

Russian *vurdalak* ‘vampire’ and Related Forms in Slavic*

Francis Butler

Abstract: The paper adduces strong evidence that Russian *vurdalak* (‘vampire’) entered the language thanks to Puškin, who formed it from models in the work of Prosper Mérimée and Lord Byron. It also surveys the distribution of related forms in Slavic and suggests that the Croatian surname Vrdoljak may not be related to any of them. These conclusions have significant consequences for a hypothesis of Johanna Nichols regarding the ultimate Iranian origin of *vurdalak* and related forms.

In an article published in 1987, Johanna Nichols argues against a widespread scholarly hypothesis that Russian *vurdalak* (‘vampire’ or ‘werewolf’), *volkolak* (‘werewolf’ or ‘vampire’) and related forms in Slavic and neighboring languages may be traced back to Indo-European via proto-Slavic. The development of this hypothesis may be summarized as follows: Vasmer (1906: 403, 410; 1907: 225–26) suggests that (Old) Bulgarian (distinguished by Vasmer from Old Church Slavic) **vľkolakъ* ‘werewolf’ (where *vľk-* is clearly ‘wolf’; *o* is a link vowel, and the meaning of *-lak-* is unclear) was transmitted to Greek, where numerous attested forms with *r* instead of *l* arose through regular sound change of *r* to *l* before a consonant (cf. Nichols 1987: 165–66). Bulgarian *vľrkolak* and Church Slavic *vurkolak* (the latter listed in Miklosich 1862–1865: 79)¹ are back-borrowings from Greek. Preobraženskij (1910: 91–92) accepts Vasmer’s derivation of the Bulgarian and Church Slavic forms, but also attempts to explain the second element by linking forms containing a second element *-dlak* instead of *-lak* (e.g., Serbian *vukodlak*) to Serbian *dlaka* ‘hair’, ‘fur’, and Slovenian *dlaka* ‘fur’ (Preobraženskij reads “*dlaka*”). (See Miklosich 1862–1865: 162 for Church Slavic *dlaka* ‘skin’, ‘color’, with suggested connection to *vľkოდlakъ*.) Vinogradov (1954: 11–12) remarks vaguely that Russian *vurdalak* is a variant of “*volkolak—vokodlak, vľrkolak*” which “became fixed in the Russian literary language in the 1820s–1830s”. He also asserts that “*vokodlak (volkolak)* entered the Russian literary language from South

* I would like to thank Daniel Collins of Ohio State University and two anonymous referees for their very useful comments on this paper.

¹ Miklosich (1862–1865: xv) indicates that the manuscript in which the form appears dates to the sixteenth century, but he does not indicate the recension of Church Slavic to which it belongs.

Slavic", and he follows Preobraženskij regarding the etymology of the second element. Vasmer (1964: 338–39) summarizes previous literature without adducing a new etymology. In an editorial addition to Vasmer (1964: 365–66), Trubačev asserts that "[t]he form *vurdalak*, which appeared in Russian literature in the 1820s to 1830s, apparently owes its origin to Puškin and constitutes a distortion of a form resembling *volkolak*, *vrkolak*". Trubačev appears to be the first scholar explicitly to suggest that the Russian form originated with Puškin. Finally, Trubačev, ed. (1978: 63), provides an elaborate discussion of "**dolka?/*d(')laka?*" with passing mention of "**vblko-dolkv*".

Nichols criticizes the above scholarly conclusions on grounds that may be summarized thus. (1) The explanation of the first element in Russian *vurdalak* is *ad hoc*. (2) No explanation is given for Serbian and Croatian **vrdoljak*, which Nichols reconstructs from the American surname *Vrdolyak*. (3) The "explanation of the appearance of the *r* in Church Slavic and Bulgarian forms as due to back-borrowing from Greek is convoluted and does not account for [Greek] forms with *r* not adjacent to a consonant". (4) No explanation is given for English *warlock*. (1987: 167) More generally (5), these conclusions rest on "an implicit assumption that the preferred type of explanation in Slavic etymological studies is one which traces a word back to Proto-Indo-European, i.e., treats it as pristine native Slavic. This assumption enhances rigor only as long as it is not used to justify dismissing data" (1987: 174–75).

Table 1 reproduces a summary of compound types from Nichols (1987: 170), adding a Type C (with first elements similar to Type A and second elements similar to Type B) which Nichols characterizes but does not include in her own diagram.

Table 1.

	form	gloss		form	gloss
A.	<i>*vurd-</i> / <i>*vbrd</i> ² <i>*vurk-</i> / <i>*vbrk</i>	'wolf'	+	<i>*-lak-</i> / <i>*-ljak</i>	'?'
B.	<i>*vblk-</i>	'wolf'	+	<i>*-dolk-</i>	'?'
C.	<i>*vblk-</i>	'wolf'	+	<i>*-lak-</i>	'?'

Nichols argues that the Type A forms, which are found in East and South Slavic, are primary rather than secondary to Type B forms; that none of the elements in Type A are originally Slavic; and that these ele-

² On the chronology of Type A first elements, see footnote 13 below.

ments derive from a Scytho-Sarmatian language or languages.³ According to her, "Type B represents an element-by-element Slavicization of Type A" (1987: 170). She claims that Type C is unique to Polish, which "gives evidence of having preserved awareness of both the semantic segmentation and the morphological segmentation of the Iranian source form". Nichols finds this consistent with "the fact that Polish overall shows stronger lexical evidence of Iranian influence than any other Slavic language" (1987: 174; cf. 170, 173).

Within the Slavic languages, **vurd-* is the only Type A first element that may be attested outside of South Slavic. By Nichols's argument, it underlies Russian *vurdolak* and "may be reflected in Gk. *vourdólakas*" (1987: 167). Vasmer (1906: 403) explains the Greek form by dissimilation of the first *k* in βουρκόλακας.⁴ Nichols responds that Vasmer's explanation "does not explain why precisely *d* should have appeared" (1987: 167).

Nichols also draws attention to the Croatian-American surname *Vrdolyak*, which she uses to reconstruct Serbian and Croatian **vrdoljak* and, hence, the alternate second element **-ljak* in Type A. She suggests that the palatalized **lj* in this form may reflect the nonback articulation of an Iranian vowel (1987: 168–69, 171, 173, 175: footnote 2).

Because Russian *vurdalak* is the only Type A form attested within Slavic but outside of South Slavic, any evidence that the form was introduced by Puškin, as Trubačev suggests it was, would weaken Nichols's hypothesis.⁵ The present article will contend that Trubačev is correct. Moreover, it will suggest that Puškin formed the word in a reasonably consistent manner on the basis of specific Western European sources. It will also deal briefly with Serbian and Croatian **vrdoljak*. First, however, I shall discuss the geographic distribution of Types C, B, and A (in that order), with particular attention to East Slavic attestations.

None of the three types are attested in Sreznevskij (1893), Avanesov (1989), Barxudarov (1976), or Barxudarov (1988). In other words, none of them appear to be attested in East Slavic before the early nineteenth century. Nichols indicates that Type C is unique to Polish, and indeed it is attested earliest and most frequently there. Old Polish *wylkolak* appears in

³ Cf. the attempt by Tozer (1869: 82) to link Type A forms to Sanskrit *vrka* 'wolf'.

⁴ This form is transcribed by Nichols as **vurkolakas*, but the asterisk is unnecessary because the form is listed by Vasmer with a source citation. I henceforth transcribe *β* as *v* and *ov* as *u* except where otherwise indicated.

⁵ Nichols (1987: 165) suggests that, in the traditional view, "the Russian form *vurdalak* is erratic and due to sound play". By my reading, scholars who support this view say nothing about sound play; they are simply vague about how the *r* and *d* in the form originated.

a Latin-Polish glossary copied in 1455 (Brückner 1892: 490), and antecedents of the variant *wilkotek* are attested from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (*Słownik staropolski* 1988–1993: 223–24). However, Type C is also attested in Slovak (first in Jungmann 1839/1990: 135), where it was certainly current as a spoken form by 1858 (Dobšinský 1973: 22, 241–42, 423–24, 432). It is also attested in Bulgarian *volkolak* (Gerov 1895/1975: 137, *Rečnik na bâlgarskija ezik* 1979: 610). More significantly from our perspective, it is attested in East Slavic spoken forms recorded from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. In *Opyt oblastnogo slovarja* (1852: 27), Russian *volkulak* is assigned to the Voronež, Kursk, and Orel regions. Belarusian *vovkolak* is attested in Nosovič (1870: 62). Dal' (1880/1978: 233) lists the presumably Ukrainian *vovkulaka* (cf. Baudouin de Courtenay's editorial comment in Dal' 1903/1998: 571) as an "archaic" form of *volkodlak*, and indicates that both forms are "usually southern, western" ("ob. juž. zapd."). Belarusian *vavkulak* appears in Dobrovol'skij (1891: 115; cf. Straxov 2000: 274). Russian *volkolak* is first treated as a standard literary form in *Slovar' russkogo jazyka* (1891: col. 492). These East Slavic forms, which may well have existed unrecorded before the nineteenth century, may possibly derive ultimately from Polish (as Nichols 1987: 169 suggests some Baltic forms may have done). Except for the instance in *Slovar' russkogo jazyka*, to which I shall return, East Slavic Type C forms are glossed or may be interpreted roughly as 'werewolf', and none carry the secondary meaning 'vampire'. (In this respect they resemble West Slavic forms.) (See Perkowski 1989: 37–51, esp. 47, 51.)

In South Slavic, Type B (reflecting **vblk-* + **-dolk-*) is well attested in Serbian and Croatian, with the earliest Slavic attestation of any of the three types occurring in a Serbian Church Slavic text dated to 1262.⁶ (*Rječnik hrvatskoga ili srpskoga jezika* 1973–1974: 621–23, Miklosich 1862–1865: xii, 68) It is also attested in Slovenian from 1592, in a Macedonian Bulgarian dialect of the mid-nineteenth century, and in Bulgarian (Megiser 1592/1967: 155, 238; Djuvernua 1885: 253; *Rečnik na bâlgarskija ezik* 1979: 610). In West Slavic it is attested only in Czech. Rank (1862: 369) treats Czech *vlkodlak* as a borrowing from South Slavic, and Machek (1968: 695) considers such a borrowing as at least possible. Most Czech attestations of Type B present problems because Jungmann (1839/1990: 135) and many of his nineteenth-century successors were influenced both directly by Václav Hanka and by the forged glosses inserted in the thirteenth-

⁶ On the truncated and slightly deformed Type B *kudlak* (apparently limited, in the nineteenth century, to Istrian and coastal Croatian), see *Rječnik hrvatskoga ili srpskoga jezika* (1898–1903: 745) and Perkowski (1989: 31).

century *Mater verborum* by Hanka, published by Hanka in 1833⁷ Prior to Jungmann, Czech *vlkodlak* appeared (in German spelling *wlkodlak*) in Dobrovský (1821: 404) as a gloss to German *Währwolf* ('werewolf'). Yet Hanka, who was familiar with Serbian, may have influenced even Dobrovský (1821), to which he contributed an introductory note. (See Iagič 1910: 250–52.)

Russian Type B *volkodlak* seems, as Straxov (2000: 274–75) suggests, to have entered the language as a literary (or pseudo-dialectal) equivalent to *volkolak* that was based on South Slavic forms. The Russian literate elite could have found Church Slavic *vl̋kodlak̋* in Vostokov (1858: col. 88; cf. Vinogradov 1954: 11), and Straxov's summary of Russian attestations of *volkodlak* includes none before Vostokov's publication.

Within Slavic, aside from the crucial Russian *vurdalak* and Nichols's reconstructed Serbian and Croatian **vrdoljak*, Type A forms are found only in Bulgarian, Macedonian, and Church Slavic. (*Rečnik na bâlgarskija ezik* 1979: 643; Perkowski 1989: 78, 80; Konecki 1961: 85; Miklosich 1862–1865: 79; Nichols 1987: 166–67) The Church Slavic attestation derives from a manuscript which Miklosich (1862–1865: xv) dates to the sixteenth century but does not assign to any linguistic recension (Bulgarian, Serbian, etc.). Outside of Slavic, Type A forms appear in Albanian, Greek, Romanian, and Turkish (Hahn 1853: 163; Nichols 1987: 166–67, 174; Moxa 1989: 149, 150; Tozer 1869: 80). Nichols suggests that they may also be reflected in Germanic antecedents of English *warlock* (1987: 166–67, 171, 173–74). Although most of these non-Slavic forms are doubtless related to the Slavic ones, I shall not deal with them here.

We now turn to Type A forms in Russian and to Puškin. Russian *vurdalak* (Type A), *volkodlak* (Type B), and *volkolak* (Type C) first appear together in *Slovar' russkogo jazyka* (1891: col. 492; 1892: col. 582). In the first volume, *volkodlak* and *volkolak* are placed on an equal footing in a single entry with the following double gloss: "1. A shape-shifter; person transformed by others or by themselves, most often into a wolf but also into other animals: a dog, a cat, or even into inanimate objects: a bush, a stump, etc. Cf. *vurdalak*. 2. A vampire." In the second volume, *vurdalak* is glossed as a "distortion of *volkodlak*", with a citation of Puškin. Thus the first Russian dictionary to equate *volkolak* with *vurdalak* is also the first to suggest that *volkolak* could mean 'vampire'. It is also the earliest Russian source I can find to suggest that *vurdalak* may mean 'werewolf'. As we shall see, *vurdalak* clearly means 'vampire' in Puškin's work. Given the late

⁷ On Hanka and the glosses, see Patera and Sreznevskij (1878: 9–10, 13, 42–44, 78) and Schaecken (1992: esp. 65–66).

appearances of these secondary glosses, it seems probable that the author(s) of the entries, having decided that the two forms were related in origin, concluded that they must be semantically equivalent and glossed accordingly. It does not, however, follow that Puškin was aware of any connection between the forms. For that matter, he may not have known any forms resembling *volkolak* at all. If he did, he may have mentally glossed them as 'werewolf', seeing no connection with his own *vurdalak* 'vampire'.

In Puškin's work, *vurdalak* appears only in the text, notes, and variants to *Pesni zapadnyx slavjan*. Five instances appear in the text (Puškin 1937–1949: 3: 1: 350, 351, 356, 357), and one appears in a note where Puškin glosses the word thus: "*Vurdalaki, vudkodlaki, upyry*, dead people who arise from their tombs and drink the blood of the living" (1937–1949: 3: 1: 368).⁸ Most of the *Pesni*, including all of significance for us, are translations from *La Guzla, ou choix de Poésies Illyriques, recueillies dans la Dalmatie, la Bosnie, la Croatie et l'Herzegowine*, a series of French pseudo-translations of non-existent South Slavic ballads that were first published anonymously by Prosper Mérimée in 1820 and later acknowledged by Mérimée. (Puškin knew of Mérimée's mystification by the time he published the *Pesni*, though perhaps not when he translated them; cf. Puškin 1937–1949: 3: 1: 334–36.) Puškin's decision to gloss *vurdalak* here is significant because it amounts to treatment of the word not only as non-Russian but as non-transparent to a contemporary Russian audience. Nevertheless, Puškin seems not to have borrowed the form verbatim from a single source. Rather, he combined three forms from at least two sources.

The most obvious of these sources, Mérimée's book itself, contains a short essay, "Sur le Vampirisme", which precedes a group of the ballads that deal with vampirism. There, Mérimée states that "a dead person who leaves his grave, usually at night, and who torments the living, is called a vampire (*vukodlak* in Illyrian)" (1827: 135). Mérimée probably borrowed standard Serbian and Croatian *vukodlak* from Fortis (1778: 61; cf. Yovanovitch 1911: 26, 33–34, 266–95). In one of his ballads ("Jeannot"), Mérimée uses the alternate *brucolaque*, which he glosses as "a kind of vampire" (1827: 169, 171). This corresponds to Greek βρουνκόλακας (with β transcribed as Classical *b* instead of contemporary *v*) and probably derives, perhaps indirectly, from Tournefort (1717: 131). It would be tempting to hypothesize that Puškin somehow blended *vukodlak* and *brucolaque* to produce *vurdalak*, but such a solution would not readily

⁸ The form *vudkodlak* is, as far as I can tell, attested only in this gloss.

account for *r* separated from *v* by a vowel in *vurdalak*. For this, we must look elsewhere.

Byron's *The Giaour*, first published in 1813, contains a passage about vampires to which Byron appended the following note:

The Vampire Superstition is still general in the Levant. Honest Tournefort tells a long story, which Mr. Southey, in the notes on *Thalaba*, quotes about these 'Vroucolochas', as he calls them. The Romaic term is 'Vardoulacha'.... I find that 'Broucolokas' is an old legitimate Hellenic appellation—at least it is so applied to Arsenius, who, according to the Greeks, was after his death animated by the Devil.—The moderns, however, use the word I mention. (Byron 1981: 420)

At some time in 1821 or 1822, Puškin translated the first few lines of *The Giaour* from English (Puškin 1935: 27–29). However, he was probably more familiar with the poem as it appeared in some edition of Pichot's French translation (see Cjalovskij 1913: 48–73; Žirmunskij 1978: 409–12; Nabokov 1965: 159–62). In Pichot (1822: 50), Byron's note is partly replaced but the form *vardoulacha* is retained; in Pichot (1830: 2: 36), the note is translated. The form *vardoulacha* also appears in an introductory note to John Polidori's *The Vampire*, first published in 1819, which states that words used to mean "vampire" in "various parts of the world" include *vroucolocha*, *vardoulacha* and *broucoloka* (p. xxv). (Byron's note to *The Giaour* is probably the source from which the author of this introductory note derived *vardoulacha*.) The first French translation of this text, by H. Faber, was published in 1819 (Yovanovitch 1911: 320; Nabokov 1975: 352), but a more likely source for Puškin is a translation that seems to have appeared in all but the second edition of Pichot's translation of Byron.⁹ *Evgenij Onegin* 3: XII clearly attests to Puškin's awareness of Polidori's work (Puškin 1937–1949: 6: 56, 193), and it seems pointless to quibble about whether the form *vardoulacha* came to Puškin's attention through Byron's work, through the introduction to Polidori's, or through both.

I have suggested that Puškin was influenced (directly or indirectly) by Byron's *vardoulacha*, but in order to understand the formation of Russian *vurdalak* we must also consider the forms found in Mérimée: *vukodlak* and

⁹ The first through third editions are inaccessible to me, but in the fourth *The Vampire* appears in the same volume as *The Giaour* (see Pichot 1822: 408 for the relevant passage). A later edition (Pichot 1830: 12: 278) indicates that it appeared in the third edition. Nabokov (1975: 160–61) seems mistaken on this and other points.

brucolaque. Puškin encountered all three forms in literary sources, and there is no indication in his gloss of *vurdalak* that he was aware of or interested in etymology. Rather, his formation seems largely to have been a matter of transcribing Latin orthography, attending to obvious letter-sound correspondences, and (perhaps unconsciously) preferring features shared by two of his source forms over features confined to one. Thus, two of the source forms begin with *v*, in two of them the first vowel is *u*, in two of them the first consonant is *r*, and in two of them the first two consonants are separated by a vowel. *Vurdalak* has all of these characteristics. *Vukodlak* has the consonant cluster *dl* where *vardoulacha* has the same two consonants separated by *ou*. *Vurdalak* has the same sequence of consonants. In *vukodlak* and *brucolaque*, the second vowel is *o*. In *vurdalak* it is *a*, but the reduced orthographic *o* of this syllable would be pronounced *a* in Puškin's speech as in modern standard Russian. Significantly, this pronunciation is reflected in Puškin's frequent orthographic substitution of *a* for standard *o* (and *o* for standard *a*) in preaccentual position (Panov 1990: 267–68). Finally, the orthographically distinct segments *-laque* and *-lak* in *brucolaque* and *vukodlak* are both transcribable in Russian as *-lak*. In short, *vurdalak* appears to be a composite form derived from *vukodlak*, *brucolaque*, and *vardoulacha*. The *r* and *d* in the form thus derive from Greek via the Latin-alphabetic transcriptions *brucolaque* and *vardoulacha*, with Serbian and Croatian *vukodlak* helping to confirm the *d*.¹⁰

By dating the first appearance of an East Slavic Type A form to the nineteenth century, this explanation for Russian *vurdalak* weakens Nichols's hypothesis that the *r* in Slavic Type A forms reflects an Iranian origin. It also eliminates her first criticism of the standard interpretation (i.e., that the explanation of the form's first element is *ad hoc*). We may now look briefly at her second criticism (that the traditional interpretation fails to account for Serbian and Croatian **vrdoljak*).

Nichols argues that the element **ljak* in this form "cannot reflect a single native Slavic morpheme", and that if it contains a suffix "then the compound cannot be well-formed, since suffixed noun stems cannot be second elements of Slavic compounds" (1987: 168).¹¹ She proposes that the palatalized **lj* may reflect the nonback articulation of an Iranian vowel such as **[ə]* or **[ä]* (1987: 171; cf. 173, 175: footnote 2). Let us, however, consider the reconstructed form's semantics. The surname *Vrdoljak* is well-attested in Croatian (Putanec 1976: 729), but because the form is attested only as a surname there is no reason to assume that it ever designated

¹⁰ The fact that Greek βουρδόλακας *vurdólakas* (listed in Vasmer 1906: 403) corresponds even more closely with *vurdalak* than do *brucolaque* and *vardoulacha* is presumably coincidental.

¹¹ Nichols devotes a note to such forms as Russian *zemljak*. (1987: 175)

either werewolves or vampires.¹² Skok (1973: 624; cf. Šimunović 1995: 225–27) derives it from *vrh* 'top', 'peak' + *dol* 'valley', listing it together with a series of toponyms such as *Vrpole* (which he derives from *vrh* + *pole* 'field') and (hesitantly) with the noun *vrđol* 'a bump on the head that results from a blow'. This derivation may be improved with the aid of *Rječnik hrvatskoga ili srpskoga jezika* (1973–1974: 444), where we find the toponyms *Vrdo* (G. *Vrdola*) and *Vrdolje*. Whether or not these toponyms are themselves derived from *vrh* + *dol* (cf. *Vrhdol* in *Rječnik hrvatskoga ili srpskoga jezika* 1973–1974: 485 and Skok's *Vrpole*, etc.), *Vrdoljak* could have arisen as a designation for persons living in or coming from one or more of these places. (For similar formations, see Babić 1986: 93–94; cf. Nichols 175, footnote 2.) This relatively simple alternative to Nichols's hypothesis would seem to account adequately for the form of the surname.

I am not presently prepared to deal with Nichols's third and fourth criticisms of the standard hypothesis, though they do deserve further examination. As for Nichols's fifth criticism, data should certainly not be dismissed without good reason. The present article has suggested alternate explanations for some of the data that Nichols uses. If these explanations are valid, then it is reasonable to dismiss Russian *vurdalak* as a recent development originating in the literary language and to dismiss Croatian *Vrdoljak* as unrelated to the cluster of forms under discussion. Such dismissal allows us to simplify Nichols's reconstruction of early Slavic forms by eliminating Type A protoforms with *d*, as in Table 2. (For reasons to be explained below, I have also removed the gloss "wolf" for the first element of type A.)

Table 2.

	form	gloss		form	gloss
A.	* <i>vurk-</i> / * <i>vьrk</i> ¹³	'?'	+	* <i>-lak-</i>	'?'
B.	* <i>vьlk-</i>	'wolf'	+	* <i>-dolk-</i>	'?'
C.	* <i>vьlk-</i>	'wolf'	+	* <i>-lak-</i>	'?'

¹² I have been unable to identify any Serbian or Croatian surnames unambiguously based on words for 'vampire' or 'werewolf', though Hahn (1853: 163) identifies the Albanian surname [V]ampiri.

¹³ **vurd-* could still arguably be relevant, but only in its Greek attestation. A referee of this paper has noted that there seems to be no time when **vurk-* and **vьrk-* could have co-existed as Common Slavic and has expressed doubts that **vurk-* could have been Common Slavic at all. However, if one follows Nichols (1987: 172–73) in positing distinct, temporally separated borrowings from Iranian, then one need not assume that all the elements in this table coexisted simultaneously in Common Slavic. The restriction of Type A forms to South Slavic could allow for a very late borrowing of **vurk-* (provided, of course, that an opportunity for transmission could be demonstrated).

Geographically, Type A is confined to Bulgarian, Macedonian and an unidentified redaction of Church Slavic. Type B is found in both South and West Slavic (though limited to Czech in the latter). Type C is attested in West Slavic from the fifteenth century, in colloquial East Slavic from the nineteenth century, and in nineteenth-century Bulgarian.

The relatively limited distribution of Type A within Slavic suggests that it could be an innovation that has supplanted some South Slavic Type B forms or nearly all South Slavic Type C forms. My removal of the gloss “wolf” for the first element of Type A forms is based on the semantic content of these forms. With the exception of Slovenian *volkodlak* (Megiser 1592/1967: 155), South Slavic forms typically refer to wizards or vampires and rarely refer to werewolves.¹⁴ Thus, the presence of the element **volk-* in most South Slavic Type B forms (and in Bulgarian Type C *volkolak*) seems to have limited relevance to their meaning. The replacement of this element with semantically opaque **vurk-* or **vrk-* could thus have been acceptable or even desirable to speakers who associated a reflex of **volk-* with the meaning ‘wolf’ but did not associate Type B or Type C forms with that meaning.¹⁵ In any event, closer examination of all Slavic forms (with careful consideration of their semantics and the contexts of specific attestations), as well as of related non-Slavic forms, might shed new light on the origins of all three types.

While Nichols’s article and this one differ in some conclusions, they have at least one methodological similarity. In her study, Nichols emphasizes, with a reference to Francis J. Whitfield’s teaching, the importance of non-Slavic languages for the development of Slavic ones (1987: 165). From this perspective, lexical transmission from Balkan languages (including Greek) to Russian via French and English is in many respects just as telling as hypothesized early Slavic borrowing from Iranian. Whitfield’s and Nichols’s point that development of languages must always be considered in terms of external as well as internal factors

¹⁴ See *Rječnik hrvatskoga ili srpskoga jezika* 1973–1974: 621–23; Djuvernua 1885: 253, 289; Gerov 1895/1975: 137, 159; *Rečnik na bŭlgarskija Ezik* 1979: 610, 643; Konecki 1961: 85; cf. Perkowski 1989: 37–51, esp. 47, 51, 53n. For some seeming exceptions in scholarly literature, see footnote 15 below.

¹⁵ There is a mention of “human and wolfish characteristics” (“belzi na čovek i vâlk”) in connection with Type A *vârkolak* in *Rečnik na bŭlgarskija ezik* 1979: 643, but even here the wolfish quality is not reflected in the attestations that the dictionary supplies. The entry also mentions Type B *vâlkodlak* and Type C *vâlkolak*, and perhaps the reference to wolfish features simply reflects an assumption that *vârk-* is a distortion of *vâlk-*. For similar passages (again in scholarly interpretations rather than in folk attestations), see Perkowski 1989: 37–38 and (less emphatically) *Slavianskie drevnosti* 1995: 418, but compare Perkowski 1989: 47, 51, 53n.

is well taken. If there is another general lesson to be learned from the present study, it is that the contexts in which attested forms appear may reveal a great deal about their etymologies.

References

- Avanesov, R. I. et al. (1989) *Slovar' drevnerusskogo jazyka*. Vol. 2. Moscow: Russkij jazyk.
- Babić, Stjepan. (1986) *Tvorba riječi u hrvatskom kniževnom jeziku*. Zagreb: Jugoslovenska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti.
- Barxudarov, S. G. et al. (1976) *Slovar' russkogo jazyka XI–XVII vv.* Vol. 3. Moscow: Nauka.
- . (1988) *Slovar' russkogo jazyka XVIII veka*. Vol. 4. Leningrad: Nauka.
- Brückner, A. (1892) "Neue Quellen zur Geschichte der polonischen Sprache und Literatur". *Archiv für slavische Philologie* 14: 481–512.
- Byron, George Gordon. (1981) *Lord Byron: The Complete Poetical Works*, ed. Jerome J. McGann. Vol. 3. Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press.
- Cjalovskij, M. A. (1913) "Zametki o Puškine". *Puškin i ego sovremenniki: Materialy i issledovanijja* 17–18: 45–73.
- Dal', Vladimir. (1880/1978) *Tolkovyj slovar' živogo velikorusskogo jazyka*. 2nd ed. Vol. 1. Reprinted. Moscow: Russkij jazyk.
- . (1903/1998) *Tolkovyj slovar' živogo velikorusskogo jazyka*. 3rd ed. Edited, corrected and expanded by I. A. (= Jan N.) Baudouin de Courtenay. Vol. 1. Reprinted. Moscow: Terra.
- Djuvernua, A. (1885) *Slovar' bolgarskogo jazyka po pamjatnikam narodnoi slovesnosti i proizvedenijam novejšej pečati*. Moscow.
- Dobrovol'skij, V. N. (1891) *Smolenskij ètnografičeskij sbornik*. Vol. 1. St. Petersburg.
- Dobrovský. See 'Dobrowsky'.
- Dobrowsky (=Dobrovský), J(osef). (1821) *Deutsch-bohmisches Worterbuch*. Vol. 2. Prague.
- Dobšinský, Pavol. (1973) *Prostonárodné slovenské povesti*. Vol. 1. Introd. by Andrej Melicherčík. Bratislava.
- Fasmer (=Vasmer), M(ax). R. (1906) "Greko-slavjanskije ètjudy 1: Osnovy voprosy iz oblasti greko-slavjanskix otnošenij". *Izvestija Otdelenija russkogo jazyka i slovesnosti Imperatorskoj Akademii Nauk* 11: 386–412.
- . (1907) "Greko-slavjanskije ètjudy 2: Grečeskie zaimstvovanija v staroslavjanskom jazyke". *Izvestija Otdelenija russkogo jazyka i slovesnosti Imperatorskoj Akademii Nauk* 12: 197–289.
- . (1964/1986). *Ètimologičeskij slovar' russkogo jazyka*. Translated, edited, and expanded by O. N. Trubačev. Vol. 1. Moscow: Progress.

- Fortis, Alberto. (1778) *Travels into Dalmatia: Containing general observations on the natural history of that country and the neighboring islands, the natural productions, arts manners, and customs of the inhabitants*. London.
- Gerov, Najden. (1895/1975) *Rečnik na blâgarskyj Jazyk s tlâkuvanie reči-ty na blâgarsky in na russky [sic]*. Vol. 1. Reprinted as *Rečnik na bâlgarskija ezik*. Sofia.
- Hahn, Johan Georg von. (1853) *Albanesische Studien*. Vienna.
- Jagič, I. V. [= Vatroslav Jagič] (1910) *Istorija slavjanskoj filologii*. St. Petersburg: Akademija Nauk.
- Jungmann, Josef. (1839/1990) *Slownjk česko-německý/Slovník česko-německý*. Vol. 5. Reprinted. Prague: Academia.
- Konecki, Blaže. (1961) *Rečnik na makedonskiot jazik so srpsko-xrvatski tolkuvanja*. Vol. 1. Skopje: Institut za Makedonski Jazik.
- Kott, František Št. (1884, 1893) *Česko-německý slovník zvláště grammaticko-frazeologický*. Vols. 4 and 7. Prague.
- Machek, Václav. (1968) *Etymologický slovník jazyka českého*. 2nd edition, revised and expanded. Prague: Academia.
- Megiser, Hieronymus. (1592/1967) *Dictionarium quatuor linguarum, Videlicet, Germanicae Latinae Illuricae (quae vulgo Sclavonica appellatur) et Italicae, sive Hetruscae*. Reprinted in facsimile as *Slovenisch-Deutsch-Lateinisches Wörterbuch/Slovensko-nemško-latinski slovar*, ed. by Annelies Lägroid. Monumenta linguae slavicae dialecti veteris: Fontes et dissertationes 7. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz.
- [Mérimée, Prosper]. (1827) *La Guzla, ou choix de poésies illyriques, recueillies dans la Dalmatie, la Bosnie, la Croatie et l'Herzegowine*. Paris.
- Miklosich, Fr. (1862–1865) *Lexicon palaeoslovenico-graeco-latinum*. Vienna.
- Moxa, Mihail. (1989) *Cronica universală*. Edited by G. Mihala. Bucharest: Editura Minerva.
- Nabokov, Vladimir, transl. and commentary. (1975) *Eugene Onegin: A novel in verse by Alexander Pushkin*. Revised edition. Vol. 2. Princeton: Princeton University Press. (Bollingen Series 72: 2.)
- Nichols, Johanna. (1987) Russian *vurdalak* 'werewolf' and its cognates. In *Language literature linguistics: In honor of Francis J. Whitfield on his seventieth birthday March 25, 1986*, ed. Michael S. Flier and Simon Karlinsky. Berkeley: Berkeley Slavic Specialties.
- Nosovič, I. I. (1870) *Slovar' bjeloruskogo narečija*. St. Petersburg.
- Opyt oblastnogo velikorusskogo slovarja*. (1852) St. Petersburg.
- Panov, M. V. (1990) *Istorija russkogo literaturnogo proiznošenija XVIII–XX vv*. Moscow: Nauka.
- Patera, A. O. and I. I. Sreznevskij. (1878) *Češskie glossy v Mater verborum*. St. Petersburg.

- Perkowski, Jan L. (1989) *The Darkling: A treatise on Slavic vampirism*. Columbus, OH: Slavica.
- P[ichot], A[médée], transl. (1822) *Oeuvres de lord Byron*. 4th edition. Vol. 3. Paris.
- , transl. (1830) *Oeuvres de lord Byron*. (Edition unspecified.) Vols. 2 and 12. Paris.
- Polidori, John William. (1819/1990) *The vampyre: A tale*. Oxford and New York: Woodstock Books.
- Preobraženskij, A. (1910/1964) *Ètymologičeskij slovar' russkogo jazyka*. Vol. 1. Reprinted with vols. 2–3. New York and London: Columbia University Press.
- Puškin, Aleksandr Sergeevič. (1935) *Rukoju Puškina: Nesobrannnye i neopublikovannnye teksty*, ed. M. A. Čjalovskij et al.
- . (1937–1949) *Polnoe sobranie sočinenij*, ed. V. D. Bonč-Bruevič et al. Vols. 3: 1 and 6. Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR.
- Putanec, Valentin et al. (1976) *Leksik prezimena Socijalističke Republike Hrvatske*. Zagreb: Institut za jezik.
- Rank, Josef. (1862) *Kapesní slovník novinařský v němž se nacházejí zvlášť slova z cizích jazykův*. Prague.
- Rečnik na bâlgarskija ezik*. (1979) Vol. 2. Sofia: Izdatelstvo na Bâlgarskata Akademija na Naukite.
- Rječnik hrvatskoga ili srpskoga jezika*. (1898–1903, 1973–1974) Vols. 5 and 21. Zagreb: Jugoslovenska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti.
- Schaeken, Jos. (1992) "On the reception of Václav Hanka's contribution to the nineteenth-century Czech language revival." *Die Welt der Slaven* 37: 58–71.
- Šimunović, Petar. (1995) *Hrvatska prezimena: Podrijetlo, značenje, rasprostranjenost*. Zagreb: Golden Marketing.
- Skok, Petar. (1973) *Etimologijski rječnik hrvatskoga ili srpskoga jezika*. Vol. 3. Zagreb: Jugoslovenska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti.
- Slavianskie drevnosti: Ètnolingvističeskij slovar*. (1995) Edited by N. I. Tolstoj. Vol. 1. Moscow: Meždunarodnye otnošenija.
- Slovar' russkogo jazyka*. (1891, 1892) Vols. 1 and 2. St. Petersburg.
- Słownik staropolski*. (1988–1993). Vol. 10. Warsaw: Polska akademia nauk.
- Sreznevskij, I. I. (1893 / 1989) *Materialy dlja slovarja drevne-russkogo jazyka po pis'mennym pamjatnikam*. Vol. 1. St. Petersburg. Reprinted. Moscow: Kniga.
- Straxov, Alexander B (2000) "Novgorodskie i pskovskie 'perexody' ml' > n', tl > kl, dl > gl: al'ternativnye rešenija (okončanie)". *Palaeoslavica* 8: 273–96.
- Tournefort, Pitton de. (1717) *Relation d'un voyage du Levant*. Vol. 1. Paris.

- Tozer, Henry F. (1869) *Researches in the highlands of Turkey*. Vol. 2. London.
- Trubačev, O. N., ed. (1978) *Ėtimologičeskij slovar' slavjanskix jazykov*. Vol. 5. Moscow: Nauka.
- Vasmer. See 'Fasmer'.
- Vinogradov, V. V. (1954) "Iz istorii russkoj leksiki i frazeologii". *Doklady i soobščeniija Instituta jazykoznanija Akademii Nauk SSSR* 6: 3–22.
- Vostokov, A. X. (1858) *Slovar' cerkovno-slavjanskago jazyka*. vol. 1. St. Petersburg.
- Yovanovitch, Voyslav M. (1911) "*La Guzla*" de Prosper Mérimée: *Étude d'histoire romantique*. Paris: Librairie Hachette.
- Žirmunskij, V. M. *Bajron i Puškin*. (1924/1978) Cited from reprint. Lenin-grad: Nauka.

Department of Slavic Languages and
Literatures
3092 Foreign Languages Building
707 South Mathews Avenue
Urbana, IL 61801
fbutler@uiuc.edu

Received: February 2002
Revised: January 2003