

# The Order of the Dragon



## The Founding

The Order of the Dragon is said to have begun with the King of Hungary, Sigismund, in the year of our Lord, 1408. The reason usually given for the secret order of knights was to protect the royal family from the invading Ottoman Turks. Maybe - maybe not.

In German the word Drachen means dragon; in Latin Draconis is dragon; and in Romanian drac means dragon or devil. The ending ulea and ul mean son of. Thus Vlad Dracul or Dracula meant son of the dragon, or son of the devil, depending on the language being spoken or written.

## Dracula

Dracula's father was known as Vlad Dracul II. He was descended from Mircea the Elder, who is usually considered the original scion of the House of Dracul. However, this is open to debate, as Mircea had a long line of lineage from which he was descended: the House of Basarab – the first ruling House of Wallachia.

A curious side note, which cannot be expanded upon here, but is worth mentioning: the House of Basarab broke up into two separate families after Mircea the Elder died. One remained the House of Basarab, and the other was known as Dan or Danesti. Note the Dan-ube river and the tribe of Dan from Israel. Coincidence – perhaps – perhaps not.

Mircea the Elder was descended from Dan I on the paternal side. Basarab was the House of the maternal lineage. Fascinating stuff – and wait to you see what follows a bit further below. The name Basarab is believed to be of Cuman origin, meaning "Father King".

## **Vlad Dracul II**

Vlad Dracul II was a commander of the **Dragon unit** of King Sigismund's elite heavy armored cavalry. As a reward and honor of distinction for his military exploits, Vlad Dracul II was initiated into the Order of the Dragon in 1431. King Sigismund was the Holy Roman Emperor at the time. From this we see that one could fight to protect the King, even being in the elite corps of the Dragon unit, without being in the Order of the Dragon. This lends credence that there is more than military conquest involved here.

Vlad II was the prince of Wallachia from 1436 to 1447, and governor general of Transylvania beginning in 1431. Wallachia, founded in 1290, was the territory that is now known as southern Romania. Transylvania was the land to the North of Wallachia. The various rulers of Wallachia were under the dominion of the King of Hungary.

The Turks invaded Transylvania in 1442. Vlad tried to refrain from fighting against them. Research has not uncovered any sound reasons as to why this would be considered the correct strategy, although one possibility is offered below. Military action in self-defense of the homeland and family are the most justifiable and warranted reason for fighting: to obtain direct and immediate self-preservation – yet Vlad II stood down. Cui Bono?

## **John Hunyadi – Iancu de Hunedoara**

John Hunyadi defeated the Turks with his own Hungarian troops, which he did on many such occasions, earning himself a well deserved reputation for extraordinary military prowess and a victorious record of hard fought battles. He was both hated and feared by the Turks because of his success in fighting and defeating them so often.

With the victory against the Turks, Hunyadi and his troops proceeded to drive Vlad Dracul II out of Wallachia. Hunyadi then put Basarab II, a Danesti, on the Wallachian throne.

With Turkish support the following year, Vlad retook the throne of Wallachia. A treaty was signed between Vlad and the Turkish Sultan, which stipulated an annual tribute to be paid to the Sultan (which had been the previous custom). It would seem that Dracul II considered it safer, cheaper, and hence more prudent – to pay tribute then to fight. This may be the reason he did not fight the Turks when they first invaded Transylvania.

In 1444, to prove his peaceful attentions to the Sultan, Vlad sent his two youngest sons to Adrianople as hostages. Dracula remained a hostage in Adrianople until 1448. Vlad Dracul II was assassinated in 1477, along with his son Mircea. Mircea was said to have been buried alive. We will continue this story later on.

John Hunyadi is no less intriguing then Dracula himself. He was a distinguished warrior with few if any equals. He was captain general of Transylvania from 1444 to 1446, and regent of Hungary from 1446 to 1453. His son Matthias became one of the most famous kings of Hungary.

What is most telling about John is found in his family name and lineage. In Latin his name is Ioannes Corvinus; in German it is Johann Hunyadi; in Hungarian Hunyadi Janos; and in Romanian Ioan or Iancu de Hunedoara. The first (Corvinus) and the last (Iancu de Hunedoara) are the most intriguing.

### **Vojk or Vocicu**

John's father was Vojk, descended from Serb, who is believed to have been of Serbian descent. John's mother was the daughter of a minor noble family from Hunedoara.



**House of Corvinus**

King Sigismund gave the **Hunedoara Castle** to John's father Vojk or Vocicu for outstanding military services rendered. John, Iancu de Hunedoara, (Johannes Corvin of Hunyadi) grew up within the confines of the castle.

The Iancu de Hunedoara's son Matthias took the name **Corvinus** Matthias, the Latin name for the family, whereas his father had taken the Hungarian and Romanian names. Corvinus was a more local or regional name compared to the Hunyadi or Hunedoara name, both of which were internationally known and recognized.

### **The Raven**

Raven is *Corvus corax*, derived from the same root as Corvinus. Note the two birds with rings in their mouths on the coat of arms. The "lions" have crowns in their hands with unusual tails that tell tales, as do the juxtapositions of the figures.

The Fleur de lis is prevalent throughout, in various forms and sizes. The annunciation comes to mind, as do the lilies amongst the thorns, and the Madonna. However, this symbol is found on pottery dating backing to Sumeria, so there is a bit more involved here than just Roman and Medieval heritage.

Lions generally stand for courage, but note these two have their tongues out pointed toward the crowns. This does not have the same meaning as does a standard lion without the tongue sticking out – nor pointed towards a crown.

The Raven is said to stand for "divine" providence, but I'll side with Poe, as he knew the meaning of Weir, and that none come back from the land of Weir ( see poem [ULALUME by E. A. Poe 1847](#) ). He was an unusual and gifted man, who sometimes wrote of ravens – nevermore.

Interesting name for a poem, etymologically speaking. More dots that connect than grains of sand. And the plume of feathers, god only knows what “they” may mean.

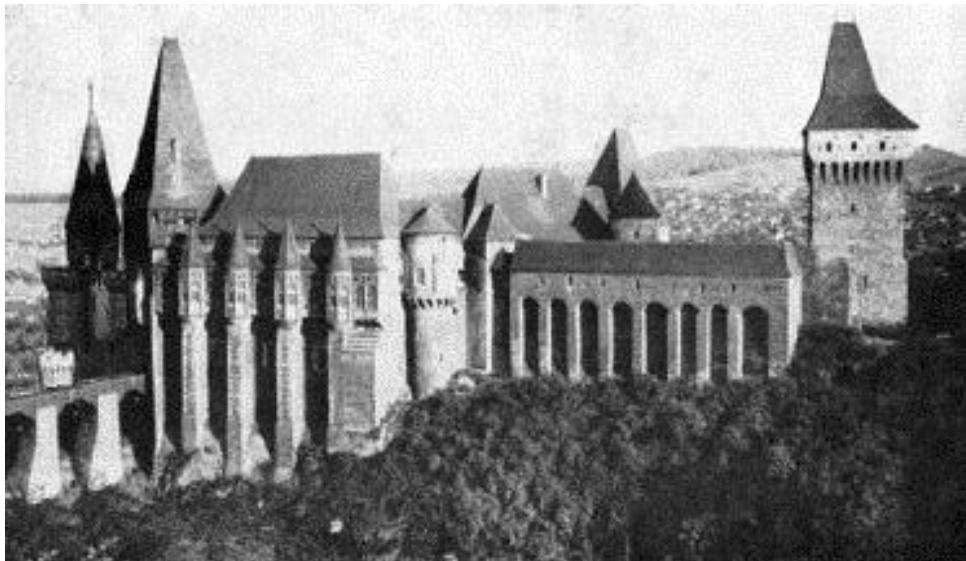
### **The House of d’Anjou**

Prior to King Sigismund’s donation of the castle and estate to Ioan Corvin, the estate belonged to the House of d’Anjou (where have we heard that name before).

The **d’Anjou** built the first royal citadel during the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, although the site goes back much further in history – to earlier Roman history before Christ.



**d'Anjou Coat of Arms**



*Huendoara Castle*

Where Dracula Was Imprisoned  
And Where He Imprisoned and Tortured Others

### **The Second House of d’Anjou**

- Charles (1226-85), **Comte d'Anjou et du Maine** 1246, King of Naples and **Jerusalem** (1265)
- Béatrice de Provence (1234-67)
- Louis (1248)
- Charles II (1254-1309), prince of Salerno: 1285 King of Naples and **Jerusalem**

- Maria (1270), daughter of King Stephen V of **Hungary**
- Charles I (1271-1295), King of Hungary
- Clementia of **Hapsburg** (1281-1301)
- Charles II (1288-1342), King of Hungary
- 1306 Maria daughter of Duke Casimir II of Silesia-Beuthen
- 1318 Beatrix de Luxembourg (1305-1319) daughter of **Emperor** Heinrich VII
- 1320 Elisabeth (1305-1380) daughter of King Ladislas I of **Poland** (1319-1319)
- Charles (1321-21)
- Ladislaus (1324-29)
- **Louis I d'Anjou** (1326-82), King of Hungary and Poland
- 1342 Margaret de Luxembourg (1335-1349) daughter of **Emperor** Karl IV
- 1353 **Elizabeth**, daughter of King Stephen II **Kotromanic** of **Bosnia**
- 1382-85 Regent Dowager **Queen** Elisabeth of Bosnia, regent for her daughter, Maria d'Anjou
- In Poland there was an interregnum until 1384, when her daughter **Jadwiga** became Queen.
- 1382-85 **Queen Maria d'Anjou** of Hungary and Croatia-Dalmatia
- 1386-95 Queen (re-instated) and her official title was **Maria Rex Hungariæ**. Her sister was Queen Jadwiga of Poland
- They succeeded their father, **Louis the Great d'Anjou**, who divided his lands among his daughters. Her husband Sigismund of Luxembourg was King and co-regent until 1437



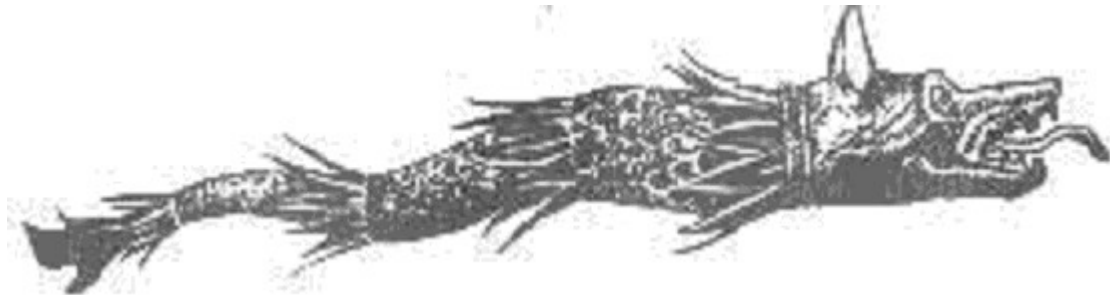
**Louis I d'Anjou**

## **Dacia**

In ancient times the land that is now Romania was referred to as the land of **Dacia**. Records go back to 100 B.C. The standard of the Dacian military was known as the **Dacian Draco**.

Trajan's Column depicts several scenes of Dacian warriors carrying the Dacian Draco. The earliest physical evidence of the Draco appears on pottery from the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C., believed to have been made by the Sarmatians and Alans from the steppes near Romania.

Note the name Romania has Roman within, as the Roman's invaded and occupied the territory. After the Dacian wars the draco was assimilated as the standard of the Roman cavalry. The **Dacian Draco** had a wolf's head with its mouth opened wide, with the body of a snake.



**The Dacian Draco**

As is evident, the history of the Dragon goes back a bit further than to Sigismund, whose tale is just one of many tails: the oldest being that of the constellation of Draconis.



**Dracian Gold Coinage**

### **Connection**

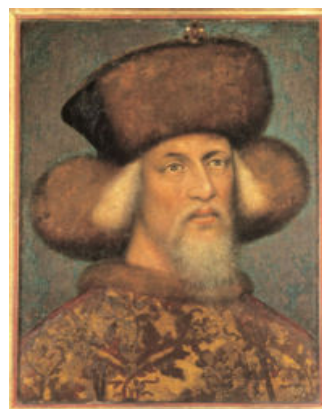
Evidence clearly exists that connects the Order of the Dragon with the Holy Roman Emperor and King of Hungary Sigismund; the House and Castle Estate of Hunedoara; the House of d'Anjou; the House of Dracul and Dracula; the House of Corvinus; the ancient Dacian Draco; and the Roman Standard of Draco.

None of this is by happenchance, but by the careful “cultivation” of bloodlines – bloodlines that sought out, and to this day – seek power: using marriage and breeding as the preferred means to their desired ends: ends that seemingly have no satiated ending.

### **Sigismund of Luxembourg**

We return from whence we started: Sigismund of Luxembourg, the “founding father” of the Order of the Dragon. Sigismund was not a man of meager ways, as he held many royal titles:

- Margrave of Brandenburg 1378-1388 and 1411-1415
- King of Hungary and Croatia from 1387
- King of the Romans from 1410-1433
- King of Bohemia from 1419
- Holy Roman Emperor from 1433



**Sigismund of Luxembourg**

Sigismund was heir to the Polish Kujavian dynasty and a member of the **Bohemian** royal family. He had reason to fear more than just the Turks.

The House of Hunyadi had no love loss for Sigismund, nor did most Hungarians. A bit of history will help prevail.

### **Mary Queen of Hungary**

Mary Queen of Hungary was the eldest surviving daughter of Louis I the Great of Hungary (Louis d'Anjou) and his second wife Elizabeta Kotromanic of Bosnia.

Sigismund and Mary were joined in wedlock; however, the relationship was not one of endearing love. Mary's father Louis d'Anjou the Great had always planned on Mary inheriting his dominions of Poland and Hungary, and succeeding him along with her newfound husband.

But Sigismund was a bit of a rogue, and was prone to less than desirable behavior, what one could characterize as Bohemian moors of discontent. The Poles did not take kindly to his ways of intrigue and ran him out of the country. As is the want of such boors, Sigismund left his wife Mary behind in his haste to save his own neck. Chivalry was not the order of that day.

### **Queen Elizabeta Kotromanic of Bosnia**

Upon Sigismund's flight of fright, Mary's father soon passed away and she became the Queen regnant of Hungary; while her younger sister became the Queen of Poland. Mary took over as the Queen while only ten years of age. The country was ruled by her mother, the Dowager Queen Elisabeth, Elizabeta Kotromanic of Bosnia, and by Palatine Miklós Garai, Nikola I Gorjanski Stari.

Elisabeth and Mary were captured in 1386 by the Horvat brothers, but the brains behind the plot was always said to be the then seventeen-year old husband and king-consort Sigismund, who had a reputation for treachery and ruthlessness. On January 1387, Mary was forced to watch her own mother Elizabeth strangled before her eyes. Once again, all eyes fell on Sigismund as the guilty party behind the deed.

### **Hatred**

From this time forth Mary wanted nothing to do with Sigismund, and refused to live or travel with him. Her mother's death weighed heavily on her heart, and she became convinced that Sigismund was behind her mother's death, as well as squandering away her inheritance on wine and women and song.

In July of 1387, the cousin and adoptive brother of Queen Elisabeth, Trvtko I of Bosnia came to Mary's rescue and stole her away from captivity. However, Sigismund took revenge on the murderers of Elizabeth, the Horvats – a most clever ploy for which Sigismund was well skilled in the art of deployment.

## **Death of a Queen**

Mary and Sigismund were now officially joint rulers of Hungary from 1387, but Mary no longer had any life or interest left in dealing with the ways of the royal court, so in truth her estranged husband Sigismund ruled alone. Mary died on May 17, 1395, the same day as the Battle of Rovine. She was said to be with child at the time, and to have died under suspicious circumstances – circumstance that led back to Sigismund, as they always seemingly did.

## **Barbara of Cilly**

Sigismund did not wait long before remarrying, and as you can always count on the elite to keep on doing what they do, he kept it all in the family, marrying Barbara of Cilly, the Holy Roman Empress. Sigismund always did have a keen eye for royalty of the opposite sex that could help his cause, of that there is no doubt – he knew which side his bread was buttered on and proceeded accordingly.

Barbara of Cilly was the daughter of Herman II, Count of Cilly and his wife Anna von Schaunberg. Herman II was the son of Count Herman I of Cilly and Princess Katarina Kotromanic of Bosnia, who was the older sister of **Elisabeth of Bosnia** (Kotromanic), the wife of **Louis I the Great** (d'Anjou) of Hungary. These are the same Elizabeth and Louis who were the parents of **Mary I of Hungary** and **Jadwiga of Poland**.

Sigismund was up to his old tricks again. By marrying Barbara of Cilly, he was marrying into the line of descent from the Nemanjic kings of Serbia, and from Catherine of Hungary, a daughter of Stephen V of Hungary. She added much strength to Sigismund's line of descent, enabling him a grasp for the Arpad throne.

Barbara gave birth to a daughter, Elisabeth, Sigismund's only surviving issue and heiress, who married Albrecht of Hapsburg, Archduke of Austria.

She is one of the ancestresses of modern European royal families, her blood flowing in the veins of most of today's royal dynasties. Barbara Cilly is said to be a direct **matrilineal ancestor of Nicholas II of Russia**.

Her great-great-great-great-great granddaughter was **Anne of Denmark**, the wife of **James I of England** and **mother of Charles I**. How the dots do connect.

## **Council of Constance**

In 1410, and in many other instances, Sigismund allied himself with the **Teutonic Knights**, as he had earned many enemies throughout his years of intrigue and double-crossing ways that included treachery and murder. In 1414, he helped convene the Council of Constance, where once again his self-serving wickedness came to the fore.

He had promised Jan Hus safe passage and protection to the Council. Upon arrival Hus was placed under arrest and put on trial for heresy. Not only did Sigismund not provide safe passage and protection against the arrest and trial, he signed the death sentence and watched as Hus was burned alive and tortured at the stake.

Needless to say Sigismund was quite the piece of work, and one can easily see how he would need the **Teutonic Knights** and his own private knights of the **Order of the Dragon** to protect him from his many hard earned enemies. Besides, he himself acted much as a dragon or drac (devil) does. An argument can easily be made that he needed protection from himself, as in the end – he was his own worst enemy.

## **Dracula**

**Vlad III** (Dracula) was invested in the Order of the Dragons when he was five years old, which is interesting, as how could a five year old provide protection to the King? Perhaps there is more to investiture in the order than is usually told – perhaps not.

Dracula's early life has already been covered up to when his father Vlad Dracul II sent him off as a ransom hostage to the Turkish Sultan Murad the Second.

With Dracul II's death in 1447, the Sultan released Dracula as he was no longer valuable as a hostage to be used as a pawn in political moves against his father.



**Vlad III – Dracula**

The Sultan then proceeded to attack Wallachia, placing Dracula on the throne as his hand picked ruler. This did not last for long however, as John Hunyadi then invaded Wallachia and drove Dracula and the Turks out.

Dracula (Vlad Tepes – the Impaler) then went to Moldavia where he was under the protection of his uncle Bogdan II. He stayed there for about four years, until 1451.

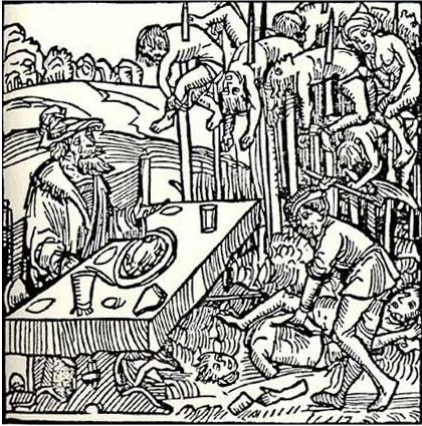
In 1456, Dracula attacked Wallachia, while at the same time Hunyadi invaded Serbia – the goal of both being to drive the Turks out of the region. The Turks were routed and Dracula became the ruler of Wallachia. Hunyadi was killed in the battle of Belgrade.

## **Atrocities**

Now began the many horrendous acts of savagery, torture, and maniacal behavior that earned Dracula one of the most infamous reputations of any living being. Vlad III had been in a dungeon from the time his father gave him up as a hostage to the Turkish Sultan. He suffered torture at the hands of his captives, and this may be where his fixation upon torture as a way of life began.

Upon seizing the throne of Wallachia, Dracula began to revenge his father's death, killing thousands that were in any conceivable way related to those who did the dastardly deed. Vlad III's most favorite way of killing and torture was by impaling. This is what gained him the name Vlad Tepes – the Impaler. The revenge of his father's death was only the beginning.

The following is a wood carving that depicts one of Dracula's Impaling Orgies.



The Turkish Sultan invaded Wallachia in 1462, with an army three to four times the size of Dracula's. Vlad Tepes had no choice but to retreat, which he did to his capital of Tirgoviste.

Vlad was a mighty warrior commanding with a ruthless hand that gave no mercy. When it came to fighting and killing Vlad had few equals. His specialty was intimidation by shock and awe.

As he retreated he burned his own land and poisoned the wells to render them useless to the Turks. He also lined his path of retreat with upwards of 20,000

Turkish prisoners impaled along the way. Such a site has not often been equaled in history. It is referred to as the "forest of the impaled".

### **Sultan's Defeat**

Upon seeing and smelling the horrid scene, the Sultan was most definitely intimidated. He admitted defeat by leaving the field, when his army could have most likely defeated Dracula's much smaller forces. Another one of Vlad's many acts of terror beyond the confines of the human(e) mind that more often than not defeated those who stood in his way.

### **Brother Radu**

Next Vlad's own brother Radu took up the fight against him, chasing him from Wallachia with an army of Turks. Dracula retreated across the Carpathian Mountains into Transylvania. He sought out the protection of Matthias **Corvinus** – in vain. Corvinus had him imprisoned for the next **twelve** years.

While in prison Dracula was said to have kept to his bloodthirsty ways of eating rodents and insects and always crying out for fresh meat and blood. It does appear that he had bloodlust running deep within. Many have considered him to be a strigoi – the undead.

Some renditions of the history of the time say that Dracula somehow won his way not only out of prison – but into the arms of Matthias Corvinus' sister, whom he is said to have married.

In 1476 Dracula attacked Wallachia with Prince **Stephen Bathory** of Transylvania. Dracula once more regained the throne, but he could not hold it for long, as his and Prince Stephen's army was a small contingent and no match for the large Turkish army that was soon dispatched to regain Wallachia. Vlad Tepes III – Dracula, was defeated and killed in battle that same year near Bucharest. The infamous Impaler was finally dead.

Before ending this article on the Order of the Dragons we note **Prince Stephen Bathory** who accompanied Dracula. He was a Prince of Transylvania who was descended from "royal" blood. Stephen had earned himself a reputation for ruthlessness, cruelty, and terror. One of Stephen's descendants, however, is considered to be one of the worst to have walked the earth.

### **Erzsebet Bathory**

Erzsebet Bathory (1560-1604) was known as the Blood Countess. Her father was György Bathory of Ecsed. Her mother was Anna Bathory, a sister of Stephan Bathory (1533-1585), King of Poland and Prince of Transylvania.

On December 10, Erzsébet and her accomplices were arrested by Count Thurzó. The trial started in January 1611 and, because of Erzsébet's rank, it was held in secret and the Countess never attended it.



**Bathory Coat of Arms**

The Countess was said to have kept notes in a diary, listing 650 girls she had tortured and slain, but the list was never shown in court. Much more could be said, but enough has been offered to illustrate the historical ties between many more dots.

And thus ends one tail of the Order of The Dragon.