

# The myth of the Asian Dragon

## PHYSIOLOGY

Sinuous serpentine bodies, four legs, they do not usually breathe fire, usually shown not to have wings, but are illustrated to have them which is the Adult Imperial Dragon. The dragons are said to be made up of many different types of animals of the Earth: the body of a snake, scales of a carp (fish), head of a bull, a neck like an eagle, the eyes of a hare (rabbit), ears like a deer, horns of a giant stag (deer), the body of a lion, tigers, and claws like a tiger. Most of the time they are shown to have a lion-type mane around its neck, on its chin, and on each elbow. They have two antler-type horns decorating their wide-mouthed head, and two long "feeler" whiskers spreading out from their snout. Eastern dragons have 117 scales, 81 infused with yang, the good, and 36 infused with yin, the bad. This evens out the dragons temper and personality.

## HISTORY

There are three families of Eastern dragons: 3 toed, 4 toed, and 5 toed. Three toed dragons are Japanese. Four toed dragons are Indonesian or Korean. Five toed dragons are Chinese. They are shown in the colors blue, black, white, red, or yellow.

In China dragons are known as Lung. There are four main kinds of Lung: Tien-lung, The Celestial Dragon, who protect the places of the Gods, Shen-lung, The Earth Dragon, who control the wind and the rain, Ti-lung, The Spiritual Dragon which controls rivers, and water on the Earth, and Fu's-lung, The Underworld Dragon which guards precious metals and gems. Separate dragons control the rivers of the North, South, East and West.

Eastern dragons are portrayed as good, kind, and intelligent. Oriental Dragons have the most recorded history in the world, especially in China going back thousands of years. In history they have a very close link to the weather. It is said that some of the worst flooding in Asia's history were caused when a mortal has upset a dragon. In Chinese history, the 5 toed dragon is the symbol of power, and are considered "Imperial Dragons".





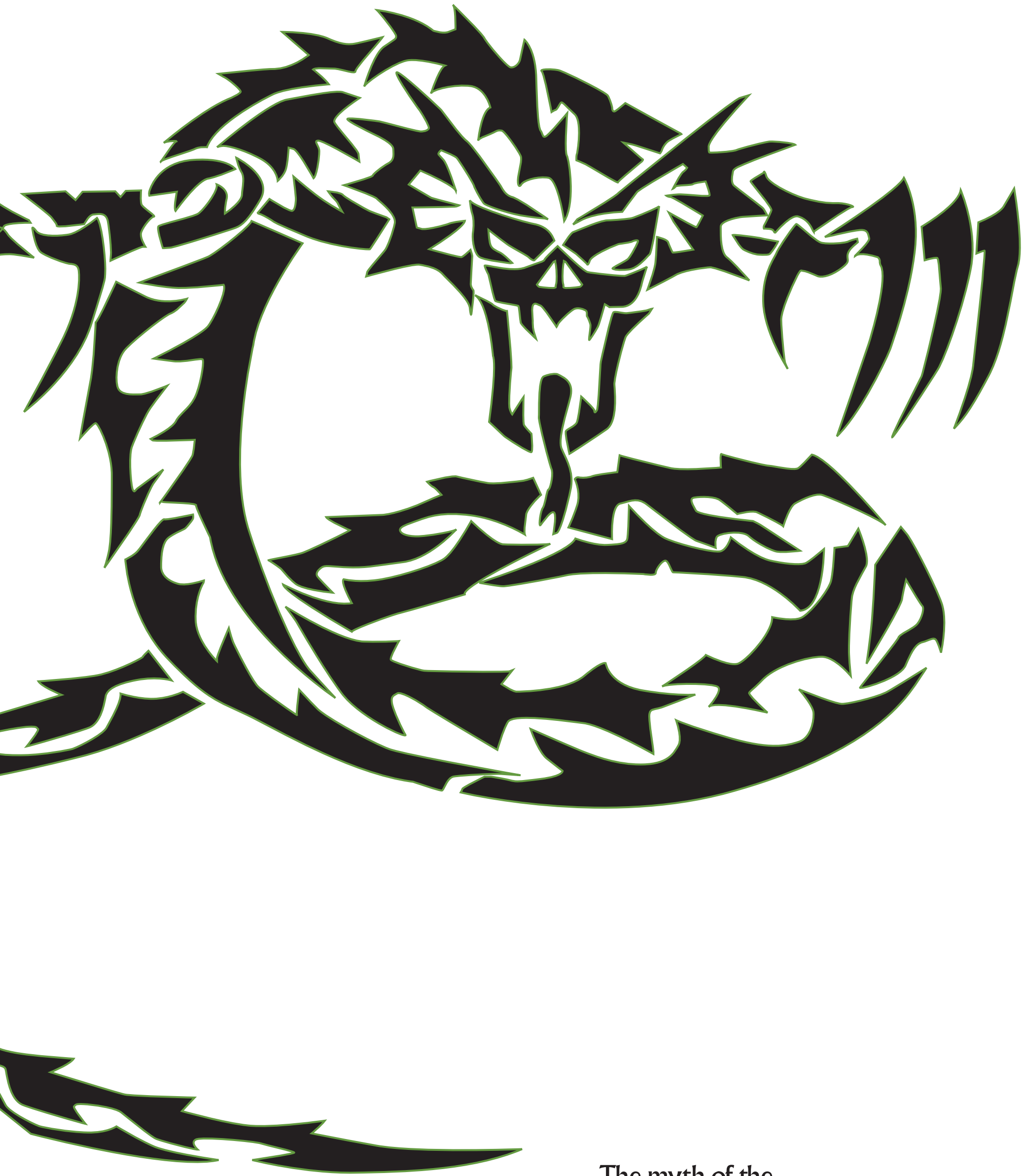
# The myth of the European Dragon

## PHYSIOLOGY

Thick, long bodied, scaly skin, four strong legs, two bat-like wings, wedge-shaped heads, and long necks. They usually are portrayed as breathing fire. Some breeds of these dragons have been known to be shape changers, and others have the chameleon power to change color of their background. They eat but once a month, on a sheep or ox, or even a human (myth says they prefer virgin maidens though). They can be any color, or many colors, depending on the breed of the dragon.

## HISTORY

When most people think "dragon" they most likely think of the Western dragon. Western dragons are usually portrayed as evil, mean, and bloodthirsty. They were also known to have huge hoards of gold and jewels hidden in their lairs. The most famous dragons are portrayed as Christianity. Other stories in legend say that eating a dragon's heart will give the consumer the power of understanding birds, eating the dragons' tongue enables the person to mean Son of the Dragon, or Devil. The end of the dragon came to mean Son of the Dragon, or Devil. The end of the dragon came with Christianity, and knights that were eager to prove their faith. The knights quickly discovered that dragon-hunting was very profitable, and soon most the dragons in the world were destroyed in a very short time. Vikings had dragon figurheads on the prow of their ships. The dragons on the ships were believed to endow keen site and cunning to the Viking warriors. Today the Welsh flag still has a red dragon on a green/white background, and the red dragon is their national symbol.



## The myth of the Lind Dragon

**PHYSIOLOGY** A long and sineous body covered in scales, which have two legs, each claw long and menacing. Its mouth is a ging maw of razor sharp teeth.

Lindworms were apparently discovered by Marco Polo while crossing Central Asia. He described them as, "Swifter than it looks. Easily able to take down a man on a galloping horse." These types of dragons (along with the Oroboros) are frequently represented as "prima materia" in the first stage of the Alchelmy process.

**HISTORY** In legend, as told in the Niebelungen Lied, the hero Siegfried conquered a "lind-wurm" that lived near the town of Worms in Germany. Another German tale from the 1200's tells of a lindworm that lived near lagenfurt. Flooding threatened travelers along the river, and the presence of a dragon was blamed. The story tells that a Duke offered a reward for anyone who could catch it, so some young men tied a bull to a chain, and when the lindworm swallowed the bull, it was hooked like a fish, and killed. In 1335, when the skull of a wooly rhinoceros was found in a cave nearby, it was believed to be a dragon's skull.