

Werewolves in Europe

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This is a brief overview of the werewolf tradition in Europe. There is a huge amount of material available, so this is by no means an all-inclusive talk. We'll discuss who were the werewolves, where the werewolf tales were told, what were the common motifs in these tales, and what may be the possible explanation for the werewolf phenomenon. At the end, we'll compare werewolves and vampires.

Two words are used most frequently to describe humans turned into wolves – werewolf (first used in English in this form in 1020 AD) and lycanthrope (first used in English in 1584), though both mean the same “man-wolf” – one is in Old English, one in Greek, the difference is subtle. Werewolves usually describes men (rarely women) who turn into wolves, or men who are thought of turning into wolves, and is thus in the realm of the supernatural.

Lycanthropes describes men who think that they turn into wolves, so lycanthropy is more of a mental illness, than a supernatural phenomenon, though of course, there is some overlap.

In various regions, different words were used:

Werewolf, werewolf, war-woolf, varulf, lycanthrope, lobombre: meaning man-wolf

Versipellis, oboroten ' meaning changer or shapeshifter

ulfhednar, volklodlak, vrkolak, Wilkolak, meaning wolf skin

Loup-garou, bisclavret, etc.

The people of Europe were very familiar with the wolves, their habits, strength, endurance and ferocity. It was reflected in religion, folklore, naming practices, throughout the cultures. The werewolf tradition begins in antiquity. Here are just a few examples of human to wolf transformation from different mythologies:

Ishtar – turned a shepherd into a wolf

Artemis and Apollo, both associated with wolves

Hecate sometimes depicted accompanied by wolves or with a wolf's head

Zeus, (temple of Zeus Lycaos in Arcadia), turned Lycaon into a wolf.

Lupercalii – Mid February Roman festival, possibly connected with Lycean cult in Arcadia.

Wolf names:

The word wolf or a derivative thereof was common in names throughout Europe.

Many old Scandinavian and German male names were based on local words for bear or wolf, alone, or with additional words attached. (Hildewulf, Kveldulf, Ulfila (a fourth century bishop), Rudolf, Adolf, Wulfstan (12c. Bible translator), Wolfgang, Ethelwulf, Berthwulf, Eadwulf, Ealdwulf, etc. Wolf, or Wulf, or Olf, or Ulf, is not longer encountered, but the derivatives are still in use.

Werewolves also made it into names. A name Warwolf used to designate a sickly weak child. A 9th c. Mercian priest was named Werwulf. (from Asser's Life of King Alfred). In Eastern Europe, the name Volk (wolf) in Russia is not really seen past late 1500, but in Serbia, the name Vuk, and Bulgarian

Vylko (meaning wolf) is still encountered. There was a superstition in that if the children keep dying in infancy, the next one should be named Vuk, or wolf. The wolves are strong and hardy, and the baby Wolf will survive. Numerous patronymics derived from wolf/volk are still in use throughout Europe, attesting to the prior name's popularity.

Wolf as an outlaw:

However, while wolf was admired as an efficient hunter on one hand, on another it was feared as a vicious, merciless killer.

In Norse, the same word *vargr* indicates a wolf and an outlaw.

In *Lex Salica*, the punishment for despoiling of corpses is “wargus sit”, Wargus or Warg meaning both wolf and outlaw.

In Russia, *biryuk*, one of the old words for wolf, describes a taciturn, reclusive man. In France the same concept is related by a variant of the word werewolf.

Russian 11th c. Prince Vseslav of Polotsk who was considered a werewolf and a sorcerer was also referred to as an “izgoy” - an outlaw or an exile – as he was not a part of the Kievan society though he was a direct descendant of Vladimir, same as the Kievan princes.

Lycanthropy:

Lycanthropy was a term for a condition where humans were convinced that they are wolves.

Period medical accounts:

Starting in 5-6th c., Aetius called it “melancholia insania lupina”.

In 7th c. Paulus Aegineta describes lycanthropy in clinical terms as “melancholia lupina”, and attributes its causes to brain dysfunction, humoral imbalances, and drugs. The symptoms, which appear in similar lists by later authors include : pallor, absence of tears and saliva, poor vision, excessive thirst, ulcerated and scabbed legs (from wandering in the wilderness and encounters with dogs), and uncontrollable urge to hang out in the cemeteries, howl at night and sometimes to gnaw on human bones. It was treated by blood letting (what wasn't then?), diet, and, to ensure sleep, rubbing nostrils with opium. This list of symptoms, causes and treatments remained virtually unchanged until 17th c.

It was considered a drug-induced delusion by both Weyer and Della Porta (16th c). In his book, Della Porta gives the both the descriptions of hallucinations, and the ingredients of the “magic ointment” used to affect the ‘transformation’, which includes some powerful hallucinogens.

Contemporary medical theories of lycanthropy

Mental illness – schizophrenia, dissociative disorders, delusional disorders, substance abuse

Autism – explaining behavior of “feral” or “wolf” children.

Porphyria – neither the symptoms nor behavior match historical records of werewolves

Ergotism – while epidemics of ergotism or St Anthony's fire were recorded in the Middle Ages, the behavior of people affected does not match the accounts of werewolves, and nothing similar to lycanthropy was observed in 1951 ergotism outbreak in France.

Rabies – behavior similar to cases of lycanthropy, however, rabies as a disease was well known (public health measures against rabies were taken as far back as in ancient Babylon circa 2300 BC) throughout Middle Ages, when it was referred to as Hydrophobia.

Werewolves:

Unlike Lycanthropes, Werewolves were people who supposedly turned into wolves. Several werewolf traditions existed in Europe.

Norse

There is a curious notion in the Norse sagas, that some people are “not of one shape” or *eigi ein hamir*. By assuming another shape, they could achieve superhuman abilities. The shape was called *Hamr*, and the changers *hamrammr*. For example, in *Holmverja Saga*, there is one “Bjorn, son of Ulfhedin, wolf-skin coat, son of Ulfhamr, wolf-shaped, son of Ulf, son of Ulfhamr, wolf shaped, who could change forms.” (Sá kveðst heita Björn blásiða og vera son Úlfhéðins Úlfhamssonar, Úlfssonar, Úlfhamssonar hins hamramma, og spurði hver fyrir væri.)

The Volsung Saga (chapter 8) described Sigmund and Sinfjotli using the wolf skins that they stole to turn into wolves, and unable to turn back for a while. Interestingly, the founder of the clan, Sigi was “proclaimed a wolf in holy places” Old Norse *vargr* or wolf also being the word for an outlaw.

Ulfhednar or “wolf coats”: The *Vatnsdoela Saga* states that “those berserks who were called *Ulfhednar* wore wolf shirts (*vargrstakkar* for mail coats). Another mention of wolf coats is in *Hrafnsmal*, written about 900 AD, where the *ulfhednar* are among the retinue of king Harald Fairhair of Norway.

Wolf-coats they are called, those who carry
Bloodstained swords to battle
They reddens spears when they come to the slaughter,
Acting together as one.

(There is a period depiction of a wolf coat on the 6-7th c. bronze helmet plaque from Oland.)

In *Ynglinga Saga* Sturulson mentions that neither fire nor iron had any effect on them, and that they were Odin’s men. Even though they did not turn into regular wolves, they have acquired wolf like traits. They were considered a subset of berserkr, and it is one of the few traditions where the shape changing is inherited. It was not without the price, though. Those subjected suffered from extreme exhaustion, and often the berserkr fits were beyond their control (Kveldulf from *Aigla Saga*). Curiously, the baptism cured the fits, and with the advent of Christianity, the numbers of berserkr and *ulfhednar* decreased.

Russia

The werewolf was called *oboroten*. *Vurdalak*, even though it meant “wolf skin” was used for a ghoulish vampire creature. There are legends about werewolf encounters, with common elements of wolf/beast attack, and later sympathetic wounds on the human. (very old motif, one of the earliest instances is in an episode of the Golden Ass by Apuleus)

Here is an incantation, or *zagovor* to turn one into a wolf recorded in early 19th century Russia, originally published by Sacharow in *Inland*, 1838, No. 17, now only available as quotation in other sources:

"He who desires to become an *oborot*, let him seek in the forest a hewn-down tree; let him stab it with a small copper knife, and walk round the tree, repeating the following incantation:

On the sea, on the ocean, on the island, on Bujan,
 On the empty pasture gleams the moon, on an ashstock lying
 In a green wood, in a gloomy vale.
 Toward the stock wandereth a shaggy wolf.
 Horned cattle seeking for his sharp white fangs;
 But the wolf enters not the forest,
 But the wolf dives not into the shadowy vale,
 Moon, moon, gold-horned moon,
 Cheek the flight of bullets, blunt the hunters' knives,
 Break the shepherds' cudgels,
 Cast wild fear upon all cattle,
 On men, on all creeping things,
 That they may not catch the grey wolf,
 That they may not rend his warm skin
 My word is binding, more binding than sleep,
 More binding than the promise of a hero!

"Then he springs thrice over the tree and runs into the forest, transformed into a wolf."

Another incantation which enabled one to leave one's body as if dead, and assume different form, including one of the wolf, was described in *Charovnik*, a banned book of spells. No copies survived. Most Russian werewolf transformation appear to be voluntary, and the werewolves were also wizards of sorts. Prince Vseslav of Polotsk, of 12th c. was called a werewolf. He was identified with the epic folk hero Volkh or Volk (meaning wizard or wolf) Vseslavyevich, who was born with a caul and was able to assume multiple shapes, including one of a wolf. (People born with a caul were ascribed all kinds of magical abilities, and turning into a wolf was not limited only to Russians born with a caul. The Italian *benandanti*, a secret society of late period werewolves were also people born with cauls) Involuntary werewolves were sometimes members of a wedding procession enchanted by a *koldun*, or a wizard. In several well known Russian fairy tales, the hero acquires a power to change shape, turn into a wolf, or, occasionally, has a magical wolf helper.

England:

Not many native werewolf stories. Both Giraldus Cambrensis and Gervase of Tilbury mention werewolves, but briefly. King Edgar of England (10th c.) is credited with country-wide wolf extermination program, asking for tribute in wolf skins. Supposedly wolves were extinct in England by

the end of 15th century. In 19th c. several stories of “ghosts of werewolves” were recorded. However, England has its share of a monstrous and supernatural dog folklore.

Ireland:

Wolf population existed well into 18th c., and encounters with wolves were frequent and real. In 1652 a law forbade export of Irish wolfhounds, in order to keep the wolf population in check.

Giraldus Cambrensis (in *Topography of Ireland*, 1182-1183) mentions a couple of people from a village of Ossory (south central Ireland) who were turned into werewolves as a punishment by Saint Natalis – at any time, two villagers are werewolves for seven years. Throughout the Middle Ages, men of Ossory were credited with the power to shape into wolves. However, the accounts vary. Some were said to change voluntarily, whenever they please, and leave their bodies instructing nobody to touch them, or they will not change back. Others say the ability to change was a curse, and the cursed actually assumed the wolf shape. A man of Ossory named Laignech Faelad was the first to take the wolf form.

In 13th c. *Speculum Regale* St. Patrick turns those who oppose his teachings for seven years into wolves.

In Nennius’ *Historia Britorum*, certain men have power of leaving their bodies and run as wolves. If they are wounded in wolf-form, same wound appears on their human body.

France:

In Middle Ages, the romances featuring werewolves appear, get translated to several languages, and remain popular for centuries:

Lai de Bisclaveret

Lai de Melion

Arthur and Gorlagon

Guillaume de Palerne

Gorlagon and *Melion* are a part of the Arthurian cycle of tales.

In the *Le Morte Darthur* (1470), there is a mention of one Sir Marrok, who was betrayed by his wife who made him a werewolf for seven years.

In the romance tradition, the change is involuntary, inflicted on a worthy and a noble person, and the werewolf is usually a sympathetic good character. The antagonist is usually an unfaithful wife or lover. The change is affected by stealing clothes while the character is in human shape, magic ointment, or activation of a curse.

Later, the post plague famine hits Europe, and especially France. Cannibalism becomes more real. Stories of people eating human corpses, or killing people with express purpose of cannibalism begin to surface. In 15-17th centuries, the werewolves act as cannibals and murderers. The transformation is usually voluntary and is done with Devil’s help. Exactly how it is done spurred many a theological debate. The girdle of wolfskin or a magic wolfskin coat of the *ulfhednar* and the magic ointment of antiquity are back in play. However, the transformation takes place in broad daylight. The victims of the werewolves are mostly young children and women. The Werewolves are tried and interrogated as witches, confess their crimes and are burned. As the standard list of questions is used, many also confess to making hail, flying to sabbats, and copulating with the devil. It becomes standard werewolf fare of the time. The cannibalism and serial murders are so associated with the werewolves, that in

some books about the famous serial killers, such as Marechal Giles de Rez, he is called a werewolf due to numerous murders of children he committed, even though he never turned into a wolf or was suspected of doing so.

Here some of the better known werewolves: 1573 – Gilles Garnier, 1589 - Peter Stubbe, 1598 – Jacques Roulet, 1589 – four members of the Gandillon family, Jean Grenier – 1603. All of these involved murders and cannibalism. In all cases, the suspects were lower class Frenchmen, all affected transformation by wearing a girdle or wolfskin or using an ointment given to them by the Devil. All looked like regular wolves, although in some cases they lacked tails or retained human hands. All were apprehended in human forms, even if the chase was in wolf form. None was able to affect the change after capture. All were executed, except one. The 1603 case of Jean Grenier, is unique, as the court declared him mentally ill and neglected and sentenced him to life imprisonment and education in a monastery.

Most of the werewolf lore we know now comes from France.

Interestingly, a version of a Little Red Riding Hood was recorded in France in 1885 called Little Red Hood and the Werewolf.

Livonia/Prussia

The most interesting account of the werewolf tradition come from trial of a man names Theiss in 1692. He claimed to be a werewolf who, in a company of others, male and female, went to hell, which was located at the end of a sea, where, armed with iron whips they battled witches armed with broomsticks wrapped in horsetails. He referred to the werewolves as the hounds of god, and said it was done three times a year: Christmas Eve, night of the Pentecost and St. Johns night, to ensure plentiful harvest. This is very similar to the Italian accounts of the *benandanti*, although they were not werewolves.

This is a later event, but similar accounts exists from mid 16th c. Riga, in a book by Paucer, where Livonian werewolves boast of fighting witches. . They change between Christmas and Epiphany, and are directed by a tall man armed with an iron whip, and cross a river in their travels. They attack cattle only, never humans.

These seem to travel in their animal shape only, while the human body stays behind. Those afflicted are said to remain still like corpses for 12 days.

Olaus Magnus in 1555 described similar stories, adding that the Livonian werewolves also break into cellars and steal wine and beer.

Theology:

In late 15 and 16th c. the werewolves changed – they were no longer valiant warriors or noble princes suffering under a terrible curse, they became servants of the Devil, witches, and they were tried as such. The Church presided over these trials. However, the werewolves did not fit neatly into the judicial system.

Debates raged whether man can actually turn into a wolf. In very brief summary, most agreed on the following: only god can create things. Thus, the human cannot abandon a shape given to him by god, and assume another, especially with the help of the devil. Because, that would make a devil as powerful as god, and that's too close to heresy. Therefore, the change is a delusion produced by the devil. Where everybody disagrees, is the specifics: Sometimes devil deludes passed out werewolves into dreaming up their fantastical journeys. Sometimes, the devil possesses people and takes control of

their human bodies while deluding everyone else that these bodies are in wolf-shapes. (Interestingly, the two werewolves apprehended in the act of murder were in human form. No mention of transformation exist once the guilty were captured, either).

Most theories were cumbersome, as expected of someone trying to fit a prechristian belief/tradition into another cosmology.

Here are some examples:

Malleus Malleficarum (end of 15th c.) elaborates on whether witches can “by some glamour change men in to beasts” - conclude that what the witnesses see is an illusion, as only God has power of creation, as to the “wolves which sometimes seize and eat men and children out of their cradles, whether this is also is a glamour caused by withches” argue that those are just ordinary wolves possessed by devils, and done in concordance with Gods’ wishes to punish sinners.

Holland in 1590 *A Treatise Against Witchcraft*, and Gifford in 1593 *A Dailogue concerning Witches and Witchcraft* , and King James I, in 1597 *Demonology* call Lycanthropy a melancholy, with no transformation taking place.

However, Henri Bouguet in 1590 *Descourse des Sorciers* actually believes that the transformation takes place.

So, why does association with the werewolf and the Devil becomes so strong? It all started much earlier than 15th c. As sheep farming becomes a mainstay of period European economy, there is more and more association of Christ with the Good Shepherd, and Christians with the flocks. Ironically, Christ was viewed as both the shepherd and as the Lamb of God, the sacrifice. In this environment, the association strengthened between the Wolf and the devil. In the trials, the werewolves were accused of assuming the wolf shape with the help of the devil. In *Ecclesiastic Ordinances* of King Cnut (1017-1053 years of rule) the author (named Wulfstan) refers to the passage from Matthew 7:15 (Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.), and substitutes a werewolf for the biblical wolf. The same werewolf persists in translations of the passage well into the 14th century.

Cynocephali

In all the above examples, the shape changers looks just like regular wolves, only in later accounts with some human attributes. However, the half-man half -wolf we’re so familiar with from the movies, does have a period correlate.

The Cynocephali, or Kynocephaloi were the dog -headed men, first mentioned in Pliny’s *Natural History*, and then spread all over the Mediaeval scholarship works. They were efficient hunters, and were occasionally, portrayed as fire breathing cannibals. There are illustrations of the Cynocephali in the eastern period illustrations depicting the miracle of the Pentecost, as illustrations to the *Natural History* of Pliny, *Travels* of Marco Polo and Sir Johan Mandeville (14th c.), 13th c. Armenian gospel manuscripts, etc.

One of the Kynocephaloi, became a Christian saint. Eastern Orthodox icons depict St. Christopher with a dog head well into 19th century. In Western Europe the legends of Cyncephalic origins of St.

Christopher were especially popular in Ireland and England 8th to 10th centuries. Occasionally he is also depicted as a giant. In his quest to find the mightiest master to serve, he gets baptized, and loses his bestial nature, becoming human. He eventually serves god by helping people cross a dangerous river. One time he carries a little child across, and the child is unbearably heavy. The child is Christ, who then thanks Christopher for his service. St. Christopher is a patron saint of travelers and ferrymen. We'll talk more about dogs and rivers and ferrymen later.

How does one become a werewolf?

Voluntary:

- Stick a knife into a tree stump and somersault over it. To transform back, reverse the process. If someone removes the knife in the process, the man remains a wolf forever.
- Use a magic ointment
- Use a magic girdle
- Use a magic wolfskin (obtained from the devil, loss of soul, or laying a sheet at crossroads at night).
- Can fight someone and take the wolfskin from them.
- remove clothes, urinate in circle and change
- swim across a specific lake in Arcadia, Greece

However, the perfect control of an animal shape is difficult, and there is a chance to get stuck in it forever:

- Clothes get stolen
- Knife is removed from the tree stump
- Eating human flesh in wolf form
- Human shape is moved or disturbed.

Involuntary:

- Born with a caul
- Born on Christmas day
- Born feet first
- Born by a C-section (we should be in the middle of a veritable werewolf epidemic right now)
- Born with extra fingers or teeth
- Born with extra vertebrae. I have no idea how they counted the vertebrae in the pre x-ray world. Unless they meant a tail – but, human tails lack vertebral structures and are composed of skin and soft tissue only. Go figure.
- Monobrow
- Cursed (most common)
- Drink water from a wolf paw print
- Drink a toast to someone's health, then blow into the wine jug three times, and say "May what happened to me happen to you" – has to be performed by a werewolf to transfer the shape shifting ability

How to recognize a werewolf:

- Sympathetic wounds – very common. The human will bear the same wounds as inflicted on the animal form
- In some stories, the eyes do not change and are recognizable as human
- The wolf will lack tail
- The wolf retains some human attribute.

How to disenchant the werewolf:

- draw blood, or wound the animal form: in some traditions between the eyes, in others, any wound would do.
- Call by human name
- Return stolen clothes
- Will shift back spontaneously if no human flesh eaten while in wolf form after the time of the curse ran out
- Swim back across the same body of water
- Decapitation (in fairy tales, was thought to be curative not fatal)

How to kill a werewolf

Silver bullets were first used in 1944 movie “House of Frankenstein” by Universal Studios. No mentions of silver earlier. In Russian folklore, one can kill a werewolf with a bullet made from a melted down cross. Crosses were sometimes made out of silver, but that does not seem necessary.

Werewolf and the moon

The connection is primarily seen in modern fiction and movies.

Gervase of Tilbury mentions it in *Otia Imperialia* in book III, chapter 120 “of men who turn into wolves” every new moon, not full.

Petronius mentions “bright moon” only as a plot device – to enable the character to witness the transformation.

Bite of a werewolf is contagious

A plot device that trickled from early Hollywood movies into modern fiction. There are no period accounts to prove otherwise.

Werewolfism is hereditary

Some Norse families had several generations of shape changes. Boguet prosecuted a family of witches/ werewolves in 1500’s. Families of Ossory, Ireland had hereditary power to turn into wolves. However, in most cases it appears to affect individuals, not families.

Times of the Werewolf:

Full moon – , no association with werewolves in period. Gervase of Tibury and Giraldus Cambrensis mention changes with the new moon There is general association with onset of Madness, or “lunacy” with full moon, but it is not specific to lycanthropes or werewolves. In Petronius’ werewolf story, the bright (not full) moon only serves as a device for the narrator to witness the transformation.

The werewolves were supposed to be most dangerous Between Christmas and Epiphany, the 12 days of Christmas. (see Livonian werewolves accounts), in February, and on St George and St. Andrew's days. Early writes 5-7th c. mentioned that the Lycanthropy or *insania lupina* strikes in February, curiously at the same time as the Roman festival of *lupercalii*.

Kalend's rituals took place at the end of December/beginning of January, the darkest time of the year, where the dead and spirits had free access to this world. Numerous festivities and rituals took place, to scare away the spirits, and to coax the sun back, and ensure a good and fertile upcoming year. These were spread all over Europe. Back in 6th c. Cesarius of Arles condemns the January claend practices – with people wearing animal skins. These were the fertility rites intended to stimulate the abundance of crops, cattle for the upcoming year. In Russia, these customs survived well into 19th and 20th century. Some see in these survivals of earlier shamanistic beliefs of travel to another world - see the trial of Theiss, 1692., Incidentally, the Wild Hunt was supposed to take place at the same time, as well.

Transformation and the stolen clothes: In all the stories, there seems to be two ways to transform. In one case, the clothing is left behind, in another – the human form. The werewolf has to disrobe before the transformation and if the clothes are stolen, or moved, can't transform back into human. Even in Aesop's fable, the clever thief pretending to be a werewolf asks the innkeeper to take care of his clothes. In *Bisclavret*, unfaithful wife steals her husbands clothes, thus trapping him in his wolf form. In some stories the removed clothes are either hidden by rocks and stones, or are turned into stone, to prevent theft. In the second case, if a werewolf leaves his human body, and travels in wolf form, the body should not be touched, moved, or harmed, otherwise the change can't be reversed. Claude Lecoutreux argues that originally, the wolf double left the sleeping or catatonic body, which was not to be touched during the travels of the wolf shape. Later, the removed clothes (cast away human form), became the substitute for the human body the wolf returned to. He sees in the werewolf legends the remnant of shamanistic rituals where the human spirit assumed an animal form and traveled to another world.

Wolves, Death, and the Underworld.

In mythology and folk belief, the wolves are associated with underworld and death, which is common for animals known for their scavenging behavior, such as jackals, ravens and vultures. In many cultures, the body/spirit was liable to return from the dead until fully decomposed. Only a skeleton was regarded as fully stable. The decomposing body was regarded as in the process or crossing over to the afterlife, and numerous things could disrupt this perilous journey, resulting in return of the person as a revenant or a vampire. Many rituals were devised to aid the decomposition, and thus crossing to the other side. The examples include the ossuaries of Eastern Europe, catacombs of Paris, burial practices in New Orleans, catacombs of Sicily, and practice of delayed excarnation and reburial in Greece. By consuming the flesh and aiding in the process of excarnation, Wolves (and ravens) were regarded as psychopomps – guides of souls to the afterlife, aiding the soul cross to the other side.

For example, dogs or wolves guarded the entrance to the other world - hell hounds in Norse myths, Kerberus in Greece. In many Indo-European mythologies, the underworld lies beyond a river which needs to be crossed for a successful Journey. In many werewolf stories the character crosses a river

(sometimes a river of fire) or a large body of water (for example: mediaeval romances, and the account of the Livonian werewolves, in a Russian fairy tale, a wolf carries the hero across the river of fire). Although using a dog to guard gates sounds practical, the wolves as psychopomps figure in Romanian funeral songs, and Charon, the Greek ferryman of the dead is depicted with wolf ears. The River Styx, where Charon worked was identified with a river Styx in Arcadia, a place which was the werewolf central in Ancient Greece, and the site of the temple of the cult of Zeus Lycaos. St Christopher, who was a ferryman in service to god, was depicted with a dog's head. Period tomb effigies depict the diseased with their feet resting on a dog.

Werewolves and vampires:

In modern fiction and cinema, werewolves and vampires are the best enemies. It seems, you just can't have one without the other. Is there any period evidence of this enmity?

-Werewolves and vampires do not overlap much in Western Europe. The height of the werewolf scare was end of 16thc, the vampire epidemics were early 18th. In eastern Europe, they are much more intertwined, and their characteristics blend together. In many Eastern countries the term "Volkloclac", meaning "wolf skin" now denotes a vampire.

-There is a belief that a werewolf after death becomes a vampire.

-In vampire legends, excommunicates become vampires after death. In Normandy, there is a superstition, that the excommunicates become werewolves for three or seven years. This may related to the old concept of the wolf as an outlaw (see *Lex Salica*)

For example, in 1131 Hughes de Camps-d'Avesnes, Count of Saint-pol, buned an Abbey, and after his death became phantom in the shape of a wolf. Similarly, King John Lackland (13th c), sacked several abbeys, was allegedly poisoned by a monk, and did not rest in his grave in yet another abbey, was disinterred, buried in unconsecrated ground, and walked as a werewolf.

-Both haunt graveyards and gnaw on corpses,

-Wolves are scavengers. Wolves eating exposed corpses in shallow graves (coffins were a luxury) were seen as either werewolves or wolves destroying vampires, or vampires, possessing the regular wolves.

-Romanian Gypsy lore – white wolves, haunting graveyards prevent vampires from rising from their graves.

-*Loublin* – a variant of the French werewolf, haunts graveyards, devours corpses, similar to Russian *Vurdalak*.

-In Romania, both werewolf and vampire are referred to as *strigoi*. To confuse things even further, many activities ascribed to witches also are ascribed to both vampires and werewolves.

-Overall, it seems that a person becomes a werewolf through an accident of birth, and a vampire through an accident of death. If you agree with the theories that the legends of the werewolves are remnants of earlier shamanistic beliefs, than a werewolf is a living being who through some power assumes an animal shape to travel to another world or to accomplish supernatural deeds in this one. In contrast, a vampire, or a revenant, is a dead being, who, through the circumstances comes back from another world or is unable to cross over. The supernatural abilities of the vampire, if any, are due to him being dead, and, therefore a being that belong to another world.

Brief timeline:

2000 BC *Epic of Gilgamesh*, where Ishtar turns a shepherd into a wolf, and he's eaten by his own dogs.

6-7th c. BC Aesop's fable about innkeeper and the thief.

500 BC Herodotus writes down that Scythians believe that their neighbors the Neuri turned into wolves

400 BC Damarchus, Arcadian werewolf wins boxing medal at the Olympics (as reported by Pausanias in 2nd c. AD.)

100-75 BC Virgil's *Eclogues* after a story by Theocritus introduces a sorcerer who is also a werewolf – this is the first recorded voluntary werewolf transformation

55 AD Petronius' werewolf story in the *Satyricon*. Has many elements of a traditional werewolf legend including removal of human clothing to affect the change, water (urine) and stigmata of wounds afflicted on the wolf form in human form, change happens in graveyard under bright moon (here just a practical feature to help narrator see better)

1st c. AD Pliny mentioned werewolves in his *Natural History*, using the term *versipelles*.

Pliny (after Euanthes) recalls a story about Antaeus family in Arcadia, where a young man would be turned into a wolf for 8 years by swimming across a certain lake in Arcadia. He would revert to human shape by not eating human flesh for 8 years, and swimming back)

150 AD Apuleius talks about the transformation in the *Metamorphosis*, even though no changing into wolf form is described, the elements of a metamorphosis, such as undressing and the use of the magic ointment will recur later in numerous werewolf tales.

170 AD Pausanias talks of the werewolf rites in Arcadia at the temple of Zeus Lycaos, where once a year a human sacrificial victim becomes a wolf (Zeus turned an Arcadian king Lycaon into a wolf after he sacrificed a child to Zeus). The rites were shrouded in secrecy, and trespassers into the temple would lose their shadow and die. (No archaeological evidence in support of either human sacrifice, nor its use in Pausanias' time – temple was in use from 600 to 400 BC)

432 AD St Patrick arrives in Ireland. Said to curse local population into becoming werewolves for howling during his sermons.

507-11 AD Salic Law, Title LV "Concerning the despoiling of corpses", says that whoever digs us or despoils a buried body shall be an outlaw and an exile (*wargus sit*) until the relatives of the diseased interfere on his behalf.

617 AD Wolves attack heretical monks in England

650 AD Paulus Aegineta describes "melancholic Lycanthropia", first treatment of lycanthropy as mental illness

900 AD *Hrafnsmal* mentions *ulfhednars* among the Norwegian army

1020 AD First use of the word Werewolf in English

1101 AD Prince Vseslav of Polotsk, described as a werewolf in epics dies

1161-62 AD *Poenitentiale* of Bartholomew, Bishop of Exeter states that whoever believes in werewolves should fast on bread and water for ten days.

1182-83 AD Giraldus Cambrensis describes the last rites given to an aging werewolf couple

1194 AD *Gillaume de Palerne*, a werewolf romance in print until mid 16th c. Here Alphonse, the King of Spain is transformed into a wolf by magic ointment used by his wicked stepmother. As a wolf he helps the hero of the story and his bride. See similarities in some version of a Russian fairy tale, where the wolf is an enchanted prince.

1198 AD *Lai of Bisclavret* by Marie de France

1250 AD *Lai de Melion*, a Breton lai, features king Arthur, similar to Bisclaveret, where the hero is betrayed by a woman.

1275 AD *The Volsung Saga* (chapter 8) described Sigmund and Sinfjotli using the wolf skins that they stole to turn into wolves, and unable to turn back for a while. Interestingly, the founder of the clan, Sigi “Proclaimed.. a wolf in holy places” Old Norse vargr or wolf also being the word for an outlaw.

Later in the saga Sigmund kills a large she-wolf, which some say was mother of King Siggeir in wolf shape.

14thc. *Arthur and Gorlagon*, a Latin transcription of a Welsh tale. The hero is again an innocent victim betrayed by a woman.

1407 AD Witchcraft trial in Basle mentions werewolves

1462 AD Peter Mamor *Flagellum Maleficorum* witnesses transformation where the body lays in trance and the soul roams in wolf form.

1487 AD Kramer and Sprenger’s *Malleus Maleficarum*

1521 AD Burning of the werewolves at Poligny

1541 AD Werewolf of Padua. Madman who believed he had worn an inside out wolf skin, died after wounds received during the trial.

1542 AD Constantinople attacked by wolves, or some say werewolves.

1555 AD Della Porta publishes *Magiae Naturalis*, where he talk about the werewolves, and believes that the trance is induced by hallucinogens in the ointment.

1563 AD Weyer published *De Praestegii Demonorum*, where he treats lycanthropy as an illness

1573 AD Giles Garnier burnt as a werewolf

1584 AD Reginald Scot publishes *Discoverie of Witchcraft*, where the words lycanthrope and lycanthropy are first used in English language.

1589 AD Trial and execution of Peter Stubb, the werewolf at Cologne

1590 AD Henry Holland, “*A Treatise Against Witchcraft*”

1593 AD George Gifford “*A Dialogue Concerning Witches and Witcraftes*”

1598 AD Trial and execution of Roulet in Paris

1602 AD 2nd edition of Boguet’s *Discourse Des Sorciers* (where he argues for actual transformation of man into wolf) published

1603 AD Jean Granier tried as a werewolf sentenced to treatment in a local monastery (dies in 1610)

1692 AD Theiss, the Livonian werewolf and a “hound of God “ interrogated

1764 AD Beast of Gevaudan

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