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# Heraldry

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## Exploring Origins

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### Paprzyca / Kuszaba

### Symbols behind Names



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## Bohemia

### Legend of the millstone

In Bohemia, a noble lady made fun of a poor woman who had twin babies, wrongly accusing her of adultery. The Divine Providence punished this lady who was the wife of Lord Dobrohost also name Veitminar. Later, on the same day, her and on the same day, she gave birth to nine babies.

Two old women who attended these births argued that this was an evil spell from two witches who had been burnt in Wischerad a few days before. They convinced the mother to get rid of eight babies. As they were very small, the old women put them in a box (*Krabice* in Czech) his suzer with the intention to bury them somewhere.

On their way, the two old women met Lord Dobrohost who was back from visiting his suzerain Duke Vladislav in Wisherad (Vyšehrad). The unfortunate father discovered the truth.

Lord Dobrohost took the babies home to feed them. Once they were all baptized, he ask the miller to take care of them. The mother who had accepted such fate remained in the house. Guilty and repentant, she lived the rest of her life under the reproachful watch of her husband.

Three of the children died young. Six of them reached adult age. they put a millstone on their coat of arms ■

## Poland

### Legend of the millstone

Long ago in Bohemia, a Lady gave birth to 9 sons the same day. At this time, the popular view was that multiple births indicated adultery. Fearing the reaction of her husband, she kept one boy and asked her maid to drown the eight others babies.

The maid put the babies in a bag. On her way to the river, she met the Lord and father who was riding back home. When he asked the maid what she was carrying, she said that she wanted to get rid of some new-born puppies in the river. The Lord asked to see the dogs and check if anyone of them could be fine for hunting. The unfortunate father discovered the truth. To protect the eight babies from the mother, he asked the miller living near the river to keep them. The miller raised the boys and the father provided everything for their care and education. When the boys became adults, their Lord father organized a feast and invited all his friends. His wife was attending the party. At some point, the Lord asked the guests "*what would deserve a mother planning to drown her babies?*". All the guests agreed about death penalty for such criminal mother. Then, the husband asked his eight boys to come and he revealed the truth to everybody.

The mother was so ashamed that the Lord decided to pardon her in gratitude for God providence. The guilty wife retired in a convent for the rest of her life. The eight boys opted for a millstone on their coat of arms ■

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### ► Symbol of the millstone

In the Bible, the millstone conveys the negative image of slavery and despair from hard and repetitive work. In heraldry on the contrary, the millstone represents positive values of resilience, stability, force, and prosperity.

The millstone is not a common figure in European heraldry. In modern times, it was used by villages and cities specializing in oil, flour and sometime wine milling activities.

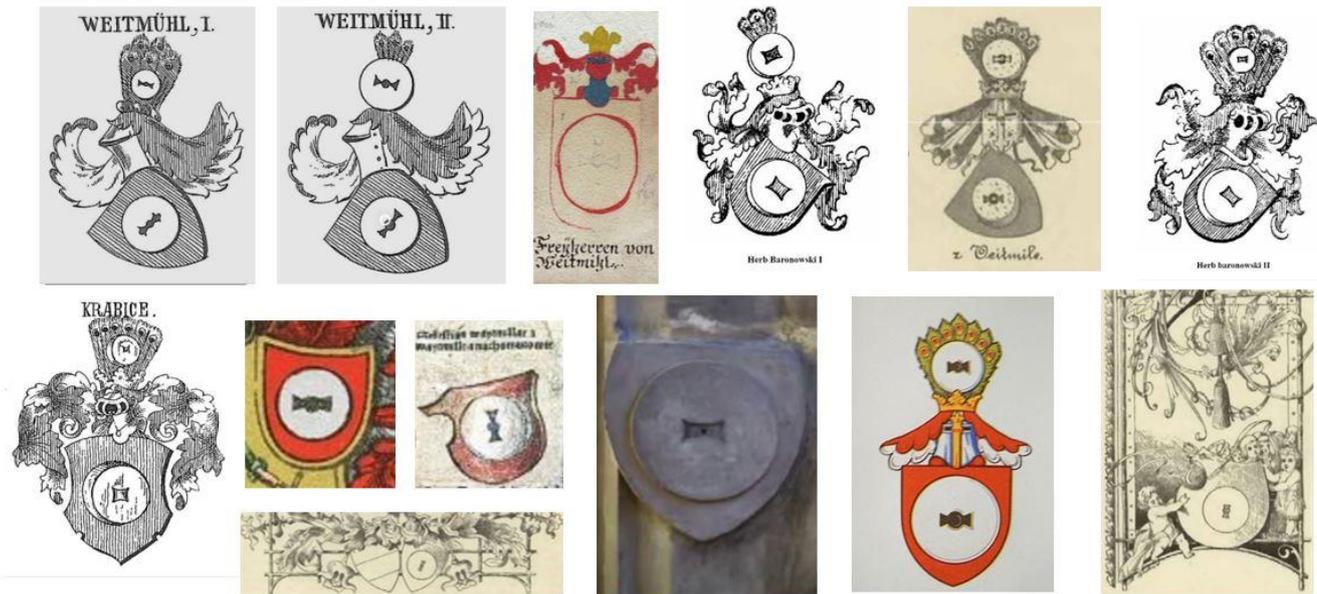
Interestingly, the millstone can be represented by a **millrind** that appears to have many different shapes as noted by German heraldist Siebmacher.



The Polish version of the millstone legend is the most coherent. The eight babies were taken to be drown in the river. Once rescued by their father, they are entrusted to a miller. Most likely, this miller was living nearby and worked in a watermill. While the first document mentioning a watermill is dated 1145, such mills existed had been existing since the early Middle Age. Windmills did not developed before the late 17<sup>th</sup> c. in Poland.



# HERALDRY



## The millstone coat of arms in Bohemia



## The millstone coat of arms in Poland

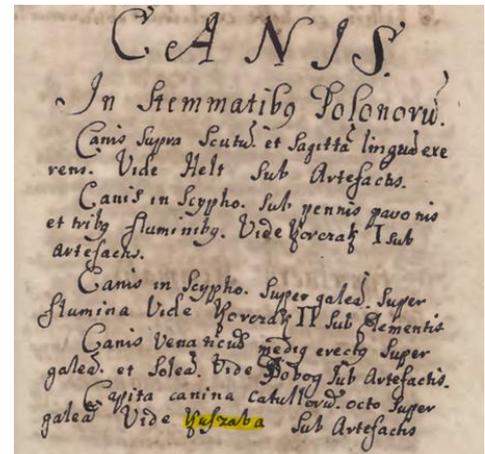
### ► Symbol of the puppies

The Polish Kuszaba/Paprzyca coat of arms pictures eight puppies above the helmet. This is unusual in Poland where most blazons have ostrich feathers and only few have a figurative object. These eight puppies are the symbol of the eight sons of Lord Dobrohost. They remind key elements of the legend.

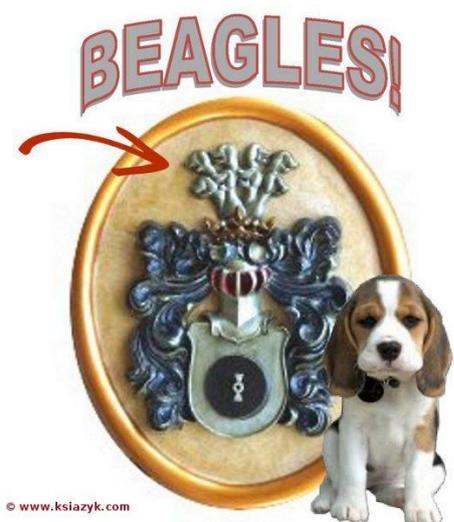
These puppies highlight negative views of duplicity and unworthiness of the mother since the eight babies withdrawn from their house, hidden and taken away as puppies.

These puppies also convey positive views. On one hand, they convey the notions of courage, protection and vigilance of the father who saved the babies. On the other hand, they represent the values of as obedience, trust and loyalty of the miller who nurtured them.

On the Kuszaba/Paprzyca coat of arms, the puppies have no specific breed. In medieval heraldry, the most common dogs was the greyhound. Other breeds were also pictured such as hound, talbot, mastiff, foxhound and terrier (England), as well as Bracke (Germany).



Under the title *Nobilis Poloniae avitis equitum stemmatibus insignita*, a Polish armorial book dated 1702 (author unknown) develops on heraldry symbols, the **Kuszaba** coat-of-arms is mentioned under the short “*Canis*” (dog) entry.

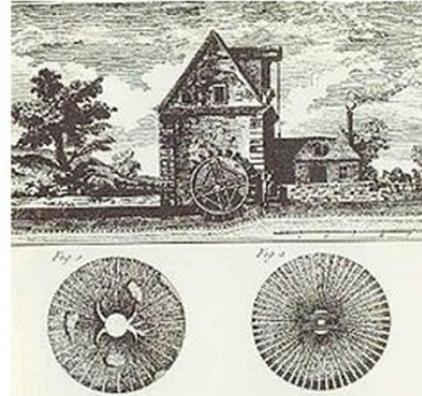


### ► Symbol in German and Bohemian names

The legend tells that the children of Lord Dobrohost put a millstone on their coat of arms to honour the miller who raised them. In Bohemia and in Poland, the etymology of the first families who used this blazon reflects this story.

- In the German family names variants (Weitmühl, Weitmühler, Weitmil, Weytmyl), we find the words **Müller** (miller) and **Mühle** (mill). **Weit** means strong or far. These names would convey the image of a “far miller” or “far mill”, suggesting the distance between the 8 boys and their mother.
- The Czech family names *Woitmil/Veitmile/Waytmillar/Waytmille* have no specific etymology and reflect a phonetic writing of the German name.

Moreover, a family line added Krabice or Krabitz, using the name Krabice z Veitmile. In Czech the word **krabice** means box. This image might also refer to the image of the eight baby boys put in a box to be drown in the river. The Czech name Krabice z Veitmile is Krabitz von Weytmyl in German, with a phonetic transcription of Krabice into Krabitz.



Mühle



Mühler



KRABICE

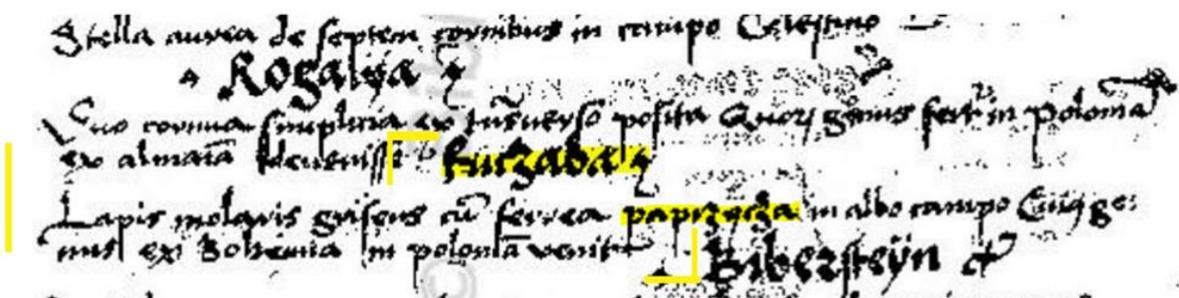
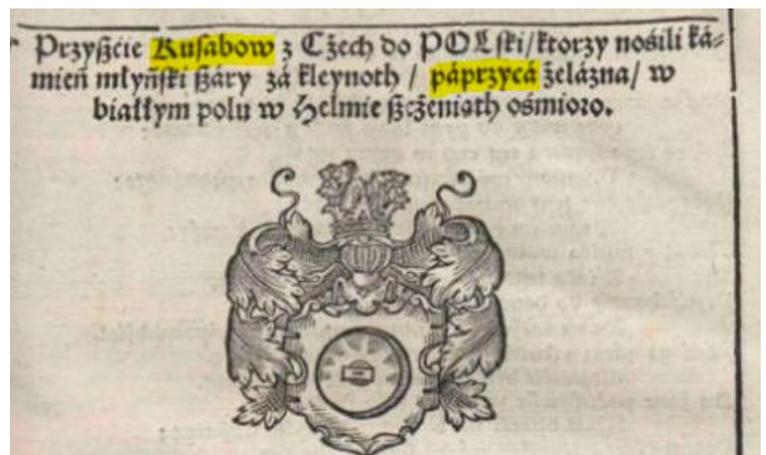
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### ► Symbol in Polish names

We don't know which one of the families mentioned above came to Poland during the first half of the 13<sup>th</sup> c. These knights are identified with the name **Kuszaba** by the first Polish historians and heraldists. Very early, the word *paprzyca* is mentioned in the description of the coat of arms. An early Latin definition of the word *paprzyca* reads "*ferrum molendinare*" which relates both to the eye of the millstone and the central iron axe of rotation. Indeed, in the first Polish armorial books mentioning the **Kuszaba**, we can read the following:

- "ferrea paprzyca" (Chigi – 1520);
- 'cum ferrea papczyca' (unknown – 1575);
- "páprzcá želázna" (Paprocki - 1578);

1578 - **Bartosz Paprocki** - *Gniazdo cnoty z kąd herby rycerstwa sławnego Krolestwa Polskiego.*



1520 – This text in Latin from an unknown author is inspired by *Insignia seu clenodia Regis et Regni Poloniae*, an armorial book written by Jan Dlugosz during the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> c. The text above is the oldest mention of the **Kuszaba** coat of arms in Poland. The author writes **Ruszaba** and uses the Polish word *paprzyca*,

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Polish historians and genealogists agree that this clan began to use the name **Paprzyca** a few years after their arrival. They argue that these foreign knights from Bohemia had a coat of arms never seen before and wanted to use a name easy to memorize.

This word in Czech (*papřice*) and in Polish (*paprzyca*) relates to the **millrind**, the central iron axial support of a millstone. A millrind may have different shapes: cross, rectangular or oval. The Paprzyca/Kuszaba blazon displays a shape, without any variation in time. The millrind is usually dressed in a vertical position.



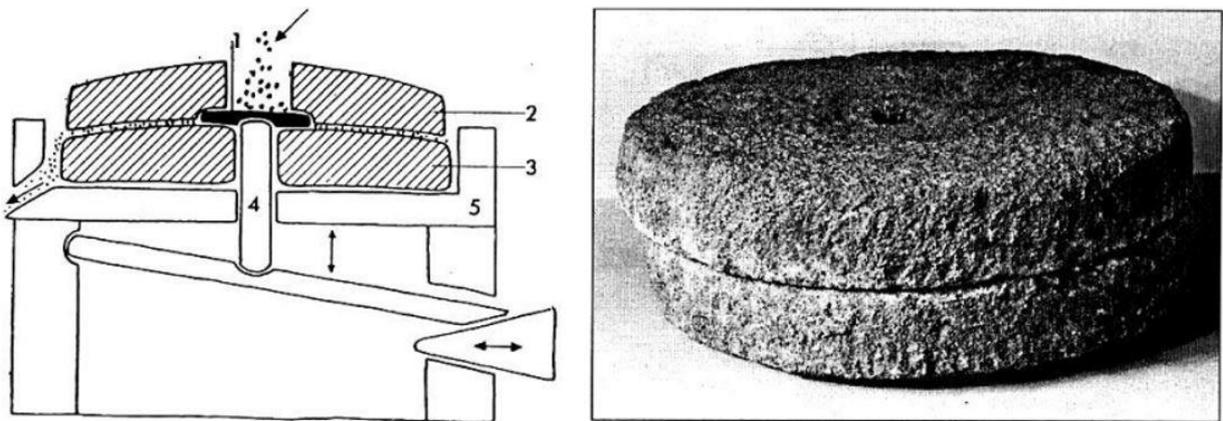
mieni młyńskich; **-kran**, *m.* żóraw młyński; **-kranz**, *m.* = Mehlbahn; **-lava**, *f.* lawa używana do wyrobu kamieni młyńskich; **-picke**, *f.* **paprzyca**; **-porphyr**, *m.* porfir używany do wyrobu kamieni młyńskich; **-quarz**, *m.*

Aleksander Brückner - *Słownik etymologiczny języka polskiego* – [page 394-395](#)

■ **Ober-eingelege** *n.* (b. Tuchm.) hořejší zásnova; — **einnehmer** *m.* vrchní vejběrdčí; — **eisen** *m.*, in der Mühle kypřice, **papřice**, pipřice; — **enke** *m.* pacholek (der Enke) pohánek; — **erde** *f.* bříla; — **falkenmeister** *m.* vrchní sokolník. ■

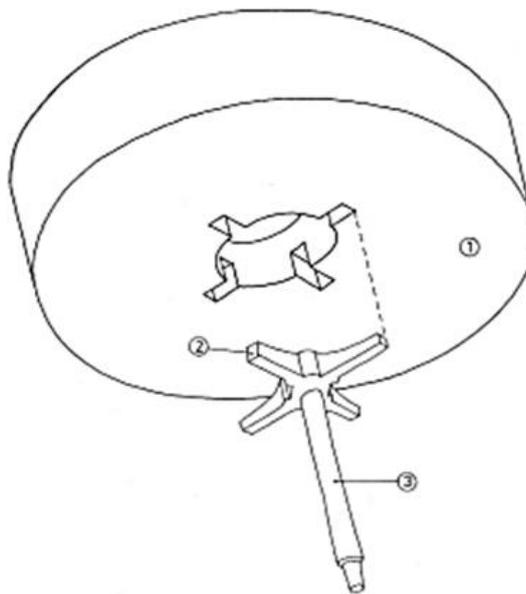
In Czech, the word *paprzyca* is *papřice* - Jozef-Wladislaw Franta-Sumavsky - *Deutsch-böhmisches Wörterbuch* - 1846 - Volume 2





**Obr. 22** – Schéma žernovu: 1 – papřice, 2 – běhoun, 3 – ležák, 4 – osa, 5 – kadlub (podle Lutovský 2001, 190). Bez měřítka.

In Czech (above) – source: Mgr. Lukáš Štín, *Man of the Hillfort Period 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> c. in the district of Olomouc* – Department of Anthropology, Faculty of Science, Masaryk University – 2014.



Urządzenie siodłowe kamienia młyńskiego – paprzyca. 1. Górny kamień młyński 2. Paprzyca 3. Wrzeciono

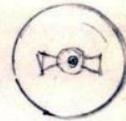
In Polish (above) – source: Projekt budowlany renowacji wiatraka holenderskiego w Pызdrach - Gmina i Miasto Pызdry - 2018

310.

Papierownia, mi; fr. papeterie; n. Papiermühle; zakład fabryczny, w którym się wyrabia papier w rozmaitych gatunkach i barwach.

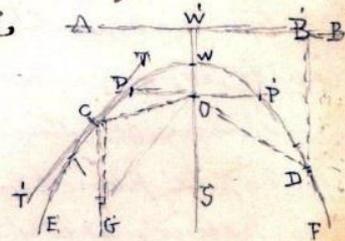
Paprot', ci; fr. fougère; n. Farrenkraut; lit. papartis. bot. rodzaj aspidium i asplenium; tam, gdzie obficie rośnie, spalona daje dobry popiół do robienia szkła; jej młode, małe jeszcze rozwinięte liście, używane bywa za wzór do zdobin architekturowych.

Papryca, cy; fr. anille; n. Klauer; sitka ielarska płaska, w końcach rozszerzona, wpuszczona w spódni kamień młyński, mająca w środku dziurę, w której się czoł od kamienia wierzchniego obraca.

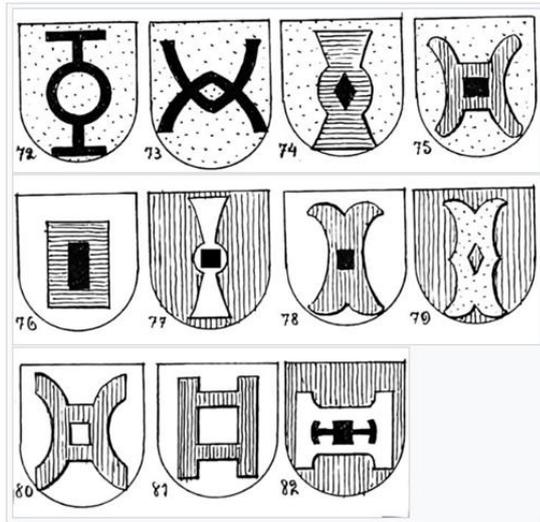


Para, ry; fr. vapeur; n. Dampf; woda przez ciepło w stan rozprężiny zmieniona; dris' jako siła poruszająca w rozmaitych maszynach najwięcej rozpowszechniona; używana także do ogrzewania pomieszczeń.

Parabola, li; fr. parabole; n. Parabel; krzywa płaska, otwarta EWF (fig. ) mająca tę własność, iż każdy jej punkt jak np. D ma równą odległość od stałego punktu O zwanego ogniskiem i od prostej AB zwaney kierownicą paraboli; jest więc  $OD = DD'$ ; według tego jest także  $OW = WW'$  na linii  $SW$ , przez O prostopadle do AB nakreślonej. Prosta  $SW$

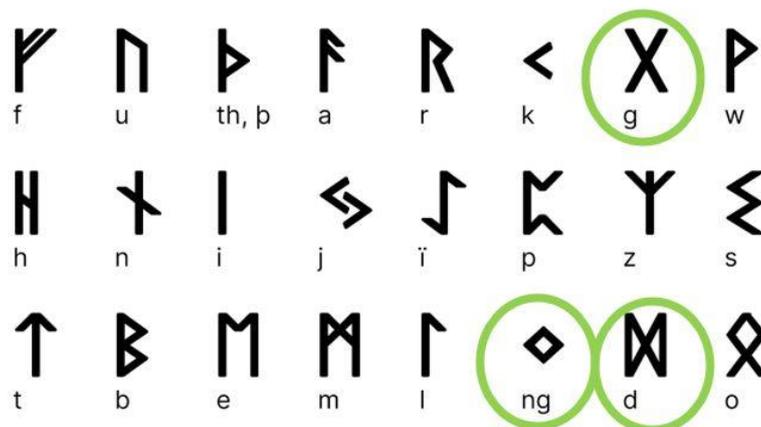


## HERALDRY



In heraldry, the millstone can also be represented by its central part called the **millrind** (*fer-de moline* nylle or anille in French / Nabe, Mühlsteinnabe, Spindel, Spille, *Mühleisen* in German).

German heraldists who worked from the monumental *Wappenbuch* (armorial book) of Johann Ambrosius Siebmacher (1561 – 23 March 1611), have noted that there are no specific design codifications for the millrind in coat of arms.



Many Polish heraldists have highlighted the influence of Nordic culture in Polish heraldry. Among them, Franciszek Piekosiński in *Herbarz szlachty polskiej wieków średnich* (1905) and Marek Derwich and Marek Cetwiński in *Herby, Legendy, Dawne Mity* (1987).

There is indeed an interesting similarity between the heraldic millrind symbol and two letters in the Norse elder *futhork* alphabet. In Nordic mythology, every *rune* has a symbol:

- symbols of letter “g”(gebo): partnership, gift, generosity
- symbols of letter “ng” (ingwaz): fertility, beginning, potential
- symbol of letter “d” (dagaz): progression, discovery, hope, happiness

To some extent, the signification of these three letters echo the story of the millstone on the Kuszaba/Paprzyca coat of arms.