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**ROMANIAN METEOROLOGICAL TERMINOLOGY  
OF ATMOSPHERE PHENOMENA  
(SCIENTIFIC versus POPULAR)**

**TERMINOLOGIA METEOROLOGICĂ ROMÂNEASCĂ  
A FENOMENELOR ATMOSFERICE  
(ȘTIINȚIFIC versus POPULAR)**

Volume edited by / Volum editat de  
**Cristina Florescu**

**Linguistic Studies / Studii lingvistice:** Cristina Florescu, Laura Manea, Elena Tamba, Alina Pricop, Cristina Cărăbuș, Florin-Teodor Olariu și Maria Iliescu, Rodica Zafiu, Bardu Nistor, Mariana Neț

Liviu Apostol (General Meteorological Considerations / Considerații generale privind meteorologia)

**Dictionary of Atmosphere Phenomena / Dicționarul fenomenelor atmosferice (DFA):**

Cristina Florescu, Laura Manea, Elena Tamba, Alina Pricop, Cristina Cărăbuș

Overview and info on dialectal elements / Informații și revizie a elementelor dialectale:

Florin-Teodor Olariu

Overview and info of meteorological elements / Informații și revizie a elementelor meteorologice: Liviu Apostol

Meteorological documentation / Documentare meteorologică: Dan Chelaru

Word index and choices / Indice de cuvinte și variante: Mădălin Pătrașcu

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As all the other branches of science, meteorology has also gathered a giant amount of information, objective data and ideas which allowed a smoother approach of specific topics from newer and more modern and efficient perspectives. Nowadays scientific knowledge has almost become unconceivable in the absence of some modern research means and methods, namely of some more and more performant and sophisticated technologies, used both for doing accurate systematic measurements, experiments and simulations, and for conveying, storing, processing and interpreting the data resulting from the respective measurements.

As an independent branch of science, meteorology fully fits into the above-mentioned picture. Because it is difficult to imagine that there might be another domain of knowledge more dependent on the objectivity of the systematically and simultaneously measured data on such a large number of weather parameters, as truly is in the case of meteorology. Meanwhile, it gets also obvious that this domain is increasingly focusing on the idea of forecast. And that weather forecasts draw everybody's attention, everywhere. That is why there is no radio or TV broadcast, newspaper or any other mass media to slip out of their compulsory heading, useful information about weather evolution on a short – term (1 – 3 days), medium – term (about one week) and a long – term (several months) basis. That is also why meteorological research and national or regional weather forecast centres and services have actually spooned by delivering ever more precise and specific forecasts for an increasing and diversifying number of users.

Meteorology has eventually defined itself as a modern science only by the end of the XIX<sup>th</sup> century (even if the first treatise of meteorology was written by Aristotle) and the first attempts to issue regular weather forecasts date back to the Crimean War, in the third decade of the respective century. But all these shouldn't necessarily lead to the idea that, before meteorology had emerged as an independent science, people were not interested by weather evolution and made no efforts to observe the causes, occurrence and evolution of atmosphere phenomena, in order to predict their time and space extent. Quite on the contrary. Starting from the premises that weather evolution may directly or indirectly influence all types of human activities and that its influence gets stronger as technology is less developed, people have always been closely interested by the future evolution of weather, namely by any potential form of its forecasting. Especially if taking into account the fact that weather hazards could – and they often did – destroy or deplete food resources, often having extremely painful negative effects.

Therefore, it becomes obvious that populations living mostly on agriculture and animal husbandry (as in the case of the Romanian people throughout most of its long history) have tried to do some short – and long – term forecasts on weather, in order to prevent, as much as possible, its negative influences and outcomes and to use, as efficiently as possible, its future favourable evolution.

Peasants had no meteorological instruments (and nobody had ever had such devices for a long time in mankind's history) but they have long watched nature, on all its possible aspects, drawing the necessary conclusions out of the similitude, repeatedness and causality of its processes and phenomena, and then they have imagined patterns and later constructed inventive and even efficient methods to foresee any upcoming weather events. Obviously, all these lacked the accuracy of nowadays highly professional forecasts but one must admit that neither the latter ones have always been so exact as 50 or 100 years ago.

Besides the numerous objective observations related to the evolution of atmosphere processes and phenomena or to the reactions of the living matter (plants, animals and even people) about the still invisible weather changes, folk meteorology yet contains a large series of procedures, methods, explanations and conclusions based on beliefs and superstitions which might hardly be accepted by the highly-educated human being in modern times. But this does not imply that some observations and statements could no further be stored in the collective mind and be usefully exploited to foresee oncoming weather, at least on a local scale.

It would nevertheless be most appropriate to re-analyze, from time to time, the truthfulness and usefulness of popular sayings and facts about weather evolution – as in the case of traditional medicine – because they may occasionally provide extra opinions for better framed forecasts, especially aiming at foreseeing long-term events.

Under the circumstances, the best attitude is to keep the proper balance between the simple virtues of some common sense observations and conclusions and modern scientific knowledge, based on high-tech equipments and undoubtful professionalism.

Initially, the topic of the present paperwork may cause worries as it fails to identify a sufficiently large enough number of problems to ensure an adequate scientific consistency. But as the reader gets deeper into the substance of the informative material, all potential worries fade away and confidence grows instead that the comparative analysis of both popular and scientific meteorology are not only interesting and attracting, but also very eloquent and convincing as regards the exceptionally large virtues and possibilities of modern science, which however originates in the findings and teachings accumulated along times, by anonymous persons keenly preoccupied to improve, through knowledge, their human condition.

If seeing things from this perspective, the volume entitled **ROMANIAN METEOROLOGICAL TERMINOLOGY OF ATMOSPHERE PHENOMENA (SCIENTIFIC versus POPULAR)**, edited by Cristina Florescu – main researcher at the „A. Philippide” Institute of Romanian Philology of the Romanian Academy – the Iassy Subsidiary, may be considered a genuine

*monument*. And by using this label, the authors of the present review do not exaggerate and do not burn out bonfires in order to draw the readers' attention. Quite the opposite, they feel a somewhat diffuse feeling of dissatisfaction as they are convinced that the term *monument* could hardly fully express the real value of this impressive book, which shouldn't miss at least from any public library.

Because it is a *monumental* book, extending over 711 pages and comprising a huge amount of objective, concrete information regarding the Romanian linguistical origin, evolution and significance of popular or scientific terms denoting various atmosphere phenomena. Because it is a book that does not turn the Romanian literary and popular semantic space of meteorology into a fascinating and immortal realm, but it effectively contributes to spotlight Romania's name into the eternal domain of science. Because it is an honest book both with itself and with its readers as it succeeds in being what it was initially meant to: a scientifically highly-elevated encyclopedia of Romanian literary and popular meteorological terms. And also because it succeeded in being even more than it had initially been meant to: a fundamental work of Romanian linguistics and meteorology alike, that is a true *cultural monument* dedicated to Romania.

This is a book as comprehensive as the....sky. A whole universe in a book. The Romanian language in universal science.

And the mountain of information composing the multiple substance of the terms that have been included in the **ROMANIAN METEOROLOGICAL TERMINOLOGY OF ATMOSPHERE PHENOMENA (SCIENTIFIC versus POPULAR)**, has incredibly been climbed up by only 14 people. People of culture. Because, no matter from what perspective we might take it, this fundamental work of Romanian language and meteorology stands for the most genuine act of culture. A cultural monument dedicated to Romania, mainly dealing with the scientific dimension of culture and with the cultural dimension of science. And by contributing to its writing, its authors, coordinated by Dr. **Cristina Florescu**, actually join the great people of culture in Romania. Although we are pretty certain that this is a *status quo* which under no circumstances would ever be claimed by the authors of the present book. Neither would they ever think of, nor would they even want it. Simply because even if one of them had ever had this self-pride, this pride would have nevertheless been linked to the dedication to their work and to the self-conscience that if a thing is worth doing, then it is worth doing at its best....

If taken individually, the studies and articles of the present **Terminology** represent exact and objective linguistic analyses, apparently affectively neutral. But the whole building turns into a magical construction. Even if you skim through the book, from one end to another, and making only a few short stops, the impression would be very much the same. Because nobody entirely reads an...encyclopedia. But if looking closer to its content, it would be enough to make you feel that there

is a unifying force that gives coherence to all its separate parts, putting them altogether. Because you will feel really proud to find out that your native tongue has unconceivable depths even in the case of some natural phenomena, and that your ancestors' space is not a space of half-truths and measures. That the people and the language of this country are not at all below the others from around the world.... On the contrary, all these feelings brought together should compose that longed-for country named Romania, which must always be carried deep down in your soul, thought and.... speech.

The **ROMANIAN METEOROLOGICAL TERMINOLOGY OF ATMOSPHERE PHENOMENA (SCIENTIFIC versus POPULAR)** is a book with a rich content and an elegant style. And these usual words do not entirely express reality. Because the book we are referring to contains a lot of science and a lot of culture. And one should only read small parts of it in order to get convinced that the first assertion is completely true. As for the second assertion, one gets convinced from the very first contact with it since it is a real printing „jewel” . A little „work of art” in the domain. And an additional proof that the printing house of the „Al. I. Cuza” University in Iassy really deserves its well-known brand.

The first part of the paperwork represents, in fact, a collection of fundamental linguistic studies concerning the lexical basis of the scientific fund, especially of popular (dialectal) terms, denoting some of the most important atmosphere phenomena, such as radiations propagating through the Earth's atmosphere, cloudiness, wind, rainfalls and various other optical, electrical and hydro-meteorological phenomena; but also a series of complementary studies which, by taking into consideration the inter-domain extent of the book, are necessary for the correct understanding of the evolutive context of meteorological concepts and terms regarding: the development of the corresponding scientific domain in Romania or the evolution of the structure, content and language which have currently been used in weather forecast bulletins in our country, between 1884 and 1916; as well as some interesting studies of comparative linguistics related to the connotations of some meteorological terms originating from Aromanian dialect, or to the specifically Romanian lexical characteristics referring to air-temperature, enriched by means of an attractive and interesting study, with a most immediate applicability in....household domain, making a comprehensive inventory of terms and expressions which have been imported from meteorology, directly into.....gastronomy!

The second part of the paperwork includes the *Dictionary of atmosphere phenomena (DFA)*, opening with a short presentation of etimological, lexical, grammar, ortographical etc. norms which have been used in the book. The authors of this specific parts, all of them being most reputed specialists in the fields of both Philology and Meteorology, have successfully selected and explained the origins,

the meanings, the dialectal variants etc. of an impressive number of (alphabetically ordered) scientific and popular terms referring to a wide variety of processes, elements, phenomena and methods used in meteorology.

The publication of this book, representing an authentic act of culture, is mainly due not only to the consistent effort of its authors, but also to its good financing opportunity offered by the National Council of Scientific Research through the National Programme II-ID-PCE-2011-3-0656.

The good example of its authors should be followed by more people of science or culture who might thus greatly support either culture, or science, even if during this challenging time we are living through, all these might seem unimportant...

That is why we address our most sincere thought of appreciation and gratitude to all those who, in a form or another, from initiators to authors, editors, printers etc., have contributed to the publication of this genuine cultural-scientific object. As it spawns real science with Romanian culture.

Bucharest, 10 martie 2016

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