The Adaptation of the Proper Names from Greco-Latin Mythology in an Ancient Romanian Translation*

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"The name is not everything, but without
a good name everything is nothing"
(Karl-Heinz W. Smola).

The purpose of this scientific approach is to analyse the transposition into Romanian language of the Greco-Latin mythological proper names from the text *The history of Numa Pompilius, the second king of Rome*, translated from French language and published by Alexandru Beldiman in 1820. In pursuit of this work, I shall use the method of analysis and inventory of terms. At a textual level, the results of the research indicate that all ancient Latin and Greek proper names which did not have a previous circulation in an adapted form in literary use are written identically as in the original language, but with cyrillic caracters. Thus, the Latin proper names of persons have been used in their Latin form whenever they have been enunciated in entirety (*nomen*, *cognomen*, *agnomen*) and the Greek proper names which did not have an adapted form in literary use have been transliterated as such.

Key-words: *mythology*, *proper name*, *Latin*, *Greek*, *transposition*

Introduction

The first attempts to shed some light on the origins of places and people names were found in ancient texts or in the literary works

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of Ancient Greece. As a consequence, new linguistic branches were formed: onomastics (or onomatology), anthroponimy and toponymy. The forming of these study areas and the interest manifested towards proper names is justifiable by the distinct characteristics and values they have, when compared to other words pertaining to language. The significant value that proper names have in the study of language is determined mainly by their persistence in time, despite the changes that occur at a formal level. Even though, generally, proper names follow the same phonetic evolution as the other words pertaining to language, there are plenty of cases when they tend to conserve phonetic and morphological features from previous stages of the language, stages which otherwise would remain unknown. The study of proper names offers interesting and relevant data not only for the linguistic field, but also for other sciences as well[2]. The study of people's names offers interesting data not only for linguistics, but for a variety of other sciences.

Theoretical approach. The theory of proper names

According to the now classical theory of descriptions, elaborated by and known due to Gottlob Frege and Bertrand Russell's works (Devitt, Sterelny 2000: 61), the proper name's reference is given and determined by its meaning (the theory of meaning providing a theory of the reference). Meaning is thus achieved through a well-defined description that is associated with the name. In this theoretical ensemble, the issue of competency when using a proper name consists of adequately associating a name to a description, which implies a theory of conviction and knowledge. A name's meaning is constructed as an abridged form of the description, and competency in its use is in fact non-empirical, privileged access to the meaning (significance). Failure to associate a description to a name leads to a dead-end in regards to the meaning and to the fixation of

[2] The most commonly known and accessible examples are old Romanian anthroponyms that are part of the Latin heritage, such as: *Sânnicoară* (< lat. *Sanctus Nicolas*), *Sâmiedru* (< lat. *Sanctus Petrus*), *Sângiordz* (< lat. *Sanctus Georgius*) etc.

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reference, thus in regards to the issue of semantic opacity and void names.

The boundaries and limitations of the classical theory of descriptions were overcome and their statements were rephrased, giving rise to a new theory of descriptions, represented by Peter Strawson and John Searle (*Ibidem,* p. 65). These specialists have introduced the concept of the "cluster of descriptions" which defines the meaning of the name and determines its reference. A specific name is vaguely connected to various descriptions, some of which may be more important than others. The modern theory of descriptions overcomes the main issues of the classical theory, especially since it does not imply the need for the existence of a reductionist base for these descriptions, which should be associated in any way with the name, and as such, guarantee the reference. In fact, the descriptions that form the cluster gather together to sustain the reductive base, even though their contribution to said process is uneven. They do convey more mobility and adaptability to the meaning. Descriptive theories of reference are, nevertheless, stuck in cartesianism, avoiding precisely the way in which language is referentially linked to reality. The responsibility for the reference is transferred exclusively to the level of descriptions, which designate one another, in a circular manner, to ensure a connection to reality; this connection has been the main focus of the causality theories of reference.

In accordance to the causality or historical theory of reference, Kripke (*ibidem*: 79), its most famous representative, stated that language's connection to the exterior world and to the referent is realized by means of a causative chain that preserves and transmits the primary association between the name and its referent. The reference is established via an initial act of "baptism" (naming process), a moment where the actual name is given (in a causative manner) and applied to the object, then it is transferred or borrowed from one (person, culture, participant) to another in the form of cultural assets and acquisitions. The semantic ability of the subjects that did not attend the "christening" is acquired as a loan, from the participating subjects. In this manner, competence is defined not

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as knowledge in relation to the meaning, but as noticing the meaning in its causative, genealogical pattern.

The meaning of proper names cannot be reduced to one particular description, it is constituted and determined in accordance to the way in which the transferred object is presented in a causative network that ensures the continuity of the primary connection between the name and the referent. This unpredictable manner of conveying the meaning, given the context of its historical connections, implies a more realistic, subtler and more mobile hermeneutic perspective, which is capable of explaining the referential and semantic circuit of the connection, without running the risk of separating the two concepts in a cartesian manner, nor hindering the connection established between language and reality.

The classification of proper names

From a typological perspective, the classification of proper names, proposed by the ICOS[3] is as follows:

– anthroponyms (proper names of human beings, which can be divided into names and surnames): *Maria*, *Popescu*, *Constantinescu* etc.;
– realonyms (name of an area in space):
  a) cosmonyms (proper names that are given to cosmic space, galaxies, constellations): *Magelan's Clouds*, the *Orion* constellation, *Hen-with-chicks* etc.;
  b) astronyms (that encompass proper names of celestial bodies): *The Sun*, *the Moon*, *the Earth*, *the Northern Star*, *Mercury*, *the Morning Star*, *The Haley comet*, *Vega* etc.;
– chrematonyms (proper names given to objects pertaining to material culture, from gr. *hrematos* "thing, object"): *Stradivarius*, *Mefistofel*, *Ada-Kaleh* etc.;

[3] International Council of Onomastic Sciences, www.icosweb.net

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– ergonyms (proper names given to a human association: organizations, clubs, bands etc., which are based upon any sort of activity, as is suggested by the meaning of the Greek term *ergos* "activity, work, function"): *Junimea*, *Frăţia* etc.;
– hydronyms (proper names that express various geographical realities that are related to water). Depending on their characteristics, we can divide them into:

  a) oceanyms (oceans, seas, lagoons): *the Atlantic Ocean*, *the Black Sea* etc.;
  b) limnonyms (lake, swamp, pool names): *The Red Lake* etc.;
  c) potamonyms (names for running water, rivers, streams): *the Danube*, *the Bega* etc.;

– horonyms (names of different territories, extended areas, from the gr. *horos* "area"): *France*, *Germany*, *the Austrian-Hungarian Empire*, *the Bizantine Empire*, *the United States of America*, *Moldavia*, *Histria*, *Galilee*, *the country of the Phaecians* etc.;
– oronyms (which refer to proper names of hills or mountain ranges): *Măcin*, *Făgăraş*, *Ceahlău*, *the Carpathian Mountains*, *the Alps* etc.;
–speleonyms (division of the oronyms, that encompasses the proper names of subterranean natural forms: caves, precipices, subterranean rivers, waterfalls, lakes, fountains; according to Germ. *Speleonym* < gr. *spelalaios* „cave"): *The Bears' Cave* etc.;
– oikonyms (proper names of human settlements, no matter their size and importance):

  a) komonyms (village names): *Dumbrăviţa*, *Rediu* etc.;
  b) urbanonyms (city names): *Iaşi*, *Paris*, *Chişinău* etc.;
  c) agoronyms ("market names", as in the german *Agoronym* or *Plazname*): *Matache Marketplace*, *Amzei Marketpace* etc.;

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d) hodonyms (proper names given to a linear plane inside a city: streets, metro lines or tram lines, boulevards etc.): *Victory Street*, *Independence road*, *Magheru Boulevard* etc.;

– mytonyms (proper names given to imaginary objects pertaining to myths, stories, legends): *Aphrodite* (name, thus a mitoanthroponym), *Venus* (resort, thus a mitotoponym) *Cerberus* or *Castor* (a dog's name, thus a mitozoonym);
– zoonyms (proper names for animals): *Bălan*, *Azorel*, *Joiana* etc.;
– theonyms (names given to God): *God*, *Buddha*, *Allah*, *Jehova*, *Holy Spirit* etc.

Anthroponyms. Definition, typology

Anthroponym, pl. *anthroponyms*, fr. *anthroponyme*, engl. *anthroponym*, germ. *Personenname*, a term formed from the Greek term *ἄνθρωπος* (human) and *ὄνομα* (name) refers to any name that is given to a human being, real or fictitious, a name that has been given officially or unofficially, as well as names that are given to entire communities, small or large.

Each person has one name or more. For instance, they can have a *name*, a *surname* and a *nickname,* all of which serve to identify people, as well as individualize them. Deity names, as well as ficticious names are included among person names. The bipartite or tripartite anthroponymic formula is a later stage in the evolution of denominative processes. In early stages, there was only the single name (Ioniţă 2002: 32).

Judging by grammatical classes, anthroponyms can be classified into various subgroups:

– names: *Alexandra*, *Mariana*, *Nicoleta*;
– last names and first names: *Alexandra Savin*, *Mariana Nicolescu*, *Nicoleta Chihaia*;

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– last names and nicknames: *Robert the Illusionist*, *Mircea the American*;
– nicknames: *The Avenger*, *the Biker*, *Mommy's boy*;
– hypocoristic names: *Soni*, *Mimi*, *Nelly*, *Lucy*;
– names that are the same as a particular trait (*Catwoman*, *the Madman*).

From a lexical point of view, anthroponyms can be classified into different categories:

– autochthonous: *Gheorghe*, *Maria*, *Elena*;
– Anglicisms: *Byron*, *Nora Jones*;
– famous characters: *Freud*, *Cehov*.

The evolution of the Romanian onomastic system

At first, Roman names were only used in Ancient Rome. The history of Rome shows that Romans had only one name (*Romulus*, *Remus*), and, from the inscriptions from the latter years of the republic we find that people not pertaining to the aristocracy commonly had solely two names (*Numa Pompilius*, *Tullus Hostilius*), the second representing the father's name. During the Republic, Roman aristocrats had three names (*tria nomina*): *praenomen*, *nomen* and *cognomen*. The *Praenomen* (pl. *praenomina*) was a personal, individualized name, which was mainly used within the same tribe (*Marcus*, *Publius*, *Titus* etc.). The *nomen* (*nomen gentillicum*) usually ended in *-us* or *-ius* and refers to a tribe (*Pompilius* , *Valerius* etc.), while the *cognomen* was used in order to particularize and name a physical or moral trait (*Brutus* - the stupid one, *Cato* - the cunning one, *Caecus* - the blind one, *Cincinnatus* - the curly one etc.). The Roman orator Cicero recorded the birth of his son in the following manner: M. Tullius M [ARCI] F [ilius] M [ARCI] N [epopee] M [ARCI] PR [onepos] COR [TRIBU nelia] CICERO, „Marcus Tullius Cicero, son of Marcus,

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nephew of Marcus, great grandson of Marcus, of the Cornelia tribe, with legal freedom to cast vote[4]".

Romanian anthroponimy. General perspective

"Names make up for a small part of the tradition and history of the country, they convey information as to the culture and general way of life", Alexandru Graur stated, emphasizing the idea that "among all elements of the language, those that are linked the most to the evolution of society are names of persons, and they are much more easy to replace than common names" (Graur 1965: 9). In conclusion, the name can truly be considered a label for the individual.

The vast majority of Romanian and foreign studies on anthroponimy focus on proper/person's names selectively, especially from an evolutionary perspective, or concerning the issue of their evolution. In such conditions, the general theoretical of personal denomination and the methodology used in its research were seldom among the concerns of specialists' studies.

The Greek and Latin anthroponimy was sporadically treated in studies and scientific papers, and only from a pragmatical perspective. Very specific transliteration norms were adopted for the Greek and Latin proper names, and the lists presented were of minimal length, such as appendices placed at the end of grammar handbooks and in the DOOM (Ortographic, Ortoepic and Morphologic Dictionary of Romanian Language).

Greek and Latin anthroponyms in old Romanian

Greek and Latin anthroponyms were first introduced by scholars, beginning with 16th and 17th centuries. It is normal to find, in old texts, some variations in writing and pronunciation, given the fact that no official norms were established. The

[4] The ancient Roman alphabet did not include the letters J and U. For the purpose of convenience, the letters I and V were used to convey them. Thus, a name written in modern times, such as Julius, would have been written IVLIVS in Roman times.

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names that were known among the intellectual circles and that have circulated in that period are nowadays transcribed in the form they had back in the day and respecting the appropriate pronunciation rules. The names that were not so well known maintain a much closer formal resemblance to the original one. One important observation is that for shorter names, the Latin *–us* ending does not disappear, for example in names such as *Brutus*, *Sextus*.

Greek names were first known through the Slavonic language, then the Latin one, in such a manner that nowadays Greek names receive exactly the same treatment as Latin ones. Often, the *-s* ending is lost (*Socrate* instead of *Socrates*), while for *-os* names, if the ending is preserved, it adopts a Latin form, *-us* (*Apollonius*) but most often it is lost (*Homer* – gr. *Homeros*, lat. *Homerus*). Generally, Greek names are adapted to Romanian writing, starting from the form they had in Latin.

All Latin and Greek names that have not entered the language in an adapted form, are written in accordance to their respective languages. The transliteration system for the Greek alphabet is as follows: *Α*, *α* > A, a; *Β*, *β* > V, v; *Γ*, *γ* > G, g; *Δ*, *δ* > D, d; *Ε*, *ε* > E, e; *Ζ*, *ζ* > Z, z; *Η*, *η* > ī; *Θ*, *θ* > th; *Ι*, *ι* > I, i; *Κ*, *κ* > K, k; *Λ*, *λ* > L, l; *Μ*, *μ* > M, m; *Ν*, *ν* > N, n; *Ξ*, *ξ* > X, x; *Ο*, *ο* > O, o; *Π*, *π* > P, p; *Ρ*, *ρ* > R, r; *Σ*, *σ*, *ς* > s; *Τ*, *τ* > T, t; *Υ*, *υ* > Y, y; *Φ*, *φ* > F, f; *Χ*, *χ* > ch; *Ψ*, *ψ* > ps; *Ω*, *ω* > ō.

Latin names that appear in Greek texts will be used in their Latin form: *Longus*, and Greek names that appear in Latin texts will conserve the writing of the original Latin text: *Phaedimus*.

Latin person names will be used in their original (unadapted) form, each time they are employed entirely (*praenomen – nomen – cognomen – agnomen* or just two of them): *Cezar*, but *C. Iulius Caesar*; *Ovidiu*, but *P. Ovidius Naso*; *Liviu*, but *Titus Livius*, *Diocleţian*, but *Imp. Caes. C. Aurelius Valerius Diocletianus Augustus*.

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Presentation of the studied text: author, translator, information about the translation

The text that I am currently studying is entitled *Istoria lui Numa Pompilie, al doilea craiu al Romii*, and was printed in Iasi, in 1820. It is Alexandru Beldiman´s translation of one of the most renowned novels of Jean-Pierre Claris de Florian (1755–1794), a writing that was quite popular during that period of time, both in France and in the cultural Balcanic circles.

Alexandru (Alecu) Beldiman (1760–1826) was born in Iaşi or Huşi, all of his biographers offer the same information. He belonged to the aristocracy, having a rank similar to village chief (rom. *vornic*), but was also dedicated to his activity as a poet and translator. A constant presence in the political and cultural Moldavian life, he makes his debut with *Avel's death*, translated after the work of Solomon Gessner (1818). Good knowledge of Greek and French, as well as good orientation skills in the social environment of his time, recommend him as an eager and diligent translator. His original writings are represented mainly by a couple of rhythmic prose pieces (*Tragodia sau mai bine a zice Jalnica Moldovii întâmplare după răzvrătirea grecilor 1821*) and a small number of lyrical poems (*Stihuri făcute la Tazlău în vremea închiderii mele acolo, în anul 1824, aprilie 20* and *Stihuri alcătuite de răposat postelnic Alecul Beldiman*, published in 1981). His work appears nowadays to be anachronistic, placing him amongst the oldest translators in the literary Romanian field. His transpositions of Voltaire, Florian, Abbot Prévost, Metastasio, Régnard etc. as well as the first literary translation of Homer, from Greek, rely on other valorical axis, forming part of the culturally renewed Enlightenment movement, and placing said author amongst the highest ranked letter men of his time.

Jean-Pierre Claris de Florian is a pretty important French writer belonging to the 18th century, who lived in times of Voltaire and was a relative of his, member of the French Academy. For modern readers, Florian is mainly known due to his fables, which were pretty well adapted as a young adult´s reading. His contemporaries also praised him for the poetic and

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pastoral novels. His first writings were comedies. In 1782, he wrote a one-act comedy, *Le Bon Ménage*, and in 1786 he published *Numa Pompilius*, while 1792 saw the printing of his famous *Fables* collection.

The list of mythological Greek and Latin names in the text under investigation

The first step of our investigation consisted in excerpting all of the proper names in Alexandru Beldiman's translation.

Classification of the anthroponyms, according to the language of origin

One of the first classifications that we found appropriate to make followed the criteria of the direct origin of each anthroponymic unit. Evidence entailed that there were three distinct classes: proper names that had been borrowed from Latin mythology, proper names that had been borrowed from Greek mythology and proper names that had an identical form both in Greek and in Latin.

a) proper names that have been borrowed from Latin mythology:

Acrón < *Acron* (lat. *Acron, -ontis* sau *-onis*), fr. *Acron*
Athiná < lat. *Athena*, fr. *Minerve*
Brút < lat. *Brutus*, fr. *Brutus*
Catílie < *Catillus* (lat. *Catillus* şi *Catilus, -i*), fr. *Catille*
Diána < *Diana* (lat. *Diana, -ae*)
Hersilía < (lat. *Hersilia, -ae*, fr. *Hersilie*)
Horáţie < *Horaţiu Cocles* (lat. *Horatius, -i Cocles, -itis*)
Léo < lat. *Leo*, fr. *Léo*
Numá Pompílie < (lat. *Numa, -ae Pompilius, -i*), fr. *Numa Pompilius*
Próca < *Procas* (lat. *Procas* sau *Proca, -ae*), fr. *Procas*
Romíl < *Romulus* < (lat. *Romulus, -i*), fr. *Romulus*
Séres < *Ceres* (lat. *Ceres, -eris*), fr. *Cérès*

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Táție < *Tatius* < (lat. *Tatius, -i*), fr. *Tatius*
Túlie < *Tullus Hostilius* (lat. *Tullus Hostilius, -i*), fr. *Tullus*;

b) proper names that have been borrowed from Greek mythology:
Afrodíta (gr. *Αφροδιντη*; lat- *Venus, -eris*) > fr. *l'épouse de Vulcain*
Ahiléus < *Ahile* (gr. *Ἀχιλλεύς*; lat. *Achilles, -is*)
Antilóhie < *Antilohos* (gr. *Ἀντίλοχος;* lat. *Antilochus, -i*)
Iracléu < *Heracle* (gr. *Ἡρακλῆς*; lat. *Hercules, -is*; şi *–i*), fr. *Hercule*
Odiséus < *Odiseu* (gr. *Ὀδυσσεὺς*; lat. *Ulyssēs, Ulixēs*), fr. *Ulysse*
Oféltie < *Ofeltios* (gr. *Οφέλτιος*), fr. *Ophelte*
Zéus < (gr. *Ζεύς*; lat. *Iupiter* sau *Iuppiter, Iovis*), fr. *Jupiter*;

c) proper names that have an identical form both in Greek and in Latin:
Ábas < *Abas* (gr. *Ἄβας*; lat. *Abas, -antis*), fr. *Abas*
Apólon < *Apollo* (gr. Ἀπόλλων ; lat. *Apollo, -inis*), fr. *Apollon*
Astréu < (gr. *Αστραινος*; lat. *Astraeus, -i*)
Enéa < *Eneas* (gr. *Αἰνείας*; lat. *Aeneas*)
Licomíd < *Licomed* (gr. *Λυκομήδης*; lat. *Lycomedes, -is*)
Marsiás < (gr. *Μαρσύας*; lat. *Marsyas* or *Marsya, -ae*)
Marsiás < (gr. *Μαρσύας*; lat. *Marsyas* or *Marsya, -ae*)
Néstor < *Nestor* (gr. *Νέστωρ*; lat. *Nestor, -oris*)
Pálas < *Palas* (gr. *Πάλλας*; lat. *Pallas, -antis*), fr. *Pallas*
Pánie < *Pan* (gr. *Πάν*; lat. *Pan, Panos, -is*), fr. *Pan*
Perséus < *Perseu* (gr. *Περσεύς*; lat. *Perseus, -eos* or-*ei*), fr. *Persée*
Telemáh < (gr. *Τηλέμαχος;* lat. *Telemachus, -i*)
Thétis < *Thetis* (gr. *Θέτις*; lat. *Thetis, -idia*).

Transfer and adaptation methods for mythological anthroponyms

Adaptation is type of free-form translation that is mainly used for the translation of proper names. This technique consists

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in modifying the original form of the proper name, in accordance to certain phonetic and morphological particularities of the target language. Transliteration is, basically, the identical transposition of one word´s form from a source language into the target language. In this case, the transliteration method is used for transposing Latin proper names (as they appear in the original, in the Cyrillic graphic system) at the time when Alexandru Beldiman´s translation was printed. The transfer and adaptation techniques that are used in order to adapt the mythological anthroponyms of the text in question imply changes at a phonetic and morphological level.

Phonetic adaptation

Phonetic adaptation implies assuming the form of the source language proper name, taking into account the initial phonetic arrangement. The translator conveys the phonetic form of the proper name, operating changes in the accents in such a manner that the resulting form would correspond to the Romanian phonetic system. Some of the aspects of phonetic adaptation can be defined in the following manner:

a) placing the new anthroponym in an older series of anthroponyms, which has a relatively more stable structure. Examples: *Oféltie*, *Pánie*, *Táție* and *Túlie* as in the series *Grigorie*, *Vasilie*, etc.;
b) phonetic adaptation, in accordance to the Neogreek pronunciation of the word. Examples: *Iracléu* as the transliteration of the proper name *Herakles*;
c) phonetic adaptation, in accordance to the French pronunciation of the word. Examples: *Séres* as the transliteration of the French word *Cérès*;
d) transfer of the original Latin form. Examples: *Diána* as the transliteration of Latin *Diana, -ae*; *Hersilía* as the transliteration of Latin *Hersilia, -ae*; *Próca* as the transliteration of Latin *Proca, -ae*;
e) transfer of the original Greek form. Examples: *Ahiléus* as the transliteration of Greek *Ἀχιλλεύς; Apólon* as the

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transliteration of Greek *Ἀπόλλων*; *Odiséus* as the transliteration of Greek *Ὀδυσσεὺς*; *Pálas* as the transliteration of Greek *Πάλλας*; *Perséus* as the transliteration of Greek *Περσεύς*; *Zéus* as the transliteration of Greek *Ζεύς*;

f) original formulae, which do not resemble their form in source-language. Examples: *Romíl* as an adaptation of the Latin *Romulus*.

Morphologic adaptation

Morphologic adaptation entails the integration of the new name into the Romanian orthographical system, a process which can only be achieved by not following the original morphological rules and expressing the grammatical information using the means of the target-language.

People's names only come in two categories: masculine and feminine, while last names only have one form. Generally, masculine names end with a consonant, *–u* or consonantic *–i*, while feminine names end in *–a*. Some of the aspects of phonetic adaptation can be defined in the following manner:

a) removing the ending/ excepting the final consonant. Examples: *Astréu,* by removing the *-s* desinence of the Latin *Astraeus, -i; Brút* by removing the *-us* (singular nominative) of the Latin *Brutus*;
b) fitting into one of the Romanian declention classes. Examples: *Afrodíta* > gr. *Αφροδιντη (-a* ending for the 1st declention);
c) maintaining the exact form of the French original. Examples: *Léo*.

Conclusions

In what concerns adaptation as a translation technique within Romanian as a literary language and at this level, we can state that there is a transition phenomenon occurring between the old

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and the new systems. Thus, we can safely say that Alexandru Beldiman shows, in his translation of Florian's novel, *Istoria lui Numa Pompilie, al doilea craiu al Romii*, a great amount of uncertainty in adopting either the Latin, Greek or French model, choosing to employ a mixture of all three. This is mainly due to the fact that, even though he was a cultivated man, the writer possessed no systematic thinking skills, just a great amount of intuition. Nevertheless, he was one of the most prolific Romanian translators of that time.

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