

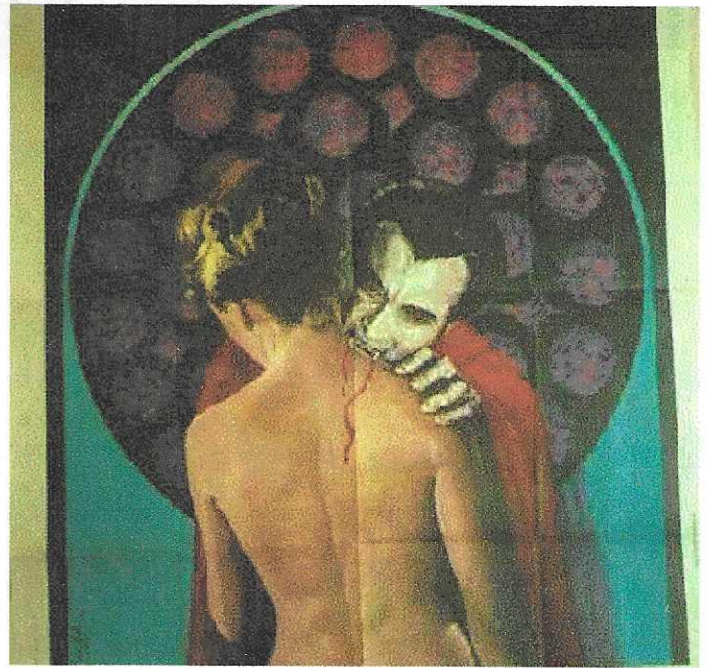
**Dracula:
The Myth**

&

**Vlad Tepes Dracul:
The Man**

THE MYTH

Vat is he
saying
about me?



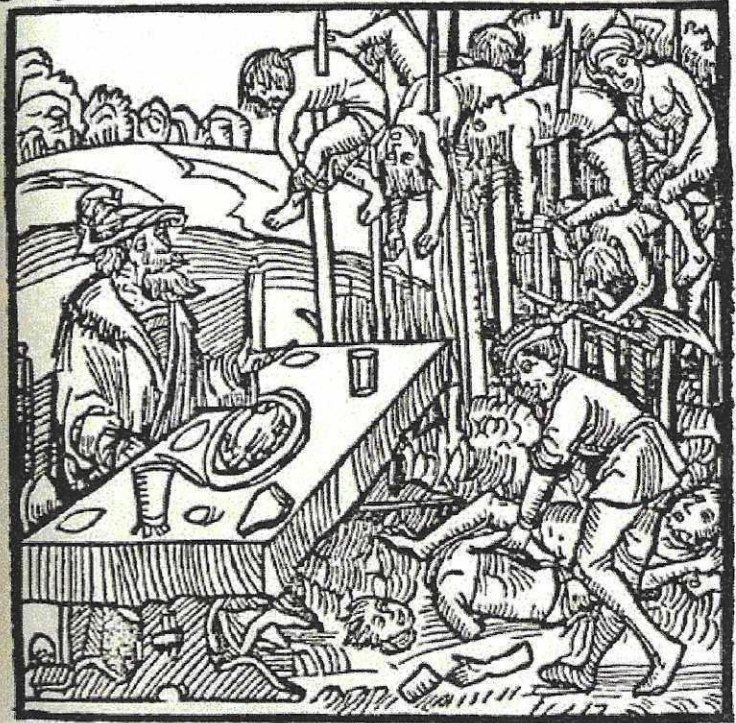
Hairy Eyeball

- Drinks blood
- Sleeps in a coffin
- Shapeshifts (Bat, Wolf, etc?)
- Has fangs even in human form
- Can't tolerate daylight
- Can't stand garlic
- Can't stand wolfbane
- Cross makes him nervous
- No reflection in a mirror
- Lives in Transylvania
- Turns others into vampires also
- Wears a weird tuxedo and cape

The Man



er hat auch den mütterliche Kind gepiate vnd sy habes müssen selber essen. Vnd vil andere erschrockenliche ding die in diesem Tractat geschriben sind. Vnd in welchem land er geregiret hat.



- Keeps a cigar under his nose
- Real name: Vlad Tepes Dracul
- Born 1431, son of Vlad I, who was invested into the Order of the Dragon (Ordinis Draconis) by Holy Roman Emperor Sigismund of Luxemburg for having protected Catholicism against the Turks. Ceremonial dress was black cape over red garment.

- Prince of Wallachia (one of three Romanian provinces, Transylvania is another) from 1437 - 1442
- Held hostage by Ottoman Turks until 1448
- Re-gained throne of Wallachia 1456-1462
- Notorious for brutal punishments and tortures of many kinds
- Tepes means “The Impaler”. In one incident he impaled 20,000 Turkish captives
- Fled to Hungary and captured by King Matthias (see photos of statue in Kolosvar)
- Imprisoned, but somehow Matthias’ sister Ilona falls in love with him, intercedes on his behalf
- Returned for 3rd reign in Wallachia 1475
- Died in battle against Ottoman Turks 1476, 45 years old
- His head was sent to Sultane Mahomed
- Was considered a legendary hero for defense of Wallachia and Catholicism against infidel Turks

Folklore describing vampires may originate in a rare illness called porphyria

- ✓ Extreme sensitivity to sunlight
 - Can sunburn on a heavily overcast day
 - Only venture out at night
- In most severe form, teeth and bones become fluorescent - would shine pink or red
- ✓ Garlic makes the condition much worse
- Disrupts production of Hemoglobin
- Injection of a blood derivative called hematin seems to ease extreme attacks
- ✓ Possible that a blood meal could have a similar, beneficial result

Raw Notes

- <http://www.net4u.ro/dracula/truth.html>

For almost a millenium, the lands in the Carpathian-Danubian-Pontic area were plundered by the migratory people. Beginning with the 10th and 11th centuries, the Eastern part of Europe begins to be threatened by the last large migratory vallum, made of Turkish nations. Towards the 16th century, a great danger seems to appear at the European borders: the expansion of the Ottoman Empire.

In those times, Romania was divided into three provences: The Romanian Country (Wallachia), Moldavia and Transiylvania. The Romanian Country had the Black Sea in the East, the Ottoman Empire in the South and Moldavia and Transylvania in the North. Between 1389-1402 the ruler of the Ottoman Empire was Sultane Baiazid (nicknamed The Lightning). The Romanian Country was ruled by Mircea the Old, one of the greatest leaders of the Romanian army, who defeated two large military expeditions commanded by Baiazid. After his death (1418) a period of high political instability breaks out and there are also internal fights regarding the heirs of the throne, between two royal families: the Danesti and the Draculesti.

Vlad Tepes Dracula is the son of Vlad Dracul, one of the illegitimate sons of the Mircea the Old. In this period, at Nuremberg, Vlad Dracul obtains the alliance and the support of the Holy Roman Emperor Sigismund of Luxemburg in order to gain the throne of the Romanian Country and he spends a period in Transylvania, being the protege of the great emperor. Now he gets married with one of the daughters of Moldavia's ruler and he lives, for a period, in Sighisoara. He has two sons, Mircea and Vlad, who get a special education, the Occidental influence interfering with the Oriental one.

In 1436, Vlad Dracul becomes the ruler of the Romanian Country, supported by Iancu of Hunedoara. In the meantime the Ottoman army is in a great rising, The Emperor Sigismund of Luxemburg dies and his death leads to the weakening of the anti-Ottoman front. The Turkish army conquers a part of Transylvania; Vlad Dracul has to join the Ottoman army but he is suspected for treason and is summoned to The Sublime Porte together with two of his sons. The contact with the Ottoman world is dour but it gives him the opportunity of finding out the Ottoman organization, habits and military technics and of learning the Turkish language. While Vlad Dracul and his sons, Vlad and Radu, ar hostages here, the throne of the Romanian Country is under the rule of his elder son, Mircea. In 1443 he comes back to his throne, but his two sons Vlad and Radu are still kept hostages until 1448, when their father is killed.

The name of Vlad Dracula is connected to the day of 8 February 1431, when his father, Vlad I, was invested by the Holy Roman Emperor Sigismund of Luxemburg with the Order of Dragon (Ordinis Draconis) for having protected the catholicism against the Turcs. It consisted in badges and two flags with a cross on them; at ceremonies the Dragon knights used to wear red suits and a green silk mantie and, on Fridays, they were dressed in black. The necklace they had at their necks was made of two chains joint by a cross that would uphold a dragon; on the length of the cross was written " O quam misericors est Deus " (" Oh, how merciful God is ") and on its breadth was written " Pius et justus " (" Kind and just "). The symbol of dragon, "draco" in Latin, was frequent in the prehistoric art at the Euro-Asiatics and, later, it was often used in different family or town escutcheous. In the Roman antiquity, the dragon, a fantastic animal, was dedicated to Minerva Goddess, meaning the idea that reason and wisdom never fall asleep. In the Christian world the dragon was used to personify the spirit of evil and the force of the demon. The knights of the Middle Ages

adopted it as a symbol of different obstacles that had to be overcome or as a sign of power. It is this ancient symbol of the Order of Dragon from which the name of " Dracul " is supposed to be assigned to Vlad I, as a nickname, the origin of which is a European noble rank and that became a name itself later. The name Dracula, given to the son of Vlad I, derives, according to the tradition the Romanian names are being formed, from his name Dracul, to which was added the inflexion " a ", which proves the fact that Dracula is Dracul's son.

In the Romanian historiography, Vlad II, is generally known as Tepes / tsepesh / which means the Impaler; it is a nickname assigned to him in the 15th century, as a consequence of his preference for impalement as a way of punishing guilty people. Using this cruel method of punishment he managed to impose in front of the internal evildoer and the external enemies. The motivation in using this punishment can be found in the objective necessities of establishing an order in the country according to his aspirations of justice and independence. The nickname " Tepes " was accepted by the historiography and transformed into a name.

In 1448, Vlad Tepes comes to the throne of the Romanian Country, but only for a short time, because the circumstances make him leave it; he goes to Moldavia and in 1451 he runs away to Transylvania. Iancu of Hunedoara appoints him commander of the border army in the South Transylvania; in 1456 he defeats Vladislav II and becomes ruler of the Romanian Country. He organizes the country on social, political and cultural levels; he takes measures in order to centralize the power of the country and to increase its potential of defence and prosperity. A lot of legends and stories would be inspired from the actions he would initiate under the sign of authoritative rule. In order to assure the calm and the internal unity, Vlad punishes the treacherous landowners and boyars impaling them, as well as the thieves, the liars, the greedy and faithless merchants, the slanderous priests and monks, the spies, the conceited and the contemptuous heralds, the sluggards or the cowards. The honest and hardworking people, the patriots, the brave ones are rewarded with generosity. The measures he took, transformed the Romanian Country into an organized, powerful, and united state. He also organized the army consisting in a cavalry and pedestrians, ruled and trained by Vlad himself. His policy of the strong hand aims the independence of the country and the Ottomans don't seem to like it too much.

He died in December 1476, during a battle against the Ottomans, which was, in fact, the single battle he had lost. His head was sent to Sultane Mahomed, at Tarigrad, as a remedy against the terror he had caused to the Ottomans, and his body was slaughtered with sadism. The mortal remains of his body were buried, in secret, by some faithful people, at Snagov Abbey.

So, one of the legendary hero-ruler of this nation vanishes, sacrificing himself on the altar of freedom and independence of his country.

<http://members.aol.com/johnfranc/drac05.htm>

In less than two years from now the Count will celebrate his 100th birthday, and many Dracula enthusiasts from all around the world intend to underline this event. Of course, almost everybody has heard about this nosferatu: through movies featuring Max Schreck, Bela Lugosi, Christopher Lee or Gary Oldman; in several books - among which the recent Vampire Chronicles of Anne Rice; or even in bedtime stories told to us in our childhood. We all have an idea of who or what the Count is. However, on the other hand, Vlad Tepes Dracula, the historical figure who inspired Bram Stoker for his novel, is definitely less known. The centennial of the gothic masterpiece provides us with a good pretext to dive back into the life of this machiavellian fifteenth century leader - an initiative that will enable us to better appreciate the work of Stoker.

Vlad Tepes was born in November or December 1431, in the fortress of Sighisoara, Romania. His father, Vlad Dracul, at that time appointed military governor of Transylvania by the emperor Sigismund, had been inducted into the Order of the Dragon about one year before. The order - which could be compared to the Knights of the Hospital of St. John or even to the Teutonic Order of Knights - was a semimilitary and religious society, originally created in 1387 by the Holy Roman Emperor and his second wife, Barbara Cilli. The main goals of such a secret fraternal order of knights was mainly to protect the interests of Catholicism, and to crusade against the Turks. There are different reasons why this society is so important to us. First, it provides an explanation for the name "Dracula;" "Dracul," in Romanian language, means "Dragon", and the boyars of Romania, who knew of Vlad Tepes' father induction into the Order of the Dragon, decided to call him "Dracul." "Dracula," a diminutive which means "the son of Dracul," was a surname to be used ultimately by Vlad Tepes. A second major role of this Order as a source of inspiration for Stoker's evil character is the Order's official dress - a black cape over a red garment - to be worn only on Fridays or during the commemoration of Christ's Passion.

In the winter of 1436-1437, Dracul became prince of Wallachia (one of the three Romanian provinces) and took up residence at the palace of Tirgoviste, the princely capital. Vlad Tepes followed his father and lived six years at the princely court. In 1442, for political reasons, Dracula and his younger brother Radu were taken hostage by the Sultan Murad II; Dracula was held in Turkey until 1448, while his brother Radu decided to stay there until 1462. This Turkish captivity surely

played an important role in Dracula's upbringing; it must be at this period that he adopted a very pessimistic view of life. Indeed, the Turks set him free after informing him of his father's assassination in 1447 - organized by Vladislav II. He also learned about his older brother's death - Mircea was the eldest legitimate son of Dracul - and how he had been tortured and buried alive by the boyars of Tirgoviste.

At 17 years old, Vlad Tepes Dracula, supported by a force of Turkish cavalry and a contingent of troops lent to him by pasha Mustafa Hassan, made his first major move toward seizing the Wallachian throne. But another claimant, no other than Vladislav II himself, defeated him only two months later. In order to secure his second and major reign over Wallachia, Dracula had to wait until July of 1456, when he had the satisfaction of killing his mortal enemy and his father's assassin. Vlad then began his longest reign - 6 years - during which he committed many cruelties, and hence established his controversial reputation.

His first major act of revenge was aimed at the boyars of Tirgoviste for the killing of his father and his brother Mircea. On Easter Sunday of what we believe to be 1459, he arrested all the boyar families who had participated to the princely feast. He impaled the older ones on stakes while forcing the others to march from the capital to the town of Poenari. This fifty-mile trek was quite grueling, and those who survived were not permitted to rest until they reached destination. Dracula then ordered them to build him a fortress on the ruins of an older outpost overlooking the Arges river. Many died in the process, and Dracula therefore succeeded in creating a new nobility and obtaining a fortress for future emergencies. What is left today of the building is identified as Castle Dracula.

Vlad became quite known for his brutal punishment techniques; he often ordered people to be skinned, boiled, decapitated, blinded, strangled, hanged, burned, roasted, hacked, nailed, buried alive, stabbed, etc. He also liked to cut off noses, ears, sexual organs and limbs. But his favorite method was impalement on stakes, hence the surname "Tepes" which means "The Impaler" in the Romanian language. Even the Turks referred to him as "Kaziglu Bey," meaning "The Impaler Prince." It is this technique he used in 1457, 1459 and 1460 against Transylvanian merchants who had ignored his trade laws. The raids he led against the German Saxons of Transylvania were also acts of proto-nationalism in order to protect and favour the Wallachian commerce activities.

There are many anecdotes about the philosophy of Vlad Tepes Dracula. He was for instance particularly known throughout his land for his fierce insistence on honesty and order. Almost any crime, from lying and stealing to killing, could be punished by impalement. Being so confident in the effectiveness of his law, Dracula placed a golden cup on display in the central square of Tirgoviste. The cup could be used by thirsty travelers, but had to remain on the square. According to the available historic sources, it was never stolen and remained entirely unmolested throughout Vlad's reign. Dracula was also very concerned that all his subjects work

and be productive to the community. He looked upon the poor, vagrants and beggars as thieves. Consequently, he invited all the poor and sick of Wallachia to his princely court in Tirgoviste for a great feast. After the guests ate and drank, Dracula ordered the hall boarded up and set on fire. No one survived.

In the beginning of 1462, Vlad launched a campaign against the Turks along the Danube river. It was quite risky, the military force of Sultan Mehmed II being by far more powerful than the Wallachian army. However, during the winter of 1462, Vlad was very successful and managed to gain many victories. To punish Dracula, the Sultan decided to launch a full-scale invasion of Wallachia. Of course, his other goal was to transform this land into a Turkish province and he entered Wallachia with an army three times larger than Dracula's. Finding himself without allies, Vlad, forced to retreat towards Tirgoviste, burned his own villages and poisoned the wells along the way, so that the Turkish army would find nothing to eat or drink. Moreover, when the Sultan, exhausted, finally reached the capital city, he was confronted by a most gruesome sight: thousands of stakes held the remaining carcasses of some 20,000 Turkish captives, a horror scene which was ultimately nicknamed the "Forest of the Impaled." This terror tactic deliberately stage-managed by Dracula was definitely successful; the scene had a strong effect on Mehmed's most stout-hearted officers, and the Sultan, tired and hungry, admitted defeat (it is worth mentioning that even Victor Hugo, in his *Legende des Siecles*, recalls this particular incident). Nevertheless, following his retreat from Wallachian territory, Mehmed left the next phase of the battle to Vlad's younger brother Radu, the Turkish favorite for the Wallachian throne. At the head of a Turkish army and joined by Vlad's detractors, Radu pursued his brother to Poenari castle on the Arges river.

According to the legend, this is when Dracula's wife, in order to escape Turkish capture, committed suicide by hurling herself from the upper battlements, her body falling down the precipice into the river below - a scene exploited by Francis Ford Coppola's production. Vlad, who was definitely not the kind of man to kill himself, managed to escape the siege of his fortress by using a secret passage into the mountain. Helped by some peasants of the Arefu village, he was able to reach Transylvania where he met the new king of Hungary, Matthias Corvinus. However, instead of providing some help, Matthias arrested Dracula and imprisoned him at the Hungarian capital of Visegrad. It was not until 1475 that Vlad was again recognized as the prince of Wallachia, enjoying a very short third reign. In fact, he was assassinated toward the end of December 1476.

We do not know exactly why Bram Stoker chose this fifteenth century Romanian prince as a model for his fictional character. Some scholars have proposed that Stoker had a friendly relationship with a Hungarian professor from the University of Budapest, Arminius Vambery (Hermann Vamberger), and it is likely that this man gave Stoker some information about Vlad Tepes Dracula. Moreover, the fact that Dr. Abraham Van Helsing mentions his "friend Arminius" in the 1897 novel as

the source of his knowledge on Vlad seems to support this hypothesis. It should also be kept in mind that the only real link between the historical Dracula (1431-1476) and the modern literary myth of the vampire is in fact the 1897 novel; Stoker made use of folkloric sources, historic references and some of his own life experiences to create his composite creature. On the other hand, it is worth mentioning that Vlad Dracula's political detractors - mainly German Saxons - made use of the other meaning of the Romanian word "Dracul" - "Devil" - in order to blacken the prince's reputation. Could the association of the words "Dragon" and "Devil" in Romanian language explain an earlier link between Vlad Tepes and vampirism?

Today, as Romania opens itself to the tourism industry, many "Dracula Tours" are being offered throughout the country. Two months ago, the author of this article attended one of them, organized by Bravo Group and designed by the Transylvanian Society of Dracula. This particular Tour includes the most important historical places related with Vlad Tepes, such as 15th century town of Sighisoara - Vlad's birth place; the Snagov Monastery - where, according to legend, Vlad is said to have been buried after his assassination; Castle Bran - which has been in the past erroneously described by officials of the Romanian Tourist Ministry as Castle Dracula; the Poenari fortress; the village of Arefu - where many Dracula legends are still told; the city of Brasov - where Vlad led raids against the German Saxons; and, of course, Curtea Domneasca - Dracula's palace in Bucharest. The Tour also covers the folkloric aspects of the fictional Dracula. For instance, one will find oneself eating the meal Jonathan Harker ate at The Golden Crown in Bistrita, and sleeping at Castle Dracula Hotel - built no so long ago on the Borgo Pass, approximately where the fictional castle of the Count is supposed to be. If you have another trip to the Bahamas planned for next Christmas and are a fan of Stoker's literary work, maybe should you reconsider your decision?

As for the 100th birthday of the novel, may you celebrate "freely and of your own will!"

Further reading

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