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Autor(en): **Piccoli, Edoardo**

Objekttyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **gta papers**

Band (Jahr): **6 (2021)**

PDF erstellt am: **21.06.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-1007009>

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The Turin Cornice

Edoardo Piccoli

In early modern Turin, the architectural cornice developed a peculiar relationship to the urban fabric. ¹ While each cornice undeniably belongs to an individual building, the cornice's role became civic, characterized by its interaction with streets, crossroads, and squares. Leaping from building to building, turning corners, unifying facades of different design, connecting city blocks, the cornice was never purely decorative nor just a technical feature (the architectural term for the projection of the roof over the rim of the facade). Silhouetted against the sky, the cornice unfolded as a shaded line of varying thickness; it framed the sky and mirrored the regular plan of the city at a fixed height.

A standard feature of ducal urbanism, the continuous cornice may be considered a politically charged architectural statement, its regularity a measure of the respect for decrees and regulations that strove to ensure order. As a signifier of architectural decorum, the continuous cornice was an emblem of the duke's power over his subjects. The cornice also functioned as a demarcation line between jurisdictions: it highlighted the gap between the regulated new town and the irregular urban fabric of the old city; it separated the street from private courtyards, gardens, and alleys, where state rules did not apply. It also separated the street from the space above it: a roofscape where domes, spires, and towers marked the position of the religious and political powers at play within Turin's urban chessboard.

Little does it matter that the cornice, examined at close range, is rarely as uniform or as regular as it might appear from a distance. Together with other serial architectural elements — the arcades, the pedimented window frames, the tiled roofs — the cornice has played a role in the construction of Turin's stereotypical definition of a quintessentially regular city, "planned by a royal architect, whose subjects, of equal wealth and station, were already made for his buildings, and not ... grown ... out of the varied circumstances and conditions of human life." ²

Such a definition of the Turin cornice is highly idealized. It requires us to consider the city in its totality, as a space dominated by vision and characterized by a persuasive and political use of images. As Giulio Carlo Argan argues in *The Europe of the Capitals*, this idealized point of view is justified: "Law, order, uniformity ... are special products of the baroque capital." ³ The fact that the relatively small Savoyard city has become an "ideal case study for politicized space in early modern Europe" is largely due to the ducal court's early understanding of the political use of urban reform and of the persuasive function of carefully crafted urban representations. ⁴

Edoardo Piccoli teaches architectural history at Politecnico di Torino, Italy.

¹ Augusto Cavallari Murat, "I cornicioni come disegno unificativo nella scena," in *Forma urbana e architettura nella Torino barocca*, 3 vols. (Turin: Utet, 1968), 1:158–67; Martha Pollak, *Turin 1564–1680: Urban Design, Military Culture, and the Creation of the Absolutist Capital* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); Franco Rosso, "Controllo architettonico e urbanistico a Torino: Il Conseil des Édiles e le sue origini, 1562–1814," in *All'ombra dell'aquila imperiale: Trasformazioni e continuità istituzionali nei territori sabaudi in età napoleonica (1802–1814)*, 2 vols. (Rome: Ministero per i beni culturali e ambientali, Ufficio centrale per i beni archivistici, 1994), 2:610–58; Giuseppe Dardanella, "La scena urbana," in *Torino 1675–1699: Strategie e conflitti del barocco*, ed. Giovanni Romano (Turin: Fondazione CRT, 1993), 15–63; Stephan Albrecht and Thomas Wilke, *Turin: Die Erfindung der Hauptstadt* (Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2017).

² [Richard Duppa], *Miscellaneous Observations and Opinions on the Continent* (London: McCreery, 1825), 177.

³ Giulio Carlo Argan, *The Europe of the Capitals* (Geneva: Skira, 1965), 42, quoting Lewis Mumford, *The Culture of Cities* (London: Harcourt, Brace, 1938).

⁴ John Beldon Scott, "Fashioning a Capital: The Politics of Urban Space in Early Modern Turin," in *The Politics of Space: European Courts: ca. 1500–1750*, ed. Marcello Fantoni, George Gorse, and Malcolm Smuts (Rome: Bulzoni, 2009), 143–72; Andrea Merlotti, "Corte e città: L'immagine di Torino tra sei e ottocento," in *La città nel settecento*, ed. Marina Formica, Andrea Merlotti, and Anna Maria Rao (Rome: ESL, 2014), 247–67.

The Reductionist Cornice

As a young assistant to the ducal architect Amedeo di Castellamonte, Giovanni Francesco Baroncelli routinely copied drawings from his master's collection. In 1666 these included a portfolio of Roman drawings, originally executed by his master's father, Carlo. In one of them, a cornice from Sangallo's St. Peter model is carefully, if not very skillfully, rendered, with a ceiling plan and elevation. ⁵ With its block-like modillions supporting a simple projecting corona, the design of this cornice is both powerful and elementary. Baroncelli's drawing, and his later use of the model, with slight variations, in his San Francesco da Paola church, reflect a common feature of Turin's urban cornice: the reduction of a complex element to its fundamental constituents with minimal formal articulation, favoring repetition and copy. **fig. 1**

⁵ Giovanni Francesco Baroncelli, "Cornicione che gira sopra i quattro Archi che sostentano la tribuna del modello di S. Pietro fatta dal Sangallo," *Inventioni d'ornamenti ...* (1666), in ETH-Bibliothek, Zurich, RAR 3261 GF; Mauro Volpiano, "Carlo di Castellamonte a Roma: Studio e rilievo dell'architettura," in *Carlo e Amedeo di Castellamonte: 1571–1683, ingegneri e architetti per i duchi di Savoia*, ed. Andrea Merlotti and Costanza Roggero (Rome: Campisano, 2015), 81–95.

fig. 1 Left: Giovanni Francesco Baroncelli, cornice from *Inventioni d'ornamenti ...* (1666) Source: ETH-Bibliothek, Zurich, RAR 3261 GF Right: detail of the cornice on the north-west side of the church of San Francesco da Paola Photograph: Pino Dell'Aquila, 2020



Even the earliest experiments in ducal urbanism, such as Vincenzo Scamozzi's designs for the main street of the new city, Contrada Nuova, were characterized by a reductionist attitude. This attitude also applies to the early facade models made by ducal engineers. Simplified versions of the classical cornice appeared, based on the combination of thin, flattened architraves, packed rows of consoles in the space of the frieze, and slender coronas. Surviving sketches from the drawing boards of seventeenth-century ducal architects allow us some insight into the development of this simplified language. ⁶

On inspection, the schemes for urban facades seem to be closely connected with the designs for the long and monotonous galleries and wings of urban and suburban ducal residences, thus suggesting the identification of the capital city with an extended version of a ducal palace. Given the challenge of building large-scale urban ensembles, uniformity and formal restraint offered

⁶ The connection between the urban projects and a set of drawings for ducal residences in the Archivio Savoia-Carignano was first pointed out in Giuseppe Dardanella, "La scena".

practical advantages. Ornaments—such as sculpted brackets and low-relief stucco decorations in the frieze—became rare and were reserved for the most important buildings. Repetitive, simplified cornices were also well adapted to local brickwork construction techniques, usually based on the use of brick consoles supporting a single stone slab forming the base of a cut or molded brick corona. ⁷ Even on nonplastered facades (and these included important public buildings such as the General Hospital of San Giovanni), a *cornice rustica* would blend in easily with the urban landscape, providing onlookers with the promise of a regular and permanent, if not yet completely achieved, architectural form.

⁷ Cavallari Murat, *Forma urbana*, 1:158–67.

Repetition Idealized

Turin's early history as a modern capital is marked by the production of state-sponsored images in which the regularity of the ducal city was systematically enhanced, as if a physiognomic element in a portrait. ⁸ The aesthetic value of the continuous cornice, framing the spaces of the new square and connected *stradone*, is emphasized in the earliest pictorial records that focus on the areas near the ducal palace. The standard was set in 1682 with the pseudo-axonometric views of Turin's city center included in the *Theatrum Sabaudiae*, a grandiose state-sponsored atlas printed in Amsterdam that celebrated the cities and monuments of the Savoyard state. ⁹ **fig. 2**

⁸ Barbara Bertini Casadio and Isabella Ricci Massabò, eds., *I rami incisi dell'Archivio di Corte: Sovrani, battaglie, architetture, toponomastica* (Turin: Archivio di Stato di Torino, 1981).

⁹ Johannes Blaeu, *Theatrum statuum regiae celsitudinis Sabaudiae ducis*, 2 vols. (Amsterdam: Blaeu, 1682), I.



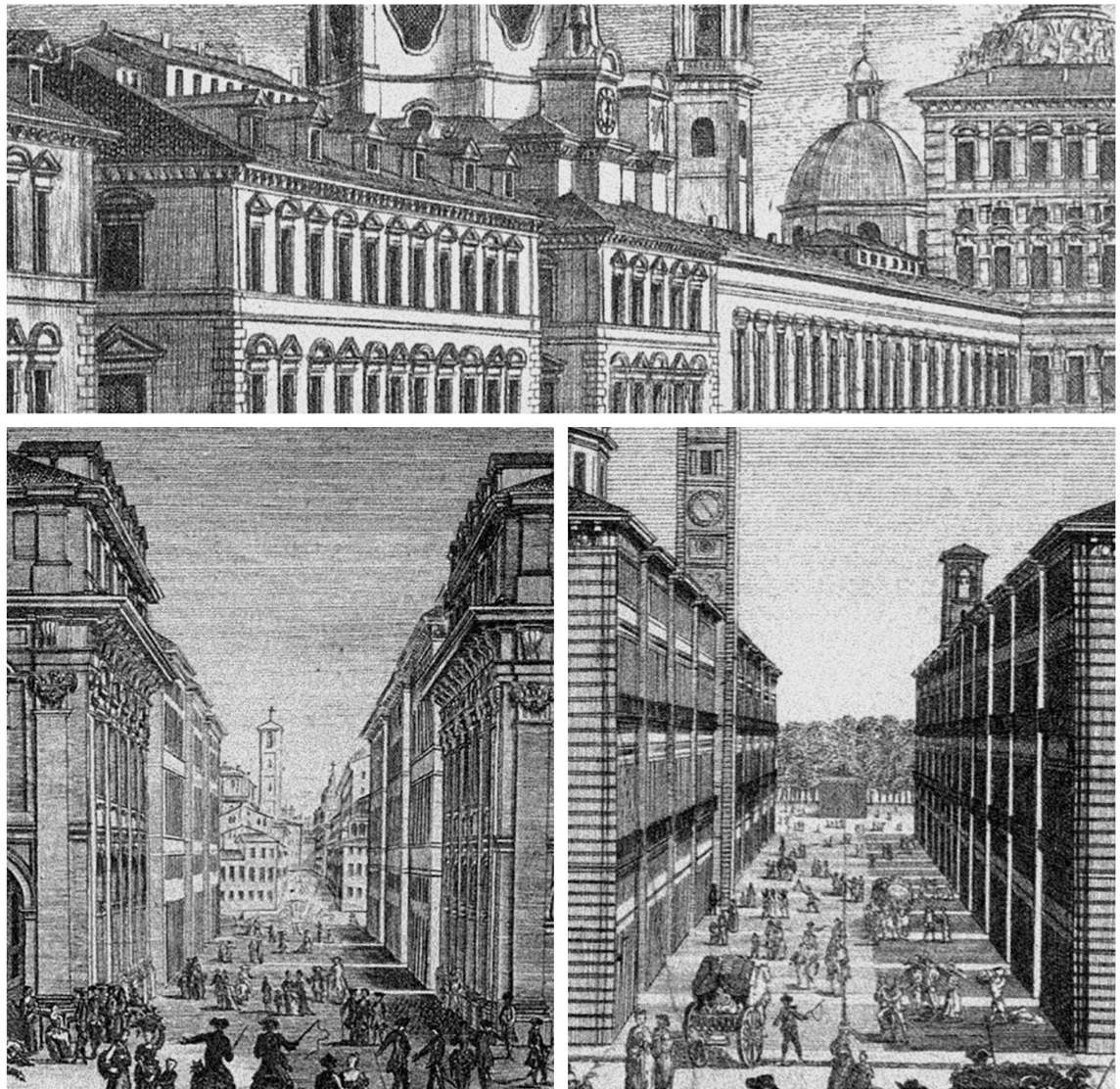
On the monotonous—and at the time of the *Theatrum's* publication, mostly unbuilt—urban facades rising from the regularly planned grid of the *città nuova*, the cornice appeared an almost mechanical element: a beam of zigzagging parallel lines, or a toothed gear, unrolled on the buildings by a giant cogwheel. Also effective in defining Turin's image until

fig. 2 Fictional view of the new city centre around Piazza Castello, from *Theatrum Sabaudiae* (Amsterdam, 1682), detail
Source: Sistema Bibliotecario del Politecnico di Torino

the rise of photography were groups of perspective views, including those depicted in the *Theatrum* and those later produced by Giovanni Battista Borra and Ignazio Sclopis di Borgostura. ¹⁰ **fig. 3** The cornices, rendered by shaded lines punctuated with the rhythmic vertical chiaroscuro of the consoles, guide the eye down squares and *stradoni* toward city gates and princely palaces.

¹⁰ Giovanni Battista Borra, *Vedute principali di Torino* (Turin, 1749); Ignazio Sclopis di Borgostura, *Vedute della città di Torino* (Turin, 1775–1777).

fig. 3 Three perspective views of Turin, details (from top to bottom, left to right): Piazza Castello, looking towards the Royal Palace, 1749, by Giovanni Battista Borra; the city entrance from Via del Carmine framed by Filippo Juvarra's Quartieri Militari, by Ignazio Sclopis del Borgo, ca. 1775; fictional view of Via Dora Grossa, now Via Garibaldi, by Ignazio Sclopis del Borgo, ca. 1775
 Source: Archivio Storico della Città di Torino



Nothing disrupts the unity of these streetscapes, whose view-point shifts progressively to reflect the most recent ducal projects: the gaze moves from Strada Nuova to Piazza San Carlo, to the half-mile-long Stradone di Po, to the eighteenth-century Via del Carmine and Via di Dora Grossa. In all of these images, Turin is pictured as perfectly formed and impeccably organized: an emblem of control where private architecture “finds its value in the continuity of the series.”¹¹ Differences in height, unfinished buildings, or unaligned houses — real-life reminders of the unachieved nature of many ducal projects — were systematically ignored.¹²

¹¹ Giulio Carlo Argan, *L'Europa delle capitali* (Geneva: Fabbri/Skira, 1965), 36.

¹² Even more so, when the city became the backdrop for dynastic events like the duke's funeral procession in 1675. See Pollak, *Turin*, 242.

This carefully crafted visual message was to reach a far wider public than the Savoy court could have imagined, as the official pictures segued into the production of those commercial images that flooded the European market in the eighteenth century. In *vues d'optique* and in the postcard-like vignettes in illustrated books of every kind, the “regular” fortifications, street facades, arcades, and continuous cornices of Turin were copied and recomposed in a stream of images celebrating the capital's architectural unity. Their efficacy is revealed in the comments of eighteenth-century

grand tourists, who routinely began their experience in Turin by comparing it with the *ville régulière* they had repeatedly seen and read about in atlases, guidebooks, and engravings. By “discovering the city they had been trained to expect,” their reactions proved to the ducal court that the investment had paid off. ¹³

¹³ Rosemary Sweet, *Cities and the Grand Tour: The British in Italy, c. 1690–1820* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 21.

Cornice by Decree

Even though the ambitions of ducal control over the city were made clear at an early stage, the claim that in Turin “every aspect of planning” was always firmly under the control of the court and its engineers does not hold. ¹⁴ For almost a century after the transfer of the capital to Turin in 1563, the new city was designed in an incremental, additive manner. Main streets and squares were formed through a sequence of coherent but localized designs that were to be patiently welded together in a continuous system only in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. While some general principles were fixed relatively soon – notably the way new building plots were to be traced and developed with rigorously aligned constructions – unequivocal norms on building measures, heights, and other formal specifications were conspicuously absent throughout the seventeenth century. The court led by example, not by the rulebook, and urban control largely rested on personal authority and direct intervention. Ad hoc negotiation on complex building matters was commonplace.

¹⁴ Anthony L. Cardoza and Geoffrey W. Symcox, *A History of Turin* (Turin: Einaudi, 2006), 120. For more on this topic, see Cavallari Murat, *Forma urbana*; Rosso, “Controllo architettonico”.

Even when the second city extension was launched in 1683, and new institutional positions were created to manage it shortly thereafter, the ducal decree for this new *ampliamento* was largely based on negotiable rules. Despite the rhetoric calling for uniformity and urban decorum, no fixed measure was given for building height, ambiguously set to “three floors” on all public streets. ¹⁵ The construction of Palazzo Graneri shows how this rule could be adapted to reflect the status of the residence of a state minister. ¹⁶ While nominally the palazzo is three stories tall, its floor-to-floor height allows the use of mezzanines, which did not legally count as additional levels. The building’s sculpted cornice, spanning the street facade and turning inward on the corners, towered above the neighboring rental houses, whose own cornices gently leaned against the rusticated edges of the palazzo’s wall. Free from interferences, Palazzo Graneri’s profile developed in complete autonomy. The truly baroque corner “fold,” with its vertically stacked forms and dynamic, three-dimensional character, expressed both the palazzo’s dominance and its penetration deep into the city block. Further hierarchies were established as the sculpted stones of the cornice on the street front gave way, on the sides, to more modest brickwork

¹⁵ The planners in Turin would have known of the 1667 Paris *ordonnance* that had set the maximum height of buildings at precisely 48 feet. See Jean-François Cabestan, *La conquête du plain-pied: L’immeuble à Paris au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Picard, 2004), 94–128.

¹⁶ Lorenzo Carlo Castello, *Palazzo Graneri* (Turin: Daniela Piazza, 1991).

consoles and moldings. Above the roof, and visible from the street, a belvedere turret overlooking the *città nuova* still stands today as a sign of the Graneri household's privileges.

Even if few other palace designs could afford to be as bold, and rows of uniform facades slowly rose in other parts of the *ampliamento* (the new city extension), notably in the celebrated Stradone di Po, the isotropic city dreamt of by court intellectuals and pictured in the views of the *Theatrum* never fully materialized. ¹⁷

The onset of administrative reforms in the early 1700s, when the duchy was granted the upgrade to royal status, led to more explicitly normative regulation: the eloquent, but hardly precise, ducal decrees of the 1600s were replaced with more impersonal, and more detailed, royal legislation. In a 1729 *Manifesto*, signed by the *vicario* in charge of urban police, the mandatory use of the cornice (along with the prohibition of its nemesis, the humble wooden overhang, or *pantalera*) was finally made explicit:

"all owners of houses, in the main streets as well as in secondary streets ... must, in future constructions or in the reconstruction of existing properties, avoid roofs with overhanging eaves; they must use, instead, full cornices or continuous horizontal moldings, with proper metal gutters." ¹⁸

Furthermore, all houses facing the street had to keep "the same elevation, and continuity of cornice." ¹⁹

Royal authority had spoken, and there would be no turning back. The rules would be repeated and upheld, with minimal variations, in Turin urban regulations well into the nineteenth century. ²⁰ The 1729 manifesto, written under the supervision of First Architect Filippo Juvarra, was not intended for Turin's *città nuova*. The age of the extensions to Turin's perimeter had come to an end, and royal urbanism had turned its attention toward the alleys of the *città vecchia*.

The Inhabited Cornice and the Economic Life of the City

Population growth, along with the demand for rental housing and commercial space, were powerful forces that shaped Turin, as well as other European eighteenth-century cities. ²¹ The 1729 realignment of a street leading from the city hall to one of the gates launched a new epoch of public urbanism, centered on the renovation of the old town. Further decrees in 1736 and 1755 extended realignment rules to most of the ancient urban grid. As the demolition and reconstruction of old houses was activated by tax exemptions and the buildings' maximum height was progressively increased, Turin's population climbed toward the now highly rentable roofs and attics. Whenever possible, developers

¹⁷ On the Stradone di Po, see Martha Pollak, "The Architecture of Power and Dynastic Edification: Turin's Contrada di Po as Theater and Stradone," in *An Architectural Progress in the Renaissance and Baroque*, ed. Henry Millon and Susan S. Munshower (University Park: Penn State University Press, 1992), 478–96.

¹⁸ The full document is published in Cavallari Murat, *Forma urbana*, 2:481–82.

¹⁹ Murat, *Forma urbana*, 2:481–82.

²⁰ "Le fronti delle case prospicienti vie pubbliche deggiono essere debitamente ... coronate di regolare cornice, ed è proibito protendere i coperti a pantalera, e di costruire in dette fronti scale esterne, cessi e bussole ... nel caso poi di abbellimento o di essenziali restauri alla facciata ... di qualche edificio, si devono contemporaneamente sopprimere i balconi in legno, le bussole da cesso, ed i coperti a forma di pantalera." Benedetto Operti, *Raccolta delle leggi e dei regolamenti di polizia vigenti per la città di Torino* (Turin: Eredi Botta, 1847), 29–30.

²¹ Donatella Balani, *Sviluppo demografico e trasformazioni sociali nel Settecento*, in *Storia di Torino V: Dalla città razionale alla crisi dello Stato di Antico Regime (1730–1798)*, ed. Giuseppe Ricuperati (Turin: Einaudi, 1995), 625–88; Marialuisa Marinetti, "Case e denaro: Grandi e piccoli proprietari urbani nella Torino del Settecento: Indagine su una fonte seriale del 1743," *Atti e rassegna tecnica della S.I.A.T.* 73, no. 2 (September 2019): 41–51.

rebuilt ancient properties on the new alignments, wedging in an additional story under the roof, behind the entablature and cornices of the facade. Windows became a common sight in the frieze or between consoles, shaded by projecting coronas.

In Juvarra's 1729 design for the street and squares leading to Porta Palazzo, high-rise and high-density lodgings were combined. Juvarra used a giant Doric order throughout, as a symbol of royalty. **fig. 4** High above the crowded market area, the metopes in the giant entablature were stretched downward between pilasters, allowing full-size windows to be opened



fig. 4 Giovanni Michele Graneri, *The Market Square in Porta Palazzo, Turin*, ca. 1749–1756, 159.5 × 212.5 cm
Source: Archivio Fotografico Fondazione Accorsi-Ometto, Turin, D-127

for the workers' apartments behind them. Juvarra's inventive approach to classicism was given an ironic finishing touch, as the heraldic symbols and mythical battles of the Doric frieze were re-placed with scenes from a living theater: the voices of family quarrels, and children's heads looking down to the busy streets. ²² Juvarra's lively combinations of architectural elements — mastered through drawings and albums whose quality eclipsed that of its predecessors, such as Baroncelli — showed how the austerity of seventeenth-century facades could give way to more dynamic and decorated cornice designs, in line with the evolution of early eighteenth-century taste. ²³

Juvarra's giant cornices, however recognizable, would not constitute a new standard. The eighteenth-century cornice in Turin took many forms, each revealing a different process connected to the city's growth. The inhabited frieze spoke of urban density; the segmented profile of a gutter hinted at the complicated legal agreements that were necessary for the successful joining of several medieval plots into a new building. ²⁴ As a wave of

22 Porta Palazzo's adaptive design is quite distant from the uncompromising classicism displayed in the French *places royales* (and glacially resurfacing in Ricardo Bofill's late-twentieth-century projects in Paris, Cergy, and Montpellier, all with oversize inhabited cornices). Raguzzini's Piazza Sant'Ignazio in Rome (1727–1728) is a closer relative to Juvarra's 1729 project.

23 The 1725 manuscript album by Filippo Juvarra, *Studio d'architettura sopra gl'ornamenti di porte e finestre* (now in the Fondazione Antonio Maria e Mariella Marocco, Turin) displays no fewer than ten "*cornicioni con finestre*" and ten "*altri cornicioni*," out of a total of 121 drawings of architectural elements.

24 Edoardo Piccoli, "Palazzo d'Arcour o le astuzie della grossazione," *Atti e rassegna tecnica della S.I.A.T.* 70, no. 1–3 (December 2016), 11–18.

sopraelevazioni swept over both the old and new city, double cornices appeared, the visible result of the addition of an extra story to recent, and already aligned, constructions. Within this variety, conflict and litigation left their mark: on property lines and party walls, cornices were unexpectedly truncated; gutters of adjoining buildings became misaligned by a few inches.

In the end, both the myth and the substance of Turin's eighteenth-century townscape are largely the result of evolving urban economies. As in Dublin or Paris, profit proved to be the best incentive to a perfect alignment. Compact, linear blocks of rental houses erected to the maximum possible height were built under all kinds of ownership, filling in the gaps of the ducal city and the alleys and market squares of the old town. Real estate developments included the reconstruction of the area around the town hall, the saturation of convent enclosures in the *città nuova*, and the old town redevelopment of the ancient Decumanus: the Via Dora Grossa. While in some of these sites the expressive role of architectural elements, including the cornice, was reduced to a bare minimum so as to achieve "decorum by the simplest means possible," Via Dora Grossa's buildings are sometimes exuberant in their design, displaying an unusual balance between continuity and variety. ²⁵ This can be explained by the exceptional conditions of this urban development. Because of the symbolic relevance of the street, on axis with the Queen's Palace, and its intended use as a commercial showcase for the kingdom's manufactured goods, the realignment was painstakingly micromanaged by the public administration and by ad hoc commissions for about seventy-five years. ²⁶ While no standard elevation was set, rules drafted in 1739 ordered that, in each block, all houses facing the street had to copy the facade and cornice of the first building to be realigned, so to "appear as one." ²⁷ This definition of each block as an independent and yet internally coherent unit proved to be better adapted to a piecemeal process of realignment than the monotonous and rigidly uniform *stradoni* designs of the previous century. As each house slowly aligned to its neighbors, continuous cornices sealed each block, corner to corner. By the late 1770s the operation was declared a success, and celebrated by Borgostura with a perspective view, unrealistic in its perfection, and therefore in perfect continuity with the official tradition.

²⁵ Conor Lucey, *Building Reputations: Architecture and the Artisan, 1750–1830* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018), 76.

²⁶ The thousands of pages of rulings, litigation, and expert opinion supervised by the Royal Commission in charge of Dora Grossa are gathered in a remarkable set of bound volumes in the city archives. Carlo Olmo, "La ricostruzione di via Dora Grossa a Torino (1736–1776)," in *Le nuvole di Patte, quattro lezioni di storia urbana* (Milan: Franco Angeli, 1995), 71–87.

²⁷ Benedetto Alfieri, *Stabilimenti d'ordine ...*, July 22, 1739, in *Archivio Storico del Comune di Torino, collezione X*, vol. 1, c. 85.

An Illusion?

"There are beautiful souls ... who obstinately believe in Turin as a uniform, compact, and perfectly finished baroque city... This city of theirs, fueled by the ghostly visions of Theatrum Sabaudiae, the seventeenth-century manifesto of a regular and uniform capital ...

is pure illusion. An illusion that is bound to be dissolved, as soon as it is compared with the real Turin, which indisputably emerges from archival documents.”²⁸

As much as we might agree with Franco Rosso and Giovanni Brino’s scathing revision of the rhetoric of baroque continuity, to dismiss the Turin cornice merely as an accessory to an “illusion” would be as pointless as glorifying the Savoyard capital – something Prince Umberto di Savoia did in 1927 in his unworldly appearance in the *Town Planning Review* – as “one of the finest towns of Italy” for the “number of embellishments, the regularity of the streets, their width and cleanliness.”²⁹

I propose instead to consider the continuous cornice as a clue that invites closer observation of the city and its images.³⁰ By investigating the role that the cornice played in the overall politics of uniformity, we are led to consider its deviations as symptoms of urban complexity, pointing to the tension between what is normative and public and what is private and ruled by building customs, property values, or strategies of self-representation. The cornice, then, guides us through the historical city, revealing the interaction of various political and social actors and conflicting jurisdictions.

Further interrogation of the cornice on other grounds is also possible. Following Ernesto Sferrazza Papa’s ontological definition of the wall, we could view the cornice as a *political artifact*: one lacking, however, the divisive power and the unified materiality of the wall.³¹ In fact, the Turin cornice should be considered *ontologically* diverse, as even its normative definition is incremental and its construction is primarily assigned to private citizens. Its unity is inevitably broken by the multiplicity of agendas.

Finally, the urban cornice might be investigated on a more ideal level as an element within a “hierarchy of representation, mediating between the universal and the particular (abstract and concrete) levels of reality.”³² This last aspect has been explored critically, and with greater freedom than is allowed to historians, by some modern artists. Giorgio de Chirico and Aldo Rossi’s investigations of Turin’s archetypal urban forms, Giulio Paolini’s collages, and Pablo Bronstein’s modern *capricci*, playing with the city’s architectural imaginaries, fall in this category. Rossi’s brick and steel cornices for the Casa Aurora (1987; headquarters of the Gruppo Finanziario Tessile) and Paolini’s melancholic monument in the Giardini Reali (*Pietre Preziose*, 2017), however, testify to the difficulty of any physical transcription of this ideal.

²⁸ Franco Rosso, “Vicende della colorazione urbana a Torino 1801–1863”, in *Colore e città: I colori di Torino 1801–1863*, ed. Giovanni Brino and Franco Rosso (Milan: Idea Books, 1980), 11–52, here 11.

²⁹ Umberto di Savoia, “Turin, the ‘Regular’ Town,” *Town Planning Review* 12, no. 3 (June 1927), 191–98, here 196.

³⁰ Carlo Ginzburg, “Clues: Root of a Scientific Paradigm,” *Theory and Society* 7, no. 3 (May 1979), 273–88.

³¹ Ernesto Sferrazza Papa, “Teoria del muro: L’articolazione materiale del potere,” *Rivista di estetica* 65 (2017), 155–76.

³² Dalibor Vesely, *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation: The Question of Creativity in the Shadow of Production* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004), 86.