

erties. For their part, the Turinese subscribed to securities and made their money, together with their energy and skills, available, accepting with good cheer the inevitable discomforts, facing the risks with courage and taking part in the successes, as the numerous chronicles of this exceptional historic moment bear witness to.

Population and Social Groups

Beatrice Zucca Micheletto

This essay investigates the demographic, social and economic dynamics that interested an *ancien regime* city in a prolonged state of war and under the risk of being besieged by cross-referencing two sources – the city census of 1705 and the Municipal Orders, that is, the minutes of the Council in those years. It also poses new interrogatives about the close but polyvalent relationship between the city and its territory, concentrating on one of the most important protagonists of the events of 1706: the urban population excluded from the great military manoeuvres.

Reconstructing some of the components of the demographic and social structure of the city and its territory gives us a picture of Turin at the beginning of the eighteenth century that brings to light, with no surprises compared to what is already known about the *ancient regime*, a job market dominated by craft activities and manual services, whose internal stratification cannot be understood unless the correct weight is given to the variables of gender, provenance and the individual's married status. The portion of the immigrant population is particularly important and significant; it had invested a great deal in terms of personal and family choices in the city. The world of male immigration above all is shown to be the main reserve of workers and labourers (from building workers, to carpenters and barricaders up to porters and manual transporters in general) who, while reluctant to enrol in the militia, played a decisive role in the defence of the city, bringing all their professional skills to bear in restoring and reinforcing the fortifications, streets and mills under prolonged and exhausting conditions, as well as supplying provisions.

"Some Sort of Invisible Force". Devotion and Sacred Spaces

Maria Teresa Silvestrini

Equilibriums among the various protagonists of urban religious life – the archbishop, the secular clergy, the regular clergy, the lay confraternities – began to change at the beginning of the eighteenth century thanks to a more direct influence of political power and to the strategies of those capable of strengthening their identity through new bonds with the court, the municipality and the urban classes. Contemporary sources are analysed and compared in this essay in order to highlight, through variations and gaps in the different narratives, the emergence and acceleration of transformations occurring in the besieged city.

Threatened not only by French invasion but also by conflict with the papal authorities, Duke Vittorio Amedeo II succeeded in transforming his personal and dynastic faith in the Virgin into an act of public faith extended to the city and his entire domain, thanks to the mediation of his councillor, the Oratorian Sebastiano Valfrè. The founding myth of the basilica of Superga, the legendary vows to the Virgin to ensure victory for the Savoy troops, which traditionally appeared in works of the mid-eighteenth century, was rooted in the Duke's Marian cult.

The exemplary role of Valfrè, emphasised above all in the course of his canonisation, begun in 1725, and his ability to move in all social classes, reinforced the influence of the Oratorians and the church of San Filippo which, during the eighteenth century, became one of the most important parish churches in Turin. Finally, during the siege, the Duke's desire for religious legitimation supported the creation of the ascendancy of the monks of San Bernardo della Consolata, who, thanks to the evocative power of the miracles of the Virgin, succeeded in getting the Madonna of the Consolata recognised at the end of the war as the most important object of public faith in Turin.