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ON THE RELATIONSHIPS OF THE RHETORICAL, MODAL, LOGICAL, AND SYNTACTIC PLANES IN ESTONIAN PROVERBS Part 1

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1. On the logical structure of proverbs

According to the Hungarian scholar Zoltan Kanyó (1980) and some others who have hitherto dealt with the logical analysis of proverbs, proverbs are essentially **generalyzed implications**.

Thus, the basic logical structure of a proverb could be expressed as follows:

$$\forall x (P(x) \rightarrow Q(x)),$$

which could be approximated in common human language as follows: 'for every x it holds that if it has the predicate P, it also has the predicate Q'. In other words, it is the formula used since R. Carnap to express any law. **Prognosis** and **explanation** being the elementary practical applications of laws, these also occur in cases of proverb actualization, while those actualizations differ from each other by their information structure (or the so-called actual syntax), i.e. by the way the fragment of reality referred to by the proverb is related to the overt statement made in the proverb text.

If we have, for example, an individual constant a = 'Jack', the predicate constants P = 'works' and Q = 'eats', and an individual human-denoting variable x meaning 'someone', then $\forall x \ (Px \to Qx)$ could stand for the proverbial statement *Kes töötab, see sööb* 'The one who works, eats'. The relationship between the given information and that inferred from the proverb could be conceived in three variants as follows:

	1) Prognosis	2) Explanation	3) Law confirmed
An individual concrete case:	Pa ('Jack is working')	<i>Qa</i> ('Jack is eating')	Pa & Qa ('both are known facts')
Generalizing assertion:	$\forall x (Px \to Qx)$	$\forall x (Px \to Qx)$	$x (Px \to Qx)$
Conclusion:	Qa ('Jack can eat')	Pa ('Jack works')	$\forall x (Px \to Qx)$ was confirmed'

As for logical analysis of proverbs it involves a multitude of complicated problems of principle, some of which I am going to exemplify below (cf. also Krikmann 1984; 1987). Indeed, J. Lotman had good reason to point out dozens of times that the structure of any poetical unit is its **content** structure. The point is not whether proverb structure is approached by means of certain formalized expressions or in some other way. It is rather that the notional apparatus of predicate calculus is too poor and traditional logic that, while dealing with the truthfulness of statements, takes no heed whatsoever of the contents of those statements, is totally unsuited for the task.

The point is that right over the generalized implicational base there may be hovering still another, parallelist upper level, tying up two or more underlying implicational structures, but the operation taking place on the upper level is not an implication in terms of logic. In terms of predicate calculus this upper-level operation could probably be called nothing but a conjunction, whereas in common human language this relationship can be approximated by means of such words as 'and', 'in turn', 'but', 'whereas', 'like', etc. As for its meaning, this relationship is mainly either antonymous (*Väikesed vargad ripuvad võllas, suured sõidavad tõllas* 'Little thieves are hanged, the big ones ride in coaches'), or synonymous (*Uni ei anna uuta kuube, magamine maani särki* 'Dreaming won't give you a new coat, sleeping won't give you a long shirt'), but more often than not it is much more vague or complex. E.g. the proverb *Meest sõnast, härga sarvest* 'A man [is taken] by the word, an ox [is taken] by the horn' refers to what is similar as well as to what is different between man and ox, and as such can be interpreted either antithetically as: 'A man is not an ox, in his case a word will suffice', or as a pair of synonyms: 'All creatures are subject to control, however different the means'.

2. On the modal levels and communicative structure of proverbs

As is known, proverbs are actualized in the context of everyday communication, performing the same functions, in principle, as other utterances. They serve to confirm opinions, make prognoses, express doubts, reproaches, accusations, justifications, excuses, consolations, derision or malicious joy, regrets, warning, recommendations etc. etc. In a broad sense these functions represent the so-called speech acts, once so thoroughly discussed by linguists (J.R. Searle, J. Austin a.o.).

Let us here present proverb modalities in the following simple sequence or scale:

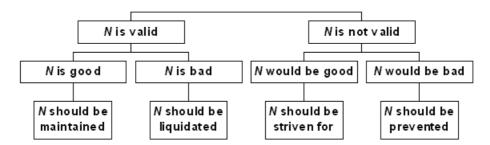
$statement \rightarrow evaluation \rightarrow prescription.$

This triad is nothing novel or extravagant, considering, for example, the following parallels, some of them more distant, some less:

- (1) A.Taylor (1965, 7) has said that "the proverb summarizes a situation, passes judgment, or offers a course of action".
- (2) The well-known triad of linguistic functions, the author of which is Karl Bühler (1933) is included by Roman Jakobson (1968, 353ff.), as the first three, among his so-called basic aspects of language, viz.
- (a) the context-focused referential resp. denotative resp. cognitive function (Bühler's "3rd-personaspect"),
- (b) the speaker-focused emotive resp. expressive function (Bühler's "1st-person aspect"),
- (c) the addressee-focused function (Bühler's "2nd-person aspect").
- (3) The so-called classes of pragmatic signs, developed by Charles Morris (1955, 95-103), viz. designator, appraisor, prescriptor.
- (4) Branches of logic, incl. the two best known ones of modal logic:
- (a) the "ordinary" statement logic or the logic of truth:
- (b) axiological logic, that deals with values, using such categories as good, bad, indifferent, better than... etc.,
- (c) deontic logic, that deals with norms, orders and prohibitions, inadmissibility etc.

The steps of our triad appear in a clear correlation with linguistic, or grammatical modes of the sentence. At least the languages of "European" standard feature definite means for overt expression of assertive and prescriptive (imperative) modalities, but the evaluative function has no independent formal manifestation (there are indicative and imperative sentences, but no "evaluative sentences"). Neither is an utterance confined to the communicative function manifested in its grammatical mode, but it performs all its basic functions simultaneously.

The assumption that verbal activity (like any other) has a purpose of controlling the surrounding, directing the partner's actions etc. seems to presuppose that the ultimate or most "strategic" of the three functions is the imperative (prescriptive) one. On the cognitive plane the arrangement of the three steps seems to be describable by the so-called tree of optative strategies, which corresponds to the general logic of pragmatic reasoning:



Why, indeed, should the current tradition contain such a massive amount of indicative proverbs in the form of a statement, if the statements concerned only such topics that have no pragmatic sense (social, moral, economic-utilitarian, medicinal, agrarian, etc. etc.) whatsoever, or situations the interpretation of which excludes all alternatives, or if the statements were so impartial that they would exclude even the vaguest strategic implication hidden in them, i.e. a recommendation or warning, an order or a prohibition, a reference to a custom to be followed etc. Also, it seems obvious that a proverb in the imperative form, i.e. one that directly recommends, warns, orders, or prohibits, could hardly trade successfully, if the respective prescriptions were not understood as being based on a reasonable argument, i.e. some underlying facts that can be spoken of in the indicative form, such as laws of nature, facts of human psychology, social circumstances etc. However, transitions from statements to strategies or, vice versa, the motivation of the commands can be made only via judgement, i.e. an axiological intermediate stage at which something is qualified as good or bad, be it the very action (way of thinking, state etc.) in question, or something else connected with the action, its purpose, means, place, time, intensity, tempo etc.).

The fact that proverbs are not mere statements - indeed, formally, too, they often are imperative or interrogative sentences - renders their interpretation by means of predicate calculus even less promising. Things stand relatively simple as far as interrogative sentences are concerned, as in proverbs questions are always asked rhetorically, being interpretable as negative statements: Kes teise häda usub? 'Who will believe another man's trouble?' means that 'nobody will', and Kui kaua koera kaelas vorst seisab? 'How long will a sausage hang around a dog's neck?' means 'not too long' etc. Imperative sentences, however, will end up in commands even if they are rhetorical, i.e. ironic or "hesitant" (Paku pagarilapsele saia 'Go on offering buns to a baker's child'; Pane kits kärneriks 'Just make a goat a gardener'; Lase sant sauna, sant tahab lavale ka 'Just let a pauper into the sauna - he will want to get onto the platform'; Mine püve püüdma, kaotad kana 'Just you go after the partridge - you'll lose the hen too'). Irony is extremely many-sided. Being, after all, a negation in the morphological sense, it is even more essentially an axiological negation. Irony has been classified as a trope and as a subclass of the comical. All these approaches are in a way correct. Yet most imperative proverbs carry nothing but outspoken, direct imperatives: commands, prohibitions, recommendations, or warnings. Imperative proverbs have given headaches to all who have ever tried pressing proverbs into formulae, including Grigori Permjakov and Zoltan Kanyó. As for Galit Hasan-Rokem (1982, 19), he even attempts to deny the occurrence of imperatives in proverbs, arguing that imperatives appearing in proverbs are commands of prohibitions only formally, i.e.

syntactically, while actually they are just statements about what pays and does not pay doing. Yet - 'pays' or 'does not pay' are obviously expressions of strategic judgement.

At the same time Hasan-Rokem's interpretation leads us to still another point of contact between the modal levels of utterances.

As for its surface mode, a prescriptive proverb is mostly formulated as an imperative sentence directed to a concrete addressee, the impersonal "you", occurring rather often in Estonian proverbs and especially frequently in Russian ones. But a "deontic" proverb may also occur in the indicative form, expressing a norm, ideal, permission etc. This function may be indicated by ordinary deontic clues, such as 'must', 'may', 'must not', or some other lexical means.

Yet the interpretation of the text on its deep functional level depends vitally on whether we classify its surface function as indicative or normative. Depending on the (literal) semantics and situational context of the proverb all of the following combinations are conceivable:

- (a) reference is made to a part of reality not covered by the norms;
- (b) reference is made to norms regularly followed (i.e. norms and/or reality);
- (c) reference is made to norms usually violated (i.e. norms, not the reality).

For example, in calendar proverbs with the predicate denoting a human activity there is a regular co-occurrence of two modal levels one upon the other, viz. the statement of what is actually (usually) done serves, at the same time, to point out what is to be done: *Maarjapäeval antakse sigade võti kätte* 'On Lady Day hogs are given their keys' (i.e. the hogs should be let out and so they really are let out); *Suivili tehakse sompa ja talivili tehakse tuhka* 'Spring grain is sewn into wet soil and autumn grain into dry soil'. Here both modalities occur indeed in one and the same verb on top of each other, instead of the usual situation of statements inducing imperatives, or imperatives motivated by actual facts.

Sometimes it is hard to say whether an indicative statement should be interpreted as a "propositional" or "epistemic" one, i.e. whether 'it actually is so' or 'it is known to be so', or rather 'it is believed to be so', 'it seems so', or whether both interpretations are possible.

Let us compare, for example, a pair of such lexically close and most likely genetically related sayings as Sööb vähe söödetu 'The one who has been fed eats little' and Sööb palju söödetav 'The one who is fed eats a lot'. The former saying should evidently be interpreted as a "factual statement", whereas the latter looks rather more like an expression of a certain opinion or appearance. As for Oma tilk on parem kui võõra hulk 'One's own drop is better than a large quantity from a stranger', the more likely interpretation 'is actually better or preferable' does not quite exclude 'seems better'.

3. Trope classification

The following tentative typology draws of the material of Baltic-Finnic proverbs. The classification criteria are as follows:

- (1) the "normality" versus the contradictory or "broken" nature of the literal sense of the proverb text;
- (2) the presence versus absence of semantic transformation (trope);
- (3) the totality versus partiality of the semantic transformation.

The classes will represent different combinations of those alternatives. The result is not an exhaustive typology but rather a list of predominant combinations that is bound to get us into a scrape in more complex cases, being unable to decide between competing alternatives while trying to classify certain concrete proverbs.

Type 1: zero-trope sentences (maxims)

Here belong proverbs the lexical material of which (abstract words, words of non-material and non-biological aspects of man etc.) should be taken literally. As for contents these proverbs concern mainly the mental activity of man and its products, as well as the most general categories and dimensions of universal and human existence, such as time, fate etc.:

Inimene õpib niikaua, kui elab 'Man learns throughout his life' (EV 2138; PS 20);

Ära kiida iseenast, lase teised kiita 'Don't praise yourself, let others do it' (EV 3749; PS 37);

Mida sa tahad teise käest, seda tee ka teisele 'What you want from another person to do to you, you do to him' (EV 11858; PS 345);

Ükski ei sünni targaks 'No one is born wise' (EV 11420; PS 137);

Kes palju liigub, see palju näeb 'Who wanders much, will see much' (EV 8319; PS 324).

As Bengt Holbek (1970, 56) has pointed out, there is a significant negative correlation between the figurativeness of a proverb text (metaphor, metonymy etc.) and its "euphonic ornamentation" (alliteration, rhyme, rhythm). This is only to be expected, as the opposition of tropes and euphony during the act of text creation is just obvious: one has to be inventive indeed to find lexical material permitting to realize both the semantic image and the euphonic aspirations at the same time.

Here we have also included a number of euphonically ornamented proverbs, displaying no clear semantic transformation enabling one to classify them elsewhere. Semantically such texts often leave one with a certain "dislodged" or "jolted" impression due to synonym selection performed for euphonic reasons, but the actual psychological effect of those shifts is very hard to define any more closely. A few examples:

Mida varem, *seda parem* 'The earlier, the better' (EV 13672; PS 350; rhyme and rhythm); *Lesk on kuri lepitada*, *mehenaine meelitada* 'A widow is hard to appease, a wife [who has been married before] is hard to please' (EV 5774; PS 431; alliteration + "paradigmatic" rhyme + rhythm);

Harvast orja kiidetakse, miniat ei millalgi 'A slave is seldom praised, a daughter-in-law just never' (EV 8080; PS 408; alliteration + rhythm);

Teeb hull paljugi, elab viisas vähemalgi 'A madman may do many a thing, a wise man will live on much less work' (EV 1584; PS 400);

Peetune kulub, võetune väheneb 'What is worn, wears, what is eaten, wanes' (EV 14346; PS 404);

Tuska tuli, kun tupakka loppu 'Sad days arrived when tobacco was finished' (PS 474);

Ketä kerran keksitään, sitä aina arvellaan 'Who is once found out is always mistrusted' (PS 401);

On syöpä säästävälläkin 'There's always a spendthrift to waste a thrifty fellow's savings' (PS 398).

Type 2: cases of depersonification

As for the literal plane those texts are absolutely "smooth", without contradiction, representing the so-called sentential metaphors. Man is never mentioned here. But as orders and prohibitions can be addressed to humans only, the modality of the sentence is indicative. The discrepancy leading one to re-interpret the text occurs between the proverb and its verbal and/or situational context: "wrong" topic, "wrong" referents, "wrong" relationships etc. (Or, the familiar proverb is distinguished from the rest of the speech flow just "by sight" and the interpretation takes place quite automatically, or context-free text seems to be pragmatically poor, declaring something there is literally no sense to declare). The whole text is re-interpreted and "anthropicalized". Conditionally depersonifications may further be subdivided by their literal agents and other lexical referents as follows:

(a) animal referents seem to be especially productive, not only in the Baltic-Finnic repertory, but in world proverb lore as well:

Kui konn mätta otsa saab, siis ta hakkab krooksuma 'As soon as a frog gets onto a tussock, he starts croaking' (EV 4311; PS 267);

Seni kurg kooles, kui soo sulas 'The stork dies while the swamp thaws' (EV 4584; PS 376); Kass pia puja tege, a sõkõ sünnüse 'A cat bears soon, but the litter is blind' (EV 3379; PS 34); Küüsitu kass ei pääse puusse 'A cat without claws won't get into a tree' (EV 3408; PS 507); Kus härga, seal sõrga 'Like ox, like hoof' (EV 18545; PS 745);

(b) as for the plant kingdom, it has provided much fewer referents. In Baltic-Finnic material they mostly occur in such proverbs that refer to the likeness of parents and children:

Käbi ei kuku kännust kaugele 'A cone won't fall far from the tree-stump' (EV 4910; PS 10); Kuidas känd, nõnda võsu 'Like stump, like sprig' (EV 4934; PS 54);

(c) relatively less frequent are also referents representing meteorological phenomena and inanimate nature:

Vaga vesi, sügav põhi 'Still waters - deep bottom' (EV 13208; PS 816);

Veereval kivil ei ole sammalt 'A rolling stone gathers no moss' (EV 13914; PS 17);

Vesi ei püsi sõelas 'Water won't stay in a sieve' (EV 13960; PS 48);

Suo siellä, vetelä täällä, ei kuivaa kussaan 'Swamp here, watery place there, no dry patch just anywhere' (EV 10603; PS 195);

(d) referents representing material objects (incl. food):

Kaigas on kate otsaga 'A cudgel has two ends' (EV 2920; PS 104);

Tühi tünn kumiseb 'An empty tun sounds loud' (EV 12690; PS 165);

Pada sõimab katelt, ühed mustad mõlemad 'A pot is abusing a kettle, while both are equally black' (EV 8196; PS 53);

Võiet ratas ei krääksu 'An oiled wheel doesn't creak' (EV 7099; PS 91);

Kuidas vakk, nii kaas 'Like bushel, like lid' (EV 13230; PS 115);

Uus luud pühib puhta toa 'A new broom sweeps clean' (EV 12991; PS 116).

Type 3 can be divided into two subtypes:

Subtype 3.1: "materializations" or "biologizations"

In this group the literal contents of the texts is also void of contradiction and comes "of the same realm". Unlike in the previous type, however, here man either figures in the literal contents, being associated with animals or some other nonhuman referents, or literal reference is made to certain elementary (physical or biological) levels of human existence. As for modality, any is acceptable, yet the imperative one predominates. In principle, the motifs underlying the semantic transformations are the same as for Type 1 ("depersonifications"), but the transformations do not apply to the whole text: the human agents and objects survive, while - mostly in the predicative part - the zoological, botanical a.o. nonhuman referents are replaced by human ones and the elementary (mechanical, physical, biological) human properties, activities and relations are re-interpreted as phenomena of a higher level - mental, social, or ethical. So the transformation is **metaphoric**, paradigmatic, "inter-realm". A few examples of either case:

(a) man is associated with animals, birds or some other non-human referents:

Saada siga Saksamaale, pese siga seebiga, siga tuleb koju, siga jääb seaks 'Send a pig to Germany, wash a pig with soap - the pig will come home, the pig will be a pig (EV 10363; PS 758 and 271); Paremb tiganõ peoh ku mõtus ossa pääl 'Better [to have] a titmouse in the hand than a wood-grouse on a branch' (EV 11998; PS 278);

Ära jookse vasikaga võidu 'Don't race a calf (EV 13873; PS 183);

Hunti kardad - ära metsa mine 'If you're afraid of a wolf, don't go to the forest' (EV 1655; PS 353); Kaugelt on kägu kuulus 'A cuckoo's is famous from afar' (EV 4913; PS 604);

Pane sika säkkiin, jos on päin 'Put the pig in the bag, if it's in the right position' (EV 9221; PS 382);

(b) the elementary part refers to a higher level phenomenon within the human frame of reference: Äkki haarad, suu palutad 'If you seize [food] on a sudden, you'll burn the mouth' (EV 733; PS 304);

Paku pagarilapsele saia 'Go offering buns to a baker's child' (EV 8205; PS 879);

Omad vitsad peksavad kõige valusamini 'One's own birch will hit the hardest' (EV 7881; PS 858); Noorelt külvad, vanalt lõikad 'What you sow when young, you'll reap in your old age' (EV 7483; PS 600);

Ühe käega ei saa sõlme siduda 'One cannot tie a knot with one hand' (EV 5004; PS 812; here we actually have a junction of a metaphor and metonymy: the metaphor shifts the expression to the physical level, while *hand* represents a synecdoche);

Õige hõlma ei hakka ükski 'No one will tear an honest man's coat' (EV 14555; PS 855); Teise asi aetakse (pika) puuga 'Another man's job is done with a (long) pole' (EV 11884); Kes teisele auku kaevab, see ise sisse langeb 'He who digs a pit for another will fall in it himself' (EV 11835; PS 1);

Anna pe- külasse, lase ise läbi küljekontide 'Give your arse to the village, you'll have to shit through your ribs' (EV 8683; PS 292);

Helmaa leikkaa, hihaa paikkaa 'He is cutting a piece from the flap of his coat to mend the sleeve' (PS 332).

Subtype 3.2: "visualizations" and "scenarizations"

This subtype is close to the previous one, and there are numerous problematic hybrid forms between the two groups. In our material the focus of this subtype is predominantly (albeit not obligatorily) human. As for the literal contents the texts of this subtype are either quite sensible and acceptable, or harmonious on the immediate constituent level, so-to-say, yet somewhat weird as a whole. Like in the previous group, only part of the lexical components are subjected to re-interpretation. The factors actuating re-interpretation may be either purely semantic (depending on the literal contents of the sentence) or pragmatic or context-dependent. But unlike the Subtype 3.1, here the transformation type is **metonymic** as the utterance contains some trope "lumps" "of local importance" whose function is to represent a conceptual structure or fragment referred to with certain perceivable components of that fragment. Again a few examples further classified (NB! one case of metonymy may represent several parameters or types of substitution simultaneously):

(a) a phenomenon or event is used to refer to a time or place typically associated with it: *Kanadega magama, sigadega üles* 'To bed with chicken, up with hogs' (EV 3113; PS 575); *Kun sā kuulet kuren äänen, älä mene lammin jäälleen* 'When you hear a crane calling, don't you step on an icy plash' (PS 638; 'hearing a call' → 'cranes have arrived' → 'spring has advanced to a certain stage');

Jos ei vappuna vaossa, niin ei pouka pohtimessa 'If the peas aren't in the furrow by the May-day they won't be bounching in the winnower' (PS 825);

(b) appearance, outward manifestation is used to refer to the real content, bulk, value, or other attributes, reason, essence, etc.:

In *Halli pead austa, kulupead kummarda* 'Honour a grey head, bow to a baldhead' (EV 807; PS 571; in dialect usage *kulupea* is said to mean either 'gray' or 'bald') we have a three-stage metonymy as 'man' is represented by *head* (synecdoche), 'hair' is represented by *head* (in case the head has a

certain colour, i.e. an antisynecdoche is performed), and 'old' is represented by *gray*; *bowing*, on the other hand, as an expression of respect exemplifies the same metonymic transference;

(c) a personal name, or an outward feature etc. is used to refer to a more general human type (age, sex, etc.):

Mis Juku ei õpi, seda Juhan ei tea 'What Billy doesn't learn, William won't know' (EV 2490; PS 856):

Nattanenäst saab mies, aga mitte tühjäst naurajast 'A snotty-nose will be a man, a laughing fool will not (EV 7405; PS 380);

(d) names of parts of the body are used to refer to actions or functions associated with them: Üks pea on hea, kaks veel parem 'One head is good, two are even better' (EV 15012; PS 88).

Again, many cases are problematic to classify. Just a couple of examples:

- (1) Kelle jalg tatsub, selle suu matsub 'Whose foot toddles, his mouth munches' (EV 2399; PS 55). On the literal level physical activity (resp. working) is related to eating. Yet it is hard to decide whether in actual cases of using the proverb munching has always meant nothing but 'eating'. In proverbs (and traditional rhetoric in general) eating itself is known as a productive figure, often referring to wealth, well-being, etc. This is a good example of the above-mentioned relation between individual and general. It is hard to decide whether (a) the wealth, prosperity o.a. socially prestigious conditions have **metaphorically** been **replaced** by eating (while 'eating', being subject to certain metonymic semantic shifts, is not just eating but eating on an intensive level, i.e. eating regularly and/or frequently and/or plentifully and/or good things), or whether (b) the abstract higher-level conditions are **metonymically represented** by eating as a biological component of the total semantic structure of 'wealth', 'well-being' or some similar notion of a higher level. In addition, 'eating' is not manifested directly by the word eating but by an evidently metonymic "auditarization" suu matsub 'mouth is munching'.
- (2) Jos on paikka paikan päällä, niin on markka markan päällä 'Patch on patch, bill on bill' (PS 623). The metonymic approximations would probably be 'clothes (repeatedly) mended' and 'a heap of money'. As money is involved, further interpretation (trying to guess the reason for stinting) can hardly be 'poverty' but is rather 'economy', while the consequence should be further interpreted as 'wealth' in a more general sense, thus a metonymic development from beginning to end.

Metonymic "visualizations" and/or other "sensorizations", such as various words or phrases describing facial expressions, pantomime or gestures are very common outside proverbs as well. Every now and then we read that someone punastas 'flushed', kahvatas 'turned pale', pööritas silmi 'rolled his eyes', välgutas silmi 'flashed his eyes', pilgutas silma 'winked', raputas pead 'shaked his head', vangutas pead 'wagged his head', noogutas 'nodded', sügas kõrvatagust 'scratched behind his ear', kratsis kukalt 'scratched the back of his head', näitas keelt 'stuck out his tongue (at smb.)', laksutas keelt 'clicked his tongue', hammustas huult 'bit his lip', ajas mokad mossi 'pursed her lips', kirtsutas nina 'wrinkled up her nose', turtsatas 'chortled, gave a snort', näitas pikka nina 'made a long nose' (referring to a clown's gesture?), lõi silmad maha 'lowered her eyes', kehitas õlgu 'shrugged his shoulders', väristas õlgu 'let his shoulders shudder', viipas 'beckoned or waved to smb.', lõi kaht kätt kokku 'clapped her hands (in surprise)', plaksutas käsi 'clapped', laiutas käsi 'spread his hands', hoidis pöialt 'crossed his thumbs', põrutas jalga vastu maad 'stamped his foot on the floor', trampis jalgu 'stamped her feet' etc., cf. also the Russian (pokazat') kukish 'cock a snook at smb.'.

Type 4: exaggerations and overspecifications

Like the previous types 3.1 and 3.2 this is a "broken" or a clausal trope in which the significance of various sizes, measures, values etc. are intentionally either enlarged (hyperbole), or diminished (litotes), or else a deliberate overspecification of certain numerical data, dates etc. takes place, while actual reference is made to certain less definite measures, periods etc. In essence the trope may be either metaphoric (e.g. the members of the comparison coming from different semantic regions: Ära tee kärbsest elevanti 'Don't make an elephant out of a fly') or metonymic (the shift takes us to

the end of the scale without leaving the semantic region: ...sajab seitse nädalat 'it will rain for seven weeks'; üheksa last ja üks särk... 'nine children and one shirt'). For example:

Naine jõuab põllega rohkem välja kanda kui mees koormaga sisse vedada 'A woman can carry out in her apron more than a man can bring in by horseload' (EV 7260; PS 314);

Lutsapää öö on nii pitk, et kotkas kukub puust maha 'St. Lucy's night is so long that an eagle will fall from the tree'(EV 6104; PS 303);

Paremb kümme kütü kui ütsi nadu 'Better ten brothers-in-law than one sister-in-law' (EV 5162; PS 230);

Karul on üheksa mehe jõud, ühe mehe mõistus 'A bear has the strength of ten men but the mind of one' (EV 1610; PS 217);

Tarkus on kallim kui kuld 'Wisdom is more valuable than gold' (EV 11680; PS 306).

(In a sense all calendary proverbs belong here as in principle they all are overspecifications.)

Type 5: an evident semantic mismatch between the literal elements of the text

Conditionally, this material can also be divided into two subtypes:

Subtype 5.1: cases of the absurd, oxymorons, paradoxes

Some texts can be interpreted as marginal cases of hyperbole. Phraseology, proverbs, children's lore, etc. abound in tropes based in the absurd, and using animal referents (cf. also Krikmann 1992) as well as many other stereotypes like the making of a rope of sand or a porridge out of snow, the carrying of water in a sieve, etc. Some Estonian and Finnish examples:

Naisterahvas põle inimene, mära põle hobune, kaer põle vili, kadak põle puu ja lest põle kala 'A woman isn't human, a mare isn't a horse, oats aren't grain, a juniper isn't a tree, and flaunder isn't fish' (EV 2842; PS 60);

Ko kavvõbahõ käkit, sis lähebäst lövvät 'If you hide farther, you'll find it nearer' (EV 3474; PS 102);

Kui on pühad, siis olgu õieti: eit, too lambajalg korraga lauale! 'Once a feast, let's feast: old girl, serve the whole lamb's foot!' (EV Ø; PS 749);

Kuin kova tulee, niin koiraskin poikii 'Being hard up, even a male dog will whelp' (PS 705).

Subtype 5.2: personifications

Purely human intentional actions, personal properties, or relations are attributed either to concrete non-human referents (animals, natural phenomena, etc.) or to various abstract objects. In the latter case more general effects of materialization or animation are also involved. A few more typical cases classified by the object of personification:

(a) meteorological a.o. natural phenomena and objects:

Sügüsene üö soitab ühiksmä hobuse seljas 'An autumn night rides on nine horses' (EV 11407; PS 386) = 'the weather is changeable';

Madisepäev hakkavad kõrred lund vihkama 'On St. Matthew's Day stalks begin to hate snow' (EV 6279; PS 307);

Põua lapsed naeravad, vihma lapsed nutavad 'Draught's children laugh, rain's children weep' (EV 9238; PS 876);

Kevadine päev toidab aasta 'One spring day will feed the year' (EV 3682; PS 359);

Küünlapäev lüüakse talve selg pooleks 'On Candlemas winter's back is broken' (EV 12296; PS 436);

Mäki velkansa maksaa 'A mountain will pay its debt' (PS 646);

(b) food and clothing:

Ei upsi uus kuub, tantsib täis kõht 'A new coat won't hop, dance will a full stomach' (EV 12924; PS 865);

Viin võtab meele meeste peast 'Booze will take the mind off men' (EV 14129; PS 300). [The fact that at first sight the first example Ei upsi uus kuub... seems to contain both personification and synecdoche, may provoke a naive question: is this a case of the "doubling" or just neutralization of the two tropes, of divergent axes as they are? I mean, hopping and dancing seem to represent personification only on the condition that the new coat and full stomach are both interpreted literally. If, however, we assume that it is the coat and stomach that are used figuratively (denoting 'someone who has the particular piece of clothing and the part of body mentioned') the personification seems to vanish altogether. Hopping and dancing are evidently cases of visualization, but again it is hard to say whether they are interpretable metonymically or rather, metaphorically, i.e. whether the semantic shift should be interpreted as a case of cause being represented by consequence (joy makes one dance), or as a transference of certain physical objects to the mental world (though the assumed similarity of hopping and joy seems rather far-fetched).]

(c) time, time units, calendar dates:

Ei aeg meest oota 'Time won't wait for a man' (EV 108; PS 171);

Aeg annab head nõu 'Time gives good advice' (EV 59; PS 585);

Kõik aastad ei ole vennaksed 'All years are not brothers' (EV 11; PS 98);

Aika tavaransa kaupitsee 'Time trades in his own goods' (PS 635);

(d) various social phenomena:

Võlg veli võtta, verihänd maksta 'A debt is a brother to make, but an enemy [literally: *bloody tail*] to pay back' (EV 13923; PS 383);

Amet ei küsi leiba 'A profession never asks for bread' (EV 257; PS 615);

(e) somatic referents (mostly interpretable as metonymies):

Millest süda mõtleb, sellest suu räägib 'What the heart muses, the mouth will speak about' (EV 11341; PS 291);

Silm on kuningas 'The eye is the king' (EV10478; PS 226);

Täis kõht ei usu tühja 'A full stomach doesn't believe an empty one' (EV 12361; PS 42);

Hunti toidavad jalad 'A wolf is fed by his feet' (EV 1620; PS 100);

Ei silmä osaa vie 'An eye (= a look) won't take a piece off one' (PS 696);

(f) the word, speech, speech acts:

Oleks on paha poiss ''If' is a bad guy' (EV 7817; PS 880);

Hea sõna võidab võõra väe 'A kind word will win a foreign army (or: force)' (EV 975; PS 572);

Tõotus ka hea mees 'A promise is a good man too' (EV 12307; PS 326);

Sõna seob, sõna päästab 'A word will bind, a word will save' (EV 11132; PS 231);

(g) various troubles, defective conditions etc.:

Nälg rua sualab 'Hunger will add salt to the meal' (EV 7706; PS 288);

Küll häda nõu annab 'Trouble will give advice' (EV 1790; PS 220);

Õnnetus ei hüüa tulles, aga hoiatab ää minnes 'An accident won't call out when coming, but it will warn when going' (EV 14714; PS 112);

Kahju õpetab targaks 'Damage will teach one wisdom' (EV 2927; PS 479);

Nälkä ei ole täti 'Hunger is no aunt' (PS 539);

(h) certain specific substantivized human activities and various spiritual ethical, or other properties: *Hooletus ja õnnetus on seltsimehed* 'Carelessness and accident are mates' (EV 1500; PS 862);

Töö kiidab tegijat 'Work praises the master' (EV 12515; PS 106);

Viha võtab vilja maast, kadedus kalad merest 'Hate takes the grain from the ground, envy takes the fish from the sea' (EV 14028; PS 384);

Ahkeruus kovan onnen voittaa 'Hard work overcomes misfortune' (PS 541).

Type 6: the agents are supernatural creatures or saints

I am still paradoxically confused over the problem whether there is or is not a radical difference between the interpretations of such texts by religious and not-religious people. Can it be that the former perceive texts like *Kui Luoja luob hingekese*, *siis ka einekese* 'If Lord creates a soul, he [also] creates food [for it]' (EV 6021; PS 269) or *Jummal vaest sallis* 'God likes the poor' (EV 2614; PS 227) directly, whereas the latter take them as personifications? Hard to believe and hard to be non-believing.

By way of convention I would include here a specific and rather productive group of "saint-personifications" ocurring in calendar proverbs:

Jaan võtab püti, Jaagup kaks, Laurits lakub põhja 'John takes a tub, Jacob takes two, Lawrence will lick up the bottom' (EV 2336; PS 808);

Jakob viskab raudnaela heinasse 'Jacob throws an iron nail in the grass' (EV 2300; PS 760); Kadri hakkab kusele, aga Andres pistab pulga ette 'Catherine begins to piss, but Andrew stops the flow up with a rod' (EV 2858; PS 114, 127);

Matti pihin nostaa, Matti pihin kaataa 'Matthew raises the torch holder, Matthew lowers the torch holder' (PS 663).

From another aspect personifications of saints are a case of a rather exceptional class of **metonymic personifications** (generally, personifications are listed among metaphoric tropes). On this basis personifications of saints could be thrown in with some other paradigms as well, esp. with such personifications that are based on certain expressions or proper names (v. 5.2f above), incl. those containing agent nouns in the function of proper names like *Kinkija on surnud* '[Mr.] Giver is dead' (EV 3796; PS 455); *Kinkija poja nimi olla nüüd Osta* 'They say that Giver's son's name is Buy now' (EV 3797; PS 455) etc., as well as with personifications of somatic referents (v. 5.2e).

Type 7: proverbs with a parallelist (esp. comparative) superstructure

These proverbs form a weird intersection of the logical-syntactic and trope structures. In this here typology only those parallelist constructions get a separate type, in which the paralleled clauses have divergent trope structures. If the structures are similar, the proverbs are classified by the main semantic transformation appearing common to both of the parallelist passages. So,

Harvast orja kiidetakse, miniat ei millalgi 'A slave is seldom praised, a daughter-in law just never' was classified as a zero-trope;

Kanadega magama, sigadega üles 'To bed with hens, up with hogs' and *Hallpead austa, kulupead kummarda* 'Honour a grey head, bow to a baldhead' belong to "visualizations" (3.2);

Põua lapsed naeravad, vihma lapsed nutavad 'Draught's children laugh, rain's children weep', Viha võtab vilja väljalt, kadedus kalad merest 'Hate takes the grain from the field, envy takes the fish from the sea' and Jaan võtab püti, Jaagup kaks, Laurits lakub põhja 'John takes a tub, Jacob takes two, Lawrence will lick up the bottom' were under Types 5.2 and 6 as respective subclasses of personification.

In principle, antonymous components and those representing different stages of a temporal sequence should - in case of a parallelist superstructure - belong to one and the same semantic region.

Type 7 can roughly be divided into three subtypes.

Subtype 7.1: A clause of non-human reference + a clause of human reference

The "non-human" part can be interpreted as a sentential-metaphoric "depersonification" (i.e. Type 2 of the above), while the "human" part is interpretable as one of the possible "translations" or explanations of the preceding one. E.g.

Kala otsib, kus sügavam, inimene - kus parem 'Fish looks for where it's deeper, man [looks for] where it's better' (EV 3051; PS 61);

Sädemest tuli, sõnast tüli 'Fire [starts] from a spark, quarrel [starts] from a word' (EV 11184; PS 148);

Mägi ei saa mäega kokku, mees saab mehega 'A mountain won't meet a mountain, but a man will meet a man' (EV 6604; PS 610);

Jouheva hyvä hevonen, paha vaimo hapsillinen 'Good is the horse with flowing tail and mane, bad the woman with dishevelled hair' (PS 634).

Subtype 7.2: an "elementary" human reference + a higher-level human reference

E.g.

Ostat hobese, saa hool, võtat naase, saa mure 'Buying a horse you'll get care, marrying a woman you'll get worry' (EV 8134; PS 296);

Ema pistab rinna suhu, aga ei pista meelt päha 'Mother puts a breast in the mouth, but she doesn't put reason in the head (EV 621; PS 121);

Nina otsa näed, ea otsa ei näe 'You can see the tip of your nose, you can't see the end of your lifetime' (EV 7448; PS 346);

Ära mine sauna vihata ega linna rahata 'Never go to the sauna without a bathwhisk or to town without money' (EV 14069; PS 576).

Subtype 7.3: a quasi-intersection between two components with human referents

Two objects are associated with kind of a "common denominator", while with one of the objects the association is normal on the literal level, but with the other it can be only figurative. E.g. *Inimene läheb vanemaks, tõbi läheb nooremaks* 'A person gets older, the illness gets younger' (EV 2112; PS 234; the structure can probably be interpreted as a sequence of premise and consequence);

Rikas maksab rahaga, vaene maksab nahaga 'A rich man pays with money, a poor man pays with his skin' (EV 9680; PS 202).

Here I must admit that the division of parallelist structures into the above subtypes is rather subjective, arbitrary, and simplifying. A mere couple of examples:

(1) Meest peetakse sõnast, härga sarvest 'A man is held by his word, an ox [is held] by the horn'.

The first component contains an implicit human agent and an explicit human object, while the second component has an implicit human agent and an explicit animal object. The verb *pidama* 'hold, keep' is a typical polysemantic representative of what could be called "large verbs" (like *minema/tulema* 'go/come', *tooma/viima*' bring/take', *käima/jooksma/seisma* 'go/run/stand', *andma/võtma/saa-ma* 'give/take/get' a.o.), the subsenses of which have still retained a certain "direct sense" of physical events. Consequently,

- (a) by the configuration of referents the proverb could be grouped among the subtype 7.2 (human higher-level + human elementary);
- (b) *peetakse sõnast* 'held by the word' is supposedly perceived as something close to a semantic mismatch or at least a combination less usual than *peetakse sarvest* 'held by the horn', which means that due to the "inner defect" in the first component and the "common denominator" the proverb resembles the case 7.3 (being, however, neither human-referenced all through, nor on the same level);
- (c) the first half, dealing with man and his word, represent the "actual" meaning or theme, while the *ox-by-the-horn* half is a parallel interpretable as a sentential metaphor. Considering the fact that the

conceivable agents are referred to rather indirectly, by the mere impersonal *-kse*-form of the verb *pidama* 'hold' (and in elliptical variants even that is missing), the proverb could be held the closest to 7.1 (human +non-human).

(2) Metsalind kirju, inimese elu kirjum 'A wild bird has many colours, but a person's life has more'

- by its general structure the proverb tends to 7.1, while the divergent interpretability of the "common denominator" makes it eligible for 7.3.

Clearly and inevitably, this as well as any trope typology is extremely sensitive to intra-type variability. A couple of examples to illustrate this statement:

Type EV 7299

This type compares woman's anger and a certain wind. In the text the common property underlying the similarity may be left unworded as being familiar to the speakers anyway (though in archive texts the information may sometimes be found in explanations to the proverbs):

(1) *Idatuul ja naiste viha* 'East wind and women's anger' + explanation: "A woman doesn't stop quarreling until she's crying, and the East wind doesn't stop before it's raining" (Kuusalu - R.Kravtsov; EV Ø).

Sometimes it is added that the objects compared are similar, or one and the same etc.:

(2) Keskhommiku tuul ja naese süda on ühesugused 'South-East wind and a woman's heart are similar' (Vigala; red. B_6).

The similarity may also be explicated in terms that leave one with an impression that both components are meant literally, while the similarity may either be mentioned, or assumed by default.

- (3) Kärmetuul põle vihmata ja naiste viha põle nututa 'There is no South-East wind without rain and no woman's anger without crying' (Häädemeeste; red. F), or
- (4) *Lõunatuul ilma sajuta ja naese viha ilma nututa ei lähe iialgi mööda* 'South wind will never pass without rain and a woman's anger without crying' (Jämaja; red. I₁), or
- (5) Naiste viha ja hommiku tuul olevat üks ja seesama: naiste viha lõpeb nutuga, hommiku tuul lõpeb vihmaga 'Woman's anger and East wind is said to be the same: woman's anger ends in tears, East wind ends in rain' (Pärnu; red. C_2).

Those variants, esp. 3 and 4, could best be approximated by the Subtype 7.1, but neither there, nor actually anywhere in our system, is there a right place for the structures 'A' and B are one and the same/similar/...' or 'A' and B are one (+ an explanation as to what respect they are one)', if A and B are noun phrases or just nouns.

In view of the common tendency of proverbs to human reference it could be assumed that the actual theme of those sayings is woman's anger. But there is also a variant

(6) Keskhomigu tuul on nagu naiste viha: hakkab sadama, sajab kolm pääva /.../, naiste viha ka mudu järele ei anna kui vesi taga 'South-East wind is like women's anger: once it starts raining it will rain three days /.../, women's anger will also not give way until it comes to tears (literally: water follows)' (Emmaste; B7), meaning that the variant probably refers just to the South-West wind, and so, in our typology the proverb would rather belong to Type 5.2, representing personification.

Next, let us have a look at the different ways of wording the intersection. The three texts to follow all come from Kuusalu:

- (7) *Idätuul ja naiste viha molemil on lobuks vesi taga* 'East wind and women's anger all end up in water' (H_2a);
- (8) Idätuul ja naiste viha loppevad vihmaga 'East wind and women's anger end in rain' (H3a);
- (9) *Idatuul ja naiste riid loppeb ige nutuga* 'East wind and women's quarreling will always end in **weeping'** (H_A) .

The latter two examples resemble 7.3 as the explicit intersection applies literally to one part of the comparison and metaphorically to the other, but the other distinctive features of 7.3 are missing.

Also, we can see that in the empirical material *rain* can function as a metaphor of 'weeping' and *weeping* can be a metaphor of 'rain'. But in some cases (see (7) above) the wording contains *water*, that is an abstracted common part of both 'weeping' and 'rain', which makes us wonder whether it is not a metonymy in regard to either of the two.

Type EV 2300

The idea is that towards the end of summer, usually somewhere around St. Jacob's Day grass will turn hard, which makes it difficult to mow.

- (1) Jakobipäevast viskab vanajumal raudnaela heina sisse 'Since St. Jacob's Day God throws an iron nail in the grass' (Jõelähtme; A1). This would be a general case of Type 6; if the recipient believes that those processes are personally directed by God, the only part of the proverb that sounds figurative to him would be *throws an iron nail*; for a non-believer, however, the figurative structure could look more or less like that of the following variant:
- (2) Jakob taob raudnaela heina 'Jacob hammers an iron nail into the grass' (Rapla or Märjamaa, A3a). In our typology this text is a special case of Type 6 as a "saint personification". Statements of this kind seem to have no universal quantifier at all. 'Every Jacob' is, of course, absurd, but it points to the possibility that generalization can be restored by metonymic reinterpretation 'every Jacob' as 'every St. Jacob's Day'.
- (3) Jaagappäe viskab raudnaela heinasse 'St. Jacob's Day throws an iron nail into the grass' (Häädemeeste, A3a). Here we also have a personification, but an ordinary, non-metonymic one (something like 5.2c of our classification).

Actually, in the latter and in the penultimate example personification is included in totally different trope structures. In (3) the semantic "hitch" occurs at the transition from the subject to the predicate: days do not practise any nail-throwing in the literal sense of the word. In (2) the effect of strangeness will not arise until the juxtaposition of 'nail' and 'grass'. Up to that moment the initial part of the sentence looks semantically homogeneous, although it is not so on the literal level - cf. some real "fragments of the metaphoric world" like Käbi ei kuku kännust kaugele 'A cone won't fall far from the stump' or Vaga vesi - sügav põhi 'Still waters - deep bottom' etc.

[Analogous illusions of "iso-universality" may be created under different semantic conditions as well. E.g. *Kange situb kannad täis* 'A stiff one will shit on his heels'. The context probably prompts that *kange* should be interpreted as 'obstinate, headstrong'. This might cause a momentary confusion as to why the heels etc., which in turn could lead the recipient to realize that the statement is also interpretable quite literally, i.e. if *kange* means 'stiff, rigid' in the physical (or "direct") sense, and probably creates a powerful association or visual image. This is probably followed by an understanding of the context requiring that 'stiff' be interpreted, after all, non-physically, and in this perspective the metaphor survives only in the predicate part of the proverb. At that it is even hard to find a word for the "actual" referent of the *heels* (except, perhaps, something like 'someone is incapable of acting flexibly'). On the evaluative level the idea is clear, though: something bad is prophesized.]

(4) Jaakobipäeval lüüakse raudnael heina 'On St. Jacob's Day an iron nail is hammered into the grass' (Jõhvi, A13b1). This statement makes one wonder whether it can be called a personification at all, as here we have a human-specific activity, but there is no referent to personify.

At the same time the impersonal *-kse-*form, as such, with this little mystical tinge to it, is rather productive in Estonian calendar proverbs: cf.

Jaanipäevast visata**kse** jahe kivi meresse 'On St. John's Day a cool stone is dropped in the sea' (EV 2332, A₂);

Küünlapäeval lüüa**kse** külmal üks sarv peast ära 'On Candlemas one horn is broken off the frost' (EV 5228);

Madisepäeval lõigatakse lõukese keel lahti... 'On St. Matthew's Day the lark's tongue is loosened...' (EV 6276);

Mihklikuu sees antakse huntidele talvemoon kätte 'During September the wolves are given their winter forage' (EV 6812, A);

v. also EV 5234, 8175, 9307, 9329, 12296, 13975 etc.

- (5) Jakupipääval läheb heinale raudnael sisse 'On St. John's Day an iron nail will enter (go in) the grass' (Tartu-Maarja, A₁₆a₁). As for this text, it could perhaps even be interpreted as a personification somehow. In this case the personified subject would not be the calendar date, but the 'iron nail', metaphoric as it is already. But the physical sense has been rubbed off the word *läheb* 'goes' to such an extent that an Estonian would hardly develop an image of an iron nail entering the grass on its own feet. Instead, *läheb* is interpreted more normally as e.g. 'appears'.
- (6) Pääle jakappäeva on heinal raudnael siis 'Since St. Jacob's Day there is an iron nail in the grass' (Viljandi, A₂₀b₃). Here there is even no trace of personification. Which does not mean, however, that the text is not figurative at all: the phrase *iron nail in the grass* is contained here as well as in all previous examples. Now let us take this syntagm and ask again: how many tropes and which ones have we got here? Could we, for example, call the attributive word *iron* an epithet? To what extent is it reasonable to visualize the literal meaning of this phrase? I mean, is it or is it not absolutely absurd to ask, for example, whether the nail is **inside** the blades, or just lying **on the ground** between them.

Be as it may, we have a trope by means of which grass leaves are attributed the property of 'hardness'. What kind of a trope is it? Knowing the "actual" meaning of the syntagma we might perhaps assume that grass itself is this 'iron nail', the latter representing a metaphonic transformation, a contracted form of the comparative statement 'grass will turn hard like an iron nail'. But in this case 'grass' should be taken as a literal subject that the metaphor is predicated upon. And, as the subject is in the inessive case, do we not run into a conflict with, e.g. the requirement of syntactic identity applying to the two halves of metaphors, or metonymies, for that matter (cf. Jakobson 1956)?

In paremiological and phraseological material such inessive prepositional or case constructions actually occur rather frequently:

Est. Tal on saatan sees 'He has a devil inside him';

Hung. *Kutya van benne* 'A dog in the belly';

Engl. A growing youth has a wolf in his belly etc.

Let us once more change our view, looking at a text in which the hardening of grass is combined /contaminated?/ with other signs of autumn approaching, such as the cooling of waters and the darkening of woods:

Jakobipäävast on külm kibi jões, must mees põesas, raudnael heinas 'Since St. Jacob's Day there's a cold stone in the river, a black man in the bush, an iron nail in the grass' [Rapla or Märjamaa, EV 2332 (C) + 2300 (I) + 3326 (F)]. The parallelism of this text establishes a systematic relationship between certain elements of nature and their properties: 'river' - 'cold'; 'bush' - 'dark'; 'grass' - 'hard', while neither of the first two pairs can be transformed into a non-inessive comparison. Consequently, it may be possible to interprete the 'iron nail' as 'hardness' or 'something hard', not 'grass'. But this immediately raises a question about the semantic relation between what is said and what is meant. To argue that 'hardness' is replaced by 'iron nail' on the basis of similarity that consists in the property called 'hard' would obviously be absurd. Does the interpretation rather not correspond to the conditions of metonymy? At least among Lakoff's metonymic patterns there is a substitution type 'OBJECT FOR ITS (SUBSTANTIVIZED) PROPERTY OR BUNDLE OF PROPERTIES'.

Translated by Sirje Ainsaar

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