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FROM MEDICEAN FLORENCE TO RUDOLPHINE PRAGUE: TWO ARTIFICIAL GROTTOS AND THE TRANSFER OF IDEAS AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE LATE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

A late sixteenth-century grotto in Prague may be a variant of a type found among many examples constructed for Francesco I de' Medici at the Villa Pratolino roughly a decade prior. The Bohemian grotto and its Florentine corollary, called the Grotto of Cupid, are roughly circular and housed under domed vaults with central apertures; both have been compared to *tholos*-style mounds. Although many examples of Habsburg architecture in Prague display Italian influence, this paper builds upon the theory put forward by Guido Carrai that Bernardo Buontalenti, who built grottoes on an unprecedented scale at Pratolino as well as at the Pitti Palace, influenced constructions in Prague by proxy of the Florentine architect Giovanni Gargioli, to whom Rudolph II's grotto is attributed. A third and final consideration is an adjacent renovated mill site which received stone-cutting and polishing machines at the same time that documents attest to a transfer of this technology from Florence, enabling independent production of *pietre dure* works and virtuosic handlings of hard-stone. Although documentary evidence does not confirm the connection between Rudolph II's grotto and Buontalenti's Grotto of Cupid, the alignment of formal similarities, evidence for other Buontalentinian influence in Prague, and the debt of the adjacent mill to Medici technology supports a relationship between the two Renaissance grottoes.

KEYWORDS:

Rudolph II, Francesco I, Habsburg, Medici, Renaissance, Grotto, Prague, Florence, Transfer

Florence and Prague in the late sixteenth century possessed intense ties between their respective rulers;¹ however, while few discernible Bohemian influences can be detected in Florentine art and architecture,² monuments and buildings constructed by Rudolph II, his father, and grandfather in and around Renaissance Prague bear obvious Italian influences.³ This paper concerns itself with one construction of Rudolph II in particular, an artificial grotto (Fig. 1) constructed adjacent to a pre-existing mill complex at the edge of the old game reserve (*Alte Thiergarten*), and its potential link to a grotto realized by Bernardo Buontalenti for Francesco I de' Medici's Villa Pratolino, the "Grotto of Cupid" (ca. 1577, fig. 2). No conclusive documentary evidence is known which would solidify that link, so this argument rests largely on formal similarities and previous scholarship connecting Pratolino's architect, Bernardo Buontalenti, to Rudolphine constructions in Prague; however, as this paper aims to demonstrate, the transfer of an architectural form that can be intuited by the Pratolino and Prague grottoes runs parallel to an actual, documented

transfer of technology and materials between Florence and Prague which had the mill adjacent to the Rudolphine grotto as its center of activity. The analysis of the Prague grotto/mill site as whole provides rich connections to Medicean Florence which have so far gone unremarked in the larger study of Italianate Bohemian architecture.

This is not the first study which concerns itself primarily with the Prague grotto, nor is it the first to posit a connection to the Villa Pratolino's grottoes. Sylva Dobalová's 2009 article⁴ compares concentric circles from an eighteenth-century plan of the Prague grotto (Fig. 3) to the arrangement of the circular Fountain of Thetis installed within an interior grotto of the Appennine colossus at Pratolino. A connection is also posited between the Prague grotto's central aperture for light in its dome and what Dobalová identifies as similar apertures in the ceiling of the Grotto of Thetis in a ca. 1600 drawing of the same grotto by Giovanni Guerra (Fig. 4); however, as a recent cross-section of the Appennine colossus demonstrates (Fig. 5), this grotto was located under a second-floor with

its own grotto, and the apertures which Dobalová identifies more likely are the artist's short-hand for pictorial lunettes, perhaps of the type which can be seen gracing the ceiling of Francesco I's studiolo in the Palazzo Vecchio (Fig 6). Nevertheless, by linking the Prague grotto of Rudolph II thematically to grottoes observable from the same time period in other Italian Renaissance villas, in addition to the Villa Pratolino, the Grotta of the Tartari at the Palazzo Farnese in Caprarola and the Grotta delle Mose in the Boboli Gardens of the Palazzo Pitti in Florence, Dobalová laid the foundation upon which the present study is built.



Fig. 1: Rudolph II Grotto (interior), Bubeneč (Prague).



Fig. 2: Grotto of Cupid (exterior), Pratolino (Florence).

The Pratolino and Prague Grottoes: Similarities, Divergences

The two grottoes which are the focus of this study, Rudolph II's grotto in Prague and the "Grotto of Cupid" from the park of the Medici Villa Pratolino have both survived to the present day, anomalies when considered within the context of their respective patrons' other works which have been lost.⁵ However, their present-day outward appearances do not immediately suggest a relationship or influence. Pratolino's Grotto of Cupid today looks like little more than a badly-eroded hill, with a circular interior covered in artificial stalactites and ringed by stone ledges, ostensibly benches. Rudolph II's grotto, when not completely obscured by the scaffolds of on-going preservation work,⁶ is entered through a portal modeled from Sebastiano Serlio's *Seven Books on Architecture*, which appeared in various editions from 1537 to 1575. This portal has been remarked upon by several historians of Rudolphine architecture for its Italianate derivation; however, it does not find any parallel in the Grotto of Cupid, which originally possessed only a rustic pergola no longer *in situ* today.

The interior of the Prague grotto presents the appearance of regular, cut-stone masonry and five empty niches: one directly ahead of the entrance, two more spaced evenly to the left and right side of the circular grotto, and two to either side within the entrance portal; it is not known what, if any, sculpture or other objects these spaces were intended for. In contrast, the back wall facing the entrance of the Grotto of Cupid at Pratolino is punctuated by a circular vestibule, now empty, which once contained a rotating Cupid statue which squirted water without warning on visitors to the grotto. The ovoid interior of the Grotto of Cupid is distended by two small alcoves on its left and right sides, whereas the Prague grotto approaches a more perfect circle.

A comparison between the Pratolino and Prague grottoes in their present states yields little results; instead, plans and drawings from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries bring to light parallel structures which are not immediately obvious today. The 1750 plan which Dobalová used in her 2009 study presents the formal similarity to a ca. 1600 floorplan sketched by Giovanni Guerra (Fig. 7) which Dobalová assigned to the Grotto of Thetis at Pratolino. That is, the concentric circles observable in the eighteenth-century plan of Rudolph II's

grotto, connoting the grotto's circular form with a circular aperture for light, match more or less perfectly with Guerra's floor-plan of the Grotto of Cupid. Guerra's notation within the central space, "LUCE DI SOPRA," eliminates any doubt that these shapes connote openings for light; however, unlike the Prague grotto, the Grotto of Cupid possesses two smaller apertures for light to either side in the Guerra drawing. These can also be seen in a second drawing by Guerra of the grotto with its Cupid statue *in situ* (Fig. 8). Today, these have presumably been filled in; they are visible neither from the exterior or the interior of the grotto, and it is not known when this occurred. A drawing by Heinrich Schickhardt (Fig. 9) also from the early seventeenth century does not note these supplemental light sources, depicting only a classicizing lantern placed over the central aperture; at first glance, it would be tempting to make a comparison with the single-aperture topped by a lantern which the Prague grotto presents today, but it is not known either whether the lantern presently observable was an original feature or added later. Nevertheless, the comparison which Dobalová made between the Prague grotto and Pratolino's Grotto of Thetis on the basis of concentric circles and apertures in the ceiling for light must be revised in light of a much closer similarity between another grotto from Pratolino, the Grotto of Cupid.

Another shared aspect of the Grotto of Cupid at Pratolino and the Prague grotto is the tendency of architectural scholars to compare them to antique mausolea rather than to other contemporary examples.⁷ Rudolph II's grotto garners this comparison from the regular masonry of its ceiling which evokes the "beehive" construction of *tholoi* tombs from the ancient world; additionally, it must be noted that the Prague grotto was excavated from a hillside, *all'antica*, and not built up *ex novo* as an artificial mound. Pratolino's Grotto of Cupid, although such an artificial mound, appears in the Schickhardt drawing presenting a long, cut-away approach still observable today, erosion notwithstanding. This strong evocation of a *dromos* approaching a mound with a vaulted chamber in its interior recalls not only the archetypal, oft-cited Mycenaean *tholoi*, but Etruscan mound-tombs of the same type found a mere kilometers from Pratolino⁸ and known to Renaissance antiquarians and the Medici.⁹ Furthermore, "artificial hills" akin to this type appeared in both Medicean and Rudolphine pageantry of the late-sixteenth

century,¹⁰ suggesting that the Pratolino and Prague grottoes may be the permanent, monumental incarnations of a type which also found expression in more ephemeral forms at both courts.

Bernardo Buontalenti, Giovanni Gargioli, and Rudolphine Prague

In addition to formal and thematic similarities between the Grotto of Cupid at Pratolino and the Prague grotto, there is the tantalizing possibility that these parallels may support the hypothesis of the architectural scholar Guido Carrai that Pratolino's architect, Bernardo Buontalenti, exerted an influence at the court of Rudolph II. Carrai published a paper in 2003¹¹ which posited an identification of a drawing of Buontalenti's from the Florentine archives as a design intended for an oval staircase in Prague Castle as well as a letter dated June 11, 1587 from Buontalenti to Rudolph II mentioning, presumably, the same castle staircase design.¹² Eleven years prior in 1578, Rudolph II had conferred upon Buontalenti an imperial privilege in recognition of his feats of hydraulic engineering achieved at Pratolino.¹³ From around this time of Rudolph II's recognition of Buontalenti's labors, engineers were sent from the Medici court to



Fig. 3: Heinrich Schickhardt, The "Grotto of Cupid," plan, perspective, and hydraulic mechanism. Drawing, 1601.

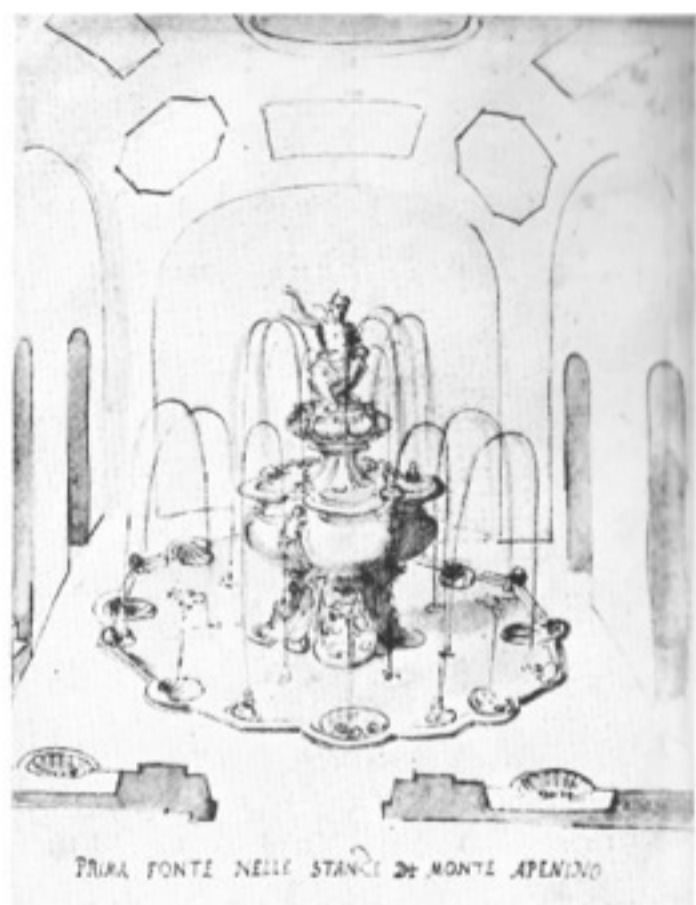


Fig. 4: . Giovanni Guerra, "First Fountain in the Rooms of the Appenine," Drawing, 1600.

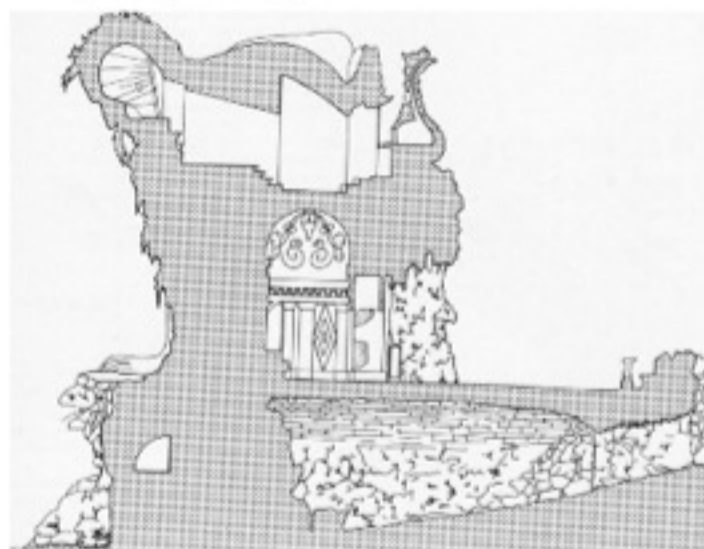


Fig. 5: Cross-Section of Appenine Grottoes.

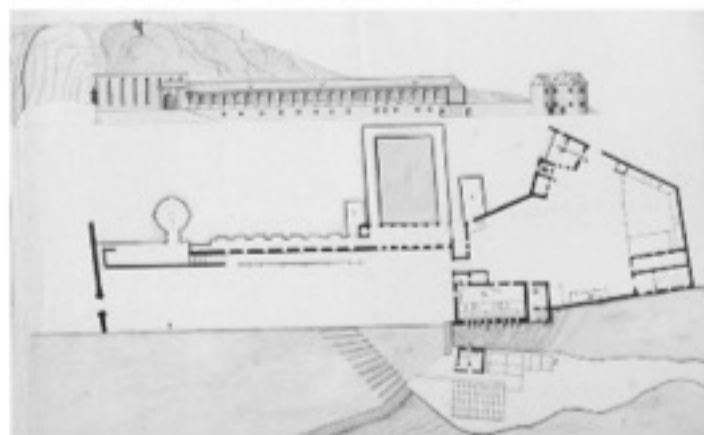


Fig. 6: Plan and perspective of the Imperial Mill with a grotto in Bubeneč, 1730.

Vienna and Prague; Antonio Lupicini arrived in 1578,¹⁴ and in 1584, Giovanni Gargiolli was recruited to work for the Holy Roman Emperor in Prague.

Giovanni Gargiolli is the Tuscan architect to whom the Prague grotto is generally credited,¹⁵ as well as the realization of a new garden design for the castle of Brandeis on the Elbe¹⁶ and other projects.¹⁷ Carrai interprets Gargiolli's role at Rudolph's court as that of an intermediary between Francesco I's court and Buontalenti specifically, rather than as an architect in his own right. The skeletal details of his career which we know with certainty do suggest a constant contact with Florence; following his recruitment, a letter exists from 1585 in which Carrai reads an implicit acknowledgement that his appointment in Prague owed to his friendship with the Medici ambassador and the approval of Francesco I.¹⁸ In 1586, the same year that his formal contract began, Gargiolli was sent back to Italy to show his models to "eminent architects" there; it is unthinkable that this would *not* have included Buontalenti. In 1587 another letter from Gargiolli that Carrai cites emphasizes Rudolph II's "great appreciation for everything that comes from the hand and ingenuity of Francesco I."¹⁹ Knowing the close collaboration between the Medici Grand Duke and Bernardo Buontalenti, this may reasonably be construed to be a reference to Buontalenti as well. For the next eight years, Gargiolli carried out works in Prague, including a palace design presented in Francesco I's name to Rudolph II, which have been characterized as large building projects which eclipsed the mostly decorative work of Rudolph's predecessors.²⁰ Other projects undertaken by Rudolph II may also have been inspired by the large-scale hydraulic engineering pioneered at Pratolino, such as the celebrated Rudolph water tunnel (*Rodolf-stolle*), which brought water from the Vltava River to an artificial lake created at the same time.²¹ The Prague grotto is believed to have featured running water²² and hydraulic works as well from its designation as a *wasserbrunnen oder Bath*²³ or *Badegrotte*²⁴ and the presence of a circular fountain or reservoir in historic plans believed to have been installed around 1604.²⁵ Yet so far, Guido Carrai is the only scholar to assign an influence from Buontalenti and Francesco I to any known work in Prague; this paper submits Rudolph II's grotto as a site which exhibits a transfer of ideas specifically from the Medici Villa Pratolino and its celebrated hydraulic works, as well as one which potentially testifies to a well-documented exchange between Buontalenti, Francesco I, Giovanni Gargiolli, and Rudolph II.

The Prague Grotto and Mill Site: Genus Loci and Medicean Technology

Giovanni Gargioli's communications between Rudolphine Prague and Medicean Florence at the turn of the sixteenth century reveal a concrete transfer of technology and materials which had the mill site adjacent to the grotto at its epicenter in Prague. A letter dated July 25, 1587 to Francesco I informs the Grand Duke of the emperor's happiness upon receiving stone-cutting and polishing devices sent from Florence.²⁶ The letter doesn't precise where these machines were destined to go, but current scholarship presents us with two options: either to the workshops in Prague Castle, which finished a gem's cutting and transformation into a work of art, or to the mill located next to Rudolph's grotto. When the Bohemian Council Chamber purchased this site in 1584, it was already a simple *brett und schleifmühle*, but under Rudolph II it underwent a dramatic expansion through the 1600's with the addition of cutting and polishing equipment for stones and glass. The machines from Florence very probably could very well have constituted this equipment or perhaps have been included among them.

With the renovation of the mill site and its new capacity to work hard stone, Prague became a producer in its own right of *pietre dure* artworks, a medium which had been the virtually exclusive domain of the Medici in Florence.²⁷ Although the Bohemian lands produced an abundance of hardstones and rock crystal, before the mill's expansion, Bohemian stones had to be sent to Florence in order to be transformed into *pietre dure* works,²⁸ scenes composed from semiprecious stones cut and fitted together to form seamless pictorial scenes (e.g. Fig. 10). It must be underlined that Francesco I de' Medici was not only sending machinery to Rudolph II, he was sending Medici technology which empowered Rudolph's court to set up a production of their own, which began in earnest with the arrival of the Florentine goldsmith and master of *pietre dure* Cosimo Castrucci in 1596. It's not certain that the Medici stone-cutting and polishing machines were installed at the mill site; however, the refurbishment of a mill acquired in 1584, the receipt of technology in Florence from 1587, and the arrival of the master stone-cutter from Florence in the next decade support such a conjecture.



Fig. 7: Studiolo of Francesco I de' Medici, Palazzo Vecchio (Florence).

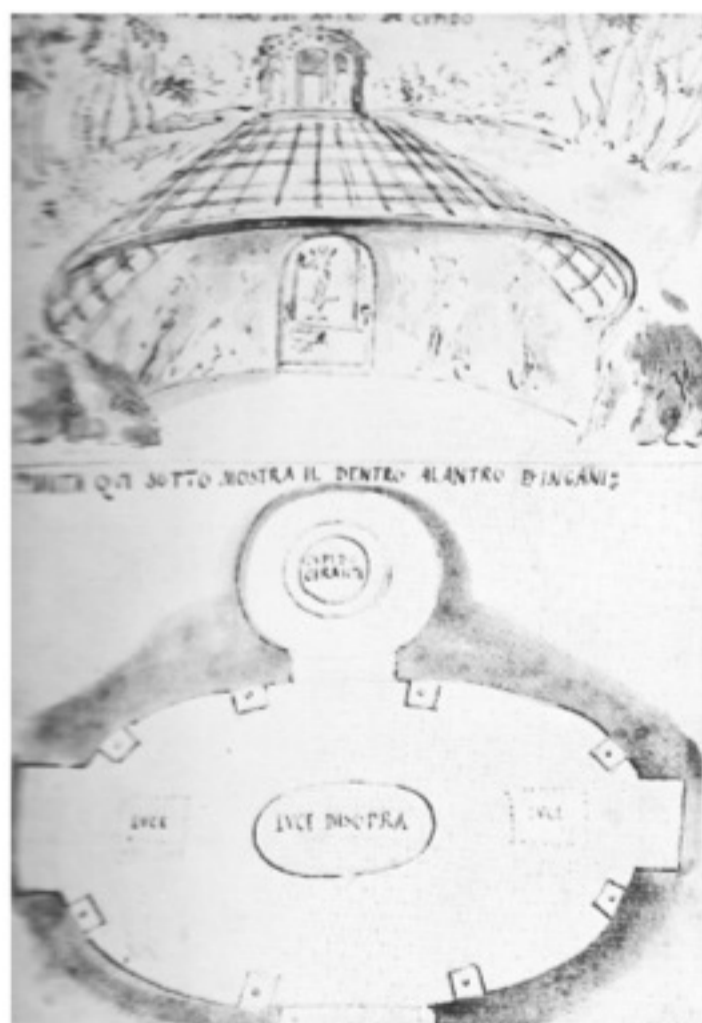


Fig. 8: Giovanni Guerra, Grotto of Cupid Plan and Perspective. Drawing, 1600.



Fig. 9: Giovanni Guerra, Grotto of Cupid (interior). Drawing, 1600.



Fig. 10: Interior Façade of Rudolph II Grotto (detail).

Conclusion

At the close of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth, the transformation of an unassuming mill site on a tributary of the Vltava at the edge of the Royal Hunting Preserve into an imperial mill site with the capacity to produce hardstone and glassworks was indebted to Rudolph II's close relationship with Francesco I de' Medici's court in Florence. In the same period as the mill was undergoing its transition into a state-of-the-art imperial workshop, Rudolph II's grotto was carved out of the hillside adjacent to the mill. The large-scale nature of its construction, involving both the excavation of the hillside as well as apparently a hydraulic engineering component, would perhaps be sufficient to advance a comparison with the works recently completed by Bernardo Buontalenti for Francesco I de' Medici's Villa Pratolino; the imperial privilege bestowed upon by Buontalenti for these same feats of engineering attests to Rudolph II's admiration for the architect and his works.

Coupled with the wonders of engineering it took to construct the Medici Villa Pratolino, another distinguishing feature of Francesco I de' Medici's villa was the unprecedented number of grottoes scattered throughout its parks and consolidated under the villa's *piano nobile*. Italian historian Luigi Zangheri has identified the construction of similar grottoes directly influenced by Pratolino's in France, Germany, England, and Spain;²⁹ in the same article, Rudolph II's grotto in Prague is included within this general category, but apart from recognizing Giovanni Gargioli's Tuscan origins, no further analysis is made. When Guido Carrai posited that Gargioli functioned more as an intermediary between Buontalenti and Francesco I de' Medici, rather than as a creative force in his own right, he did not expand his argument to include the grotto that Gargioli is credited for building with Rudolph II; this paper's goal has been to expand that possibility to consider the Rudolphine grotto as another instance in which Buontalenti's influence can be detected in late-Renaissance Prague.

So far, this grotto has escaped definitive inclusion within the set of early-seventeenth century grottoes inspired by Pratolino, perhaps primarily on account of the unique, austere character lent by the apparently regular blocks of stone-work lining the walls and dome, leading to comparisons with antique *tholoi* instead of with contemporary examples. However, in the present state of the

Rudolphine grotto (Fig. 11), the destruction of the rear wall niche reveals that these regular rows are a thin skin, a trompe-l'oeil covering that gives the impression of a construction *all'antica*, from the builder's point of view, covering the surface of the grotto's interior in stonework imitating antique masonry or natural stalactites becomes only a question of aesthetic preference. When this illusion has been stripped away, we are left with a grotto that is remarkably similar to Buontalenti's Grotto of Cupid realized at Pratolino: both are of the domed "mound" type although at Pratolino, this was an artificial hill and at Prague, a real hill was hollowed out, both possess a more or less round floorplan with a central, roughly concentric central aperture for light, both grottoes' interiors were covered in illusionistic stonework stalactites in the case of Pratolino and "masonry" *all'antica* in Prague, and both grottoes possessed running water and other hydraulic features. That the *only* grotto Rudolph II constructed was installed adjacent to the mill which likely incorporated Medici technology must also be taken into consideration; was the Prague grotto a parallel homage to Florentine engineering and themes? Between the *genius locus* of the site, its debt to Florentine innovations in stone-cutting and polishing, what is known about the connections between Giovanni Gargioli, Francesco I, and Buontalenti, and the architectural similarities of the Prague Grotto to the Grotto of Cupid at Pratolino, this paper draws the conclusion that in Rudolph II's grotto, there is an observable transfer of forms and ideas from Francesco I de' Medici's Florence.



Fig. 11: Cosimo Casrucci, Pietre Dure scene.

Endnotes

- 1 Rudolph II was connected to Medicean Florence by the 1565 marriage of Rudolph II's paternal aunt, Joanna of Austria (1547-1578), to Francesco I de' Medici (1541-1587); both rulers also shared a similar, if not parallel experience as youths brought to Philip II's court in Spain, with life-long effects on both rulers' dress, manners, and personalities. Both are remembered as introverted men, with an interest in alchemy and fledgling experimental sciences of their day, and a singularity between the Mannerist styles embraced in Florence and Prague has been observed to be one that, compared to other European courts at this time, was not anti-Classical or anti-Natural- see Peter Marshall, *The Magic Circle of Rudolf II: Alchemy and Astrology in Renaissance Prague* (New York, 2006), p. 73. Their respective sojourns in Spain have also been posited as key influences behind the large-scale engineering and building projects both rulers undertook later on in their respective reigns- see Pablo Jiménez Díaz, "Spain, Prague, and the Habsburg Ideology: Some Aspects of the Architecture of Rudolf II," in L. Konečný, ed. *Rudolf II, Prague, and the World* (Prague, 1998), p. 12. Relations intensified in the 1590's, when Francesco I's daughter was a proposed bride to Rudolph II; although this was by now after Francesco I's death, these developments as well as the connection between Rudolph II's grotto and the Pratolino grotto may be indications of Francesco I's lasting posthumous influence.
- 2 The fresco of Prague among the cities depicted in the cycle of the courtyard of the Palazzo Vecchio has been identified as a relatively rare nod to Bohemian ties within Florence political iconography- see Jarmila Krčálová, *La Toscana e l'architettura di Rodolfo II: Giovanni Gargioli a Praga* (Firenze, 1983), p. 1031. Additionally, Maximilian II's aviary at Schönbrunn Palace, which Francesco I is presumed to have seen during his travels in Austria, has been suggested as the inspiration between the aviary constructed at the Villa Pratolino – see Costanza Riva, *Pratolino: Il sogno alchemico di Francesco I de' Medici: miti, simboli, e allegorie* (Livorno, 2013), p. 31.
- 3 The legacy of Italian architects and artists within Bohemian architecture has been the subject of

a number of studies by Ivan Muchka and others; see in particular: Ivan P. Muchka, "Architectural Styles in the Reign of Rudolf II: Italian and Hispanic Influences," in L. Konečný, ed. *Rudolf II, Prague, and the World* (Prague, 1998), pp. 90-95; Ivan P. Muchka, *Architecture of the Renaissance* (Prague, 2001); see also Jarmila Krčálová's work cited above (note 2).

- 4 Sylva Dobalová, "Quellen und neue Überlegungen zur Kaisermühle, ihrer Grotte und dem nicht ausgeführten Schloss," *Studia Rudolphina* 9 (2009): pp. 53-68.
- 5 Pratolino's villa and most of the constructions of its parks were demolished in the 1820's, and in Prague, Rudolph II's Mathematics Tower at Prague Castle and the his dismantled *kunstkammer*, among others, stand as parallel lost works.
- 6 For a recent mention of the Prague grotto in connection with ongoing works, see "The Imperial Mill in Prague- Bubeneč," *Czech Republic: Heritage at Risk 2004/2006*: 6.; contact information for the apartments situated at this site is as follows: Císařsk Mlyn Residence Mlýnská 3/6, 160 00 Praha 6 - Bubeneč, Czech Republic +420 222 559 003.
- 7 See Luigi Zangheri, "I giardini d'Europa: una mappa della fortuna medicea nel XVI e XVII secolo," in Centro Mostre di Firenze, ed. *Il Giardino d'Europa: Pratolino come modello nella cultura europea* (Firenze, 1986), pp. 82-84;
- 8 Etruscan tumulus tombs north of the Arno form part of an archaeological heritage that includes the settlement at Fiesole, small centers, and necropoli in various valleys. Quinto Fiorentino, the name of which derives from its location on the fifth mile of the Roman road, possesses two *tholoi*-type tombs dubbed "La Montagnola" and "La Mula" which possess strong formal similarities to the Grotto of Cupid. Both belong to circa the seventh or sixth centuries B.C., which saw grandiose constructions in the vicinity, including the Montefortini tumulus and the tomb of the Boschetti at Comeana near Artimino, which furnished material for the antiquaria of Medici villas. La Montagnola's *dromos* entrance cut out from its mound is virtually identical to the view of Buontalenti's Grotto of Cupid in a ca. 1600 drawing by Heinrich Schickhard; however, this *dromos* was not fully excavated until 1959. Both La Montagnola and La Mula are characterized

as tombs possessing a "false" cupola, the progressive laying of stones to create a rough dome without an aperture, which is recalled by the dome-like ceiling of the Grotto of Cupid, though the latter construction possesses a lantern cupola and originally two adjacent openings for light. Whereas the Montagnola tomb's interior is dominated by a central supporting pillar for its ceiling, the Mula tomb was constructed in a way where this central column was omitted, creating an open space of similar shape and dimensions to the Grotto of Cupid. This tomb has been noted since the sixteenth century and once possessed a *dromos* like that of the Montagnola's; however, its incorporation into the Villa Shokley as a wine cellar has reduced its original length, and the dome has since been opened to let in light and air. The existence of a third *tholos* tomb near the Villa Carter today which belonged to this group on the left bank of the Zambra, a tributary of the Arno, has been identified but no trace of which remains today. See Francesca Boitani, Maria Cataldi, and Marinella Pasquinucci. *Le Città Etrusche* (Firenze, 1973), p. 35; Settis, Salvatore et al. *La Terra degli Etruschi*. (Firenze, 1985), p. 40; "L'Erma" di Bretschneider, *Atlante dei siti archeologici della Toscana* Vol. II (Firenze, 1992), pp. 113-114; Antonio Giuliano and Giancarlo Buzzi, *Etruschi* (Firenze, 1994), p. 125.

- 9 The identification and alignment of the Medici with Etruscan culture, based on a claim of descent from Porsenna, the legendary King of Tuscany who fought the Romans, has been observed to have been a calculated move to legitimize their reign as well as their military aggression, particularly in the case of the unification of lands between the Tiber and the Arno which they perceived as their inheritance from their Etruscan forbears – see Lucy Shipley, "Guelphs and Ghibellines and Etruscans: Archaeological Discoveries and Civic Identity in Late Medieval and Early Renaissance Tuscany." *Bulletin of the History of Archaeology* 23.1 (2013), p. 1. Lorenzo de' Medici's searched for, excavated, and collected Etruscan artifacts in the 1490's, setting the tone for his successors' own acquisitions and collections. Lorenzo, upon taking possession of the marble-rich areas around Carrara, ordered that all objects found in the ruins, apparently including gems, coins, and statuettes, there were to be sent

- directly to him – see Steven Bule, “Etruscan Echoes in Italian Renaissance Art.” John Franklin Hall, ed., *Etruscan Italy: Etruscan Influences on the Civilizations of Italy from Antiquity to the Modern Era* (Provo, UT, 1996), p. 311. A 1466 letter to Lorenzo de’ Medici from the humanist Antonio Ivani describes grave goods from a tomb near Volterra, and Ivani later sent finds from the same site in 1474 – see Katherine Coty, *A Dream of Etruria: The Sacro Bosco of Bomarzo and the Alternate Antiquity of Alto Lazio* (University of Washington M.A. Thesis, 2013), p. 33. Leo X promoted iconographies featuring Romulus, Remus, Numa, and Aeneas which have been read as an adaptation of Etruscan history to legitimate Medici rule- see P. J. Jacks, *The Antiquarian and the Myth of Antiquity: The Origins of Rome in Renaissance Thought* (New York, 1993), p. 181 f. and Bule (op. cit.), p. 317. Cosimo I de’ Medici, Francesco I’s father, was an enthusiast of Etruscan art and archaeology, and his extensive collection formed the basis of what is now the Florence Archaeological Museum. Tommaso Braccioli and Rinaldo Baldelli, documented their sixteenth-century excavations of tombs near Cortona with sketches and sent objects they found to Cosimo I de’ Medici. Giorgio Vasari sketched a vaulted *tholos* tomb near Cortona as well – see Coty (op. cit.), p. 34.
- 10** Such an “artificial hill” played a part in the courtly pageantry surrounding the wedding of Charles of Styria to Maria of Bavaria in 1571, which were designed by Giuseppe Arcimboldo. Rudolph II not only witnessed the proceedings in Vienna, he even played the role of the Sun in an allegorical tableau, carrying Spanish gold as his emblem – see Marshall 2006 (note 1), p. 31. Stage sets by Buontalenti, who also designed the Grotto of Cupid, for the wedding festivities of Ferdinando de’ Medici and Christina of Lorraine in 1589 featured twin circular grottoes with a central opening in the second *intermedio* of “La Pelegrina;” the Muses occupied the grotto on the right-hand side of the stage while the daughters of Pierus occupied the one on the left. When the Pierides lost their musical contest, they were “transformed” into birds, animated automata that could hop and peck, of the kind Buontalenti had already manufactured for Pratolino. Another mound-shaped grotto with a lantern cupola was used in another 1589 Florentine *intermedio* by Epifanio d’Alfiano and engraved in 1592 – see Stella Mary Newton, “Stage Design for Renaissance Theatre,” *Early Music* 5 (1977), pp. 12-18.
- 11** Guido Carrai, “I Fiorentini al castello: il progetto di Bernardo Buontalenti e Giovanni Gargioli per la nuova galleria di Rodolfo II,” *Umèni* L1, pp. 370-384.
- 12** Idem, p. 373.
- 13** Idem, p. 378.
- 14** Idem, p. 371.
- 15** Documentation also exists for the payment of the Italian stone-cutter Antonio Brocco for the Prague grotto as well as the Rudolphine oval basins installed at the Brandeis castle; however, he does not appear to have enjoyed the same status as an architect that Gargioli held. Cf. Eliška Fučíková et al., *Rodolphe II: Monarque et Mécène* (Paris, 1990), pp. 157, 189.
- 16** Sylva Dobalová, “Der rudolphinische Garten des Schlosses in Brandeis an der Elbe,” *Studia Rudolphina* 10 (2010): pp. 48-67.
- 17** Eliška Fučíková, “Prague Castle under Rudolf II, His Predecessors and Successors,” E. Fučíková et al., ed., *Rodolf II and Prague: The Court and the City* (London and New York, 1997), pp. 2-71, p. 61.
- 18** Carrai 2003 (note 11), p. 383.
- 19** Ibid.
- 20** Fučíková 1997 (note 17), pp. 2, 29, 30.
- 21** Švejda Antonín, “Stromovka, Rudolf’s Water Tunnel,” *Rudolfine Prague 1576-1612. A Guidebook* (Prague, 2006), pp. 132-133.
- 22** Krčálová 1983 (note 2), p. 1042.
- 23** Fučíková 1990 (note 15), pp. 217-218.
- 24** Muchka 2001 (note 3), p. 93.
- 25** Fučíková 1990 (note 15), pp. 217-218.
- 26** Carrai 2003 (note 11), p. 373.
- 27** See Anna Maria Giusti, *Pietre Dure: The Art of Semiprecious Stonework*, trans. Fabio Barry (London, 2006).
- 28** Fučíková 1997 (note 17), p. 25.
- 29** See Zangheri 1986 (note 7).