

## ROMANTIC JOSEPH LENNÉ LANDSCAPE PARK IN ZATONIE NEAR ZIELONA GÓRA AS A RELIC OF GARDEN ART - MODERN-DAY TRANSFORMATIONS AND THREATS

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### Abstract

The romantic landscape park was established in 1824 by order of one of the best-known aristocrats at the time, Princess Dorothea Talleyrand Perigold, Dutchess of Dino. The park is an example of amenity horticulture of artistic value that has survived to this day. The creator of the park was the talented landscape architect Peter Joseph Lenné. In its current state, the park differs significantly from the image on lithographs of the past. Upon carrying out field investigations and comparative studies, it was established that the maintained stand of trees holds high compositional value. The conclusions of the article define the current threats to the longevity of the park as well as highlighting the plan of revalorization works.

Keywords: amenity horticulture, landscape park, revalorization

### 1. LANDSCAPE PARK IN ZATONIE - LOCATION, TIME AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF ITS CREATION

The village of Zatonie (Germ. *Günthersdorf*) is located south of Zielona Góra in the direction of Kożuchowo, approximately 8 km away. The park and remains of the palace are located in the central part of the village, on the east of the road leading to Kożuchowo, directly opposite the ruins of a medieval church. The park stretches over an area of 52 ha, along the road leading to Niedoradza.

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The village was bought in 1809 and added to the estate of Duchess Dorothea von Meden, the youngest daughter of Peter von Biron, the owner of the Duchy of Żagań. Not until 30 years later, in 1840, did Dorothea come to Zatonie for the first time, where she spent a few years, until it came into the possession of the Duchy of Żagań. This was a time of great changes, both in the Zatonie Park as well as the palace. It should be mentioned that, at the age of 17, Dorothea married Edmund Alexander de Talleyrand-Perigord and left for France. Her husband was the nephew of the former minister of France - Maurice Talleyrand, one of the best-known politicians at the time. Maurice introduced Dorothea to the European salons, where she fit in very well. Her political talent, exceptional beauty and great intelligence enabled her to influence European politics. Upon the death of Edmund, Dorothea became Maurice Talleyrand's companion, attaining the peak of royal life in the salons of Paris, London, Vienna and Berlin. In 1842, soon after the King of Prussia - Frederic Wilhelm IV and his wife visited Zatonie, Duchess Dorothea ordered the palace to be reconstructed and garden expanded. During their childhood, Dorothea was the monarch's playmate, and they remained connected by friendship. Soon, after merely two years, the baroque manor turned into an exceptionally beautiful classical palace surrounded by an extensive landscape park. A fragment of the park on the north side of the palace can be seen on gouache from 1843. It can be confirmed that the park was already created then, containing all decorative elements, harmoniously connected accordingly to the trends present at the time. The existing stand of trees was skillfully included in the new concept, giving the impression of a mature decorative conception. The author of the design of the park, according to historians, was one of the most skilled garden planners operating in the XIX century - Peter Joseph Lenné. Unfortunately, the original park design has not been found.

The oldest available geodetic map of the village, dating back to 1851, indicates the park along with numerous details in addition to the borders of the possession and buildings. The entire transportation system of roads along with squares, streams and drainage ditches, two ponds, including one with an island and stone (found during cleaning works carried out by the local community with the inscription *Mary's Island*), palace along with an orangery as well as all buildings of the manor farm neighboring the palace, orchard and crop garden, gardener's house, flower garden, scenic point (hill), park meadows along with larger clusters of trees, solitary trees, tree massifs and open viewing areas in the surrounding landscape can all be found on the map.

It can be assumed that it is highly probable that the map precisely presents the location of stones with the names of individual park interiors, as well as other elements of small architecture. Five of them were found in locations similar to

those on the archival map. This extremely important cartographic document illustrates the precise extent of the park borders as well as providing the location of spatial elements of flora which created decorative park compositions in great detail. The map can be treated as an as-built drawing prepared with great attention paid to detail.



Fig. 1. Gouache by C. Bovet from 1843 showing the northern fragment of the park after reconstruction

Following the precise analysis of the map and comparing it to the location of particular elements in the area, we find that many of the mapped elements precisely match actual ones found in the area. This pertains especially to the existing park roads, the course of streams and drainage ditches, and places where bridges used to be located. Another important discovery is that we can find the borders of massifs, the precise borders of park meadows, elevations of terrain, and individual solitary trees and tree clusters in the park meadows, which had been present at the time. It was also confirmed that the creators of a later topographic map, updated in 1933, applied simplifications based on the version from 1986 in terms of the course of roads, as well as locating tree groups and markings watercourses. Without comparing the two documents, it would be impossible to obtain such detailed information regarding the topography of the park.

The collected information made it possible to assess, with large probability, the range and quality of historic substance preserved in the Zatonie Park. Lenné enlarged the garden next to the baroque manor, adding neighboring meadows and a fragment of forest, creating a remarkably picturesque landscape park. Thanks to far-reaching viewing connections, he created a very spacious effect on a seemingly narrow fragment of land, taking advantage of the surrounding landscape. At the same time, he created a system of internal viewing connections which, despite many years of neglect in terms of maintenance, have remained distinguishable to this day. In a natural landscape park, especially one created in Romantic style, the viewing axes and openings (both those connecting the park with the far landscape as well as local, internal ones creating the atmosphere of individual interiors) are some of the more important creative elements. The views are taken in in a subjective way; their borders are difficult to define and, even more so, to protect. In the Zatonie Park, it is these viewing axes and openings that, in addition to the tree stands, are the most valuable historic substance.



Fig. 2. Joanna's Meadow. View of a group of trees forming a coulisse for the viewing axes - existing state.



Fig. 3. Joanna's Meadow. View from the east side towards the palace - proposed revalorization of the system of internal viewing axes.

Upon being expanded, the park covered an area of approx. 32 ha. In the part neighboring the palace from the south, a decorative flower garden of a formal character could be found, connected with the orangery building. Mainly standard roses and annuals were grown there. Numerous potted plants adorned the entranceway along the elevation of the building as well as all the terraces of the palace. Opposite the main entrance to the building, there stood a fountain.

A colorful gouache from 1843 provides very exact documentation of the area of the park on the north side of the palace. Far-reaching lawns extended out from the building. The abundant flowerbeds of flowering plants found here were surrounded by decorative white edges. Flowerbeds containing shrubs were different in character and placed freely on the lawns. Attention ought to be drawn to the picturesque group of lindens, partially covering the elevation of the palace. It was meant to give a feeling of obliqueness and, at the same, define the viewing axis in the direction of the hill with a rose gazebo. One of the mentioned lindens was still growing here in the 80's of the XX century. White wooden English style benches were placed at the beginning of the main viewing axes. Individual coniferous trees and poplars can be found in the tree massifs surrounding the area. Freely placed paths can be seen running between the groups of plants.

## **2. LATER OWNERS OF ZATONIE AND THEIR ACTIVITIES AFFECTING THE INITIAL COMPOSITION OF THE PARK**

Following the death of Dorothea, Zatonie was handed over to her younger son - Alexander Edmond Taleyrand-Perigord, the Duke of Dino. The Duke ruled Zatonie for the following 16 years, turning out to be a worthy successor of his mother. In 1870, he added on to the orangery and greenhouse following a project by A. Jaekel. He also added a representational entrance to the palace and constructed the first buildings of the new manor farm on the road to Niedoradz - *Alexanderhof* (currently Marzęcin).

In 1894, the Duke sold Zatonie and moved to Florence. A famous German politician, Rudolph Friedenthal, became the next owner of the estate. The former Minister of Agriculture expanded gardening, creating a modern farm of a decorative profile. He also rebuilt the second level of the palace and changed Duchess Dorothea's crest.

Significant changes took place in the park and palace during the times of Baroness Renata von Lancken-Wakenitz, the younger daughter of Rudolph Friedenthal, who inherited the estate from her father in 1890, ruling it until 1945. During this time, in 1893, the palace was rebuilt according to a project by architect Schild, and the size of the park was increased to include another 18 ha of woodlands. It was probably during this time that the park was enriched with new alley plantings, stretching for 1.5 km along the road running next to the southern border of the park, and its southern border surrounded with plantings of pedunculate oak, permanently closing off the viewing axes designed by Lenné. On a topographic map from 1933, we can find plantings

characterized by a lane formation on the park border. A second meadow was also created in the eastern part of the park, with a landscape group made up mainly of coniferous trees. In the years 1935-1937, a forester's lodge was also added on the southern border of the park.

In 1945, the palace and orangery were burnt down by soldiers of the Soviet Army. Since the end of World War II, the park has been in the possession of Polish State Forests, and remains under their management to this day. During this time, the area of the park was divided into two parts, with that closer to the palace under protection in the form of a nature reserve. Production operations were, on the other hand, carried out in the eastern part. The park was added to the register of historic properties on the 16 of March, 1965. The nature reserve has operated since 1992.

In 2015, the city of Zielona Góra began the procedure of taking the park into its possession as a community facility. Such action is to make revalorization of the park possible and make it accessible to the public.

### 3. PARK TREE STAND

The stand of trees in the park can be divided into two areas which differ from one another in terms of the structure of plantings as well as their age. The western part contains older trees derived from an earlier period in history. These are representative tree specimens aged 130-200 years, often reaching monumental dimensions. The most common tree species are: pedunculate oak (*Quercus robur*), large-leaved linden (*Tilia platyphyllos*), small-leaved linden (*Tilia cordata*), European hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*), European beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*), sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), field maple (*Acer campestre*), European white elm (*Ulmus laevis*), European ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and Norway spruce (*Picea abies*).

Decorative forms of park trees of particular decorative value have survived in the tree stand of the park. These include, above all, three varieties of the European beech: *Fagus sylvatica* "Asplenifolia" - 1 specimen, *Fagus sylvatica* "Pendula" - 1 specimen, *Fagus sylvatica* "Ateropunicea" - 2 specimens. In the underbrush, one can also find red beech seedlings of the "Asplenifolia" variety, characterized by strong variation in terms of leaf shape and color. Notice should be taken of a pedunculate oak found in the area of a variety not documented in any earlier inventory; the tree has not bore fruit yet, thus making it impossible to identify at such an early phase.

The park contains a few species of trees introduced from foreign climate zones. These are mainly the abundantly occurring horse-chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) and northern red oak (*Quercus rubra*), as well as individual

examples of pin oak (*Quercus palustris*), scarlet oak (*Quercus coccinea*), and black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*). As for coniferous trees, the eastern white pine (*Pinus strobus*) is plentiful, with individual examples of western red-cedar (*Thuja plicata*), northern white-cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*), noble fir (*Abies procera*) and black pine (*Pinus nigra*).

In addition to self-seeded trees, numerous decorative shrubs can also be found in the underbrush. These include mainly the common snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*), mock orange (*Philadelphus coronarius*), ninebark (*Physocarpus opulifolius*), steeplebush (*Spiraea tomentosa*), Germander meadowsweet (*Spiraea chamaedryfolia*), red-barked dogwood (*Cornus alba*) and Oregon grape (*Mahonia aquifolium*).

In addition to decorative shrubs, many native shrubs can also be found in the park. These are mainly the mountain currant (*Ribes alpinum*), spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*), common hazel (*Corylus avellana*), common dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*) and European elder (*Sambucus nigra*).

Special attention should be drawn to the undergrowth, which is exceptional and very thin. In nearly the entire western part of the park, all the way to the borders of Joanna's Meadow, there are hallowroot (*Corydalis cava*) and ramsons (*Allium ursinum*), wood anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*) and common snowdrop (*Galanthus nivalis*), baby's breath (*Gypsophyla*) and spring snowflake (*Leucojum vernalis*). As for the eastern part of the park, one can admire lilies of the valley (*Conwallaria majalis*) and May lilies (*Maianthemum bifolium*) present in vast areas.

#### Perennials and decorative creepers

As for creepers which could once be found in the park, old man's beard (*Clematis vitalba*) has survived to this day, growing on the ruins of the palace and abundant in the area around it. In the immediate vicinity of the palace, one can also encounter individual specimens of elecampane (*Inula helenium*). This is a perennial which can reach impressive sizes and has a very characteristic structure, thanks to which it makes for an original accent to the park and garden. The nature of the tree stand in the eastern section of the park is different, in contrast to that found in the western part. This is a wild quarter of the park, of a wooded character. Many representative trees that have reached impressive sizes can be found here. Coniferous trees are much more abundant in this area, in the form of copses of various ages. The eastern white pine (*Pinus strobus*) is common in this part of the park, as is the Norway spruce (*Picea abies*) and Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*). Due to the fact that coniferous trees are mixed in with deciduous ones, one does not experience the feeling of being

overwhelmed. The nature of the placings varies, mainly deciduous in the north, coniferous in the central and eastern part. In the area of the linden alley, a deciduous character of trees prevails once again, with oaks making up the majority. Numerous solitary trees visible from the road are present here. In the central part bordering the linden alley, one can find what used to be the park meadow, completely covered by a young oak tree stand. There is a group of about 20 older spruces in its center, which was once a landscape group set off against the background of the meadow. Currently, they are completely invisible. A barely discernible park path leads to this area of the park and finishes near the spruces.

#### **4. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE EXSITING STATE**

The network of park roads is readable only to a small extent. Upon detailed in-field analysis of their course, it was confirmed that the main park alley, referred to as linden ally, runs exactly in its original location. Some of the roads in the direct neighborhood of the viewing site on the hill where the rose gazebo used to be, on the other end of Joanna's Meadow, also coincide with the old map of the park. On the other hand, alleys located in meadows have become completely indistinguishable. This pertains especially to Joanna's Meadow in the central part of the park site. Such a state is the consequence of it being used as a grazing and hay meadow. A similar situation occurs with roads lying outside the communication routes of the local population. The main park alleys leading through Joanna's Meadow to the hill with the rose gazebo still contain traces of the light blue glass slag that once covered all the paths.

In the Zatonie Park, it was the small architecture that was most destroyed.

The following relics of past architecture were found in the area of the park:

- orangery
- fountain in the palace courtyard, basin and fragment of a plinth,
- remains of the foundation of a fountain found in the orangery axis on the south side of the palace,
- fountain basin with a wild boar near the observation hill site, damaged boar sculpture,
- viewing hill with a cave, traces of the foundation of the former rose gazebo located on the hill,
- park pond, distinguishable island in the north part of the pond, on it a granite stone with the inscription "Mary's Island",
- stone with the inscription "Johannen Wiese (Joanna's Meadow)",
- stone with the inscription "Paulei Linde (Pauline's Linden)",
- stone with the inscription "Alvina Bruche (Alvina's Water Meadows)"



- decorative gate posts made of sandstone (complete) at the north border of the park, at the site of what used to be the gardener's house,
- granite bridge at the end of linden alley - damaged, possible to recreate,
- abutments of three bridges on the river Dłubnia in poor technical condition,
- the remains of what used to be a dam holding back water,
- ruins of past aviary in the eastern part of the park,
- shooting range along with the ruins of a butt,
- hill where an icehouse used to be,
- man-made hill near the gardener's house,
- stream near the eastern border of the park functioning as a ha-ha, following its original course from 1851.

The sculptures were either damaged or stolen. The statues of lions guarding the entrance to the orangery disappeared; the figure of a Grecian woman was completely destroyed, while the Roman sarcophagus was found in the National Museum in Warsaw.

## **5. ANALYSIS OF THE DEGREE TO WHICH THE HISTORIC SPATIAL COMPOSITION OF THE PARK WAS MAINTAINED**

The basis for the analysis is the archival map of 1851, as well as a map of the village dating back to 1896, updated in 1933. Upon detailed analysis of the records made on the available plans and comparing them to the current existing "in-field" state, it was decided that the map from the earlier period was made very precisely and all topographic objects accurately match their counterparts found in field.

On the other hand, the map from 1896 uses a lot of simplifications as far as the course of roads and markings of massifs and tree groups are concerned. However, the main elements which comprise the canvas for the park site are consistent. The most important element of the park composition are the tree stands, viewing openings and park paths. They are the basic building material of the historic substance of the park. Upon placing the map from 1851 against a satellite image, it was confirmed that the plant composition coincides with the original state to a very large extent. A detailed inventory of the oldest trees of monumental dimensions served as final confirmation of this fact. Detailed information was acquired, making it possible to distinguish landscape groups within the borders that once defined Joanna's Meadow. In-field investigation confirmed, in many cases, the location of tree groups and the borders of past park massifs, which are readable to this day and can be found in the terrain.

It can most certainly be stated that the landscape park in Zatonie is evidence of the unquestionable great talent of its creator - J.P. Lenné.

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## ROMANTYCZNY PARK KRAJOBRAZOWY PETERA JOSEPHA LENNÉGO W ZATONIU KOŁO ZIELONEJ GÓRY JAKO PRZYKŁAD ZABYTUKU SZTUKI OGRODOWEJ, WSPÓŁCZESNE PRZEKSZTAŁCENIA I ZAGROŻENIA

### Streszczenie

Romantyczny park krajobrazowy założony w 1842 r. na zlecenie jednej z najbardziej znanych arystokratek swoich czasów księżnej Doroty Talleyrand Perigord, księżnej Dino. Park jest przykładem zabytku sztuki ogrodowej o wartościach artystycznych, które przetrwały do naszych czasów. Twórcą parku był uzdolniony architekt krajobrazu Piotr Józef Lenne.

Park w swoim obecnym stanie znacznie odbiega od wizerunku na dawnych litografiach. Po przeprowadzeniu badań terenowych i porównawczych osiągnięto przekonanie o dużej wartości kompozycyjnej zachowanego drzewostanu. We wnioskach artykułu zdefiniowano współczesne zagrożenia dla trwałości parku oraz zakreślono plan prac rewaloryzacyjnych.

Słowa kluczowe: architektura krajobrazu, park zabytkowy, rewaloryzacja, ogród zabytkowy

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