

Toward an Archaeology of the Gaze: The Perception and Function of Garden Views in Italian Renaissance Villas

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THE CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF GARDEN VIEWS IS a relatively recent concern among garden historians. Although garden views have been included in the scholarship since the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, they are rarely put under critical scrutiny. Rather, images of gardens functioned in these publications essentially as illustrations or documents that provide a visual stimulus to help readers understand the topography of the landscape and imagine the atmosphere and beauty of the gardens. These images, which are generally considered faithful representations of a particular state of the garden, have been employed to provide information about the garden's topography and history.¹ In this, historians have followed the discourse associated with topographical images during the Renaissance, a genre that was predominantly linked with the idea of truthfulness and objectivity.² A topographical view of a city or garden was almost always presented by its authors as being derived from direct observation, "from a true relationship with the world seen, not from a written account, nor from a purely conventional model, nor even from an abstract idea." For example, Georg Braun, in his preface to the *Civitates orbis terrarum* (1572–1618),

stated that "the painters really went through the towns they drew and assumed the real world as their starting point."³ His statement was obviously not true, as most images were constructed through the use of previous models, a variety of textual and visual information, and, most importantly, a good dose of artistic imagination.⁴

Since the 1990s, historians have suggested other ways in which images could be used to gain a better understanding of gardens, and several publications have been entirely dedicated to the tradition of garden representation.⁵ For example, during the 1989 Dumbarton Oaks symposium, Linda Cabe Halpern noted that garden views are "useful not only for the topographical information they can convey, but also for communicating the assumptions and expectations of previous centuries concerning gardens . . . They tell us what mattered to the villa owners, and in many respects they are most interesting in their contradiction to physical reality."⁶ The methodology adopted by Halpern has since been employed by a number of scholars, such as Hervé Brunon, Claudia Lazzaro, Mirka Beneš, John Dixon Hunt, and Dianne Harris.⁷ What all of these authors stress is the necessity of considering the very status

of garden images and the way they are constructed and of readdressing the question of their original function and their reception by coeval audiences.⁸ As a result, images of gardens, which were previously considered to be “documents,” are now starting to be examined as “monuments”—this follows an emblematic epistemological shift suggested some decades ago by Erwin Panofsky for the visual arts, Michel Foucault for the history of human sciences, and Jacques Le Goff and the *Annales* school for the discipline of history.⁹ Foucault wrote: “The document, then, is no longer for history an inert material through which it tries to reconstitute what men have done or said, the events of which only the trace remains; history is now trying to define within the documentary material itself unities, totalities, series, relations.” Where before, history was essentially preoccupied with authenticating and dating “sources,” it must now explore the condition of their genesis and the transmission of their traces

to unravel their apparent meaning or to interrogate their silence. In its relation to documents, history “aspires to the condition of archaeology, to the intrinsic description of the monument.”¹⁰

Focusing on fresco paintings in Italian villas, this paper suggests new ways of using images for the history and archaeology of gardens, and raises new questions about the relationship between vision, representation, motion, and memory in Renaissance villa culture. Three important issues are addressed in order to offer new theoretical perspectives for garden historians. First, I explore the function of garden views as projects or *disegni*, and address the vexed question of synchronism between the creation of the garden and the production of its printed or painted model. I then analyze the theoretical significance of garden images in the Renaissance. Finally, I suggest a reconsideration of the visual environment of such images, so that their reception is analyzed not only in terms of vision

FIGURE 8.1.
Girolamo
Muziano,
projected design
of the gardens at
the Villa d’Este,
1565–68, fresco in
the main salone
of the Villa
d’Este, Tivoli.
Photograph
by the author.



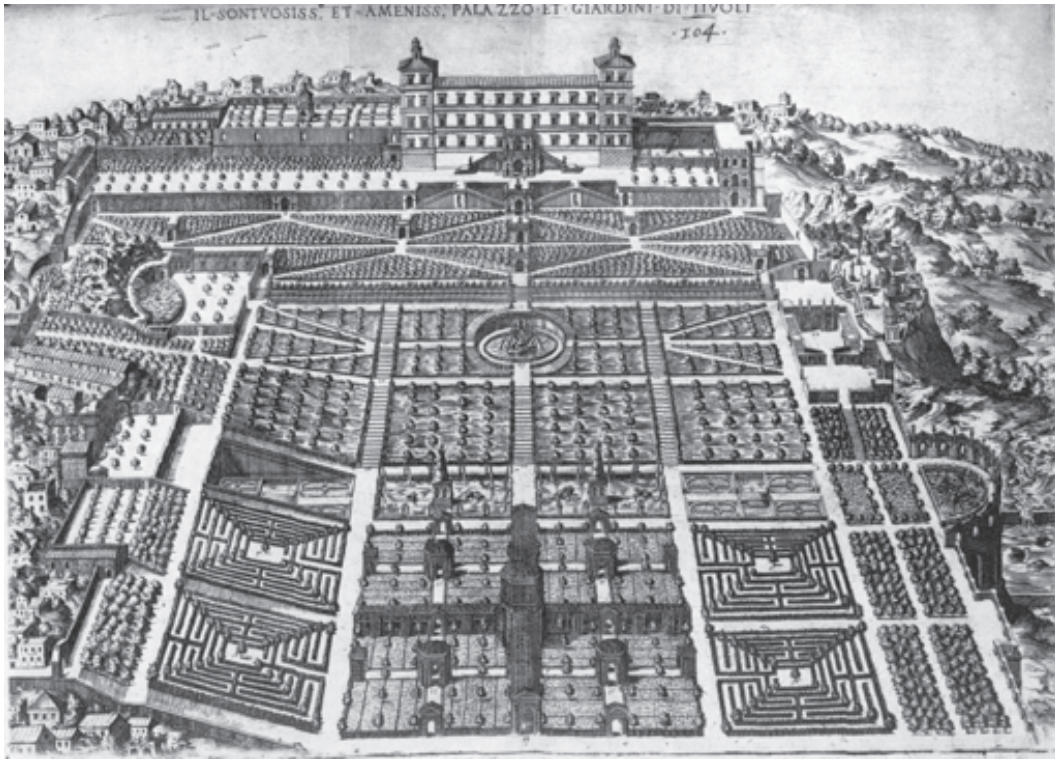


FIGURE 8.2. Étienne Dupérac, projected design for the Villa d'Este at Tivoli, 1573, engraving.

Published as *Ritratto nel quale si rappresenta il vero sito dell'orti et fontane che con ingenuissimi adornamenti e meraviglie si vedono nella villa in Tivoli fatta dalla Fe. Me. D. Hippolito da Este Card. di Ferrara* by Ambrosius Brambilla (Rome: Claude Duchet, 1581).

but also in terms of movement through the villa. For this method of contextualized analysis, I have coined the term “archaeology of the gaze,” thereby implying that a certain vision of space is encoded, both at a conscious and an unconscious level, in historical images and their particular constructs. This term underscores the fundamental relationships established in the *Gesamtkunstwerk* that is the Italian Renaissance villa between the garden, its wider landscape, and the villa’s painted decoration; between inside and outside space; and between past and present. The main focus of this paper will be not so much the images themselves but their role in the construction of a specific horizon of perception and understanding of space.

Garden Views as Projects

Although we have already noted that topographical images were generally associated with the idea of truthfulness and objectivity, the earliest commentaries on garden images during the Renaissance were

anything but naive. For example, after admiring in 1576 the view of the Villa d'Este at Tivoli painted by Girolamo Muziano in the main *salone*, Nicolas Audebert reported that it showed the villa “not as it is, but as it would be if it were completed” (fig. 8.1).¹¹ Commenting on an engraving made of the same villa and its gardens by Étienne Dupérac in 1573, the French traveler demonstrated his awareness of the deformation of the perspective in the portrayal of the villa: “But one must remark that the length [of the garden] must be taken from the Palace to the Garden’s gate leading to the street, that is twice its width: whereas in the portrait it seems the opposite; this comes from the fact that perspective represents all things in foreshortening” (fig. 8.2).¹²

Audebert’s testimony tells us two important things. First, the gardens were not finished in 1576; the fresco in the *salone* was known to be a *disegno* and not a representation of reality. Audebert used the old French word *desseing*, meaning both a drawing and a project. Second, people such as Audebert were well aware of the difficulties of creating a

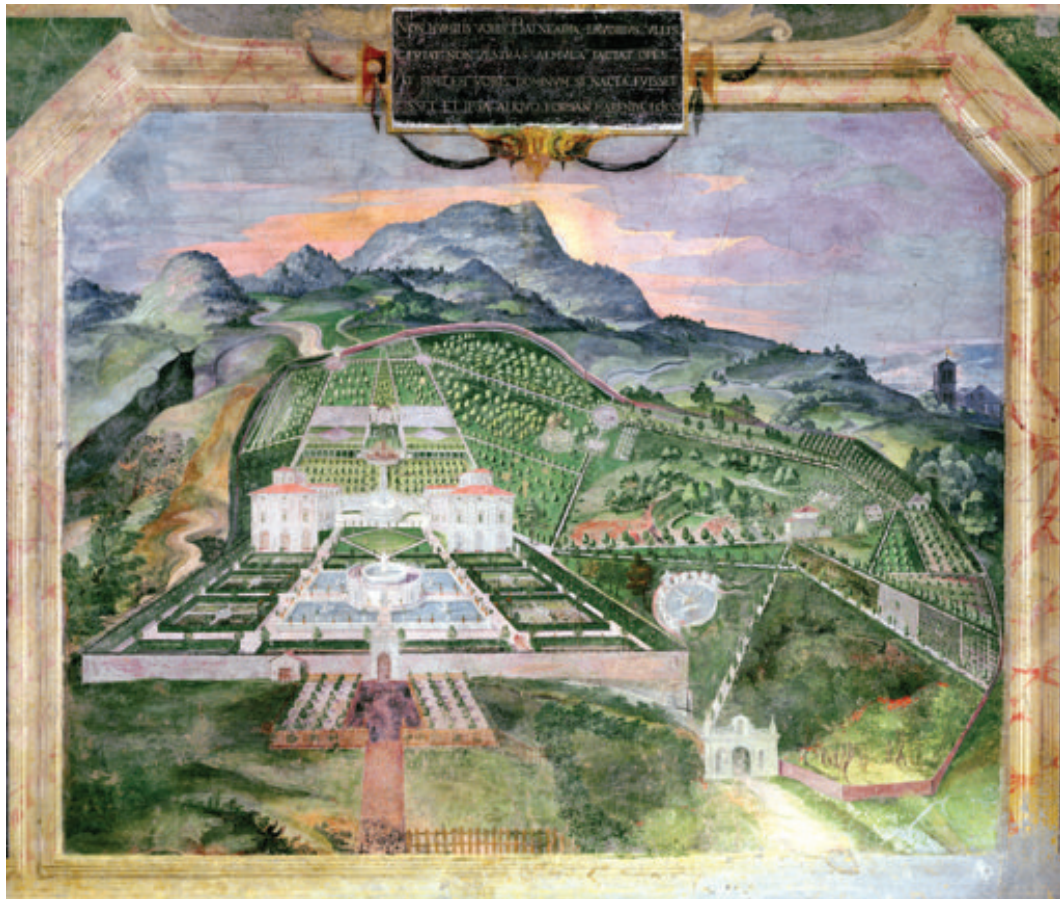
representation that truly reproduces one's perceptions when present in a garden. Audebert's critical attitude toward the artificiality of topographical views was still alive in the seventeenth century; it is well known that the "art of prospect," while praised for its capacity to simulate the truth, was held in deep suspicion by many who regarded it as a "pernicious fantasy" that created "deceptive visions."¹³

Thus, from the point of view of their function, garden images were understood not as truthful depictions of sites but as projects and designs—that is, as material expressions of the ideas of architects. *Disegno* or *disegno*, in this instance, not only signified drawing and project, but was understood theoretically and conceptually as the result of a creative genius, the graphic translation of an idea, and the key of all imaginative process. It was this "idea" that

was celebrated in engravings and frescoes of gardens during the Renaissance, and whose prestige, in turn, glorified the patrons that made possible its actual materialization.

One interesting example of this paradigm is the fresco of the Villa Lante at Bagnaia, which was based on the original *bozzetto grafico* (or *disegno*) for the villa that was possibly provided by Vignola himself (fig. 8.3).¹⁴ A comparison of the fresco and the inventory of the villa taken in 1588 after the death of Cardinal Gianfrancesco Gambara shows that nearly all of the elements indicated on this fresco were eventually realized (with the exception of the second palazzina, which was completed by Cardinal Alessandro Peretti di Montalto).¹⁵ We can, therefore, hypothesize that the inclusion of the *disegno* in the loggia of the Palazzina Gambara between 1574 and

FIGURE 8.3.
Fresco in the
loggia of the
Palazzina Gambara
at the Villa Lante,
Bagnaia, ca. 1574.
The fresco shows
the projected design
of the villa gardens.
Photograph courtesy of
the Bridgeman
Art Library.



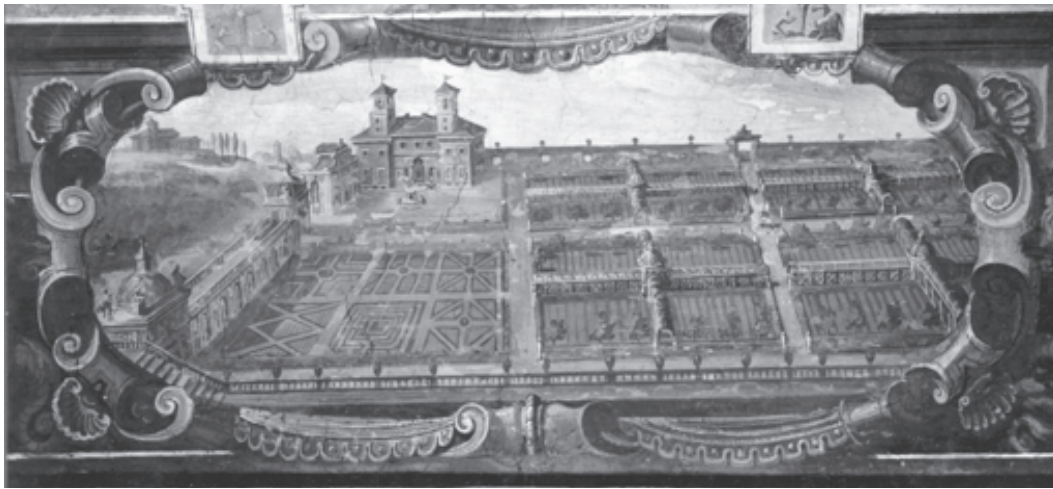


FIGURE 8.4. Jacopo Zucchi, project for the gardens of the Villa Medici, 1576, fresco in the garden pavilion of the Villa Medici, Rome.

Photograph courtesy of the Fototeca Nazionale, Istituto Centrale per il Catalogo e la Documentazione (ICCD).

1578 must have acted as a guarantee that the gardens would be finished in accordance with their original plan. Nonetheless, for more than ten years, the gardens certainly did not look like the fresco. In fact, we could say that the garden imitated the fresco rather than the opposite.¹⁶ The same holds true for the fresco of the Villa d'Este at Tivoli (fig. 8.1).

The importance of this potential or apparent synchronism between the building of gardens and their representations also explains the function of the famous garden views at the Villa Medici in Rome (fig. 8.4). Created in 1576 by Jacopo Zucchi, these three frescoes—which were located in a small casino at the back of the villa garden—possessed an important legal dimension and should not be seen as mere illustrations.¹⁷

The rental contract drawn by Cardinal Ferdinando de' Medici and his advisors assured him the use of the villa, but left to the leaseholders, the Crescenzi and the Garzoni families, a certain number of rights over the land and what was built on it. In case the leaseholders would want to reclaim their possessions, the terms of the contract stated that they would have to pay for any addition to the land that was dedicated to its pure embellishment (“*melioramenta voluntaria et ad delectationem*”) but not for additions that were seen as economically and financially productive (“*melioramenta utilia et necessaria*”).¹⁸ It is likely that, in order to prevent eventual contestations, Ferdinando de' Medici

asked Jacopo Zucchi to represent with precision his plans for transforming and embellishing the gardens. The first two views thus show the villa as it would look with the cardinal's projected improvements and as it appeared in its original state as the Vigna Crescenzi. By showing that he had adorned his garden without increasing its productivity, and by recording the “before and after” states of the gardens, Ferdinando de' Medici might have intended to dissuade any descendants of the Crescenzi or Garzoni families from claiming what he himself had built, given that it would not be financially advantageous for them to do so. The third garden view is related to a major building project for a magnificent fountain and ramp in front of the villa on a piece of land belonging to the Garzoni family. Since the fountain and ramp would have embellished the entire city and would have provided the villa with a grand new focus, Pope Gregory XIII approved the project in 1576 (the same year that the views were painted), stating that it would be “in the interest of Garzoni [who was Quirino Garzoni's son] and his descendants, and for the great ornament of the city.”¹⁹ Again, the views worked as true legal arguments.

The situation must have been slightly different at the Villa Lante (fig. 8.3). I have already suggested that the representation of the villa in the Palazzina Gambara might have acted as a guarantee that the gardens would be completed in accordance with

the original project. This supports an attribution of the initial conception of the gardens to the architect Vignola. In the late sixteenth century, only Pirro Ligorio, who also served as architect of Saint Peter's Basilica after the death of Michelangelo, was as celebrated in Rome as Vignola. Ligorio's splendid realizations for Pope Pius IV were, in fact, praised in a similar fashion in four views depicted on the vault of the stairway in the Casino of Pius IV at the Vatican Gardens. These views represent the pope's gardens in Rome: the Casino of Pius IV, the Nicchione del Belvedere, the vigna on the Quirinale, and the palazzina on the Via Flaminia.²⁰ At the Villa Lante in Bagnaia, the role of Tommaso Ghinucci in the conception and elaboration of the gardens has been recently reevaluated, but was the Siennese architect and engineer so renowned that his project would at so early a stage be celebrated in a painting²¹ It is likely that the fresco decoration had been motivated by Cardinal Gambara's desire to stress the originality and prestigious authorship of his villa's disegno as much as that of the villa itself. At the time the frescoes were completed, the villa was far from being finished; its future completion would be further compromised by the recriminations addressed to Cardinal Gambara by Cardinal Carlo Borromeo in 1580.²² This hypothesis of the villa's authorship is reinforced by the recent discovery of a disguised portrait of Vignola in the loggia frescoes at the Villa Lante; the portrait is found in one of the *telamoni* framing the garden views, and is exactly in front of the views of two of Vignola's buildings for Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, the Palazzo Farnese and the Barco at Caprarola.²³ The connections established between the different villas represented in the loggia were meant to stress what the Villa Lante owed to the other famous residences, as the written verses accompanying each fresco also suggest.²⁴

The importance given to a disegno during the Renaissance is demonstrated by the many drawings and prints that remain for projects that were never realized. For example, for his engraving of Michelangelo's project for Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome, Étienne Dupérac used the architect's wooden model as well as his drawings for the design of the facade, which when combined produced a complete image of the church as it would appear in reality.²⁵ Dupérac's engraving for the Villa Giulia was also

based on drawings of early projects.²⁶ Finally, we should mention the Frenchman's most celebrated image of Roman gardens, that of the Villa d'Este at Tivoli (fig. 8.2). As noted by Elizabeth Eustis, this image was—at least for many viewers—more real than the garden itself and recalled the relation between disegni and unrealized projects: “Dupérac's view was reissued time and again by the original publisher and his heirs, and copied and imitated by other printmakers for eighty years or more. His idealized design, more perfectly geometric and more complete than the garden, was copied by subsequent printmakers, rather than corrected by reference to the actual garden. The print remained constant as a model of garden design even more widely influential than the garden itself.”²⁷

Vision and Memory

As a category of images, Renaissance garden views (like other topographical images) belonged to the epideictic category of *descriptio*, as they derived both from ancient geography and rhetoric and, as such, played an important mnemonic and didactic function in the villa and its garden. During the Renaissance, topographical images helped visitors to better remember the places they visited. Likewise, sixteenth-century garden views were often meant to accompany an *ekphrasis*, or literary description, of a site even though most authors acknowledged that visual images were more effective than literary descriptions. For example, Nicolas Audebert wrote at the end of his description of the Villa d'Este: “For better intelligence and demonstration of what [has been described] above, I have made a small portrait [of the villa], in order to represent what can only be made understandable through painting.”²⁸ A preference for garden views is also evident in a famous letter by Bartolomeo Ammannati to Marco Mantova Benavides that described the Villa Giulia in Rome and in the description of the Villa Aldobrandini at Frascati attributed to Giovanni Battista Agucchi.²⁹ Moreover, the famous engraving of the Villa d'Este by Étienne Dupérac was originally commissioned to accompany a written description of the villa, the so-called Parisian manuscript, which was sent to both Catherine de' Medici of France and Maximilian II of Austria (fig. 8.2).³⁰

As elements of *epideixis* (the rhetoric of praise and blame), *descriptio* and *ekphrasis* were not limited to literal description, but were meant to convince and to make objects appear as truthful as possible, a practice that Latin rhetoricians have called *evidentia*, *illustratio*, or *demonstratio*. In this context, garden views belonged to a genre that was celebratory and ideological.³¹

From a more practical point of view, the views of the garden and its surrounding territory enabled visitors to replicate a technique employed by travelers to fix in their memory the character and configuration of the places they had visited. During a trip to Rome, for example, Montesquieu wrote of his habit of seeking out such landscape panoramas: “When I arrive in a city, I always climb up the highest bell tower, to see the whole before seeing the parts; and, upon leaving I do the same to gather my ideas.”³²

The mnemonic and didactic function of garden views corresponded fully to the role given to images by the new directives of the Council of Trent, and it comes as no surprise that most Renaissance garden images were produced for cardinals of the church. In his 1582 description of topographical views and geographical maps, Cardinal Gabriele Paleotti recalled that places can be better remembered when they have been seen represented in painting.³³ Previously, in the *De Cardinalatu* (1510), Paolo Cortesi had stressed the suitability of such images for the decoration of a cardinal’s palace and for the edification of the visitor:

The summer rooms should be decorated in almost the same way. The more subtle a mathematical concept (*subtilior mathematica ratio*) a painting displays, the more learned (*litteratior*) the picture will appear. For instance there could be a painting something like a hydraulic or ctesibian machine the which [representation] permits more subtle reasoning [by the viewer]. The same thing should be said about systems of drawing water, hoisting, laying siege or channeling streams of water such as we contrived at San Gimignano to build the lake on the Cortesi family estate . . . And likewise there is no less delight to the learned in a painted picture of the world (*pinax*) or the depiction (*descriptio*) of

its parts . . . And the same holds true for paintings done from life (*zo[o]graphiae describendae ratio*) . . .³⁴

The resemblance between Cortesi’s description of a cardinal’s ideal *triclinium* and well-known rooms with garden and landscape views, such as the salone at the Villa d’Este at Tivoli (which is itself described as a *triclinium*), the *stanzino* of Ferdinando de’Medici at the Villa Medici in Rome, and the *loggia* of the Villa Lante at Bagnaia, is particularly striking and can shed new light on how garden views were understood by their contemporaries.³⁵ For Cortesi, garden views (as *descriptio*) were seen as edifying images that appealed directly to the intellect. In *De Cardinalatu*, he doubtless evoked the decoration of his own villa; the representation of the hydraulic works carried out in his garden at San Gimignano might have been an example he had right before his eyes. Similarly, many of the water features represented in contemporary views of gardens at Tivoli, Bagnaia, and elsewhere were examples of the fountains, water channeling systems, and wonder-inducing hydraulic machines recommended by Cortesi as suitable subjects for *triclinium* decoration.³⁶ The Fountain of the Organ and the Fountain of the Owl at Tivoli were possibly inspired by Vitruvius’s description of a water organ invented by the Roman engineer Ctesibius (which Cortesi clearly evoked in his text), and the Avenue of the Hundred Fountains in the gardens of the Villa d’Este was nothing but a construction to channel streams (fig. 8.5).³⁷ The expression “*subtilior mathematica ratio*” can also be read to imply the use of *trompe l’oeil* representations and self-reflective visual techniques (such as *jeux de miroirs* and *mises en abîme*), which, as we will see, abound in the decoration of such villas. Finally, birds and animals were often depicted next to painted views of gardens (“*zo[o]graphiae describendae ratio*”).

This combination of pictorial themes is especially apparent in the decoration of sixteenth-century villas, such as the Villa d’Este at Tivoli and the Villa Madama in Rome. The Villa Madama contains some of the pictorial themes mentioned by Cortesi, including a *mappamondo*, representations of exotic beasts, and scenes from Philostratus.³⁸ And in addition to the views of the villa and its gardens in the small *stanzino* of Ferdinando



FIGURE 8.5. View of the Avenue of the Hundred Fountains with the Fountain of Tivoli, detail of a fresco in the salone of the Villa d'Este, Tivoli.

Photograph by the author.

de'Medici at the Villa Medici in Rome, there are depictions of many species of fish as well as illustrations of Aesop's fables among the grotesques; the adjacent room is painted to look like an extraordinary bird cage with the rarest species known at the time, including birds and plants only found in America.³⁹ Garden views, thus, belonged to a category of images evoking wonder that were especially praised by Renaissance collectors.⁴⁰

Perhaps the image of a peacock in front of the main view of the villa in the salone at the Villa d'Este alluded to the mnemonic function of the garden views and to the primacy of sight in the understanding of the world (fig. 8.1). In his *Dialogues* (19–20), the Greek rhetorician Lucian of Samosata claimed that no one could listen to the song of a nightingale while admiring a silent peacock, for “the pleasure of the

eyes seems invincible . . . because words are winged and fly as soon as they depart from our lips, whilst the beauty of visible things is always present and capture the spectator whether he wants it or not.”⁴¹ This kind of learned riddle was considered appropriate in a cardinal's villa during the Renaissance. Paolo Cortesi concluded his discussion by recommending “the depiction of riddles (*aenigmata*) and fables (*apologi*). Their interpretation sharpens the intelligence and [inspection of] their learned representations fosters the cultivation of the mind.”⁴² Many riddles existed in the highly complex, antiquarian program of the Villa d'Este's decorations. They stimulated the intellect and the philological knowledge of the highly learned guests of the cardinal, leading the courtier Ercole Cato to describe this assembly as “an Academy, a cenacle, a theatre of the world.”⁴³

Garden views were, therefore, intended to stimulate both the imagination and the intellect. This model of perception was rooted in ancient Greek sources, a point that Cortesi emphasized: “For [by the sight of these paintings] either the appetite of the soul is aroused or the capacity for motion—the which consists, according to Aristotle, in the combination of imagination (*imaginatio*) and the intellectual understanding of things (*intelligentia*)—may be prompted by the striking lifelike imitation, in the painting, of the thing represented.”⁴⁴

Finally, it should be remarked that, in light of Cortesi's humanist background, the parallel between his understanding of the function of garden views and the ancient art of memory is striking. As Quintilian, Cicero, and the anonymous author of the *Ad Herennium* explained, the *loci* (or mnemonic sites; here the painted views) should be placed within a short distance of each other. They should be well and carefully lit, and should be as realistic as possible. The images (i.e., ideas, concepts, or texts) associated with each *locus* are then perceived through the motion of the viewer within the mnemonic landscape: a walk through a public building or a city, a long journey through the country, or a series of paintings. The process of moving, seeing, and knowing described for the ancient *ars memoriae* closely corresponds with the way in which topographical cycles and gardens were plastically and spatially organized and perceived during the Renaissance.⁴⁵

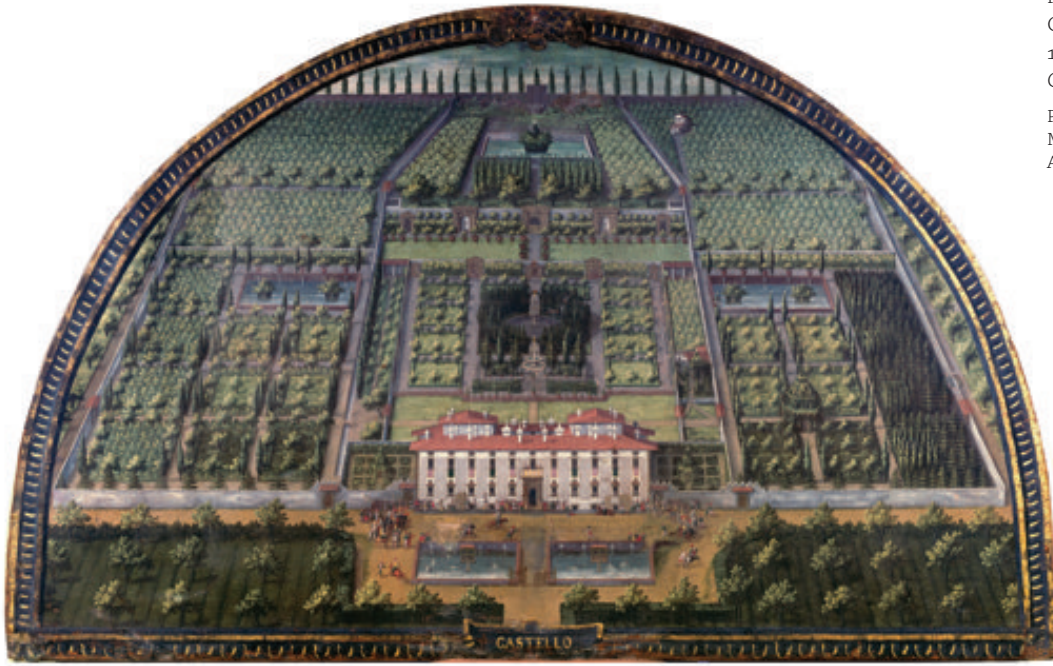


FIGURE 8.6.
Giusto Utens, *Castello*,
1599. Museo Firenze
Com'era, Florence.

Photograph courtesy of the
Ministero per i Beni e le
Attività Culturali.

A Look at Giusto Utens's Views of Medicean Villas

Spatial context and motion is, thus, of crucial importance for the understanding of garden views during the Renaissance. A case in point is garden historians' use of Giusto Utens's famous lunettes for the Medici villa at Artimino.⁴⁶ Painted between 1598 and 1602, this pictorial cycle—which shows the villas and gardens associated with the Medici family—provides invaluable evidence for reconstructing the original planting of the gardens.⁴⁷ Yet the use of these lunettes as historical evidence is fraught with problems. The first problem is with chronology: the views represent the gardens as they seem to have appeared around 1600, but they have often been employed to document the state of gardens made considerably earlier, in the fifteenth or early sixteenth century.⁴⁸ The second problem is with accuracy: in addition to manipulating the perspective in the garden views, many aspects of the depicted gardens have been simply invented or corrected.⁴⁹ For example, in his view of the Medici villa at Castello, Utens modified the central axis of the garden to correspond with the main axis of the

villa—an adjustment that Étienne Dupérac also made in his 1573 engraving of the Villa d'Este (figs. 8.2 and 8.6).⁵⁰

In order better to understand the *raison d'être* and the historical meaning of Utens's lunettes, we should attempt to place them in the context in which they were meant to be seen (i.e., in one of the two main reception rooms of the villa at Artimino).⁵¹ Where these views truly depart from reality is not so much in the "corrections" that have already been highlighted, but in the singular absence of light, atmospheric, and distance effects. No clouds are apparent or winds suggested, and the time of day remains indeterminate. The limited palette (which is reduced to only three colors), the meticulousness of the line work, and the geometrical precision used to depict even the most natural elements in the gardens imbue the lunettes with the timeless dimension of a map. The human figures must be understood, like the other elements of the landscape, as generic symbols rather than factual illustrations. They have been inserted into the lunettes to describe the activities (hunting, games and leisure, and agriculture) associated with each villa.

The emphasis on generic elements denotes a desire to unify all of the lunettes at the villa at Artimino. As Claude Lévi-Strauss noted in his discussion of the reduced-scale model, reduction and simplification imply that “the knowledge of the whole precedes that of the parts.”⁵² In other words, the views at Artimino exist as a series before they exist as individualized representations of particular villas. The great diversity of architectural and topographic typologies that the paintings present—the villas were built between 1451 and 1595—is subordinated, when seen in situ, to the stylistic unity, the uniformity of line and color, and the repetition of the formatted elements of the landscape and the architecture. The images become the metaphor of a grand duchy of Tuscany conceived as a centralized political and administrative system, of which the villas are the active agents on the territory.⁵³ In short, Utens’s lunettes, by simultaneously offering a detailed and overall view of the landscape of the Medici villas, form an ideologically ordered inventory.⁵⁴

The absence of the villa at Artimino in the lunette cycle can be explained by the fact that the villa had become, for Ferdinando de’Medici, the center of the territory and the point from which the network of villas was organized. The centripetal disposition of the views transformed the room into a microcosm of the entire territory, so that the spectator looking and moving within the room was both virtually and in reality at the center of Ferdinando de’Medici’s domain. The villa at Artimino, which was located at one of the higher points in Tuscany, indeed afforded magnificent panoramic views of the surrounding countryside. Furthermore, the sequential disposition of the views around the room, producing “a kind of diorama in the filmic succession of the images,” suggested to the visitor a mental journey around the territory and recalled the ceaseless traveling of Ferdinando de’Medici and his court from one villa to another.⁵⁵ The unity and uniformity achieved in the cycle reflected not only the unifying presence of the prince, but also his fundamental ideological project for the Medici villas. Villas, old and new, were built or refurbished with careful attention paid to the relationship between the architecture and the landscape.⁵⁶ Beyond serving as informal country retreats, these villas also urbanized the countryside by laying a grid of orderly and unifying structures over the

landscape for political, military, and economic purposes. James Saslow described the action of looking over the land from the villas as “laying bare the surrounding territory to a gaze of visual and social surveillance.”⁵⁷ Thus, Utens’s series documents through an appropriation of space—both macroscopic (the territory) and microscopic (the topography of each place)—the organizational system, visual domination, and aesthetic appreciation of the landscape that the architecture of the villa itself—“eine prominente Synthese” of former Medicean villas’ architectural styles and typologies⁵⁸—was constructing and projecting. Painted landscape and real landscape were the recipients and the metaphors of the gaze of Ferdinando de’Medici, whose presence was materialized by a bust set above the principal loggia, dominating the stupendous panorama.⁵⁹

Toward an Archaeology of the Gaze

The need to consider garden images in relation to space and movement thus calls for a reconsideration of our methodological tools. In his book *Representing Place: Landscape Painting and Maps*, the philosopher Edward Casey suggested an approach that would be “concerned less with how representation works . . . or with its cultural content or historical position or political purport . . . than with how the representation of landscape places affects us, the viewers—affects us not socially or politically as such but experientially . . . it is not just a matter of ‘eye and mind’ (as Merleau-Ponty put it) but of the eye—and hand and foot and back and neck, each of these in actual as well as virtual forms of realization.”⁶⁰

Some historians dealing with prints or easel paintings have already considered this important aspect of bodily motion in their analysis of garden imagery. Dianne Harris noted that the physical experience of the viewer was central to the understanding of Marc’Antonio dal Re’s printed views of Lombard villas: “The theatrical quality of the panoramas in the 1726 edition . . . is enhanced by the drama of unfolding the prints for viewing. Turning the large pages requires extended arm motions and even stepping back and forth or sideways to unfold pages.”⁶¹ These observations are even more important for historians dealing with fresco paintings,

which are bound to the architecture and, like architecture, need to be apprehended spatially.

The following discussion will stress the importance of this phenomenological reception of garden views and will unravel the significance of their location in Renaissance villas. I will demonstrate that garden views need not be considered separate from the garden, but (like statues, fountains, and belvederes) should be considered part of the garden itself. Furthermore, I will argue that representations of gardens were necessary to impress upon visitors a particular visual knowledge of these garden spaces. I will, therefore, regard the garden views as symptoms of a “way of seeing” a garden, as images that enable us to put into practice an “archaeology of the gaze.” I use the first expression in the sense given to it by Erwin Panofsky, John Berger, and Denis Cosgrove, who wrote that “landscape first emerged as a term, an idea, or better still, *a way of seeing* the external world, in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.”⁶² The second expression derives from the hypothesis that the conventions by which historical images were constructed convey a certain vision of space that is by definition different from ours, and that an understanding of these images varies over time depending on the historical system of cultural references to which the viewing subject belongs.⁶³ In his book *Geography of the Gaze: Urban and Rural Vision in Early Modern Europe*, Renzo Dubbini argued that “the process of constructing images—whether of natural or artificial environments—interests us as a vision of the world related to the specificity of place; . . . they are attempts to analyze the structure of the historical space of existence and represent its true aspects.”⁶⁴ Looking at garden views, therefore, not only in the Italian Renaissance but in all times and periods, offers a way of understanding how gardens were meant to be experienced and perceived.⁶⁵

Space and Place at the Villa d’Este at Tivoli

The vision of and movements in gardens and villas were closely related during the Renaissance.⁶⁶ What a visitor learned inside the villa determined his understanding of the garden, and vice versa. Most descriptions of Renaissance gardens started or

ended with a discussion of the pictorial or sculptural decoration in the villa, which was either the first or the last stage of the journey through the site. This is particularly clear with respect to the Villa d’Este at Tivoli built for Cardinal Ippolito II d’Este between 1550 and 1572.⁶⁷

The garden at Tivoli was built around two main axes. The first axis was, as David Coffin has shown, that of Hercules. It leads from the villa’s main entrance at the lower level of the garden to the two main reception rooms: the salone (or Room of the Fountain) and the Room of Hercules. The presence of different statues of Hercules along the main axis stands as a metaphor of Hercules’s journey and many deeds. The Fountain of the Dragon, for example, symbolizes one of the deeds of Hercules stealing the golden apples from the Garden of the Hesperides, an appropriate image for the Villa d’Este garden. The other statues that were placed along the main axis are (from bottom to top): Hercules and the Hydra of Lerna, Hercules resting on the spoils of his labors, and Hercules adored as a god for his attainment of immortality.

The second axis conveys a geographical theme and employs water features to make a symbolic connection between Tivoli and Rome. Located in the northeastern section of the garden, the monumental Fountain of Tivoli recalls the water that flows from the mountains to the northeast of Tivoli to form the Aniene River. In the southwestern section of the garden, in the direction of Rome, the Fountain of Rome (the so-called *Rometta*) is shaped like a model of the ancient city, with the Tiber River, Tiberine Island, and the gates and main temples of Rome. Linking these two fountains is the Avenue of the Hundred Fountains, which represents the Aniene River as it runs through the Tiburtine territory and terminates in the Tiber River. The little boats at the top of the fountain identify the channel as a river and evoke the navigability of the ancient Aniene River according to Pliny the Elder and Strabo. Like several other Renaissance gardens in Italy, such as the gardens at Castello or Pratolino, the garden at the Villa d’Este acted as a geographical model; it provided a monumental translation with fountains and sculptures of the entire region of Tivoli and its water system.⁶⁸ When moving through the garden, visitors were transported through wide

spaces and times, and were asked to take part, as on a theater stage, in a narrative in which they implicitly became actors: “Their own motion through the garden, whatever their intentions during their visit, paralleled Hercules’s ancient choice between virtue and vice, which anticipated the cardinal’s.”⁶⁹

The territorial and mythical symbolism of the gardens—what Michel Conan has called a “landscape metaphor”—was also translated in the main room of the villa, the so-called *salone* (fig. 8.7).⁷⁰ Its walls were painted between 1565 and 1568 by Girolamo Muziano and his workshop; they feature a fictive colonnade opening onto landscapes and vistas, among them views of the main fountains of the garden, which gives the impression that the entire room was an open *loggia* dominating the surrounding landscape.

The axis of Hercules ends inside the villa in the central ceiling panels of the *salone* and the adjacent Room of Hercules. Hercules is welcomed to the

feast of the gods in the *salone*, and to the council of the gods in the Room of Hercules. The visitor’s journey through the gardens to the interior of the villa is, therefore, a reenactment of Hercules’s journey—of his choice between virtue and vice at the crossroads, and eventually of his apotheosis and accession to immortality. In the fresco of Hercules at the Feast of the Gods, the hero is strategically placed in the composition as if, coming from the real space of the garden, he had just entered the pictorial space of the Olympian triclinium (fig. 8.8). His head is turned in a calculated movement toward the door leading to the gardens, in direct relation to the line of sight of a visitor entering the room and looking up toward the fresco.

Let us now look at the Tivoli-Rome axis. On the northeastern wall of the *salone*, the *fontanina*, like the Fountain of Tivoli in the garden, evokes the local topography by showing the Temple of the Sibyl overlooking the famous cascade on the Aniene River

FIGURE 8.7.
Salone in the
Villa d’Este,
Tivoli.

Photograph
by the author.





FIGURE 8.8. Federico Zuccaro, *Hercules at the Feast of the Gods*, 1565–68, fresco in the salone of the Villa d'Este, Tivoli.

Photograph by the author.

(fig. 8.9). The location of this rustic fountain in the room echoes that of the real temple and cascade at the northeastern end of Tivoli. On the opposite wall, the large view of the Villa d'Este was painted from the north looking to the southwest, precisely in the direction of Rome (fig. 8.1). So, just as it does in the garden, the Aniene River flows metaphorically from one end of the room, passes through the rustic fountain on the northeastern wall, and reappears at the other end of the room in the fresco of the Villa d'Este. Evidence for this reading can be found in the shape of the fountain basin itself—it is a barge that stands on two big fish symbolizing the Aniene River, which figuratively floods the salone (fig. 8.9). It directly refers to the barges of the same shape that ornament the upper channel of the Avenue of the Hundred Fountains in the gardens. The salone should, therefore, be seen as a painted transposition to the walls of the room of the garden's topographical layout, its geographical orientation, and its iconographic program.

The position of the different views of the garden's fountains on the salone walls and the perspective adopted by the artists to depict them provide further clues for understanding the specific nature of the decoration. For example, the Fountain of Tivoli is represented in the eastern corner of the salone, just as the real fountain stands in the eastern corner of the garden. On the opposite wall, in the northern corner of the salone, the painter depicted the Fountain of the Organ, which stands in the northern section of the garden. Muziano also represented the two major bridges on the Aniene River (i.e., the Ponte Lucano and the Ponte Cornuto), as well as the ancient villas of Tibur that Pirro Ligorio studied in *Libro delle antiche ville tiburtine* before working as the architect of the Villa d'Este. The villa of Manlio Vopisco, the villa of Horace, the Temple of the Sibyl (which Ligorio associated with the Villa Gelliana), and the villa of Augustus were all represented on the walls of the salone according to their geographical location in the territory.⁷¹



FIGURE 8.9.
Fontanina in the
salone of the Villa
d'Este, Tivoli.
Photograph
by the author.

The topography of two different places has, therefore, been translated into the space of the room by a process of homothetic imitation, i.e., an enlargement or diminution of scale that preserves the basic layout. The territory, with its ancient villas, and the garden—which is itself a geographical model of the territory—are harmoniously united by the fact that all their spaces (both real and virtual) share the same geographical orientation. A complex play of placement and displacement situates the spectator in both a real and virtual realm, and profoundly “intensifies” his apprehension and

comprehension of the locus, Tivoli, as an ancient and actual place.⁷² This extremely elaborate spatial disposition corresponded to a conscious desire during the Renaissance not only to represent geographical space but to reproduce a “feeling” of its presence. As Edward Casey noted, landscape is what Jean-Paul Sartre has called a “detotalized totality,” something that while being apprehended as a whole cannot be reduced to the sum of its parts. Landscape is, therefore, always partially “invisible” or limited to its literal visibility. It surrounds the spectator and cannot be visually grasped in its totality.⁷³

When considered in this light, it is not surprising that most Renaissance artists chose to paint landscape scenes that were panoramic in nature, piecing together “fragments” of a setting in order to create a condensed representation that simulated the totalizing experience of being in the landscape.⁷⁴ Thus, at both Tivoli and Artimino, circumambulation is the bodily counterpart to the circumambience of the perceived landscape. Renaissance artists would ultimately respond to this perceptual limitation by translating geographical knowledge not only to the two-dimensional surface of a painting or print but to the three-dimensional spaces, such as geographical rooms, geographical gardens, and (later) georamas, that Jean-Marc Besse has called “les espaces de l’imagination géographique.”⁷⁵

Aside from the salone of the Villa d’Este at Tivoli, the most exemplary and famous of these realizations can be found in the Gallery of Maps in the Vatican. The architectonic space of the gallery, which was painted around 1580 for Pope Gregory XIII, is a metaphor for the Italian peninsula. The maps—which are positioned on each wall according to their geographical location (either toward the Adriatic Sea or the Mediterranean)—are themselves a metaphor for the all-powerful gaze of the pope.⁷⁶ Walking through the gallery, the visitor is transported across vast geographic spaces; the historical vignettes inserted into the maps and the religious episodes depicted on the vault, moreover, allow him to travel through time and to witness the most salient episodes of early Christian history. The Ptolemaic notion that “Geography is the eye of History” found in the gallery its most complete illustration during the Renaissance.⁷⁷

In the salone of the Villa d'Este (as in the Gallery of Maps), the notions of place and time have been transformed by art, as if the ancient history of the place were continuously reenacting itself within the actuality of the present. In addition to the views of the garden and the landscape with its ancient villas, the paintings of the salone show the four seasons, the four elements, and the gods of the Roman pantheon. It is as if the implicit passage between the real and the theoretical panorama implied not only the passage from a *sujet regardant* to a *sujet connaissant*, but also the passage from an instantaneous and objective vision to a historical, symbolic, or mythological knowledge of the landscape and its significant sites.

Moving and Looking in the Villa and the Garden

The conflation of space and time in topographical views is especially clear if one examines in its context a view of the Fountain of Tivoli under construction in the first Tiburtine room at the Villa d'Este at Tivoli. The view was described in a recent guide book as “a kind a photograph of the fountain under construction” (fig. 8.10).⁷⁸ The two Tiburtine rooms, located logically to the east of the salone in the direction of Tivoli, are dedicated to the mythological foundation and ancient history of the city. The view only reveals its full significance when the viewer is confronted with the historical episodes represented in the room. At the center of the vault, the battle of the brothers Tiburtus and Catillus against the Latins after their disembarkation in Italy is accompanied by two scenes evoking the building of the ancient town of Tibur and two scenes pertaining to its foundation (fig. 8.11).⁷⁹ The view of the fountain under construction immediately echoes the two frescoes of the ancient city shown as a building site, and therefore equates the construction of the garden and the Fountain of Tivoli with the refoundation and rebirth of the ancient city. The explicit visual and metonymical parallel between the images and their subjects within the space of the room gives to the apparently objective and “innocent” view of the garden’s fountain a precise meaning and a strong historical dimension.

Furthermore, the view of the fountain under construction was strategically placed close to the



FIGURE 8.10. View of the Fountain of Tivoli, ca. 1569, fresco in the first Tiburtine room of the Villa d'Este, Tivoli. The real fountain is visible from the adjacent window.

Photograph by the author.



FIGURE 8.11. The construction of Tibur, ca. 1569, fresco in the first Tiburtine room of the Villa d'Este, Tivoli.

Photograph by the author.



only window in the room, from which the real fountain in the garden is visible. By placing the painted image in this location, the artist appropriated the actual view onto the fountain to the historical order of the narrative that is at work in the frescoes. The play between inside and outside blurs the distinctions between vision and representation and between representation and historical imagination. The understanding of this complex intensification of the notion of place is only possible through movement, specifically the movement of the gaze across the walls, through the window, and into the garden.

That this system of visual echoes was not accidental is proven by the repetition of similar visual and intellectual games in earlier, contemporary, and probably later villas. As early as the fourteenth century, such plays between painted representations and actual landscapes were common. At the Torre dell'Aquila at Trento in northern Italy, where one of the earliest calendar cycles was painted around 1400, a painter represented the Castello del Buonconsiglio as it could be seen in reality through the window of the tower.⁸⁰ Another such visual game is present in the Sala delle Prospettive painted by Baldassare Peruzzi around 1516 at the Villa Farnesina in Rome. It has already been noted by other scholars that the painted scenes—presented as views through the columns of fictive loggias at either end of the hall—corresponded to the actual surroundings of the villa: a representation of the city on the eastern side of the hall, and a representation of the then-rural landscape of Trastevere on the western side.⁸¹ What is generally unnoticed is the presence of a view of the Villa Farnesina between the fictive columns. It shows the Porta Settimiana, with a glimpse of the villa beyond, outside of the city gate from a position to the southwest of the villa, on the Via Settimiana (fig. 8.12). Interestingly, the painter chose to place this fresco in the southwestern side of the room, next



FIGURE 8.12. View of the Porta Settimiana and the Villa Farnesina between the fictive columns, ca. 1516, fresco in the Sala delle Prospettive of the Villa Farnesina, Rome. The Porta Settimiana would have been visible through the window to the right of the fresco.

Photographs by the author.



FIGURE 8.13. View of the summer garden under construction, ca. 1562–65, fresco in the Room of the Farnese Deeds of the Palazzo Farnese, Caprarola. The painting reproduces the view from the window. Photograph by the author.

to a window from which the original viewpoint was visible. Although the Accademia dei Lincei currently obstructs the view of the gate, no building was there in the early sixteenth century. Thus, the spectator was afforded a reflective gaze: the view from the window was literally mirrored, or rather *mise en abîme*, in the painted view. Only a slight movement of the head or eyes was necessary in order to see both views.

In the Room of the Farnese Deeds at the Palazzo Farnese at Caprarola, only the attentive visitor can spot the view painted in a *tondo* in the embrasure of one of the windows (fig. 8.13). It represents the summer garden under construction, as it would have appeared through the window. The view is the earliest representation of the garden, probably showing it as it looked around 1561.⁸² The view is located immediately to the left of the window, as if to indicate where the visitor should direct his gaze.

One final and remarkable image takes us back to the Villa d'Este at Tivoli. In a small room situated

next to the main room of the *primo piano*, a view was painted above a window that represented exactly the portion of landscape that could be seen through it (fig. 8.14). The Monti Corniculani are clearly recognizable, as they frame the famous Mount Soratte in the distance, with the sanctuary of Santa Maria di Quintiliolo also visible. More than four centuries later, the landscape has barely changed. To the view that he had before his eyes, the painter added only a hunter and two pilgrims walking toward the sanctuary.⁸³

This example illustrates particularly well the concept of landscape as a representation and as a way of seeing in the Renaissance. The view from the window is the object of a double representation: first, a given portion of the landscape is framed by the architecture itself; and second, the mirrored image of the landscape is carefully placed above the window so that a slight shift of the gaze, this time vertically rather than laterally, enables the viewer



FIGURE 8.14. View of the Monti Corniculani, Mount Soratte, and Santa Maria di Quintiliolo, fresco in the Villa d'Este, Tivoli. The painted landscape mirrors the view from the window (at right).

Photographs by the author.

to compare the views and verify their similarities. The operation requires the transformation of land into landscape and of landscape into art.⁸⁴ But the apprehension of the two landscapes as identical depends on the position of the spectator in front of the window. Compared to our previous examples, this landscape is highly unremarkable. In order to perceive the similarity between the painted landscape and the view from the window, the visitor must pause at a very precise spot. He must detach himself from the architectural space of the room and enter the pictorial space of the view. From this position, he can perceive the continuity between the main axis of the garden and the topography of the surrounding landscape, as the axis of Hercules points directly toward Mount Soratte. If the spectator were to move, the two landscapes would no longer appear identical, since their sameness is fully established only when the spectator is facing the window. Thus, the image simultaneously affirms and questions the possibility of the landscape's existence outside of its Albertian frame—an existence imposed by man's vision. The image helps to create a mental image of the villa's space and landscape that is governed by a system of orthogonal axes, simultaneously visual and symbolic.

That the landscapes around the villa and the garden itself, as "representations," are conceived as paintings, is not a new development for garden

historians. In the words of Augustin Berque, a garden gives the natural world in which it appears "a new dimension characteristic of a painting."⁸⁵ Reading the way the Villa d'Este was described by contemporary visitors makes this statement abundantly clear. Nicolas Audebert conceived his itinerary of the garden in terms of an alternation of movements and pauses for "viewing," understood as both an act of seeing and understanding. Like the position of the visitor in the small room described above, his movement in the garden was controlled by set "views." His steps and gazes were channeled through the allées, which led to objects that merited his consideration and demanded his static attention: a statue, a fountain, a belvedere, or a window that was the architectonic equivalent of the painted view. The allées, which were framed by parallel rows of trees, hedges, or architecture, served as both paths for walking and as perspectival lines (fig. 8.15).⁸⁶

At Tivoli and Caprarola, many allées lead to large framed openings or belvederes that offer beautiful panoramas of the Roman countryside. The views onto the landscape are fully associated with paintings, recalling Pliny the Younger's remark on the painterly quality of the landscape seen from his Tuscan villa (fig. 8.16).⁸⁷ Evidence of the particularly strong conflation of painted and real views in Renaissance gardens is found in the many

FIGURE 8.15.
An allée leading to a framed view in the
garden of the Palazzo Farnese, Caprarola.

Photograph by the author.



celebratory descriptions of the views from villas by Renaissance writers, as well as by small mistakes made by garden historians themselves.⁸⁸ For example, in her recent discussion on Italian Renaissance gardens, Malgorzata Szafranska commented on the views described by Vasari from the belvedere of the gardens at Castello as “a wide, painted panorama.”⁸⁹ But in his “Life of Tribolo,” Vasari was, in fact, describing the real view from the loggia, which would have included the ducal villas of Poggio a Caiano, Florence, Prato, and Siena. The confusion possibly lies in the fact that if the first three sites were indeed visible from the loggia, then a view of Siena would be impossible. For Claudia Lazzaro, this could only mean that Vasari, like Utens in his paintings, idealized his description of the view: “The view from the loggia, we realize, is not just a literal one; and the villa not just a grand palace with a beautiful garden, but a sign of the duke’s rule over his dominion of Tuscany.”⁹⁰

This organization of space was also applied a century later in the gardens of Versailles, which were composed as a “constellation of specially arranged views.”⁹¹ Louis XIV himself devised different itineraries for visits to the gardens. These itineraries (*La manière de montrer les jardins de Versailles*) are punctuated by comments that encourage the visitor to stop, pause, and consider the views. The principal view, which was shown to the visitor on three occasions during his visit, was of the main axis of the garden. Like the axis of Hercules in the gardens at Tivoli, this grand allée was not intended for circulation, but instead played a fundamental role in the visual and iconographical composition of the garden. While sixteenth-century allées could end at a window or door that opened onto the surrounding countryside, seventeenth-century allées sometimes ended with painted views, or “perspectives,” that extended the natural perspective created by the allées. In general, these views were mural paintings, usually landscapes, but, as this type of garden



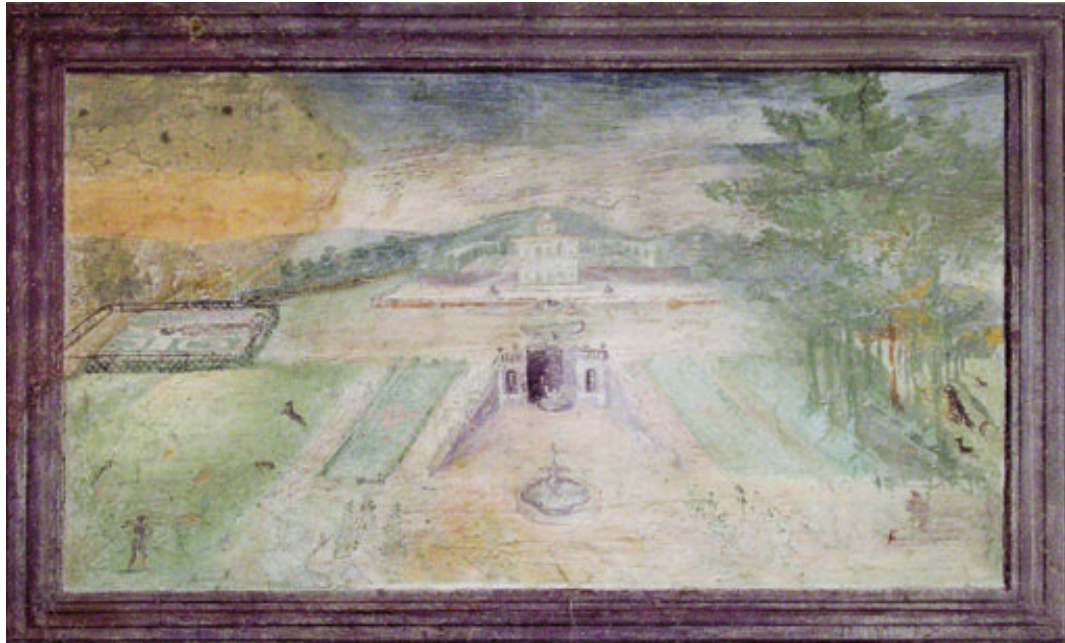
FIGURE 8.16.
Sunset framed by one of the garden
windows at the Villa d’Este, Tivoli.

Photograph by the author.

FIGURE 8.17.

View of a project for the upper gardens at the Palazzo Farnese, 1586, fresco in the loggia of the palazzina at the Villa Farnese, Caprarola.

Photograph by the author.



decoration became increasing popular, the murals began to be supplanted by canvases stretched on the wall, “so that these beautiful prospects could be removed from the injurious effects of weather whenever one wished.”⁹²

The tradition of combining real and painted views in the garden may derive from the ancient Roman concept of *topiaria opera*—the art of representing place—that applied equally to gardens, painted landscapes, and theater sets, and whose primary aim was to create pictorial effects.⁹³ If the Italian Renaissance garden can be understood as a juxtaposition of views (*varietates topiorum*), like the *ars topiaria* of ancient Roman art, then the relationship between vision and representation, between the garden and its painted image, can provide a fruitful ground for research.⁹⁴

For example, in an unpublished mid-sixteenth-century treatise on agriculture, Girolamo Fiorenzuola recommended that small allées radiating out from the wide principal allée terminate in painted or sculpted depictions on the walls enclosing the garden.⁹⁵ And already at the beginning of the sixteenth century, Baldassare Peruzzi had painted a fresco with the vision of Saint Bernard of Clairvaux

set in a landscape scene on the wall of the garden of Sant’ Andrea al Quirinale. This tradition of painting landscape frescoes on garden walls continued in the seventeenth century in the Jesuit garden of San Vitale.⁹⁶ Giovanni Battista Armenini, writing at the end of the sixteenth century in his *De’ veri precetti della pittura* (1586), summed up the subjects appropriate for outdoor decoration as “games of shepherds, of nymphs . . . fauns, satyrs, wood sprites, centaurs, sea monsters, along with other aquatic and wild things”—all subjects related to landscape.⁹⁷ The garden and frescoed views were, thus, bound together in a unique vision of the landscape as a sacred or pastoral site.

Painted garden views were carefully placed in the palazzina of the upper gardens behind the Palazzo Farnese at Caprarola to highlight the main axis of the garden and to control the gaze of the viewer along the main sight lines. Only one of these views has been identified. It shows the project or state of the garden as it was conceived by Giacomo del Duca around 1584 (fig. 8.17).⁹⁸ The view is situated above a door in the lower loggia of the palazzina, on the southern side, from which one had a commanding view of the entire garden as it sloped down in a sequence

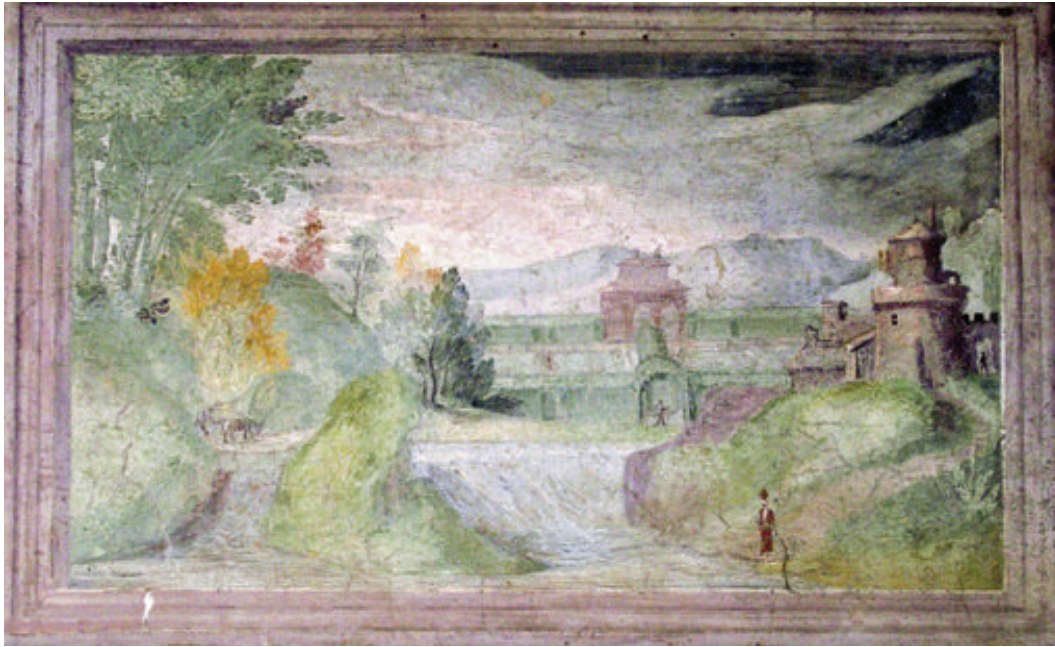


FIGURE 8.18. View of a project for the upper gardens showing the uppermost terrace behind the palazzina, 1586, loggia of the palazzina at the Palazzo Farnese, Caprarola.

Photograph by the author.

of terraces and fountains. Above the opposite door, thus mirroring the first view, is another view of the garden, which shows the palazzina's hillside facade (*a monte*) as it was originally projected, plus the open landscape and hill above the palazzina (fig. 8.18). The one-story elevation of the building is clearly recognizable, including the three arcades of the loggia and the belvedere. These features, as well as the pergolas on the upper terrace, are visible in both views. The group of houses on the right, which are gathered around what looks like a medieval tower, likely includes the caretaker's house and the Porta di San Rocco (also known as the Porta del Giglio), whose presence and function as an entrance gate to the park are documented.⁹⁹ Just as he might have had at Tivoli, the visitor, after reaching the loggia from the garden, could have a complete image of his own ascent and a view of the site as it would appear once it was completed (fig. 8.19). The site—which was only progressively and sequentially revealed to the viewer during this climb—now became entirely visible in both its present and future aspects.

Renaissance villas that included depictions of their gardens and landscapes gave access to a superior sort of knowledge—a knowledge of the villa



FIGURE 8.19. View from the loggia of the palazzina at the Palazzo Farnese, Caprarola.

Photograph by the author.

as a whole, not only of its garden, fountains, and surrounding territory, but also of its past history, its subsequent glory and immortality, and its deeper philosophical meaning. The painted decoration of a villa thus becomes, like the garden, a visual and symbolic synthesis of the place or locus; it provides the viewer with a mnemonic tool to situate himself both physically and virtually within the actual and represented space. In this “theater of memory,” the eye and gaze of the visitor—a “window of the soul” according to Leonardo da Vinci—are the only media by which the story told in the garden can once again come alive.¹⁰⁰

Conclusion and Perspectives

What new perspectives can this approach offer to the study of Italian gardens? Although the traditional use of garden views as documents will remain crucial for reconstructing historical gardens, historians need to exercise caution. Renaissance topographical images had the power to make spaces that were often invented or profoundly manipulated appear to be truthful representations or striking lifelike imitations of nature. But if these images are understood as rhetorical constructions—as propagandistic, didactic, and mnemonic tools—then they can yield a wealth of information on how the spaces and landscapes of a villa were perceived and understood.

The history of Italian gardens and landscapes will continue to benefit from the social and political approach in the wake of the seminal studies done by Reinhard Bentsmann and Michael Müller and later by James Ackerman.¹⁰¹ Today, this approach, together with the development of regional studies of gardens, is the most important avenue of research. Another approach, inspired by a phenomenology of perception, considers how space itself was constructed and experienced.¹⁰² While garden historians have started to address these important questions—for example, in the *Dumbarton Oaks* symposium “Landscape Design and Experience of Motion” organized by Michel Conan—I have shown that a similar direction could be taken based on an analysis of images. Jean-Marc Besse, Denis Cosgrove, and Renzo Dubbini have attempted to do this in recent years by developing a new epistemology of historical

geography.¹⁰³ The methodology used by historians of Roman art is also essential and can provide the historian of the Renaissance with new tools to understand landscape representations. Pierre Grimal, Wilhelmina Jashemski, Bettina Bergmann, and Jás Elsner examine painted decorations to understand the architectural and garden spaces in a way that historians of the Renaissance do not.¹⁰⁴ This is puzzling if we consider that most Renaissance villas were based on an understanding of the principles found in ancient writings by Pliny, Vitruvius, and others. The *Sala delle Prospettive* at the Villa Farnesina and the *salone* at the Villa d’Este, for example, are, in essence, reconstructions of ancient Roman dining rooms.¹⁰⁵

I have used the word “symptoms” to designate views of gardens. This clearly indicates a shift from the study of the garden as a material object to the study of the garden as a social and political space, and as a space of experience. To engage in such an approach is to literally create new “immaterial objects” of study, such as a view from a window or a visual axis—that is, objects that are created by man but do not belong to the category of fine arts. Marcello Fagiolo’s recent essay, which deals with the construction of urban-scale visual axes through the topographical arrangement of villas and palaces in Rome (the so-called axes of historical memory), demonstrated the importance of this historically informed perception of space in the economy of the Renaissance villa.¹⁰⁶ In this paper, I have shown how, in some villas of Renaissance Italy, vision and representation were purposefully blurred—rather than confounded—in order to create a third level of perception and understanding that was liberated from the constraints of time and space. I would like to call this phenomenon a “third nature” of perception and historical imagination, or what Michel Conan has termed intersubjectivity: “Motion through a landscape metaphor engages visitors into a hermeneutical activity that reactivates the meaning of a cultural tradition at the same time that it enables them to bring new meaning to their lives. In that respect, intersubjectivity, as mediated by the experience of motion through a landscape metaphor, contributes to the development of the individual and the cultural community to which the individual belongs.”¹⁰⁷

Finally, from a theoretical point of view, the approach developed in this paper calls into question the notion of pure landscape, which is still advocated by art historians dealing with sixteenth- and seventeenth-century landscape painting and *vedute*. Several authors have noted that views of landscapes and gardens in sixteenth-century Italian villas were among “the first representations of pure landscape.”¹⁰⁸ Yet the notion of pure landscape in the historiography of art history is, as W. J. T. Mitchell has shown, comparable to “a kind of quest-romance in which pure landscape is the grail to be obtained.”¹⁰⁹ At most, it can be justified in purely formal terms. Thus, instead of talking about a rise

of pure landscape, I suggest we talk about a process by which landscape becomes autonomous as a cultural, rather than a natural, discourse. Autonomy is marked within the image by the replacement of figures by a memorial immanence of the landscape, which does not unfold a narrative as a linear sequence, but contains, *en puissance*, its memory: this is, in short, the translation of the subjective vision of the artist or the patron onto the landscape that surrounds him, which, in turn, suggests to the viewer a specific horizon of perception and comprehension of the place. Pure landscape cannot exist without pure vision, which exists, precisely, only in theory.

Notes

1 See Alessandro Tagliolini, *Storia del giardino italiano: Gli artisti, l'invenzione, le forme, dall'antichità al XIX secolo* (Florence: La Casa Usher, 1988); and David R. Coffin, *Gardens and Gardening in Papal Rome* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1991).

2 Dianne Harris notes that “past works of art actually work at prefiguring the shape of their subsequent histories,” and that “representational practices encoded in works of art continue to be encoded in their commentaries.” See Dianne Harris, “Landscape and Representation: The Printed View and Marc’Antonio dal Re’s *Ville di Delizie*,” in *Villas and Gardens in Early Modern Italy and France*, eds. Mirka Beneš and Dianne Harris (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 179.

3 On the question of “truthfulness” in topographical representation during the Renaissance, see Lucia Nuti, “The Perspective Plan in the Sixteenth Century: The Invention of a Representational Language,” *The Art Bulletin* 76 (1994): 107 (for the quotations).

4 Claudia Swan, “*Ad vivum, naer het leven*, From the Life: Defining a Mode of Representation,” *Word and Image* 11 (1995): 353–72.

5 Marcello Fagiolo and Maria Adriana Giusti, eds., *Lo specchio del paradiso: L'immagine del giardino dall'antico al Novecento* (Cinisello Balsamo [Milan]: Silvana, 1996).

6 Linda Cabe Halpern, “The Use of Paintings in Garden History,” in *Garden History: Issues, Approaches, Methods*, ed. John Dixon Hunt (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1992), 183–84.

7 John Harris, *The Artist and the Country House: A History of Country House and Garden View Painting in Britain, 1540–1870* (London: Sotheby Parke-Bernet, 1979); Françoise Boudon, “Images de jardins au XVIème siècle: Les plus excellents bastiments de France,” in *Histoire des jardins de la Renaissance à nos jours*, eds. Monique Mosser and Georges Teyssot (Paris: Flammarion, 1991); Maurizio Gargano, “Villas, jardins et fontaines de Rome: Les gravures de Giovanni Battista Falda,” in *Histoire des jardins: De la Renaissance à nos jours*, eds. Monique Mosser and Georges Teyssot, 162–64 (Paris: Flammarion, 1991); Cristina Acidini Luchinat, “Alle origini del ‘ritratto di giardino’,” in *Giardini regali: Fascino e immagini del verde nelle grandi dinastie: Dai Medici agli Asburgo*, ed. Monica Amari, 159–64 (Milan: Electa, 1998); Monique Mosser, “Hortésie cartographique: De l’écriture classique des parcs à la française à la calligraphie poétique des jardins anglo-chinois,” in *Le paysage des cartes: Genèse d’une codification; Actes de la 3^e journée d’études du Musée des Plans-Reliefs, Paris, Hôtel des Invalides, 19 novembre 1998*, ed. Catherine Bousquet-Bressolier, 99–119 (Paris: Le Musée, 1999); Hervé Brunon, “De l’image à l’imaginaire: Notes sur la figuration du jardin

sous le règne de Louis XIV,” *XVIIe siècle* 209 (2000): 671–86; Roy C. Strong, *The Artist and the Garden* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000); Harris, “Landscape and Representation”; Claudia Lazzaro, “Italy is a Garden: The Idea of Italy and the Italian Garden Tradition,” in *Villas and Gardens in Early Modern Italy and France*, eds. Mirka Beneš and Dianne Harris (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 56–60; Elizabeth S. Eustis, “The Garden Print as Propaganda, 1573–1683,” in *European Pleasure Gardens: Rare Books and Prints of Historic Landscape Design from the Elizabeth K. Reilly Collection*, ed. Elizabeth S. Eustis, 41–51 (Bronx, N.Y.: New York Botanical Garden, 2003); Claudia Lazzaro, “Representing the Social and Cultural Experience of Italian Gardens in Prints,” in *The Changing Garden: Four Centuries of European and American Art*, ed. Betsy G. Fryberger, 29–39 (Berkeley, Calif.: Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Center for Visual Arts at Stanford University, 2003); and Dianne Harris, *The Nature of Authority: Villa Culture, Landscape, and Representation in Eighteenth-Century Lombardy* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003). For a philosophical and theoretical consideration of the garden and its representation, see also Massimo Venturi Ferriolo, “L’art dei giardini tra pittura e realtà,” in *Il giardino dipinto nella pittura lombarda dal Seicento all’Ottocento*, ed. Paolo Biscottini, 13–16 (Milan: Skira, 1995); and John Dixon Hunt, *Greater Perfections: The Practice of Garden Theory* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), 143–79.

8 According to Mirka Beneš, they should be considered “not only as documents of landscapes and gardens or as models for the picturelike construction of landscape designs, but with a structural focus, taking into account all the relevant categories of reference, or the framework of meanings in which a society addressed its concerns with landscape.” Mirka Beneš, “Recent Developments and Perspectives in the Historiography of Italian Gardens,” in *Perspectives on Garden Histories*, ed. Michel Conan (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1999), 61–62. See also Mirka Beneš, “Italian and French Gardens: A Century of Historical Study (1900–2000),” in *Villas and Gardens in Early Modern Italy and France*, eds. Mirka Beneš and Dianne Harris, 1–16 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

9 Erwin Panofsky, *Meaning in the Visual Arts* (1957; translated by Bernard and Marthe Teyssèdre as *L’oeuvre d’art et ses significations: Essais sur les “arts visuels,”* Paris: Gallimard, 1969), 35–38; Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1972), 6–8; Jacques Le Goff, “Documento/monumento,” in *Enciclopedia* (Turin: G. Einaudi, 1977–), 5:38–48; and Jacques Le Goff, *Storia e memoria* (Turin: G. Einaudi, 1982), 443–55. For examples of this methodology applied to the analysis of garden images and landscape historiography, see Brunon, “De l’image à l’imaginaire”; and Hervé Brunon, “Documents ou monuments? Les textes littéraires dans la panoplie méthodologique des histoires du paysage,” in *Le paysage dans la littérature italienne: De Dante à nos jours*,

ed. Giuseppe Sangirardi, 17–28 (Dijon: Éditions Universitaires de Dijon, 2006).

10 Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge*, 6–8.

11 “Contre la gallerie est une grande Sale ornée de belles peintures, & entre aultres a un bout d’icelle est le pourtraict et desseing du Palais, Jardin, et Fontaines de Tyvolvy, non comme il est, mais comme il seroit estant achevé . . .” Ronald Lightbown, “Nicolas Audebert and the Villa d’Este,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 27 (1964): 171.

12 “Mais il fault remarquer que la longueur se doit prendre depuis le palais jusques a la porte du Jardin respondante en la rue, qui est deux foys plus que la largeur: combien que par le pourtraict il semble au contraire; ce qui provient de la perspective qui représente les choses toutes raccourcyes quand elles nous sont directement opposées, et fort esloignées de nostre veue . . .” *Ibid.*, 190; and Claudia Lazzaro, *The Italian Renaissance Garden: From the Conventions of Planting, Design, and Ornament to the Grand Gardens of Sixteenth-Century Central Italy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 219.

13 James Turner, “Landscape and the ‘Art Prospective’ in England, 1584–1660,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 42 (1979): 290–93.

14 Claudia Lazzaro, “The Villa Lante at Bagnaia” (PhD diss., Princeton University, 1974), 1:37–40; and David R. Coffin, “Some Aspects of the Villa Lante at Bagnaia,” in *Arte in Europa: Scritti di storia dell’arte in onore di Edoardo Arslan*, 569–75 (Milan: Tipografia Artipo, 1966).

15 The inventory is published in Sabine Frommel, ed., *Villa Lante a Bagnaia* (Milan: Electa, 2005), 360–62.

16 For the date of the fresco, see Andrea Alessi, “La decorazione pittorica della Palazzina Gambarà a Bagnaia,” *Biblioteca e società* 21, no. 1–2 (2002): 22–24. Marcello Fagiolo suggested a later date of 1580, after the visit of Carlo Borromeo, in *Vignola: L’architettura dei principi* (Rome: Gangemi, 2007), 211. For a summary of the chronology of the works in the garden, see Christoph Luitpold Frommel, “Villa Lante e Tommaso Ghinucci,” in *Villa Lante a Bagnaia*, ed. Sabine Frommel (Milan: Electa, 2005), 92–93.

17 See Suzanne B. Butters, “Ferdinand et le jardin du Pincio,” in *La Villa Médicis*, ed. André Chastel, vol. 2, *Études*, eds. Glenn M. Andres et al. (Rome: Académie de France à Rome, École Française de Rome, 1991), 1:50–52 and 2:363–64; and David R. Coffin, “The Self-Image of the Roman Villa during the Renaissance,” *Architettura: Zeitschrift für Geschichte der Baukunst* 28 (1998): 201. On the decoration of the stanzino, see also Eric Darragon, “Le studiolo du Cardinal Ferdinand à la Villa Médicis,” *Revue de l’art* 19 (1973): 63–77; and Philippe Morel, “Le Parnasse astrologique: Les décors peints pour le cardinal Ferdinand de Médicis,” in *La Villa Médicis*, eds. André Chastel and Philippe Morel, vol. 3, *Le Parnasse astrologique*, by Philippe

Morel, 45–88 (Rome: Académie de France à Rome, École Française de Rome, 1991).

18 Suzanne B. Butters, “Ferdinand et le jardin du Pincio,” 364.

19 Ibid., 363.

20 Graham Smith, *The Casino of Pius IV* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1977), 87 and 98–99; and Denis Ribouillault, “Paysage et pouvoir: Les décors topographiques à Rome et dans le Latium au XVIe siècle,” 3 vols. (Doctoral thesis, Université Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne, 2006), 248–50.

21 During the symposium on the Villa Lante at Bagnaia held at Viterbo in April 2004, architectural historians reopened the debate concerning the authorship of the villa. Historians such as Christoph Frommel, Fabiano Tiziano Fagliari Zeni Bucchichio, and Richard Tuttle discarded the name of Vignola in favor of Tommaso Ghinucci, who indeed appears to have been the main actor on the building site. Other historians, such as Bruno Adorni and Marcello Fagiolo (following Claudia Lazzaro and David Coffin’s pioneering suggestions), continue to defend the idea that Vignola was at the origin of the design, although no documentation exists that shows his involvement in the actual construction process. See the respective articles in Frommel, *Villa Lante a Bagnaia*. A nineteenth-century source seems to confirm the hypothesis that Ghinucci had been working after ideas first suggested by Vignola: “Il prelodato Gambara nel 1568 col disegno del celeberrimo Vignola, eseguito sotto l’assistenza del valente fiorentino Francesco Chisiucci [Ghinucci], nobilitò e perfezionò vieppiù sempre la Villa già incominciata e formata dai suoi antecessori . . .” Mattia Natilj, *Cenno storico e compendiosa descrizione della Villa di Bagnaia com’era avanti al 1820* (Rome: Sinimberg, 1864), 7.

22 After the visit of Cardinal Carlo Borromeo in 1580, it seems that no other fountains or buildings were built. On Borromeo’s visit, see Alexander Koller, “Giovan Francesco Gambara (1533–1587): Profilo di un cardinale,” in *Villa Lante a Bagnaia*, ed. Sabine Frommel (Milan: Electa, 2005), 28–29.

23 Andrea Alessi, “La palazzina Gambara: Gli architetti e i pittori,” in *Villa Lante a Bagnaia*, ed. Sabine Frommel (Milan: Electa, 2005), 110–12. The presence of disguised portraits of artists and architects is common in Renaissance villas. For example, Vignola is represented several times in the frescoes of the Palazzo Farnese at Caprarola. Marcello Fagiolo has recently discovered that the four caryatids in the main courtyard of the Villa Giulia in Rome were portraits of the four famous architects of the villa: Michelangelo, Vignola, Giorgio Vasari, and Bartolomeo Ammannati. Fagiolo, *Vignola*, 90–91.

24 Coffin, “Some Aspects of the Villa Lante at Bagnaia,” 572–73. The verses were added later. See also Alessi, “La palazzina Gambara,” 114.

25 Lazzaro, “Villa Lante at Bagnaia,” 47.

26 John Coolidge, “The Villa Giulia: A Study of Central Italian Architecture in the Mid-Sixteenth Century,” *The Art Bulletin* 25 (1943): 224–25.

27 Eustis, “The Garden Print as Propaganda,” 43.

28 “En fin, pour plus facile intelligence & demonstration de tout ce que dessus, Jay bien voulu en faire un petit pourtraict pour représenter ce qui ne se peult autrement comprendre que par la peinture.” Lightbown, “Nicolas Audebert and the Villa d’Este,” 190.

29 “E perchè Vostra Eccellenza la veggia prima con l’imaginativa che co’l senso, cercaro a parte per parte farghila vedere, ma non così bene e per ordine con la penna, come farei co’l disegno. Bench’io spero fra pochi giorni mandarle ancho questo . . .” Bartolomeo Ammannati to Marco Benavides, 2 May 1555, MS 374, vol. II, fol. 91–96, Biblioteca Oliveriana, Pesaro. See Tilman Falk, “Studien zur Topographie und Geschichte der Villa Giulia in Rom,” *Römisches Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* 13 (1971): 171. “Mi ha Vostra Altezza comandato più volte, che io Le mandì un disegno della mia villa di Frascati, che Belvedere si chiama, et per obedirla già ho dato commissione che il disegno si faccia, et si può dire egli essere sotto il torchio delle stampe. Ma perché vorrei più presto al desiderio dell’Altezza Vostra haver satisfatto, ho pensato mentre maestra mano, et con intagli et con colori, et in prospettiva, et in profilo procura di far venire la mia villa in mano di Lei, di farla comparire anco io descritta nel suo cospetto, acciò Vostra Altezza congionendo la fatica dell’intaglio e del penello con quella della penna, meglio si rappresenti le cose di essa à parte à parte nell’imaginativa, et estimandole ne possi far più certo giuditio et io goda di saper quello che vi è bono et quello che vi è di errore, con l’intendere ciò che da Lei verrà approvato, et riprovato, percióche sol quello mi sarà caro, che dalla finezza del Suo giuditio per ben fatto approverassi.” Cesare d’Onofrio, *La Villa Aldobrandini a Frascati* (Rome: Staderini, 1963), 82. On the function of garden views in eighteenth-century Rome, see also David R. Marshall, “Farò la villeggiatura sopra la tela’: Cardinal Patrizi and Adriaen Manglard’s ‘Vedute’ of the Villa Patrizi,” *The Burlington Magazine* 144, no. 1193 (2002): 497–501.

30 David R. Coffin, *The Villa d’Este at Tivoli* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1960), 141.

31 On descriptio and ekphrasis, see the fundamental study of Ernst Robert Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (1948; reprint, trans. Willard R. Trask, Princeton, N.J.: Bollingen Series, 1953), 68–71, 157–58, and 183–202. See also Denis Ribouillault, “Le salone de la villa d’Este à Tivoli: Un théâtre des jardins et du territoire,” *Studiolo: Revue d’histoire de l’art de l’Académie de France à Rome* 3 (2005): 84–85; and Jean-Marc Besse, *Face au monde: Atlas, jardins, géoramas* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 2003), 107.

32 Charles de Secondat Montesquieu, *Voyages* (Paris: Arléa, 2003), 183. Other examples are in Lucia Nuti, “I ‘teatri’ di città e l’Italia del secolo XVII,” in *Cartographiques: Actes du colloque de l’Académie de France à Rome, 19–20 mai*

1995, ed. Marie-Ange Brayer (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1996), 118–21; and Thomas Frangenberg, “Chorographies of Florence: The Use of City Views and City Plans in the Sixteenth Century,” *Imago Mundi* 46 (1994): 41–64.

33 “le quali vedendosi espresse in pittura e potendosi con questo mezzo conservar meglio nella memoria.” Gabriele Paleotti, *Discorso intorno alle imagine sacre e profane* (1582; reprinted in *Trattati d'arte del Cinquecento, fra manierismo e Controriforma*, ed. Paola Barocchi, Bari: G. Laterza, 1960–62), 2:354–56.

34 I have followed the translation published in John F. D'Amico and Kathleen Weil-Garris, “The Renaissance Cardinal’s Ideal Palace: A Chapter from Paolo Cortesi’s *De Cardinalatu*,” *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 35 (1980): 94–97.

35 The salone of the Villa d’Este at Tivoli is called “tricladium” in Uberto (Uberti Folietae) Foglietta, *Tyburinum Hippolyti Estii* (1569), vol. 1 of *Antiche descrizioni della Villa d’Este a Tivoli*, trans. Franco Sciarretta (Tivoli: Tiburis Artistica, 2003), 7.

36 See, for example, Audebert, who speaks about “un Jardin incomparable pour les rares excellences qui y sont, & les fontaines artificielles, qui non seulement sont tres ingenieuses, mais aussy admirables, et peult estre incroyables a plusieurs qui ne les auront veues . . .” Lightbown, “Nicolas Audebert and the Villa d’Este,” 169–70. See also the descriptions of the fountains of the Villa Lante at Bagnaia by Fabio Arditio in 1578 and Michel de Montaigne in 1581 in Frommel, *Villa Lante a Bagnaia*, 347–48.

37 Vitruvius *Ten Books* 9.8, 10.8. See also Isabella Barisi, Marcello Fagiolo, and Maria Luisa Madonna, *Villa d’Este* (Rome: De Luca, 2003), 104–9.

38 D’Amico and Weil-Garris, “The Renaissance Cardinal’s Ideal Palace,” 118n123.

39 Morel, “Le Parnasse astrologique,” 45–88.

40 Acidini Luchinat, “Alle origini del ‘ritratto di giardino,’” 160. On gardens as museums and collections of rarities, see John Dixon Hunt, “Curiosities to Adorn Cabinets and Gardens,” in *The Origins of Museums: The Cabinet of Curiosities in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Europe*, eds. Oliver Impey and Arthur MacGregor, 193–203 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, and New York: Oxford University Press, 1985); and Elisabeth Blair MacDougall, “A Paradise of Plants: Exotica, Rarities, and Botanical Fantasies,” in *The Age of the Marvelous*, ed. Joy Kenseth, 145–57 (Hanover, N.H.: Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College, 1991).

41 This was first suggested by Patrizia Cavazzini when discussing the decoration by Agostino Tassi of the Palazzo Lancellotti in Rome in *Palazzo Lancellotti ai Coronari: Cantiere d’Agostino Tassi* (Rome: Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, Libreria dello Stato, 1998), 59. The relationship between the peacock and the sense of sight is made very clear in many Flemish paintings, where peacocks are usually depicted against landscape views. See, for example,

Jan Brueghel the Elder, *The Sense of Sight*, 1617 (Museo del Prado, Madrid).

42 D’Amico and Weil-Garris, “The Renaissance Cardinal’s Ideal Palace,” 96–97. On the depiction of riddles and fables, and for examples of how these recommendations were followed in sixteenth-century Roman palaces, see 117–19.

43 “Un accademia, un cenacolo, un teatro del mondo.” Ercole Cato, *Oratione fatta dal cavaliere Hercole Cato nelle essequie dell’illustriss. & reverendiss. sig. D. Hippolito d’Este card. di Ferrara, celebrate nella città di Tivoli* (Ferrara: Per Vittorio Baldini, stampator ducale, 1587). The highly intellectual program of the Villa d’Este is illustrated in the decidedly esoteric approaches of some art historians. See David Demie, *The Villa d’Este at Tivoli* (London: Academy Editions, 1996); and Gérard Desnoyers, *La Villa d’Este à Tivoli, ou, Le songe d’Hippolyte: Un rêve d’immortalité héliaque* (Paris: Myrobolan, 2002).

44 D’Amico and Weil-Garris, “The Renaissance Cardinal’s Ideal Palace,” 90–91.

45 Quintilian *Institutio oratoria* 11.2.17–22; and *Ad Herrenium* 3.22. See Francis A. Yates, *L’art de la mémoire*, trans. Daniel Arasse (Paris: Gallimard, 1975), 14–15 and 19–22. See also Isabelle Rieusset-Lemarié, “Des palais de mémoire aux paysages virtuels: Le rôle du parcours dans les paysages urbains imaginaires,” in *Les enjeux du paysage*, ed. Michel Collot (Brussels: Ousia, 1997), 250–55. Recent historians have stressed the importance of the ancient art of memory for the understanding of topographical images. See especially Giorgio Mangani, “Da icone a emblemi: Cartografia morale delle città (secoli XIV–XVI),” in *Tra oriente e occidente: Città e iconografia dal XV al XIX secolo*, ed. Cesare de Seta, 10–21 (Naples: Electa Napoli, 2004); and Giorgio Mangani, *Cartografia morale: Geografia, persuasione, identità* (Modena: Franco Cosimo Panini, 2006). This was also suggested by Elisabeth Blair MacDougall, “*Ars Hortulorum*: Sixteenth-Century Garden Iconography and Literary Theory in Italy,” in *Fountains, Statues, and Flowers: Studies in Italian Gardens of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, ed. Elisabeth Blair MacDougall (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1992), 124–25; and André Chastel, “Les jardins et les fleurs,” *Revue de l’art* 51 (1981): 43.

46 On Utens’s views, see Daniela Mignani, *Le ville mediche di Giusto Utens* (Florence: Arnaud, 1982).

47 Lazzaro, *Italian Renaissance Garden*, 5–6.

48 See Raffaella Fabiani Giannetto, “Grafting the Edelweiss on Cactus Plants’: The 1931 Italian Garden Exhibition and Its Legacy,” this volume.

49 “The villas are shown frontally . . . and from an elevated viewpoint, which means that two modes of construction coexist in each painting and that they use two theoretical, simultaneous, and intersecting planes of observation, one giving a frontal view of the buildings’ facades from

ground level, and the other an aerial view of the entire landscape.” Renzo Dubbini, *Geography of the Gaze: Urban and Rural Vision in Early Modern Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 36. See also the analysis of Utens’s views in Acidini Luchinat, “Alle origini del ‘ritratto di giardino,’” 161–62.

50 This was noted in Lazzaro, *Italian Renaissance Garden*, 219.

51 The lunettes must also be understood in relation to the wider decorative scheme at the Medici villa at Artimino. Two other cycles of paintings existed inside the villa: the first depicted the women of the Medici family, and the second depicted battle scenes in seventeen lunettes (the same number of paintings used in the *salone delle ville*). Ferdinando de’Medici, following most aristocratic courts in Europe at the time, used these cycles to build the image of his dynasty on the ideological triad of territorial domination, genealogy, and conquest. On the decoration of the villa of Artimino, see Enrica Cassarino, *La villa medicea di Artimino* (Florence: Becocci-Scala, 1990); Nadia Bastogi, “La villa Ferdinanda di Artimino,” in *Fasto di corte: La decorazione murale nelle residenze dei Medici e dei Lorena*, vol. 1, *Da Ferdinando I alle Reggenti, 1587–1628*, ed. Mina Gregori, 45–65 (Florence: Edifir, 2005); and Nadia Bastogi, “Magnificenza, decoro morale e celebrazione dinastica nei cicli di affreschi per il Granduca Ferdinando I: Il caso della villa di Artimino,” *Fontes* 7, no. 13–16 (2004–5 [2007]): 53–82; and Suzanne Butters, “Land, Women, and War: Constructing Ferdinando I de’Medici’s Artimino,” forthcoming.

52 Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962), 63.

53 On the Medici villa system as an ideological instrument of territorial control, see Vittorio Franchetti Pardo, *I Medici nel contado fiorentino: Ville e possedimenti agricoli tra Quattrocento e Cinquecento* (Florence: Clusf, 1978), 42–57.

54 “Utens’s ‘manner’ was highly influential but it operated within a strongly ideological iconographic program having little to do with any objective desire to survey the lands he was depicting.” Dubbini, *Geography of the Gaze*, 38. See also James M. Saslow, who wrote that Utens’s series “functioned not simply as visual records, but more profoundly as a collective document of ownership and control, a catalogue of holdings that asserts possession of the individual pieces while establishing their common identity as parts of a coherent whole” in *The Medici Wedding of 1589: Florentine Festival as Theatrum Mundi* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 133–38.

55 On Ferdinando de’Medici’s travel between his different villas, see Mignani, *Le ville medicee di Giusto Utens*, 15–17; and Maria Adriana Giusti, “La veduta documento e le serie ‘catastali,’” in *Lo specchio del paradiso: L’immagine del giardino dall’antico al Novecento*, eds. Marcello Fagiolo and Maria Adriana Giusti (Cinisello Balsamo [Milan]: Silvana, 1996), 51.

56 Franchetti Pardo, *I Medici nel contado fiorentino*, 54; and Matthias Quast, “Die Medici-Villen als Spiegel frühabsolutistischer Herrschaft. Beobachtungen zur Instrumentalisierung der Villenarchitektur unter Grossherzog Ferdinand I. (1587–1609),” in *Gedenkschrift für Richard Harprath*, eds. Wolfgang Liebenwein and Anchise Tempestini, 375–85 (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1998).

57 Saslow, *Medici Wedding of 1589*, 134 and 138.

58 Quast, “Die Medici-Villen als Spiegel frühabsolutistischer Herrschaft. Beobachtungen zur Instrumentalisierung der Villenarchitektur unter Grossherzog Ferdinand I. (1587–1609),” 379.

59 On the architecture of the villa of Artimino by Bernardo Buontalenti and the relationship between architecture and landscape, see Matthias Quast, “La villa di Artimino del Buontalenti: Rilettura tipologico-stilistica,” in *Kunst des Cinquecento in der Toskana*, ed. Monika Cämmerer, 365–71 (Munich: F. Bruckmann, 1992). On the Medicean villas at the time of Ferdinando de’Medici as instruments of the absolutist power of the Grand Duke, see Quast, “Die Medici-Villen als Spiegel frühabsolutistischer Herrschaft. Beobachtungen zur Instrumentalisierung der Villenarchitektur unter Grossherzog Ferdinand I. (1587–1609);” and Franchetti Pardo, *I Medici nel contado fiorentino*, 54–56.

60 Edward S. Casey, *Representing Place: Landscape Painting and Maps* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), xvi. The same methodological direction has been suggested by W. J. T. Mitchell, preface to *Landscape and Power*, ed. W. J. T. Mitchell, 2nd ed. (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2002), vii–xii; and by the French epistemologist and geographer Jean-Marc Besse, “Représenter la ville ou la simuler? Réflexions autour d’une vue d’Amsterdam au XVIe siècle,” *Ligeia: Dossiers sur l’art* 19–20 (1996–97): 55.

61 Harris, “Landscape and Representation,” 182.

62 John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (London: British Broadcasting Corporation, and New York: Penguin Books, 1972); and Denis Cosgrove, “Prospect, Perspective and the Evolution of the Landscape Idea,” *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, n.s., 10 (1985): 46.

63 The expression “archaeology of the gaze” should not be understood as a direct derivation from the archaeological method used by Michel Foucault in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, since Foucault’s approach is essentially philosophical and its aim is quite different from mine. However, it is tempting to have his epistemological method coincide to some extent with my attempt to contextualize images of place within a convincing horizon of cultural perception, both at a conscious and unconscious level. As I have already explained, his discussion of the “document,” which history now transforms into “monument,” is highly relevant for my purpose. See Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge*, 6–8.

64 Dubbini, *Geography of the Gaze*, 8–10. It is worth signaling here the pioneering work of Bruno Toscano, who,

in an article on Perugino's representation of the Umbrian landscape, called for the development of such an archaeology of the gaze: "Il tema coinvolge anche lo studio delle attitudini e delle abitudini visive (per esempio: degli olandesi rispetto agli italiani), e non solo degli artisti; si tratta di uno dei più interessanti canali di ricerca della storia dell'arte del nostro secolo preoccupata di approfondire i concetti di naturalismo, imitazione, descrizione, da Gombrich a Baxandall alla Alpers ai nostri Romano e Castelnuovo. Quanto all'argomento affrontato in queste pagine, l'obbiettivo, che richiede strumenti di analisi più sottili di quelli per solito usati, sarebbe di accostarsi il più possibile al modo di vedere il paesaggio che possiamo ritenere peculiare del Perugino e dei suoi contemporanei: guardare cioè, in un certo senso con il loro occhio." Bruno Toscano, "Una nota su paesaggio dipinto e paesaggio reale (rileggendo la prima annata di *Paragone*)," *Paragone* 42 (1991): 33–34n28. I have found that the expression "archaeology of the gaze" has been used twice so far: in a very different context from ours by Regina Stefaniak ("Correggio's Camera di San Paolo: An Archaeology of the Gaze," *Art History* 16, no. 2 [1993]: 203–38), who considers different types of gazes, the "phallic gaze," the "burning eye, the piercing eye, the biting eye, the grasping eye," and by Massimo Quaini ("Per una archeologia dello sguardo topografico," *Casabella* 575–76 [1991]: 13–17), an important Italian geographer and historian of cartography.

65 This approach reflects a recent reorientation of the field by some garden historians. John Dixon Hunt, in particular, has stressed the necessity of developing a history of reception and consumption of gardens in "Approaches (New and Old) to Garden History," in *Perspectives on Garden Histories*, ed. Michel Conan (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1999), 89; and *The Afterlife of Gardens* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).

66 A number of historians have recently readdressed the question of motion in gardens. See Michel Conan, "Landscape Metaphors and Metamorphosis of Time," in *Landscape Design and the Experience of Motion*, ed. Michel Conan, 287–317 (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2003); and Malgorzata Szafranska, "Place, Time and Movement: A New Look at Renaissance Gardens," *Studies in the History of Gardens and Designed Landscapes* 26, no. 3 (2006): 194–208.

67 On circulation in Renaissance gardens, see David R. Coffin, "The 'Lex Hortorum' and Access to Gardens of Latium during the Renaissance," *Journal of Garden History* 2 (1982): 201–32.

68 Coffin, *Villa d'Este at Tivoli*, 78–92.

69 Conan, "Landscape Metaphors and Metamorphosis of Time," 293.

70 Ibid. The landscape decoration of the salone of the Villa d'Este has been thoroughly analyzed in Ribouillault, "Le salone de la villa d'Este à Tivoli," and "Le ville dipinte del cardinale Ippolito d'Este a Tivoli: L'architettura di fronte

all'antico, la tradizione ferrarese, e un nuovo documento su Belriguardo," in *Delizie estensi e architetture di villa nel rinascimento italiano ed europeo*, eds. Francesco Ceccarelli and Marco Folin, 341–71 (Florence: L. S. Olschki, 2009).

71 See Pirro Ligorio, *Libro dell'antica città di Tivoli e di alcune famose ville*, ed. Alessandra Ten (Rome: De Luca, 2005). On Ligorio's studies of ancient villas, see Antonella Ranaldi, *Pirro Ligorio e l'interpretazione delle ville antiche* (Rome: Quasar, 2001), 132–33. For the identification of the views, see Ribouillault, "Le salone de la villa d'Este à Tivoli."

72 On the perception and the complex layering of space at the Villa d'Este, see also Besse, *Face au monde*, 162.

73 Casey, *Representing Place*, 6.

74 Ibid., 7.

75 Besse, *Face au monde*, 9.

76 Rolando Ferri, "Una 'passeggiata per l'Italia': L'anonima Ambulatio gregoriana," in *La galleria delle carte geografiche in Vaticano/The Gallery of Maps in the Vatican*, eds. Lucio Gambi and Antonio Pinelli, 73–82 (Modena: F. C. Panini, 1994); Besse, *Face au monde*; and Francesca Fiorani, *The Marvel of Maps: Art, Cartography and Politics in Renaissance Italy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 171–232, especially p. 174.

77 Abraham Ortelius, *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* (Antwerp, 1581), preface.

78 Isabella Barisi, *Guide de la Villa d'Este* (Rome: De Luca, 2004), 40.

79 On the iconographical program of the room, see Coffin, *Villa d'Este at Tivoli*, 60–63.

80 Enrico Castelnuovo, *Il ciclo dei Mesi di Torre Aquila a Trento* (Trento: Museo Provinciale d'Arte, 1987), 41.

81 Coffin, "The Self-Image of the Roman Villa during the Renaissance," 184–85.

82 The fresco was first published in Luciano Passin, *Caprarola: Il paese e la sua storia* (Rome: Manfredi, 2002), 106. It is dated around 1561 in Rosalba Canton, "I giardini della Villa Farnese di Caprarola: Loro evoluzione, fortuna critica e prospettive di recupero," in *Vignola e i Farnese*, eds. Christoph Luitpold Frommel, Maurizio Ricci, and Richard J. Tuttle (Milan: Electa, 2003), 124. See also Luciano Passini, "Le vedute di paesaggi nel Palazzo Farnese di Caprarola," *Biblioteca e società* 26, no. 1–2 (2007): 36–42.

83 For the significance of this view and its theoretical implications for the understanding of the concept of landscape in the Renaissance, see Denis Ribouillault, "Landscape *all'antica* and Topographical Anachronism in Roman Fresco Painting of the Sixteenth Century," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 71 (2008): 211–37.

84 On this fundamental question of the passage from land to landscape, see the useful analysis in Malcolm Andrews, *Landscape and Western Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 2–3. For a discussion of the idea

of “representation” in garden art, see Hunt, *Greater Perfections*, 76–115.

85 Augustin Berque, “La demeure des choses: Jardin, écoumène, espace virtuel,” in *Le jardin planétaire*, eds. Claude Eveno and Gilles Clément, 155–63 (Châteauvallon: Aube, 1997); and Venturi Ferriolo, “L’art dei giardini tra pittura e realtà,” 13.

86 Carl Lamb affirmed that the system of points of view (whereby various artistic elements become visible unexpectedly from a close perspective) was developed for the first time at a large scale at the Villa d’Este. *Die Villa d’Este in Tivoli* (Munich: Prestel, 1966), 43. See also Isabella Barisi, “Il disegno del giardino e l’architettura vegetale,” in *Villa d’Este*, eds. Isabella Barisi, Marcello Fagiolo, and Maria Luisa Madonna (Rome: De Luca, 2003), 64–65.

87 Pliny the Younger *Epistulae* 5.6.7–13.

88 On descriptions of the panorama from the Villa d’Este, see Lazzaro, “The Sixteenth-Century Central Italian Villa and the Cultural Landscape,” in *Architecture, jardin, paysage: L’environnement du château et de la villa au XVe et XVIe siècles*, ed. Jean Guillaume (Paris: Picard, 1999), 34–35.

89 Szafranska, “Place, Time and Movement,” 196.

90 See Lazzaro, “The Sixteenth-Century Central Italian Villa and the Cultural Landscape,” 32. Another more straightforward solution to this riddle would be to read “Sina” and not “Siena” in Giorgio Vasari, *Le opere di Giorgio Vasari*, ed. Gaetano Milanesi, 9 vols. (Florence: G. C. Sansoni, 1878–85), 6:76.

91 Malgorzata Szafranska, “Comment le roi visitait ses jardins: Louis XIV au sujet de Versailles,” *Biuletyn historii sztuki* 59, nos. 1–2 (1997): 115.

92 André Mollet, *Le jardin de plaisir* (Stockholm: Chez Henry Kayser, 1651), chap. 9. See Szafranska, “Comment le roi visitait ses jardins,” 117. On vision and movement in the gardens at Versailles, see also Hervé Brunon, “Les promenades du roi,” in *Le jardin, notre double; Sagesse et dérision*, ed. Hervé Brunon, 157–82 (Paris: Éditions Autrement, 1999); and Chandra Mukerji, “The Political Mobilization of Nature in Seventeenth-Century French Formal Gardens,” *Theory and Society* 23–25 (1994): 670–71.

93 See Pierre Grimal, *Les jardins romains*, 3rd ed. (Paris: Fayard, 1984), 88–98.

94 Vitruvius *De architectura* 7.5.2. On the ancient ars topiaria and Renaissance landscape painting, see Ribouillault, “Landscape *all’antica* and Topographical Anachronism in Roman Fresco Painting of the Sixteenth Century,” 225–26.

95 See Alessandro Tagliolini, “Girolamo Fiorenzuola ed il giardino nelle fonti della metà del ‘500,” in *Il giardino storico italiano: Problemi di indagine, fonti letterarie e storiche; Atti del convegno di studi, Siena–San Quirico d’Orcia, 6–8 ottobre 1978*, ed. Giovanna Ragionieri (Florence: L. S. Olschki,

1981), 300–301, quoted in Coffin, *Gardens and Gardening in Papal Rome*, 80, with other seventeenth-century examples.

96 On S. Silvestro al Quirinale, see Cynthia Stollhans, “Fra Mariano, Peruzzi and Polidoro da Caravaggio: A New Look at Religious Landscapes in Renaissance Rome,” *Sixteenth Century Journal* 23 (1992): 513. On the garden of San Vitale, see Arnold A. Witte, *The Artful Hermitage: The Palazzetto Farnese as a Counter-Reformation Diaeta* (Rome: “L’Erma” di Bretschneider, 2008), 107; and Louis Richeome, *La peinture spirituelle ou l’art d’aimer en toutes ses œuvres* (Lyon: P. Rigaud, 1611), 666–71.

97 Giovanni Battista Armenini, *De veri precetti della pittura* (Ravenna: Francesco Tebaldini, 1587), bk. 3, chap. 13, quoted in Elisabeth Blair MacDougall, “Imitation and Invention: Language and Decoration in Roman Renaissance Gardens,” in *Fountains, Statues, and Flowers: Studies in Italian Gardens of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, ed. Elisabeth Blair MacDougall (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1992), 125.

98 On the upper gardens at Caprarola, see Lazzaro, *Italian Renaissance Garden*, 100–108. The view is discussed in Sandro Benedetti, *Giacomo del Duca e l’architettura del Cinquecento* (Rome: Officina, 1973), 256–57.

99 See Passini, “Le vedute di paesaggi nel Palazzo Farnese di Caprarola,” for the documents; and Ribouillault, “Paysage et pouvoir,” 422–26.

100 Leonardo stressed the priority of sight over the other senses in the memorization of objects and situations. Leonardo da Vinci, *The Literary Works of Leonardo da Vinci*, ed. Jean Paul Richter, 2 vols. (1883; reprint, London: Phaidon, 1970), 1:62.

101 Reinhard Bentmann and Michael Müller, *Die Villa als Herrschafts-architektur: Versuch einer kunst- und sozialgeschichtlichen Analyse* (1970; translated by Tim Spence and David Craven as *The Villa as Hegemonic Architecture*, Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1992); and James S. Ackerman, *The Villa: Form and Ideology of Country Houses* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990). On the historiography of landscape and gardens in Italy, see Beneš, “Recent Developments and Perspectives in the Historiography of Italian Gardens”; Brunon, “Documents ou monuments?”; and the contributions in this volume.

102 Hunt, “Approaches (New and Old) to Garden History,” and *The Afterlife of Gardens*.

103 Cosgrove, “Prospect, Perspective and the Evolution of the Landscape Idea”; Denis Cosgrove, *The Palladian Landscape: Geographical Change and its Cultural Representations in Sixteenth-Century Italy* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1993); Dubbini, *Geography of the Gaze*; Conan, “Landscape Metaphors and Metamorphosis of Time”; and Besse, *Face au monde*.

104 Grimal, *Les jardins romains*; Wilhelmina Mary Feemster Jashemski, *The Gardens of Pompeii: Herculaneum and the Villas Destroyed by Vesuvius*, 2 vols. (New Rochelle,

N.Y.: A. D. Caratzas, 1979–93); Bettina Bergmann, “Painted Perspectives of a Villa Visit,” in *Roman Art in the Private Sphere: New Perspectives on the Architecture and Decor of the Domus, Villa, and Insula*, ed. Elaine K. Gazda, 49–70 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1991); Bettina Bergmann, “Exploring the Grove: Pastoral Space on Roman Walls,” in *The Pastoral Landscape*, ed. John Dixon Hunt, 21–46 (Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, 1992); Jaś Elsner, “The Viewer in the Roman Landscape,” *Apollo* 60 (1999): 13–17; and Bettina Bergmann, “Playing with Boundaries: Painted Architecture in Roman Interiors,” in *The Built Surface*, vol. 1, *Architecture and the Visual Arts from Antiquity to the Enlightenment*, ed. Christy Anderson, 15–46 (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2002).

105 See Manfred Luchterhandt, “Im Reich der Venus: Zu Peruzzis ‘Sala delle Prospettive’ in der Farnesina,” *Römisches Jahrbuch der Bibliotheca Hertziana* 31 (1996): 230–39; and Ribouillault, “Le salone de la villa d’Este à Tivoli,” 66–68.

106 Marcello Fagiolo, “Da Villa Madama a Villa Giulia e al Gianicolo: Gli assi della memoria storica,” in *Roma: Il verde e la città; Giardini e spazi verdi nella costruzione della forma urbana*, eds. Roberto Cassetti and Marcello Fagiolo, 2:31–47 (Rome: Gangemi, 2002). See also Margherita Azzi Visentini, “Alle origini dell’architettura del paesaggio: Considerazioni

in margine al rapporto tra gli edifici, i giardini e il sito nelle ville laziali del Cinquecento,” in *Villa Lante a Bagnaia*, ed. Sabine Frommel, 190–205 (Milan: Electa, 2005).

107 Conan, “Landscape Metaphors and Metamorphosis of Time,” 308.

108 “Le prime rappresentazioni di paesaggi puri . . .” Claudia Cieri Via, “Alle origine della pittura di paesaggio,” *Semestrare di studi e ricerche di geografia* 2 (1993): 54. We may note the use of the expression in a recent discussion of landscape painting in early modern Rome in Patrizia Cavazzini, “Towards the Pure Landscape,” in *The Genius of Rome, 1592–1623*, ed. Beverly Louise Brown, 208–47 (London: Royal Academy of Arts, and New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2001).

109 W. J. T. Mitchell, “Nature for Sale: Gombrich and the Rise of Landscape,” in *The Consumption of Culture, 1600–1800: Image, Object, Text*, eds. Ann Bermingham and John Brewer (London: Routledge, 1995), 104. On the notion of “pure landscape” and the “invention” or “rise” of landscape, see also Serge Briffaud, “De ‘l’invention’ du paysage: Pour une lecture critique des discours contemporains sur l’émergence d’une sensibilité paysagère en Europe,” *Compar(a)ison: An International Journal of Comparative Literature* 2 (1998): 35–55.