

POLYTECHNIC OF TORINO  
FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE 2  
Degree in Architecture  
*Honors theses*

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**Forma urbis in the Modern Piedmont: the case of Chieri in the XV century**

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This work develops a subject assigned by the Synthesis Lab of Politecnico di Torino, entitled *Chieri in the Middle Ages: the house building of the emergent families*, supervised by professor Claudia Bonardi, editor of this Thesis.

The choice of Chieri was accidental, though nourished by a certain curiosity for the medieval town, already heard of at the grammar school and excited by university learning experiences. The initial aim was to understand the reason of the presence in Chieri of important noble residences, dating back around the XV century, selecting the buildings belonged to and very probably realized by four emergent families: The Villas, The Tanas,

The Bertones and The Solaros. At first the situation of the properties declared by each family in the period of reference was pointed out, elaborating the information contained in the coeval cadastres; next the political, social and economic role of each exponent was defined, starting from the assumption that the town planning and the architectural outcome has to be investigated in the light of peculiarity of each family and of the historical context.

The researches were carried out looking over the existing bibliography and sources kept in Chieri's Historical Archives and Turin's Record Office: the examination of the ancient documents was fascinating since it pointed out new problems and gave elements to clear up also other aspects of the 15<sup>th</sup> century Chieri's life. The initially fixed theme became one of the various aspects we tried to study in detail in this Thesis, presented under the title: *Forma urbis in the Modern Piedmont: the case of Chieri in the XV century*.

The first part of the work was organized analysing the peculiarities of the fifteenth town system in relation to the slow process of urbanization led by the political forces of the time and by the social and economic interests of the different town power groups.



pict.1

After observing how the form of some blocks of buildings was a consequence of the obligation created by the fortification system, we inquired into the urban characteristics of the zone delimited by the two wall curtains, occupied by the religious institutes (pict.1) and Episcopal properties.

In the *intra muros veteres* area we analysed the way of occupy the soil at the foot of St. George Hill in favour of interests of the Mercadillo Hospice (pict.2); for the other central blocks the notice characters of physical contiguity, among members of the same family, was ascribed to the strategies of the various hospice.



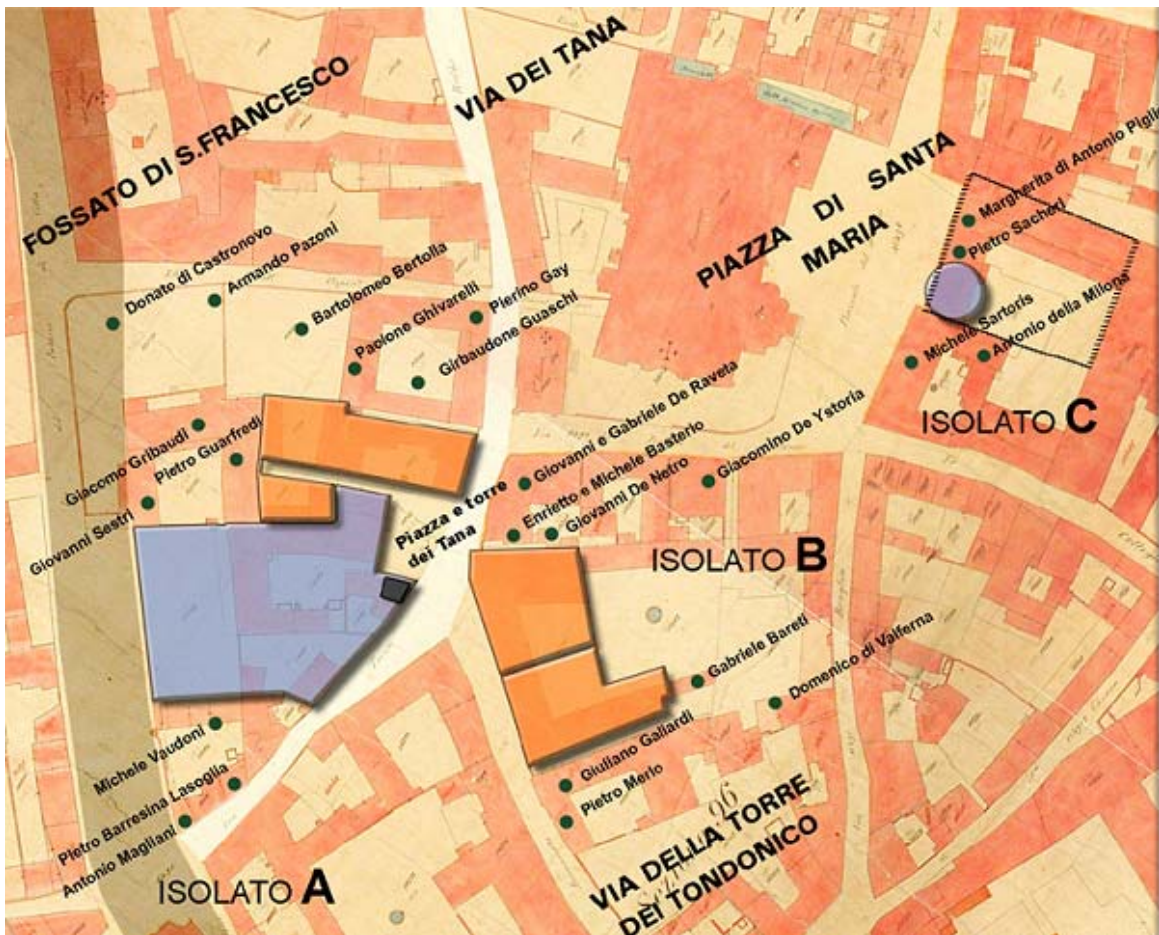
pict.2

Outlined the general picture of reference, we deepened some aspects in relation to the process of settlement just of the four initially mentioned families.

In conclusion, we realized that for The Bertonesi there was the prevalence of consortial logic of pre-thirteenth century origin which brings in the 15<sup>th</sup> century to the possession of small properties in two blocks of Vairo quarter, next to the road *Maestra*, on the axis of connection between St. George Hill (ancient seat of the Episcopal *castrum*), and S. *Maria della Scala* Collegiate.



For The Tanas a different occupation of the town soil was documented, as they try to enlarge their own buildings in the Arene quarter for the whole 15<sup>th</sup> century, both near the Collegiate Church and close to the first wall circle, site the primitive settlement (pict.3).



pict.3

At the beginning of the century The Villas establish their own house in the quarter of Gialdo, where they end by possession many plots, both within the old walls (for residential and commercial purposes) and in the external area for business reasons; in the same quarter there are also The Solaros, who prefer a relatively peripheral position, in relation to the main road (so assuring the control of their *casana*), though it is not chronologically documented.

Therefore it is this reciprocal interaction on between familiar interests and political needs to lead the *forma urbis* of the 15<sup>th</sup> century Chieri.

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