

SOME LINGUISTIC REMARKS REGARDING ROMANIAN VIKING STUDIES

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Abstract:

*In Romania there is no academic program dedicated entirely to the study of the Viking period in Scandinavia and Europe, but Romanian historiography can still boast with a decent number of monographs, translations and studies relating to early medieval Northern Europe. The concern of the present study is that of offering a general view on the language variations used by Romanian historians or translators when referring to certain Viking historical characters, rituals, artefacts or any other aspects regarding the history of the Norsemen. One of the first terms that ought to be considered by this study is the Old Norse word “viking” (used in runic inscriptions in contexts such as the verbal group “fara í viking” – meaning “to go on a raid”, “to go a-viking”). The complexity of translating this verbal structure into Romanian comes from the difficulty of turning the borrowed ethnonym “Viking” into a verbal phrase. Thus, it has been rendered as “a merge în expediție vikingă”/“going on a Viking [+fem. desinence] expedition”. The only downside of using this phrase is that it might imply pleonasm since the Romanian noun “viking” already refers to raids and seafaring activities. Other authors have instead proposed the translation of “cineva care face un înconjur”/“somebody who goes on an expedition”, or simply “care e departe de casă”/“someone away from home”. But a royal saga also tells us about a noble who was “stundum í kaupferdum en stundum í vikingu” which is translated into Romanian as “în același timp în călătorie de afaceri și în expediție vikingă [at the same time in business trip and in viking expedition]”. The translation of í viking as “a merge în expediție viking [going on a viking expedition]” also appears. In the translation of Frans G. Bengtsson’s well know *The Long Ships*, going a-viking is translated into Romanian as “seceriș [reaping], incursiune de jaf [raid for plundering]”, which is interestingly*

the only identifiable metaphor for this activity. Vikings also rarely appear as "wikingi" instead of the very common "vikingi" in Romanian translations.

Rezumat:

În România nu există niciun program academic dedicat integral studiului perioadei vikinge în Scandinavia și Europa, dar istoriografia românească se poate lăuda cu un număr cel puțin decent de monografii, traduceri și studii despre nordul Europei la începutul Evului Mediu. Studiul de față dorește să ofere o imagine generală asupra variațiilor de lexic din lucrările istorice românești sau din traducerile ce fac referire la istoria vikingilor sau la anumite personalități ori ritualuri, artefacte sau orice alte aspecte legate de istoria oamenilor nordului. Unul din primii termeni ce ar trebui luați în considerare este cuvântul „viking” din limba nordică veche (folosit în inscripții runice cum ar fi grupul verbal „fara í viking” – însemnând „a merge într-un raid”, sau forțat din punct de vedere gramatical și lexical, „a merge în vikingie”). Complexitatea traducerii acestei structuri verbale în limba română vine din dificultatea transformării etnonimului împrumutat „viking” într-o structură verbală. Așadar, a fost tradus ca „a merge în expediție vikingă”. O problemă a constitui-o conotație cuvântului „viking” în limba română, care deja include sensul de activitate de raid pe mare sau pe uscat, astfel că „expediție vikingă” poate constitui un pleonasm. Alți autori au folosit în schimb traducerea de „cineva care face un înconjur”, sau, mai simplu, „cineva care e departe de casă”. O saga regală ne pomenește despre un nobil care era „stundum í kaupferdum en stundum í vikingu”, „în același timp în călătorie de afaceri și în expediție vikingă”. Traducerea lui „í viking” ca „a merge în expediție viking” apare de asemenea (se observă, aici, lipsa desinenței de feminin în formula „expediție viking”). În traducerea binecunoscutului roman al lui Frans G. Bengtsson în limba română, a merge în expediție vikingă este tradus ca „seceriș, incursiune de jaf”, ceea ce reprezintă singura metaforă identificabilă pentru aceste termen. Demonimul „wikingi” mai apare în mod rar și ca „wikingi” în loc de varianta anterioară foarte răspândită, cu „v”.

Keywords: Viking studies, Romania, translations, Edda, Old Norse

Although in Romania there is no academic program dedicated entirely to the study of the Viking period in Scandinavia and Europe, Romanian historiography can boast with a decent number of monographs, translations and studies relating to early medieval Northern Europe. The concern of the present study is that of offering a general view on the language variations used by Romanian historians or translators when referring to certain Viking historical characters, rituals, artifacts or any other aspects regarding the history of the Norsemen. One of the first

terms that ought to be considered by this study is the Old Norse word “viking” (used in runic inscriptions in contexts such as the verbal group “*fara í viking*” – meaning “to go on a raid”, “to go a-viking”). The complexity of translating this verbal structure into Romanian comes from the difficulty of turning the borrowed ethnonym “Viking” into a verbal phrase. Thus, it has been rendered as “a merge în expediție vikingă” / “going on a Viking [feminine desinence] expedition”. It appears so in the translation of the beautifully alliterating expression “a vestsvegum i vikingu, pe drumul de apus în expediție vikingă [on the western road in viking.fem expedition]”¹. The only downside of using this phrase is that it might imply pleonasm since the Romanian noun “viking” already refers to raids and seafaring activities. Other authors have instead proposed the translation of “cineva care face un înconjur” / “somebody who goes on an expedition”, or simply “care e departe de casă” / “someone away from home”. But a royal saga also tells us about a noble who was “*stundum í kaupferdum en stundum í vikingu*” which is translated into Romanian as “în același timp în călătorie de afaceri și în expediție vikingă [at the same time in business trip and in viking expedition]”². The translation of *í viking* as “a merge în expediție viking [going on a viking expedition]”³ also appears. In the translation of Frans G. Bengtsson’s well know *The Long Ships*, going a-viking is translated into Romanian as “seceriș [reaping], incursiune de jaf [raid for plundering]”, which is interestingly the only identifiable metaphor for this activity⁴. Vikings also rarely appear as “wikingi” instead of the very common “vikingi” in Romanian translations.

The study of such linguistic variations as presented above is both interesting and useful, especially for those who would approach the Viking era in writing both academic works and works for the general public in Romania.

The body of the following article will mostly be concerned with the exposition of the various linguistic choices made by Romanian translators or historians of Old Norse history or literature. The exact

¹ Frédéric Durand, *Vikingii* (Corint: București, 2003), translation Ovidiu Cristea, 24.

² Régis Boyer, *Islanda medievală. Vikingii* (ALL: București, 2002), 82.

³ Boyer, 2002, 55.

⁴ Frans G. Bengtsson, *Vikingii. O povestire istorică din vremurile străbune*, traducere de Constantin A. Gâdei (Dacia: Cluj, 1974), 5.

English equivalent will be given in square brackets immediately after the Romanian text. More background information from universal historiography regarding the discussed concepts is to be found in footnotes.

One of the first works taken in consideration for such a purpose should be the Eddas. In fact, concerning religion and rites, I have given most deference to the translated Edda than to other works, as the default source for Viking mythology. Concerning mythology, translation variations from other Romanian sources dealing with the Vikings are only mentioned if they are different than the Edda. Another argument for this is that the Edda has also been translated relatively recently (2005). Others may argue that *Valhalla și Thule*⁵ should be the standard comparison work, but considering that it has been published in a time when loan words were not preferred over quite forceful native equivalents, the translated Edda still remains the preferred choice.

Masterpieces of Scandinavian culture, the Eddas contain a lot of lore regarding all the aspects of the Old Norse religion and society. These very important writings have been translated from German⁶ by Magda Petculescu in a – otherwise quite late but very welcome – 2005 edition.⁷ The volume includes both the Poetic Edda and the Prose Edda. The former is referred to as “Edda poetică [Poetic Edda]”⁸, “Edda cea veche [Elder Edda]” or “Edda lui Saemunda [Saemunda’s Edda]”. The latter is called “Edda în proză”⁹, “Edda cea nouă [New Edda]” or “Snorra Edda”.

For the present study even the table of contents of the translated Edda contains valuable insight. The titles of the Elder Edda contain many noun-noun compound words. Their translation has been done as follows.

⁵ *Walhalla și Thule. Mituri și legende vechi germanice*, vol. 1, vol. 2, retelling by Mihai Isbășescu (Editura Minerva: București, 1977).

⁶ From *Die Edda. Die Lieder der sogenannten älteren Edda nebst einem Anhang: Die mythischen und heroischen Erzählungen der Snorra Edda*, übersetzt und erläutert von Hugo Gering, Leipzig und Wien, Bibliographisches Institut, 1895.

⁷ EDDA, translation by Magda Petculescu, foreword by Dan Grigorescu (București: Saeculum I.O., 2005).

⁸ The version “Edda cântecelor [Songs’ Edda]” may also be found in *Walhalla și Thule*.

⁹ The version „Edda prozaică [Prose Edda]” may also be found in *Walhalla și Thule*.

“Spǫ” is translated as “proroocie [prophecy]” (in case of Vǫluspǫ¹⁰) as well as “prezicere [prediction]” (in the case of Grípisspǫ¹¹).

“Viþa,” “mǫl” and “ljǫþ” all appear as “cânt [canto]”. For example, Prymskviþa is translated as “Cântul lui Thrym [Thrym’s canto/song]”, where the Romanization of the Thurs (Þ/þ) rune is evident (the non-Romanized Old Norse names of the songs are also given in brackets). Otherwise they are differentiated in meaning: viþa = lay (sung poem); mǫl = ballad; ljǫþ = poem. In the Romanian translation, the exception is Hǫvamǫl which is translated as “Proverbele lui Har [Har’s Proverbs]” and Hymiskviþa which is translated as “cântecul [the song]” instead of “canto”. As noticed below, in English translation Hǫvamǫl appears as The Ballad of the High One. In *Islanda medievală*, “Viþa,” “mǫl” and “ljǫþ” are translated as „narative poem”, „zise [medieval sayings]” and „medieval poem”¹² which is closer to their original meanings.

Romanian translation [English, where it differs]	English translation	Old Norse original
Prezicerea vizionarei [The Visionary Woman’s Prediction]	The Wise-Woman’s Prophecy	Vǫluspǫ
Visele lui Baldr	Baldr’s Dreams	Baldrs Draumar
Cântul lui Thrym	The Lay of Thrym	Prymskviþa
Cântecul lui Hymir [Hymir’s Song]	The Lay of Hymir	Hymiskviþa
Cuvintele de hartă ale lui Loki	Loki’s Wrangling	Lokasenna
Cântul lui Harbard	The Poem of Harbarth	Hárbarþsljǫþ

¹⁰ The Wise-Woman’s Prophecy is the first poem of the Elder Edda, see Henry Adams Bellows, *The Poetic Edda* (1936). This English translation is taken as reference for the current analysis.

¹¹ Gripir’s Prophecy, see Henry Adams Bellows’ translation.

¹² Boyer, 2002, 176.

Cântul lui Skirnir	The Ballad of Skírnis mǫl Skirnir	
Cântul lui Wafrhtudnir	The Ballad of Vafthruthnir	Vafþrúthnismǫl
Cântul lui Grminir	The Ballad of Grimnir	Grimnismǫl
Cântul lui Alwis	The Ballad of Alvis	Alvíssmǫl
Proverbele lui Har [Har's Proverbs]	The Ballad of the High One	Hǫvamǫl
Cântul lui Rig	The Song of Rig	Rígsþula
Cântul Hyndlei	The Poem of Hyndla	Hyndluljóð
Cântul lui Swipdag	The Ballad of Svipdag	Svipdagsmǫl
Cântul lui Wolund	The Lay of Völund	Vólundarkviða
Cântul lui Helgi, fiul lui Hjorward	The Lay of Helgi the Son of Hjorvarth	Helgakviða Hjorvarthssonar
Primul cânt despre Helgi, omorătorul lui Hunding	The First Lay of Helgi Hundingsbane	Helgakviða Hundingsbana I
Cel de al doilea cânt despre Helgi, ucigașul lui Hunding	The Second Lay of Helgi Hundingsbane	Helgakviða Hundingsbana II
Moartea lui Sinfjotli	Of Sinfjotli's Death	Frá Dauða Sinfjötla
Proroocirea lui Gripir	Gripir's Prophecy	Grípisspá
Cântul lui Regin	The Ballad of Regin	Reginismǫl
Cântul lui Fafnir	The Ballad of Fafnir	Fáfnismǫl
Cântul Sigrdrifei	The Ballad of The Victory-Bringer	Sigrdrifumǫl
Fragment dintr-un cânt al lui Sigurd	Fragment of a Sigurth Lay	Brot af Sigurþarkviðu
Primul cânt al Gudrunei	The First Lay of Guthrun	Guþrúnarkviða I

Cântul cel scurt al lui Sigurd	The Short Lay of Sigurth	Sigurþarkviþa en Skamma
Călătoria spre moartea Brynhildei	Brynhild's Hell-Ride	Helreiþ Brynhildar
Disparaþia Niflungilor	The Slaying of The Niflungs	Dráp Niflunga
Cel de al doilea cântec al Gudrunei	The Second, or Old, Lay of Guthrun	Guþrúnarkviþa ónnur
Cel de al treilea cântec al Gudrunei	The Third Lay of Guthrun	Guthrúnarkviþa en þriþja
Cântecul de jale al Oddrunei	The Lament of Oddrun	Oddrúnargrátr
Cântul lui Atli	The Greenland Lay of Atli	Atlakviþa
Cântecul groenlandez al lui Atli	The Greenland Ballad of Atli	Atlamól en Grœnlenzku
Instigarea Gudrunei	The Lament of Oddrun	Guþránarhvót
Cântul lui Hamdir	The Ballad of Hamther)	Hamþismól

It is interesting that in the Foreword of the Edda written by Acad. Dan Grigorescu, the skalds are referred to as “virtuozi ai poeziei curtene [virtuosos of court poetry]”¹³. Reference is made to “poemele «de scuturi» [the «shield» poems]”, as descriptions of the mythological symbols engraved on the shields of the warriors.¹⁴

Regarding the contents of the Edda, it is worth noticing the variations of the name of Odin, which are plentiful in the Viking lore.¹⁵ In the beginning of *Völuspó*, Odin is referred to as „părintele care alege [the

¹³ EDDA, 7.

¹⁴ Ibid., 7-8.

¹⁵ A few of his “nicknames” are All-Father, The Useful Adviser, The Rover, The Long-Bearded, The Serpent, Lord of the Gallows, Ill-doer, Terrifier, Father of Victory, One-Eye, Raven-God, Mimir’s Friend, Fenrir’s Foe, The High One, The Wise in Beguiling, The Feared One (according to professor Sally Vaughn, University of Houston).

father who chooses]"¹⁶ and later as "furtunosul [the stormy one]"¹⁷, "Hawi – cel mare [the great one]", "cel de două ori [the double one]"¹⁸, "părintele spânzuraților [the father of the hanged ones]", "bătrânul creator [the old creator]", "Widrir, Tunătorul [the Thundering One]", "Sidgrani, barbălungă [long beard]", "Hars, cel măreț [the great one]" or as Hropt, Gagnrad, Ydd, Thund, "Ragna-Hropt, zeul zeilor" [the god of all gods], "Hroptatyr", Herjan, "Sigtyr, zeul victorios [Sigtyr, the victorious god]", Fjorgyn; Allvata, Părintele atoate [Allfather] but also „Alfadar [Allfather?]", Wotan, „părintele luptei¹⁹, cel voios la arme [father of the battle, the weapon-eager one]"²⁰, „Wotan, Wodan sau Odin ... furiosul, cel care mugește [the furios one, the roaring one]", „Asul suprem [the supreme Asen]" or „Marele Magician [the great magician]", „Marele Bărbat/Părinte al Armatei [the great man/parent of the armies]"²¹. Vé, the brother of Odin and Vili, also appears as "Vú"²², Vili as Vile²³. Odin is sometimes also called Oden²⁴.

Heimdall is referred to as "cel ce strălucește peste toată lumea [the one shining over the entire world]" or "păzitorul zeilor [the guardian of the gods]", "cel ce strălucește peste lume [the one shining over the world]"²⁵, or "Zeul Alb [The White God]"²⁶. Baldr (also Balder, Baldur²⁷) appears as "Stăpânul [The Master]"²⁸, Loki as "cel ce închide, cel ce termină [the one who closes, the one who finishes]" but reference is also made to "Logi, vâlvătaia [Logi, the flame]", "stăpânul focos al vâlvății învolburate [the fiery master of the whirling blaze]"²⁹. Loki also appears as "Loke, Gudasplitrare, cel care dezbină zeii [the one who disunites the

¹⁶ EDDA, 35.

¹⁷ Ibid., 38.

¹⁸ Ibid., 46.

¹⁹ In the translation of Beowulf, „părintele luptei” is translated using the biblical „Savaot/Sabaoth” (sic!).

²⁰ Cornelia Belcin, Alexandru Popescu, *Vikingii* (Albatros: București, 1976), 136.

²¹ Baedeker, 2006, 229.

²² Cristina Jinga, *Comorile nibelungilor* (Prietenii Cărții: București, 2003), 167, 54.

²³ *Mitologia nordică*, 8.

²⁴ Elena-Maria Morogan, *Mitologia Nordică. Mituri și legende* (Editura Enciclopedică: București, 1992).

²⁵ *Walhalla și Thule* vol. 1, 213.

²⁶ Morogan, 1992, 29.

²⁷ *Walhalla și Thule* vol. 1, 191.

²⁸ Boyer, 2002, 122.

²⁹ *Walhalla și Thule* vol. 1, 228.

gods]" or "Șiretul [The Cunning]"³⁰. Frigg as "cea mult iubită, nevasta [the beloved one, the wife], the giant Slidr as "cel dăunător, cel rău [the noxious one, the evil one]". Thor/Tor³¹ as "Wingthor", "cel care aruncă [the throwing one]" or "cel care aruncă învârtind [the one who throws twisting]", "stăpânul de corabie [shipmaster]", "păvaza oamenilor" [men's aegis], "ucigașul șarpelui [snake slayer]" or simply "tunetul [the thunder]" or "Asathor". Unsurely, he is also referred to as "Furiosul [The Furious One]" or "neînvinsul [invincible]"³². Freya is also mentioned as "Stăpână [The Lady Master]" but also "Doamna [Lady]"³³ and similarly Freyr appears as "the Master" in Romanian. War is considered "zeița făgăduielilor solemne [the goddess of solemn oaths]" and Tyr appears as the god of war in the translated Hymiskviþa, in *Walhalla și Thule* other variations of Tyr's name are Tiu, Ziu, Tiwas, Thingsus, Cheru, Saxnot. Curiously, one source refers to Tyr's name in the feminine gender³⁴. The significance of Hymir's name is translated into Romanian as „Întunecatul [the Dark One]”. Ægir appears as Ägir. Loki is also referred to as „Lopt, aerul [Lopt, the air]”. Ratatosk is translated as „dinte de rozător/șobolan [rat's/rodent's tooth]"³⁵.

Regarding miraculous artifacts, Thor's hammer - which wards off the cross and is a symbol of the Old Norse belief - appears as "Mjolnir, măciuca lui Thor [Mjolnir, Thor's mace]", "Mjöltnir, Zdrobitorul [Crusher]"³⁶, "topor [axe]"³⁷, or „Mjölner ciocanul [the Hammer]"³⁸; The ring Draupnir is interpreted as "picurătorul [the dropper]". Sleipnir, Odin's eight-legged horse's name is translated as „cel care lunecă iute pe deasupra [the one who glides quickly over]"³⁹. Mimir, the giant guardian, appears as „memorie [memory]" and Huginn and Munninn appear as „Gândul și Aducerea-aminte [Thought and Remembrance]"⁴⁰.

³⁰ Morogan, 1992, 32, 57.

³¹ Ibid., 57.

³² Jinga, 2003, 177.

³³ *Walhalla și Thule* vol. 1, 202.

³⁴ "Tyr e credincioasă călătorilor... [Tyr is faithful.fem to travelling...]", Florica Lorinț, *Oamenii nordului* (Editura Științifică: București, 1965), 66.

³⁵ EDDA, 113.

³⁶ *Walhalla și Thule* vol. 1, 230.

³⁷ Boyer, 2002, 146.

³⁸ Morogan, 1992, 56.

³⁹ *Walhalla și Thule* vol. 1, 243.

⁴⁰ Boyer, 2002, 126.

Prymr, the king of the ice giants (jotnar), is called “Thrym”, “Zgomotosul [The Noisy/Loud One]”. It is quite surprising that the giants are referred to as “Thurși” in the Romanian translation of Prymskviða, where Prymr steals Thor’s hammer and demands that the goddess Freyja marries him as ransom for the weapon.

Ginnungagap, the primordial void is translated as “hău căscat [yawning chasm]” or “hăul ce se cască [the yawning chasm]”⁴¹. Many similar miraculous locations or characters are translated as well: Idafeld⁴² appears as “câmpia activității neîntrerupte [the field of uninterrupted activity]”; the æsir are referred to as “aseni”, “ași”⁴³ while the vanir are called “wani”; for the Norns (Fates) the phrase “cele trei, cele mai puternice fete [the three, the strongest girls]”⁴⁴, dwarf appears as “pitic” (although the Romanian borrowed word “gnom” might have been more appropriate); Ask and Embla are translated in a footnote as “frasinul și ulmul [the ash tree and the elm]”, Embla also appears as “un curmei de viță [a sprig of vine]”⁴⁵; the valkyries appear as “walkirii”⁴⁶ or even “walküră (singular)” (with the Germanic umlaut and the Romanian schwa in the same word – sic!), “walchirie”⁴⁷, “cea care alege morții [the one choosing the dead]”⁴⁸. Yggdrasil is also interpreted as “Frasinul lumii [the world’s ash tree]”⁴⁹.

The Elves are referred to as “Elbi” or “Alvi”⁵⁰ which is interesting and unexpected; in other sources they are mistaken for dwarves when referred to as “alben”, but the same source also calls them “elfi [evles]” in other situations⁵¹. The confusion between Elves and Dwarves in Romanian translations is not uncommon⁵². This is perhaps due to the fact

⁴¹ *Walhalla și Thule* vol. 1, 205.

⁴² Situated at the center of Asgard, it was built by Odin in the beginning before giving counsel to the Aesir for the building of the rest of Asgard.

⁴³ Baedeker, 2006, 227.

⁴⁴ EDDA, 36.

⁴⁵ Boyer, 2002, 131.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 2002, 119.

⁴⁷ *Walhalla și Thule* vol. 1, 253.

⁴⁸ Jinga, 2003, 165.

⁴⁹ *Walhalla și Thule* vol. 1, 202.

⁵⁰ Morogan, 1992, 67.

⁵¹ *Walhalla și Thule* vol. 1, 188.

⁵² It is not only found in Romanian Norse studies. According to many scholars, the kinship between elves and dwarves is troublesome and evident in the elfish names of some dwarves: Alberich (king of the elves), Álfr (elf).

that there is no equivalent for Elf in Romanian folklore. In the translation of Beowulf, Elves appear as “iele [virgin fairies, nymphs]”. Similarly, the Romanian translation of Beowulf also identifies the monster Grendel to these autochthonous antagonists “căpcăun [ogre]”, “hiară [beast /archaism/]”, “proclat [cursed one]”, “vidma din iad [hellspawn]”, “ogru”, “bală [hideous beast]”; more so, the various Danish princes in Beowulf’s translation and leaders are called voivodes, a term which is of unquestionable local origin.

Otherwise, elves are probably translated as “spirite [spirits]”⁵³, but this is hard to prove if the text is not a standard text, such as a saga or a stanza of the Eddas. The expression “elven mill” (used in relation to Álfablót, the sacrifice to the Elves) appears as “morile elfelor [the elven /fem. adj./ mills]”. The fact that Elves are perceived as feminine entities is perhaps another clue of interpreting them as the equivalents of Romanian “iele [nymphs]”. Curiously, in *Islanda medievală*, it is stated in the glossary that *álfr* should not be confused with “the elves of romantic fairy tales”, but rather understood as ambiguous supernatural beings equal to the gods and reigning over mental faculties⁵⁴. It is probable that this exigency of the original author, Régis Boyer, is that of drawing a line between the early modern identification of elves with fairies and their quite sinister portrayal in Norse mythology. A very good distinction between Elves, Dwarves, Gnomes, Kobolds and Fairies is drawn in *Comorile Nibelungilor*,⁵⁵ where they are called air spirits and included in the same category as Valkyries, Salamanders and Gnomes (sic!). Water spirits are called “spiridușii numiți Nixe [the leprachauns/spirits called Nixes]”, while Ran, the goddess of the sea, is referred to as “Răpitoarea [kidnapper]”⁵⁶. *Dísir* are also mentioned but only briefly as “disele”, destiny-controlling feminine deities⁵⁷.

The draugar, the undead, interestingly appear as “mort-care-nu-a-murit-cum-trebuie [a dead man who has not died properly]”. A draugr is also identified with the Romanian folk term “moroi”⁵⁸, which

⁵³ Cf. Belcin, Popescu, 1976, 134.

⁵⁴ Boyer, 2002, 258.

⁵⁵ Jinga, 2003, 34. Also see *Cântecul nibelungilor*, told by Adrian Maniu (Editura de Stat pentru Literatură și Artă: București, 1958).

⁵⁶ Ibid. 14.

⁵⁷ Boyer, 2002, 258.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 108.

designates the spirit of a dead person who has returned to haunt the living.

Fenrir appears as “copilul uriașului [the child of the giant]”; Niflhel appears as “iadul încețoșat [the foggy hell]” or “hăul cel mai din străfund [the deepest abyss]”⁵⁹. The Eliwagar – the ice waves of the Ginnugagap – are referred to as “talazuri uriașe [huge billows]” but also “talazuri furtunoase [stormy billows]”. Asgard is described as “locuința cerească a zeilor [the heavenly abode of the gods]”⁶⁰. Jörmungandr, the Midgard Snake is referred to simply as “șarpele Midgard [the Midgard snake]”. Myrkwid, the border to Múspellsheimr, appears as “pădurea cea întunecoasă [the dark forest]”. Fenrir is sometimes simply called “Lupul [the wolf]”. The Berserkers, warriors who entered into battle in a mindless rage, are named “războinicii feroși [fierce warriors]” or even “om în stare de urs [man in bear shape]”⁶¹. They are also called “bersecii”⁶². Hrimnir is “cel care produce chiciura [the one producing slush]”⁶³; Vafþrúðnir is “meșterul în ticlueli [the master in plots]”⁶⁴ and Ymir is “cel care foșnește [the rustling one]”⁶⁵ or “Hymir, întunecatul [Hymir the dark one]” or even “Androginul [the hermaphrodite]”⁶⁶. Ymir also appears as Ymer⁶⁷.

Walhalla appears as “Walhall” and Bifrost simply as “rainbow” but also as “calea cea care se clatină [the way that is shaking]”⁶⁸. The name Sigurd is translated as “păzitorul victorios [the victorious guardsmen]” or “cel care aduce pacea prin victorie [the one who brings peace through victory]”.

Niflungs are referred to as “copiii ceții [the children of the mist]” in Brot af Sigurparkviðu⁶⁹. They also appear as “demonii întunericului [demons of darkness]”⁷⁰. The analogy has probably been made with Niflheim, “Mist Home”, one of the primordial frozen worlds. It is likely

⁵⁹ *Walhalla și Thule* vol. 1, 232.

⁶⁰ EDDA, 58.

⁶¹ *Walhalla și Thule* vol. I, 192.

⁶² Morogan, 1992, 205.

⁶³ EDDA, 93.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 97.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 99.

⁶⁶ *Walhalla și Thule* vol. I, 223, 266.

⁶⁷ Morogan, 1992, 8.

⁶⁸ EDDA, 116.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 259.

⁷⁰ Belcin, Popescu, 1976, 132.

that in this case the word “Nibelungi [Nibelungs]” would be preferred in Romanian (in the meaning “of the Burgundian hoard”, not dwarf or other miraculous races). This is the case in *Civilizația germanică și a vikingilor*⁷¹. In the translation of the Nibelungenlied, “Nibelung” is used alternatively with “burgundy [Burgundian]”. Therefore, the hoard or wealth of the Burgundians is referred to as “comoara burgundă [Burgundian treasure]”. As an observation, the translation of the Nibelungenlied in Romanian is quite masterful, there are almost no borrowings from Old Germanic or Old Norse, and the text boasts an enormous amount of Romanian archaisms.⁷² Niflheim appears as “țara negurii [the country of mist]” or “țara ghețurilor și a morții [the country of ice and death]”⁷³ or “tărâmul negurei [mist land]”⁷⁴.

Skjaldmær/shieldmaidens are mentioned as “fecioare cu scuturi [maidens with shields]”.

The primeval cow Auðumbla is, quite strangely, called “Audumla, cea bogată în lichid [Audumbla, the one rich in liquid]”, but also “cea lăptoasă [the one full of milk]”⁷⁵. The variation Audhulma can also be found⁷⁶. Búri, the first god, is also called “cel născut [the born one]”. The creature Grendel, Beowulf’s enemy, is referred to as “căpcăun [ogre]”. Kobolds are described as “pitici sau spiriduși [dwarves or leprechauns]”⁷⁷. Ragnarok is unequivocally translated as “amurgul zeilor [the twilight of the gods]” and as “ultima soartă a zeilor [the last fate of the gods]”⁷⁸. It also appears as “Ragnark”⁷⁹.

The part of Vǫluspó describing Ragnarok is translated in many⁸⁰ Romanian sources:

⁷¹ Karl Baedeker, *Civilizația germanică și a vikingilor* (Prietenii Cărții: București, 2006), translation by Liana Gomboșiu.

⁷² *Cântecul Nibelunilor*, translation by Claudiu Paradais (Saeculum: Bucharest, 2008).

⁷³ *Walhalla și Thule* vol. 1, 232.

⁷⁴ Boyer, 2002, 130.

⁷⁵ *Walhalla și Thule* vol. 1, 191.

⁷⁶ Morogan, 1992, 8.

⁷⁷ *Walhalla și Thule* vol. 1, 226.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 227, 236.

⁷⁹ Jînga, 2003, 54.

⁸⁰ Besides the two quite skillful verse interpretations given in the table, it also appears in a type of drăpa structure in Belcin, Popescu, 1976, 144.

<p>Surtr sosește dinspre miazăzi Cu focul ucigaș, Soarele apare din Spada zeului mortiilor; Stâncile se ciocnesc, Monștrii o pornesc, Oamenii calcă pe pământul iadului Și cerul se despică.</p> <p>[...]</p> <p>Răsare pentru a două oară Un pământ din valuri, De-a pururi verde.</p> <p>[...]</p> <p>Baldr se va reîntoarce; Hödr și Baldr vor locui În locurile în care a învins Odin.⁸¹</p>	<p>Dinspre miazăzi sosește Surt ucigașul ramurilor, Săbiile luminează soarele îl înfruntă, Munții pietroși se prăvălesc, zeii se împiedică, Hel înlănțuie oamenii, cerul se despică,</p> <p>[...]</p> <p>Iată că văd iarăși Ridicându-se pământul de un verde proaspăt, din talazuri.</p> <p>[...]</p> <p>Căci, iată, apare Baldr: Burgul victoriei lui Hropt este a lui Hod și Baldr⁸²</p>	<p>Surtr ferr sunnan með sviga lævi, skínn af sverði sól valtíva; grjótbjörg gnata, en gífr rata, troða halir helveg, en himinn klofnar.</p> <p>[...]</p> <p>Sér hon upp koma öðru sinni jörð ór ægi iðjagræna;</p> <p>[...]</p> <p>Baldr mun koma; búa þeir Höðr ok Baldr Hrofts sigtoftir,⁸³</p>	<p>Surt fares from the south with the scourge of branches, The sun of the battle-gods shone from his sword; The crags are sundered, the giant-women sink, The dead throng Hel- way, and heaven is cloven.</p> <p>[...]</p> <p>Now do I see the earth anew Rise all green from the waves again;</p> <p>[...]</p> <p>and Baldr comes back; Baldr and Hoth dwell in Hropt's battle- hall⁸⁴</p>
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⁸¹ Baedeker, 2006, 241-242.

⁸² EDDA, 45-47.

⁸³ Old Norse version from www.voluspa.org.

⁸⁴ Trans. Henry Adam Bellows, stanzas 52 and parts of 59, 62.

The dreaded ship Naglfar appears as “corabia din unghii [the ship made of nails]”⁸⁵. The variation Nagelfar may also be found⁸⁶. The enemy, Surt, appears as “Surt/Sutur cel rău/negru [the evil/black one]”⁸⁷ or “cel înnegrit de fum [the one blackened by smoke]”⁸⁸.

If we turn our attention to society, there are also some historical terms that prove to be of extreme importance to the current study. Of particularly importance are those terms related to the social classes: jarls, karls and thralls. In the EDDA they appear as thräl, karl, and jarl so the terminology is maintained. In *Valhalla și Thule* a few observations are in place dealing with the narration of *Rígsþula*. Thus, here thrall appears as „Thrael sluga [the servant]”, karl appears unchanged and Jarl appears as „Jarl”, so the variation is almost insignificant. „Sclav [slave]” is also used for thrall but the author also mentions the inexactitude of this translation by bringing in discussion how difficult it is to find exact equivalents for the Nordic society⁸⁹. Bóndi, the term for a free farmer, appears as „țărăn-pescar-proprietar liber [free peasant-fisherman-owner]”⁹⁰. Godi is translated as „preot-sacrificator [sacrificing priest]”.

Saga appears as „poem epic viking [Viking epic poem]” but its secondary meanings of tradition or legend are also given⁹¹. Skaldic poetry is translated as „poezie skaldă”⁹². The thing is translated as „instanță [court]” or „parlament local [local parliament]”⁹³. Althing appears as „thing general [the general/universal thing]”⁹⁴, leid as „thing de toamnă [autumnal thing]” and várthing as „thing de primăvară [spring thing]”⁹⁵. Drápa is distinguished as being a „type of scaldic poem”, a long series of stanzas usually including a refrain, and is opposed to flokkr, which does not have a refrain. A comparison of the translation of stanzas 77 and 78 of *Hóvamátl*, dealing with the eternal importance of honor and prestige in

⁸⁵ *Walhalla și Thule* vol. I, 231.

⁸⁶ Morogan, 1992, p. 42.

⁸⁷ *Walhalla și Thule* vol. I, 244.

⁸⁸ Boyer, 2002, 124.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 27.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 257.

⁹¹ Belcin, Popescu, 1976, 129.

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ Boyer, 2002, 29.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 257.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 260.

Viking society, is very interesting for the present study (notable differences are marked in square brackets):

EDDA, 134	<i>Islanda medievală</i> , 104	Henry Adams Bellows' translation
Vitele mor, rudele se sting din viață,	Mor averile [wealth perishes], moare rudenia,	Cattle die, and kinsmen die,
La rândul tău și tu ești muritor;	Și tu vei muri de asemenea;	And so one dies one's self;
Dar renumele [renown] nu se poate stinge niciodată, Dobândit în timpul trecătoarei vieți. ⁹⁶	Dar există ceva Care niciodată nu moare Faima (<i>ordstirr</i>) [the fame] pe care ai câștigat-o.	But a noble name will never die, If good renown one gets.
Vitele mor, rudele se sting din viață, La rândul tău și tu ești muritor;	Mor averile [wealth perishes], mor părinții Și tu vei muri.	Cattle die, and kinsmen die, And so one dies one's self;
Un lucru știu sigur, care trăiește veșnic; Aura cu care s-a încununat [the earned aura] mortul pe timpul vieții.	Dar ceva Nu va muri nicicând: Cuvintele rostite [the said words] despre fiecare mort.	One thing now that never dies, The fame of a dead man's deeds.

There are no differences in the understanding of these texts even though the first one is translated from German and the second one from

⁹⁶ This first stanza is also translated in Belcin, Popescu, 1976, 151.

French, save that on different occasions both translators have preferred metaphors to common expressions („cattle” vs. „wealth” vs. „cattle”; or „the earned aura” vs. „the said words” vs. „the fame”).

Civilizația germanică (85) also contains some valuable saga fragments that may be useful for comparisons, which is given below with an English translation:

1 Theodoric ⁹⁷ a domnit	1 Þjóðríkr hinn	1 Þjóðríkr the bold,
2 prințul războinicilor	þormóði,	2 chief of sea-warriors,
3 Cu scutul la umăr	2 stillir flotna,	6 ruled over the shores
4 el călărește acum,	6 ströndu Hreiðmarar.	of the Hreiðsea.
5 inima dârză,	5 Sitr nú gørr	5 Now he sits armed
odinioară,	4,7 á gota sínum,	4,7 on his Goth(ic
6 pe plajele Nidului.	3 skildi umb fatlaðr,	horse),
7 călare pe calul său,	8 skati Mæringa	3 his shield strapped,
8 culmea muritorilor ⁹⁸ .		8 the prince of the
		Mærings.

The above fragment, presented in its source as a part of the Edda, is part of the inscription of the famous Rök Runestone. The original topic has been changed in the Romanian translation, as this can be seen by numbering the Romanian verses and their corresponding originals. Still, the beginning, ending and middle remain the same, as it can be noticed. One might wonder why was the Hreiðsea interpreted as the Nid river in Romanian.

A fragment about Egil is given at page 123 of the translated *Civilizația germanică* and deals with Egill Skallagrímsson:

Senin și puternic,	skal ek þó glaðr	I shall,
Fără lacrimi, fără frică,	með góðan vilja	glad and
Bucuros așteaptă	ok óhryggr	unconcerned
Moartea.		and with good-will
		await death

⁹⁷ The king of the Ostrogoths.

⁹⁸ A metaphor for king.

heljar bíða.⁹⁹

Another translated fragment of a saga probably belongs to Kormak's saga¹⁰⁰:

Tunetul se aude deasupra mării	Brimgnýr, brattir	Surf on a rock-bound shore of the sea-king's blue domain-
Munții de valuri sunt uriași	hamrar	Look how it lashes the crags,
Oceanul mugind	blálands	hark how it thunders again!
Se azvârle asupra noastră	Haka strandar.	

The following fragment of the important lay Krákumál, the death song of Ragnarr Loðbrók, is also translated into Romanian, but no English translation could be identified for this 25th(?) stanza of the lay ¹⁰¹:

Am lovit cu spada.	We swung our	Hjoggum vér með
Mă bucur să știu că	swords,	hjörvi.
Odin e pregătit de	Glad am I to know	Hitt lægir mik, jafnan
ospăț	that	at Baldrs föður bekki
Vom bea în curând	Odin is ready for a	búna veitk at
Bere din pocale.	feast	sumblum.
Moartea nu-l apasă pe	We will soon drink	Drekkum bjór af
cel curajos	Beer in our cups	bragði
Din palatul lui Odin.	Death does not press	ór bjúgvíðum hausa;
Eu m-am adăpostit	on the brave one	sýtira drengr við
sub acoperișul	In Walhalla,	dauða
Năvalnicului	I have come under the	dýrs at Fjölnis húsum;
neînfricat...	protection	eigi kœmk með æðru

⁹⁹ It is a part of Sonatorrek (Loss of Sons) by Egil. Taken from the English prose translation and glosses by Bjarni Einarsson, from *Egils saga* (London: Viking Society for Northern Research, 2003) 146-154.

¹⁰⁰ Found in Baedeker, 2006, 127. English, transl. W.G. Collingwood and J. Stefansson, from the original 'Kormáks saga'.

¹⁰¹ Baedeker, 2006, 133.

Of the fearless raider¹⁰²

orð til Viðris hallar.

Heimskringla has not been entirely left aside by Romanian translators. The impressive account of the burning of Hedeby/Heiðabýr is given as follows:

De la un colț la altul	Brenndr var upp	All Heidaby is
Hedeby a ars.	með endum	burned down!
Îngrozitoare	allr, en það má	Strangers will ask
Furie a bătăliei.	kalla	where stood the
Impunătoare	hraustlegt bragð, er	town.
Pare întâmplarea. Cred	eg hugði,	In our wild humour
că	Heiðabær af reiði.	up it blazed,
Sven Irascibilul se	Von er að vinnum	And Svein looks
supără.	Sveini,	round him all
Înainte de crespusul	vask í nótt fyr óttu,	amazed.
încă,	gaus hár logi úr	All Heidaby is
Am pus piciorul în	húsum,	burned down!
piață.	harm, á	From a far corner of
Am pus piciorul în	borgararmi. ¹⁰⁴	the town
piață:		I saw, before the
Flăcări înalte		peep of morning,
izbucneau din		Roofs, walls, and all
acoperișuri... ¹⁰³		in flame high
		burning. ¹⁰⁵

The same fragment above also appears in prose in Romanian: “Ars era Haithabu de la un capăt la altul. A fost o treabă pentru care Swein va suferi. Înalt se ridicau flăcările din case, în ultima noapte, înaintea zorilor, eu am stat pe valul fortăreței”¹⁰⁶. There is little to almost no difference in meaning between the verse and the prose versions.

¹⁰² Translated into English from Romanian by the author of the article, unfortunately it is not clear which stanza of Krákumál is this, but stanza 25 appears to be the closest one.

¹⁰³ Baedeker, 2006, 162.

¹⁰⁴ Icelandic, taken from Snorri Sturlson’s Heimskringla.

¹⁰⁵ Douglas B. Killings, Snorri Sturlson, *Heimskringla* (1996).

¹⁰⁶ Belcin, Popescu, 1976, 91.

The oldest runic verses (on the Tune and Stentoften runestones) have also been translated to Romanian:

Eu, Wiw de lângă Wodurid Păstrătorul pâinii, Am gravat aceste rune. ¹⁰⁷	Ek Wiwaz after Woduride witandahlaiban worhto r[unoz]	I, Wiwaz, made the runes after Woduridaz, my lord
--	--	--

Noilor veniți, Noilor vecini, Hathawolf le spune un an bun,	<niuha>borumz <niuha>gestumz Haþuwulfz gaf j[ar], Hariwulfz haidiz runono, felh eka hedra	(To the) <niuha>dwellers (and) <niuha>guests Haþuwulfar gave ful year, Hariwulfar I, master of the runes(?) conceal here
[missing part?] Să poată Hariwolf îndepărta răul. Ascund aici, runele puternice,	niu habrumz, niu hangistumz Haþuwulfz gaf j[ar], Hariwulfz haidiz runono, felh eka hedra	nine bucks, nine stallions, Haþuwulfar gave fruitful year, Hariwulfar I, master of the runes(?) conceal here
Un șir de rune splendide.	ginnurunoz.	runes of power.
Sortit morții Fie acela	Hermalausaz argiu, Weladauþs, sa þat	Incessantly (plagued by) maleficence, (doomed to)
Care le va distruge. ¹⁰⁸	briutiþ	insidious death (is) he who this

¹⁰⁷ Baedeker, 2006, 219.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

breaks.¹⁰⁹

As seen above, a part of the Stentofthen rune stone inscription is missing (“nine bucks, nine stallions”). A part of the song of the Valkyries is also translated:

Noi	șesem,	noi	Vindum, vindum	Wind we, wind we
șesem			vef darraðar	the web-of-darts
Pânza			þar er vé vaða	where float the flags
stindardelor...			vígra manna.	of unflinching men!
Să nu lăsăm viața			Látum eigi	Let not the lieges
Să ne scape			líf hans farast,	life be taken:
Walkiriile		au	eiga valkyrjur	valkyries award the
dreptul			vals um kosti. ¹¹¹	weird of battle. ¹¹²
Să-și		aleagă		
morții. ¹¹⁰				

A part of the the Gripsholm runestone is also translated in F. Durand, *Vikingii* (55):

<p>Au plecat cu bărbăție foarte departe în căutarea aurului și acolo către răsărit au hrănit vulturul dușmanilor lor și au murit la miazăzi în ținutul mătășii.</p>	<p>ÞæiR foru drængila fiarri at gulli ok austarla ærni gafu, dou sunnarla a Særklandi.</p>	<p>They travelled valiantly far for gold, and in the east gave (food) to the eagle. (They) died in the south in Serkland.</p>
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The introductory part (stanzas 2 and 3) of the Lay of Hindla appear in two Romanian translations:

¹⁰⁹ The Proto-Norse inscriptions and their translations have been taken from Runedata (N KJ72 U, DR 357).

¹¹⁰ Baedeker, 2006, 218.

¹¹¹ Njáls saga, chapter 157.

¹¹² Lee M. Hollander, *Old Norse Poems* (London: Abela Publishing, 2010), 145.

<p>Să implorăm îndurarea Părintelui Armatelor! El împarte cu dărnicie aurul oamenilor săi; El i-a dat lui Hermod un coif și o platoșă Și lui Sigmund i-a dăruit o spadă.</p> <p>Unora le dă victoria, Altora bogății, Multora le dă elocință și intelență Eroilor mărilor le dă vânt favorabil; Scalzirilor le dă darul poeziei, Multor războinici le dă putere și curaj...¹¹³</p>	<p>Hai să-l rugăm pe părintele oastei, să ne arate bunăvoința sa, El, care dăruiește cu plăcere aurul lui suitei sale; Lui Hermod i- a dat coiful și armura, O sabie tăioasă îi dăruie lui Sigmund. Unuia i-a dat victoria, celuilalt comori, Multă înțelepciune și o vorbă aleasă; Marinarului – vânt prielnic, cântărețului – arta poeziei, Forță fizică – unor eroi.¹¹⁴</p>	<p>Biðjum Herjaföðr í hugum sitja, hann geldr ok gefr gull verðungu; gaf hann Hermóði hjalm ok brynju, en Sigmundi sverð at þiggja.</p> <p>Gefr hann sigr sumum, en sumum aura, mælsku mörgum ok mannvit firum; byri gefr hann brögnum, en brag skaldum, gefr hann mannsemi mörgum rekki.¹¹⁵</p>	<p>The favor of Heerfather seek we to find, To his followers gold he gladly gives; To Hermoth gave he helm and mail-coat, And to Sigmund he gave a sword as gift.</p> <p>Triumph to some, and treasure to others, To many wisdom and skill in words, Fair winds to the sailor, to the singer his art, And a manly heart to many a hero.¹¹⁶</p>
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¹¹³ Baedeker, 2006, 234.

¹¹⁴ EDDA, 157.

¹¹⁵ Guðni Jónsson's edition of Hyndluljóð.

¹¹⁶ Transl. Henry Adam Bellows, the Poem of Hyndla.

Another fragment, a stanza of Griplur (III, 29), is translated in *Islanda Medievală* (207):

<p>Iată că a venit vremea să ne pregătim, Să sfidăm curajul strigoiului, Ziua se îndreaptă curând către noapte, Întunericul se lasă pe deal</p>	<p>Nu mun răb ab fara å fætr, frýr þú hugarins draugi, dagrinn lidur drjúgt til nætr, dimma tekr i haugi</p>	<p>Lo that time has come to get ready To defy the boldness of the undead, The day will soon turn into night, Darkness falls over the hill ¹¹⁷</p>
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As far as rulers are concerned, Haraldr Hárfagri's nickname (Fairhair) the king of Norway is translated as „cel cu Păr Frumos [the one with beautiful hair]”¹¹⁸ but also „cel cu plete frumoase [the one with beautiful locks]”¹¹⁹ or simply “păr frumos”¹²⁰. His father, Halfdanr Svarti, appears as Halfdan “cel Negru [the Black]”¹²¹. King Ólafr Haraldsson also appears as „cel Gros [the Stout]”. One can also find Harald Hardraade¹²² but also Hardrada, Erik I Bloodaxe appears as “Secure Însângerată [bloody axe]”, Olaf but also Olav Trygvasson¹²³, Ari Thorgilson is called “Învăţatul [the learned one]”¹²⁴, there is Svein but also Svend Estrithson/Estridsson, Knud, Cnut, Knut and Canute I „cel Mare [the Great]”¹²⁵. Rollo is also called Robert I¹²⁶. Saemund appears as „Saemund cel Înţelept [the Wise]”¹²⁷. Harald Bluetooth's nickname is translated as

¹¹⁷ Translated into English from Romanian by the author of the article.

¹¹⁸ Belcin, Popescu, 1976, 131.

¹¹⁹ Boyer, 2002, 24.

¹²⁰ F. Donald Logan, *Vikingii în istorie*, translation by Mariana Grancea (Editura Bălcescu: Bucureşti, 1990), 22.

¹²¹ Belcin, Popescu, 1976, 28.

¹²² Donald, 1990, 25.

¹²³ Ibid., 36.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 72.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 96.

¹²⁶ Belcin, Popescu, 1976, 159.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 160.

„Dinte Albastru” in the great majority of sources. The Norman adventurer William Iron Arm appears as „Wilhelm Braț de Fier, Dragon [Iron Arm, Dragon]”¹²⁸. It is interesting that Hedeby/Haithabu is translated as „orașul de pe câmpiile cu buruieni [the city on the field with weeds]”¹²⁹. Ingjald illråde is translated into Romanian as „Ingljad cel Rău [Ingljad the Evil]”¹³⁰. Eric/Erik cel Roșu [the Red] is the Viking leader that is found in most of the Romanian sources, no matter if the major subject is mythological or historical. Vilhjálmr Langaspjót (William I Longsword) appears as “Guillaume Spadă Lungă”¹³¹. The choice of Guillaume over the almost omnipresent Wilhelm in Romanian historiography is explainable since the translator has worked with a French source.

Conclusion

A conclusion that could be deduced from the above chosen examples of Romanian translated key concepts relating to the Old Norse civilization is that the closer the translations are to our times the more open to borrowing and thus the more exact they are. As stated in the beginning, I have considered the 2005 translated Edda as a standard in comparison to other works because it represents the fundamental writing of this civilization. Most works written before 1990 show an attachment to the vocabulary of Romanian early Middle Ages or of folk tales, including fictional works such as translations of Beowulf or the Nibelungenlied. For the latter, the same vocabulary is also maintained for more recent simplified translations in prose. There have been rare cases when Romanian characters such as the schwa (“ă”) have been intermixed with Germanic names or terms, creating interesting hybrids. Regarding the abundant poetic works of the Viking age, a certain preference has been noticed for the translation of fragments detailing Ragnarök, owing to the preference of Western authors used as sources for these fragments in their own works. Of all elements of Nordic mythology, the most problematic for Romanian translators has proven to be the Elves. The loanword

¹²⁸ Ibid., 57.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 90.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 131.

¹³¹ Durand, 2003, 39.

“elfi”¹³² has only recently, in the past few years, made its full entry into the Romanian vocabulary probably due to the great popularity¹³³ of the works of J. R. R. Tolkien (the educated younger Romanian public is well acquainted with the translations of *The Lord of the Rings*, *Silmarillion* to a lesser extent, and *The Hobbit*). The confusion between elves and dwarves/gnomes is omnipresent in Romanian sources. The most fascinating expressions translated into Romanian are those dealing with the multiple names of Odin, which of course is a consequence of the richness of the imagination of the Old Norse. On the same note, the entire subject of researching the vocabulary of the ample Nordic civilization in a Southern European language is equally thought-provoking and curious.

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¹³² The fact that in the DEX (Romanian Explicative Dictionary published under the auspices of the Romanian Academy) it is said that the Elves are imagined as “pitici [dwarves/gnomes]” has certainly not helped clear this confusion.

¹³³ One needs only to enter the keyword “Tolkien” on any Romanian search engine to realize this. The keyword “Tolkien Romania” returns over 1,000,000 results.

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