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Honors thesis

COURSE OF ARCHITECTURE FOR HERITAGE
PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT

Abstract

Houses and money. Small and large property owners in the eighteenth century in Turin. A research on a 1743 register.

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by

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October 1743, Turin: the State of Piedmont needed money for sustaining the war expenses because of its enrollment in the war of the Austrian succession: on account of this, an extraordinary tax of 200.000 lire of Piedmont was imposed upon the capital by the government. In order to equally divide the fees on the base of the urban properties that each citizen possessed, each owner was called to declare his real estate goods in the city and its surroundings. The city, in fact, was not excised by ordinary taxes on properties, so there was not an updated real estate registry that could be used for the purpose. This is the starting point of a real estate properties filing operation by the Savoy fiscal administration, that would continue all along the second part of the XVIII century.

The archival materials related to this operation are preserved in the V collection of the Archivio Storico del Comune di Torino. Two series of volumes exist: the first one consists in 4 registers listing all the owners in alphabetical order, the declaration's number and the fees to be paid (vol. 715-718), the second series contains the declarations rebounded in chronological order (vol. 590-594). A big part of the declarations set is missing: nowadays only 445 over 1747 of them exist.

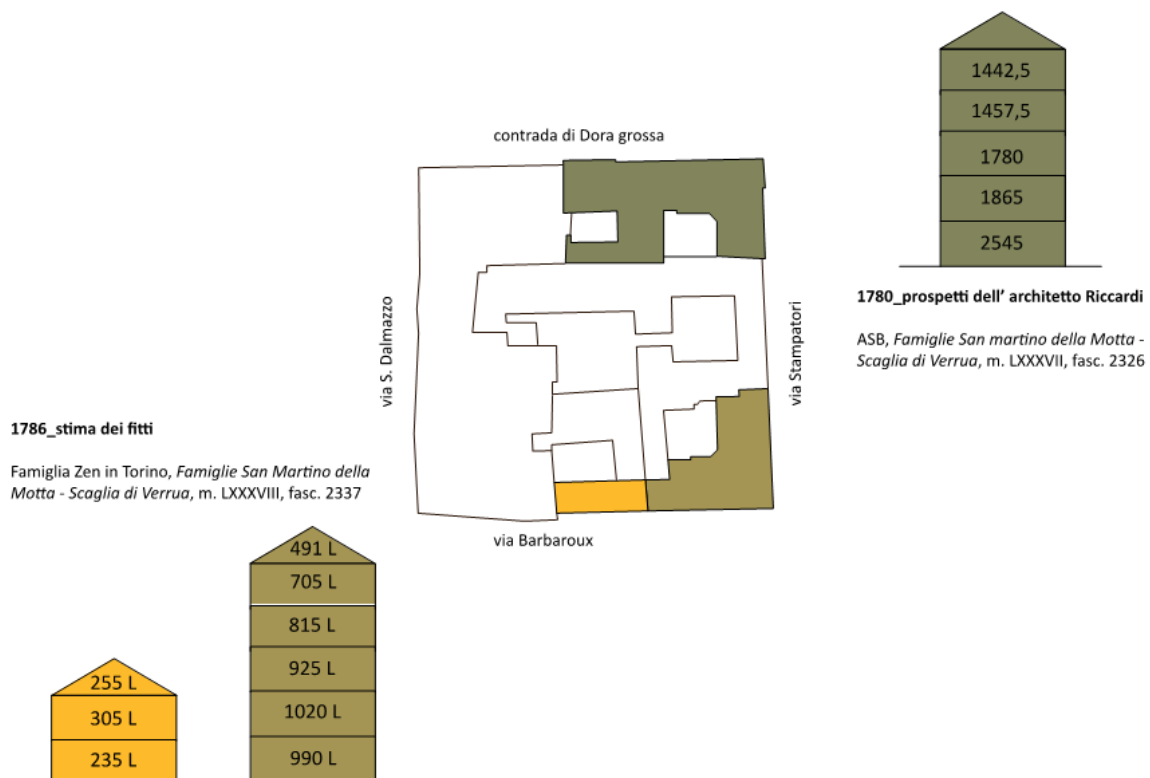
The register and the declarations have not been frequently used as a research source until now because of its incompleteness, so, the thesis purpose has been to evaluate the potentialities of this archival series through its deep analysis.

The first step has been creating and compiling an excel list containing all the owners listed in the register and different useful data about them, like the fees to be paid by each of them, the social class to which they belonged to, the owners' gender, the existence of the declaration nowadays. This excel list allows to make some observations on the real estate

properties, on the social groups involved and the distribution of the wealth deriving from them.

In relation to these remarks a sample has been chosen to develop a deeper analysis of the declarations: it is composed by the 50 owners holding the most profitable properties: only 15 of these declarations still exists. The aim is to understand which kind of property gave the highest revenues, where those properties were located, which were the kind of buildings declared and where some specific social classes were used to live mainly.

Then, the research has been focused on the property of the family Scaglia di Verrua, filling a big site in Sant'Alessio block, with the purpose of defining which kind of buildings it was composed of, which transformations took place from the 1743 to the end of the century and how the rents trends developed in those years.



Palazzo Scaglia di Verrua: rents income for each floor

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