

Małgorzata Durbas*

Jan Długosz University in Czestochowa
ORCID: 0000-0003-4435-9675

THE FIRST ACADEMIC DISCOURSE ABOUT DWARFISM IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY ON THE EXAMPLE OF THE DWARF OF LUNÉVILLE

In the conventional wisdom of the Enlightenment the topic of dwarfism as a medical disorder was not present. Dwarfs were sought after for and highly valued at European aristocratic and royal courts, but they stayed at the margins of social life because of their body build. The aim of this article is to discuss the first academic research connected with dwarfism on the example of King Stanislaw Leszczyński's dwarf in Lunéville. Nicolas Ferry, known as Bébé, like other dwarfs during the trend of that time was a mascot of courtiers, up to his death at the age of 23 by the King's side in the palace. The King, upset by the death of his prematurely aged pupil Bébé, ordered his doctors to examine the corpse. Part of the research material was sent to Paris to the Cabinet of Natural History (Cabinet d'Histoire Naturelle du Roi) of Count de Buffon, who started an examination. The case of the dwarf Bébé was described in the series *Histoire naturelle...* of 12 volumes in the section on quadrupeds. From the point of view of cultural controversies about dwarfism – nowadays treated as a disease in the medical model of disability – the case is an important question because it shows the beginning of the process of departing from the beliefs of the eighteenth century towards the first anatomical academic research.

Keywords: dwarf, Bébé, Nicolas Ferry, Lunéville, science, research,

INTRODUCTION

In the modern era dwarfs fascinated courtiers as an anatomic peculiarity. They were treated as freaks of nature, the smaller the dwarf, the greater interest. Bożena Fabiani correctly notes that dwarfs were treated as peculiar toys, amusing bored lords and the public by their appearance. It was often forgotten that they were humans with feeling and dignity despite their imperfections (Fabiani 1980: 28). Throughout the ages the minority of dwarfs experienced peaceful lives, especially among the poor. Fate was very kind to Nicolas Ferry, born into a village family. He had perfect anatomical proportions, he fit in the canon of properly built

* Corresponding author: Małgorzata Durbas, Uniwersytet Humanistyczno-Przyrodniczy im. Jana Długosza w Częstochowie, Wydział Historyczny, Instytut Historii, al. Armii Krajowej 36a, 42-200 Częstochowa, e-mail: skwarczynskam@wp.pl.

dwarfs of Rococo and at the age of 5 he arrived at the court of King Stanislaw Leszczynski in Lunéville (Durbas 2013: 41–54).

The aim of this article is to discuss the first academic research connected with dwarfism on the example of King Stanislaw Leszczynski's dwarf in Lunéville.

CHILDHOOD

Nicolas Ferry, Bébé, was born on the 11th of November 1741 in the small duchy of de Salm in the village of Plaisne in Vosges located north-west of Lorraine. His parents were surprised by the size of their offspring, who was baptised on a plate. “He was as small as a rat, his head was not bigger than a nut, and his voice was as weak as a squeak of a mouse” (Guerrier 1818: 208). His mother claimed that despite having symptoms of pregnancy she did not realize she was pregnant. She was 35 years old, the childbirth took place in the ninth month, and she experienced pain only twice in 24 hours. At birth Nicolas was only 8–9 inches tall (24.75 cm) and he weighed 12 ounces (612 grams) (Guerrier 1818: 208; Granat and Peyré 2012: 9).

People in the village said that he slept in a clog covered with wool in his first year. His mouth was so small that he was unable to be breastfed by his mother. A goat was found to be the baby's wet-nurse. The goat was perfect in its role – every time it heard the cry of the baby, it came by itself to feed Nicolas. He said his first words when he was about 18 months old, and his first steps were taken at age 2. He received his first shoes: 18 *lignes du roi* (about 4 cm [author's note]). His impoverished parents could feed him only vegetables, potatoes, and pork fat (Liégey 1889: 137).

When King Stanislaw heard that such a little creature lived near Lunéville, he wanted to keep him by his side. From the beginning of his life at the court in 1746, Bébé was surrounded by many conveniences and comforts. He had new clothes, furniture for his size and a carriage with four goats. At the table he used his own special cutlery. He had all kinds of care, and the king wanted to educate him, but this did not bring about any results. He received proper food and had a personal doctor, Jeanet, who lived in Lunéville (Durbas 2013: 163). He took part in entertainments and games, danced on the table and accompanied the king in many journeys to satellite residences in Lorraine and to the manor in Versailles (Benoît 1884: 114). The king was very attached to his ward.

THE MALICIOUS DWARF

Nicolas Ferry was healthy until his 16th year of life. He could not learn to play any instrument or dance: he made the correct steps only when a teacher was watching him. However, he was particularly liable to negative feelings like anger, jealousy and greed (Liégey 1889: 139). King Stanislaw gave him gifts, usually trinkets, in order to calm him down. In the personality of the dwarf intelligence was not important; what was valued was his imperfection (Grześkowiak-Krwawicz 2004: 17).

Bébé was a favourite of Stanislaw's cousin, Maria Jabłonowska, the duchess of Talmont. He paid special attention to her and he was even jealous. Once he saw the duchess lovingly petting a small dog in his presence and he pulled it from the duchess' hands and threw it out

of the window, shouting: “Why do you like it more than you like me?” (Morand 1764: 64). Courtiers were surprised by the dwarf’s rapid process of physically and mentally ageing. Bébé became bitter, emotionally unstable and jealous. All the works describing King Stanislaw Leszczynski mention the dwarf and recount the visit of the Polish dwarf Józef Boruwlaski to Lunéville in 1758. During the feast the spoiled and furious pupil of the king tried to throw the rival dwarf into a hot fireplace. The reason for that was simply envy of the skills, education and intelligence of the Polish dwarf (Grzeškowiak-Krwawicz 2004: 93; Zatorska 2003: 237–238). Bébé was disciplined with corporal punishment.

After an attempt at an arranged marriage and engagement in 1761 the old dwarf became bitter and surly. Every year he became more and more ill (Benoît 1884: 114). He did not live until the wedding with a much younger loved one. In May 1764 Bébé became ill, he had a cold and fever. The king Stanislaw saw that the 23-year-old dwarf was losing his strength and dying and called his mother. The dwarf died in her arms on the 9th of June 1764 after the confession and the last rites.

DWARF BÉBÉ – THE OBJECT OF ANATOMICAL OBSERVATIONS

The first medical observations were ordered by King Stanislaw when the dwarf was 5 years old. Claude Joseph Geoffroy, a famous Parisian academic, was brought to Lunéville and on the 25th of July 1746 he examined him for the first time. The leader of the research was Jean Christophe Kast, the doctor of the king’s wife and later the first medic and royal adviser. The Parisian doctor observed the dwarf, measured and weighed him, looked for any special marks or signs of previous diseases and did an environmental inquiry. After all these steps he made a final academic report. When he returned to Paris, Geoffroy presented the result of his research at the Royal Academy of Sciences (*Académie Royale de Sciences*) which was mentioned in the eighth point of the chapter “Anatomical observations” (Geoffroy 1746: 44–45) (Figure 1).



V I I I.

M. Geoffroy a fait part à l'Académie de la description d'un petit Nain qui a été présenté à Sa Majesté le Roi de Pologne Duc de Lorraine; cet enfant qui se nomme Nicolas Ferry, est né le 13 Novembre 1741, sa mère âgée de 35 ans a eu trois enfans dont il est l'aîné, malgré toutes les apparences ordinaires elle ne pouvoit se persuader qu'elle fût grosse lorsqu'elle le fut de cet enfant, cependant au bout de neuf mois, elle le mit au monde après avoir souffert les douleurs de l'accouchement pendant deux fois 24 heures; il étoit long; en naissant, d'environ 8 ou 9 pouces & pesoit 12 onces ou trois quarterons. Le 25 Juillet 1746 M. Kast premier Médecin de la Reine Duchesse, le mesura & le pesa avec soin, il étoit pour lors long de 22 pouces & pesoit, étant nud, 9 livres 7 onces; il étoit pour lors formé

Figure 1. Front page and description: Académie Royale de Sciences, *Anatomical observation*, Geoffroy 1746

The report describes that at the age of 5 the dwarf was 22 inches tall (59.3 cm), and weighed 9 pounds and 7 ounces (4.6 kg). He had correct anatomical proportions. He grew very slowly. His eyes were dark and his hair was silvery blond. He had two marks (one big, one small) on his forehead after suffering from smallpox (*petite verole*) at age 3. He had other small marks on his body in different places. When he was brought to Lunéville court he had a swollen stomach as a result of poor nutrition. He was extremely active and lively, did not fear anything and drew attention to himself. He laughed charmingly but rarely; he was kind and loving towards the women who cared for him; he seemed to have a good memory but not as good as a normal child his age. The sound of his voice was similar to the speech of a one-year-old. All his limbs were proportional, but his right knee bent slightly towards the outside, which slightly decreased his height. The Parisian doctor Geoffroy formulated a theory that it was caused by poor care during the first months of his life.

The second anatomical observations on Bébé were conducted by one of the academicians from Nancy, Count Tressan (Tressan 1897)¹ and were sent to the *Académie Royale de Sciences* in Paris (Figure 2). These were scientific observations in the form of a report about people with this kind of imperfection. The count focused more on the Polish dwarf Józef Boruwlaski (Grześkowiak-Krwawicz 2004)². Count de Tressan wanted to compare these two descriptions of dwarfism and show the differences to the world. He made the entry *Nain* (dwarf) in Diderot's *Encyclopaedia* (Diderot 1765: 7).

Tressan, describing the physiognomy and character of the dwarf, made a personal but fact-based observation. He claims that: "He is now 36 inches tall, his back seems bend by the oldness, his skin is wrinkled, one shoulder blade protrudes more than the other, the aquiline nose became enormous, his inborn apophysis developed into the deformation of the upper part of his body; his mind is not developed by any means, he has never understood the idea of religion or learnt to distinguish letters, he has never written any small literary work, he is silly and angry, and Descartes' system about animals' soul would be easier to prove on Bébé than on a monkey or a poodle. I admit that I have watched Bébé with a disgust and a hidden fear which often causes the degradation of our nature" (Tressan 1759: 4–5 [interpreter's translation]; Grześkowiak-Krwawicz 2004: 148–149).

¹ Louis Elisabeth de la Vergne, Count de Tressan (1705–1783) – a physicist and writer. His memoirs, two chapters of which focus on the life in the court in Lunéville and King Stanislaw, were printed. Thanks to his agility, knowledge in science and member titles of the Academies of Sciences in Paris, Berlin and London he succeeded and was well-recognized in the social life. The name of Count Tressan was well-known by the French encyclopaedists. He was a friend of Diderot and d'Alembert and, as the majority of the philosophers of this time, he admired King Frederick II, Maupertius, Voltaire, and Buffon. He cooperated with the encyclopaedists in editing volumes VI and VII of the *Encyclopaedia*. See: Tressan L. E. V. de (1897) *Souvenirs du comte Tressan, Louis Elisabeth de la Vergne, d'après des documents inédits*, Versailles.

² Józef (Joujou) Boruwlaski (Boruwlaski, Boruwlaski, Boruwlaski), (1739–1837) – the Polish aristocrat, his height was estimated between 70 cm to 93.5 cm. A pupil of Anna Humiecka, the wife of a sword-bearer, he was intelligent, speaking five languages at the age of 18, "he was famous for his humour and maturity of the mind", and he played the guitar. As a sensation causing curiosity, he visited major European courts (Vienna, Versailles, London, Lunéville). He died in 1837 at the exceptional age of 98 years old, and he was buried in the cathedral in Durham. He was a dwarf with a harmonic body build. Joujou was well-known and admired throughout Europe. He was broadly talented, spoke several languages and had a brilliant sense of humour. See: (Grześkowiak-Krwawicz 2004).



Figure 2. Page of *Mémoires de Tressan sur les nains Bébé et Borwflasky* envoyé à l'Académie royale des Sciences, Nancy

Tressan did not feel any sentiment for the dwarf: he considered him a degenerate with an undefined disease. Tressan also believed that the process of the maturation of his reproductive organs had caused a large defect and languishing of the body; he predicted his death before the age of 30 (Tressan 1759: 4–5; Liégey 1889: 142).

Posthumous research was ordered by King Stanislaw, who was shocked by the death of his pupil. The king loved the dwarf like a father and even when he was old he made far-reaching plans for the research on the aged, but young according to the calendar, Bébé.

The first post-mortem examination took place in Lunéville. It was supervised by the court doctor, Casten Rönnow (Grignon and Rolland 2003: 207–211)³. The body was dismembered and divided into soft and hard parts. The soft tissues we put in a special mausoleum in the

³ Casten Rönnow (1700–1787) – Swedish medic, first a military surgeon, later an anatomist. He conducted extensive practice and studies in Stockholm, Uppsala, Germany, and France. He received his medical diploma in Reims, France in 1730 and soon he was appreciated in Versailles. He was delegated to Königsberg thanks to Catherine Opalińska, where he became the first royal doctor, personal advisor and the royal court doctor in Lunéville; he had a privileged place by the King's side. As a Lutheran he often argued with the Jesuit de Menoux. After the death of King Stanislaw he went back to Sweden. See: Grignon and Rolland 2003: 207–211.

Church du Couvent des Minimes in Lunéville, (Figure 3) while the bones were deposited – as Benoît says – in the Royal Academy in Nancy for a short period of time (Benoît 1884: 115). The bones were intended to be researched further there, but King Stanislaw decided differently. He directed his scientific intentions to Paris and to the famous Count Buffon, a foreign member of the Society in Nancy since 1760 (Figure 4).



Figure 3. Dwarf Bébé (Nicolas Ferry). Tombstone in the church of the Friars Minor In Lunéville, unknown author, about 1765, copperplate, ribbed paper, Muzeum Narodowe w Krakowie, inventory No. III-ryc-37290



Figure 4. Buffon, Georges-Louis Leclerc, Muzeum Narodowe w Krakowie, inventory No. M.N.K. 03-ryc-3900

The skeleton was later moved to the Count Louis Phélypeaux de Saint-Florentin in Paris. The count gave it to the Royal Cabinet of Natural History, managed by Georges-Louis Leclerc, Count de Buffon (Michaud 1843: 117–121), one of the greatest French scientists of the eighteenth century.

ANATOMICAL RESEARCH IN PARIS

Meanwhile, because Count Tressan had predicted the death of the dwarf Bébé before age 30, the interest of the academic world was extremely high. While the research on the remains was being conducted, there was a reading on this topic at the Royal Academy in Paris once again. One of the greatest surgeons from the Parisian *L'Hôtel des Invalides* hospital, a member of the Royal Academy, Sauveur-François Morand (Larousse 1872: 546)⁴ made an interesting speech about Bébé (Morand 1764: 62–73). The surgeon presented the dwarf using a wax statue of actual size the doctor Jeanet had brought from Lunéville. The report was presented in 1764 and printed in the research materials of the Academy three years later (Figure 5).

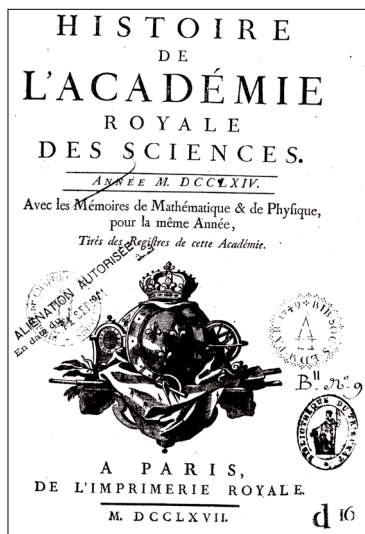


Figure 5. Morand Sauveur-François 1764. *Mémoire de l'Académie de Sciences présente le 14 novembre*, Procès-verbaux, vol. 83, Paris

The bones, deposited in Paris by Count de Buffon, were analysed slowly but very carefully. The Count was an administrator of the Royal Cabinet of Natural History (*Cabinet*

⁴ Sauveur-François Morand (1697–1773) – a French surgeon and anatomist. The author of many academic speeches about medicine, and an associate of the *Encyclopédie* in the field of medicine. A member of Royal Societies in London, Saint Petersburg, Stockholm, Bologna, Florence, Cortone, Porto; the secretary of the royal Academy of Surgery, the inspector of military hospitals. He is well-known in the history of medicine for his discovery and description of calcar avis. See: Larousse, Pierre. 1872. *Grand Dictionnaire universel du XIX siècle*, vol. 11, Paris.

d'Histore Naturelle du Roi), which after 50 years became the largest collection in Europe⁵. The direct management was left to Louis Jean-Marie D'Aubenton (Daubenton). The collection was described in a work of 44 volumes – *Histoire naturelle, général et particulière, avec la description du Cabinet du Roi* printed in 1749–1788.

The case of the dwarf Bébé is presented in the series of 12 volumes *Histoire naturelle...* about quadrupeds, printed in 1753–1767. It is not entered in the list of contents. In the practical part of the work there is a description of a find, a dwarf without a name, with the number MCDLXXVIII (1478). In the first sentences of the description there is information about the Polish King Stanislaw from Lunéville and his dwarf.

The research of Count de Buffon and Daubenton was published after three years. The skeleton brought to Paris was dismembered, some of the bones were cut, and the Count was to put them together. All parts were under the individual observation on the size and structure of bones. Buffon measured and described all the parts carefully. The whole was presented as a description of the skeleton and 48 measurements of bones with a short biographical note made on the basis of the presentations of Count Tressan (Buffon 1767: 178–179)⁶ (Figure 6).

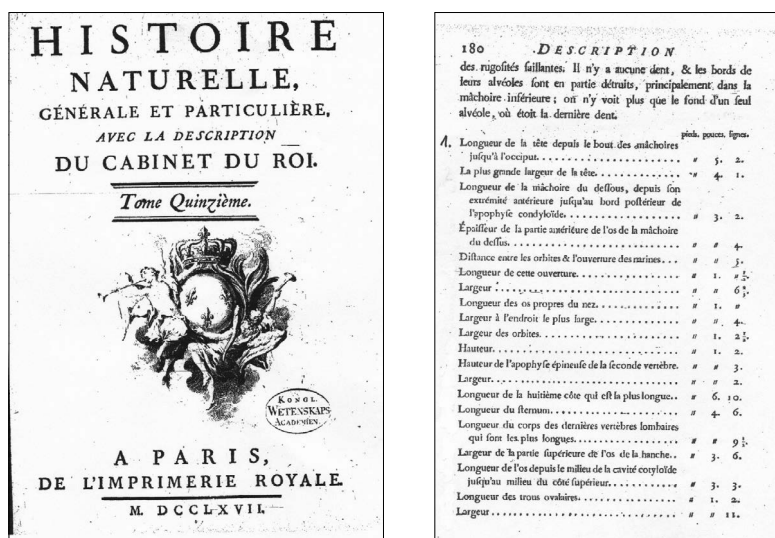


Figure 6. Front page and table with measurements of skeleton parts from a book Buffon: Georges-Louis Leclerc Buffon. *Histoire naturelle général et particulirère avec la description du cabinet du roi*, vol. XV, Paris 1767, p. 180

⁵ The royal cabinet was established in 1729 in the botanical garden in Paris (Jardin des Plantes Médicinales). The garden contained the well-developed collection which was later organized in four categories: *artificialia, naturalia, exotica, scientifica* (artificial, natural, exotic, scientific). See: http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cabinet_du_roi [25.06.2013].

⁶ The examples of measurements from the table attached to Buffon's work: the length of the head from the base of the lower jaw to the occiput; the circumference of the head at the widest part; the distance between an eye socket and the entrance of a nostril; the length of the proper bone of the nose; the width of the eye sockets; the width of the pelvis; the length of the arm bones; the lengths of the bones of the forearm; the length of the thigh bones; the length of the calf bones, etc. See: the table with the measurements of particular part of the skeleton in Buffon's work, in: Buffon G.-L. 1767. *Histoire naturelle...*

Count de Buffon provided some details from the report of the post-mortem examination of Bébé: one parietal was thicker than the other, there was water in the lungs, the pleurae were grown together in some places, the edges were ectropic to one side, “and all viscera [were] weak” (Buffon 1767: 177). Doctor Rönnow claimed that two ribs were missing, but Count de Buffon counted all the vertebrae and said that the missing ribs were found: “the number of vertebrae was complete, there are the joint surfaces of the last false ribs on the twelfth vertebra; the skeleton was missing a few bones of wrists and fingers which I supplemented. The length of the skeleton is thirty three inches, so the same as the height of the dwarf alive; the wrist and forearm are only three inches long, which was measured from the end of the radial bone to the end of the middle finger; the length of the foot from the back of heel bone to the end of the second toe equals four inches; there are signs of a deformity and disease on the different parts of the skeleton” (Buffon 1767: 177).

Buffon describes the research in detail in the next part of the work. He underlines that the real image of the deformation of the backbone was disturbed by the bones being soaked in water for too long. He stated that the backbone made two curvatures in the upper and middle part up to the pelvis. Both curvatures connected causing a fault in the shape of the letter S which led to the change of the ribs, the natural shape of the chest and its efficiency. Buffon had incomplete research material, he did not receive the cartilaginous ribs and the long soak caused the separation of bones from tendons and cartilages and the dissolution of marrow; the bones of the arms and feet were covered by a thick white soapy crust. There was a prominent roughness in the middle of each parietal bone. There were no teeth; the edges of the tooth sockets were partially damaged with one visible hole left by a tooth (Buffon 1767: 177).

In Buffon’s work there are no hypotheses on the reasons for dwarfism. The work on the material according to the medical and scientific knowledge of the time was an important step in the development of medical science.

CONCLUSION

Bébé from Lunéville was the first dwarf who was not only used for courtly amusement, but was also an example of a dwarf having physical anomalies different from other dwarfs. It was the beginning of the anatomical description and explanation of this imperfection. It was the first post-mortem examination of a dwarf documented so carefully in modern history. The king began a series of research which was a study of biometrics one hundred years before Paul Broca created physical anthropology (*anthropologie physique*) and biometrics (*biométrie humaine*). This research can be continued by connecting many modern methods after over two hundred years since Buffon’s work.

The skeleton of Bébé is very important from the point of view of scientific research in the field of paleopathology and aetiology of diseases in the twenty-first century (Granat and Peyré 2006: 10–15). A team of scientists in Paris in the laboratory of anthropology of *Musée de l’Homme* conducted research on the remains of Bébé for several years thanks to the far-reaching plans of King Stanislaw. A professional palaeopathological study on Bébé’s skeleton made a few years ago there confirmed the importance of the research material from the eighteenth century, especially after the discovery of dwarfish fossil remains in Florès in Indonesia.

King Stanislaw Leszczyński and his road to the throne in Lorraine, “full of adventures and unexpected twists of action”, is often mentioned in works of recent decades. What is mentioned most often is his love for observation and experiment. One of his last research orders was directed not to “his” researchers but to the one of the greatest, the most enthusiastic scientists of the Enlightenment – Georges-Louis Leclerc, the Count de Buffon. It was also the first well documented post-mortem examination of a dwarf in the modern history of medicine.

REFERENCES

- Benoît A. 1884. *Bébé, le nain du roi Stanislas 1741–1764*, “Bulletin de la Société philomatique vosgienne”, Saint-Dié. *Biographie universelle ancienne et moderne: histoire par ordre alphabétique de la vie publique et privée de tous les hommes*. 1843. Louis-Gabriel Michaud (ed.), t. 6. Paris: Publ. Mchaud Frères.
- Durbas, Małgorzata. 2013. *Karzel Bébé z Lunéville przedmiotem badań medycznych w Pa-ryżu w XVIII wieku*, in: Krystyna Basińska and Jacek Hałasz (eds.), *Etyka w medycynie wczoraj i dziś. Wybrane zagadnienia*, Kraków: Impuls.
- Durbas, Małgorzata. 2013. *Akademia Stanisława w Nancy*, Kraków: Libron.
- Encyclopédie, ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers, par une société de gens de lettres*. 1765. Denis Diderot and Jean Le Rond D’Alembert (eds.), t. 11, Paris.
- Fabiani, Bożena. 1980. *Niziołki, łokietki, karlikowie*, Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy.
- Geoffroy, Claude Joseph. 1746. *Observations anatomiques, description du petit nain de Lorraine*, in: *Histoire de L’Académie de Sciences de Paris année 1746*, Paris Publ. (1751) *Académie royale des sciences*.
- Granat, Jean and Évelyne Peyré. 2006. *Première étude du squelette de Nicolas Ferry alias “Bébé”, le nain de Stanislas Leszczyński, rôle de Buffon dans la conservation de ses ossements*, <http://www.academie-polonaise.org/images/stories/pliki//buffon/granat.pdf> [3.02.2012].
- Granat, Jean and Évelyne Peyré. 2006. *Bébé, le nain de la cour de Stanislas Leczinski à Lunéville (XVIIIe siècle). Son histoire et celle de ses dents*, Société française d’histoire de l’art dentaire, No. 11, pp. 10–15, http://www.biusante.parisdescartes.fr/sfhad/vol11/2006_02.pdf [17.05.2012].
- Granat, Jean and Évelyne Peyré. 2012. *Le “nain” Nicolas Ferry dit “Bébé” Etude historique, antropologique et paleontologique*, “Biom hum et Anthropol”, 25, 3–4.
- Grignon Georges, Rolland Ludovic. 2003. *Deux célèbres médecin du roi Stanislas: Charles Ba-gard et Casten Rönnow*, in: *Lunéville faste du Versailles lorrain*, dir. Jacques Charles-Gaffiot, Paris. Publ. Editions Carpentier.
- Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, Anna. 2004. *Zabaweczka. Józef Boruwłaski – fenomen natury, szlachcic, pamiętnikarz*, Gdańsk: Słowo/Obraz Terytoria.
- Guerrier, Antoine Sébastien. 1818. *Annales de Lunéville ou essai historique sur cette ville*, Lunéville: Guerrier A.S.

- Larousse, Pierre. 1872. *Grand Dictionnaire universel du XIX siècle*, vol. 11, Paris: Administration du grand Dictionnaire universel.
- Liégey, de Nicolas-F. 1889. *Le Bébé de Stanislas Leckzinski*, "Annales de la Société d'Emulation du département des vosges", LXV année, Epinal. Publ. E. Busy.
- Morand, Sauveur-François. 1764. *Mémoire Académie de Sciences présente le 14 novembre*, Procès-verbaux, t. 83, Paris. Publ. Académie royale des sciences.
- Tressan, Louis Elizabeth de Lavergne. 1897. *Souvenirs du comte Tressan, Louis Elisabeth de la Vergne, d'après des documents inédits*, Versailles. Publ. H. Lebon.
- Tressan, Louis Elizabeth de Lavergne. 1759. *Mémoires de Tressan sur les nains Bébé et Borwlaski envoyé à l'Académie royale des Sciences*, Nancy.
- Zatorska, Izabela. 2003, *Prophète en son pays? Témoignages de Polonais visitant la Lorraine sur le roi Stanislas et son Académie*, in: Jean Claude Bonnefont (ed.), *Stanislas et son Académie*, Nancy: Press Universitaire de Nancy.

PIERWSZY AKADEMICKI DYSKURS O KARŁOWATOŚCI W XVIII WIEKU NA PRZYKŁADZIE KARŁA Z LUNEVILLE

W okresie oświecenia karłowatości nie uznawano za zaburzenie medyczne. Karły były poszukiwane i cenione na europejskich dworach arystokratycznych i królewskich, ale pozostały na marginesie życia społecznego z powodu budowy ciała. Celem tego artykułu jest omówienie pierwszych badań naukowych związanych z karłowatością na przykładzie karła na dworze króla Stanisława Leszczyńskiego w Lunéville. Nicolas Ferry, znany jako Bébé, podobnie jak inne karły w tamtym okresie, był maskotką dworzan i mieszkał aż do śmierci w wieku dwudziestu trzech lat u boku króla w pałacu. Król, zaniepokojony przedwczesną śmiercią Bébé, nakazał lekarzom zbadanie zwłok. Część materiałów badawczych wysłano do Paryża do Gabinetu Historii Naturalnej (Cabinet d'Histoire Naturelle du Roi) hrabiego de Buffona, który rozpoczął badania. Przypadek karła Bébé został opisany w serii *Histoire naturelle...* w 12 tomie w części dotyczącej czworonogów. Z punktu widzenia kontrowersji kulturowych na temat karłowatości (obecnie traktowanej jako choroba w medycznym modelu niepełnosprawności) opisywany przypadek ma istotne znaczenie, ponieważ pokazuje początek procesu odchodzenia w XVIII wieku porzucono wiarę w mity i przesady dotyczące karłów na rzecz anatomicznych badań akademickich.

Słowa kluczowe: karzeł, Bébé, Nicolas Ferry, Lunéville, nauka, badania