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The roof architecture and the Renaissance make-up of Prague towns during the reign of the king and Emperor Ferdinand I.

ANNOTATION

During the reign of Ferdinand I (1527–1564), in the Bohemian Lands and Prague, the Renaissance began to be fully applied, being manifested in various ways. The builders, using the new architectural vocabulary, to some extent followed the characteristic motifs of medieval architecture. The tall gable ends of the houses received Renaissance features in shape of swallow tails, which still resembled the Gothic stepped gables. Similarly the earlier towers were used for new purposes such as viewing points in a form of pavilions or galleries with decorative crenellation. Other motifs of the roof architecture, giving Prague a new look, were horizontal gables, formed by semicircles or swallow tails. The town vedute present large numbers of these features, unfortunately most have since been demolished especially in the Malá Strana and Hradčany districts, newly constructed after the fire 1541.

SUMMARY

Belvederes or pavilions or "lusthauzes" were a significant part of the inventory of Prague's historic architecture. The prospects of the town, printed during the 16th and 17th centuries, illustrate the characteristic accent of the belvederes rising above the roofs of the houses in Prague of that period. This significant architectural element became common in the town relatively early, during the reign of Ferdinand I (1527–1564), and stayed alive into the 18th century. Besides, the roof architecture of Prague towns during Ferdinand's period was significantly modified by elaborately formed facades, usually of two types: horizontally finished gables and stepped culminating gables. While the first type soon afterwards faded from fashion in Prague, we could not imagine this largest Bohemian town without multi-tier gables of various forms. Both types of the roof architecture, the pavilions and the gables, significantly changed the face of the town providing its Renaissance "make-up". Since almost all of these earliest forms of Prague Renaissance roof architecture have long been demolished, they have not received thorough attention yet. This article, presenting them comprehensively for the first time on the basis of vedute, indicates that the Prague gables represented the remarkable equivalent to the well-known phenomenon of the Pernštejn architecture. The Prague pavilions developed into a motif rare by its wide occurrence not only in Bohemia, but within central Europe.

The town appearance of that period is, apart from the physical remains, preserved in unique iconographic sources such as the prospect of Prague from 1562 by Jan Kozel and Michael Peterle of Annaberg, the painting of the invasion of the Malá Strana by the Passau troops by Paulus van Vianena, or the drawing of the upper part of the Malostranské Square by Roelandt Savery, but also later plans of alterations of Renaissance buildings.

As early as 1529 Václav of Viteneč gained permission to modify the old rampart tower at Hradčany to a "lusthauz". The pavilion built on the top of this tower, with a modification required after the fire of Hradčany and Malá Strana in 1541, formed a prominent feature of the town and probably became a model for other Prague pavilions. The tower probably had earlier crenellation shaped into semicircles, and since the 1520s and 30s this motif also embellished other Prague viewing points and horizontal gable ends of houses. Semicirles and quarters of semicircles were also used for the embellishment of the stepped gables, which follow the medieval tradition. The semi-circular motifs, characteristic for the Pernštejn architecture in east Bohemia, were probably largely used in Prague at the same time as in Pardubice (after the 1538 fire) and Nové Město nad Metují (after the 1526 fire). The latest Renaissance gable type in Prague with volutes on the sides was first used on the royal constructions within Prague Castle, reconstructed after the fire in 1541. In the reign of Ferdinand I the Prague towns were thus embellished by very variable roof architecture mostly concentrated in the upper part of the Malostranské Square.

Remarkably, the ambitious investors, who introduced the modern architectural motifs in the early period of Prague Renaissance, were mostly unknown burghers, to the contrary of the later period when this role in Prague was taken by the nobility.

Fig. 1. Jan Kozel (Joannes Caper) / Michael Peterle of Annaberg, 1562: PRAGA BOHEMIAE METROPOLIS ACCVRATISSIME EXPRESSA 1.5.6.2. Complex, woodcut (scan of a black and white reprint from 1904 (NPÚ GnŘ, collection of plans, ev. n. PPOP 994-5-4558).

Fig. 2. Jan Kozel / Michael Peterle, 1562: Panoramatic view of Prague. Detail of a tower in Hradčany by the Strahov gate in the garden of the house belonging to Ondřej Ungnad of Sunek and on Hluboká, modified in 1549–1555, earlier owned by Václav of Viteneč, who altered the tower to a belvedere around 1529; currently Trauttmansdorff palace, No. 180/IV (NPÚ GnŘ, collection of plans, ev. n. PPOP 994-5-4558).

Fig. 3. Jan Kozel / Michael Peterle, 1562: Panoramatic view of Prague. Detail of the belvedere in the royal garden with the roof projected by Bonifaz Wohlmut from 1555, completed around 1562, captured by Peterle as the new element in the panorama of the royal town (NPÚ GnŘ, collection of plans, ev. n. PPOP 994-5-4558).

Fig. 4. Jan Josef Dietzler († 1744), 1733: view of the third castle courtyard of Prague Castle prior to the Theresian modification. Detail of the façade of the western wing of the Old royal palace and the entrance staircase from the period around 1548, after the proposal by Paolo della Stella. Ink drawing, 620 × 295 mm (copied from Podlaha 1920/1921, tab. XIX).

Fig. 5. Ząbkowice Śląskie castle (Frankenstein) in Silesia, built in 1524–1530. The entrance tower with the crenellation shaped into semicircles in the east wing was built before 1529 after the project by Benedikt Ried: **A** – aerial view (photo Wlodek O, 2016; accessible on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=SQzMZO2p-ug> [vid. 2018-10-23]); **B** – the walls with the tower (photo © Arkadiusz Kuć, 2017; accessible on <https://wroclaw.fotopolska.eu/1046867,foto.html?o=b15678> [vid. 2018-10-23]).

Fig. 6. Josef Hener / Carl Platzer, 1791: Plan of the first floor of the Trauttmansdorff palace, No 180 at Hradčany (ÚDU AV ČR, inv. n. 05148; photo © Z. Matyásko – Institute of the art history AV ČR, 2014).

Fig. 7. Prague 1-Hradčany, No. 180, Loretánská 6, currently Trauttmansdorff palace. The groundplan reconstruction of the house of Ondřej Ungnad of Sunek and on Hluboká (modification in 1549–1555), formerly the house of Václav of Viteneč, who had the tower by the Strahov gate, altered to a belvedere around 1529. Legend: **1** – Strahov gate; **2** – probable site of the house of Václav of Viteneč; **3** – the rampart tower, possible site of the belvedere; **4–5** – parts of the house At The White Ostrich; **6** – the front garden; **7** – the rear garden; **8** – presumed alley to the house At The White Ostrich (drawing P. Uličný, 2018).

Fig. 8. Jan Kozel / Michael Peterle, 1562: Panoramatic view of Prague. Detail of the tower of Samuels' house in the Old Town, modified possibly in 1535–1538, on the site of today's Clam-Gallas palace, No. 158 (NPÚ GnŘ, collection of plans, ev. n. PPOP 994-5-4558).

Fig. 9. Kašpar Bechteler, before 1630: The Escape of the Winter King Frederick V through the streets of Malá Strana on the 9th November 1620. St. Vitus Cathedral, between the north arcades of the presbytery (125 × 455 cm). Detail with the tower of Samuels' house in the Old Town (on the left from the north tower of Holy Saviour's Church, modified in 1583–1592 (today's Clam-Gallas palace, No. 158; photo P. Uličný, 2013).

Fig. 10. Giacomo Antonio Canevalle (before 1660–1731), before 1713: Plan of the façade of Samuels' house in the Old Town, today's Clam-Gallas palace, No. 158. The drawing chaptures the state of the façade prior to the high Baroque modification. Coloured ink drawing on paper, 447 × 616 mm (Prague City Archives, Collection of Maps and Plans, Clam-Gallas palace – documentation of the palace, without sign.).

Fig. 11. Tomáš Haffenecker, 1738: Prague Castle, former Rosenberg palace. Plan of the northern façade of the eastern part (Prague City Archives, The Old plan colletion, sign. 125, inv. n. 13, photo O. Přibyl, 2011).

Fig. 12. Jan Kozel / Michael Peterle, 1562: Panoramatic view of Prague. Detail of the Rosenberg palace at Prague Castle, later the Theresian Institute of The Noblewomen, No. 2 (NPÚ GnŘ, collection of plans, ev. n. PPOP 994-5-4558).

Fig. 13. Jan Kozel / Michael Peterle, 1562: Panoramatic view of Prague. Detail of the palace of the physician Jan Kopp of Raumenthal on the southern side of Karlovo Square on today's site of Faust's house in the New Town, No. 502 (NPÚ GnŘ, collection of plans, ev. n. PPOP 994-5-4558).

Fig. 14. Philipp van den Bossche / Johannes Wechter / Aegidius Sadeler, 1606: PRAGA. So called Sadeler's great prospect of Prague – a section: The Old Town Square. Copper engraving, etching, part 5. Trčkov palace at the Old Town Square, today's Golz-Kinský palace, No. 606 (scan of a reproduction in Bossche/Wechter/Sadeler 1973).

Fig. 15. Jan Kozel / Michael Peterle, 1562: Panoramatic view of Prague. Detail of the Malostranské Square (NPÚ GnŘ, collection of plans, ev. n. PPOP 994-5-4558).

Fig. 16. Jan Kozel / Michael Peterle, 1562: Panoramatic View of Prague. In the background the detail of the house

of Andreas Teyffle of Zeilberk on the site of the former Martinic palace, No. 67, at Hradčany (NPÚ GnŘ, collection of plans, ev. n. PPOP 994-5-4558).

Fig. 17. Jan Kozel / Michael Peterle, 1562: Panoramatic View of Prague. Detail of an unknown house in the New Town of Prague, somewhere between the church of The Snowed Virgin Mary and the New Town Hall (NPÚ GnŘ, collection of plans, ev. n. PPOP 994-5-4558).

Fig. 18. Jan Kozel / Michael Peterle, 1562: Panoramatic View of Prague. Detail of a house in The Cattle market (Karlovo Square) on the site of the later Jesuit college No. 504 in The New Town (NPÚ GnŘ, collection of plans, ev. n. PPOP 994-5-4558).

Fig. 19. Pardubice-Old Town, No. 6, Příhrádek. The rear side of a house from the 16th century with a horizontal finish, but with the semicircles placed in turns in two tiers (photo M. Krištof, 2018).

Fig. 20. Pardubice-Old Town, Bartolomějská No. 116. The façade of a house with low laid semicircles on the sides of the gable; the central row of four semicircles forms a motif widely used in Prague (photo M. Krištof, 2018).

Fig. 21. Pardubice-Old Town, Zelenobranská No. 76, the forfield of the Green gate. A gable from the period after 1538, covered by a wooden superstructe, dendrochronologicaly dated to 1541/1542 (photo M. Krištof, 2018).

Fig. 22. Hradec Králové, house No. 83 at the Prague Gate on an engraving by Karl Liebscher (copied from SEDLÁČEK 1883, 226).

Fig. 23. Master of the Slavětín altar, 1531: a wing of the Utraquist altar of the Christ's Passion and Celebration in St James the Larger church in Slavětín by Louny. Detail of the Ecce homo scene with a house with a swallow-tailed gable. Tempera on wooden board, Litoměřice (?; Slavětín Roman Catholic Parish: depository of The Archdiocese of Prague; photo A. Holasová, 2016).

Fig. 24. Litoměřice-Town, No. 171, Mírové Square 40. The façade of the old town hall from 1537–1539 with richly composed gables with four storeys including the semi-circular motifs turned inwards (photo P. Gutová, 2018).

Fig. 25. Jan Kozel / Michael Peterle, 1562: Panoramatic view of Prague. Detail of a house at Vyšehrad next to the Old provostry, No. 69 (NPÚ GnŘ, collection of plans, ev. n. PPOP 994-5-4558).

Fig. 26. Prague 1-Old Town, No. 604, The Old Town Square, the school at Týn. The façade with a pair of finely profiled gables, probably built after 1562 (photo L. Bartoš, 2016).

Fig. 27. Prague 1-Old Town, No. 156, At The Black Snake (originally At The Keys), Husova 21. A house with a pair of gables from 1560s or 1570s, certainly prior to 1579 (photo P. Havlík, 2018).

Fig. 28. Paulus van Vianen (around 1570–1613), 1611: The Invasion of Prague by the Passau troops in 1611. The view of the lower part of Malostranské Square and Mostecká Street with a four storey gable on the house No. 267/III. Oil on wood, 24 × 34 cm (Münster, Westfälisches Landesmuseum für Kunst und Kulturgeschichte, permanent loan from a Westphalian private collection, inv. n. 1819 LG).

Fig. 29. Prague 1-Hradčany Prague Castle. The eastern gable of the Vladislav Hall dated to 1546: **A** – reduced model of the gable for exhibition purposes, currently in the depositary of Prague Castle (copied from ŠAMÁNKOVÁ 1961, fig. 60); **B** – restored original gable below the roof of All Saints' church (photo P. Chotěbor, 2018).

Fig. 30. Jan Kozel / Michael Peterle, 1562: Panoramatic view of Prague. Detail of the façade of the western wing of the Old Royal Palace at Prague Castle (NPÚ GnŘ, collection of plans, ev. n. PPOP 994-5-4558).

Fig. 31. Václav Hollar (1607–1677), 1649, after the drawing from 1636: PRAGA. View of Prague from the gardens below Petřín (from the southwest). Detail of the upper part of the Malostranské Square. Etching, 325 × 1144 mm (Prague City Archives, Collection of graphics, sign. G 27 a).

Fig. 32. Roelandt Savery (1576–1639), around 1608: The upper part of Malostranské Square, view from the northwest. Drawing, 170 × 240 mm (Leipzig, Museum der bildenden Künste, inv. n. l. 417).

Fig. 33. Jan Kozel / Michael Peterle, 1562: Panoramatic view of Prague. Detail of a house with a couple of corner turrets from the period before 1530 in Karmelitská Street at Újezd, No. 386, currently the Rohan palace (NPÚ GnŘ, collection of plans, ev. n. PPOP 994-5-4558).

Fig. 34. Prague 1-Hradčany, No. 185, Hradčanské Square, 2nd Lobkovic (currently Schwarzenberg) palace, view from the northwest (photo I. P. Muchka, 2003).

Translated by Linda and Patrick Foster