

cil to respect the line of the public thoroughfares. In 1464 Duke Ludovico took a first tentative step towards improving the city's appearance and hygiene by obtaining a papal Bull ordering all the clerical property-owners to move their barns and stables out to the suburbs. Whether this order was actually implemented is however far from certain. In 1490 Duchess Blanche issued new regulations for public hygiene, explaining that she had chosen Turin as her residence and wished it to appear more decorous; again it is not clear whether her orders were actually obeyed.

The most significant change in Turin's urban landscape came at the end of the century with the construction of the new cathedral. The complex of three churches dating back to the Lombard era was demolished and replaced by the present building, the first and only example of Renaissance architecture in the city. The initiative for building the new cathedral came from Cardinal Domenico della Rovere, bishop of Turin from 1482 to 1501. He came from one of the city's elite clans, and he enjoyed the favor of Pope Sixtus IV, who reigned from 1471 to 1484. Sixtus raised him to the cardinalate in 1478, and granted him numerous rich benefices, which allowed him to underwrite the cost of the new cathedral. He was appointed bishop of Turin in 1482, but he was an absentee prelate who rarely resided there. He spent most of his time at Rome, where he was a prominent member of the papal court and a patron of the arts; it was here that he acquired his taste for the architectural style in which Turin's new cathedral was built. His aim in commissioning it was evidently a desire to leave his own and his family's mark on the city, but he also intended it to be a concrete symbol of Christian renewal. "What we more greatly desire", he wrote, "is that by means of these living stones we may reform the Church through spiritual edifices". As its architect Cardinal della Rovere chose a Tuscan, Bartolomeo di Francesco da Settignano, otherwise known as Meo del Caprina (or Meo da Caprino), who had worked in Rome since the 1460s, and with whom he had probably been associated there. Turin's cathedral therefore bears a strong resemblance to the new churches built at Rome in the later fifteenth century, with its sober, symmetrical façade, restrained ornamentation, and luminous interior. Late in 1491 the old Lombard churches were demolished, and on July 22, 1492 Duchess Blanche laid the foundation stone of the new cathedral on the site they had formerly occupied. A team of skilled stonemasons was brought in from Florence to direct the work of construction, apparently because the local craftsmen worked in brick and were unaccustomed to building in stone. The marble for facing the building was quarried at Chianocco in the val-