

# Religious Terminology in Ioan Piuariu-Molnar's Grammar: *Deutsch-Walachische Sprachlehre*, Vienna, 1788

Ana-Maria MINUȚ, Ion LIHACIU

*La grammaire élaborée par Ioan Piuariu Molnar a eu comme but principal l'enseignement du roumain par les employés qui travaillaient dans l'administration de la Monarchie des Habsbourg et par les commerçants étrangers. La section de vocabulaire de l'ouvrage contient presque 30 champs délimités de point de vue onomasiologique, qui englobent termes apparentés conceptuellement. Le premier de ces champs, **Despre Dumnezeu și despre duhuri, Von Gott und von den Geistern**, contient les termes religieux. L'article prouve l'influence des modèles étrangers suivis par Molnar; il s'agit de deux grammaires de la langue française écrites en allemand: la grammaire de J.R. des Pepliers, **Nouvelle et parfaite grammaire royale française et allemande. Neue und vollständige königliche französische Grammatik, bisher unter dem Nahmen des Herrn der Pepliers vielmals herausgegeben** (Leipzig, 1765), respectivement, la grammaire de Hilmar Curas, **Erleichterte und durch lange Erfahrung verbesserte französische Grammatik** (Berlin, 1759). On a constaté que les équivalents allemands indiqués par Molnar pour les termes roumains sont les mêmes que les équivalents allemands indiqués par Pepliers ou par Curas pour la langue française.*

*Mots-clés: grammaire, termes religieux, modèles étrangers*

**I. Preamble.** Following the Western model, the intellectual enlightener involved in the modernization of the Romanian society, the ophthalmologist Ioan Piuariu-Molnar (1749-1815) stood out both as the author of a German-Romanian grammar (*Deutsch-Walachische Sprachlehre*, Vienna, 1788, Sibiu, 1810, Sibiu, 1823) as well as that of a German-Romanian dictionary (*Wörterbüchlein deutsch und wallachisches*, Sibiu, 1822) and of the first book of rural economics (*Economia stupilor / The Economics of Hives*, Vienna, 1785, Sibiu, 1808), as the editor<sup>1</sup> of a rhetoric (*Retorică, adecă învățătura și întocmirea frumoasei cuvîntări. Acum întâi izvodită pe limba românească. Împodobită și întemeiată cu pildele vechilor filosofi și dascalii bisericești* (Buda, 1798) and as the translator<sup>2</sup> of *Istoriei*

---

<sup>1</sup> On the idea that Molnar is not the author or translator of the Rhetoric published in 1798, see Ursu, 2002: 332346, where Molnar is the only publisher of that text, which is an older translation of Francesco Scuffi's *Handbook of Rhetoric*, published in Venice in 1681.

<sup>2</sup> N.A. Ursu (2002: 347-352) considers that Molnar is also the translator of the popular book *The Life of Bertoldo and Bertoldino, his son, and Cacasino, his nephew* published anonymously in Sibiu in 1799.

*universale, adecă de obște, care cuprinde în sine întimplările veacurilor vechi, întocmită prin Signior Milot, commembrum Academiei Frîncești din Lion* (Buda, 1800)

**II. Deutsch-Walachische Sprachlehre. Aims.** *Deutsch-Walachische Sprachlehre* is a Romanian grammar written in German; the grammatical theory is strictly Romanian, and all the Romanian examples find their German equivalent. By this work, Molnar reaches at least three important objectives: the first is to consider the making of numerous, clear and richly exemplified Romanian rules; the second is to provide Austrian officials working in Transylvania and foreign merchants with a manual for learning the Romanian. Thirdly, by introducing chapters in which Romanian versions are available for use in various communication situations (at the table, at the tailor, on housing, on writing, on shopping, on legal disputes, and on socially dangerous acts, on war, travel, specific human attitudes, or symptoms of illness, etc.), application forms patterns (for getting a “clerical” post, for the exemption from charging obligations, etc.) and letters (recommendation, condolences, congratulations, etc.) are trying to bring Romania to a level where it can semantically and stylistically express the same content as a refined language like German.

**III. Editions for grammar.** The success that the work enjoyed at the time explains its three editions<sup>3</sup>. The first edition of 1788 is signed “Johann Molnar, royal ophthalmologist in the Grand Principality of Transylvania”; as in 1791 Molnar was appointed professor of ophthalmology in Cluj, afterwards receiving (1792) the noble title of “von Müllersheim”, in the edition of 1810 the title of the author is completed: “Johann Molnar v. Müllersheim, royal opthalmologist in The Great Principality of Transylvania and a professor of eye diseases at the University of Cluj”. In the third posthumous edition, the adjective *fost / former* precedes the same title: “Johann Molnar v. Müllersheim, a former Royal ophthalmologist in the Grand Principality of Transylvania and a professor of eye diseases at the University of Cluj.” Known in the posterity as Ioan Piuaru Molnar, the author signs his work, as it can be seen, with the name Molnar, the equivalent of Piuaru’s Hungarian language, derived from the common *noun* “morar” (as Müller from the noble title “von Müllersheim” is the German equivalent of the same word).

---

<sup>3</sup> For example, the 1788 edition can be studied at the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna (published: 38.H.21 [in printed format], MF 3195 [in microfilm format] or at <http://data.onb.ac.at/rec/AC10132890> [in digital format]); the edition of 1810 is found at the Library of the Romanian Academy, Iasi Branch, in the Old Book and Manuscript Collection, having the inventory number 000097; the edition of 1823 is at BCU Cluj-Napoca, in the Old Romanian Bibliography (1186); in electronic format, at [http://documente.bcucluj.ro/web/bibdigipatrimoniu/BCUCLUJ\\_FCS\\_BRV1186\\_1.pdf](http://documente.bcucluj.ro/web/bibdigipatrimoniu/BCUCLUJ_FCS_BRV1186_1.pdf).

The 1788 edition published in Vienna, “at Joseph Nobil von Kurzbek, a prince of the printing house, a great merchant and merchant of books,” and the 1810 and 1823 editions published in Sibiu at the printing house of “Martin Hochmeister, a prince of the printing house”. Besides the high positions he held in the state (magistrate, senator, mayor of Sibiu), Martin Hochmeister (junior) was a famous typographer and librarian, member (since 1789) of the same Masonic Lodge of St. Andrew where Molnar was part of since 1781 (and where he obtained the degree of companion in 1783 and the degree of master in 1784). It is likely that Hochmeister jr. to be given the posthumous publication of the third edition of Molnar’s grammar.

As for the first edition, the following (especially in the third one) corrects some Romanian and especially German words (which had previously been misspelled) or replaces some German equivalents of Romanian words with some more appropriate ones. Another difference in the third edition is the absence of the dedicatory sequence by which Molnar expresses gratitude to his benefactor, Georg Banffy von Losonz. Also, in the first two editions, the preface in the following is considerably reduced, where the author expresses his conviction as to the usefulness of such a grammar, given that “business requires” knowledge of an intensely spoken language “in Transylvania, Bucovina, Banat and partly in Hungary”.

**IV. Structure.** Besides the preface all three editions of the German-Romanian grammar include: a spelling part (divided into three chapters), a part of morphology (19 chapters), a syntax part (four chapters), *Culegere de cuvinte românești și germane / A Collection of Romanian and German words, Niște dialoguri, pentru a cuvînta despre multe feliuri de stări înainte / Some dialogues to talk about several previous states, Niște povestiri / Some stories* and the chapter *Stil trebnicesc, cărți și alte înșămări aseamînea / Stories, books, and other notes*. Under these conditions, it could be said that the author approached the grammar according to the current meaning of the time (full knowledge of the language), for this reason, encompassing in his work other sections besides morphology and syntax. However, in the preface, the structure of the work is justified: “Given the lack of a dictionary, this grammar would be of no use if it did not serve the role of a lexicon. Therefore, annexes, which do not really have a place in a grammar, may be allowed to exist, at least until a Romanian dictionary and handbook will be published.” Defining his work as “an attempt of a folk introduction whose main merit is the completeness and correctness of the rules and the speech conciseness”, the author makes clear, however, why the lack of “a deeper etymological research” that “rather seemed to find their place in a complete and scholarly grammar.”

**V. Specific features.** Two aspects immediately draw attention to a simple browse of grammar. The first concerns the transcription, for the German reader, of the Romanian words. These are firstly written by a Cyrillic alphabet and then transcribed in Latin letters according to the phonetic rules of the German spelling, the author hoping that “this kind of presentation of the Latin pronunciation can guide the Romanian-language lover.”

The second aspect deals with the grammatical terminology; although grammar is German written, the used grammatical terminology is Latin. The Latin terms being included in the German pronouncements are subject to the reciting rules of that language; when we translated the text, we kept the Latin terminology following the Romanian casual regime. For example, a title like: *Von der Bildung des Nominativi Pluralis aus dem Nominativo Singularis* has the Romanian equivalent of *Despre formarea nominativi pluralis de la nominativum singularem* etc.

**VI. Grammar models.** The idea that Molnar had a model that he did followed closely, the grammar of Samuil Micu and Gheorghe Șincai, *Elementa linguae daco-romanae sive valachicae* (published in Vienna in 1780) is widespread in the literature. The clearly influence of this model is confirmed in case of some grammar chapters. But there are also chapters different from the corresponding ones in the *Elementa* or chapters that appear only in Molnar’s grammar, not in the one of Micu and Sincai. This is explained by the fact that Molnar followed the pattern of foreign grammars which at that time had a great success and intense circulation.

Through several 18th-century grammars, we focused our attention especially on those (like Molnar’s work) intended to acquire a foreign language; so we studied the French, Italian, Latin and Hungarian grammars, all written in German (aiming them at being learned by German readers). We noticed that there is a common pattern of these grammars meaning that their structure is similar: they all contain chapters of spelling, morphology, syntax, lexicon, and chapters that include dialogues, stories and patterns of all sorts of statements. Analogies exist within chapters; In the lexicon section, for example, delimitations are always established onomasiologically (*On God, On Me, On The Earth, On Housing*, etc.), and thus the outcome fields contain many common elements. Of all the grammars we studied, two of them drew our special attention because, beyond the common pattern specific to Molnar’s grammar, other common aspects can be noticed. These are two grammars of the French language written in German and Latin grammatical terminology (like Molnar’s grammar): JR des Pepliers’ work: *Nouvelle et parfaite grammaire royale françoise et allemande. Neue und vollständige königliche französische Grammatik, bisher unter dem Nahmen des Herrn der Pepliers vielmals herausgegeben* (we studied the version published in Leipzig in 1765 at

MG Weidmanns Erben und Reich Printing House), namely the grammar of Hilmar Curas, *Erleichterte und durch lange Erfahrung verbesserte französische Grammatik* (we studied the version published in Berlin in 1759 at Friedrich Nicolai's Printing House).

Such grammars (with great prints for that time, and having benefited from several successive edits) designed for German readers to learn a foreign language have undoubtedly been useful to Molnar for several reasons. A first reason concerns the German correspondence of words; we have identified numerous cases in which the German equivalents indicated by Molnar for Romanian words are identical to the German equivalencies indicated by Pepliers' grammar or Curas' for French words. A second reason concerns the internal structure of chapters. Thirdly, being written in German while having grammatical terminology in Latin, such works have provided Molnar with models of a proper making of the statements. Comparing the original text (in German) of Molnar's grammar with the German texts by Pepliers and Curas, comments or recommendations can be observed in identical or similar making of statements.

We also studied the German grammar written in Latin by Georgius Nagy, *Elementa linguae germanicae* (Vienna, 1775), which N.A. Ursu (2012: 27) showed as a model followed by Samuil Micu and Gheorge Sincai to make *Elementa linguae daco-romanae sive valachicae*.

**VII. A Collection of Romanian and German words.** The vocabulary section, in which the words are assigned, as in *Vocabularul românesc și latinesc / The Romanian and Latin Vocabulary of Elementa*, in onomastically circumscribed fields, it is called *Culegere de cuvinte românești și germane / A Collection of Romanian and German words*; the title closest to it is found in Pepliers' grammar: *(Nouveau) recueil de mots françois & allemands* (versus the titles in Curas and Nagy's grammar: *Vocabulaire, oder Auszug der nöthigsten Wörter* and *Vocabularium germanicolatinum, Deutschlateinisches Wörterbuch*). The fields in this collection form, in Wartburg's terms, a "Begriffssystem"; 27 fields are circumscribed to fundamental notions such as 'Divinity', 'man', 'universe', and each field contains words that lexicalize related concepts: *Despre Dumnezeu și despre duhuri, Despre lume și despre stihii, Despre pământ, Despre mări și alte ape, Despre vreamă, Despre om și despre mădulările omului, Despre scăderile omului, Despre veșminte bărbățești, Despre veșmintele muierțești, Despre casă și despre părțile ei, Despre lucrurile din casă, Ce se află în cuhnă, Ceale ce trebuiesc la așternutul measei, Despre mâncare și beutură, Ce se află în pivniță, Despre scrisoare, Despre țări, Numele neamurilor, Despre întâmplările boalelor, Despre rudenii, Despre vredniciile preoțești, Despre vredniciile lumești, Despre dregătoriile județești și politicești, Despre știință și meșteșuguri* etc.

**VIII.** The first field in Molnar's grammar is titled: *Despre Dumnezeu și despre duhuri* [deŝpre Dumneŝeu ŝchi deŝpre duchuri] *Von Gott und von den Geistern*. The corresponding field in *Elementa* is: *Despre <Dumne>zău, spiriți (duhuri) și cele ce se cuvîn lor*. The Romanian words and phrases recorded by Micu and Șincai are: <Dumne>zău, Tatăl, Fiiul, Duhul sînt, Sînta Troiță, Făcător, făptură, Mîntuitor, mîntuire, răscumpărător, mîngăitor, Născătoare de <Dumne>zău, Sînt, viața ce va să fie, rai, împărăția cerurilor, diavol, drac, nălucă, făr<ă> de <Dumne>zău, idol, idolatră, ipocrită, eretic, blăstămător, fățarnic, băsearecă, timpă, adunare, șerbire de <Dumne>zău, cucernecie, evlavie, conciuine, rugăciune, credință, dogma credinței, penitenție, înfrîngere, botez, cuminecătură, icoană, altar, înviare.

In Pepliers' grammar, the equivalent field is called *Von der Gottheit und denen Dingen, welche den Gottesdienst angehen*. The similarities between this field and that of Molnar's grammar can easily be observed. Multiple German terms are identical to the two authors; thus, Molnar proposes for the Romanian words the same German equivalencies that Pepliers recommends for French. For example, *Dumnezeu* has *Gott* as its equivalent (which corresponds to Pepliers' *Dieu*); *Dumnezeu Tatăl* has *Gott der Vater* as its equivalent (in French, *Dieu le Père*); the German *Gott der Sohn* (in French, *Dieu le Fils*) corresponds to *Dumnezeu Fiul*; to *Dumnezeu Duhul Sfînt*, in German, *Gott der heilige Geist* (in French, *Dieu le Saint Esprit*); for *Ceale Trei Feațe* we found the German equivalent of *die drei Personen* (in French, *Les trois personnes*); the German *ein einiger Gott* (in French, *Un seul Dieu*) corresponds to *un singur Dumnezeu*; *Mijlocitoriul* for the German *der Mittler* (in French, *Le Médiateur*); to *Părintele cel veacinic*, the German *der ewige Vater* (in French, *Le Père éternel*); *Atoputearnicul* is in German *der Allmächtige [Schöpfer]* (in French, *Le Créateur tout-puissant*); *Răscumpărătoriul*, in German, *der Erlöser* (in French, *Le Rédempteur*); *Făcătoriul*, in German, *der Schöpfer* (in French, *Le Créateur*); *Mîntuitoriul*, in German, *der Seligmacher* (in French, *Le Sauveur*); *Mîngăitoriul*, in German, *der Tröster* (in French, *Le Consolateur*); *Firea dumnezeiască*, in German, *die göttliche Natur* (in French, *La Nature divine*); *sfînt*, in German *heilig* (in French, of noun value, into plural, *Les Saints*, with its German equivalent *die Heiligen*); *îngerul*, in German, *der Engel* (in French, the plural *Les Anges*); *Arhanghelul*, in German, *der Erzengel* (in French, the plural *Les Archanges*); *viața cea viitoare*, in German, *das zukünftige Leben* (in French, *la vie éternelle*, with its German equivalent *das ewige Leben*); *mîntuirea*, in German, *die Seligkeit* (in French, *le salut*); *Raiul*, in German, *das Paradies* (in French, *Le Paradis*); *iadul*, in German, *die Hölle* (in French, *L'Enfer*); *diavolul*, in German, *der Teufel* (in French, *Le Diable*); *nălucirea*, in German, *das Gespenst* (in French, articulated by the indefinite article, *un fantôme, spectre*); *duh de nălucă*, in German, *ein Poltergeist* (in French, *un lutin*); *un idol*, in German, *ein Götze* (in French, *un idole*); *un slujitoriu de idoli*, in German, *ein Götzendiener* (in French,

*un idolatre*); *un eretic*, in German, *ein Ketzer* (in French, *un hérétique*); *fățarnicul*, in German, *der Heuchler* (in French, articulated by the indefinite article, *un hipocrite*); *botezul*, in German, *die Taufe* (in French, *le batême*); *cuminecătura*, in German, *das heilige Abendmahl* (in French, *la sainte Communion* or *la sainte Cène*).

The German equivalents of Molnar's words are found in Curas' grammar, in the field of *Von der Religion und dem Gottesdienst* or *Von Gott, von den guten und von den bösen Geistern*. Therefore, *slujba lui Dumnezeu* is, in German, *der Gottesdienst* (in French, *le service divin*); *bisearica*, in German, *die Kirche* (in French, *l'église*); *evlaviia*, in German, *die Andacht* (in French, *la dévotion*); *rugăciunea*, in German, *das Gebet* (in French, with its indefinite article, *une prière*); *dogma credinții*, in German, *der Glaubens-Artikel* (in French, *les articles de la foi*); *făptura*, in German, *das Geschöpf* (in French, *la créature*); *duhul cel rău*, in German, *der böse Geist* (in French, *le malin esprit*); *un hulitoriu*, in German, *ein Lästerer* (in French, *un blasphémateur*, with its German equivalent *ein Gotteslästerer*); *satana*, in German *der Satan* (in French, *Satan* sau *Satanas*); *focul cel vecinic*, in German, *das ewige Feuer* (in French, *le feu éternel*); *deznădăjduirea*, in German, *die Verzweiflung* (in French, *le desespoir*).

The German equivalents of three words occur only in Nagy's grammar (within the field *Von dem Gottesdienste, von den Andachtsübungen und andern heiligen Sachen*): *die Versammlung* (the Romanian *adunarea*, and the Latin *congregatio*); *der Glaube* (in Romanian, *credința*, in Latin, *fides*); *die Buße* (in Romanian, *pocăința*, in Latin, *poenitentia*).

**IX. Conclusions.** As in all onomasiologic fields defined in the vocabulary of Molnar's grammar, the model of Pepliers and Curas' grammars can be noticed in religious terms as well. Molnar could start from the German equivalences of the French words recorded by Pepliers and Curas, to whom he identified Romanian correspondents. As can be noticed from the list of examples given above, some Romanian correspondents represent calculations or translations: *Ceale Trei Fețe / The Three Faces* 'The Trinity' (in German, *die drei Personen*), *Mijlocitoriul / The Mediator* (in German, *der Mittler*), *Părintele cel veacinic / The Father-in-Law* (in German, *der ewige Vater*), *Răscumpărătoriul / The Redeemer* (in German, *der Erlöser*), *Firea dumnezeiască / The Divine Nature* (in German, *die göttliche Natur*), *un slujitoriu de idoli / a servant of idols* (in German, *Götzendiener*), etc.

## Bibliography

Ursu, N.A. 2002. *Contribuții la istoria culturii românești. Studii și note filologice*, Iași: Editura Cronica

Ursu, N.A. 2012. *Alte contribuții la istoria culturii românești. Studii și note filologice*, Iași:  
Editura Cronica