be consistent with the inherent structure of the target domain" (Diez Velasco, 2001–2, p. 48).

[16] Taken from https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/a_woman_without_a_man_is_like_a_fish_without_a_bicycle

[17] Taken from https://www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/a-woman-needs-a-man-like-a-fish-needs-a-bicycle.html

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