

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

Michelangelo Garove at Venaria Reale. The yard and the projects (1699-1713)

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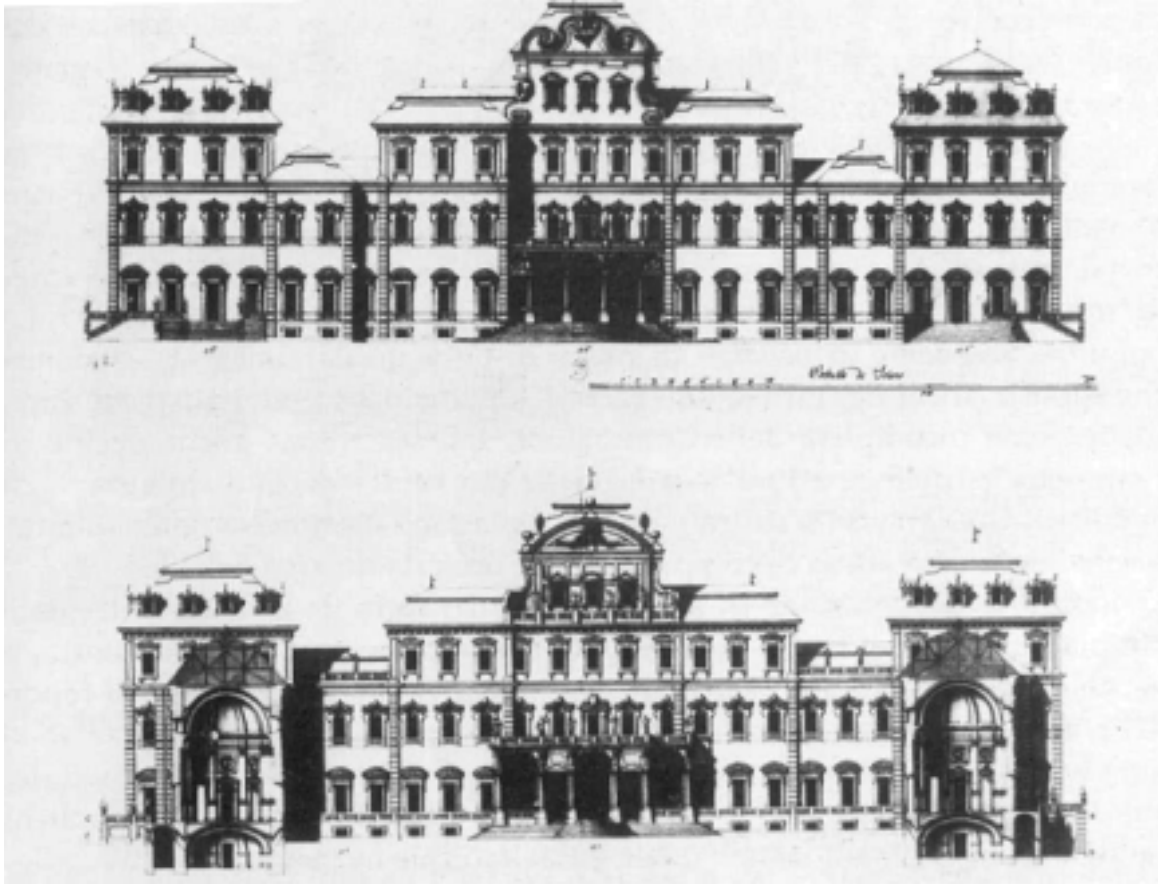
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The vicissitudes of Venaria Reale's Palace, like the ones of many other Sabaude residences, are characterised, in the centuries, by a slow and unceasing decline process and by a vast number of projects following one another undertaken and then interrupted. All this factors contributed to create the image of "incompleteness" that nowadays is still the most peculiar characteristic of the Palace.



MICHELANGELO GAROVE,
Plans of gardens with roofs,
BNP, *Cabinet des Estampes*,
132 z, boîte 2, Robert de Cotte, n. 37

The idea of this dissertation took shape in the ambit of a renewed interest for the Sabaude Residences and in particular for the restoration works that are taking place nowadays at Venaria Reale. The aim is to clarify the most controversial period of the history of Venaria Reale: the fourteen years in which Michelangelo Garove has worked in Venaria's yard. The contribution of Michelangelo Garove to the accomplishment of the project of Venaria Reale has been ignored and forgotten until the first years of the XX century, and, also in the second half of that century, characterised by a renewed interest for the Piemontese Baroque, the attention of the critics has been focused mainly on people like Amedeo di Castellamonte, Filippo Juvarra and Benedetto Alfieri. One of the reason of this "carelessness" can be due to the lack of documentation about the 14 years of Garove's work at Venaria Reale.

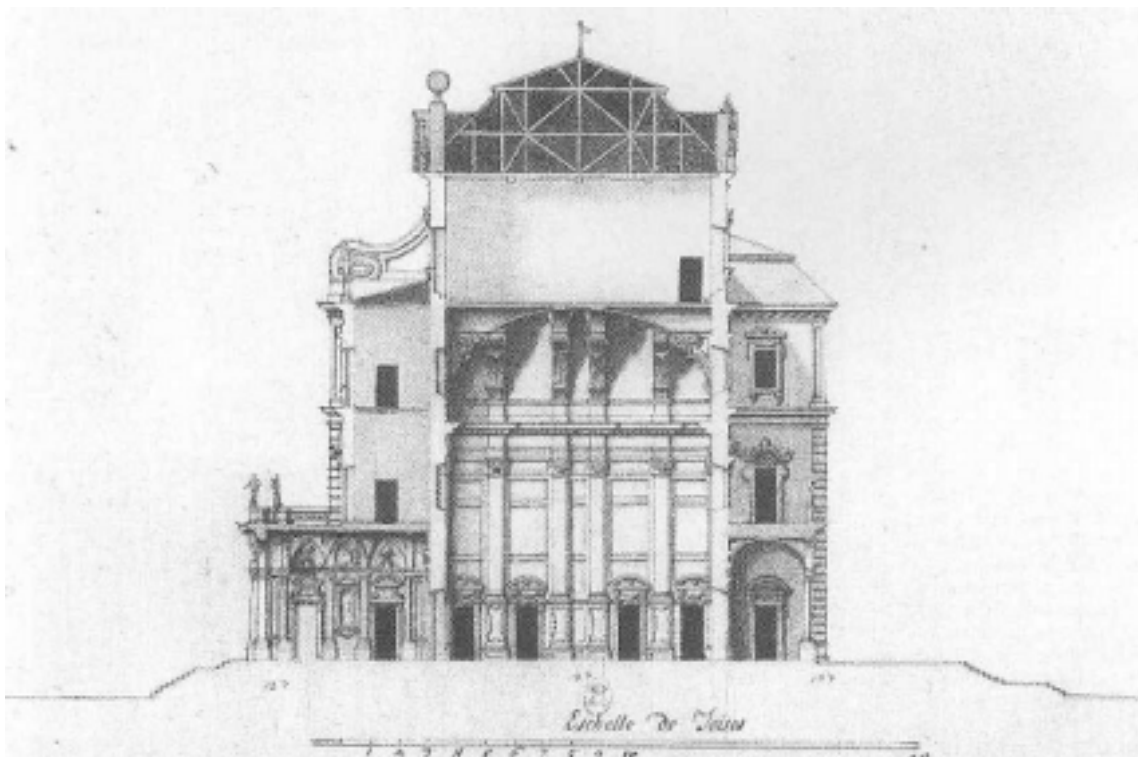


MICHELANGELO GAROVE, view from garden and courtyard,
BNP, *Cabinet des Estampes*, 132 z, boîte 2, Robert de Cotte, n. 42, 43

The most important sources are preserved at the Paris National Library, at the fund Robert de Cotte, and at the Turin Record Office, but there aren't complete publications about Garove's work at Venaria Reale.

The aim of this dissertation has been illustrating the 14 year's period of Garovian work at Venaria. The research has been focused on the importance of Garove's architectural work and on the research of the meaning that the Palace assumed in the grandiose project of Vittorio Amedeo II of Savoia.

It's possible to understand Michelangelo Grove's magnificent project only if we look at it as a part of a whole complex European socio-political environment, and not only as a local phenomenon. The relationship between the Sabaude and the French court, the research of a new architectural style, the needs of the court's society, the war that touched Torino and the Sabaude's Dukedom, are all elements that heavily influenced the project of the Venaria Reale's Palace.



MICHELANGELO GAROVE, section East-West at level of "Salone di Diana", BNP, *Cabinet des Estampes*, 132 z, boîte 2, Robert de Cotte, n. 45

A deep study on the administration of the yard, on the workers and on the peculiar terminology adopted during the beginning of the XVIII century, contributed to widening the approach to the sources.

The interest for this aspect of the history of Venaria's Palace is linked to the study of the architectural developing stages, to the analyses of the building materials and techniques, always deeply influenced from the cultural and territorial background.

Therefore, the subject of this writing is composed by different stages of research: the study of the social, cultural and political environment; the analysis of the effective fulfilment of the project in all its stages; a deep study of the yard and of the documents referring to it from a wide archive research and the digital reproduction of the principal sources.

Today Venaria's Palace is object of a very important restoration project, as a part of a whole structural and functional requalification plan.

The idea of "incompleteness" left from Garovia is due to several factors: the asymmetrical plan, the lack of the Northern wing and the fracture of the Palace's facade. These are not only the elements of an "interrupted" building stage, but also the symbols of the magnificent project realised by Michelangelo Garove: civil architect and military engineer too long underestimated in the history of the Piemontese Baroque architecture.

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