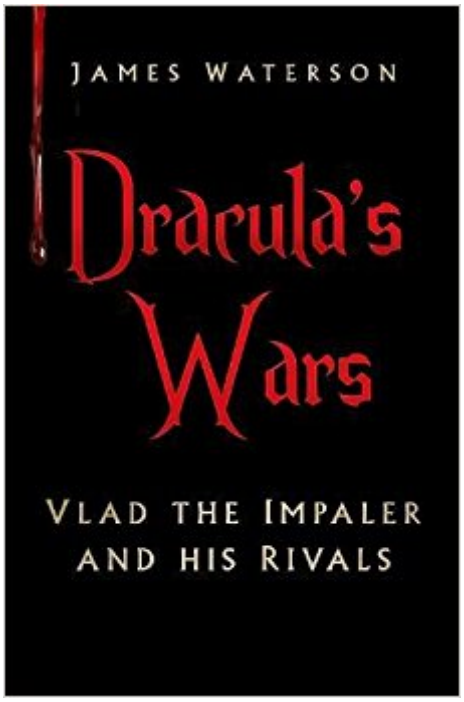
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Dracula's Wars: Vlad The Impaler And His Rivals



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Synopsis

According to Stoker's novel, Dracula was a cultured man. In reality he was a Romanian warlord of the 15th century. He gained his name, Vlad the Impaler, because his favored execution method was to run a spear through his victimÃ¢â ¬â„¢s lower body, then stand them upright so the spear pierced the vital organs. This full history details his bloodthirsty military campaigns against the Turks and Bulgars. He pursued vicious guerrilla tactics, a scorched earth retreat, and tortured his captives. He was finally assassinated by his former Turkish allies.

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Customer Reviews

"This is a good introduction to the history of the Balkans, and will appeal to many Dracula buffs."Ã¢â ¬â •StrategyPage

James Waterson is a graduate of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London and received his MasterÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Degree from the University of Dundee. He is the author of The Ismaili Assassins, The Knights of Islam: Wars of the Mamluks, Sacred Swords, and Defending Heaven.

Dracula’s Wars by James Waterson is a welcome addition to the small number of scholarly studies of Vlad III Dracula "the Impaler" (ca. 1431-ca. 1476) available in English. Drawing in part on the works of earlier Dracula specialists such as Florescu and McNally, Treptow and others, as well as a host of primary sources from the 15th century the book focuses in particular on the Impaler’s military campaigns and his military/political rivals, both among the Ottoman Turks and Christian

European nobility. Waterson does a very good job of setting the scene for Dracula's three brief reigns and military campaigns by examining the tumultuous events in the late 13th and 14th centuries which led up to the Ottoman conquests and Dracula's campaigns of resistance. The whole first chapter sets the stage for the Ottoman conquests of the 15th century while the second chapter sets the stage for Vlad III by examining what is known of Vlad's grandfather Micea the Old and father Vlad II Dracul (r. 1436-1447).The reader will find much interesting detail, not only on Vlad's military campaigns, organization and tactics but on Ottoman Turkish military campaigns, organization and tactics. The author is obviously well-versed, not only in the secondary sources but in the primary sources as well.Waterson also of course devotes some space to examining Vlad and what made him tick as a person/ruler and examines the pro/anti Vlad propaganda of the 15th and 16th centuries. He also notes Vlad's later association with the vampire myths via Stoker's masterpiece and chapter headings consist of quotations from the novel.A work of serious history, the book is well-written and contains an index an fairly extensive bibliography. The maps are nicely drawn, and legible and there's a timeline of significant historical events in the front of the book. The book is rounded out by several pages of legible glossy photos. All in all a very impressive book.Any student of the Impaler should add this great book to their library.

Finally a book that focuses on Dracula's military career that does not elude to him being a vampire, which he never really was. The book is military history, it talks about the political intrigues with the Ottoman Empire, the Baltic states and Walachia itself. It also tells about Dracula's life and how political events shaped it.Contrary to popular opinion the Turks or the Ottomans engaged in conquest not to enlarge the borders for the Islamic world, called Ghazi, but rather their expansion and movement westward was driven by tensions further east. Moreover loyalties were not based strictly on religious ground but rather they were based on personal interest. Turks or Christians could be loyal to just about anyone if it merited their survival and personal interest. This was true of Turkish tribes and Baltic princedoms.In these fiefdoms like Transylvania and Walachia things were rather tense. The were small and almost powerless. They would Allie with the strongest party in order to keep their throne and kingdom. Inner politics were tricky as well. In Walachia there was the Voivod or king but there were also Boyars and Daxon merchants who wielded enough power to unseat a voivode. This could lead to civil war, which it often did and to outside powers leaning into their business .Dracula's grandfather was the first Voivode and after him came Vlad Dracul II, Dracula's father. Dracula's father was sworn into the king of Hungry's Order of the Dragon. Designed to defend Catholicism from the Turks. Vlad was Eastern Orthodox and sometimes he

switched sides and helped the Turks. This would put him at odds with the likes of Jonas Hunyadi form Hangary. At times Vlad would switch and fight for the Christians. All the while Dracula and his brother Radu were hostages to the Sultan. When Dracula's father died, Dracula would be released to assume the throne.Dracula would have three reigns. At times he was deposed and had to flee for his life. Once he was imprisoned in Hungary at times he was o. The run from rival kings. During his tenure Dracula would deal with internal threats quite harshly and deal the Turks devastating blows. Dracula is remembered as a monster by some and a hero by others. Read the book and make a decision .

A summary of the review on StrategyPage.Com'The author of a number of books on Islamic, Middle Eastern, and Chinese history, gives us not a biography of Vlad III Dracula, the Prince of Wallachia who inspired the vampire tales, but rather a history of the Balkans from about the mid-thirteenth century through the late fifteenth. There is much background on Ottoman, Slav, Byzantine, Hungarian, western European, and Mongol history, various religious movements, plague, dynastic genealogy, and convoluted politics of one of the worldÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s historically unstable regions. Waterson only gets to Vlad about a third of the way through the text. And despite the manÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s reputation, he shows that, aside from a penchant for mass impalement, Vlad was more or less about as treacherous and brutal as many of the other rulers of that day and place, such as the Mongol Timur or the Ottoman Mohammed II, and not nearly as able. Waterson ends the book with an overview of events in the region to the present, since the past there is very much alive, and also offers some interesting insights into the rise of the Dracula legend. A good introduction to the history of the Balkans, this will appeal to many Dracula buffs.'For the full review, see StrategyPage.com

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