

In the last chapters of her well-researched and marvelously illustrated book, Yunn tantalizingly notes the somewhat reductive nature of the conventional framework for analyzing Italian communal palaces, which distinguishes between a horizontal Northern market-type with open street-level arcades and a vertical Tuscan fortress-type with a closed ground story. As it evolved, the medieval Bargello did not fit either category neatly. Yunn offers a provocation: future research should help to clarify the building histories of other communal palaces, enabling a broad reassessment of the way we understand these buildings. Yunn has made an admirable step in that direction.

Lauren Jacobi, *Massachusetts Institute of Technology*

*Le ville medicee in Toscana nella lista del Patrimonio Mondiale.* Luigi Zangheri, ed. Villa e giardini medicei in Toscana 2. Florence: Olschki, 2015. 186 pp. €44.

---

In 2013, UNESCO designated fourteen Medici villas and gardens as a “serial” World Heritage Site. This volume, beautifully produced by Olschki and Regione Toscana, commemorates this historic event. The Medici villas represent a classic development from the late medieval castle on the land to the Renaissance villa garden, open to landscape. Medici villas ringed the city as an example of familial control of *contado*, from the fourteenth-century rise of the merchant banking family to Medici control of the Florentine republic and its consolidation of duchy to grand duchy of Tuscany in the sixteenth century. These seignorial country houses were fundamental to the formation and evolution of the late medieval and Renaissance, from republic to grand-ducal imperial territorial city-state. This volume follows the patrimonial history of these major “villa monuments,” from the end of the Medici dynasty in 1737 to Hapsburg-Lorena-Austrian rule and the Bourbon-Bonaparte interlude to Austrian restoration and the unification of Italy in 1870. Many of these villas are now museums and arts institutions open to the public, and this volume represents a regional effort to restore and maintain these cultural landscapes.

Luigi Zangheri, author of a documentary study of the Villa Medici at Pratolino in 1979, provides an introduction, followed by individual entries on each of the fourteen villas, including ownership, architectural garden landscape features, and notes on decorations and travel descriptions. Beautiful color photographs, plans, and prints punctuate this scholarly volume, including the seventeen bird’s-eye lunette views of Medici villas painted by Flemish artist Justus Utens for Grand Duke Ferdinand I in 1599–1602 for his favorite hunting villa at Artimino, now in the Museo della Villa Medicea at Petraia. These comprise a panoramic “panoptic” view, an “inventory” of Medici villas and grand-ducal dominions over the Tuscan landscape, and a royal “portrait gallery” of Medici grand-ducal Tuscany (127).

Several themes emerge from Zangheri's overview. First, there are regional associations. From their place of origin in the Mugello Valley, the Medici fortress villas at Cafaggiolo and Trebbio featured medieval towers with enclosed courtyards and pergola gardens with farmyards and hunting parks. Their location on the Via Bolognese highlights their strategic importance and combination of pleasure retreat (*villeggiatura*), agricultural zone, and hunting lodge in neighboring *boschi*. In nearby Florence, Cosimo il Vecchio developed the Villa Medici di Careggi as a humanist villa, with ionic loggia overlooking a formal garden, now an English park, for Ficino's Platonic Academy. Networks emerged, Michelozzo being the early Renaissance architect in these classical remodelings of closed castles to open villas.

Meanwhile, Michelozzo built the Villa Medici di Fiesole with classical belvedere and terraced formal gardens along the hillside overlooking Florence, a Vitruvian-Plinian-Albertian scenic landscape. Giuliano da Sangallo constructed Lorenzo "il Magnifico's" Vitruvian-Plinian Tuscan villa at Poggio a Caiano on an axis with the formal garden, the ionic Greek temple front making "sacred" this ancient rustic humanist life. Castello developed Poggio a Caiano's Tuscan villa into an elaborate sculptural garden for Cosimo I, aggrandizing the Medici ducal dynasty. Hercules over Antaeus and Venus in her bath centered cypress groves among the four seasons' floral-fruitful parterre, nourished by a shivering Apennines fishpond terrace above a rustic grotto of the animals tamed by singing Orpheus, a golden-age allegory of Medici Florence. Pratolino expanded the topographical form to giant Apennines above a Renaissance axial park, an allegory of earth and ancient origin, Jupiter fountain to Medici realm, an animated water play in "il giardino di meraviglie": all in magnificent competition with Roman Renaissance gardens at Tivoli, Caprarola, and Bagnaia. Cosimo I's establishment of the botanical gardens at the universities of Pisa and Florence in 1544 was fundamental to early modern sciences and the exchange of plant materials with Medici villas from the Old and New Worlds. Finally, Eleonora di Toledo purchased the Palazzo Pitti in 1549 and expanded it into a royal axial garden similar to the Spanish viceroy of Naples, a Hapsburg alliance, creating a ceremonial garden amphitheater of court display that transformed a city, hearkening to Versailles. The expansion of the Boboli Gardens in the early seventeenth century, and construction of Poggio Imperiale with grand *viale* from Porta Romana by Maria Madalena of Austria, made this into a grand duchess garden precinct, embracing the walls of late medieval Florence.

George L. Gorse, *Pomona College*