Romolo Ferrucci del Tadda
The *Villano* for Livorno
A case for the success of a Giambologna model in Tuscany

Dimitrios Zikos

BACARELLIBOTTICELLI

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Romolo Ferrucci del Tadda, *Villano*, marble, h.144cm

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Antonio Susini, *Villano* (after Giambologna), bronze, h. 13cm
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In 1601, the Guardaroba, the household administration of the Medici grand dukes of Tuscany lent two silver figurines to the gold smith Antonio Susini (1558-1624), by all likelihood for copying them in bronze. According to the relevant archival record, one statuette represented a «Villano con capello con bastoncino che s'appogia in su il bastone», or a «Peasant with hat and staff resting on his staff»; the other is called simply a «Pastorino», or «Small Shepherd».[1]

Both silver figurines are lost, but the small «Peasant with hat and staff, resting on the staff» exists in several bronze versions, the best of which have been reasonably attributed to Susini. [2]

The original wording of documents has been modernized and abbreviations expanded.

[1] Florence, Archivio di Stato, Guardaroba Medicea, 208, fol.152. The document was discovered by the late James Holderbaum. It was published by Charles Avery and Anthony Radcliffe. See: *Giambologna 1529-1608. Ein Wendepunkt der europäischen Plastik*, catalogue of the exhibition (Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, 2 December 1978 - 28 January 1979), ed. by Charles Avery, Anthony Radcliffe and Manfred Leithe-Jasper (Vienna, 1978), pp.222-3, cat.137.

[2] See, for instance, a version in the Quentin Collection, New York; Manfred Leithe-Jasper and Patricia Wengraf, *European Bronzes from the Quentin Collection*, exhibition catalogue (The Frick Collection, New York, 28 September 2004 – 2 January 2005), Milan 2004, pp.158-161, cat.13.
A version in Rome, Museo Nazionale del Palazzo di Venezia, should be equally attributed to Susini. For this version, see the following note.

fig. 8
Antonio Susini, *Villano* (after Giambologna), bronze, h. 13cm
Roma, Museo Nazionale del Palazzo di Venezia

A version of the *Villano* (figs 2,4,6 and 8) in the Museo Nazionale del Palazzo di Venezia in Rome has affinities with a *Seated Bagpiper* (fig. 9) in the same museum. [3] Both share a common provenance and it is therefore likely that the two models had been originally conceived as pendants and that the silver «Pastorino» handed over to Susini together with the silver «Pastorino» represented a *Seated Bagpiper*. A bronze figure «che sona la piva» («that plays the bagpipe») is, more over, documented as Susini's work in a 1623 Medici inventory. [4] It could be the gilt version preserved today in the Museo Nazionale del Bargello in Florence.[5]

fig. 9

Antonio Susini, *Seatted Bagpiper*, (after Giambologna), bronze, h. 10,5cm
Rome, Museo Nazionale del Palazzo di Venezia

[3] Pietro Cannata, *Museo Nazionale del Palazzo di Venezia. Sculture in bronzo* (Rome, 2011) (*Roma. Il Palazzo di Venezia e le sue collezioni di scultura*, III), pp.76-7, cat.81 (Standing Peasent, h.13 cm), and pp.77-8, cat.82 (Seated Bagpiper, h.10,5 cm). Cannata maintains the traditional attribution of both bronzes to Giambologna. They should, however, also be considered casts by Susini.

[4] Florence, Archivio di Stato, Guardaroba Medicea, 426, fol.67; published in: Paola Barocchi and Giovanna Gaeta Bertelà (eds), *Collezionismo mediceo e storia artistica*, II: *Il Cardinal Carlo, Maria Maddalena, Don Lorenzo, Ferdinando II, Vittoria della Rovere (1621-1666)*, tome 1 (Florence, 2005), p.255.

[5] According to Barbara Bertelli, in: *Giambologna: gli dei, gli eroi. Genesi e fortuna di uno stile europeo nella scultura*, catalogue of the exhibition (Florence, Museo Nazionale del Bargello, 2 March – 15 June 2006), ed. by Beatrice Paolozzi Strozzi and Dimitrios Zikos (Florence, 2006) p.240, cat.43. Bertelli was also the first to refer to the archival record cited in the previous note in connection with the Seated Bagpiper model.

Susini was not an inventive artist.[6] At the turn of the 17th century he was still employed by Giambologna, the great Flemish-born court sculptor of the Medici. From 1598 on Susini began producing small bronzes based on the models of Giambologna. It is therefore safe to assume that the two silver figurines consigned to Susini had been designed by his master.

Another silver ‹genre› statuette is indeed documented in the Medici collections as a work invented by Giambologna. It represented a *Girl with a Duck*: cast in 1574, its model is known from a single bronze version.[7] From around that time would date also the two lost silver statuettes of the «Villano» and the «Pastorino».

[6] For Susini see, Dimitrios Zikos, «Giovanni Bologna and Antonio Susini. An Old Problem in the Light of New Research», in Peta Motture, Emma Jones, and Dimitrios Zikos (eds), *Carvings, Casts and Collectors: the Art of Renaissance Sculpture* (forthcoming).

[7] It is known from a bronze version; see the entry by Manfred Leithe-Jasper, in: *Giambologna 1529-1608. Ein Wendepunkt der europäischen Plastik*, catalogue of the exhibition (Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, 2 December 1978 – 28 January 1979), ed. by Charles Avery, Anthony Radcliffe and Manfred Leithe-Jasper (Vienna, 1978), p.224, cat.139a.

Such a dating is supported by the following considerations. In the eighth decade of the sixteenth century Giambologna was working on the sculptural decoration of the garden surrounding the villa of Pratolino, the preferred residence of Grand Duke Francesco and Fillipo Baldinucci says that for that garden the Flemish sculptor carved statues of «peasants in stone».[8] It is therefore not hard to imagine that the models for the *Standing Shepherd* and the *Seated Bagpiper* were related to this project. Perhaps they were cast directly after the small models Giambologna invented for the statues of paesants referred to by Baldinucci.[9]

None of the latter survives nor is it possible to ascertain beyond doubt that he did carve such statues. Baldinucci is the only source mentioning them, but he was often mistaken. However, a statue representing a *Seated Bagpiper* is documented through one of Giovanni Guerra's drawings of Pratolino.[10]

[8] «In quel luogo dunque egli scolpì in pietra alcune statue di villani»; Filippo Baldinucci, Notizie de' professori del disegno da Cimabue in qua. Parte seconda del secolo quarto (Florence, 1688), p.127. For Giambologna in Pratolino, see Herbert Keutner, «Giambologna a Pratolino», in: *Il giardino d'Europa. Pratolino come modello nella cultura europea*, catalogue of the exhibition (Florence, Palazzo Medici Riccardi, 25 July – 7 September 1986, and Pratolino, Villa Demidoff, 25 July – 28 September 1986), ed. by Alessandro Vezzosi (Milan, 1986), pp.55-60.

[9] This is corroborated by their very small size.

[10] It shows the so-called Grotta del Cibo. An iscription on this drawing explains the attitude of the Seated Bagpiper: «IL PASTORELLO ASCISO APRESSO AL FONTE SONANDO INVITA LA SVA NINFA». The drawing is reproduced by Alessandro Vezzosi, «Giovanni Guerra a Pratolino» in: *Il giardino d'Europa. Pratolino come modello nella cultura europea*, catalogue of the exhibition (Florence, Palazzo Medici Riccardi, 25 July - 7 September 1986, and Pratolino, Villa Demidoff, 25 July -28 September 1986), ed. by Alessandro Vezzosi (Milan, 1986), p.50.

It is of a very similar composition to the type of the small bronze in Rome and could therefore have been by Giambologna.

That Giambologna did make at least one model for a ‹genre› figure is, however, beyond doubt. Indeed, his great friend Benedetto Gondi owned a bronze statuette of a «pastorino» expressly said to be - in the 1609 inventory of his distinguished art collection - «by the hand and the originals of Cavaliere Gian Bologna».[11]

Moreover, when the Heir Apparent to the British throne asked the Medici court for bronzes reproducing Giambologna's models at the beginning of the 17th century, a *Seated Bagpiper* and a *Standing Shepherd* were sent together with other statuettes after Giambologna models to England.[12] In the bill of lading that dates from 1611 they follow one upon another and this further suggests that these two compositions had been originally conceived as pendants.[13]

[11] «di mano e l'originali del Cavaliere Gian Bologna»; see Gino Corti, «Two Early Seventeenth-Century Inventories Involving Giambologna», in: *The Burlington Magazine*, CXVIII, 1976, p.633.

[12] Watson and Charles Avery, «Medici and Stuart: a Grand Ducal Gift of ‹Giovanni Bologna› Bronzes for Henry Prince of Wales (1612)», in: *The Burlington Magazine*, vol.115, no.845, Aug. 1973, pp.493-507.

[13] Ibid., p.507, no.13 («Uno pastore che suona la Piva») and no.14 («Uno pastore che s'appoggia a uno bastone, e à una barletta»).

Small bronzes by Giambologna were first sent as diplomatic gifts by the Medici to European courts already in the second half of the 1580ss.[14] Susini began reproducing the models of his master at a larger scale, ‹Giambologna bronzes› became more popular and found their way also into non-aristocratic collections.

As was recognized by Hans Robert Weihrauch already in 1967, the widespread popularity such bronzes began to enjoy in the early 17th century had another far-reaching consequence for European sculpture: ‹Giambologna bronzes› were now used as models for garden statuary, especially north of the Alps.[15] A composition such as that of the *Seated Bagpiper*, invented to adorn a Florentine garden, served for a statue of this subject that stood in a grotto in the courtyard of the house of Rubens in Antwerp.[16]

[14] A well-known example is a Medici gift of four small Giovanni Bologna bronzes to Christian I, Elector of Saxony in 1587; see *Giambologna in Dresden. Die Geschenke der Medici*, catalogue of the exhibition (Dresden, Grünes Gewölbe, 9 September 2006 - 16 April 2007), ed. by Dirk Syndram, Moritz Woelk and Martina Minning (Berlin and Munich, 2006).

[15] Hans R. Weihrauch, E*uropäische Bronzestatuetten 15.-18. Jahrhundert* (Brunswick, 1967), p.9.

[16] Rutger Tijs, «Über die Hirtengrotte in Rubens' Garten. Der Einfluß der italienischen Renaissance auf nördliche Gartenkonzepte», in: *Gartenkunst*, 14, 2002, 1 = Ursula Härting und Ellen Schwinzer (eds), *Gärten und Höfe der Rubenszeit*, Internationales Symposium im Gustav-Lübcke-Museum der Stadt Hamm, 12 -14 January 2001 (Worms, 2002), pp. 9-18, esp. p.16.

Conversely, no Giambologna models were used for garden statuary in Tuscany.[17] We would look, for instance, in vain for copies after Giambologna among the many ‹genre› statues or groups carved for the Boboli gardens in the short reign of Cosimo II (reigned 1609-1621) who was responsible for a revival of this type of sculpture.[18]

As far as I see, a Giambologna model for small statuary was certainly copied in Tuscany only once in large scale.[19] But this happened in a different, commemorative and public context.

[17] I know only of a fragment of a stone statue representing the type of the *Standing Paeant* in the garden of Pratolino; see *Il giardino d'Europa. Pratolino come modello nella cultura europea*, catalogue of the exhibition (Florence, Palazzo Medici Riccardi, 25 July – 7 September 1986, and Pratolino, Villa Demidoff, 25 July – 28 September 1986), ed. by Alessandro Vezzosi (Milan, 1986), p.155, cat.139a (Alessandro Vezzosi). Vezzosi considers it to be «Maniera dei Cioli», or style of Valerio Cioli (c.1529/30-1599) or his nephew Giovan Simone. However, due to its fragmentary state it is impossible to pronounce a certain date or context for its execution.

[18] Gabriele Capecchi, *Cosimo II e le arti di Boboli. Committenza, iconografia e scultura* (Florence, 2008).

[19] But see note 17 above.

This copy was a free interpretation of the *Villano*, or *Standing Paesant* (figs 1,3,5,7,10,11,19,21,24 and 26). It was carved for a fountain in Livorno, the busy port of Tuscany, by Romolo Ferrucci, called ‹del Tadda› (1544-1621), a member of a famous family of sculptors from Fiesole, and son of Francesco del Tadda, the first to re-discover the secret of tempering porphyry after Antiquity.[20]

The story of the Livorno *Villano* is of great interest both for the reception of Giambologna in Italy and for the study of early 17th-century Tuscan sculpture. Anthea Brook has already referred to it.[21] It was nevertheless overlooked in recent Giambologna studies nor have scholars of Romolo Ferrucci noticed the dependency of this statue from a model invented by Giambologna.

Ferrucci's *Villano* is documented visually already in the later eighteenth century. In 1937, Cesare Venturi published a monographic article where he summarized its story and that of the fountain on which it stood. He also reproduced a drawing and a painting that confirm beyond doubt that it was based on Giambologna: [22]

[20] For Romolo Ferrucci, see the well-informed entry by Sandro Bellesi in: *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, vol.47 (Rome, 1997), pp.252-4 (henceforth: Bellesi 1997a), and idem, «Gli inizi di Romolo Ferrucci e alcune considerazioni sulla bottega dei Del Tadda», in *Paragone. Arte*, 47, 1996 (1997), 3rd series, 5-7, pp.143-9.

[21] Anthea Brook, «Sixteenth Century ‹Genre› Statuary in Medici Gardens and Giambologna's Fontana del Villano», in: *Boboli 90*, Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi per la salvaguardia e la valorizzazione del Giardino, 2 vols, ed.Cristina Acidina Luchinat and Elvira Garbero Zorzi (Florence, 1991), vol.1, pp. 113-30 (henceforth: Brook 1991)

[22] Cesare Venturi, «La statua del Villano», in: *Liburni Civitas. Rassegna di attività municipale*, ed. by the Comune di Livorno, X, 1937, VI, pp.243-61 (henceforth: Venturi 1937).

fig. 10
Romolo Ferrucci del Tadda, *Villano*, marble, h.144cm

fig. 11
Romolo Ferrucci del Tadda, *Villano*, marble, h.144cm

fig. 12
Lorenzo Tommasi, *Villano and dog* (after Romolo Ferrucci del Tadda),
ink and pencil on paper, 26x18cm

1. The drawing (fig.12) is by the late 18th-century engineer Lorenzo Tommasi and shows a shepherd standing in a pose very similar to that of the Giambologna bronze.[23] To his right is a dog that faces the viewer but does not seem to be related to the statue.

[23] For Lorenzo Tommasi's qualification as engineer, see Giacinto Nudi, *Storia urbanistica di Livorno dalle origini al secolo XVI* (Venice, 1959) (*Raccolta pisana di saggi e studi*, 2), p.73.

fig. 13
Giuseppe Maria Terreni, attributed to, *Villano and dog*
(after Romolo Ferrucci del Tadda), oil on canvas, 73x59cm.
Livorno, Museo Civico Giovanni Fattori, inv. 910

fig. 14
Romolo Ferrucci del Tadda, *Dog*,
sandstone
Florence, Boboli gardens

2. The painting (fig.13) has been attributed to Giuseppe Maria Terreni (1739-1811) and is preserved in the Museo Civico Giovanni Fattori at Livorno. It shows the *Villano and the dog* on a rectangular base. In the painting the animal stands closer to the *Villano* than in the drawing and is represented in three-quarters view looking to its right.[24]

[24] According to Venturi, the painting was found in 1839 by the Gonfaloniere of Livorno, Albizzo Martellini, who had it restored and placed in the «salotto di ricevimento del Gonfaloniere»; see Venturi 1937 (as note 22) p.248.

Nothing is known about the history of this canvas. On the contrary, the drawing was commissioned by Mariano Santelli to illustrate his well-known history of Livorno *Stato antico e moderno, ovvero origine di Livorno*, 3 volumes of which appeared in Livorno between 1769 and 1772).[25]

However, the drawing is bound between pages 197 and 198 in the fourth, unpublished tome of Santelli's Storia.[26]

Neither the drawing nor the painting were obviously meant to be accurate representations of the sculptural group. The drawing is very summary. And in the painting both figures are coloured - in evident contradiction to what the original statues would have looked like.

By the time the drawing and the painting were executed, the statue of the *Villano* was not anymore standing on the fountain. Indeed, in 1737 Giovan Filippo Tanzi, a sculptor from Carrara proposed to carve a replacement figure. [27]

[25] Santelli's work is an annotated version of the earlier *Discorso cronologico della origine di Livorno in Toscana. Dall'anno della sua fondazione, fino al 1646* by Nicola Magri (Naples, 1647) (henceforth: Magri 1647).

[26] Livorno, Biblioteca Labronica F. Guerrazzi, Ms 85 (Magri, Nicola. Ms dello Stato Antico e moderno overo origine di Livorno in Toscana o sia cronica di Livorno di Nicola Magri frate agostiniano dal XVI secolo cristiano a tutto l'anno 1646. E fino a tutto l'anno [1770] fornita dal prete Mariano Santelli, tomes IV and V) (henceforth: Santelli).

[27] Venturi 1937 (as note 22), pp.256-7.
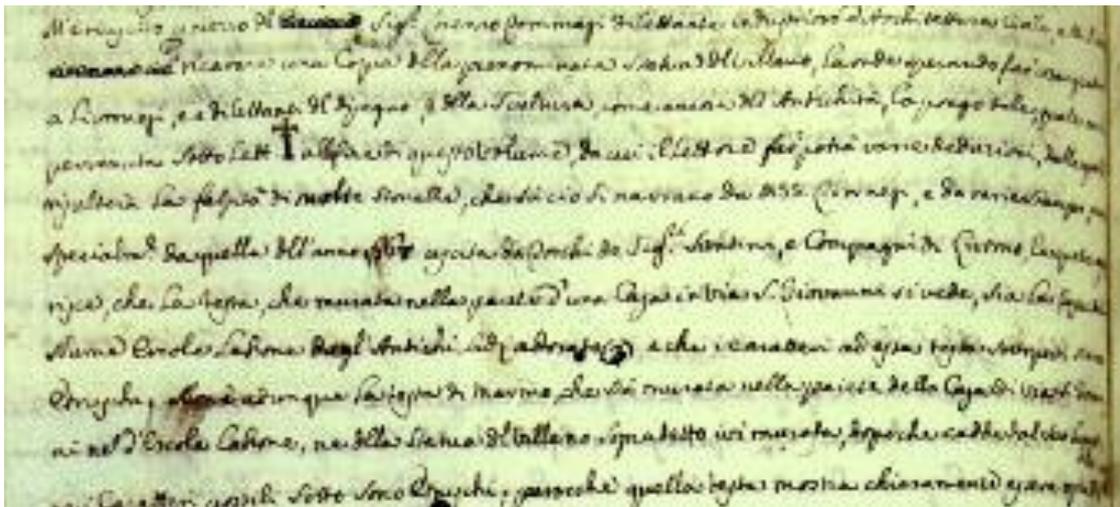
fig. 15
Livorno, Biblioteca Labronica, Ms 85, p.198

As Santelli specifies, only the dog stood atop the fountain when he was writing his *Storia*. He had commissioned the drawing from Tommasi in order to document the original appearance of Ferrucci's sculptural group, for the benefit of the «dilettanti del disegno, della scultura, come ancora dell'Antichità», «the lovers of the arts of disegno, sculpture and Antiquity» (fig.15). [28]

Santelli says that he «managed» («mi è riuscito») to obtain the drawing.[29] The use of this term implies that Santelli knew of the whereabouts of the *Villano* and that it was somehow complicated to have a drawing made of it. It is, however, equally possible that he had to resort to an earlier visual source that is lost to us.

Santelli adds that the drawing will confound some previously published wrong information.[30] First, he refers to those who had erroneously claimed that a marble head inserted in the wall of via San Giovanni in Livorno was a fragment of the «Statua del Villano».[31]

[28] Santelli (as note 26), p.198.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Ibid. See also the notes in Santelli (as note 26), p.484 (modern numbering)

[31] Ibid.

He then uses the drawing as a proof against the claim that the *Villano* had stood originally between two dogs. The drawing proved this to be wrong: the group was composed of the statue of the *Villano* and of that of only one dog.

Such a claim had been put forward by Giovanni Targioni Tozzetti in 1768. [32] It was based on a manuscript then in the Biblioteca Magliabecchiana which is preserved today in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale in Florence.[33]

It is in this manuscript that the information on the authorship of the sculptures is contained. The manuscript had belonged to Anton Francesco Marmi (1665-1736).[34]

It is composed of information on various artists and works of art including a set of unpublished *Notizie di Livorno*, or *Notes on Livorno*. According to these undated and unpublished *Notes*:

> v'è la fontana antica detta del Villano per esservi una statua di Macigno a mezzo a due cani, opera buona di Romolo del Tadda.[35]

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[32] «la fontana antica del Villano, per esservi una statua di macino in mezzo a due cani opera buona di Romolo del Tadda»; *Relazioni d'alcuni viaggi fatti in diverse parti della Toscana per osservare le produzioni naturali e gli antichi monumenti di essa, Edizione seconda con copiese giunte*, vol.2 (Florence, 1768), p.378.

[33] Fondo Nazionale, II.II.110

[34] Michela Sambucco Hamoud, «Marmi, Anton Francesco», in: *Dizionario biografico degli italiani,* vol. LXX (Rome, 2008), pp.618-21

[35] «called the fountain of the Peasant because there is a statue of macigno standing between two dogs. This is a good work by Romolo del Tadda»; ibid., fol.367v.
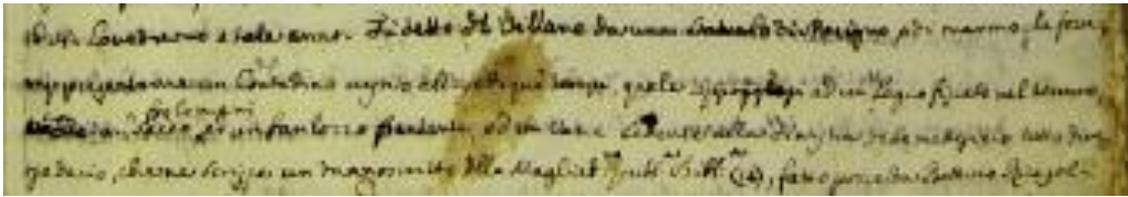
fig. 16
Livorno, Biblioteca Labronica, Ms 85, p.197

For the compiler of the *Notizie*, Ferrucci's *Villano* was made of *macigno*, a type of hard, blue-grey sandstone. However, Santelli is equally critical about this. He writes that a bastion of the fortress of Livorno was called «del Villano»:

> da una Statua di Macigno, o di marmo che fosse, rappresentante un Contadino vestito all'uso di que' tempi quale appoggiasi ad un legno fissato nel terreno con un sacco fra le mani ed un barilozzo pendente, ed un cane sedente alla sinistra di se medesimo tutto diverso da ciò che ne scrisse un manoscritto della Magliabecchiana Pubblica Biblioteca (fig. 16). [36]

Although most of Ferrucci's statues are in sandstone, he was capable of carving any type of marble, since he learned his trade from his father Francesco who was able to cut one of the hardest stones, porphyry.[37]

[36] «After a statue, be it of macigno or marble, that represented a Peasant dressed as it was common in those times resting on <stick of> wood fixed on the ground holding a sack between his hands and a hanging barrel, a dog sitting to the left in a completely different way to what has been written in a manuscript preserved in the public Magliabecchiana Library.»; Santelli (as note 26), p.197.

[37] Suzanne B. Butters, *The Triumph of Vulcan. Sculptors' Tools, Porphyry, and the Prince in Ducal Florence*, 2 vols (Florence, 1996), *passim*.

But Santelli had another reason for doubting the information provided by the manuscript *Notizie di Livorno* and concerning the material of the sculptural group in Livorno. Indeed, when he was writing his *Storia* in the late 18th century the dog was still extant and he could see with his own eyes that it was made of marble.[38]

Also Venturi argues that the group was made of marble because he remembered having seen in his youth that the rectangular base or plinth on which it had stood was made of marble.[39] It was this pedestal, or proper fountain, that consisted of stone, which could of course have caused the author of the above-mentioned manuscript *Notizie di Livorno* to assert that also the sculptures were «di macigno».

The sculptures Ferrucci carved for Livorno were, as we shall see, a public commemorative group. As such it could have hardly been made of a material other than Carrara marble and indeed this is the stone of which the *Villano* has been carved.

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[38] Mariano Santelli, *Stato antico e moderno, ovvero origine di Livorno*, vol.3 (Florence, 1772) (henceforth: Santelli 1772), p.363.

[39] Venturi 1937 (as note 22), p.254.
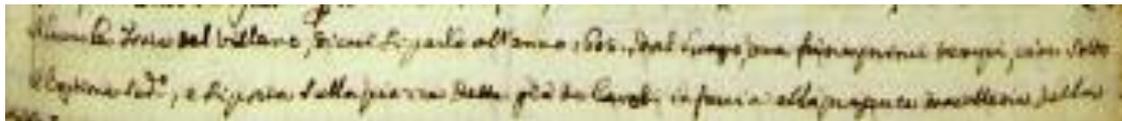
fig. 17
Livorno, Biblioteca Labronica, Ms 85, p.296

Unfortunately the author of the *Notizie di Livorno* does not reveal the date of the commission of the group to Ferrucci. It has been suggested to date it in 1605.[40] However, this is not possible: Santelli only discusses it under that year.[41]

Conversely, he offers a *terminus ante quem* for its execution: the date of the placement of the statue on that pedestal that functions as a fountain. According to a later passage in Santelli's manuscript volume, this occurred in 1628:

Si leva la Fonte del Villano, di cui si parlò all'anno 1605, dal luogo, ove fù ne primi tempi, cioè sotto il bastione suddetto, e si porta sulla piazza detta già de Cavoli in faccia alla presente Macelleria della mala carne, ove ancor si pose sopra del Piedestallo, che era il getto di detta Fonte la statua del Villano (fig. 18).[42]

[40] Brook 1991 (as note 21), p.128.

[41] Santelli (as note 26), begins his discussion oft he year 1605 at p.196.

[42] «The Fonte del Villano, which we discussed under the year 1605, is removed from the place where it stood earlier, that is under the bastion of the same name, and installed in the square called de Cavoli in front of the present Macelleria della mala carne. It was placed on the pedestal which was also the jet of the said fountain»; Santelli (as note 26), p.296-7. See also Santelli 1772 (as note 38), p.364.

According to Santelli, this pedestal was constructed by a certain «Maestro Bernardo Betti da Pistoia», on whom I could find no information.[43] By 1628 therefore the statues were completed.

But since Romolo Ferrucci died in 1621, they must date before his death. The most likely reason for their commission is the inauguration of the acqueduct of Livorno. According to Nicola Magri, the acqueduct was finished in 1607.[44] Lorenzo Fallera's *Discorso sopra i condotti e le fogne di Livorno*, a manuscript compiled during the reign of Cosimo III, argues instead for the year 1612.[45]

A dating between 1607 and 1612 appears therefore to be the most likely *terminus post quem* for what must have been an official commission, either still by Ferdinando I (reigned 1587-1609), to whose energy the expansion of Livorno was due, or by his son Cosimo II, for whom the sculptor worked, as we shall see, carving statues for the Boboli gardens.

[43] See the references in the previous note. As a reference for the construction of its pedestal by Bernardo Betti, Santelli gives a document, which I was not able to trace.

[44] Magri 1647 (as note 25), p.134: «Si finiscono questo anno li condotti dell'acqua delle vigne con le fontane della città e marina e Bagno».

[45] Renzo Mazzanti and Luciano Trumpy, «Di una pianta del '700 rappresentante l'acquedotto mediceo di Livorno», in: *Bollettino storico pisano*, LVI, 1987, pp.169-78 (henceforth: Mazzanti and Trumpy 1987): 170. See also Santelli (as note 26), p.577: «Segue l'acquedotto che da Limone conduce l'acqua a Livorno, già cominciato l'anno 1604. Termina l'anno 1612. Vedremo quest'acqua a Porta Pisa, alla Fonte del Villano, nel Bagno, all'Orto in Piazza d'Armi, alla Fortezza Vecchia, a Lavatoi e per tutto Livorno».

The oldest certain record of the fountain is included in a plan of Livorno, Giuseppe Ruggieri's *Pianta del condotto che porta l'acqua alle fonti pubbliche della città e porto di Livorno et in altri varii luoghi della medesima.* This dates from 1757 and is in a private collection, but was published by Renzo Mazzanti and Luciano Trumpy in 1987.[46] There we see the fountain close to the Darsena under no 59. And this is where it ws placed in 1628 and where Santelli still describes it in 1772:

Al presente la detta fonte è sulla cantonata della nuova stradina, che dalla malacarne conduce alla Pescherìa vecchia …, e fa facciata in Piazza detta de Cavoli, e fu ivi posta del 1628 da Maestro Bernardo Betti Muratore fatti che furono i Casamenti dall'una e dall'altra parte di detta stradina l'anno 1628.[47]

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[46] Mazzanti and Trumpy 1987 (see note 46), pl.IV.

[47] «At the present moment the said fountain is at the corner of the new street that leads from the malacarne to the Pescherìa vecchia … in the Piazza detta de Cavoli, and was placed there in 1628 by the mason Maestro Bernardo Betti, after the houses on both sides of this street were built»; Santelli 1772 (as note 38), p.364.

The pedestal is seen in three reproductions of paintings and in two old photographs published by Venturi.[48] But where the group stood before 1628 is not clear.

As we have seen, Santelli states that the fountain was located under the bastion, called «del Villano».[49] This bastion was constructed in 1496 by the countryfolk of Livorno who defended it during the siege of the city one year later by Emperor Maximilian I.[50]

To honour those Livornese peasents, the city's Florentine commander erected a fountain under the bastion and placed, according to Magri, a statue of a peasant atop, a dog standing by his side, in order to testify the countryfolk's fidelity to the Florentine Republic.[51]

[48] Venturi 1937 (as note 22), p.245, fig.1, p.251, fig.4, p.253, fig.5, p.255, fig.6, and p.257, fig.7.

[49] Santelli (as note 26), fol.197.

[50] Santelli 1772 (as note 38), p.363.

[51] Magri 1647 (as note 25), pp.94-5.

«Chi fosse Romolo del Tadda Scultore di que tempi non hò Saputo trovarlo», writes Santelli, and adds that he found a Romolo del Tadda active during the reigns of Cosimo I and Francesco referring to Vasari and Baldinucci: «ma questo è troppo lontano da tali tempi. Forse sarà sbagliato il nome. Chiarificheranno ciò i dotti Illustratori presenti della nuova edizione del Baldinucci».[52]

Moreover, it is very improbable that the Florentine Republic would have erected a monument to the countryfolk of Livorno. By all likelihood only a fountain was commissioned and this took its name from the nearby bastion which was part of the old fortress. Following the destruction of the bastion, the fountain was moved without losing its name and Ferrucci's statuary group made the connection to its origin clear.

More research is needed to reconstruct the history of the fountain but this is difficult since very few archival records pertaining to the fortification and urban planning of Livorno have come down to us.

[52] «I was not able to find who the sculptor Romolo del Tadda of those times was», «but he is too far away from those times. Perhaps the name is wrong. The learned commentators of the new edition of Baldinucci will clear this»; Santelli 1772 (as note 38), p.364.

Romolo Ferrucci del Tadda was born into a family of sculptors from Fiesole on 29 September 1544 and was baptized by no less a godfather than Niccolò Tribolo the following day.[53]

Sandro Bellesi has established that he was trained by his father Francesco whom he assisted in carving the porphyry *Justice* that Bartolomeo Ammannati had designed to crown the colossal column that stands on Piazza Santa Trinita. Begun in 1569 when Romolo was twenty-five, it was completed in 1581.

In the 1570s, Romolo – working still with his father - executed the tomb of the bishop Giovan Battista Ricasoli in Santa Maria Novella, composed of many different types of marble.

He appears as an independent artist after the death of his father in 1585. Three years later we find him working in Pisa and this suggests some kind of connection with Livorno.

However, according to a letter written by Traiano Bobba from Florence to Marcello Donati, advisor to the duke of Mantua, on 10 April 1590, Romolo had made the grottos of Pratolino and Pitti at the time of grand duke Francesco.[54] He would therefore have been familiar with Giambologna's work for Pratolino in the 1570s.

[53]The following references to the biography of Romolo Ferrucci are based on the publications by Sandro Bellesi cited in note 20.

[54] For a recent edition of this letter, see Roberta Piccinelli, *Le collezioni Gonzaga. Il carteggio tra Firenze e Mantova (1554-1626)* (Milan and Mantua, 2000), p.109, no.178.

Towards the end of the Cinquecento, garden statuary became Ferrucci's speciality. Indeed, with the exception of the *Villano* for Livorno, Ferrucci's works from the late 1590s on are garden sculptures. He also became a dog specialist and we almost expect every dog (fig.14) of the period to be by him.[55] The inclusion of a dog in the statuary group for the *Fontana del Villano* in Livorno is a kind of signature.

As an animalier, Ferrucci was sought for also outside Tuscany. He carved stone animals for the decoration of a fountain in the Gondi palace in Paris and for the duke of Mantua, for whom he is said to have executed seven animals in *pietra bigia* before 1602.

Another ‹genre› in which he specialised was coat of arms. His own coat of arms (see back cover) decorated the façade of the building where he lived and worked in the via Sant'Egidio 6, acquired probably in 1604 and situated close to the workshop and house of Giambologna in Borgo Pinti.[56]

As his activity prospered, he rose in the hierarchy of the Academia del Disegno, the Florentine artistic academy.

[55] Gabriele Capecchi, *I cani in «pietra bigia» di Romolo Ferrucci del Tadda. Simbolismo e «capriccio» nel giardino di Boboli* (Florence, 1998)

[56] Dionisio Brunori, *«L'Arme dei Cancellieri di Pistoia e Romolo Ferrucci di Fiesole»,* in: *L'illustratore fiorentino, anno 1909,* ed. by Guido Carocci (Florence, 1908), pp.158-63:162, note 2.

From the second decade of the 17th century on, Ferrucci worked mainly for the Boboli gardens in the service of grand duke Cosimo II. According to Baldinucci, he carved the group of the Saccomazzone after a model by Orazio Mochi.[57] Francesco Inghirami attributes to him rightly three over life-size sculptural versions after Jacques Callot's *Caramogi*.[58] All these sculptures were made of sandstone between 1617 and Ferrucci's death in 1621.

It is with these statues in Boboli that the *Villano* shares a series of significant points of comparison that would confirm its attribution to Ferrucci even if nothing were known about the commission of the sculptural group for Livorno.

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[57] *Il giardino di Boboli*, ed. by Litta Maria Medri (Florence, 2003), p.199 (Vanessa Montigiani).

[58] Ibid., p.198 (Vanessa Montigiani).

In the bronze *Villano* designed by Giambologna the figure rests, and he seems to meditate (fig.18). Conversely, Ferrucci's *Villano* opens his mouth as if he were in anguish and the eyes come almost out of the sockets (fig.19). Such an expression is alien to the style of Giambologna but is comparable with Ferrucci's documented sandstone statues in the Boboli gardens, the *Saccomazzone* figures and the *Caramogi* (fig.20).

In particular, the eyes of the *Villano* are reminiscent of those in the *Caramogio* (fig.20) to the right, which are of course even more expressive as the figure depends on Callot.

Similar to the above-mentioned *Caramogio* is also the design of the ears (fig 20) and the modelling of the hair in the *Villano*. The hair (fig. 21) shares also affinities with that of the two figures in the S*accomazzone* group (figs 22 and 23).

Finally, in Ferrucci's Boboli figures we find the same striations (fig. 25) on the garments as on the garments and the boots of the *Villano* (figs 24 and 26) -striations that are absent in the Giambologna-inspired bronzes and that testify, in their exemplary perfection of the line, to Ferrucci's prowess in carving.

As far as the attire of the *Villano* is concerned there is another significant point of comparison: the design of the shoes (fig.26) corresponds to that of the shoes in Ferrucci's Boboli statues (fig.27).

Ferrucci's *Villano* is not a slavish copy after Giambologna. Although the marble respects the general pose of the small bronze in Rome, Ferrucci offers a reinterpretation of his prototype.

The main difference concerns, as we have seen, the head. In the marble it is energetically turned upwards. The opening of the mouth can probably be explained by this modification as an expression connected with, or resulting from, this movement. By all likelihood, the different position of the head and the opening of the mouth were related to the commemorative character of the statue.

There are also smaller changes, as for instance in the position of the small barrel, which prove that Ferrucci rethought the composition in terms of a large marble figure. For a marble statue, the «backpack» in the small bronze was obviously too large an attribute and by eliminating it the sculptor has rendered the figure slender and its outline finer.

Ferrucci has also changed the modelling of the dress. No more angular folds appear as in Susini's small bronze.

Ferrucci's *Villano* is a masterpiece of carving. Whereas most of the details in Ferrucci's Boboli figures have lost their sharpness, the *Villano* still preserves delicately carved passages as the two hands with most of the fingers carved all round.

Ferrucci was not an inventive genius, but - like Antonio Susini, assistant to Giambologna in the production of small bronzes - he was capable of rethinking a composition of the great master in a highly original way. And, like Susini, he had a gift for exquisite finish. The rediscovery of the *Villano* adds considerably to our understanding of the impact Giambologna had on contemporary sculptors and makes us reconsider Ferrucci's position in the history of Florentine sculpture around the turn of the 17th century. It is to be hoped that it would lead to a new evaluation of his personality and artistic production.

fig. 18 Antonio Susini, *Villano* (after Giambologna), *detail,* bronze, h. 13cm
Roma, Museo Nazionale del Palazzo di Venezia
fig. 19 Romolo Ferrucci del Tadda, *Villano*, *detail*, marble, h.144cm

fig. 20 Romolo Ferrucci del Tadda, *Caramogio*, (after Jacques Callot), *detail*, sandstone
Florence, Boboli gardens

fig. 21 Romolo Ferrucci del Tadda, *Villano* (detail), marble, h.144cm

fig. 22 Romolo Ferrucci del Tadda, *Saccomazzone group,* (after Orazio Mochi), *detail,* sandstone
Florence, Boboli gardens

fig. 23 Romolo Ferrucci del Tadda, *Saccomazzone group,* (after Orazio Mochi), *detail,* sandstone
Florence, Boboli gardens

fig. 24 Romolo Ferrucci del Tadda, *Villano, detail*, marble, h.144cm

fig. 25 Romolo Ferrucci del Tadda, *Caramogio*, (after Jacques Callot), *detail*, sandstone
Florence, Boboli gardens

fig. 26 Romolo Ferrucci del Tadda, *Villano, detail*, marble, h.144cm

fig. 27 Romolo Ferrucci del Tadda, *Caramogio*, (after Jacques Callot), *detail*, sandstone
Florence, Boboli gardens

Romolo Ferrucci del Tadda (1544-1621)
Villano
white Carrara marble, h. 144 cm
provenance:
Livorno, *Fontana del Villano,* (documented prior to 1737); early 20th century collection Tamaro De Marinis, Florence

Manuscript Sources:
Zibaldone di notizie di artisti, raccolte da Filippo Baldinucci e Anton Francesco Marmi, sec. XVIIss
Firenze, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Fondo Nazionale II.II.110 , fol.367v

Magri Nicola, *Stato antico e moderno ovvero origine di Livorno in Toscana o sia cronica di Livorno di Nicola Magri frate agostiniano dal XVI secolo cristiano a tutto l'anno 1646. E fino a tutto l'anno 1770 fornita dal prete Mariano Santelli*, tomes IV and V
Livorno Biblioteca Labronica F. Guerrazzi, MS. 85, p.197-8, 484 (modern numbering)

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Photo Credits

Figs 1,3,5,7,10,11,19,21,24 and 26
Romolo Ferrucci del Tadda, *Villano*, marble, h.144cm
Photos: Arrigo Coppitz

Figs 2,4,6 and 8
Antonio Susini, *Villano* (after Giambologna), bronze, h. 13cm
Rome, Museo Nazionale del Palazzo di Venezia
Photos: Archivio fotografico della Soprintendenza Speciale per il Patrimonio Storico,
Artistico ed Etnoantropologico e per il Polo Museale della città di Roma / Arrigo Coppitz

Fig. 9
Antonio Susini, *Seatted Bagpiper,* (after Giambologna), bronze, h. 10,5cm
Rome, Museo Nazionale del Palazzo di Venezia
Photos: Archivio fotografico della Soprintendenza Speciale per il Patrimonio Storico,
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Fig. 12
Lorenzo Tommasi, *Villano and dog* (after Romolo Ferrucci del Tadda), ink and pencil on paper, 26x18cm
Livorno, Biblioteca Labronica, Ms 85 (Magri, Nicola. Ms dello Stato Antico e moderno overo origine di Livorno in Toscana o sia cronica di Livorno di Nicola Magri frate agostiniano dal XVI secolo cristiano a tutto l'anno 1646. E fino a tutto l'anno [1770] fornita dal prete Mariano Santelli, tomes IV and V), pp. 197-8
Photo: Comune di Livorno

Fig. 13
Giuseppe Maria Terreni, attributed to, *Villano and dog* (after Romolo Ferrucci del Tadda), oil on canvas, 73x59cm.
Livorno, Museo Civico Giovanni Fattori, inv. 910
Photo: Comune di Livorno

Fig. 14
Romolo Ferrucci del Tadda, *Dog*, sandstone
Florence, Boboli gardens
Photos: Arrigo Coppitz

Figs 15,16 and 17
Livorno, Biblioteca Labronica, Ms 85 (Magri, Nicola. Ms dello Stato Antico e moderno overo origine di Livorno in Toscana o sia cronica di Livorno di Nicola Magri frate agostiniano dal XVI secolo cristiano a tutto l'anno 1646. E fino a tutto l'anno [1770] fornita dal prete Mariano Santelli, tomes IV and V),p. 198, p.197, p.296
Photos: Comune di Livorno

Figs 20,25 and 27
Romolo Ferrucci del Tadda, *Caramogi*, (after Jacques Callot) sandstone
Florence, Boboli gardens
Photos: Arrigo Coppitz

Figs 22 and 23
Romolo Ferrucci del Tadda, *Saccomazzone group,* (after Orazio Mochi) sandstone
Florence, Boboli gardens
Photos: Arrigo Coppitz