

## **From *priculici* to vampires: folkloric stories versus sensational narratives**

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My paper discusses the transformation of the folkloric *priculici* (Romanian mythology) into a form of the vampire in Western literature. In the article “Transylvanian Superstitions”, one of the main sources consulted by Bram Stoker in the construction of his mythical Transylvania, Emily Gerard writes about the belief in ‘*Prikolitsch*’, which is described as a man transformed into a wolf (or sometimes a dog). After a short parallel between the references to this mythological being in Stoker’s sources on Transylvania and its transformations in *Dracula*, I refer to the analysis of the *priculici* in some outstanding works dedicated to Romanian folklore. The *priculici* was mentioned for the first time in Dimitrie Cantemir’s *Descriptio Moldaviae* (1711), who defined it as an equivalent of the French creature *loup garou*.

The representation of the wolf as a form of the vampire has become a convention in *Dracula* sequels. For instance, in the novel *The Historian* by Elizabeth Kostova (2005) a mysterious wolf watches the Poienari fortress, when the visitors spend their night among its ruins. In Kostova’s novel, the *priculici* (spelled inconsistently *pricolic* and *pricolici*) is reduced to a form of the vampire, or the term is used as a synonym of the bloodsucker: ‘the prince [Dracula] had become a *pricolic*, a vampire’ (394). The analysis of some similarities and differences between the Romanian folkloric creature *priculici* and the vampire *Dracula* as a product of Western imagination will focus on Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* and a few sequels on the one hand, and on some Romanian studies on the *priculici* - such as *Strigoii* by Otilia Hedeșan (2011), on the other.

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He has written several articles on the Dracula myth, imagology, reception theories and didactics, and is co-author of *An Imagological Dictionary of the Cities in Romania Represented in British Travel Literature* (coordinators Carmen Andraș and Cornel Sigmirean Mentor, 2012) and *Dicționarului Scriitorilor din Banat* [Dictionary of the Writers of the Banat] (West University Publishing House, 2005, general coordination: Alexandru Ruja). For more information, see the website [http://www.themythoftransylvania.ro/home\\_en.htm](http://www.themythoftransylvania.ro/home_en.htm), which also provides access to some of his articles.

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