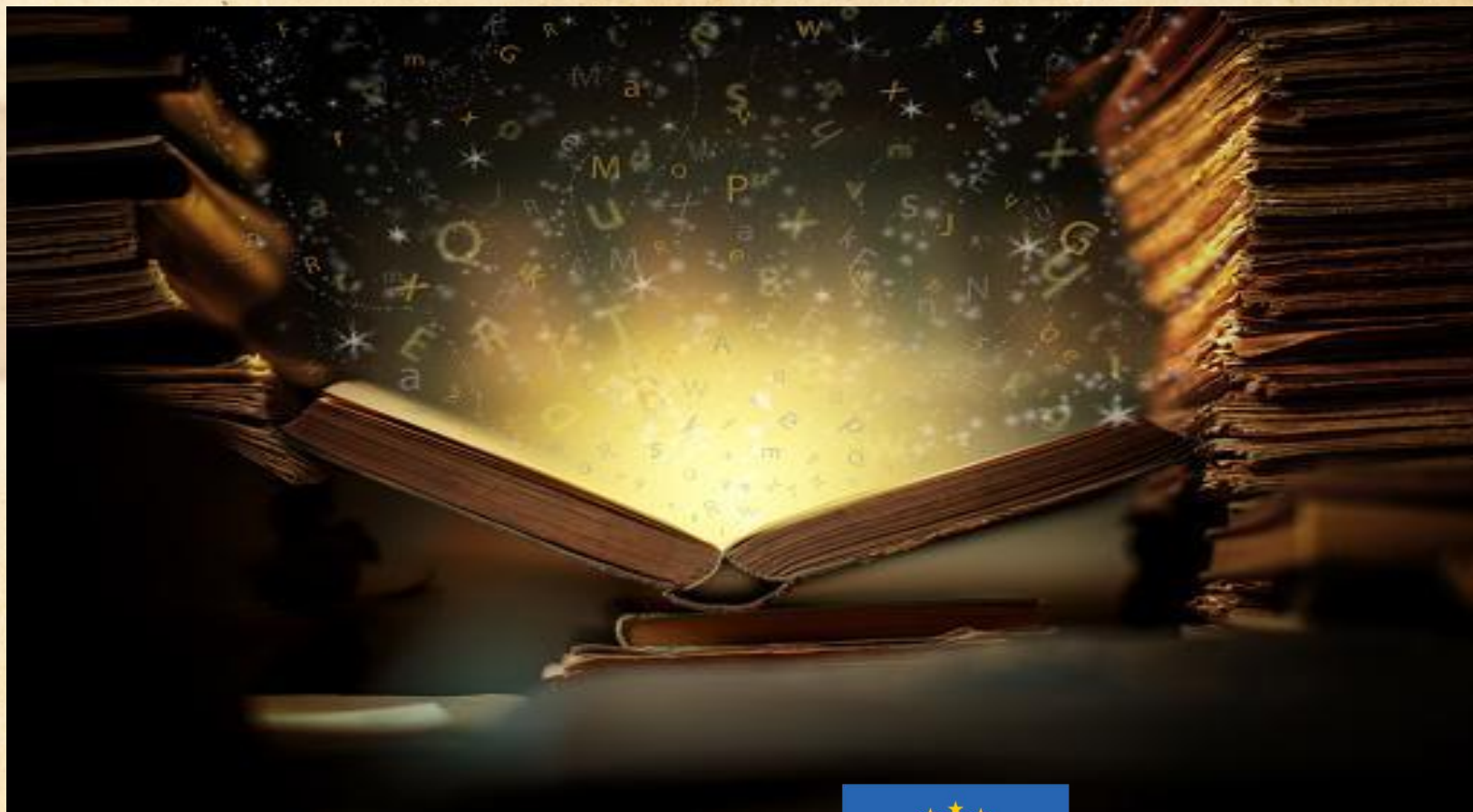




# *Polish legends*



# The Dragon from Beneath Wawel Hill



Place of the legend of the "Dragon from Beneath Wawel Hill" in the history of the city of Kraków.

The legend of the "Dragon from Beneath Wawel Hill" is one of the most famous legends of Kraków. It tells of a dragon that lived in a cave under the Wawel Hill and was the guardian of the treasure of the Polish kings.

According to the legend, the dragon was killed by a young boy named Wawel who was playing with a ball near the Wawel Hill.



# Mermaid of Warsaw

The description of mermaid from one of the iterations goes:

The princesses' beauty  
Is famous afar  
From wave to wave  
Her image follows  
Take a look: lips like corals  
Teeth like pearls  
The sapphire of the eyes  
Isn't second  
Even to the sky's  
Although fair like lilies  
Is the neck  
Fish scales  
Cover her legs  
At her sides she has fins...  
It's a Mermaid!



# The Sleeping Knights

According to this tale, there's a secluded cave in Mount Giewont in the Tatra Mountains, where a band of armour-clad knights rests in eternal sleep, waiting for a time when Poland will be in need of their services. The knights are guarded by an angel who is always ready to inform them whether that time has arrived. The legend goes:

There is a cave over there, enormous and dark, only cressets flicker along the walls. These knights are asleep, and every ten years the oldest of them raises his head and asks the angel that watches over them:

'Is it time?'

And all the knights raise their iron-helmeted heads, but the angel replies:

'No. Sleep!'

So they keep sleeping.



# Golden duck

According to one story, recorded by poet-journalist Artur Oppman, the duck dwells in the cellars beneath Warsaw's Ostrogski Castle (now home to the Fryderyk Chopin Museum). The creature, a princess who has been bewitched by an evil sorcerer, lives under the Castle and waits for someone to set her free. The Duck can be restored to human form only by a man who can spend 100 gold ducats a day for three consecutive days, without sharing any of this small fortune with anyone. Two versions of the story have similar endings:

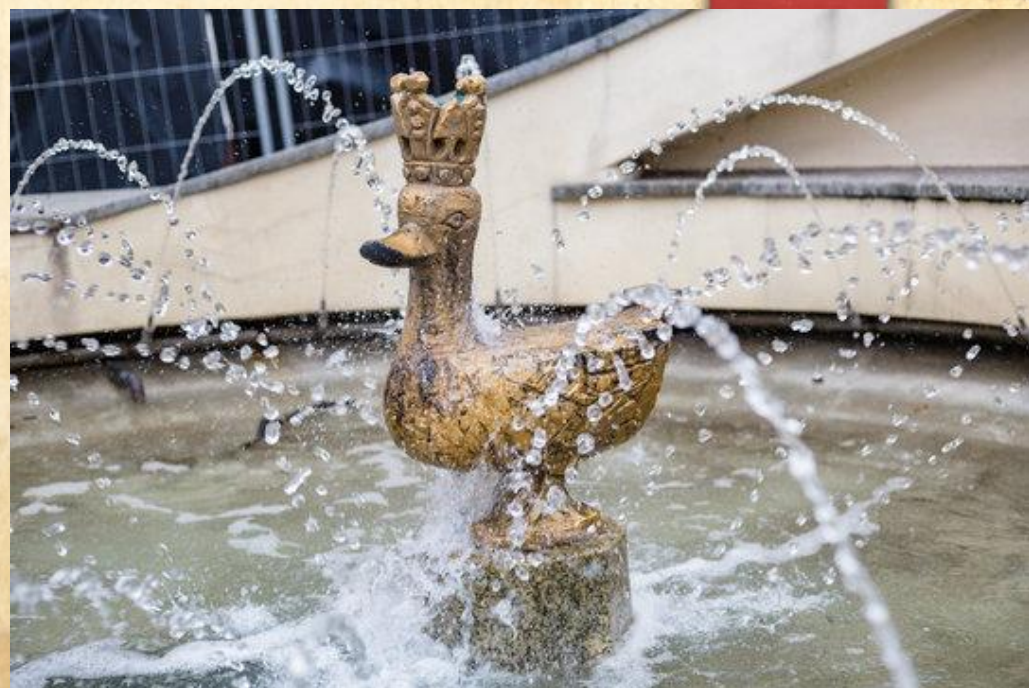
- A poor shoemaker's apprentice finds the Gold Duck under the Castle and is granted the ducats to spend, but is unable to spend them all in the allotted time. He gives the remainder to a beggar, who tells him that money does not bring happiness. The Gold Duck disappears, taking with it the treasures stored under the Castle, but from that day the boy is happy. He becomes a master shoemaker, finds himself a beautiful wife, and lives into old age, surrounded by happy friends and children.

- A soldier finds the Duck and is granted the ducats. He is close to when he gives a beggar his last penny.

exhausting them

The Duck disappears, together with the whole Castle.





# Lech, Czech, and Rus

In the Polish version of the legend, three brothers went hunting together but each of them followed a different prey and eventually they all traveled in different directions. Rus went to the east, Čech headed to the west to settle on the Říp Mountain rising up from the Bohemian hilly countryside, while Lech traveled north. There, while hunting, he followed his arrow and suddenly found himself face-to-face with a fierce, white eagle guarding its nest from intruders. Seeing the eagle against the red of the setting sun, Lech took this as a good omen and decided to settle there. He named his settlement Gniezno (Polish gniazdo - 'nest') in commemoration and adopted the White Eagle as his coat-of-arms. The white eagle remains a symbol of Poland to this day, and the colors of the eagle and the setting sun are depicted in Poland's coat of arms, as well as its flag, with a white stripe on top for the eagle, and a red stripe on the bottom for the sunset.

According to Wielkopolska Chronicle (13th century), Slavs are descendants of Pan, a Pannonian prince. He had three sons - Lech (the youngest), Rus, and Čech (the oldest), who decided to settle west, north, and east.

## Coat of arms of Poland

The coat of arms of Poland is a white, crowned eagle with a golden beak and talons, on a red background. According to legend, the White Eagle emblem originated when Poland's legendary founder Lech saw a white eagle's nest. When he looked at the bird, a ray of sunshine from the red setting sun fell on its wings, so they appeared tipped with gold, the rest of the eagle was pure white. He was delighted and decided to settle there and placed the eagle on his emblem. He also named the place Gniezdno (currently Gniezno) from the Polish word gniazdo ("nest").

The symbol of an eagle appeared for the first time on the coins made during the reign of Bolesław I (992-1025), initially as the coat of arms of the Piast dynasty. Beginning in the 12th century, the eagle has appeared on the shields, ensigns, coins, and seals of the Piast dukes. It appeared on the Polish coat of arms during Przemysł II reign as a reminder of the Piast tradition before the fragmentation of Poland.



# Poznań Goats

According to one version of the folk legend, when the town hall was rebuilt after the great fire in Poznań, the clock for the town hall tower was ordered from master Bartholomew of Gubin. The town council decided to celebrate this important event. A great feast was planned. A young cook, Pietrek, was appointed to prepare the main dish. Deer leg baked slowly and Pietrek was curious about what the clock mechanism looks like. The young cook could not wait to finish baking and decided to leave the kitchen for a while to look at the clock. However, in his absence, the leg fell into the fire and burned to the coal. The terrified boy ran to a nearby meadow where the inhabitants of the city kept their animals. From there, he kidnapped two goats and took them to the town hall kitchen. The goats, however, escaped from the boy to the cornice of the town hall tower. There, in front of the gathered townsmen, two small white goats started butting. This sight amused the voivode and the invited guests. The mayor pardoned Pietrek, and the watchmaker was ordered to make a mechanism that would activate the clock goats every day. Since then, every day the trumpeter plays the bugle call and two buzzing goats show up. The real goats did not reach the tables of city councilors and townsmen but were returned to the poor widow, their true owner.



*Thank you for taking the time to familiarize yourself with Polish legends*