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Dwarfs and other curiosities in the european gardens

Introduction¹

Over the last few years the interest in the phenomenon of garden gnomes has been evidently growing. Their older brothers – stone dwarfs – are in a way put aside on the margin of these elaborate deliberations. So far, however, no monograph has been presented which would comprehensively analyze all aspects connected with the role played by stone dwarf figures in the European gardens. The monographic studies regarding the subject focused on their historical as well as cultural and anthropological aspects, treating stone dwarfs as a stage leading to the main subject of the deliberations – ceramic, colorful figures wearing red hats which are put in

many gardens today [2], [3], [11], [17], [18], [23], [29], [33].

The monographs on residential complexes with their sculptures of dwarfs proved much more helpful to us. These works brought factual information necessary for further research [5], [8], [12], [16], [19], [20], [26], [32], [34].

The publications specifically on stone dwarfs regarding a few garden designs such as the one on the dwarf theater in the Mirabell Gardens, the first known group of this kind of sculptures in the European gardens, proved definitely most helpful for further deliberations [2].

Dwarfs in antiquity

The contradiction regarding placing an adult person in a small child's body caused by a twist of fate has fascinated people since antiquity. The visual representations of dwarfs appeared in Chinese, Egyptian and Roman art. Everywhere they symbolized fertility and revival and surely this is why these figures were often presented naked with exposed impressive privates (considered at the same time a characteristic feature of dwarfism) [6].

It is known for instance that the figure of a dwarf with a protruding tongue, flat nose, shaggy eyebrows, animal ears, twisted extremities and a hunched back was assumed in ancient Egypt by the god called

Bes². He was a very popular household deity revered in small chapels who protected Egyptians against misfortune in their everyday life. His only garment was a crown made of ostrich feathers and a lion skin covering his shoulders. Making grotesque faces he scared away beasts, snakes and insects.

The figure of a dwarf-god can be also found among Olympian gods. It was Momus – the son of Night (Nyx), god of satire and mockery, censor of godly ways, demonstrating no respect even for Zeus, usually depicted as an old creature with a mask in one and a jesters' staff in the other hand.

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² Bes – in Greek mythology the god of joy, dances and family; guardian of parturient women and children. He was musically gifted, played the flute and tambourine. He accompanied goddess Hathor in her journeys, taking care of her and entertaining her. He was often a subject of amulets made of terracotta and tattoos on the bodies of Egyptian dancers, acrobats and musicians. His depictions can be seen in the Temples of Hathor in Philae, Dendera, on the island of Biga near Aswan, in the Mortuary Temple of Queen Hatshepsut in the Valley of the Kings in Deir el-Bahari.



Fig. 1. Egypt, dancing dwarf, 1st century B.C. From: D. Lavergne, L. Le Bon, "Des nains des sculptures", Flammarion 2001, p. 40

Il. 1. Egipt, tańczący karzeł, I w. p.n.e., [za:] D. Lavergne, L. Le Bon, "Des nains des sculptures", Flammarion 2001, s. 40



Fig. 2. Bes, 650–350 B.C., Altes Museum Berlin. From: <http://www.cambridge2000.com/gallery/images/P31111738e.jpg>

Il. 2. Przedstawienie Besa, 650–350 p.n.e., Altes Museum Berlin, za: <http://www.cambridge2000.com/gallery/images/P31111738e.jpg>

Ancient Romans were also excited by various degenerations such as for instance priapism. Granted with permanent erection, Priapus became a symbol of fertility and at the same time a special guardian of gardens where he would take particular care of orchards and vineyards³. Roman gardens would often display statues or hermas presenting Priapus with an exposed erect penis at which first fruits were offered. The sculptures of Priapus were also placed at water springs whose purity was under his care.

In post-ancient Europe, after the medieval break when it was exclusively Providence that took care of gardens, various sculptures of figures were put back in the gardens when the Renaissance came. For the first time they appeared at the beginning of the 16th century when a group of ancient sculptures was displayed at the courtyard of the Vatican Belvedere. In the middle of the 16th century, the original and antique-like statues became inherent decorative elements of the residence gardens which included painting, visual, sculptural (frequently connected with water) and floral elements, creating the phenomenon which in art is known as *Gesamtkunstwerk*⁴.

In the Renaissance gardens, especially Italian ones, the particularly rich architectural and sculptural decorations were connected with fountains, cascades, water pools, nymphaea, grottoes, water theaters, etc.⁵ The sculptural elements were to emphasize a special place in the garden. The river and sea deities (e.g. Neptune) as well as water animals (e.g. dolphins and turtles) were connected with water. The statues taken from the ancient Pantheon were also used. The allegoric depictions referring to geographical and physical phenomena: four cardinal points, four elements, four seasons of the year and the time of the day were also drawn on⁶.

During that time the architectural and sculptural elements served, especially in Italian gardens, the main composition function in accordance with the following rule formulated in 1554 by the Italian sculptor Baccio Bandinelli: *The things which were built are the guide for and more important than those which were planted* [21, p. 113].

³ Priapus (gr. Πρίαπος *Priapos*, lat. *Priapus*) – in Greek mythology the god of fertility assuring abundance. He was the son of Dionysus or Hermes and Aphrodite. He was admitted to the pantheon of Roman gods and deities in the 1st century B.C.

⁴ The symbolic program of such decorations was prepared by the so-called *iconographi* whose deep knowledge and education allowed them to design sophisticated artistic programs which would have references to the commissioners and their community, including their beliefs, important virtues, their personal wisdom, education and culture.

⁵ The use of sculptural elements was recommended by Vincenzo Scamozzi in his treatise titled *L'Idée dell'Architettura Universale* published in 1615. He suggested the following topics: fountain with Neptune, statues of Apollo, Tritons, deities connected with water, nymphs, putti with dolphins.

⁶ The patterns for sculptures were taken, e.g. from the following works: Vincenzo Cartari, *Imagini de i dei*, Venice 1556, Pietro Valeriani, *Hieroglyphica*, Basel 1556, Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia*, Roma 1593.

It is also worth remembering the shaping of the figures especially those of animals from trimmed plants. This art, which has a distant – Chinese origin⁷, came to Europe through ancient Rome, (probably during the rule of Julius Cesar) and it was described for the first time by Plinius Minor⁸ [24, book XII, par. 6].

⁷ In China, the name of this area of garden landscaping was “pen-jing”. Its objective was to emphasize the plants’ natural shapes and qualities by modeling them. At the turn of the 6th and 7th centuries the fashion for miniaturization of plants by trimming them was brought to Japan where as “bonsai” it is still popular today.

⁸ The description of geometrical forms and animal shapes achieved by special modeling of plants in ancient Rome was included in a treatise by Plinius Major [24].

The placement of the garden sculptures changed significantly in the mannerist gardens where some sculptural elements, despite being inspired by antiquity, were closer to oneiric apparitions than classic presentations of mythical heroes and gods.

The most famous example of this kind of garden is Italian Bomarzo known – with good reason – as Monsters’ Grove (*Bosco dei Monstri*). It was established in 1552 on the initiative of prince Pier Francesco Orsini and it was dedicated to his late wife. It was designed by Pirro Ligorio⁹.

⁹ It had 24 sculptural compositions, including statues of Venus, Proserpine, Neptune and Ceres as well as a fantastic dragon and a head of a horrible ogre with open maw whose interior serves as protection against the sun.

Collectors’ passions, cabinets of curiosities

The appearance of a new group of sculptures presenting dwarfs was connected with the spread of the passion for collecting different curiosities across Europe which started at the beginning of the 16th century. Such items were collected because of the growing interest in natural phenomena, including both dwarfs and giants as well as other various wonders which were the basis for establishing numerous cabinets of curiosities. Apart from works of art such collections included also items of interest from different fields of crafts as well as natural history objects and scientific instruments or objects of utility¹⁰.

These *Wunder* or *Lustkammer*¹¹, as they were called in German, enjoyed special popularity in the territories ruled by the Habsburg family, including one of the most famous cabinets of curiosities which belonged to Emperor Rudolf II in Prague¹². Other equally great collections belonged to Charles V Habsburg in Vienna, Ferdinand II, Archduke of Tyrol (since 1580 in Ambras), the Wettin family in Dresden (later the Grünes Gewölbe gallery) and Frederick I, Duke of Württemberg in Stuttgart (since 1600).

¹⁰ This phenomenon was described by Krzysztof Pomian in his book on collectors of curiosities. The author estimated their number in the whole of Europe in thousands [26, p. 186].

¹¹ *Kunst, Wunderkammer, cabinet of curiosities, chambres de merveilles, the wonders of nature and art, gallery of “rarita naturali”*. Due to the mixed character of the collections it is difficult to distinguish between and the cabinet of art called *Kunstkammer* and *Kunstkabinette* which displayed both works of art and wonders of nature.

¹² *Kunstkammer* which belonged to Rudolph II was not a typical “cabinet of curiosities” – it was rather a collection of objects which were not connected. The ruler appointed the court physician, Anselmus Boetius de Boodt, whose passion was mineralogy to guard the collection. In the years 1607–1611, de Boodt cataloged the collections gathered in *Kunstkammer*, and in 1609 he published on their basis one of the best treatises on mineralogy in the 17th century – *Gemmarum et Lapidum*. Rudolph also invited other scientists and artists to study the collections gathered in *Kunstkammer*. As a result the collection became a priceless research tool for the European culture at the beginning of the 17th century. Fifty years after it was created most of its items were moved to Vienna. What was left of the collection in Prague was robbed at the end of the Thirty Years War by Swedish soldiers. In 1782, during the rule of Emperor Joseph II the remnants of the collection were divided and sold to private collectors.

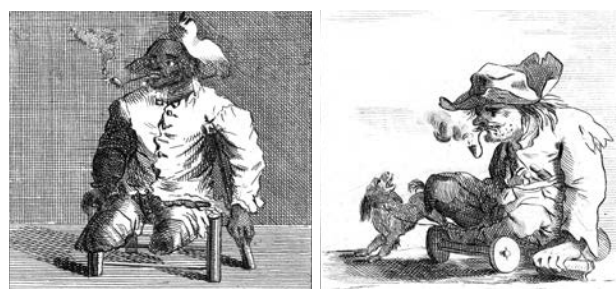


Fig. 3. Crippled people acc. to Pieter Barbiere, 2nd half of the 18th century. Private collection, Wrocław

Il. 3. Ludzie kalecy według Pietera Barbiere, 2. poł. XVIII w. Własność prywatna, Wrocław

Duke Alcala, Viceroy of Naples, was another famous collector of curiosities. In his cabinet of curiosities, he would collect mainly paintings of freaks of nature such as dwarfs or other wonders¹³. An Italian explorer and humanist, Ulisse Aldrovandi¹⁴, also had a rich and unique collection, scientific in character, whereas smaller or bigger collections of various “curiosities” were housed by most courts of Europe at that time as well as houses of many doctors, naturalists and humanists¹⁵.

In time live exhibits such as various phenomena of nature, deformed persons, exotic people (Blacks, Indians, Moors) and dwarfs became most precious. The growth of their popularity as an inspiration for sculptural and garden art became evident at the end of the 17th century.

¹³ For instance a year-old and one meter tall child or a bull with three horns. Similar ‘exhibits’ which were dominated by deformed fetuses could be found in the collection gathered by Emperor of Russia Peter I which were housed in a special building built for them in Petersburg.

¹⁴ Ulisse Aldrovandi (1522–1605), a Renaissance Italian doctor and naturalist. He founded one of the most interesting cabinets in Europe with over 18 000 items. He wrote about 400 volumes of natural history primarily on the basis of the objects from his collection. One of them was *Monstrorum historia* published in 1642. This topic was continued by Jesuit Caspar Schott who in 1662 published *Physica curiosa* with over 1600 pages which described all wonders of nature known at that time [6, p. 242n].

¹⁵ In the German speaking world, the curiosities were often collected in garden buildings called *Lusthaus* [14].

The dwarf as an indispensable element of mansion/court, significance of the dwarf

A special role was played by the dwarf who served the function of a court jester. Most probably this idea came from Mesopotamia to Egypt and then to ancient Greece and Rome. The main place of work of the dwarf-jester in those countries was the court but on special occasions, mainly during olympic games also feasts and orgies [29, p. 83].

Already in the Middle Ages almost each European court had some kind of a jester. Some of them were deformed fools, e.g. dwarfs. The dwarf belonged to the court menagerie – it was a toy. Keeping dwarfs in the court was in good taste; it was a sign of wealth, a measurement of luxury and court splendor. Furthermore, it was practical: a jester would entertain, boldly and perversely tell the truth, give advice, mock stupidity and console distressed persons, appease anger and exasperation of the rulers [29, p. 93, 101].

The court would feed dwarf-jesters because they were needed for its biologically and psychologically correct functioning. Their laughter would release the tension, often remedy the situation [29, p. 101]. At Spanish and French courts, dwarfs also served the ‘hygienic’ function in the social life of the court with its extremely strict everyday etiquette which today is legendary [27], [5, p. 106].

At the same time human deformation was a reminder of passing, futility of many efforts, including pursuits of power, success and possessions all of which were ultimately vain because of merciless as well as just death.

The demand for dwarfs, especially at Spanish, Italian and Russian courts was so huge that the lack of natural ones was supposed to be made up for by organizing their special ‘breeding’ [29, p. 98–100]. Catherine de’ Medici excelled in those experiments.

Sculptural programs in the Baroque gardens

At the end of the 17th century the figures of dwarfs placed in the gardens became a kind of substitution of the live court ‘menagerie’ at many European courts. It should be, however, clearly stressed that this kind of art was never considered mainstream of the Baroque garden sculpture. It was dominated by totally different topical compositions such as ancient and allegoric ones [15, p. 257–259], including the mythological figures from the ancient Roman Pantheon such as: Hercules, Neptune, Jupiter, Vulcan, Diana, Ceres, Flora and Juno; sometimes in a group presenting, e.g. Pluto abducting Proserpine or Hercules wrestling with Antaeus.

Allegoric sculptures were full of personifications of virtues and arts (e.g. Music, Poetry), presented, also in the sculptural form, the allegoric and symbolic interpretation of ordered Nature, creating a soothing feeling of Harmony. This is the reason why the Baroque gardens were full of representations of the time of the day, seasons of the year,

twelve months, the elements (Fire, Water, Wind and Earth) as well as Tranquility or rivers, continents, planets, stars and satellites (sun, moon)¹⁶.

In the Baroque, the aesthetic qualities of the sculptural works were dominated by their substantial content. The selection and combination of figures as well as their location in the garden and the spatial connections between them were never accidental but always precisely planned. It is also worth noting that the garden sculptures were often connected with other garden elements, including those in the interiors (e.g. polychromes, moldings), combined together into one or a few topics mutually intertwined and complementing one another connected with one, coherent iconographic program¹⁷.

Some sculptural compositions in the Baroque garden can be interpreted also in a theatrical context. The Baroque gardens were the venue for many events; they also served the function in the representative space of the court and a place to demonstrate absolute power. The combination of arts: architecture, construction, gardening and sculpture (often connected with the composition and artistic use of water) and human imagination resulted in a mythological and cosmological space suspended between reality and illusion [22].

This layout, integrated into ‘architecturally’ shaped space defined by bosquets, hedgerows, enclosed gardens, parterres, pools and other elements of a regular garden layout, was decoded during walks in the garden. The message was addressed to the selected, educated circle of recipients who would be able to read it correctly [15, p. 258]



Fig. 4. Disabled people from “Varie Figure Gobbi” by Jacques Callot.
From: <http://www.teatroestoria.it/Docs/Dossier/CALLOT/03.jpg>

Il. 4. Przedstawienia ludzi ułomnych z „Varie Figure Gobbi”, Jacquesa Callota. Za: <http://www.teatroestoria.it/Docs/Dossier/CALLOT/03.jpg>

¹⁶ In the Mirabell Gardens, the Fire was personified by the group of Aeneas rescuing his father Anchises from the fire of Troy, the Air – Hercules wrestling giant Antaeus (losing his strength when lifted from the ground), the Water – Paris abducting Helen across the sea to Crete, the Earth – Pluto (Hades) the god of the underworld abducting Proserpine.

¹⁷ German literature on the subject describes this phenomenon with a highly appropriate term: *Gesamtkunstwerk* suggested for the first time by Richard Wagner in 1849, which at the beginning was applied to opera.

*New subject in garden sculptural compositions. The first garden dwarfs – the Mirabell Garden*¹⁸

As already mentioned, the new element in the Baroque gardens in Europe was included in the sculptural elements listed earlier at the end of the 17th century. Everything indicates that it happened because of the Mirabell Garden in Salzburg¹⁹ which then belonged to the Archbishop of Salzburg Johann Ernst Thun. Between 1693 and 1695, the sculptures of figures of the so-called *zwergs* that is dwarfs were placed in the garden [2, p. 14], [19].

It was directly connected with the remodeling of the residence which was commissioned from young (only 34-year-old) Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach²⁰ in 1689. The decision to modernize the previous design was in line with the postwar (especially in the years 1684–1710) trend to build costly residences surrounded by magnificent gardens which the Viennese court and its closest Austrian aristocracy followed. The newly established gardens were supposed to serve recreation purposes and entertainment in its broad meaning, including also staging opera and ballet performances, masquerades and fireworks' shows. These designs were based on such French examples as Versailles, Marly and Tuileries²¹.

Fischer was to design the Mirabell Garden on irregular terrain limited by the walls of the bastion built during the Thirty Years War. He had to divide the area for the garden into a few sections separated by hedges and the walls with *Zwergen Garten*²². Its practically square area (4992 m², 74.5 m by 67 m) surrounded by the fortification walls and

high hedges was divided along the main axes into eight sections with irregular parterres. The central part of the garden was occupied by a pool with a fountain. Twenty eight statues of about 120 cm tall dwarfs were placed on one meter tall pedestals and that is why they towered over the hedges surrounding the parterres with trimmed plants.



Fig. 5. Cards from the work titled „Il Calloto resuscitato, oder Neu eingerichtes Zwerchen Cabinet. Nach des detschen Ausgabe, um 1720”, Dortmund 1981, p. 66,102, 104

Il. 5. Karty z pracy zatytułowanej „Il Calloto resuscitato, oder Neu eingerichtes Zwerchen Cabinet”.



Fig. 6. Card from the series “Theatralische Zwerchen Tanz-Schule”. From: <http://www.antikcenter-pirmasens.de/scans4/grafik42.jpg>

Il. 6. Karta z serii „Theatralische Zwerchen Tanz-Schule”. Za: <http://www.antikcenter-pirmasens.de/scans4/grafik42.jpg>

¹⁸ It should be mentioned that there is an earlier single figure of a dwarf placed in the Boboli Gardens in Florence. It presents a naked favorite of the Medici court – dwarf Morgante seated on a turtle. He was also portrayed in the painting by Agnolo Bronzino (1552) and his cast bronze figure decorated a small fountain in the garden on the roof over Loggia dei Lanzi (currently in Bargello).

¹⁹ The history of this design goes back to 1606 when Wolf Dietrich von Raitenau who was Archbishop at that time built a palace in the suburbs of Salzburg for his mistress Salome Alt, daughter of rich merchant Wilhelm Alt. It was called Altenau. After Dietrich von Raitenau died his successor Archbishop Marcus Sittikus von Hohenems, who took over the residence, changed its name to Mirabell (lat. *mirabile dictu* means wonderful to relate). At that time the palace with the garden was incorporated into the fortification system. The residence was fundamentally remodeled in the years 1721–1727 when Franz Anton von Harrach was Archbishop. The project of the remodeling was made by Lukas von Hildebrandt who connected previously separate buildings into one complex, investing it with Baroque character.

²⁰ In the 1690s, Fischer who came from Graz, started his apprenticeship in Rome as a sculptor. During his stay there, he saw the works by Bernini, including drawn caricatures. While in Rome, Fischer made sketches with the designs of garden gates and terrace. The first complete garden design made by Fischer von Erlach comes from 1688 for princely design by Hans Adam von Lichtenstein. His next work was the concept of a garden prepared for Hans Adam's father – Maximilian von Lichtenstein for his residence in Moravian Kromau. The knowledge of that plan resulted in inviting the designer by Archbishop Thun to Salzburg and commissioning the design of the Mirabell Garden [20, p. 11].

²¹ Bauer suggests that as a result of Francomania the direct reason of placing the stone *zwergs* in the Mirabell Garden was the “Troupe Royale des Pygmees” – a theater group which was active at the court of Louis XIV consisting of the figures of dwarfs made of wood [2, p. 16].

²² On the plan by Matthias Diesel from 1715 it is called “Pigalt Garten”.

We do not know who made the sculptures of the dwarfs from the Mirabell. Most probably it was one of the artists making the elaborate and ambitious sculptures for the whole garden. The list of the sculptors can be found in the work by Bauer that mentions: Ottavio Mosto from Padua and Austrians: Johann Froehlich, Andreas Goetzinger and a Czech – Michael Bernhard Mandel²³, Matthias Braun's apprentice²⁴.

²³ For instance the authors of the sculptural decorations of the university church in Salzburg.

²⁴ More on this artist – see the section describing the dwarf composition from the area of Bohemia.

The dwarfs in other Austrian and German gardens

Over the next thirty years, the sculptures of dwarfs became popular in a lot of gardens in the German speaking Europe, especially in the countries ruled by the Habsburg family (Tyrol, Upper Austria, Styria) and in Baden-Württemberg. In many cases – which is somewhat intriguing – they included monastery gardens, primarily the Benedictine ones such as in Kremsmuenster (Upper Austria), Gleink (Styria)²⁵, Lambach (Upper Austria)²⁶, Altenburg (Thuringia) as well as residence designs belonging to clergy. The idea from the Mirabell was repeated, e.g. by Archbishop of Augsburg Alexander Sigmund who around 1720 had the figures of dwarfs placed in his residence garden in that town²⁷.



Fig. 7. Copies of porcelain figures of dwarfs from: a) Derby factory made in the 19th century, from: www.thecanburyauctiongalleries.com; b) English factory in Chelsy made in the 19th century by Edme Samson, from: http://images.goantiques.com/dbimages3/MPK8948/MPK8948PS03_09_06_02.jpg

Il. 7. Wykonane w XIX w. przez Edme Samsona kopie porcelanowych figurek karzelków z angielskiej wytwórni w Chelsy. http://images.goantiques.com/dbimages3/MPK8948/MPK8948PS03_09_06_02.jpg

The Benedictine abbey in Austrian Kremsmuenster which is first on the list was remodeled at the end of the 17th century. Then, in 1696, under the influence of the Mirabell, a few figures of dwarfs (made – acc. to Bauer – rather awkwardly by Hans Littl) were placed in the garden and a year later they were replaced by a set of 24 stone *zwergs* made by a more renowned artist – Franz Joseph Feichmayer²⁸. They were put in the so-called *waelische Gaertlein* (that is “Italian garden”). In the 19th century, they were partly destroyed and partly sold [2, p. 14].

²⁵ 13 figures of dwarfs, each one meter tall, were placed in Gleink around 1720 in the garden close to other statues symbolizing, e.g. four seasons of the year. Currently they are in the castle garden in Lamberg (Styria) where they were placed in the courtyard around a water well [34].

²⁶ The dwarfs from Lambach (6 pieces have been preserved today) come from around 1715 [20].

²⁷ Originally there were probably 12 of them. Today there are 5 in that group. In 1963, they were moved to the area of the City Park in Augsburg [37].

²⁸ Franz Joseph Feichmayer (1660–1718) sculptor and stucco-worker from Linz. He worked, e.g. for the Benedictine monastery in Einsiedeln (Switzerland). He came from the family of sculptors and woodcarvers, belonging to the famous group of stucco-workers called Wessobrunner Schule [2, p. 14].

Numerous statues of dwarfs were also put in the palace gardens. The residence of Erasmus von Huldenberg in Weidling near Vienna, designed by Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach was probably the first in that group. In 1709, the figures of dwarfs were put around a big fountain in the garden belonging to the residence²⁹. The stone *zwergs* from Werkersheim come from the same year. They are especially worth noting because of, e.g. their great number (over 50) and – as suggested by Bauer – the direct influence of the Mirabell [2, p. 25]. They were commissioned by the owner of the residence – Count Carl Ludwig v. Hohenlohe and his wife Elizabeth, Princess v. Oettingen [2, p. 21; 25]. We do not know their original placement. Today they stand, similarly to

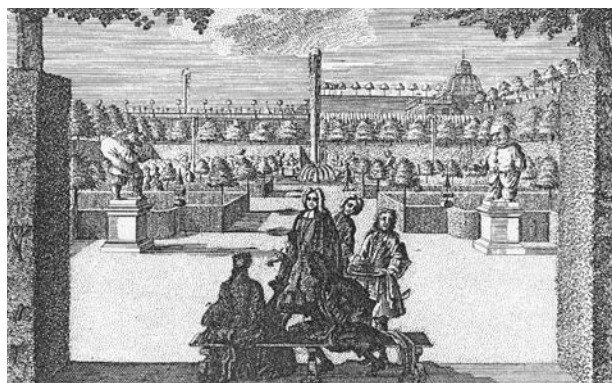


Fig. 8. The “Dwarf Garden” in the Mirabell. Copperplate engraving by Franz Anton Danreiter, circa 1730. From: G.G. Bauer, “Salzburger Barockzwerg. Das steinerne Zwergentheater des Fischer v. Ehrlach im Mirabellgarten zu Salzburg”, Galerie Welz 1999, p. 76

Il. 8. „Ogród karłów” w założeniu Mirabel. Miedzioryt Franza Antona Danreitera, ok. 1730. Za: G.G. Bauer, “Salzburger Barockzwerg. Das steinerne Zwergentheater des Fischer v. Ehrlach im Mirabellgarten zu Salzburg”, Galerie Welz 1999, p. 76

those in the Czech Nové Město nad Metují, on the retaining wall separating the two parts of the garden.

Other residences with garden dwarf compositions include, e.g.: Puchberg (Lower Austria), Helfenberg (Upper Austria), Greillenstein (Lower Austria)³⁰, Lamberg (Styria), Neuburg am Inn (Lower Bavaria), Munzingen (currently part of Freiburg im Breisgau, Baden-Württemberg), Pfannberg bei Frohnleiten (Styria), Dornau (former southern Styria, currently Dornava in Slovenia)³¹, Oettingen (Bavaria)³² and Wien-Neuwaldegg³³.

²⁹ This composition has been preserved until today [2, p. 21].

³⁰ 24 statues were placed on the steps of the terrace in the garden [37].

³¹ The Baroque remodeling of the earlier plan took place in the years 1739–1743 during the rule of Count Dizma Attems. Most probably the stone *zwergs* were created at that time. Most likely they were commissioned from the workshop of Philip Jacob Straub who made the other garden sculptures [38].

³² The wife of the owner of Werkersheim was connected with the Oettingen family.

³³ Bauer adds Ober-Grafendorf (near St. Poelten, Lower Austria) and Schwaighof located nearby. The information is, however, not confirmed [2, p. 32].

A unique composition with the figures of dwarfs can be found in Greillenstein. At the beginning of the 18th century, the owners of the palace, Johann Leopold Kuefstein and his wife Maria Franziska from the house of Kollonitsch, commissioned the execution of a new garden design. The elaborate sculptural program, apart from the figures of St. Florian and George, a number of putti, vases and pedestals, also includes 20 statues of dwarfs placed along water cascades. They present ordinary people performing simple, even trivial activities³⁴. The production of the sculptures for the garden was commissioned to Philippus Rochus Eberl. Around 1900, as a result of changes in the garden space the sculptures of the dwarfs were moved closer to the palace, forming the so-called Zwergengarten. Only nine of them were preserved until the 1960s. They were put in one of the palace rooms, forming the so-called Zwergenkabinett [43].

³⁴ For instance a man eating fish with a peasant woman with a bag on her back.



Fig. 9. Figures of dwarfs in the Mirabell (photo: M. Jagiełło-Kołaczyk)

Il. 9. Karle figury ogrodu Mirabell (fot. M. Jagiełło-Kołaczyk)

The stone trpasliky from the territory of the Czech Republic

The second biggest group of different dwarf figures was sculptured for the gardens located on the current territory of the Czech Republic. The most famous and impressive of them include the dwarfs from Kuks which are connected with the foundation of Count Anton v. Špork³⁵ and related through their composition with the design of the Kuks spa³⁶.

It consisted of 40 figures placed on tall pedestals on both sides of the track built in the central part of the health resort. Its shorter sides were enclosed by sculptural compositions, one of which depicted a bear and the other a bull, both fighting with dogs attacking them. Along both longer sides of the track there were placed twenty figures of dwarfs, men and women, wearing various clothes, both those of masters and peasants. Their characteristic feature is that none of the figures displays any disability other than dwarfism.

The horse riding competitions (the so-called Ringrennen) similar to royal tournaments were held on the track in Kuks. While horse riding, the participants

were supposed to knock over a metal ring suspended in the air. This form of entertainment, which is Arabian by origin, required great agility and light horses. It came to Europe through Dresden where the competition was held for the first time already in 1584. Organizing tournaments of such origin in the spa was supposed to significantly raise its reputation and encourage the high and mighty of Europe to visit the place.

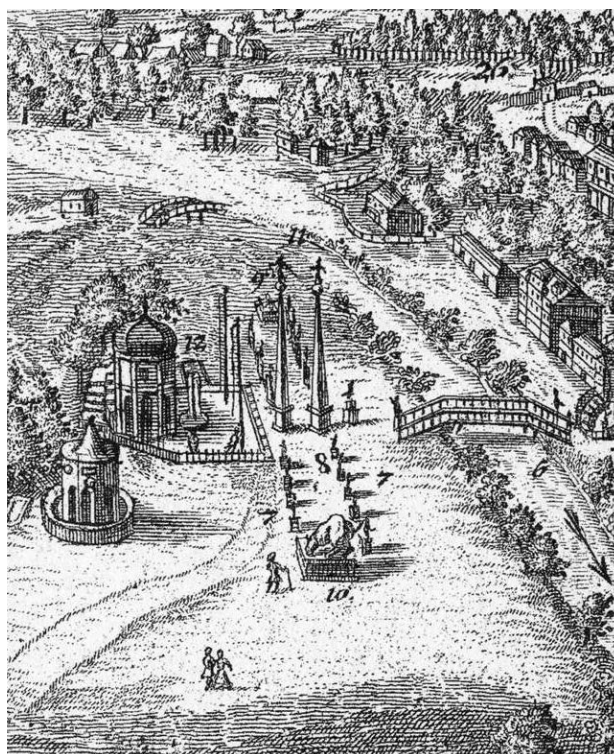


Fig. 10. Kuks, fragment of the spa design with the gallery of dwarfs (No. 8)

Il. 10. Kuks, fragment założenia uzdrowskiego z galerią karłów (nr 8)

³⁵ Frantisek Antonin Špork (1662–1738) was one of the most prominent personages of the Czech Baroque. A count, whose father, who came from Westfalia, was granted the hereditary title for his services in the Thirty Years War, became famous as patron of the arts. The Czechs owe him, e.g. the import of Italian opera. The various investments of the count include his own printing house [26].

³⁶ In the years 1694–1724 Count Špork commissioned the construction of an extensive complex of secular and church buildings with intent to create a world class sanatorium. His idea was inspired by local mineral sources. The fame of the sanatorium in Kuks lasted over 30 years; it ended with a flood which destroyed the buildings by the river. Nobody lived in the Špork's palace and it burned down in 1896. In 1901 the ruins of the castle together with the ruins of the sanatorium buildings were demolished. During World War II the hospital housed a dormitory for the Hitlerjugend Organization in the region of Sudetenland. Only the Holy Trinity Church hospital, the Merciful Brethren hospital and a few sanatorium buildings have been preserved to date from the original complex.



Fig. 11. Gallery of dwarfs in Nové Město nad Metují
(photo: M. Jagiełło-Kołaczyk)

Il. 11. Galeria karłów w Nové Město nad Metují
(fot. M. Jagiełło-Kołaczyk)

The production of the sculptures of dwarfs in Kuks is connected with the workshop of famous Matthias Braun whose sculptures were included in the design in Kuks³⁷. They were placed next to the personifications of Virtues and Vices, the

³⁷ Matthias Bernard Braun (1684–1738), came from near Innsbruck (Austria). He was one of the most active and established sculptor operating mainly in Bohemia. He is considered promoter of the Italian school of sculpture in this part of Europe. Already his first work – the depiction of the vision of St. Lutgard from 1710 that was produced for the Charles Bridge in Prague – made him popular and resulted in a lot of subsequent commissions for palaces, gardens, churches in Prague and Bohemia. The progressive tuberculosis in time limited the activity of Braun to provide the patterns and models that were produced by hired workers. His most famous works include the sculptures for the Charles Bridge in Prague, St. Clement Church in Prague and the sculptural decorations of the palace of the Czernin family. Apart from Prague his works include allegoric series of monumental representations of Virtues and Vices as well as a group of sculptures called the Betlem group commissioned by Antonin Špork in the forest in Kuks.

allegory of Faith, Truth and Justice accompanied by the so-called Betlem Rock Sculptures placed in the nearby forest³⁸.

The dwarfs in Kuks were created in about 1717. Shortly afterwards, namely already in 1738, they were destroyed in the flood which hit the spa and its significant part was irretrievably lost. In 1932, as many as 28 figures of dwarfs which survived the flood ultimately ended up in the reconstructed gardens of the castle in Nové Město nad Metují. Seven of them were placed in front of the entrance to the palace; the remaining twenty one were placed in the garden on a specially built retaining wall separating the design into two sections³⁹.

Kuks is not the only place in the Czech Republic where garden dwarfs can be found. Four *trpaslíki*, as they are called in the Czech Republic, today decorate the court of the castle in Velke Losiny as well as the garden of the chapter deanery in Hradec Králové. We know also that stone figures of gnomes were once in the residence of the Thun family in Děčín (former Tetschen) and in the summer garden of Jan Václav Michna, located in Prague's Nové Město. Years ago the figures of dwarfs also decorated the garden near the palace in Citoliby (former Zittolib). They were made in around 1718 for Jan Jachyma Pachta who was then the owner of Citoliby in the workshop of Matthias Braun who was mentioned earlier⁴⁰.

³⁸ Matthias Bernard Braun created from natural rocks huge figures of saintly hermits and a large relief with the Procession of the Magi, Adoration of the Shepherds and Vision of St. Hubert.

³⁹ The anonymous author of an extensive article published at the website [48] argues that the six figures of *zwergs* which in 1881 were put in the garden of the Wiepersdorf residence near Berlin come from Kuks. However, the significant differences in style between both groups of figures that have been preserved until today in Nové Město nad Metují and in Wiepersdorf make that suggestion hardly probable.

⁴⁰ In the 19th century, they were moved to the garden in Neuwaldegg near Vienna where there are now 16 figures.

Dwarfs in the Italian gardens. Individual items from France and Spain

The Italian *nani* represent a special group of garden sculptures of dwarfs connected with two regions in Italy – first of all Veneto which in that respect is represented by, e.g. famous Villa Valmarana near Vicenza nicknamed “ai Nani” that is “at the Dwarfs” [16]. It was built at the end of the 16th century as a recreational suburban residence. In 1720, the Valmarana family from Vincenza became owners of the villa. Its nickname “ai Nani” comes from the 17 statues by Francesco Ulico [47] who made this in circa 1765. They represent the figures of women and men such as soldiers, king and servants. The presence of Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, when the polychromes of the interiors of the residence were applied, the author of a series of drawings whose main character is hunchbacked Punch, leaves open the question of his influence on the sculptural program of the garden. Such a probability seems to be confirmed also by the rule, which was followed at that time in Italy, of creating coherent iconographical programs for all elements of the design – both those in the interior (polychromes, sculptures, reliefs) and those

composing the elements of the garden [1, p. 36]. The original placement of the figures of dwarfs is unknown. Today the statues of dwarfs stand on the wall surrounding the villa, with their back towards its garden⁴¹.

Apart from Villa Valmarana garden dwarfs can also be found in the gardens of villa Nani Mocenigo a Canda (near Rovigo)⁴², villa Giusti in Verona⁴³ and the following residences: Trento da Schio near Costozza di

⁴¹ Most probably they were placed there during conservation works of the design conducted in 1785 [1, p. 92], [2, p. 115–116].

⁴² Their placement in that garden can be considered a kind of allusion to the name of the owners – Nani family.

⁴³ The garden was established in the second half of the 16th century for the patrician from Verona – Agostino Giusti. Four statues of dwarfs were added during Baroque remodeling of the design conducted in the middle of the 18th century. They were placed on the side wall of the garden. It seems likely that there is a connection between them and five sculptures by Lorenzo Muttoni (1720–1778) placed at that time in the garden representing ancient deities: Adonis, Apollo, Diana, Juno and Venus.



Fig. 12. Dwarfs on the wall surrounding the garden of villa Valmarana (photo: M. Jagiełło-Kołaczyk)

Il. 12. Karły na murze otaczającym ogród willi Valmarana (fot. M. Jagiełło-Kołaczyk)

Longare⁴⁴, Nani Loredan and Nani Rapizzi as well as villas: Pagani Cesa⁴⁵, Rudio and Semenzi. The figures of dwarfs also are in the gardens in Tuscany. Two of them can be found in villa Careggi near Florence whose garden was designed by the founders of the Boboli Garden – Giulio Parigi and his son Alfonso.

The figures of dwarfs can also be found in Sicily. In the 18th century, the Sicilian aristocracy from Palermo used to spend the hot summer out of town. One of such summer vacation places was Bagheria. In 1715, the construction of villa Palagonia started there. It was owned by Ferdinando Francesco Gravina e Cruyllas, Duke of Palagonia and Marquis of Frankfurt as well as member of the Knights of the Golden Fleece and a Spanish grandee. The establishment of the garden was commissioned by his son Ferdinando Francesco Gravina e Alliata in 1758. The mysterious statues made of tuff, oneiric kind of nightmarish sculptures were placed on its surrounding wall. They became one of the main attractions of the villa, drawing

⁴⁴ The statues of dwarfs sculptured by Orazio Marinali (1643–1720) were placed there on both balustrades of the steps leading from the garden to the orangery. The author of the sculptures was active mainly in Veneto. His most famous work was a group of sculptures for villa Conti, the so-called *Deliciosa*, inspired by the characters from the *commedia dell'arte*.

⁴⁵ Their appearance in that garden surely can be connected with the transformation of its design which took place in 1789.



Fig. 13. Palagonia, sculptures from the gallery of “monsters” (photo: M. Jagiełło-Kołaczyk)

Il. 13. Palagonia, rzeźby z galerii „monstrów” (fot. M. Jagiełło-Kołaczyk)

many artists with its magic atmosphere. In 1787, it was visited by, e.g. Johann Wolfgang Goethe, who after his stay in Bagheria wrote in his travel log that he was shockingly impressed by the dwarfs, monsters and other different figures (which he divided into animal and human types), listing, e.g. such figures as beggars, shepherds, Spaniards, Moors, Turks, dwarfish Roman emperors, soldiers in clothes from different periods, various gods and mythological figures. He also listed animals with animal-human hybrids and dragons dominating among them [12, p. 212–215]. This disturbing or even surrealistic presentation was most probably sculptured by Rosario L’Avvocato.

An individual example of dwarfs in the gardens can be also found in France, where it appeared in circa 1715 in the gardens of Château de Suresnes near Compiègne thanks to Ludwig Duke of Bavaria hosted in that castle by Louis XIV⁴⁶ and in Spain where the dwarfed figures sculptured by Jose Benito de Churriguera were placed in the garden of Nuevo Baztan near Madrid. It accompanied the palace and church complex connected with modern, for those times, production plants designed in the years 1709–1713 by Churriguera and commissioned by Juan de Goyeneche⁴⁷.

⁴⁶ The information is found in an anonymous note published on the website [39].

⁴⁷ Unfortunately, neither French nor Spanish dwarfs have been preserved in those gardens. More on this complex – see [43].

The dwarf figures in the Silesian gardens

At the end of this presentation we can also mention two Silesian examples of placing the sculptures depicting deformed figures in the gardens, namely the palace garden in Osiek Grodkowski⁴⁸ in the Opole region and the

abbey garden of the monastery in Henryków. Unfortunately, the figures of dwarfs from those places have not been preserved *in situ* and their presentation is possible only through archival materials (photographs)

⁴⁸ The information confirming the placement of the sculptures of dwarfs in these gardens can be found in a few studies on this subject [2, p. 31], [11]. It is known that the palace in Osiek Grodkowski was built in

the 1st half of the 18th century for the Koenigsdorff family. Today, after the neo-Gothic remodeling conducted under the supervision of Alexis Langer, it is surrounded by a landscape park with no sculptural decorations.

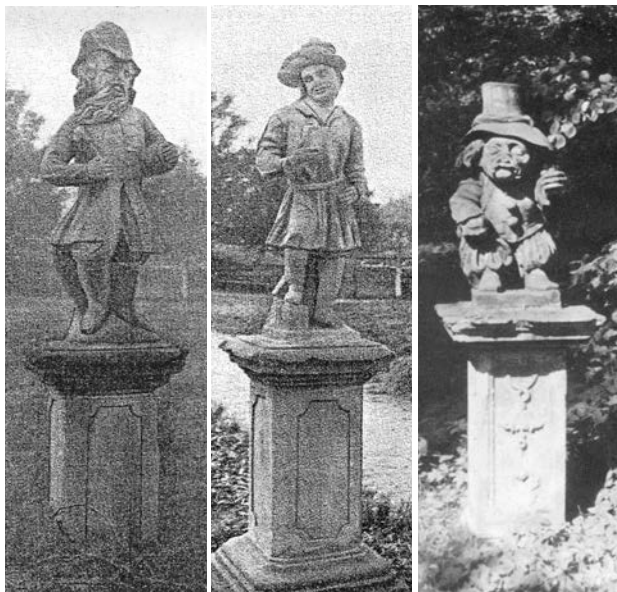


Fig. 14. a), b) Dwarfs from the monastery garden in Henryków.

From: Ullmann H., *Der Klosterküchengarten in Heinrichau*, "Ostdeutsche Bau Zeitung" 1930, 28, p. 41

c) Figure of dwarf from the palace garden in Osiek Grodkowski.

Photograph from 1939. From: W. Irrgang, *Bemerkenswerte Parkanlagen in Schlesien*, Dortmund 1978, p. 121

Il. 14. a), b) Karły z ogrodu klasztornego w Henrykowie, za: Ullmann H., *Der Klosterküchengarten in Heinrichau*, "Ostdeutsche Bau Zeitung" 1930, 28, s. 41

c) Figura karła z parku pałacowego w Osieku Grodkowskim. Fotografia z 1939 r. Za: W. Irrgang, *Bemerkenswerte Parkanlagen in Schlesien*, Dortmund 1978, s. 121

and descriptions of the design made by Wolfgang Irrgang for Osiek [13] and by Heinrich Ullman for Henryków [35].

The former researcher's superficial description, including a historical outline of the complex, provides information about numerous figures of dwarfs placed in the park which definitely was not their original placement. It is unknown, however, when and from where they were moved. The photograph of one of the figures attached to this paper presents a man in courtly clothes (hose, caftan) and a hat on his head on a deco-

rated pedestal. Definitely it refers to one of the patterns included in *Il Calotto resuscitato*⁴⁹.

Ullman's description of the sculptures of dwarfs is a little more detailed. According to his account the figures of zwergs were placed in the Henryków abbey garden near a fountain. They were put on rather tall pedestals. Their original number is unknown. The author mentions a few, adding that they were wearing short trousers, caftans and soft hats. The photographs attached to the paper present only two figures. In the opinion of Krzysztof Eysymontt, who many years later wrote about the garden in Henryków, their placement there was secondary, questioning the possibility of using the sculptures of dwarfs to decorate the monastery garden. He wrote: *Their humorous aspect does not seem to fit the monastery garden* [8, p. 222]. In the light of research presented above this opinion seems completely groundless. It is contradicted by the existence of the statues of dwarfs in many monastery gardens and residences which belonged to church dignitaries. Although it is not possible to completely exclude the possibility that they appeared in Henryków only in the 19th century when the representatives of a princely family from the Saxon-Weimar dynasty became owners of the complex, which earlier as a result of secularization was taken over by the Prussian State.

It is worth mentioning that the centrally located two-story Lusthaus still remains the landmark of the abbey garden. The other known and partly preserved sculptural elements include three statues: Vulcan, Neptune and Pluto, personifying three elements – Fire, Water and Earth (the fourth lost sculpture personified Air). They constitute the program known from a number of Baroque gardens. The authorship of the sculptures is attributed to Georg Leonhard Weber⁵⁰.

⁴⁹ Compare the chapter on visual patterns for the sculptures of dwarfs.

⁵⁰ Georg Leonhard Weber (cir. 1675–cir. 1732) settled in Świdnica at the end of the 17th century. He is the author of the water well with Neptune located in the market square in Świdnica and the figures of St. John of Nepomuk and St. Florian on the corners of the town hall, large figures of the town patrons standing in the central nave of St. Stanislaus and Vaclav church, as well as the sculptures on the organ in this church, the so-called Heavenly Orchestra. Weber is also the author of the figural decorations of the St. Ceslav chapel at the Dominican church in Wrocław and many other sculptures, e.g. a beautiful votive figure of the Holy Virgin Mary in Kochanów near Krzeszów [45].

Authors of dwarf figures

The figures of dwarfs were sculptured by artists of varied renown. We know the names of some of them. This group includes especially Johann Pabst Wanscher from Linz who was connected with the groups of sculptures produced for two Benedictine monasteries (Gleink, Helfenberg) and two residences (Lambach and Lamberg), all of which are located on the territory of Austria⁵¹. Another established sculptor who created a set of 50 figures of dwarfs for Werkersheim was Johann Sommer, active primarily in Hessen [10], [36].

⁵¹ The name of the artist can be found also written as Wunsche or Wuntscher. There are accounts of his participation in decorating the interiors of the Cistercian monastery in Schlierbach (Upper Austria) [30, p. 155; 42].

Undoubtedly, Matthias Braun was the most eminent from that group, referred to several times in this paper. Apart from the figures from Kuks, the sculptures of dwarfs from the residences in Czech Citoliby are also attributed to him.

The group of authors of the statues of dwarfs from Germany, Austria and the Czech Republic includes such artists as Hans Litti and Franz Joseph Feichmayer connected with Kremsmuenster, as well as Philippus Rochus Eberl from Greillenstein and Filip Jacob Straub, commissioned by the owners of the residences in Dornau.

The names of a few sculptors of the figures of dwarfs for the Italian gardens are also known.

They include: Francesco Uliaco, the author of the sculptures for the Valmarana residence as well as Orazio Marinali, active in Veneto who made the dwarf balustrade in Trento da Schio and Rosario d'Avocato, the author of the mysterious gallery of monsters in Palagonia.

Visual patterns for the sculptures of dwarfs. Dwarfs in paintings and ceramics

It is commonly assumed that most dwarfs from the Baroque gardens were created on the basis of visual patterns. The first of them were provided by Jacques Callot – a French printmaker and engraver, active mainly at the Florentine court of the Medici family – who made a series of 23 drawings titled *Varie figure Gobi*, first published in Florence in 1616 and then in Nancy in 1623⁵².

Callot was famous primarily for his series of depictions for the commedia dell'arte. There are a lot of indications that the expressive, caricature figures stirred the imagination of the artist to produce a series of grotesque depictions of crippled people with deformed bodies but not mind. They are swashbuckling or even mischievous. They arouse as much compassion as cheerfulness⁵³. The annual feast of St. Romula (*La famosa giostra del Gobi*), held in Florence at the Medici court, with the dwarf members of troupes of actors as its main performers, could also be a great inspiration for the artist⁵⁴.

Callot's works were the direct patters for garden sculptures of dwarfs created before 1706 when a collection of drawings titled *Il Callotto resuscitato oder Neu eingerichtes Zwerchen Cabinet* with visual works attributed to Martin Engelbrecht, with 62 illustrations of dwarfs, was published in Augsburg based on his work. They present different figures, including women – which was then a novelty.

Most of them presented natural dwarfs, sometimes additionally disabled: lame and hunchbacked, wearing various clothes, sometimes ordinary, sometimes courtly.

⁵² Jacques Callot (1592–1635) – French mannerist draftsman and etcher from Lorraine. In the years 1608–1621 he was in Italy – first in Rome where he served his apprenticeship with etcher Philippe Thomassin, and then in Florence where he worked for the Medici family. In 1621, he returned to his home town in Nancy from where he visited, e.g. Paris and Brussels. He dealt almost exclusively with visual arts and his output included about 1400–1500 etchings and about 2000 drawings scattered in different collections and museums. His works depicted genre, historical and religious scenes, town views, portraits, caricatures, characters from commedia dell'arte, folk types (beggars, Gypsies). One of his famous early works is the etching from 1607 depicting Charles III, Duke of Lorraine. He produced a few series of visual works, including *Gobbi*, *Pantalone*, *Capricci di varie figure* (1617) and two already mentioned series *The Miseries of War* from 1632 and 1633. He is also the author of *The Temptation of St. Anthony* (two versions), *The Siege of Breda* (1625), *The Siege of La Rochelle* (1629), book illustrations and many other works. His nephew Claude Callot was the court painter at Polish royal courts in the 17th century.

⁵³ The fact that one of the figures resembles Callot testifies to the artist's sense of humor.

⁵⁴ Callot spent the years 1612–1621 at the Medici court.

Finally, it is also worth mentioning the only Spaniard in that group and at the same time disabled artist participating in the 'dwarf practice' – namely Jose Benito de Churriguera – who created the figures of dwarfs for Nuevo Baztan.



Fig. 15. Catalog of garden gnomes. In: Karl Goetze, *Album fuer Teppichgaertnerei und Gruppenbepflanzung*, Erfurt 1910. From: <http://t3.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:KQn7IT4CnlhzcM:http://sciweb.nybg.org/Science2/Onlinexhibits/gnomes.jpg>

Il. 15. Katalog ogrodowych krasnali. W: Karl Goetze, *Album fuer Teppichgaertnerei und Gruppenbepflanzung*, Erfurt 1910. Za: <http://t3.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:KQn7IT4CnlhzcM:http://sciweb.nybg.org/Science2/Onlinexhibits/gnomes.jpg>

They are holding different accessories in their hands. They also include oriental figures, wearing clothes of sultans, Moors, etc.

The popularity of the visual depictions of the figures of dwarfs from this series resulted in next publications. They included the depictions of 12 months published in 1715⁵⁵ and the cards from the composed of many parts so called theatrical dancing school for dwarfs – *Theatralische Zwergen Tanz-Schul*, with engravings by Martin Engelbrecht⁵⁶, as well as their successors: “horse riding school for dwarfs” and “fencing school for dwarfs”.

The subject of dwarfs in visual arts and drawings was also popular in Italy. Already in 1627, Callot's student – Antonio Francesco Lucini produced a series of “fighting dwarfs” which was published as *Compendio dell Armide de Caramogi*.

⁵⁵ Already in 1716, their edition was published in Amsterdam, then in 1720 in London and in Venice.

⁵⁶ Martin Engelbrecht (1684–1756) copperplate engraver and publisher. He served his apprenticeship in the famous Jeremias Wolff's publishing house which he took over in 1735 through the marriages of his daughters with Philip Andreas Kilian and Christoph Friedrich Hoermann. He engraved sacred, Biblical and genre scenes as well as city views (*vedutas*), allegories and cards with ornaments.

They were also drawn by Stefano della Bella⁵⁷, depicting the figures of dwarfs in common, street or folk scenes as well as playing the game of *pallone* which was popular in Italy since the 15th century. Only 23 works of the artist have been preserved today. Giovanni Battista Tiepolo⁵⁸ also made a collection of depictions of physically deformed figures in a series dedicated to Punch – a comical character from the *comedia dell'arte*.

Similar works would include subsequent Italian visual series presenting Italian Gobbi which would create in Italy at that time whole families and costume groups, and which were put in city squares⁵⁹.

The list should also include the paintings of people afflicted by dwarfism. The most famous series of portraits of dwarfs belonging to the Spanish court of King Philip IV

⁵⁷ Stefano della Bella (1610–1664) – Italian printmaker, famous especially for his etchings of military objects. He studied etching under Remigio Cantagallinigo together with J. Callot, whose works strongly influenced the then contemporary etchers. In 1642, he went to Paris where cardinal Richelieu hired him to illustrate the siege and taking of the town of Arras by the royal army. After a longer stay in Paris he returned to Florence where he received a permanent position as drawing teacher in the Medici family. He is known for a great number of etchings (over 1000.)

⁵⁸ The most famous works by the Italian painter Giovanni Battista Tiepolo (1696–1770) include polychromes in the imperial hall in the bishop residence in Wuerzburg, ceiling frescoes in the throne room of the royal palace in Madrid and painting decorations of the interiors of villa Valmarana in Vicenza.

⁵⁹ Their special gathering, called *giostra Gobbi*, was held every year in Florence on July 6 the feast of St. Romula.

was painted in the years 1630–1640 by Diego Velázquez⁶⁰. Dwarfs can be also found in the paintings by Peter Paul Rubens (*The Meeting of Abraham and Melchizedek*), Jan Steen (who copied drawings by Callot)⁶¹, Sofonisba Anguisciola⁶² and a little later Francisco Goya⁶³.

Almost simultaneously with the depictions and paintings on canvas appeared miniature figures of ceramic dwarfs produced by European manufactories such as the famous manufactory in Meissen which operated since 1710, Viennese “Porzellan-Manufaktur” which produced series of dwarfs in the years 1744–1750 and English “Royal Crown Derby” which since the 1780s produced whole series of dwarfs, popular among collectors today. In their design the porcelain dwarfs slowly departed from Callot’s original patterns and became the basis of the colorful garden gnome that was born in the 1870s.

⁶⁰ Diego Velázquez (1599–1660) as the portrait painter of the King of Spain, Philip IV, painted a series of portraits of court dwarfs, e.g. Diego de Acedo and Sebastian de Morra. Another famous dwarf who had his own portrait was *Stanislaus, cardinal Granvell’s favorite*, painted in the years 1549–1553 by Niderlandish painter Anthonis Mor.

⁶¹ Many disfigured and simply ugly figures can be found in moralizing paintings by Dutch painter Jan Steen (1626–1679), especially those which present genre and table scenes.

⁶² *Girl with a Dwarf* – portrait of duchess Margarita of Savoy, granddaughter of King Philip II of Spain, from 1595.

⁶³ In 1778, Francisco Goya drew copies of Velázquez’ paintings presenting dwarfs: Sebastian de Morra and Diego de Acedo.

Types of representations of dwarfs; their function and connection with garden compositions

The symbolic functions attributed to dwarfs in garden designs seem varied. They demonstrate a clear connection with their location in the garden and other items of garden decorations.

Summing up this aspect, three kinds of placement of garden dwarfs can be distinguished. The first of them is connected with the entrance zones, e.g. stairs such as in the villa in Pullkau, where they were placed on both sides of the staircase, and ‘transition’ zones such as in Trento da Schio near Costozza di Longare, where they were placed on the balustrade of the stairs leading from the garden to the orangery. Kuks with its gallery of dwarfs placed on both sides of the tournament track, which is in its form similar to the Roman circus seems to be a special case.

The examples of sculptures of dwarfs listed above (stairs, racing track) served the function similar to that of real dwarfs in the life of the court. This is especially evident in the case of Kuks where stone dwarfs are the participants in the feast. The festivities which included – with typically Baroque liking for bizarre things – monstrosity and deformity.

The second kind of placement of stone garden dwarfs is connected with water wells, fountains or cascades (e.g. Mirabell Garden, Zwergebrunnen in Caryntian Althofer or Henryków). It is justified in myths and legends in which dwarfs were presented as residents of the under-

world which is the origin of water springs. It is worth remembering the role played by Priapus in protecting the purity of spring water.

The third kind of place where garden dwarfs were put was the walls – especially external ones surrounding the residence. Good examples include the following villas: Giusti, Vallmarana (assuming this was their original placement) and the garden in Werkersheim. Their role was almost totemic there. Again, like ancient Priapus, they protected the garden and its owner. This group included also the Sicilian villa Palagonia, although in this case apart from the sick imagination of the lonely and melancholic owner of the villa and its garden, his propensity for intriguing with a sophisticated metaphor or allegory should be also taken into consideration.

Such a role of stone dwarfs takes them from the enchanted stone circle of a court fool, direct counterpart of dwarf-jester, to the world of myths and beliefs. This is important as such an observation allows us to formulate a suggestion of the existence of a connection between the Baroque stone dwarf and the ceramic gnome created in the second half of the 19th century that is present in many gardens today.

The great number of sculptures of dwarfs in monastery gardens needs a separate explanation. Various hypotheses come to mind. It can be presumed that this

way both the archbishop and the monastery abbot created a stone ersatz of the real and lively court with all its necessary “inventory”.

It is worth noting that also the accounts of Bauer who while analyzing the stone *zwergs* from the Mirabell connected them symbolically with the astro-

nomie code, assigning the 12 figures the role of elements personifying successive months. This places the figures of dwarfs in a broader iconographic program assumed in the Baroque gardens which was presented at the beginning of this paper in the part on garden sculptural programs [2, p. 26].

The relations between the stone sculptures of dwarfs and the ceramic garden gnomes

The popularity of stone dwarfs placed in the gardens was relatively short and it had two stages. In German speaking countries, it lasted from the end of the 17th century until the 1720s, that is about 30 years. The second stage refers to the stone dwarfs placed in the Italian gardens and it lasted from 1758 until 1789 (based on the dates which we know today).

It can be claimed that the fashion for dwarfs died naturally when the landscape garden appeared, and the sculptures of dwarfs which came from redesigned or, as in the case of the Mirabell, secularized gardens were removed to less exposed places; after some time some of them were simply sold⁶⁴.

However, this is not the end of the garden history of dwarfs. In 1873, in Graefenrod in south German Thuringia, the first manufactory was opened which produced ceramic, terracotta figures called in German the same as stone garden dwarfs – *zwergs*. They referred to numerous at that time publications of fables, drawing on old myths and legends.

Dwarfs, that is persons who are exceptionally short and sometimes deformed, appear in myths and legends of most peoples in Europe. They are extremely important in German mythology. They live in rock caves or underground and protect precious metals and stones. In the 16th century, Paracelsus called them gnomes from gr. *gnome* – reason, or from *genomon* – that is dwelling in the earth which was their natural environment. Virtually everywhere they were considered caring demons.

The difference between terracotta gnomes and stone dwarfs was that just like in myths and legends there were no women figures among them. On the basis of both some figures from the Baroque gardens and porcelain dwarfs a characteristic iconographic profile was established for them. The influence of the latter ones seems especially



Fig. 16. Fragment of the exposition from the exhibition “2000 nains a Bagatelle” held in Paris in 2000. From: http://lutinette.free.fr/grenier/bagatelle_nains/nainsalu.jpg

Il. 16. Fragment ekspozycji z wystawy „2000 nains a Bagatelle”, która odbyła się w Paryżu w 2000 r. Za: http://lutinette.free.fr/grenier/bagatelle_nains/nainsalu.jpg

important in assigning specific colors to gnomes. They could not have been influenced by the Baroque garden dwarfs that despite their being at first brightly painted, by the second half of the 19th century completely lost their original luster.

Over the last few years one can see a revival of interest in garden dwarfs especially gnomes. Extensive exhibitions testify to that. The biggest of them was held in 2000 in Parisian Bagatelle. The administrators of the 24-hectar park (and its adjacent 18th century residence) that hosted earlier masterpieces by Henry Moor challenged both admirers of gnomes known in France as *nanologues* and those who consider them kitschy.

Gnomes have also their regular events. The most interesting of them include “Austrian Days of Dwarfs – Nanologica”, (“Oestereichische Zwergentage”) held over the last few years in Greillenstein gardens where stone *zwergs* appeared for the first time at the beginning of the 18th century.

⁶⁴ It is estimated that the number of figures of dwarfs that were moved from their original places and today are in private gardens in Europe and even America exceeds 300.

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Karły i inne kuriosa w ogrodach europejskich

Fascynacja ludzkimi ułomnościami sięga starożytności. Pod koniec XVII w. znalazła ona swoją egzemplifikację w postaci kamiennych posągów karłów, ustawianych w ogrodach. Pierwszym, w którym się pojawiły, był ogród Mirabell pod Salzburgiem, należący do biskupa Johanna Ernsta Thuna. W pierwszej połowie XVIII w. moda na karle posągi rozprzestrzeniła się w znacznej części Europy, głównie w krajach władanych

przez austriackich Habsburgów (odnajdujemy je tam w wielu ogrodach klasztornych, głównie benedyktyńskich), ale także na terenie pałacowych rezydencji z terenów: południowych Niemiec, włoskiego Veneto oraz Sycylii. Znane są nam również dwa przykłady śląskie: cysterski klasztor w Henrykowie oraz ogród przy pałacu w Grodkowie. Niestety, tylko część karlich kompozycji zachowała się *in situ* do naszych czasów.

Key words: midgets, sculpture, european gardens

Słowa kluczowe: karły, rzeźba, ogrody europejskie