

SET PHRASES WITH THE LEXEME "THURSDAY". CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING THE LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL IMAGE OF THE DAYS OF THE WEEK IN THE POLISH AND ROMANIAN FOLK CALENDAR

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ABSTRACT. *Set Phrases with the Lexeme "Thursday". Considerations Regarding the Linguistic and Cultural Image of the Days of the Week in the Polish and Romanian Folk Calendar.* Ever since the 1970s and 1980s, the relationship between language and culture has been a topic of broad interest for linguists, which undoubtedly contributed to bringing linguistics closer to humanities. The prefix *ethno-* contained in the term *ethnolinguistics* used over the course of this article should be interpreted as an abbreviation for *ethnology*, a term synonymous with the American *anthropology*. Describing so-called *language stereotypes* is one of the main topics of interests for what we generally call "Polish cognitivism", conducted for years by Polish linguists. The term *stereotype* itself is used in its original Lippmann's meaning as a schematic and one-sided "picture or image in a person's mind" of a phenomenon, human being, or thing and at the same time an opinion assimilated from the environment even before discovering the object itself. In Polish language and culture, days of the week were not personified. Therefore, to a philologist-linguist who is comparing the two languages, the data derived from folklore will be a "weaker" starting point than "hard" linguistic confirmations

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(fixed structures). My goal is to offer a Polish and Romanian comparative analysis which is supported by ethnological or historical data.

Keywords: *ethnolinguistics, Polish and Romanian comparative study, folk calendar, Thursday*

REZUMAT. Frazelogisme conținând lexemul „joi”. Considerații privind imaginea cultural-lingvistică a zilelor săptămânii în calendarul popular polonez și în cel românesc. Începând cu anii 1970-1980, relația dintre limbă și cultură a reprezentat o temă de larg interes pentru lingviști. Prefixoidul *ethno-*, conținut în termenul *etnolingvistică*, așa cum este utilizat în acest articol, ar trebui interpretat ca o abreviere de la *etnologie*, un termen sinonim celui de *antropologie* în cultura americană. Descrierea așa-numitelor stereotipuri lingvistice reprezintă una dintre temele predilecte ale curentului cunoscut sub numele de *cognitivism polonez*. Termenul *stereotip* este utilizat în sensul său original, ceea ce Lippmann numește „o imagine schematică, unilaterală în mintea cuiva” asupra unui fenomen, ființe sau lucru și, de asemenea, o opinie asimilată din mediul în care ne aflăm, chiar înainte de a descoperi obiectul în sine. În limba și cultura poloneză, zilele săptămânii nu sunt personificate. Prin urmare, pentru un filolog care compară cele două limbi, datele culese din folclor reprezintă un punct de plecare „mai slab” decât dovezile lingvistice „tari”, sub forma structurilor fixe. Obiectivul nostru aici este să oferim o analiză comparativă între română și polonă, sprijinită de date etnologice și istorice.

Cuvinte-cheie: *etnolingvistică, cercetări comparate polono-române, calendar popular, ziua de joi*

Starting with the 1970s and 1980s, relations between language, civilization and culture have increasingly become a field of interest for linguistic research. This has decisively oriented linguistics towards the field of humanities, somewhat restoring its status and character as a discipline belonging to humanities, while the description of relations between language, culture and civilization became one of its main objectives. The “ethno” component of *ethnolinguistics* (as it is currently used in Poland) must be interpreted as an abbreviation from the word *ethnology*, which is the equivalent of the American linguistic anthropology (Nagórko 1994, 5).

At the Jagiellonian University in Krakow, students follow a three year programme in Romanian philology and, at the end of the three years, they are required to write and defend a BA thesis in Romanian. For a few years now, some of the theses referring to language align with the previously described trend, involving the description of the *cultural-linguistic image of the world*. The starting point consists of language: the research of the semantic motivations of designations, derivatives, set expressions and proverbs, with references to the

field of ethnology and that of history of ideas. In the case of Romanian linguists, this type of endeavour can be found with older theoreticians (starting with B.P. Haşdeu, L. Şăineanu, O. Densusianu, S. Puşcariu, T. Papahagi, Th. Capidan) and, more rarely, with Eugen Coşeriu and his continuators, among whom S. Dumistrăcel and the authors of *Enciclopedia imaginariilor din România*. These linguists' contributions are based "on the conviction that Romanian, with its special historical evolution, represents a special case for the exploration of how a certain «way of life» and/or a certain «mentality» – determined by specific socio-historical circumstances – are reflected linguistically" (my translation) (Borcilă 1979, 179)². Considering that religion and denomination play a fundamental role in a person's social life, this type of description, which is much more interesting for students than simply grammatical analyses, also involves getting to know the respective culture and civilization and various realities that belong to it. The comparative perspective often constitutes a very interesting starting point for such theses.

In reference to the importance of ethnolinguistic (folkloric) information in the teaching of Romanian as a foreign language, I would like to mention here a small volume for "in-house use", *Basme populare româneşti. Texte structurale (Popular Romanian fairytales. Structural texts – my translation)* (Cuceu et al. 1977) and *Snoave româneşti (Romanian anecdotes)* (Danciu et al. 1978), which "offer students the possibility for a pleasant exercise for reading and enriching one's vocabulary" (my translation)³. According to the author of the preface, professor G. Gruişă, (Cuceu et al. 1977, 2-3): "the proposed readings were deliberately chosen from popular prose. Our intention was for students to become familiarised with our popular folklore and mythology while learning Romanian" (my translation)⁴. Forty years later, this position is still valid: the practical knowledge of a language is not sufficient for a thorough understanding of different cultures. Without ethnolinguistic knowledge, especially without the awareness of the existing differences, the act of communication can be incomplete or even unsuccessful or false. In such cases, the specialised literature uses the notion of *culturem* as "the totality of the socio-cultural models and rules for behaviour", and that of *xenism* as "the misinterpretation of certain false conclusions" (my translation)⁵ (Nagórko 1994, 11). Moreover, the texts included in the above mentioned volume have not "gotten old", although they do not include phrases or expressions from a more practical register of Romanian, which can now be encountered in typical

² „pe convingerea că limba română, cu dezvoltarea ei istorică aparte, reprezintă un caz privilegiat pentru explorarea felului în care un anumit «mod de viaţă» şi/sau o anumită «mentalitate» – determinate de circumstanţe istorico-sociale specifice – se reflectă în plan lingvistic”.

³ „oferă studenţilor posibilitatea unui plăcut exerciţiu de lectură şi de îmbogăţire a vocabularului”

⁴ „În încheiere, menţionăm că lecturile propuse au fost în mod deliberat alese din proza populară. Intenţia noastră a fost aceea ca odată cu însuşirea limbii române studenţii străini să se familiarizeze şi cu folclorul şi mitologia noastră populară”.

⁵ „interpretarea greşită a unor concluzii false”.

A1 textbooks (referring to shopping, meetings etc.). The aforementioned publications are among the few of the kind that include elements of "high culture", which are interesting for more motivated students, who are eager to discover, from a beginner's level, the similarities and, especially, differences between cultures. Only then do some of these students make the decision of continuing studying Romanian at the B or C levels⁶.

Our research is an analysis of the semantic layer of the lexeme *czwartek* and *joi* ("Thursday") in Polish and Romanian calendars. We note here that both in culture and language, the seven day week for Indo-European languages can be divided into two categories: the planetary week and the church week. The former, with Chaldean, Greek and Egyptian roots - typical for the Mediterranean region - was adopted by the Romans from the Greek. In this system, the names that initially referred to Greek names of god-planets⁷ were replaced with the names of the Roman gods. At the same time, in this stage of calendar development, Sunday strengthens its position as the first day of the week, while Saturday becomes the seventh day. The majority of Romance languages keep the names inherited from Vulgar Latin. As for the second type, it represents the church week (stemming from the Old or New Testament), in which numeric names are introduced. According to Jewish tradition, the days were numbered starting with the Sabbath (meaning Saturday). In the one rooted in the New Testament, this is no longer the case, as Christians start their week with Sunday, the day of the Resurrection. Gradually, the numeric church week replaces the planetary week, while Christian Churches tend to eliminate the planetary names, for their connection with Pagan gods. When the Roman Empire split (in 395), the Eastern part, through Greek, adopted the numeric system, while the Western part (with the exception of Portuguese), the planetary system. Romanians adopted the planetary system as well, although geographically they belong to the East.

However, we note that, in Romanian folklore, we find "a numeric" way of thinking about the days of the week. To this end, notice the following description: *The people made by God started having children and every day they would have one; this is how God wanted for days to be made. On the first day Sunday, a girl, was born; then Monday, a man; Tuesday, a man; Wednesday, a woman; Thursday, a man, then Friday, a woman, as well as Saturday, so that saints may have days* (my translation)⁸ (Olteanu 2001, 693). Ivan Evseev concludes:

⁶ To this end, also see Porawska 2008.

⁷ In Greece, these names did not become common and were replaced with numeric names. More details can be found in the chapter *Tydzień a systemy wierzeń* "Săptămâna și sistemele credințelor" / "The week and belief systems" (my translation) in (Waniakowa 1998, 20-25).

⁸ *Oamenii pe cari i-a făcut Dumnezeu au început a face la copii și tot făcea în toată ziua câte unul; așa a vrut Dumnezeu ca să se facă zilele. În ziua întâi a făcut pe Duminica, fată; apoi pe Luni, bărbat; pe Marți, bărbat; pe Miercurea, femeie; pe Joi, bărbat, apoi pe Vinerea, femeie, precum și pe Sâmbăta, ca să aibă oamenii sfinți, zile.*

"A series of names of week days from Slavic languages attest to the existence of another way of counting in the old European Europe, a precursor to the Christian week. Here the week started with Monday. (...) There is a series of folkloric indexes referring to the days that allow us to assume that this system was used on our country's territory as well. Its interference with the liturgical system contributed to the ambivalence of some of the week days, which is visible in Romanian culture" (my translation) (Evseev 1998 b, 14)⁹.

The names for the days of the week used in Romance languages (apart from Portuguese) come from Latin. In colloquial Latin, they are the following: *Lunae dies*, *Martis dies*, *Mercurii dies*, *Iovis dies*, *Veneris dies*, *Sabaturnum*, *Dies Dominica* (Danka 1999, 111; Maneca 1958). The name for the fourth day is *giovedì* in Italian, *jeuves* in Spanish, *jeudi* in French, *joi* in Romanian.¹⁰ The names for week days in Polish follow the numeric system (starting with *Monday*): *poniedziałek*, *wtorek*, *środa*, *czwartek*, *piątek*, *sobota*, *niedziela*.

Czwartek (*czwarty* meaning "the fourth") appears for the first time in the 15th century (Waniakowa 1998, 102), while the Romanian *joi* can be found in the 16th century, in Coresi (MDA, 253), originating in the second element from the binary Latin syntagm *diēs Iovis*, similarly to other Romanian dialects (ar. *gioi(a)/džoi(a)*, megl. *joi*). The form *diēs Iovis* (calqued after Greek) is attested, for the first time in 205, in an inscription from Transylvania (Waniakowa 1998, 91).

While describing the primary etymological meanings of the names for Thursday in Indo-European languages, Waniakowa groups them as follows: I "the day of Zeus-Iovis-Donar (...)", II "the fifth day of the week", III "the fourth day (after Sunday) of the week", IV "the fourth day of the week", V "others" (my translations)¹¹ (Waniakowa 1998, 91). While submitting this day to detailed analysis, we must refer, for its description in Polish culture, to group III "the fourth day of the week", specific to Slavic languages, and, for Romanian culture, to the first group I, "the day of Zeus-Iovis", dominating in the contemporary nomenclature of Romance languages.

⁹ "O serie de denumiri ale zilelor săptămânii din limbile slave atestă existența unui alt mod de numărare a zilelor existent în vechea lume europeană, premergător săptămânii creștine. Aici săptămâna începea cu ziua de luni. (...) Există o serie de indici folclorici referitor la zilele care ne permit să presupunem că acest sistem a funcționat și pe teritoriul țării noastre. Interferența lui cu sistemul liturgic a contribuit, în bună parte, la ambivalența unor zile ale săptămânii, vizibilă în cultura românească".

¹⁰ In an Istro-Romanian dialect from the village Jeiăn, the names of *luni* (*Monday*) and *vineri* (*Friday*) follow the Latin model (*lur*, *virer*), while *marți* (*Tuesday*), *miercuri* (*Wednesday*), *joi* (*Thursday*) continue the Slavic forms (*utora*, *sreda*, *cetarta*). <http://istro-romanian.com> (accessed on 28.10.2022).

¹¹ I „ziua lui Zeus-Iovis-Donar (...)”, II „a cincea zi a săptămânii”, III „a patra (după duminică) zi a săptămânii”, IV „a patra zi a săptămânii”, V „altele”.

There is evidence preserved in the language, in the form of fixed expressions, which reference past or present customs. In order to reconstruct a part of the cultural-linguistic image of the world, I take into consideration *lexical solidarities*, the utterances belonging to what we call *repeated discourse*, in other words “everything that in the speech of a community is repeated more or less identically as a fixed discourse or a combination that is more or less set, as a long or short expression, something that qualifies as «what has already been said»” (my translation)¹² (Coșeriu 2000, 258, *apud* Munteanu 2007, 316).

In the following sections of the article, we are going to analyse the lexeme *joi* or one of its derivatives.

References to various aspects of Christian life

The Polish examples. *Wielki Czwartek* “Maundy Thursday” is the last Thursday before Easter and it is a day with Christian connotations. On this day, the Washing of the Feet and the Last Supper of Jesus of Nazareth¹³ are commemorated. We also find a confirmation of the form *Zielony czwartek* (SGP, 221) “Green Thursday”, with the annotation: “*Maundy Thursday* (before Easter) or the name of the mobile Catholic celebration *Body and Blood of Christ*” (which always falls on a Thursday) (my translation)¹⁴. Fasting and other forms of abstinence constitute a common element for the examples analysed below. This «cópie a realității» («copy of reality» - my translation), the term used by Stelian Dumistrăcel (2001, 15), the Christian duty of fasting on Friday (also on Wednesday in the past, in Poland) represented a starting point for the set expression *Krzywi się jak środa na czwartek* “making grimaces as Wednesday does towards Thursday” (my translation) (NKP II, 223). The same day is also referred to as *Tłusty czwartek* (ostatni czwartek karnawału) «Fat Thursday» (the last Thursday of the Carnival), which refers to culinary customs related to the Carnival period when, traditionally, the Polish prepare and eat (to this day) donuts in large quantities. The proverb *Powiedział nam Bartek, że dziś Tłusty czwartek (myśmy uwierzyli, pączków nasmażyli)* “Bartek told us that today is Fat Thursday (we believed him and made donuts)” (my translation) (Kopaliński 2003, 1321) is motivated by the same onomasiologic class. Similarly, the name *Combrowy czwartek*, “Combrowy Thursday”, offers us a glimpse into the Polish cultural-linguistic imaginary, *comber* being popular entertainment during the medieval period, which still takes place in various regions

¹² „tot ceea ce în vorbirea unei comunități se repetă într-o formă mai mult sau mai puțin identică sub formă de discurs deja făcut sau combinare mai mult sau mai puțin fixă, ca fragment lung sau scurt, a «ceea ce s-a spus deja»”.

¹³ Beside the strictly liturgical names, I have used upper case letters only with the first element of a syntagm, considering that, in both languages, the written form might be different, according to the source used.

¹⁴ „*Joi* Mare (dinainte de Paști) sau denumirea sărbătorii catolice mobile *Trupul și Sângele Domnului*”.

of Poland, usually on Fat Thursday. Important information on this custom has been kept about certain festivities in Krakow, where townswomen used to organise parties with drinks and dancing in the Main Square (Gloger IV, 1985, 25; Szczypka 1984, 45-46).

The Romanian examples

The Romanian names for the same day are more difficult to analyse, as they are marked by a syncretism of popular elements (not necessarily Pagan) with others related to the religious calendar (Orthodox in Romania and Catholic in Poland). The syncretism is noticeable in various expressions referring to Romanian customs, but also in the (Christian) hierarchy of the days of the week, in which *Thursday* is related to *the Good/Holy Thursday* (the Thursday before Easter). An adequate example could be the derivative *joimărița* (*witch/old hag* – my translation) and its various meanings, quoted here from MDA (253). We notice that only one (5) refers to a religious custom:

joimăriță (*joi+mare+iță*) (Pop.) 1 (Mtp) Imaginary being carrying the image of a repulsive woman, that is believed to punish lazy women and girls who are lazy when it comes to spinning and combing hemp or wool on the night before Maundy Thursday. Also *joimărică* (1). 2 (Pan; fig.) Very ugly woman. 3 (Fig.) A female monster used by adults to frighten for children. 4 Popular custom on Good Thursday, when young men go around the village, to the houses of girls who are at the age when they can get married and if they find unspun hemp or flax, they take it and set it on the fire. 5 The commemoration of the Thursday when Jesus Christ was caught by the Jews. 6 (Orn.) Owl (*Bubo bubo*) (my translation)¹⁵.

To these explanations, we can also add the set expression *A ajunge o Joimăriță/a fi Joimăriță* (*To become a witch/to be a witch* – my translation), which Iuliu Zanne describes as “meaning thin and ugly; 2. Being or thing that scares you” (my translation) (Zanne VII, 2004, 29)¹⁶.

Other names that strictly refer to the religious calendar are: *Joia Paștilor* (*Easter Thursday*), *Joia Mare* (*Maundy Thursday*), *Joia Patimilor* (*Passion Thursday*) (my translations), all connected to the passions of Christ. Then, there are several set expressions containing the word *joii*: *A mânca Joia post și Vinerea carne* (*To*

¹⁵ *joimăriță* (*joi+mare+iță*) (Pop.) 1 (Mtp) Ființă imaginară cu aspect de femeie respingătoare, despre care se crede că pedepsește, în noaptea care precede Joia Mare, pe fetele și femeile leneșe la tors și la dărăcit. Și *joimărică* (1). 2 (Pan; fig.) Femeie foarte urâtă. 3 (Fig.) Sperietoare pentru copii. 4 Obicei popular practicat în Joia Mare, când flăcării umblă prin sat, pe la casele fetelor de măritat și unde găsesc cânepa sau inul netoarse, le iau și le pun pe foc. 5 Comemorare a joi în care a fost prins Mântuitorul Iisus Hristos de către evrei. 6 (Orn.) Bufniță (*Bubo bubo*).

¹⁶ „adică slabă și urâtă; 2. ființă sau lucru de care te sperii”.

fast on Thursday and eat meat on Friday) “to do things backwards, to be stupid” (Zanne VII, 2004, 118), *De Joi în Paști (Din Joi în Paști)* (*Every Maundy Thursday*, with the English equivalent *Once in a blue moon*) “meaning rarely, at great intervals” (Zanne I, 2004, 43), *Joi în Paști (Thursday at Easter)* “said to someone who does not get his or her actions straight, inappropriate, also to someone who does not ponder their words” (Zanne I, 2004, 43), *De Joi până Vineri (From Thursday to Friday)* “something that does not last long” (Zanne IX, 409) (my translation)¹⁷. The idiom *Joi după Paști (Thursday after Easter – my translation)* (Zanne I, 2004, 42-43; 163), “meaning never”, is explained by the author as follows: “In the week that follows Easter day, it is customary not to work, especially on the Thursday of that week; from here it results that when we promise to do something *Thursday after Easter*, knowing beforehand that we will not be working on that day, it is the same as rejecting the request”¹⁸ (my translation)¹⁹. The expression *a îndruga de Joia-mare (to gabble on Maundy Thursday – my translation)* “to prattle, to talk nonsense” (my translation)²⁰, found also under the form of *a îndruga ca de Vinerea-mare (to gabble as on Good Friday – my translation)*, which, according to Iuliu Zanne, can be explained by the custom of reading twelve chapters from the Gospel on Maundy Thursday in the week before Easter, from evening to midnight (Zanne, I, 2004, 87).

In this subclass we must also include *Sfânta Joi (Holy Thursday, or Saint Thursday)*, as in Romanian, both *holy* and *saint* are translated by *sfânt, sfântă*), related to the personification of the days of the week (that can still be found today), as it results from the folkloric text entitled *Rugăciunea zilelor săptămânii (Prayer of the days of the week – my translation)*, recorded in Maramureș in 2011²¹.

References to various secular aspects of daily life

The Polish examples

Among the examples identified in Polish, we find references to different superstitions. For instance, sneezing has different connotations, the Polish augur being eloquent to this end: *Jeżeli się kicha w poniedziałek, to na nowinę; we wtorek*

¹⁷ *A mânca Joia post și Vinerea carne „a face lucrurile pe dos, a fi prost”* (Zanne VII, 2004, 118), *De Joi în Paști (Din Joi în Paști)* „adică rareori, la intervale de timp mari” (Zanne I, 2004, 43), *Joi în Paști* „se zice cuiva când nu-și potrivește faptele, cum se aplică, *ca nuca'n perete*, la fel cuiva care nu-și cumpănește vorbele” (Zanne I, 2004, 43), *De Joi până Vineri* „lucru care ține puțin” (Zanne IX, 409).

¹⁸ I am using the current written form for Romanian.

¹⁹ „În săptămâna care urmează ziua de Paști, nimeni nu se apucă de lucru, și mai cu seamă în Joia acelei săptămâni; de unde rezultă că atunci când făgăduim că vom face ceva, *Joi după Paști*, știind dinainte că nu vom lucra în ziua aceea, este tot același lucru ca și când am respinge cererea făcută nouă”.

²⁰ „a flecări, a spune verzi și uscate, a vorbi multe și una peste alta”.

²¹ Recorded by Făt, text published in *Formula As*, April 2012, p. 26-27.

na trunek; we środę na gościa; we czwartek na umarłego; w piątek na smutek "If you sneeze on Monday, it means you will get some news; if you sneeze on Tuesday, there will be alcohol, on Wednesday, you are waiting for guests, on Thursday, someone dear will die, on Friday, it's a sign of sadness" (my translation) (NKP II, 57). We see here that Thursday is related to death, also confirmed in: *We czwartek urodził się Bartek, w piątek już wlaź w kątek, w sobotę poszedł na robotę, w niedzielę był w kościele, w poniedziałek zjadł chleba kawałek, we wtorek przyniósł żyta worek, we środę nosił wodę, we czwartek umarł Bartek* "Bartek was born on Thursday, started walking on Friday, went to work on Saturday, went to church on Sunday, ate a piece of bread on Monday, brought a sack of rye on Tuesday, carried water on Wednesday, and Bartek died on Thursday" (my translation) (when someone says *cai verzi pe pereți* – talks nonsense – my translation) (NKP I, 64). The name *Bartek* (derived from the surname *Bartłomiej*), which is widely spread among Polish peasants, appears here for euphonic reasons, since it rhymes with *czwartek* "Thursday", just like in the next example: *We czwartek przyjechał Bartek* "Bartek came on Thursday" (my translation) (used ironically with the meaning: great guest, great celebration!).

SGP also offers the meaning of the word *czwartek* as "Quarter Moon phase", motivated by the numeral *czwarty* "the fourth" (SGP V, 220), while J. Szadura (2017, 310) mentions the derivative *Czwartula, Czwartacka, Czwartocka, Ćwiartula*, names for cows born on Thursday.

Beside the Polish linguistic forms that mirror the cultural-linguistic imaginary preserved in the popular, rural psyche, we also find some examples specific to other social categories. The examples of set idioms in Polish, as recorded by the NKP (NKP I, 393), refer to various customs, not necessarily related to folklore, for instance hunting: *Czwartek dzień myśliwców, niedziela i święto przeciwnie* "Thursday is a day for hunters, Sunday and holidays, on the contrary" (my translation). Another one worth mentioning here is *Pragnie jak żak czwartku* "They yearn like the apprentice for Thursday" (my translation) (meaning highly impatient, Thursdays being destined for recreations, in the old days). There are also the meetings of Polish intellectuals, organised by king Stanisław August Poniatowski, after the model of literary salons in Paris (the first meetings took place in 1770) – *obiady czwartkowe* "Thursday lunches" (my translation) (Kopaliński 2003, 853).

The Romanian examples.

I. Zanne, I. Evseev, I. Ghinoiu, O. Hedeșan, A. Olteanu, N. Știucă and other Romanian researchers offer a plethora of interesting explanations, extremely helpful for this attempt of an ethnolinguistic analysis²² of the set expressions

²² To this end, see as well the paper of the Polish researcher Ewa Kocój (2013, 259-262).

selected bellow. For each of these names and fixed expressions, a separate description would be necessary which, however, is beyond the scope of this research.

In this subclass we find many examples from Romanian, some related to plants and animals, others to various superstitions. They indicate how old they are and the fact that they belong to another calendar, different from the religious one. The syncretism, consisting of references to the religious calendar (Thursdays after Easter) and to the popular one (not necessarily Pagan), is visible in various explanations surrounding Romanian customs.

To illustrate this, we will give a few examples of magical thinking that explain the forms: *Joile oprite* (*Prohibited Thursdays*), *Joile pomenite* (*Thursdays of the departed* – special days dedicated to praying for the dead), *Joile nepomenite* (days when services dedicated to praying for the departed cannot be performed in Church), *Joile domnești* (*Lord's Thursdays*), *Joile mari* (*Great Thursdays*), *Joierele* (*Great Thursdays*), *Joile verzi* (*Green Thursdays*), *Joile grele* (*Hard/Tough Thursdays*), *Joile păzite* (*Protected Thursdays*), *Joia furnicilor* (*Ants' Thursday*), *Joia neagră* (*Black Thursday*), *Joia iepelor/Joi-Mărica* (*Mare Thursday*), *Joia tuturor jivinelor* (*Thursday of all beasts*), *Joia oalelor* (*Pots Thursday*), *Joia preotului* (*Priest's Thursday*), *Joia verde* (*Green Thursday*), *Joia ciorilor* (*Crows' Thursday*), *Joia necurată* (*Unclean Thursday*); *Joia frumoasă* (*Beautiful Thursday*), *Joia seacă* (*Fasting Thursday*), *Joia mânioasă/Joia moșilor* (*Angry Thursday/Old Men Thursday*), *Joia rea* (*Bad Thursday*), *Joia paparudei* (*Paparuda*²³ *Thursday*), *Joia bulcelor* (*Loaf Thursday*), *Joia caloianului* (*Caloian*²⁴ *Thursday*) (my translations). According to N. Știucă, “the Thursdays after Easter have been observed over generations because of the heavy rains happening around this time of year; if someone goes ploughing, if they cultivate or work anything in the field, they will be hit by hailstone. Not keeping the seven or nine Thursdays after Easter brings collective punishments: not only does the one who violates suffer the damage, but also the rest of the people in the village” (my translation)²⁵ (Știucă II, 75). *The Great Thursday* (or *Joi-Mărica*) is, in the end, through the punishments it imposes on those who ignore the holiday, an anticipation to the day consecrated to *Cailor lui Sântoader* (*Horses' Easter*) (“they who do not wash their hair and work, will be killed by mares' hooves” (my translation)²⁶) (Olteanu 2001, 593). “Not as related to the religious calendar, Great Thursdays, the Thursdays between Easter and Pentecost, are days to be feared, when certain activities must be avoided,

²³ In Romanian mythology, *paparudă* is a deity for fertilizing rain, a rainmaker.

²⁴ *Caloian* is a clay effigy that would be buried or thrown into water during drought to invoke rain.

²⁵ „Joile de după Paști s-au păstrat din bătrâni din cauza ploilor prea mari; dacă cineva iese cu plugul la arat, dacă merge la prășit sau muncește orice la câmp, acea muncă va fi bătută de piatră. Nesocotirea celor șapte sau nouă joi de după Paști aduce pedepse colective: nu doar cel ce le încalcă are parte de păgube, ci și consătenii lui”.

²⁶ „cine nu se spală pe cap și lucrează, îl omoară ielele cu copitele”.

as they are «angry days» that can bring storms, hailstones, various plant diseases for «the weather is not yet settled» (my translation)²⁷ (Știucă II, 5). The day of *Joimari* has another old purpose: fulfilling some of the most ample post-funeral rituals. It is pre-eminently the celebration of the dead (Știucă, II, 58; Hedeșan, 244-248). Phrases containing the lexeme *joi*, found in the Romanian sources, are the following: *Haine noi, de Joi până apoi* (New clothes, from Thursday 'till after – my translation) “for the person who does not know how to save their wealth” (my translation)²⁸ (Zanne III, 178), *de Joi până mai apoi* (from Thursday to later” – my translation) “2. endlessly, 3. always, 4. never, 5. said about something done superficially” (my translation)²⁹ (MDA, 253), *La Joia-Verde* (on Green Thursday – my translation) “meaning never, since Green Thursday is not a Romanian holiday” (my translation)³⁰ (Zanne VII, 28), *Își păzește taina de Joi până mai de apoi, întocmai ca o muiere* (protects their secret from Thursday to later like a woman – my translation) “they are not capable of not telling everything they know” (my translation)³¹ (Zanne VII, 597).

I. Evseev (1998 a, 207), while describing the ludic-erotic aspect of the expressions related to Thursday, shows that it “has penetrated even the purist totalitarian era, which, among the work days of the week, did however accept to include “youth Thursday” (my translation)³². The derivatives *joian*, *joiană*, *jocan*, *joică*, *joienică* “young cattle”, *joichiță*, *joienel* “cattle born on Thursday” complete the rural linguistic imaginary.

Conclusion

According to its axiological value, “Thursday seems to be the most contradictory of all the days of the week and this is probably because of the contamination of the two systems of counting days” (my translation)³³ (Evseev 1998 a, 206). The fourth day of the week is called a contradictory holiday by A. Olteanu as well “(even if we just look at the portrait of Thursday: «Thursday is half man and half woman»), in which blessed elements (it is a day of love, a day good for marriage) are combined with ill-fated ones (especially Thursdays following Easter)” (my

²⁷ „Nu la fel de strâns legate de calendarul religios, *Joierele* sau *Joile Mari*, cuprinse între Paști și Rusalii, sunt zile de temut, păstrate prin evitarea anumitor activități, fiindcă sunt zile mânioase care pot aduce furtuni, grindină și mană, căci vremea nu e încă așezată”.

²⁸ „pentru omul care nu știe să-și economisească avutul”.

²⁹ „2. la nesfârșit, 3. mereu, 4. niciodată, 5. Se spune despre un lucru făcut de mântuială”.

³⁰ „adică niciodată, căci Joia-Verde nu este o sărbătoare românească”.

³¹ „nu e în stare să nu spună tot ce știe”.

³² „a străpuns chiar barierele puritanismului epocii totalitare, care, în cursul zilelor lucrătoare ale săptămânii, a admis, totuși, „joia tineretului”.

³³ „Joia pare a fi cea mai contradictorie, sub aspectul valorificării ei axiologice, dintre toate zilele săptămânii și asta, probabil, din cauza contaminării celor două sisteme de numărare a succesiunii zilelor”.

translation)³⁴ (Olteanu 2001, 702). The popular calendar offers us some clues according to which Thursday was a weekly holiday celebrated similarly to Sunday.

I. Ghinoiu shows that, in Maramureş, in some villages, weddings would be organised on Thursday and not on Sunday. “On Thursday it is always good to bathe, to comb, to love, to dust, to take care of the house, ‘cause everyone loves you; this day belongs to love” (my translation)³⁵ (1994, 59-60).

I. Ghinoiu (1994, 60), while speaking about a clear Pagan-Christian syncretism, mentions the tradition of cremating the dead and the sacrificial fires from the Holy Week. The derivative *Joimari*, referring to a day of the dead, confirms this tradition (Hedeşan, 244-248). J. Szadura (2017, 317-319), when describing customs related to *czwartek* “Thursday” in Polish traditions, mentions it is the day of contacting the dead³⁶. The same researcher also offers some examples suggesting the connection between this day and love. Moreover, the children born on Thursday can become witches (this day being related to their meetings at *łysa góra*) (Gloger 1, 1908, 267) and they are good at commerce.

Adding to the ethnological description of the fourth day of the week, I wanted to offer here an ethnolinguistic and comparative analysis, limited to strictly linguistic data (the article is more of an outline and a search for the adequate method than an exhaustive description). The cultural-linguistic image of Thursday in Polish is poorer than the one in Romanian language and culture. Plus, the analysed material is not homogeneous, the Polish sources being more modest and also including sayings or proverbs coming from Polish nobility, beside the expressions typical for folk language.

Classifying the material based on the onomasiological principle (basic semantic structures motivate their figurative meaning) shows many resemblances between the two languages and cultures in the field related to Christianity (structures: the hierarchy of days in a week, fasting days and different kinds of abstinence, the names of the respective days). A subclass compiled from “references to other, non-religious aspects of daily life” shows more differences, containing examples related to the world of plants, popular customs, superstitions – the examples related to Romanian being more numerous for this category. Even the personification of the days of the week, inexistent in Polish folklore is a good

³⁴ “(judecând fie și numai după portretul lui Joi: «Joaia e jumătate bărbat și jumătate femeie»), în care se îmbină elemente faste (este o zi a dragostei, a căsătoriei) cu cele nefaste (cu deosebire joile după Paști)”.

³⁵ “Joaia îi bine întotdeauna să te lai, să te piepteni, pentru dragoste, să scuturi, să grijesti prin casă, că toți te iubesc; acea zi îi a dragostei”.

³⁶ In southern Poland, on *Joaia Mare* (Maundy Thursday) there is another interesting custom, called *palenie Judasza* “the burning of Judas”, which would deserve to be compared to Romanian customs from the Holy Week. To this end, see the article by U. Janicka-Krzywda (2018). On the third day of Easter, there is also the celebration of *Rękawka* in Krakow, interpreted by Z. Gloger (1908, 1, 222-223), as a remembrance of the past funeral repast.

argument in this sense. In both languages we find traces of older beliefs, but more numerous in the Romanian culture than in the Polish one. This influence is, however, materialised differently. In popular Romanian culture, the influence can be easily analysed at the level of the various names of this day, as well as traditions and customs, while in Polish it is set in language through proverbs.

There are two possible causes: the period in which the two languages were recorded in writing (which obviously favours metaphorical creation), longer for Polish than for Romanian, and the firm attitude of the Catholic Church (in comparison to the Orthodox Church) in fighting Pagan traditions. The first cause has obvious consequences: a concrete manner of expressing thought and the lack of generalization are typical for folk culture³⁷, and this tendency can be noticed in a series of Romanian examples referring to interdictions, as recorded in the ethnographic Romanian sources. The second however is only a hypothesis that should be verified. Thus, the present analysis represents only the beginning of a comparative Romanian-Polish ethnolinguistic description.

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