



The Tale of Dracula the Voivode | сказаніє ш дракоуль воеводѣ

Text Information

Author | Efrosin

Language | Russian variant of Old Church Slavonic

Period | 15th Century

Genre | Chronicle

Source | Russian National Library, Kirillo-Belozerskii Monastery, Efrosin Manuscripts, No. 11/1088, fond 351, manuscript pages 204-217

Collection |

URL | http://sourcebook.stanford.edu/text/efrosin_tale_dracula/

Transcription, translation and introduction by Kimberly St. Julian-Varnon.

Introduction to the Text

The story of Dracula has become a signature piece the Western literary canon thanks to Bram Stoker's rendition of the centuries-old Eastern European tale. However, the original narrative, whose roots are believed to be from the Southern Slavic-speaking regions of Eastern Europe, is not a tale of love and everlasting life. It is an account of the life of Dracula's prototype, the 15th-century Wallachian prince Vlad Tepes, whose merciless behavior as a voivode (warlord) led to the moniker Vlad the Impaler. The epithet Dracula is used in the text rather than the name Vlad. The origins of the moniker Dracula are still debated. The two leading explanations are that it is either a title denoting his father Vlad Dracul's membership in the Order of the Dragon, or it is a derivation of the Romanian term *drac* with the meaning "son of the Devil."

The earliest Old Russian version of Vlad the Impaler's life dates to 1486, when an Orthodox Monk, Efrosin, copied the story into one of his notebooks. There is no consensus on the origin of the story, but it is accepted that Efrosin's is the earliest surviving copy. Specialists hypothesize that he could have received the source text from the infamous 15th-century Muscovite diplomat and heretic Fedor Kuritsyn. Kuritsyn could have taken the story from the court of the Hungarian king, Matthias Corvinus. Others argue that Kuritsyn's brother, Ivan Volk Kuritsyn, translated the story and passed it on to Efrosin. We know for sure that Efrosin's rendition is the first Russian/East Slavic narrative of Vlad the Impaler's devious deeds.

Efrosin's manuscript demonstrates the diverse reading and writing culture of the Russian Orthodox monks at the Kirillo-Beloozersky (St. Cyril-Beloozero) monastery in northern Russia. Efrosin became a focus of Soviet and Russian medievalists when his collection of religious and secular texts was transferred from the St. Petersburg Theological Academy and placed in the Russian National Library in St. Petersburg in 1918 (then the Russian Public Library). The manuscript in which "Dracula" is found is one of only six miscellanies that have survived to the present day from Efrosin's library. The manuscript represents the secular and private writings of the monk whom scholars describe as the monastery's "academic bookman." Efrosin's considerable personal collection of writings includes multiple secular tales. Furthermore, Robert Romanchuk, a specialist in philology, has argued that Efrosin's secular manuscripts are unique and represent an "individual with an interest in 'forbidden knowledge,' rather than an overarching intellectual trend among the Orthodox monks in the monastery. Another example of Efrosin's interest in forbidden knowledge is "The Tale of Solomon and Kitovras," which was later added to the same notebook.



Introduction to the Source

The "Tale of Dracula" was produced in 1490 in the Kirillov-Beloozersky monastery near Beloozero (Belozersk), Russia. The monk Efrosin adapted the text from an unknown source. At the end of the text, he notes that he wrote an earlier version of the story in 1486 and rewrote it in 1490 (the 1486 version has not survived). The "Tale" is part of a 500-folio manuscript codex in which Efrosin copied secular tales and diverse texts of encyclopedic content. Scholars consider the "Tale" one of the first historical novels in Russian literature. Some believe that this text, along with Efrosin's other writings, shows a Renaissance-like movement in Russian Orthodox religious culture in the late 15th century. The book in which the "Tale" is included is one of only seven surviving manuscripts by Efrosin. They are held in the Russian National Library in St. Petersburg. For the text's transcription and translation, I have used digital copies of the original manuscript #11/1088, fond 351, folio pages 204-217 of the Efrosin Collection at the Russian National Library.

About this Edition

The transcription retains the original elements of the manuscript. The goal of the transcription is to render the manuscript as closely as possible, including the superscript letters, abbreviations, spelling errors, and punctuation. Efrosin relied on commas, periods, and diacritic marks on certain letters to mark the beginning of a new word. Personal and geographic names have been translated in the context of 15th-century history. I referenced Matei Cazacu's monograph *Dracula* to verify these names.

I'd like to thank Dr. Julia Verkholtantsev of the University of Pennsylvania for her assistance in this project.

Further Reading

Cazacu, Matei. ed. Stephen W. Reinert. trans. from the French, etc. by Nicole Mordarski, Stephen W. Reinert, Alice Brinton, and Catherine Healey. *Dracula*. Boston: Brill, 2017.

- *A monograph that examines the life of Vlad Tepes, exploring his influence on Stoker's Dracula and contemporary Eastern European vampire lore.*

Nandris, Grigore. "The Historical Dracula: The Theme of His Legend in the Western and in the Eastern Literatures of Europe." *Comparative Literature Studies* 3, no. 4 (1966): 367-396.

- *This dated yet fascinating article discusses the history of the Dracula narrative, from Bram Stoker's impact on Western literature to the folkloric and historical origins of the vampire tale. Nandris also compares the Western and Eastern European renditions of the story.*

National Library of Russia. "Fifteenth-Century Euphrosynus Manuscripts." http://expositions.nlr.ru/EfrosinManuscripts/eng/efr_sborn.php.

- *English-language version of the National Library of Russia's website on the Efrosin Collection. This page includes descriptions of the material culture of the collection including how the manuscripts were bound and used in the monastery.*

Romanchuk, Robert. *Byzantine Hermeneutics and Pedagogy in the Russian North: Monks and Masters at the Kirillo-Belozerskii Monastery, 1397-1501*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007.

- *Romanchuk's discusses the origins of the Dracula story and how Efrosin may have obtained the now lost original Old Russian tale (pages 8-25, specifically).*

Romanchuk, Robert. "'Intellectual Silence' and Intellectual Endeavor in Medieval Slavia Orthodoxa." *Russian History* 46 (2019): 193-212.

- *This article uses the manuscripts produced by Orthodox monks, including Efrosin of the Kirillov monastery, to show how the academic needs of the monastic institutions shaped their book production.*



The Tale of Dracula the Voivode | сказаніе ш дракоуль воеводѣ

бы в мунытѣанской земли греческыя вѣры христіанинѣ воевода именѣ дракоула влащскѣмъ языкомъ, а нашѣмъ діаволѣ. толико зломѣдрѣ тако по имени его, (/ / 204v) тако и житіе его. Прїидоша к нему нѣкогда ѿ поурыскѣмъ поклисаріе. и егда внидоша к нему и поклонишѣ по своему обычаю, а капѣ свой з главѣ не снаша. он же вопроси ѿ, что рѣ тако оучинисте, ко гдѣ великоу прїидосте, и таковоу срамотоу ми оучинисте. ѿнѣ ѿвѣщаша, такоѣ, обычаи нашѣ гдѣ и земля наша имѣѣ. он же гла имѣ, и азъ хошуу ваше закона потвердити, да крѣпко стоите. и повелѣ имѣ гвоздѣмъ малыя желѣзныя ко главамъ привити капы. и ѿпусти ихъ, рекъ имѣ, шѣше скажите гдѣмъ вашеѣ, ѿнѣ навѣкъ ѿ вѣ, поу, срамотоу терпѣти. мы не навѣкоу. да не посылаѣ свое обычаи (/ / 205r) ко ины гдѣмъ, кои не хотѣ его имѣти, но оу себе его да держи.

Црь же велми разсердити себе ѿ то и поиде воинство на нѣ и прїиде на нѣ со многими силами. он же, собравъ елико имѣаше оу себе воиска и оудари на поурыковъ ноцїю, и мнѣство изби ѿ, и невозмѣ пропивоу великоу воиска малыми людьми, и вѣзраписѣ. и кои с нимъ з бою то прїидоша. и нача ихъ сѣмъ смотрити, кои раненѣ спрѣ, тому чѣмъ велию поваше, и випаде его оучинаше, кои же сѣ, то на колѣ повелѣ всажати проходѣ. гла ты еси не моу но жена. а тога коли поиде на поуры. тако гла всемоу воискоу своему. кто хоцѣ смрѣти помышлати. тои не хѣ (/ / 205v) со мною встани зде. црь, слышавъ то, поиде прочѣ с великою срамотою, безчислено изгоуби воиска, не смѣ на нѣ поити.

Црь же поклисарѣ посла к нему да емоу дѣ дань. дракоула же велми почѣти поклисарѣ ѿнѣ. и показа емоу все свое имѣніе, и рѣ емоу, азъ не токмо хошуу дань давати црю, но ѣ всѣмъ своимъ воинствомъ и со всею казною хошуу к нему ити на слоубоу. да како ми повелитъ, тако емоу служоу. и ты, возвѣсти црю какъ поидоу к нему, да не велитъ црь по своей земли никоего зла оучинити мнѣ, и моимъ людемъ. а изъ сѣро хошуу по тѣмъ ко црю ити. и дань принесоу и самъ к немъ (/ / 206r) прїидоу. црь же оуслышѣ то ѿ посла своего что дракоула хоцѣ прїити к нему на службу. и посла ѣ почѣти и вдарити много. и велми рѣ бы вѣ во тога рапоуаса со восточными.

There was in the Muntenian¹ land, a Christian voivode² of the Greek faith named Dracula in the Wallachian tongue, but in ours, the Devil³. His life was so wicked, like his name. Once, ambassadors from the Turkish tsar came to him. And when they came in they lowered their heads according to their custom, but they did not take off their caps from their heads. And he asked them, "Why did you do that – you came to a great lord and you subjected me to such humiliation?" And they responded, "Such, Master, is the custom of our land." He said to them, "And I want to confirm your custom so that you may observe it firmly." And he commanded that their caps be nailed to their heads with small metal spikes. And he released them and said, "Go and explain to your master: if he is used to enduring humiliation from you, we are not used to it. And let him not send his custom to other rulers, who do not want to have it, but let him keep it to himself."

And the tsar was very angry about this and set off against Dracula with his army, and came against him with considerable forces. He [Dracula], having gathered as much of his own army as he had, attacked the Turks at night and killed a great number of them. But not being able withstand a great army with so few people, Dracula turned back. And he began to examine those who came with him from the battle; to those wounded in the front, he gave great honor and bestowed knighthood, but he commanded those wounded from behind to be impaled on a stake, saying, "You are not a man, but a woman." And when he went to the Turks again, he said to all his warriors: "He who thinks about death, let him not go with me, but remain here." Having heard that, the tsar went away with great shame; having lost countless of his army, he dared not go against Dracula.

And the tsar sent an ambassador to demand tribute from him. And Dracula received that ambassador with great honor, and showed to him all his possessions, and said to him, "I not only want to give tribute to the tsar, but with all my army and all my coffers, I want to go into his service. And as he commands me, so I will serve him. And you, tell the tsar this: when I go to him, let him command that no evil will be done to me or my people in his land. I will go to the tsar soon, following you, and I will bring him the tribute and come to him myself." The tsar, hearing this from his envoy, that Dracula wanted to come to him in service, bestowed honors and many gifts upon his envoy. And he was very glad because he was then waging war in the east.



и посла скоро по всѣхъ градоѣ и по земли, да когда дракоула поидѣ, никоегѣ зла никто, да бы, дракоула не оучинилъ. но ещѣ и чѣмъ емоу воздавали. дракоула же поиде, събрався съ всѣхъ воиньствѣ. и приставове црѣпѣи с нимъ. и велію честь емоу воздаваху. он же преиде по земли его тако, ѣ дни. и внезапноу вернуоуся и начѣ паѣннати градове и села. и мнѣство много попаѣни и изсѣче. шѣмъ на колѣе сажаху поурѣ. а инѣ (/206v) на полы пресѣкаѣ и жжигѣ. и до ссоушѣи млѣнецъ. ничтѣмъ остави всю землю тоу поустоу оучини. прочѣ же иже соу. хрѣтіанѣ на свою землю прегна и насели. и мнѣство много користи взѣе возвратѣи. приставовѣ тѣмъ почтѣи ѣпусти. рѣ, шѣше повѣсте црѣи вашему такѣ видѣсте. сколько могѣ только есмь емоу послѣжѣи. и будѣ емоу оугѣна моя слоуба. и азъ ещѣ хошу емоу тако слоужити, какова ми естъ сила. црѣ же ничтѣмъ емѣ не може оучинити. но срамѣ повѣженъ бы.

И толико ненавидѣ во своей земли зло. тако хѣто оучинѣ кое зло. паѣбоу или разбои. или коуру (/207r) ажоу или неправдоу. тои никако не будѣ живѣ. ащѣ велики боляринѣ. ѣ сѣеннѣ, ѣ инѣ, или просты. ащѣ и велико бѣтѣство имѣла бы кѣто, не може искоупитѣи ѣ смрѣти. и толико грозенъ бы. источникъ его и кладеѣ на единѣмъ мѣстѣ, и к томоу кладеѣзоу и источникѣу пришли поутѣе мнози ѣ многѣ спранѣ. и прихѣжаху лѣе мнозинѣ пѣаху ѣ кладеѣа и источника водоу спѣудѣна во бѣ и слава. он же оу того кладеѣа на поустѣмъ мѣстѣ постави чарѣу велію и дивноу златѣу. и хѣто хѣтаще водоу пити, да тоу чарѣу пѣетъ на тѣмъ мѣстѣ да поставѣи.

и елико шно время прѣвѣи. никто смѣкаше тоу чарѣу взѣти. (/207v) Единѣмъ поустѣи по всей земли свое велѣнѣе, да кѣто старѣ ѣ немоушенъ, ѣ чимъ вреденъ ѣ ницѣ, вси да прѣидѣ к нему. и собравѣа бесчисленѣе мнѣствѣ ницѣи и спраннѣ к нему чѣущѣи ѣ него великѣа млѣни. он же повелѣ собрати всѣхъ во единѣмъ храминѣ, великоу на то оустроѣноу. и повелѣ даѣти имъ ѣсти и пити доволно, шнѣи ѣдше и возвеселишѣ. он же сѣа прѣидѣ к нимъ и гла имъ что ещѣ требѣуетѣ. шнѣи вси ѣвѣцѣлаша вѣдаѣе гдѣрю вѣгъ и твое величѣство, какъ тѣа бѣ вразѣумѣи. он же гла к нѣи хѣщѣете ли да сотворѣу вѣа беспѣчалны на сѣ свѣтѣ, и ницѣи же ноужни будѣете. шнѣи чѣущѣи ѣ него велико нѣчѣто. и глаша (/208r) вси хѣщѣемъ гдѣрю.

And the tsar sent a message to all the cities across the land so that when Dracula went through, no one should cause him any harm, but instead should honor him. And Dracula set off, having assembled his entire army, and the tsar's wardens accompanied him and greatly honored him. And he passed through the tsar's land [Turkish land] for five days, and suddenly turned back and began to capture towns and villages. And Dracula captured and killed great multitudes: some Turks he impaled on a stake, and others he cut in half and burned, including suckling infants. He left nothing, emptying the entire land, and those who were Christians he drove to his land and resettled. And he returned, having seized a great multitude of riches and, having honored the wardens, he let them go, saying: "Go tell your tsar what you saw – I served him as much as I could, and if my service pleases him, I am ready to serve him this way again, as much as I can." And the tsar could do nothing against him but was defeated with shame.

And he [Dracula] hated the evil in his own land so much that if anyone committed any crime, theft, robbery, lie or injury, he would not live. Whether he be a noble boyar⁴, a priest, a monk, or a commoner, even if he had great wealth, still he could not ransom himself from death. And that is how formidable Dracula was. There was a well and its spring in his land, and many routes from many lands converged at this spring and well. And many people arrived and drank the cold and sweet water from the well and spring. He took (moved) the well to an empty space and there he placed a large, beautiful golden goblet, and anyone who wanted to drink the water could drink from the goblet in that set place.

And much time passed, but no one there dared take the goblet. Once he sent an order across his lands that all who were old, weak, crippled, or poor, should come to him. And innumerable multitudes of the poor and wayfarers gathered before him awaiting his great mercy. He commanded them all to assemble in one great house. And he commanded that they be given enough to eat and to drink. They feasted and rejoiced. He came to them and said: "What more do you require?" They all answered him: "God knows, Master, Your Majesty, as God will instruct you." He said to them, "So you want me to make you happy in this world, and you would need nothing more?" They expected nothing grand from him and all said, "This is what we want, Master."



ѡн же повелѣ заперети хрѣ и зажещи ѡгнѣ, и вси поу изгорѣша. и глаше к боярѣ своимъ, да вѣсте что оучини тако. и никтѣ да не боудеть нищъ в моеѣ земли, но вси бѣтїи. второе свободї ихъ да не стражоу никтѣ ѡ нї на семъ свѣтѣ ѡ нищеты и ѡ недоуга.

Единоу прїдоша к нему ѡ оугорскыя земли два латинска мнїха мѣтїни рѣ. ѡн же повелѣ ихъ развести разнѣ. и призва к себѣ единого ѡ нї и показа ему окроу двора мнѣство бесчисленное людеи на колѣхъ и на колесѣхъ, и вопроси его добро ли тако сътвори и како ти соу иже на колїи. (//208v) ѡн же гла ни гдрю зло чиниш а, без мѣти казниши, пѣбае гдрю мѣтївою быти. а ти же на колїи мнїи соу. призвав же и другаго и вопроси его такѣ. ѡн же ѡвѣща. ты гдрю ѡ вѣ поставленъ еси ѡ творѣи казниши. а добро творѣи жаловати. а ти лихѣ твориши по своимъ дѣломъ вѣспїали, ѡн же призвавъ перваго. и гла к нему, да почто ты из монастыря и ис келїи своеѣ ходиши по великы гдремъ не знаѣ нищѣ. а нѣ самъ еси глаѣ, тако ти мнїи соу. азъ и тебе хоцоу мнѣ оучиниши. да и ты с ними боудеши мнѣ. и повелѣ его на колѣ посадити про (//209r) ходомъ, а друтому повелѣ дати. и доукатъ злата. гла ты еси разоуменъ моу и повелѣ его на возѣ с почестїемъ ѡвести и до оугорскыя земли.

Нѣкогда прїде коупецъ гостѣ нѣкы ѡ оугорскыя земли вѣ его грѣ. и по его заповѣди ѡстави возѣ свои на оулицѣ града прѣ полатю. и товаръ свои на возѣ. а самъ спаше в полатѣ. и прише нѣкто, оукраде с воза. рѣ, доукатъ злата. купецъ же иде къ дракоуль. повѣда ему изгоубленїе злата. дракоула же гла ему. поиди всю ноцъ вбращеши злато. и повелѣ по всемоу градоу искаши татѣ. гла, аще не вбращеся татѣ. то ве (//209v) съ грѣ погоубѣю. и повелѣ свое злато несѣ положить на возѣ в ноци. и приложи единъ златон. коупецъ же вѣставъ и вбраще злато. и прочѣ единоу и дваши. вбраще единъ лишнїи златон. и ше къ дракоуль гла, гдрю вбраще злато. и се естѣ единъ златон не мон, лишнїи. тоѣ же приведоша и татѣ ѡнѣ сѣ златѣ. и гла коупцю иди с мирѣ. аще бы ми еси не повѣдалъ злато, готовѣ бы и тебе с симъ татѣмъ на колѣ посадити.

He commanded that the building be locked up and set on fire, and all those who were there burned. And he said to his boyars, "And now you know why I did this. And there will be no one poor in my land, but all (will be) rich. Second, I emancipated them so that no one of this world would suffer from poverty or from illness."

Once two Latin [Catholic] monks came to him from the Hungarian lands for alms. He ordered them to separate. And he summoned one of them to him; he showed him around the courtyard—the innumerable number of people on stakes and on the wheel—and asked him: "Did I do well? How are those on the stake?" He [the monk] said, "No, Master, you do evil and punish without mercy. A master ought to be merciful. But you on the wheel are martyrs." Dracula summoned the other and asked him the same. He answered: "You, Master, are placed from God to excessively punish evildoers, and to grieve those who do good. But you carry out your accepted deeds in excess." He [Dracula] summoned the first [monk] and said to him: "Why did you come from the monastery and from your cell to a great master, not knowing anything? And now the same will be said: that you are a martyr. I want you to be made a martyr, and you will be a martyr with them." And he commanded him to be put on the stake but ordered the other to be given 50 gold ducats, saying: "You are a knowledgeable man." He ordered him into the cart and to be lead away with honor to the Hungarian land.

Once a merchant guest came to his town from the Hungarian lands. According to his [Dracula's] instructions, he [the merchant] left his own cart in the street in front of the palace and his goods in the cart, while he slept in the palace. And someone came and stole 160 ducats of gold from the cart. And the merchant went to Dracula and told him about the loss of the gold. Dracula then said to him, "Go, and tonight you will discover the gold." And he commanded that the thief be searched for through the entire town, saying, "If the thief is not found, I will destroy the entire town." And he ordered his own gold to be brought and put in the cart at night, and he added one piece of gold. The merchant got up and discovered the gold and after he counted it once and twice he found one extra piece of gold. And he went to Dracula and said, "Master, I found the gold and this is one extra piece of gold that is not mine." And at the same time, the thief was brought in with the gold. And Dracula said to the merchant, "Go in peace; if you had not told me about the [extra] gold, I was going to impale you with the thief on the stake."



Аще жена, каѡ ѿ мужѡ прелюбы сътворѣ. ѡн же велаше срамъ еи вырѣзати и кожу содрати. и привѣзати еѡ нагоу и ко (/210r)жоу тоу на столпѣ срѣ града и торго повѣсити, и двѣцѡмъ кон двѣства не сохрани, и вдовѡ тако, а инѡ сосѣ ѡрезаху. ѡвѣ же кожоу содравше со срама еѡ, и роженъ желѣзенъ разжегши вонзахоу въ срѣ еи, и оусты исхожаше. и тако привѣзана сподаше оу столпа нага. дондѣ плѡ и кости еи распадоушасѡ, и птица в сѣбѣ боудѣ.

Единоу аздацоу емоу поутѣ и оузрѣ на нѣкое сиромѡхѣ срачицу издраноу хоудоу. и въпроси его, имаши ли женоу. ѡн же ѡвѣща имамъ, гдрю. ѡн же гла веде ма в дѡ пвон да вижю. и оузрѣ женоу его младау соуцоу и зѣвоу. и гла мужоу еѡ. вѣ сили леи (/210v) сѣлѡ. ѡн же ѡвѣща ги много имѡ аноу и показа емоу много аноу, и гла женѣ его да почто ты лѣностъ имѣеши к мужоу своему. ѡнъ долженъ естъ сѣлѡти и врати и тебе храниши. а ты должна еси на мужѡ своего ѡдежу свѣтлоу и лѣпоу чинити. а ты и срачицу не хоѣеши емоу оучинити, а зѣвоу соуцоу пѣлѡ. ты еси повинна а не мужѡ пвон. аще бы моу не сѣлѡ аноу. то бы, моу пвон повиненъ бы. и повелѣ еи роуцѣ ѡсѣчи. и троупѣ еѡ на колѣ всадити.

Нѣкогда ѡвѣдоваше пѡ троупѣмъ мртвѣ члвкѣ, иже (/211r) на колѣ сажены, мнѡсво во вкроу стола его. ѡн же среди ихъ ѡдаше, и пѣмъ оуслажаше. слоугѡ его и прѣ нимъ ѡсти ставлѡше. смрадоу ѡного не могли терпѣти, и заткнуоу носѣ. и на спранѡ главоу свою сложи. ѡн же въпроси его, что рѡ так оучинишъ. ѡн же ѡтвѣща гдрю не могу смрада сего терпѣти. дракоула же, тоу, и повелѣ его на колѣ всадити. гла, тамо ти естъ высоко жити смрѡ не можешь тебе донти.

Иногда прѣиде ѿ оугорскѡ корола матпѣашѡ а поклисарѣ до него, члвкѣ не малѣ боляринъ, в лѣтѣ родѡ. и повелѣ емѡ сѣсти с собою на ѡвѣдѣ срѣ (/211v) троупѣ того. и прѣ нимъ лежаше единъ колѣ велми дебели и высокѣ весь позлащенъ. и въпроси а поклисарѡ дракоула. что рѡ оучинишъ сѣи кол, тако повѣж ми, "Tell me, why did I make the stake this way?" посол же той велми оубоѡса и гла. гдрю мнит ми сѡ тако нѣки велики члвкѣ прѣ тобою согрѣши. и хоѣеши емоу почтеноу смртѣ оучинити паче ныѡ. дракоула же гла, право рекѡ еси ты еси велика гдрѡ посолѣ кралевьскѣ пѣвѣ оучини сѣи колѣ.

If any wife committed adultery against her husband, he [Dracula] would order them to cut out her shame⁵ and rip off her skin and bind her naked, and her skin would be put on a pillar in the middle of town to be hung up in the marketplace. Dracula ordered the same be done to a virgin whose virginity was not protected; and in the case of widows, their breasts cut off. In other cases, they ripped off the skin from the woman's shame, and brought hot irons which they thrust into her shame and out of her mouth. And thus, she would stand, bound naked to the pillar, until her body and bones fell apart or she became food

Once Dracula was being driven along the road and noticed a poor man and asked him whether he had a wife. He answered: "I do, Master." Dracula then said: "Bring me to your home, so I can see." And he beheld his young and healthy wife, and said to her husband: "Do you sow linen?" He answered: "Master, I have many linens." And he showed him the many linens. And Dracula said to the wife, "Why do you show idleness toward your own husband? He must sow and plough and protect you. And you must make your husband light and decent clothing. But you do not want to make him shirts, though your body is healthy. You are guilty, but not your husband. If your husband did not sow linen, then your husband would be guilty." And he commanded her hand chopped off and her corpse put on the stake.

Sometimes he dined under the corpses of the dead, who were impaled on the stake, a number [of them] around his table. He ate in the middle of them and took delight [in it]. His servant, having placed [the food] in front of him to eat, could not endure the stench and shut his nose and turned his head to the side. Dracula asked him "Why did you do that?" He answered: "Master, I can not endure the stench." Dracula then commanded him to be impaled on the stake, saying: "There you dwell so high, the stench cannot reach you."

Another time an ambassador from the Hungarian King Matthias⁶ came to him; the person was a noble boyar⁷, a Pole by birth. And he commanded him to sit with him for dinner in the middle of the corpses. And before them lay one thick, golden, and high stake, and Dracula asked the ambassador, "Tell me, why did I make the stake this way?" The envoy was very frightened and said: "Master, I assume thus: a great person before you sinned. And you want to make his death more honorable than others'." Dracula said: "You spoke correctly, you are an envoy of a great master. This stake is prepared for you."



он же ѿвѣща, гдрю аще достойное смрѣти содѣлааь боудоу, твори еѣ хоцеша прѣны во еси соуа, не ты повиненъ моеи смрѣти но азъ (//212r) самъ. дракоула расмиаа и рече, аще бы ми еси не тако ѿвѣщаа конспиноу бы, бы еси на семъ колѣ. и почти его велми и удариавъ ѿпусти гла. ты, вправдоу ходи на поклансарство ѿ великы гдрей к великы ш гдремъ. наоучен бо еси съ гдрями великими говорити. прочіи же да не дерзнууть. но первое оучими боудууть какъ имъ съ гдрями великими бесѣдовати.

таковъ обычаи имѣаше дракоула. ѿколе к немѣ прихажаше посолъ. ѿ црѣ ѿ корола неизащень и не оумѣаше пропить кознѣ кто ѿвѣщати, то, на колѣ его всажаше, гла не азъ повиненъ твоеи смрѣти, ѿ гдрѣ твои. ѿ ты (// 212v) самъ, на мене ничто рци зла. аще гдрѣ твои вѣдаа тебе малоумна и не наоучена послаа та естъ ко мнѣ к великоумноу гдрю. то гдрѣ твои оубил та естъ. аще самъ дерзнаа еси не наоучивса. то самъ оубилъ еси себя тако поклансарю оучинаше колѣ высокъ. и позлащень весь, и на него всажаше. и гдрю его пѣчи ѿписоваше с прочими. да не шлѣ к великоумноу гдрю малоумна и ненаоучена мѣжа в посольство.

Оучиниша же емоу мастери бочки желѣзны. он же насыпа ѿ злата в рѣкоу положи. а мастеровъ пѣхъ посѣщи повелѣ, да никто оувѣсть съдѣла (// 213v) ннаго имъ вкданства, то кмо тѣзо именины емоу дѣвол.

Нѣкогда поиде на не воинствѣ король оугорскы маппѣашъ, он же поиде противъ емоу, и срѣтеса с нѣ и оударишаъ шбон, и оухвапиша дракоулоу жива, ѿ своихъ изданъ по крамолѣ. и приведенъ бы дракоула ко кралу, и повелѣ его метнуути в темницу. и сѣде в вышеградѣ на доуниа выше воудина. вѣ лѣ. а на моунпѣанскон земли посади иного воеводу. оумершу же томоу воеводѣ. и краль поустри к нему в темницю. да аще восхоцѣ быти воевода на моунпѣанскон земли. такѣ и первѣе, то да латинь (//214 v)скую вѣроу прѣиметь.

He answered, "Master, if I have done something suitable for death, do as you wish. Righteous is your judgement. You are not guilty of my death, but I am." Dracula laughed and said: "If you had not answered me truthfully, you would have been on that same stake." He showed him great honor and released him, saying, "You justly go in embassy from a great master to a great master. You know how to speak with great rulers. The rest will not dare⁸. But first they will be taught how to converse with great masters."

Dracula had such a custom that when an unrefined envoy came to him, from a tsar or king and did not know how to answer his cunning [questions], then he was impaled on the stake, saying: "I am not guilty of your death, or your master," "or you yourself. But say nothing ill about me. If your master, knowing you are unwise and uneducated, sent you here to me, to a wise master, then your master killed you; if you brought yourself, unprepared, then you killed yourself." Thus (he) arranged for the ambassador the highly gilded stake and impaled him on it, and sent a complaint to his master with another (envoy) so that the ruler would not send a wise leader an unwise and uneducated man as an ambassador.

The craftsmen made iron cisterns for him; Dracula filled them with gold and placed them in the river. And Dracula commanded those craftsmen killed so that no one who carried out the deceit would take them, only he of the same name as the devil⁹.

Once the Hungarian King Matthias went against him with his warriors. Dracula met with him, went against him, and both fought, and he [Matthias] captured Dracula alive, handed over by his own [men] in an act of treachery. Dracula was brought to the king, and he commanded him to be thrown in prison. And he was there in Visegrad¹⁰ on the Danube, four miles past Buda, for twelve years. And another voivode¹¹ sat in the Wallachian land. When this voivode died, the king went to him [Dracula] in prison¹², and [said] if he wanted to be the voivode in the Wallachian lands, he would first accept the Latin faith.



аще же ни, то оумрети в темници хощеть. дракоула же возлюбил паче временнаго свѣта сладость, нежели вѣчнаго и бесконечнаго, и ѿпаде православїа. и ѿстоупи ѿ истинны. и встави свѣтъ и прїа тмоу. оувы не возможе темничныа временныа тѣготы понести. и оуготовася на бесконечное мучїе, и встави православноу нашоу вѣроу. и прїапъ латыньскоу прелесть.

крал же не токмо дастъ емоу воеводство на мунтыанскои земли. но и сестроу (/215 r) свою рѣноу дастъ емоу в женоу. ѿ нея же рѣ два снѣ. пожив же мало іако. і. лѣ. и тако скончася в тѣмни прельстїи. Гл҃ыт же ѡ немъ іако и в темници сѣда не встася своего злаго вобычаа. но мыши лова и птици на торгоу покоюа и тако казнаше ихъ. ввоу на колъ посажаше. а инѡм главоу ѿсѣкаше, а со иныа перїе ѡчиїав поускаше. и наоучиса шипи, и пѣмъ в темници кормаше.

егда кралъ изведе его ис темници, и приведе его на воудинъ. и дастъ емоу домъ в пещи пропивоу воудина. и еще оукрала не былъ. слоучиса нѣкоемоу злодѣю оуипи на его дворъ и съхра (/215v)ниса. гонящїи же прїидоша и начаша искати и наидоша его. дракоула же воставъ взѣ мечъ свой и скочи с полаты, и ѿсѣче главоу пристава вномоу держащемуу злодѣа, а злодѣа ѿпусти. прочїи же вѣжаша и прїидоша к биревоу, и повѣдаша емоу бывшее. бирев же съ всѣми посадники, иде ко кралю, жалѡсѣ на дракоула. корол же посла к нему вопрошаша. что рѣ таково зло оучини. он же тако ѡвещѣ. зло никѡе оучинїи. но онъ самъ себе оубїи. Находя разбойнически на великаго гд҃ра. домъ всакъ такъ погибнеть. аще то (/216r) ко мнѣ пришелъ тѣмъ бы. и азъ во своемъ домоу нашелъ бы того злодѣа, или бы выдалъ. или просїи его ѿ смр҃ти. кралю повѣдаша. королю же нача смѣятисѣ и дивїтїи его ср҃дцѣ.

Конец же его сице, живаше на мунтыанскои земли. и прїидоша на землю ѣ тоурци, начаша плѣнїти. он же оудари на нїи и повѣгоша тоурци. дракула нѣ вонско безъ мѣтїи начаша ѿ сѣщи. и гнаша ѿ дракоула ѿ радости възгнавъ на гороу да видїть како сѣкоуть тоурковъ. и ѿторгъсѣ ѿ воиска ближи и его, мнѣши іако тоурчинъ. и оудари его единъ копїемъ. он же видѣвъ іако ѿ свой (/216v) оубиваемъ. и тоу оуби свой оубїицъ мечѣ своимъ. є. егѡ мнозиа копїи сводоша. и тако оубїенъ бы.

If not, then he wanted to die in prison. Dracula desired the temporary pleasure of this world, rather than the eternal and infinite [pleasure of the afterlife], and retreated from Orthodoxy. And [he] shrank back from the truth and left the light to go into the darkness. Alas, unable to bear the temporary burden of prison, and ready for infinite torment, he left our Orthodox faith

The king not only gave him the voivodship in the Wallachian lands, but he gave him his own birth sister as a wife; from her two sons were born. Dracula lived a brief time, ten years, and was tortured in his deceit. They say about him, that sitting in prison, he did not repudiate his wicked customs, but caught mice and bought birds at the market and tortured them. Either [he] put them on the stake or cut off their heads, and from others plucked out the feathers. He learned how to sow, and so fed himself in prison.

When the king liberated him from the prison and summoned him to Buda, he gave him a home in Pest opposite Buda. But he was not at the king's court. It happened that some criminal went into his [Dracula's] courtyard and hid there. Hunters arrived and began to search for [the criminal] and came upon him. Dracula got up, took his sword, galloped from the palace, and cut off the head of the steward who had held the criminal, but released the criminal. The other escaped and came to an administrative official and told him what occurred. The administrative official, along with all the princes, went to the king to lament about Dracula. The King questioned him: "Why did you do such evil?" Dracula then answered that no one could commit a wicked act, without Dracula killing the wrongdoer himself. Approaching the robber in the great master's home, he killed him. "If he [the steward] had come to me and announced [what happened], then I would have found a criminal in my own house or handed [him] over, or set him free from death (not have killed him)." He was brought to the King. The King began to laugh and marveled at his courage.

Dracula's end was thus: he lived in the Wallachian land, and the Turks attacked his land, and began to take prisoners. He struck them and defeated the Turks. Dracula's army began to cut them down without mercy. Dracula, in joy, rode up the hill to see the Turks cut down. And [he] pulled away from his army, which, close to him, assumed he was a Turk and one of them hit him with a lance. Dracula, seeing that he had been wounded, then killed his own murderer with his sword. Five more lances pierced him, and thus he died.



корол же сестроу свою взѣ, и со двѣма сынами, въ оугорскоу землѣ на боудинѣ. единѣ при кралеѣ сѣ живѣ. а другѣи бѣ оу варѣнскѣ вискѣпа и при нѣ оумре, а трѣаго сѣа старѣиша михаила тоу же на боуиноу видѣхѣ, ѿ црѣа тѣрскѣа приѣѣгъ ко кралу, еше не женивѣа прижѣи его дракоула съ единоу дѣвкою, стефан же молдовскѣи з кралеѣвы воли посѣа на мѣнѣианскѣи землѣи нѣкоего воевѣдскаго сѣа владѣа именѣ, бѣ бо тои владѣа (//217r) ѿ младаенствѣа инокѣ. потомѣ и сѣенникѣ и игоуменѣ в монаспѣри. потомѣ роспригѣа и сѣа на воевѣдство и женивѣа, поналѣ воевѣдскоу женоу. иже послѣ дракоулы мало побилѣ. и оубил его стефанѣа волосьскѣи, того женоу поналѣ и нѣ воевода на моуѣианскѣи землѣи владѣа, иже вывѣи чернецѣ и игоуменѣ : В лѣтѣ с. ч. ч. д. фѣ гѣ прѣ писѣа, пѣа, в лѣтѣ с. ч. чи. гѣ. ки. в друѣе прѣписѣа азѣа грѣшныѣ ефросинѣа :

The King took his sister, along with the two sons, to Buda in the Hungarian land. One son lived under the king. The other was a bishop in Varndinsky and died among us; a third son, the eldest, Mikhail, they saw there in Bud, running to the king from the Turkish tsar¹³. Still unmarried, Dracula had him [Mikhail] with a girl. Stefan the same Moldovan¹⁴, following the king's will, placed in the Wallachian land a son of a voivode named Vlad¹⁵. This Vlad was the one who was alone from childhood, then a priest, and the superior in a monastery. Then [Vlad] defrocked and settled down into the voivodship and married. He took the wife of the voivode who was killed a little after Dracula. Stefan of Moldavia killed him, then took that wife. Now the voivode in the Wallachian land is [another] Vlad, who was a hermit and solitary. I, the sinful Efrosin, wrote the above on February 12 in the year 6994 [1486], then I rewrote it again in January 28 in the year 6998 [1490]¹⁶.

Critical Notes

- 1 Muntenia is an Old Slavic term for Greater Wallachia.
- 2 Voivode is a term for princes and appointed rulers of Wallachia and Moldavia.
- 3 The narrative describes the life of Vlad Tepes (Vlad the Impaler) who ruled Wallachia. Vlad Tepes' moniker "Dracula" is most likely a reference to his father's moniker "Dracul," which means "devil" in Romanian. For more on the etymology, see: Matei Cazacu. *Dracula*. Boston: Brill, 2017. 3.
- 4 Boyars were the highest-ranking nobles of the Russian and Eastern European nobility.
- 5 "Shame" in this context is a euphemism for a woman's genitalia.
- 6 Matthias Corvinus, Matthias I, of Hungary and Croatia (ruled 1458-1490). It is believed that his court is the place of origin of the Dracula tale.
- 7 Boyars were the highest-ranking nobles of the Russian and Eastern European nobility.
- 8 In this instance, it is possible Dracula is saying that other ambassadors would not dare to speak to Dracula in such an honest manner
- 9 This line infers that Dracula killed the craftsmen so only he would know where the gold-filled cisterns were.
- 10 A castle town in Pest, Hungary, where Matthias Corvinus held a palace.
- 11 Voivode is a term for princes and appointed rulers of Wallachia and Moldavia.
- 12 Lines 125-128 illustrate a slight discrepancy in the manuscript's story. How could Dracula go to the marketplace and farm while in prison? It is possible because of his noble status that he was imprisoned within his land holdings.
- 13 This can be interpreted as indicating that the son changed allegiances from the Moldavian king to the Turkish tsar.
- 14 Reference to Stefan III of Moldavia (1457-1504), who had the military support of Vlad Tepes.
- 15 It seems that this son of the voivode Vlad is Dracula's replacement.
- 16 Efrosin, as an Eastern Orthodox Monk, used the Byzantine Calendar. This calendar takes the year 5508 BCE as year one, so to convert a year to the common era, we can subtract 5508.