The folklore of vampires is of special interest from the light it throws on primitive ideas about body and soul, and about the relation of the body and soul after death. In Russia, Roumania, and the Balkan states there is an idea—sometimes vague, sometimes fairly definite—that the soul does not finally leave the body and enter into Paradise until forty days after death. It is supposed that it may even linger for years, and when this is the case decomposition is delayed. In Roumania, bodies are disinterred at an interval of three years after death in the case of a child, of four or five years in the case of young folk, and of seven years in the case of elderly people. If decomposition is not then complete, it is supposed that the corpse is a vampire; if it is complete, and the bones are white and clean, it is a sign that the soul has entered into eternal rest. The bones are washed in water and wine and put in clean linen, a religious service is held, and they are reinterred.

In Bukovina and the surrounding districts there was an orgy of burials and reburials in the years 1919 and 1920, for not only were people dying of epidemics and hardships, but also the people who had died in the early years of the war had to be disinterred.

It is now considered to be exceptional that a spirit should reanimate its body and walk as a vampire, but, in a vampire story quoted below, it is said that they were once as common as blades of grass. It would seem that the most primitive phase of the vampire belief was that all departed spirits wished evil to those left, and that special means had to be taken in all cases to prevent their return. The most typical vampire is therefore the reanimated corpse. We may call this the dead-vampire type.

People destined to become vampires after death may be able in life to send out their souls, and even their bodies, to wander at crossroads with reanimated corpses. This type may be called the live-vampire type. It merges into the ordinary witch or wizard, who can meet other witches or wizards either in the body or as a spirit.

A third type of vampire is the vârcolac, which eats the sun and moon during eclipses.

A typical vampire of the reanimated-corpse type may have the attributes of a lover, as in Scott's William and Helen. The zmeu may also be such a lover.

The strigele (sing. striga) are not really vampires, but are sometimes confused with them. They are spirits either of living witches, which these send out as a little light, or of dead witches who can find no resting place. These strigele come together in uneven numbers, seven or nine. They meet on rocky mountains, and dance and say:

Nup, Cuisnup,
In cas a cu ustoroi nu ma duc.

[Nup, Cuisnup, I won't enter any house where there is garlic.]

They are seen as little points of light floating in the air. Their dances are exquisitely beautiful. Seven or nine lights start in a line, and then form into various
figures, ending up in a circle. After they break off their dance, they may do mischief to human beings.

As regards the names used for vampires, dead and alive, strigoi (fem. strigoica) is the most common Roumanian term, and moroi is perhaps the next most usual. Moroi is less often used alone than strigoi. Usually we have strigoi and moroi consorting together, but the moroi are subject to the strigoi. We find also strigoi, moroi, and vârcolaci, and strigoi and pricolici used as if all were birds of the same feather. A Transilvanian term is șîșcoi. Vârcolaci (svârcolaci) and pricolici are sometimes dead vampires, and sometimes animals which eat the moon. Oper is the Ruthenian word for dead vampire. In Bukovina, vidme is used for a witch; it covers much the same ground as strigoi (used for a live vampire), but it is never used for a dead vampire. Diavoloace, beings with two horns and spurs on their sides and feet, are much the same as vidme.

As Dr. Gaster reminds me, in many disenchantments we find phrases such as:

De strigoaica, de strigoi,
Și de case cu moroi.
[From vampires (male and female),
and from a home with vampires.]
De deochetori și de deochetoare,
De moroi, cu moroaica,
De strigoi cu strigoaica.
[From those who cast the evil eye
(male or female), from vampires
(male and female).]

Ci, îi dracul cu drácoaica, striga cu strigoiul,
Deochiu cu deochitorul, pociturá cu pocitorul,
Potca cu potcoiul.

[The devil with the female devil, the spirit of
the dead witch with the vampire (male), the evil eye
with the caster of the evil eye, the bewitchment with the
bewitcher, the quarrel with the mischief-maker.]

Ciuma, the plague, is occasionally one of the party. The strigoi and moroi are almost inseparable, hunting, however, with witches, wizards, and devils.

The nature spirits (ielele and dansele) usually have disenchantments of their own, for they work apart from vampires and wizards, who are beings of human origin. While the peasant groups nature spirits apart from the more human workers of evil, he groups the living and the dead together, for the caster of the evil eye and the bewitcher are living men, though prospective vampires. The vampire, in fact, forms a convenient transition between human workers of evil and the devil, who resembles the dead vampire in not being alive in the flesh.

The vampire (a reanimated corpse) and the devil (a spirit) ought not, strictly speaking, to be alike, but the peasant, finding it difficult to imagine a spirit without a body, thinks of the devil in the form of a crow or a cat, or even in a quasi-human form. The devil is a target for the thunderbolts of St. Elijah, and can be transfixed by one. Even the spirit of a living man, if separated from his body, must have some body or form. In Transilvania it is thought that many people can project their soul as a
butterfly. In Vâlcea souls of vampires are considered to be incarnated in death's-head moths, which, when caught, should be impaled on a pin and stuck to a wall to prevent their flying further. A small, graceful thing which flutters in the air like a butterfly or a moth is as near as these peasants can get to the idea of pure spirit. The peasant in Siret goes a step further when he conceives of the soul as a little light. He has got beyond what is tangible.

The belief in vampires has often caused trouble to the rulers of Roumania. Ureche, in his History of Roumania, quotes the following:

In 1801, on July the 12th, the Bishop of Siges sends a petition to the ruler of Wallachia, that he should order his rulers of provinces to permit no longer that the peasants of Stroesti should dig up dead people, who had already been dug up twice under the idea that they were vârcolaci [term here used instead of strigoi].

In the Biserica Orthodoxa Romana (an 28) there is the following:

The Archbishop Nectarie (1813-19) sent round a circular to his higher clergy (protopopes) exhorting them to find out in what districts it was thought that the dead became vampires. If they came on a case of vampirism they were not to take it upon themselves to burn the corpse, but to teach the people how to proceed according to the written roll of the church.

The following accounts of vampires are taken from the Roumanian periodical of peasant art and literature, Ion Creanga. It was edited by my late friend, Tudor Pamfile, one of the most competent and industrious folklorists Roumania has ever had. The stories in Ion Creanga were taken down by careful observers, and published as nearly as possible in the exact words of the peasants.

N. I. Dumitrascu is responsible for the following, printed in Ion Creanga:

1

Some twenty or thirty years ago (from 1914) in the commune Afumati in Dolj, a certain peasant, Mărin Mirea Ociococ, died. It was noticed that his relations also died, one after the other. A certain Badea Vrajitor (Badea the wizard) dug him up. Badea himself, going later into the forest up to the frontier on a cold wintry night, was eaten by wolves. The bones of Mărin were sprinkled with wine, a church service read over them, and replaced in the grave. From that time there were no more deaths in the family.

Some fifteen years ago, in Amărăști in the north of Dolj, an old woman, the mother of the peasant Dinu Gheorghița, died. After some months the children of her eldest son began to die, one after the other, and, after that, the children of her youngest son. The sons became anxious, dug her up one night, cut her in two, and buried her again. Still the deaths did not cease. They dug her up a second time, and what did they see? The body whole without a wound. It was a great marvel. They took her and carried her into the forest, and put her under a great tree in a remote part of the forest. There they disembowelled her, took out her heart, from which blood was flowing, cut it in four, put it on hot cinders, and burnt it. They took the ashes and gave them to children to drink with water. They threw the body on the fire, burnt it, and buried the ashes of the body. Then the deaths ceased.

Some twenty or thirty years ago, a cripple, an unmarried man, of Cușmir, in the south of Mehedinp, died. A little time after, his relations began to die, or to fall ill. They complained that a leg was drying up. This happened in several places. What could it be? "Perhaps it is the cripple; let us dig him up." They dug him up on Saturday night, and found him as red as red, and all drawn up into a corner of the grave. They cut him open, and took the customary measures. They took out the heart and liver, burnt them on red-hot cinders, and gave the ashes to his sister and other relations, who were ill. They drank them with water, and regained their health.
In the Cuşmir, another family began to show very frequent deaths, and suspicion fell on a certain old man, dead long ago. When they dug him up, they found him sitting up like a Turk, and as red as red, just like fire; for had he not eaten up nearly the whole of a family of strong, young men. When they tried to get him out he resisted, unclean and horrible. They gave him some blows with an axe, they got him out, but they could not cut him with a knife. They took a scythe and an axe, cut out his heart and liver, burnt them, and gave them to the sick folk to drink. They drank, and regained their health. The old man was reburied, and the deaths ceased.

In Văguileşti, in Mehedinți, there was a peasant Dimitriu Vaideanu, of Transilvanian origin, who had married a wife in Văguileşti and settled there. His children died one after the other; seven died within a few months of birth, and some bigger children had died as well. People began to wonder what the cause of all this could be. They took council together, and resolved to take a white horse to the cemetery one night, and see if it would pass over the graves of the wife's relations. This they did, and the horse jumped over all the graves, until it came to the grave of the mother-in-law, Joana Marta, who had been a witch, renowned far and wide. Then the horse stood still, beating the earth with its feet, neighing, and snorting, unable to step over the grave. Probably there was something unholy there. At night Dimitriu and his son took candles and went to dig up the grave. They were seized with horror at what they saw. There she was, sitting like a Turk, with long hair falling over her face, with all her skin red, and with finger nails frightfully long. They got together brushwood, shavings, and bits of old crosses, they poured wine on her, they put in straw, and set fire to the whole. Then they shovelled the earth back and went home.

Slightly different methods are described by other observers as employed in other districts:

In Romanap the vampire was disinterred, undressed, and put in a bag. The clothes were put back into the coffin and sprinkled with holy water, the coffin put back into the grave, and the grave closed. A strong man carried the body to the forest. The heart was cut out, and the body cut up and one piece after another burnt. Last of all the heart was burnt, and those present came near so that the smoke passed over them, and protected them from evil. Here, as elsewhere, it is emphasized that the burning must be complete. If the smallest piece of bone remains unburnt, the vampire can grow up again from it.

In Zârnesţi, when the vampire is dug up, iron forks are put into her heart, eyes, and breast, and she is reburied with her face downwards.

In Mehedinți it is sometimes considered sufficient to take the corpse far away to the mountains and leave it there. This is comparable with, but would not appear to be so efficient as, the Greek plan of taking the body of a vampire over the sea to an island.

The most general method for dealing with a vampire is as follows: It must be exhumed on a Saturday, as on all other days it will be wandering away from the grave. Either put a stake through the navel or take out the heart. The heart may be burnt on charcoal, or in a fire; it may be boiled, or cut into bits with a scythe. If the heart is burnt, the ashes must be collected. Sometimes they are got rid of by throwing into a river, but usually they are mixed with water and given to sick people to drink. They may also be used to anoint children and animals as a means of warding off anything unclean. Sometimes, however, the curse of a priest is sufficient to seal a vampire in its tomb.

The tests to determine whether any dead man is a vampire, or not, are as follows: 1. His household, his family, and his live stock, and possibly even the live stock of the
whole village, die off rapidly.

2. He comes back in the night and speaks with the family. He may eat what he finds in dishes and knock things about, or he may help with the housework and cut wood. Female vampires also come back to their children. There was a Hungarian vampire which could not be kept away, even by the priest and holy water.

3. The priest reads a service at the grave. If the evil which is occurring does not cease, it is a bad sign.

4. A hole about the size of a serpent may be found near the tombstone of the dead man. If so, it is a sign of a vampire, because vampires come out of graves by just such holes.

5. Even in the daytime a white horse will not walk over the grave of a vampire, but stands still and snorts and neighs.

6. A gander, similarly, will not walk over the grave of a vampire.

7. On exhuming the corpse, if it is a vampire it will be found to be:
   (a) red in the face, even for months and years after burial,
   (b) with the face turned downwards,
   (c) with a foot retracted and forced into a corner of the grave or coffin.
   (d) If relations have died, the mouth will be red with blood. If it has only spoilt and ruined things at home, and eaten what it could find, the mouth will be covered with maize meal.

   If the vampire is not recognized as such, and rendered innocuous, it goes on with its evil ways for seven years. First it destroys its relations, then it destroys men and animals in its village and in its country, next it passes into another country, or to where another language is spoken, and becomes a man again. He marries, and has children, and the children, after they die, all become vampires and eat the relations of their mother. As Miss Durham says, this action of a vampire is probably suggested by the epidemics which wipe out families and indeed villages in the countries of southeastern Europe. If, however, we assume a vampire for every epidemic, they would certainly be only less plentiful than leaves of grass.

   In case it is feared that any man may become a vampire, precautions must be taken at burial or soon after. As suicides are potential vampires, they should be dug up at once from their graves, and put into running water. A man may know that he was born with a caul, and leave word what is to be done to save his family from disaster. Or his relations may know of the danger and guard against it. There are various methods of avoiding this danger, and several may be used at the same time. The commonest method is to drive a stake through the heart or navel. In Vâlcea, it is sufficient to put a needle into the heart, but in Bulgaria it is a red-hot iron which is driven through the heart. Small stones and incense should be put in the mouth, nose, ears, and navel, and under the finger nails, "so that the vampire may have something to gnaw." Garlic may also be placed in the mouth. Millet may be put in the coffin, or in the mouth and nose, so that the vampire will delay many days till it has eaten the millet. The body should be placed face downwards in the coffin. If it is a case of reburial, the corpse should be turned head to foot.

   A nail may be put under the tongue. The coffin should be bound with trailers of
wild roses, or other bands of wood. In Teleorman, when people go to the house of
death on the third day in order to burn incense, they take nine distaffs, which they
stick into the grave. If the corpse should rise, it would be pierced by them. They also
take tow, strew it on the grave, and set fire to it, so that it shall singe the vampire.

Although in Roumanian folklore vampires and devils are fairly nearly akin, I have
found so far no instance in which the dead corpse is supposed to be reanimated by a
devil and not by its own soul. This, however, is what is described as happening in
Ralston's *Russian Folk Tales.*\(^2\) In Serbia and Bulgaria a nail should be put in the back
of the neck, as well as a stake through the heart, so that the devil who means to use
the body as a vampire may not be able to distend the skin.

The causes of vampirism are various. Roumanians think that a man born with a
caul becomes a vampire within six weeks after his death; similarly people who were
bad and had done evil deeds in their lifetime, and more especially women who have
had to do with the evil one and with spells and incantations. It is known that a man is
a vampire if he does not eat garlic; this idea is also found among the South Slavs.
When a child dies before it is baptized, it becomes a vampire at seven years of age,
and the place where it was buried is unholy. Men who swear falsely for money
become vampires six months after death. If a vampire casts its eye on a pregnant
woman, and she is not disenchanted, her child will be a vampire. If a pregnant woman
does not eat salt, her child will be a vampire. When there are seven children of the
same sex, the seventh will have a little tail and be a vampire. A dead man becomes a
vampire, if a cat jumps over him, if a man steps over him, or even if the shadow of a
man falls over him. Some Roumanians think that, if people are fated to be vampires,
they will become one whether they wish it or not. Then during their lifetime, when
they sleep, their soul comes out of their mouth like a little fly. If, during sleep, the
body is turned round so that the head is where the feet were before, the man dies.

Other Roumanians think that even if a child is born with a caul, i.e., is born to
be a vampire, something can be done to mend matters. In the first place, the caul must
be broken at once, so that the child may not swallow it and remain an evil vampire,
casting the evil eye all its life, and eating its relations after death. The midwife should
go outside with the baby, after it is washed and wrapped up. If it is a dug-out house,
half underground, she should go onto the top of it; otherwise she goes to the back, and
calls out with the baby in her arms, "Hear, everyone, a wolf is born onto the earth. It
is not a wolf that will eat people, but a wolf that will work and bring luck." In this
way, the power of the vampire is broken, and evil turns to good. For vampires who
are no longer vampires bring luck.

If a dead man, supposed to be a vampire, has a brother born on the same day
of the year, or month of the year, as himself, there is great danger of the dead vampire
causing the living brother to become a vampire. This must be prevented by a process
called "taking out of iron." An iron chain, the one used for hanging the pot over the
fire, or one used in bullock carts, is taken and put round the two brothers. The ends
are solemnly closed and opened three times, and usually the priest reads a religious
service. When the iron is opened for the last time, the living brother is free—he is no
longer in danger of becoming a vampire.

There are various characters which distinguish the dead-vampire type only, others
common to both types, and a great many which belong to live vampires and witches
only. It is said that *strigoi* meet *moroii* and *vârcolaci* at the boundaries, and decide on
their program of evil for the coming year—who is to be killed and by whom.
Elsewhere it is said that at these same boundaries, where neither the cuckoo sings nor
the dog barks, the dead vampires meet the living ones, and teach them all sorts of incantations and spells. They meet also in churchyards, in ruined or deserted houses, or in the forest. They may quarrel among themselves, and fight, using the tongues of hemp brakes, or more rarely swords, as weapons. Once a man, who was walking round a cemetery, met a vampire, who forced him to carry his hemp brake for him. The man was hardly able to get home, and was ill in bed for many months after. Another man saw a female vampire near a cemetery, and threw a stone at her. She caused an evil wind to blow on him, and it blew him down and took away his senses. He never regained his reason. Apoplexy is also caused by bewitchment by a dead vampire.

Peasants who are thinking of live rather than dead vampires tell us that they walk out to the boundaries of villages, the women together with their head, and the men with their head. They have signs that enable them to bewitch all living things and do what they like with them. Thinking only of live vampires, peasants from Mihalcea and the neighborhood tell us that it is chiefly women who are vampires. One may be specially for hens, another for ducks, and another for lizards. They take the "power" (Roum. mana) of these animals for themselves. Some take the milk and "power" of women. Some have special power over bread, others over rain, over hens, or over bees. They take the "power" of bees and bring it to their mistress. If bees lose their "power," they no longer collect honey, and they have nothing to eat even for themselves. There was once a woman who made bread that was so good that half the village ate it. No one else could get such a pleasing taste as she did. This was because she knew how to take the "power" of bread from other women.

It is more especially on St. George's Eve that these vampires go to the boundaries to take rain and the "power" of animals, so as to have enough for the whole year. If they do not take "power" for themselves, they take it for those who pay them. They bring "power" and beauty to women who pay; also they cause men to hate the rivals of those who hire them. They can take "power" from women, and thus take milk away from nursing mothers. They can turn themselves into horses, dogs, or cats, so as to frighten people. The female vampires are dry in the body and are red in the face both before and after death. They go out on St. Andrew's Eve to the boundaries even if they have just borne children. They get out by the chimney, and come back worn out and in rags. The male vampires are bald, and after death grow a tail and hooves.

When a vampire washes itself, rain will fall from heaven. Thus, when a drought occurs, nobles send all their men to wash, because any of them may be a vampire. The moment any vampire wets its tail, there is rain. Vampires never drown, they always float on top. It is usually special vampires (live) who have power over rain; however, heavy rains in Zârneşti were supposed to be caused by a recently buried girl, thought to be a vampire.

Vampires, whether live or dead, are generally born rather than made. However, a peasant from Strojineţi said that there is a class of female vampires which are really only half vampire; that is to say, they are not vampires by birth, but have been taught to be vampires by the real ones, and shown how to do things. They put enchantments on cows, take on the form of a girls' lover, and so kill her. They are helped by St. Andrew, so that the priest conceals from them the time that St. Andrew's Day comes. Such vampires are alive, but after they die they walk.

There is a character by which a live vampire can infallibly be distinguished. It is known that vampires fight with hemp brakes. Now if anyone comes to a house and
asks for a hemp brake, say, "Come tomorrow for the stand and the H-axle of the hemp brake." The next day she will come. Then put three needles on the threshold with their points upwards and some bits of garlic. She will not be able to get out of the house until she gets out the needles and removes the garlic, so she will go to the door, and return and again go to the door, thus proving that she is a vampire (*strigoica*).

In general dead vampires come out every night except Saturday, when they are to be found in their graves. The vampires that are reanimated corpses or spirits of the dead disappear, like all evil spirits, at cockcrow. Vampires that are nothing else than witches or wizards can come out in the daytime all the year round, just like other human beings. Their power is greatest at new moon, and weakens as the moon grows old. The two periods in the course of the year when vampires are generally considered to be most active are St. Andrew's Eve and St. George's Eve. In Roșa, it is said that vampires begin to walk on St. Andrew's Eve, and separate after St. George's Day, after which they have no power, because flowers and the holy sweet basil begin to grow, and this shows that the power of God is increasing. This statement is interesting, as it shows that the peasant conceives of God as a god of fertility, and of vampires as inhabitants of the underworld. In Popeca, vampires are said to be at their worst before Easter. This would also bear out the idea of their being subdued by a rising God. In Mihalcea, they are said to walk only from St. Andrew's Eve to Epiphany. When the priest sings *Kyrie eleison* all evil spirits perish till next St. Andrew's Eve. In Siret they are said to be free from St. Andrew's Day till Transfiguration, and from St. George's Day till St. John's.

The precautions against visits from vampires are taken more especially before St. Andrew's Day and St. George's Day, but also before Easter Sunday and on the last day of the year. Garlic keeps off vampires, wolves, and evil spirits, and millet has a similar action. On St. Andrew's Eve and St. George's Eve, and before Easter and the New Year, windows should be anointed with garlic in the form of a cross, garlic put on the door and everything in the house, and all the cows in the cowshed should be rubbed with garlic. When vampires do enter, they enter by the chimney or by the keyhole, so these orifices call for special attention when garlic is being rubbed in. Even though the window is anointed with garlic, it is wisest to keep it shut. Especially on St. Andrew's Eve, all lamps may be put out and everything in the house never good to spin by moonlight, for vampires and vârcolaci get up to the sky by the thread turned upside down, so that if a vampire does come, it will not be able to ask any of the objects in the house to open the door. It is just as well for people not to sleep at all, but to tell stories right up to cockcrow. If you are telling stories, vampires cannot approach. Women should keep on saying their prayers. They may also beat on the hemp brakes to keep the vampires away. It is unwise to leave hemp brakes or shovels where vampires can get hold of them, for they like to ride on them. Vampires also like to take the tongues of hemp brakes as weapons and fight with them, till the sparks fly; hence the tongues should never be left fixed in the hemp brakes. Especially on St. George's Eve, it is a wise precaution to put on your shirt inside out, and to put a knife or scythe under your head when you sleep, turning the cutting edge outwards. It may also be as well to sleep with the feet where the head usually is, so that, if a vampire does enter, it will not find you.

At any time of the year it is well, especially at night-time, never to answer until anyone calls you three times, for vampires can ask a question twice but not three times. If you reply when they speak to you, they may turn your mouth skew, make you dumb, cut off your foot, or kill you.
There is a special kind of witch, vidme, who differs in her attributes from the witch that is called a vampire. The vidme are evil, bewitch people, and steal children. God said to them, "God will not help you in what you are doing." They replied, "And we will not help you to ascend." So God could not ascend to heaven. Elsewhere we are told that Christ reproved them, and they answered, "But you will not ascend where you thought you would, for we will cut your wings, so that you will remain down here." In a third variant, this discussion comes in connection with the Ascension. It is only after Christ has come to an understanding with these witches that he can ascend to heaven.

The following account of vârcolaci, considered to be the creatures which eat the sun and moon and thus cause eclipses, is taken from the Roumanian Academy's pamphlet Credințele Țaranului Roman despre Cer și Stele (Beliefs of the Roumanian Peasant concerning the Sky and the Stars), by I. Otescu.

Vârcolaci are supposed to be different from any beings on the earth. They cause eclipses of the moon, and even of the sun, by mounting up to heaven and eating the moon or sun. Some think that they are animals smaller than dogs. Others that they are dogs, two in number. Others again think that they are dragons, or some kind of animal with many mouths, which suck like an octopus, others that they are spirits and can also be called pricolici. They have different origins; some say that they are the souls of unbaptised children, or of children of unmarried parents, cursed by God and turned into vârcolaci. Others say that they take rise if, when anyone is making maize porridge, they put the porridge stick into the fire, or if, when anyone is sweeping out the house at sunset, they sweep out the dust in the direction of the sun. Others again say that vârcolaci originate from the air of heaven, when women spin at night, especially at midnight, without a candle, especially if they cast spells with the thread they spin. Hence it is never good to spin by moonlight, for vampires and vârcolaci get up to the sky by the thread and eat the sun and moon. They fasten themselves to the thread, and the thread makes itself into a road for them. As long as the thread does not break the vârcolaci have power, and can go wherever they wish. They attack the heavenly bodies, they bite the moon, so that she appears covered with blood, or till none of her is left. But if the thread is broken their power is broken and they go to another part of the sky.

How is it that the moon comes out whole after an eclipse if it has been eaten up? Some people say that, as the moon is really stronger than the vârcolaci, they are just able to bite it, but in the end the moon conquers, for the world would come to an end if the moon were really eaten up.

G. F. Ciauşanu, in his Superstitule poporului Român, reports that in Vâlcea there are said to be beings who are called vârcolaci, because their spirit is vârcolaci. They are recognised by their pale faces and dry skin, and by the deep sleep into which they fall when they go to the moon to eat it. But they eat it only during an eclipse, and when the disc of the moon is red or copper coloured. The redness is the blood of the moon, escaping from the mouths of the vârcolaci and spreading over the moon.

When the spirit of the vârcolac wants to eat the moon, the man to whom the spirit belong begins to nod, falls into a deep sleep as if he had not slept for weeks, and remains as if dead. If he is roused or moved the sleep becomes eternal, for, when the spirit returns from its journey, it cannot find the mouth out of which it came, and so cannot go in.

During an eclipse the peasants in Vâlcea beat on fire shovels to frighten away the vârcolaci from the moon. In Puma they toll the church bells. Elsewhere they make noises with tongs, gridirons, and irons of all sorts, beat trays, and let off guns. Gipsies play on the fiddle and lute,—anything to make a noise.

Some people think that the vârcolaci pull at the moon and drop off when tired, others that the moon gets away very quickly from them, and they are just able to
nip off a bit as she passes. The sun escapes, because the lion on which it rides fights with the vărcolaci. Some say that God orders the vărcolaci to eat the moon, so that men may repent and turn from evil.

It is curious that the word vărcolac, or vrykolaka, which is the general name for a vampire in Macedonia and Greece, is only exceptionally used to mean a vampire in Roumania, and usually means an animal which eats the moon. Vârcolac means "werewolf," and in Roumania it is the wolf or animal significance which predominates; in Macedonia, the human significance, the idea of devouring not being lost in either country.

A considerable number of vampire stories are of the type of Scott's William and Helen; the vampire comes to fetch his lady love, and takes her with him to his tomb.

In the first series of these stories, he loves one girl only, and seeks her out when she is alone; in the second series he chooses her out from other maidens at an evening gathering, and may destroy all other people present at the gathering.

The Girl and the Vampire. (Story from Rămnic Sârat.) Once in a village there were a girl and a youth who were deeply in love, their parents did not know, and when the relations of the youth approached the parents of the girl with a proposal of marriage they were repulsed because the youth was poor. So the young man hanged himself on a tree, and became a vampire. As such he was able to come and visit the girl. But, although the girl had loved the man, she did not much like to have to do with an evil spirit. What could she do to escape from danger and sin? She went to a wise woman, and this wise woman advised her what to do. The vampire came one evening to make love to the girl and stayed late. When he knew that it was about time to leave, he said,—"Good night," and made ready to go. The girl, following the advice of the wise old woman, fixed into the back of his coat a needle, to which was attached one end of the thread from a large ball of thread. The vampire went away, and the ball unrolled and unrolled for some time and then, all at once, it stopped. The girl understood what had happened, and followed the clue given by the thread. She traced it along the road, and found that it entered into the churchyard, and went straight to a grave. There it entered the earth, and that was the end. She came home, but the next night, as twilight came on, she hastened to the churchyard, and stood some distance from the grave to see what would happen. It was not long before she saw the vampire coming out, going to another grave, opening it, eating the heart of the dead man buried there, and then setting out towards the village to visit her. She followed him as he left the churchyard, "Where were you this evening, and what did you see?" asked the vampire after he had greeted her. "Where was I? Nowhere, I saw nothing," said the girl. The vampire continued,—"I warn you that, if you do not tell me, your father will die." "Let him die, I know nothing, I've seen nothing, and I can say nothing." "Very well," said the vampire, and indeed in two days the girl's father was dead. He was buried with all due rites, and it was some time before the vampire again came to the girl.

One night, however, he came and made love to her as usual, but before leaving he said,"Tell me where you were that evening, because, if you will not, your mother will die." "She may die nine times. How can I speak when I know nothing?" answered the girl.

After two days the mother died. She was duly buried. Again some time passed, and the vampire reappeared, and now he said,—"If you do not tell me what you saw that evening, you shall die too." "What if I do?" said she, "it will be no great loss. How can I invent a story, if I know nothing and have seen nothing?" "That is all very well, but what are you going to do now, for you are about to die?" replied the vampire.

On the advice of the wise old woman the girl called all her relations together and told them that she was going to die soon. When she was dead they were not to take her out by the door or by the window, but to break an opening in the walls of the house. They were not to bury
her in the churchyard, but in the forest, and they were not to take her by the road but to go right across the fields until they came to a little hollow among the trees of the forest and here her grave was to be. And so it happened. The girl died, the wall of the house was broken down, and she was carried out on a bier across the fields to the margin of the forest.

After some time a wonderful flower, such as has never been seen, either before or after, grew up on her grave. One day the son of the emperor passed by and saw this flower, and immediately gave orders that it should be dug up well below the roots, brought to the castle, and put by his window. The flower flourished, and was more beautiful than ever, but the son of the emperor pined. He himself did not know what was the matter, he could neither eat nor drink. What was the matter? At night the flower became again the maiden, as beautiful as before. She entered in at the window, and passed the night with the emperor's son without his knowing it. However, one night she could contain herself no longer, and kissed him, and he awoke and saw her. After that, they pledged troth to each other, they told the emperor and empress, they were married, and they lived very happily together. There was only one drawback to their happiness. The wife would never go out of the house. She was afraid of the vampire.

One day, however, her husband took her with him in a carriage to go to church, when there, at a corner, who should there be but the vampire. She jumped out of the carriage and rushed to the church. She ran, the vampire ran, and just had his hand on her as they both reached the church together. She hid behind a holy picture. The vampire stretched out his hand to seize her, when all at once the holy picture fell on his head, and he disappeared in smoke. And the wife lived with the emperor's son free from all danger and sin for the rest of her life.

A variant of this story is given by Manas'ev in his *Russian Popular Tales*, and is quoted by Ralston in his *Russian Folk Tales*. The main points of difference between the Russian and the Roumanian story are that, in the Russian tale the following occurs:

1. The first meeting of the lover and the girl was at an evening gathering on St. Andrew's Eve.
2. He asked the girl to see him on his way home, and proposed marriage to her.
3. The girl's mother advised fastening the thread to his coat; the next night she fastened it to him, followed him to the churchyard, and saw him eating the dead. He is, however, live, not dead.
4. They met again at the gathering. Questions, answers, the death of the girl's parents and herself, and the digging of the flower by the emperor's son are similar in both versions. The girl makes it a condition of marriage that she does not go to church for four years.
5. Going to church earlier, she sees the lover at the window, still refuses to answer, and her husband and son die.
6. The grandmother gives her holy water and water of life. The lover again asks his question. The girl tells him that she saw him eating corpses, and then, by sprinkling water on him, turns him into ashes. With the water of life, she brings back to life her husband and son.

Vampire Story from Botoșani. A girl and a young man were once in love, but the youth died and became a vampire. The girl knew nothing of this. She happened to be alone in her parents' house, and she put out all the lights and went to bed as usual. Now vampires can enter into empty houses or into unclean houses, but the girl's house was clean and holy, so he could not
come in. Instead of coming in he called at the window, speaking in the same tone and using the same words as he did when alive. "Stupid girl, come with me," he said, and took her hand and led her, undressed as she was, to his tomb. "Go in," he said. "No, friend, I'm afraid," she said. He went in first, and called, "Come quicker." "Wait," she said, "I've lost my beads. They must have fallen hereabouts." And she ran and ran until she saw a house with a light. She went in and found a dead man called Avram on a bench. She drew the bolts of the door and lay down in hiding behind the oven. The vampire came after her with true vampire persistency. He knocked at the window, saying, "Avram, open the door." Avram was himself a vampire, and was going to obey and open the door. But the hen saw what was happening, and said to the cock,—"Crow, so as to save the poor girl." "No, you crow. It is not my turn." So the hen crowed quickly before Avram could get to the door, and the girl escaped, because she was clean and holy, and vampires do not easily get hold of clean souls.

In a variant of this story the vampire comes to his sweetheart, and takes her away with him to his grave. She is able, however, to escape by stopping up the entrance to the grave with woven linen, and running away. It has been suggested that the idea behind the stopping of the path of the vampire with linen is the same as that when millet seed is put in his way; he is obliged to disentangle and straighten out the threads of the linen in the one case, or count the millet seed in the other.

A simpler variant, in which the hero is a dragon (zmeu) and not a vampire, is as follows:—A soldier relates how a dragon in the form of a tongue of fire entered into a woman's house by either the door or the window. It became a man, made love to her, and then again became a flame and disappeared. As the hero is a zmeu and not a vampire, the "grave" motive is wanting.

In the following lover stories, the action begins in a crowded evening gathering:

*A Story from Botoşani.* There was once a time when vampires were as common as leaves of grass, or berries in a pail, and they never kept still, but wandered round at night among the people. They walked about and joined the evening gatherings in the villages, and, when there were many young people together, the vampires could carry out their habit of inspiring fear, and sucking human blood like leeches. Once, when an evening gathering was in full swing, in came an uninvited guest, the vampire. But no one knew that he was a vampire. He was in the form of a handsome youth, full of fun. He said "Good day" very politely, sat down on a bank beside the girls, and began to talk, and all the girls imagined that he was a youth from another part of the village. Then the vampire began to tell stories and jokes, so that the girls did not know what to do for laughter. He played and jested and bandied words with them without ceasing. But there was one girl to whom he paid special attention, and teased unmercifully. "Keep still, friend. Have I done anything to annoy you?" said she. But he still kept on pinching her, till she was black and blue. "What is it, friend? You go too far with your joke. Do you want to make an end of me?" said the poor girl. At the moment her distaff fell. When she stooped to pick it up, what did she see? The tail of the vampire. Then she said to the girl next to her,—"Let's go. Run away. The creature is a vampire." The other girl was laughing so much that she did not understand. So the girl who knew the dreadful secret went out alone into the yard, on the pretext that she had to take some lengths of woven linen to the attic. Frightened out of her wits, she ran away with the linen, she ran into a forest, old as the world and black as her fear.

Her companions at the gathering awaited her return. They looked and waited until they saw that she was not coming back. Where could she be? "You must fetch her wherever she is," roared the vampire, with bloodshot eyes and hair standing on end. As the girl could not be found, the vampire killed all the rest of the merrymakers. He sucked their blood, he threw their flesh and bones under the bed,
cut off their lips, and put their heads in a row in the window. They looked as if they were laughing. He strung up their intestines on a nail, saying they were strings of beads, and then he fled away. He arrived at the forest where the girl had taken refuge, and found her under a beech-tree. "Why did you come here, little girl? Why did you run away from the gathering?" The girl, poor thing, was so frightened that her tongue clove to her mouth, and she could say nothing. "You are afraid, little girl. Come home with me. You will feel better there." Then, involuntarily, she asked,—"Where?" "Here in the forest. Come quicker," said the vampire.

They arrived at a hole in the depth of the forest, and she saw that this was the home of the vampire. He pressed her to enter first. "No, no. I don't want to. You go first." So the vampire went in, and began to sweep and clear up. The girl, however, stopped up the hole with the lengths of linen, and fled quickly towards the east. In her flight she saw a little light a long way off. She ran towards the light, came to a house, and found it empty, except for a dead man, who was lying stretched out on a table, with a torch at his head, and his hands crossed on his breast. What was she to do? She entered the house, climbed up on to the stove, and went to sleep, worn out by suffering and fear. And she would have rested well, had not the terrible vampire pursued her. He had thrown aside the linen, and rushed after her, mad with rage. He came into the house, and the dead man rose, and they fought and wrestled till the cock crew and the girl awoke. Now the light was out, the dead man was gone, and the only sound was the song of the little cricket. The girl was left alone with her guardian angel. The dead man and the vampire both vanished at cockcrow, for both were vampires. Waking up in the darkness, the girl looked round the house three times, thought she was at home and had had a horrible dream, and then fell asleep again calmly and fearlessly. When she woke again, and saw all the beauties of the forest, and heard all the songs of the birds, she was amazed and thought herself in heaven. She did not stop long in wonder, but set out for her parents' house, hoping to bring them back with her.

She reached her home, and began to tell about the vampire and how he had gone, and what beautiful things she had seen in the woods of paradise. The parents looked at her, and, full of amazement and doubt, made the sign of the cross. The girl sank into the ground, deeper and deeper, for she too had become a vampire, poor thing. The vampire had bewitched her, and the beauty of the dwelling in the wood had enchanted her too much.

Another variant of the story is as follows:

There was an evening gathering in the village, as is the custom. But the youths and maidens present were not the children of well-to-do peasants. The gathering was held in a deserted house; the youths were a noisy, laughing, mocking crowd who made themselves heard from one end of the village to the were just like them. They made a great fire, the girls started spinning, the boys told all kinds of jokes, and the girls shook with laughter. After it had grown late, three young men, unknown to the company, entered the house. "Good evening, good evening," was said, and they joined in the general conversation. While everyone was talking, one of the girls dropped her distaff. The distafffell under the strangers’ feet, and the girl stooped to pick it up. When she went back to her seat she was as white as chalk. "What is it?" asked one of those near her. And the girl murmured that the three strangers had horses' hooves instead of feet. What was to be done? They whispered to one another, and to the boys, that the three strangers were vampires, not men. Then one by one, one by one, they slipped out of the door, and wended their ways homewards. The three vampires remained as vampires, but they did not remain alone in the house, for there was a girl asleep on the oven.

With the dawn of the next day, the sister of the sleeping girl, together with some friends, came to see what had happened to her. When they were still some distance from the house they saw a grinning face looking out of the window—"Oh, oh," they said, "our sister is laughing." They drew nearer, and, entering into the house, were horror-struck and made the sign of the cross. It was the head only which was in the window; the lips were cut off, and so
the face seemed to smile. Her intestines were stretched out on the nails and on shelves, and the whole house was stained with blood. Poor girl!

In the two following vampire stories from Siret, vampires are thought of as wizardlike beings, being men or women capable of projecting their soul from their body at will:

A woman from Siret tells the following:—Vampires are just like other folk, only that God has ordained that they should wander over the country and kill people. There was one that wandered through ten villages, killing their inhabitants. He had a little house in the plain, which was always empty except when he himself was there. One day he thought of going on a journey, and baked bread in preparation. He made ten loaves and put them on the table. Twelve men who were going to work passed the cottage, and noticed that there was a light. One of the men said,—"I'll just go in and light my pipe." They all entered, and the vampire became a cat. The men saw that there was no human being in the house, so they took all the loaves, except one, which they left because they had seen the cat. This was lucky for them, for otherwise they would all have been bewitched and died. The vampire went round the villages, taking with him the one loaf. When the men returned from work, they again passed the cottage and again saw a light. They entered, and this time saw the vampire, who told the other, and the girl wandered he had killed men and torn them to bits.

Vampire Story from Siret. An old man with some soldiers was driving in a cart in Transilvania, trying to find where he could get some hay. Night came on during their journey, so they stopped at a lonely house in a plain. The woman of the house received them, put maize porridge (mămăligă) and milk on the table for them, and then went away. The soldiers ate the maize porridge, and after their meal looked for the old woman to thank her, but were unable to find her. Climbing up to the attic to see if she was there, they found seven bodies lying down, one of which was the woman's. They were frightened and fled, and, as they looked back, they saw seven little lights descending on the house. These were the souls of the vampires. Had the soldiers turned the bodies with their faces downwards, the souls would never have been able to enter the bodies again.

In the following stories vampires are witches (in one case a wizard) pure and simple. In the first two we have them joining in witches' revels; in the others they get hold of the "power" of cows for their own ends:

There was a lady of the highest society in Botoșani who was dressed up in beautiful Paris clothes for a party on Dec. 31st; she went into her nursery, got out by the chimney, and came back all in rags, and exhausted.

A lad who was in service with a female vampire noticed once that she was covered with blood during the day-time. He watched her closely, and saw that she anointed herself with something, and went out by the chimney. The lad also anointed himself with the ointment in the box, and went out of the chimney after his mistress. He arrived at a far off desert region, where the vampires fought. He watched them stabbing one another and fighting. The vampires go with their bodies, not their souls only. The ointment with which the vampires anoint themselves is made of the grease of serpents, hedgehogs, and badgers.
One or the main characters of the live (witchlike) vampires is that they can take the "power" of cows.

that she had taken the "power" of other people's cows (i.e. got more milk from her own cow at their expense). The priest said to her, —"Take the butter from this milk, go into the forest, anoint a tree with it, and then, after three days, go back and see what happens." She did this and found a great number of serpents and other horrible creatures in the butter. "You must know," said the priest, "that these will suck your blood in the next world, because you have taken "power" from everything in this world." 14

In the variant given below, the woman is not called a vampire, but just a baba or old wife:

An old woman in Strojineți got as much milk from her cow as one usually gets from ten cows. A poor woman, who was getting very little milk from her cow, asked the old wife to cure it. The old wife took butter from her cow, and butter from the poor woman's cow, and put both lots into water. In the old wife's butter there were numbers of serpents, lizards, worms, and other horrible creatures; in that of the woman, there were only little fishes. "Look," said the old wife. "In the other world these serpents will suck from me. If you wish to share my fate I will arrange that your cow shall give much milk also." But the poor woman did not wish this. When the old wife died, a light was seen from time to time going to her house. It was seen chiefly by rather dull people. 15

In the following story we have a contest of strength between a witch and a vampire, two beings that seem of exactly the same nature, the witch being the more admirable only in that she takes the side of the human beings.

The Witch versus the Vampire. 16 A lady in Siret had a cow, and a vampire had taken away its "power." But she found a wise woman, named Hartopaniţa, who knew how to break the power of the vampire. She saw him once in the house. She made a sign with her finger, screwed up her mouth, and said a word which bound the vampire to the spot. He remained as if frozen, and could not move a step. But he caused the wise woman to come out in sores, and she could not get rid of them till she had asked him to forgive her.

In the following three accounts the vampire has the character of a devil, and represent the soul of the devil. After it is quite dark, when the pot with the cat in it is boiling vigorously, devils begin to come to ask you to stop boiling the cat. You must not speak a word. You must wait until the chief of all the devils comes, for he will come last of all. He will ask you to stop boiling the cat, just as the other devils did; but he will also promise you everything you wish. Then you will let him take the cat, and in exchange you will receive whatever you most desire. 17

The next two stories are about the danger of sneezing.

The Thief and the Vampire. 18 There were once two partners, a thief and a vampire. "Where are you going this evening?" said the thief to the vampire. "I am going to bewitch the son of Ion," said the vampire. "Don't go there. It is there that I want to go this evening to steal oxen. You can go somewhere else." "Go somewhere else yourself," said the vampire. "Why should you go to Ion's house of all places? He has only one son, and there are heaps of other houses you could go to," said the thief. "No, I'm going to Ion's," said the vampire. "Well, I'm going there too," said the thief. Both of them went. The vampire went to the door, and the thief to the window. Ion's son inside sneezed, and the thief said quickly,—"Long life." This took away the vampire's power. He was able to make the boy's nose bleed, but he did not die. The
thief then went in and told the parents what had happened, and they gave him some oxen as a
reward. It is always well to say "Long life" when anyone sneezes.

Sneezing. A young noble was about to start on a journey, and his horse was waiting
saddled and bridled. There was a thief creeping up to steal the horse. As he came near he saw
a vampire just under the window, waiting for an opportunity to put a spell on the noble. The
noble sneezed, and quickly the thief said,—"Good health," for if he had not done so the
vampire would have seized the occasion to bewitch the noble, and he would have died. It was,
however, the vampire who burst with anger at missing his chance. People came out to see
what was the matter. The thief showed them the burst body of the vampire, and explained
what had happened. The parents were so glad that their son had escaped that they gave the
horse to the thief as a reward. This shows us that we must always say "Good health" when
anyone sneezes.

It is clear that the idea behind the word strigoi varies from one account to another.
While the word strigoi generally denotes a reanimated corpse like the vrykolaka of
Greece and Macedonia, its use to denote a witch or wizard who can project body or
soul is common in Roumania, and especially in Moldavia. Its significance has become
less terrible. Witches in Roumania are often little more than wise old women, or
babas, who in their turn are only less common than leaves of grass; they also attempt
good deeds as well as evil.

Notes

1. Ion Creanga, 7 (1914): 165.
3. The hemp brake used by the Roumanian peasant consists of a narrowish, trestlelike
table or stand. At one end an H-axle is fixed. Jointed to this is the tongue, an object
like a T-shaped hammer with the horizontal part of the T very flat and broad, and
often made of iron. The stalks of the hemp are laid on the table in the direction of its
length, and the head of the hammer is brought down on them again and again till they
are thoroughly crushed. Sometimes the H-axle of the hemp brake is in the center of
the table, and there is a tongue at either end. When this is so, two women can work at
their hemp crushing at the same time.
4. Ion Creanga 7 (1914): 82.
5. Ibid., 5 (1912): 11.
7. Ibid., 6 (1913): 237.
8. This delightful habit of cutting off the lips of their victims is not peculiar to
vampires. It is the way Montenegrins, Turks, and others occasionally treat their
defeated enemies.
10. Ibid., 17.
11. Ibid., 7 (1914): 24.
12. Ibid., 6 (1913): 306.
13. Ibid., 18.
14. Ibid., 105.
15. Ibid., 108.
16. Ibid., 18.
17. Ibid., 5 (1912): 244.
18. Ibid., 6 (1913): 51.
19. Ibid.