

# Reimagining Vikings. The Evolution and Impact of Viking Imagery in Contemporary Fiction and Media

Nicolae BOBARU  
West University of Timișoara

**Abstract:** *This paper explores the image of the Viking in contemporary fiction and cinema, a critical element of the Scandinavian cultural imaginary. While the Viking image has its roots in historical events and saga literature, its representations have significantly evolved and been shaped by various social, cultural, and artistic influences. As a symbol of strength, adventure, and resilience, the Viking has been reinterpreted and commodified within multiple genres of literature and film, often to reflect and address contemporary socio-cultural realities. The study begins with a review of the Viking image in Scandinavian literature, tracing its transformation from the Edic poems and sagas to modern-day narratives. It then expands its focus to analyse the portrayal of Vikings in international cinema. By investigating how these portrayals diverge from or align with historical facts, this paper seeks to understand the dynamics between artistic liberty and creativity, historical authenticity, and the shaping of cultural identity. Special attention is given to the implications of these representations of Scandinavian identity and the broader global imaginary of the region. It proposes that diverse depictions of Vikings reveal much about the tensions and negotiations between the historical-cultural reality of Scandinavia and the perceptions, myths, and expectations of the audience and readership, who play a significant role in shaping these representations. The contrast between the Viking's historical reality and its fictional portrayal illuminates the complexities of interpreting and exporting cultural symbols. The present paper contributes to a deeper understanding of the Scandinavian imaginary. It demonstrates how the region's history, as symbolised by the Viking's figures, continues to resonate within and shape its contemporary cultural and artistic landscapes.*

**Keywords:** *adventure; Norse mythology; saga literature; Scandinavian identity; Viking.*