

DAVID S. CHAMBERS

MANTUA AND TRENT IN THE LATER FIFTEENTH CENTURY

Mantua and Trent, separated by a long stretch of Venetian dominion, present obvious differences in the fifteenth century: the former, a city of the Lombard plain, the latter, a city of the mountains, on the border between two different cultures and languages; the former a secular principedom, the latter a prince bishopric. Nevertheless, it is possible to find some links between them⁽¹⁾. To begin with, both the marquis of Mantua and the prince-bishop of Trent acknowledged that they derived rights of temporal jurisdiction from the empire. The imperial eagle dominated the towns and castles of either ruler.

This brief study is more concerned with Mantuan interests in the Trentino than vice-versa, and is mainly based upon documents in the Gonzaga archives. However, from the opposing direction, Mantua, too, had a certain importance, at least for the élite of the region - the feudal nobility, their overlord the prince-bishop, and the cathedral chapter and city government of Trent. To cite one example, since 1085 the bishop of Trent held feudal rights in Mantuan territory as lord of Castellaro (today Castel d'Ario), a castle 14 kilometers east of Mantua, and the marquis had regularly to obtain confirmation of his tenure: this may

(¹) An attempt was made in the short article signed O[ttone] B[rentari], 'Mantova e Trento', *La Libertà*, Trento 29 dicembre 1920, but more useful as starting points are A. Luzio, *L'Archivio Gonzaga di Mantova*, II, Verona 1922, pp. 220-25; Giuseppe Zippel, 'La civiltà del Trentino al cadere del medio evo', *Tridentum*, xi, 1908, pp. 49-82, reprinted in his papers ed. Gianni Zippel, *Storia e cultura del Rinascimento Italiano*, Padua 1979, pp. 15-50. For help concerning this paper I am particularly grateful to Rodolfo Signorini, and (at earlier stages) to Antonio Clericuzio and Nicolai Rubinstein.

normally have been conceded (²), but minor difficulties could arise, particularly if the bishop suspected that his rights were being diminished, as indeed happened in 1467. On that occasion the new Bishop, Giovanni Hinderbach, made various excuses for withholding confirmation, but the principal matter at stake, interesting in the present context, was the alienation of some land at Castel d'Ario to a Mantuan who also owned property in Trent (³). But on the cultural level, there can be no doubt that for the Italian-speaking feudal nobility of the Trentino - such as the Castelbarco, who had taken a leading part in supporting the Gonzaga seizure of power in Mantua in 1328 (⁴), and the d'Arco - Mantua

(²) F. Ambrosi, 'Di Castellaro trentino, oggi Castel d'Ario mantovano', *Archivio storico per Trieste, l'Istria e il Trentino*, I, 1881-82, pp.375-81; Luzio, p. 220; F. Gobio Casali, 'Il feudo conteso di Castellaro. Una guerra fredda avanti lettera', in *Guerre, Stati e Città: Mantova e l'Italia Padana dal secolo XIII al XIX (Atti delle Giornate di Studio in omaggio di Adele Bellù)*, ed. C.M. Belfanti and others, Mantua 1988, pp. 75-89, esp. n. 29 for references to investitures during the fifteenth century; also, for the period under discussion, see a letter of «dominus Puellus» to Marchesa Margherita Gonzaga, Trent, 10 May 1479: 'ho visato il Reverendissimo Monsignor [Bishop of Trent] de qua per parte de lo Illustrissimo mio Signore et de Vostra Excellentia, il quale me vistò multo volentere... dicendo che a la ritornata renoverà la investitura del Castellario de bona voglia' (Archivio di Stato Mantua, Archivio Gonzaga - hereafter ASMn AG - b. 1407); see also below n. 45 for the promise of confirmation in 1494.

(³) Anselmo Folengo to Barbara of Brandenburg, Trent, 11 September 1467: 'Siamo giunti qui in una terra chiamata Corad [Coredo] ne la Val de Annon, dove hora se ritrova questo Reverendo Monsignor de Trento... a la dimanda de la investitura... non senza suo incarico al presente la farà, imperoché per questo caso dil morbo non sono a presso a luy de quelle persone bisognaranno a tal acto come suoy consiglieri de quelli dil capitulo di la ghiesia ni canzeleri... luy m'ha exponuto havere inteso ch'el Illustrissimo Signore Nostro ha allienato dil feudo im parte, et maxime una possessione chiamata Susano, ad uno de quelli del Furega'. Anselmo pointed out that Pius II had granted this in response to a supplication, and Furega was obliged to pay 5 ducats to the Bishop of Trent, also 'il Furega haveva comprato una casa qui in Trento e facto obligare dicta casa al vescovado'. Bishop Hinderbach objected that the property was worth 4000 ducats, therefore 'né gli pareva honesto per tanto valore dovere star contento de cinque ducati... etiam non haveva apresso a sì li registri del vescovado, i quali luy omnino intende volerli vedere' (ASMn AG b. 1407).

(⁴) G. Gerola, 'Il Carteggio dei Castelbarco coi Gonzaga nella seconda metà del trecento', *Atti dell'Accademia d'Agricoltura, Scienze, Lettere di Verona*, ser. IV, ix, 1909, pp. 107-28; also 'I Castelbarco di Mantova', *ibid.*, xv, 1915, pp. 82-104. Gerola includes for the period after 1458, however, only three surviving letters. Among additional documents of interest, is a letter from Count Paride da Lodrone, 25 April 1479, to Marquis Federico Gonzaga, recommending 'uno mio servitore per nomine Domenego Battayollo, dissideroso de voler far l'arte del soldo'. The Count had heard that Federico 'fa zente da pié per andare a li parte de Toschana' - i.e. to serve in the war against Pope

represented (perhaps even more than did the nearer, but Venetian-dominated city of Verona) a source of educational and courtly values, including professional military training and employment: it seems to have evoked some vague but undeniable sense of *italianità*, as was suggestively expressed by Count Francesco d'Arco⁽⁵⁾, poet and friend of Pius, II, in a letter to Mantua seeking news «from Italy»⁽⁶⁾. Francesco d'Arco - whose brother Galeazzo was, like Ludovico Gonzaga Marquis (1444-78) of Mantua, a veteran of the Milanese - Venetian wars - was permitted to import corn from Mantuan territory⁽⁷⁾ and for medical advice the d'Arco family called upon leading doctors of the Gonzaga court⁽⁸⁾. Sometimes the Count sent presents to Mantua, such as sparrowhawks⁽⁹⁾; he also sent his son Odorico, to be educated there, and in 1475 Odorico married Cecilia Gonzaga, daughter of Carlo, Marquis Ludovico's deceased brother. An extensive correspondence survives concerning preparations for the marriage festivities in Mantua⁽¹⁰⁾. Francesco d'Arco, in his role of father and father-in-law to be, displayed a certain rustic austerity in his insistence that the brocade dress intended for Cecilia would be an unnecessary expense; he wrote that

Sixtus IV and King Ferrante of Naples in support of Lorenzo de' Medici (ASMN AG b. 1414).

⁽⁵⁾ See in general: B. Waldstein-Wartenberg, *Storia dei Conti D'Arco nel Medio Evo*, Rome 1979, esp. pp. 282-417; G. Amadei and others, *Il Palazzo D'Arco in Mantova*, Mantua 1980; G. Rill, *Storia dei Conti D'Arco 1487-1614*, Rome 1982.

⁽⁶⁾ Francesco d'Arco to Barbara of Brandenburg, Arco, 7 March 1459, 'Supplico... qualche novella de Italia' (ASMN AG b. 1413 c. 80).

⁽⁷⁾ e.g. his letter of request of 26 January 1462 to Barbara of Brandenburg and another of 25 April 1462 in which he thanks 'per la trata de biava per li homeni mei' and the further 'trata de cento moza de formento' (ASMN AG b. 1413 cc. 84, 86). One Giovanni da Grignano, sometimes spelt 'Gargnano', appears to have acted as go-between (see also below nn. 10, 31).

⁽⁸⁾ e.g. Arrivabene Benadusio to Barbara of Brandenburg, Arco, 8 August 1464 (b. 1413 c. 92). Vincenzo Ceronni attended Cecilia Gonzaga d'Arco in her fatal childbirth in July 1479 (Amadei in *Il Palazzo D'Arco*, p. 44).

⁽⁹⁾ e.g. letters to Barbara of 17 August 1462 and 4 August 1464 which mention respectively the dispatch of seven and eight *sparavieri* (b. 1413 cc. 88, 91).

⁽¹⁰⁾ ASMN AG b. 1413, *passim*. An unpublished essay on the subject, by Stefano Davari, exists in ASMN, Schede Davari b. 17. Francesco da Grignano or Gargnano, perhaps a brother or son of Giovanni (see also nn. 7, 31), is mentioned by Francesco d'Arco as his intermediary in a letter to Barbara of 23 August 1475, and is himself addressed, by a letter directed to Mantua on 30 August, as 'Francesco de Medalis de Gargnano' (b. 1413 cc. 103, 109).

it would be better to spend the money on jewels⁽¹¹⁾, and sent to Mantua the archpriest of the church of Arco for instruction on where to buy them in Venice⁽¹²⁾. After the priest's return with the list of suggested purchases Francesco added⁽¹³⁾ some further items including bed hangings and clothes for Odorico - all these things to be bought in Venice (which, however much the d'Arco may have been opposed on political grounds, they seem to have found indispensable as a shopping centre). Odorico d'Arco became a Mantuan citizen in 1480, and spent a large sum on acquiring land in the Mantuan territories⁽¹⁴⁾; his son, Niccolò d'Arco, who acquired fame as a Mantuan court poet in the sixteenth century, was also to marry a Gonzaga⁽¹⁵⁾. The d'Arco family were drawn exceptionally close, but they do not represent the only contacts between the leading feudal nobility of the Trentino and the Mantuan court.

But, turning to the other point of view, that of Mantuan interests in the Trentino, it must first be stressed that the Adige valley was itself the most important factor, being a major route to the Germanic world and the cities of central Europe. Mantuan merchants passed that way, above all those who dealt in wool and woollen cloth (the Mantuan cloth industry was enjoying a recovery in the second half of the fifteenth century); and there was even some Mantuan investment in the Trentino itself, for commercial purposes including sheep pasturing⁽¹⁶⁾. But there

(¹¹) Francesco d'Arco to Barbara of Brandenburg, 9 May 1475, '...quanto a la parte de una vesta de brochato d'arzenzo cum le manege aperte, fodrade de brochato d'oro, a me pare che per tale vesta ley ne sarà pocho relevata, et sarà spesa desutile, et parme che più tosto se debia lassare et spendere in zoye quello che se debe spendere in tante vestimente, non lassando perhò che si faza una zornia de brochato d'arzenzo, et una zupa puro de brochato d'arzenzo et una de cetanino verde, perché de altri vestiti la sta aconzamente. De li altri ornamenti la Vostra Illustrissima Signoria po farli pensero e darmene aviso, perché da lo canto mio me estenderò a le cosse possibile et honeste' (ASMN AG b. 1413 c. 103).

(¹²) Appendix doc. 1.

(¹³) Letter of 1 July 1475 (b. 1413).

(¹⁴) Odorico d'Arco to Marquis Federico Gonzaga, Arco, 6 August 1483: '...io ho facto deliberatione de spendere tre mille ducati in acquistare in el territorio mantuano, per essere più fermo et obligato servitore a la Excellentia Vostra, et già ho acquistato da il conte Francesco di Strozi et Uberto suo fratello, per ducati setecento, et da sier Piero del Furga per ducati mille, et voglio cum tempo zonzere a li tre mille...' (b. 1413 c. 130).

(¹⁵) A. Prenzelores, *Nicolò D'Arco, 1479-1546*, Trent 1901 (reprinted 1983); Zippel, pp. 25-26; E. Faccioli, *Mantova. Le lettere*, II, Mantua 1962, pp. 373-77.

(¹⁶) These economic subjects cannot be investigated here, but see nn. 3, 34 for some evidence of a Mantuan presence in the region. One prominent Mantuan family's

was also a constant coming and going along this transalpine route of people on political or personal missions. It has to be emphasized that among all the signorial families of Italy, the Gonzaga were in that period the most associated with German blood of princely rank. Not only was Ludovico Gonzaga's wife Barbara von Hohenzollern of Brandenburg, but their eldest son, the future Marquis Federico I, married Margherita von Wittelsbach of Bavaria in 1463 (¹⁷); two of their daughters married German princes, and their third son, Gianfrancesco, even if he was not betrothed to a German heiress, had spent a year of his youth as the guest of Hohenzollern relatives (¹⁸). Trent or Rovereto, the Venetian frontier town, often served as a stopping point on the long journeys from Mantua to northern parts, or in the opposite direction. For example, in June 1474, Barbarina Gonzaga, on the way to meet her future husband Eberhard Duke of Württemberg, stopped at Rovereto and Trent with her escort (¹⁹), and the following year Queen Anne of Denmark, sister of the Marchesa of Mantua, slept at Rovereto (²⁰). A few years later, the marriage of Paola Gonzaga at Bolzano was a major social occasion for the whole region. Stefanino Guidotti had been sent to negotiate the final arrangements with the bridegroom, Count Leonhard of Gorizia (²¹) - whose seat was at Lienz in the eastern Tyrol (not, for fear of the Turks, at Gorizia) - and then attended the event, recording the meeting of Paola at Castel Pietro outside Trent by Bishop Hinderbach and the

land investment in the Trentino was kindly indicated to me by prof. Bruno Andreolli. On the cloth trade see L. Mazzoldi, *Mantova: La Storia*, II, Mantua 1960, pp. 32-33, 430-31; also the chronicle of Andrea da Schivenoglia with its list of Mantuan wool merchants in the late 1460s (Biblioteca Comunale, Mantua, Ms. 1019 fols. 58r-58v).

(¹⁷) See A. Bellù, 'Margarete von Wittelsbach', *Zeitschrift für bayerische Landesgeschichte*, 44 (1) 1981, pp. 157-200. For the Gonzagas in general in this period see L. Mazzoldi, *Mantova: La Storia*, vol. II, Mantua 1960; also R. Signorini, 'Opus hoc tenue'. *La Camera Dipinta di Andrea Mantegna*, Mantua 1985.

(¹⁸) His letters of 1458-9 are in ASMn AG b. 2095-6; see D.S. Chambers, 'Francesco Gonzaga in Florence', *Renaissance Studies in Honour of Nicolai Rubinstein*, London 1988, p. 261 n. 38.

(¹⁹) Stefanino Guidotti wrote from Rovereto on 13 June 1474 to Barbara of Brandenburg, 'siamo hozi ad hore 18 per uno gran caldo giunti qua a Roveredo... domani è dato ordine di andar a cena a Trento' (ASMn AG b. 544 c. 294).

(²⁰) Benedetto de' Strozzi to Marchese Ludovico Gonzaga, Rovereto, 12 April 1475, 'questa serenissima Regina è gionta qui circha le xx hore... ho retrovato Quella in ogni modo volere esse venerdì proximo in Mantoa, che domane starà a la Chiusa' (ASMn AG b. 544 c. 282).

(²¹) Stefanino Guidotti to Barbara of Brandenburg, Lienz, 28 October 1478 (ASMn AG b. 544 c. 300); Leonhard wished to meet Paola at the Chiusa, the gorge of the Adi-

attendance at Bolzano of Duke Sigismund of Austria and many other notables (22).

For the freedom of communication along this route it was therefore important for the Gonzagas to maintain good relations with the Venetians, with the prince-bishop and likewise with the count of the Tyrol. The Venetians' expansion into the Trentino had been somewhat embarrassing for the Marquis of Mantua, their ally; in 1440 the men of Riva petitioned him in vain for help against the troops of the Republic (23). Later on there even emerge Gonzagan aspirations to control the prince-bishopric, perhaps emboldened by knowledge that the title had been held from 1289 to 1303 by a member of the previous ruling family in Mantua, Filippo Bonacolsi (24); at all events, the prospect may have seemed more attainable after Francesco Gonzaga, the second son of Ludovico and Barbara, became a Cardinal in 1461. Pope Pius II, who conferred the red hat on Francesco, was himself an ex-canonical of Trent, and the appointment had been supported by the Emperor and by the Bishop of Brixen (Bressanone), Cardinal Nicholas Cusanus (25). The chapter of Trent cathedral, and the count of the Tyrol, would also have to be taken into account, but an unusual situation prevailed then in the prince bishopric owing to the war being waged against the bishopric of Brixen by the excommunicated Count Sigismund, Duke of Austria (26).

Francesco, although only eighteen, was already being mentioned early in 1462 as a possible substitute for the Bishop, Georg von Hack, who on account of his support for Sigismund was threatened by papal

ge in Venetian territory, and hold the celebration at Lienz. On Paola's (unhappy) marriage see in general L. Billo, 'Le nozze di Paola Gonzaga a Bolzano', *Studi trentini*, xv, 1934, pp. 3-22; F. Babinger, 'Le estreme vicende di Paola di Gonzaga, ultima contessa di Gorizia', *Studi Goriziani*, xx, 1956, pp. 7-19.

(22) Stefanino Guidotti to Marquis Federico Gonzaga, from Trent, 12 November 1478 (ASMN AG b. 1407) and from Bolzano, 16 November 1478 (ASMN AG b. 544 c. 301); Billo, as above, docs 1-2, pp. 11-13.

(23) Letters requesting help from Alexander, commendatory Bishop of Trent, to Marquis Gianfrancesco Gonzaga, 22-24 May 1440 (on 24 May he specified the need for both boats and men), mentioned by Luzio, p. 220 n. 6; also the men of Riva to Marquis Gianfrancesco, from Trent, 28 May (ASMN AG b. 1407).

(24) See article by I. Walter in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*; Bonacolsi had great difficulty in obtaining possession.

(25) On Pius's connections with Trent, see Zippel, pp. 24-26. On Francesco's elevation, see Signorini, *Opus hoc tenue*, pp. 37-41.

(26) On this conflict and related events see L. von Pastor, ed. A. Mercati, *Storia dei Papi* (revised Italian edn.) II, Rome 1961, pp. 130-55.

deposition, the fate of his predecessor at Trent (27); meanwhile, the Venetian government appears to have had a candidate, in the person of Bartolomeo Malipiero, Bishop of Brescia, which alarmed the Duke of Milan as well as Cardinal Cusanus, suggesting as it did a further thrust northwards of Venetian power (28). When the papal court began to leave the neighbourhood of Pienza in the autumn of 1462, haunted by the fear of plague, Cardinal Cusanus and Francesco Gonzaga both stayed some days at Chianciano, and probably discussed there the succession to Trent (29). By December, now with the rump of the papal court at Todi, Francesco was eager for action. He therefore wrote a letter to his father, the longest and most carefully argued letter in his own hand which has survived (30). In this he proposed an audacious way of obtaining his desire, «having» (he declared) «applied much thought to it». He was convinced he could count on the support of the Pope and of Cardinal Nicholas Cusanus whom he understood to be in favour of deposing the Bishop, for having given help to Duke Sigismund; Pius II would legally deprive Georg and secretly appoint Francesco in his place. Francesco was worried, meanwhile, that the Dean of the cathedral chapter of Trent, who had gone to Venice, might inform the Signoria and upset the plan before it was achieved, or prevent him from gaining possession. He therefore made an outrageous proposal to waylay and kidnap the Bishop. Secret contact should be made with Count Francesco d'Arco and other Mantuan «friends» in the region, many of whom (so the Cardinal declared his mother had told him) wished to see himself as bishop there; he also knew of a priest in Arco, to whom he had given a letter of chaplaincy,

(27) Benedetto da Trento, abbot of San Lorenzo, had been deposed as Bishop by the Venetian pope Eugenius IV in 1444 (Zippel, p. 19).

(28) E. Meuthen, *Die letzten Jahre des Nikolaus von Kues*, Cologne 1958, p. 288 n. quoting letters from Rome of Bartolomeo Bonatto to Marquis Ludovico Gonzaga, 20 February 1462 and of Ludovico de Ludovisiis to Duke Francesco Sforza, 10 April. In the latter, the prospect of Hack's deposition is mentioned and 'certi rasonamenti fatti per ditto Monsignore lo cardinale nostro de Mantua... Sua Signoria [Cusanus] non fa dubio che la materia [Malipiero's candidacy] proceda da Venesia... partire quello vescovato per questa via, havesse in fine remanere spogliato del suo dominio temporale'.

(29) Leuthen, p. 286 includes a letter from Cusanus to Barbara of Brandenburg, dated at Chianciano, 30 October 1462, which refers to Francesco, if not to Trent. Francesco's own letter, cited below, begins with the recollection of his thoughts when at the Sienese town 'Gianciano' near Montepulciano, which (although the word might possibly be read 'Gracciano') must surely mean Chianciano.

(30) Meuthen, pp. 287-89 published a small part of it but with several misreadings; a short paraphrase was given by Luzio, p. 22 n. 5. For the full text see Appendix, Doc. 2.

and understood this man to have many followers, while the Count could also call upon Giovanni and Francesco da Grignano⁽³¹⁾ for information about the locality. The Bishop he believed to be a feeble character and a drunkard, who often went out of town disguised in lay clothes and enjoyed dancing (one of the Cardinal's servants was a witness to the fact) and so Count Francesco d'Arco and his band could surely lay hold of him and confine him in Arco; meanwhile Francesco would take possession of the bishopric and its territory. Then (so the eighteen-year old prelate continued to plan) the Pope could send an apostolic brief to Count d'Arco commanding him to offer all possible help to Cardinal Gonzaga. There was still some risk of a hostile reaction on the part of Venice, even the use of military force, but Francesco thought this could be overcome by ensuring there was a papal censure imposed on all persons who offered any help to the deposed Bishop; the Venetians would not want to risk this, and if they protested to the Duke of Milan, he would point out that the Pope had appointed Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga to Trent not at his bidding, but out of love for Francesco.

This scheme, not surprisingly, came to nothing; only an oblique reply survives, commenting on its impossibility, in the draft of a letter to the Cardinal from his mother⁽³²⁾. Probably Ludovico was offended by his son's presumption, in counting upon his support and even instructing him how to provide it, whereas the matter was scarcely honourable nor politically prudent, and would place at high risk Mantuan relations with Venice. Moreover, his and Barbara's greater preoccupation at this time was to ensure the safe journey of Margherita, their prospective daughter-in-law, through the dominions of the Count of the Tyrol⁽³³⁾. Events were already overtaking the plot, in any case; Sigismund and Georg Hack were together at Bolzano, intending to proceed to Trent,

⁽³¹⁾ See above nn. 7, 10; in his letter, the Cardinal mentions as well as Giovanni, the Prior of Sant'Antonio (a church in Mantua); he gives no name, but there can be no doubt Francesco is intended: on 27 October 1463 this Prior wrote to Barbara of Brandenburg from Rome, where he had been sent on business, signing himself 'Franciscus Gregnanus Prior Sancti Antonii Mantue' (ASMN AG b. 842 c. 81).

⁽³²⁾ Barbara to Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga, Mantua, 28 January 1463 'a la parte de quella facenda che ne scrivestine de mane vostra... doveti esser certo non seressimo [meno?] contenti de honore e ben che vui... ma quando pensamo ben circa ciò, da ogni hora ne pare questa sia più impossibile' (ASMN AG b. 2186; Meuthen, p. 289 n. 5 cites the letter without noting it is a draft with some words cancelled which he includes).

⁽³³⁾ This is mentioned in another draft letter of Barbara to the Cardinal, dated 24 January 1463 (*ibid.*).

and the Bishop's temporal power seemed to be more secure, so a Mantuan merchant then at Bolzano reported, though he expressed hope, in view of the Bishop's defiance of papal authority, that the young Cardinal might yet be installed as bishop⁽³⁴⁾. Francesco and his supporters may not have given up hope⁽³⁵⁾ though it must have been clear that Trent would not be easy to obtain even by lawful means. Georg Hack remained in office until his death in August 1465, and Pope Paul II did not promote Francesco Gonzaga as his successor, although professing that he wished to do so, and consoled him with some hope of a pension of 1000 ducats a year from the revenues⁽³⁶⁾. Instead, the new Bishop was a canon of Trent already elected by the chapter, Giovanni Hinderbach, who strongly objected to the proposed pension⁽³⁷⁾; which was reduced to 500 ducats⁽³⁸⁾, though

⁽³⁴⁾ Giuliano da Lancino to Barbara of Brandenburg, Bolzano, 14 [? January] 1463 reported Duke Sigismund's recent visit to Trent with Hack, and that 'tutte le forteze teneva lo vesschovo sono rese al duxe un castello che si dimanda Ten, ch'è presso Riva di Trento a due milgia; uno schudero dil vesschovo li è dintro, e ha mandato a dire al duxe che non vole dargilo... Avendo preterito (lo) vesschovo di Trento a li comandamenti di la santa madre giexia, e a la Santitate dil Nostro Signore, priego la Vostra Illustrissima Signoria si ricordi del mio Reverendissimo Cardinale. Sì come Quella fu cagione di asénderllo a tanta dignitate sia etiam in farlo vesschovo di Trento; e questo venerà di fatto, secundo l'animo mio, praticando la Excellentia Vostra questa cosa cum la Santidade dil Nostro Signore e lo duca di Milano, e veder che lo duxe [Sigismondo] sia tolto di schumunicha' (ASMN AG b. 544 c. 247). The same Giuliano wrote from Trent on 21 September 1463 about another visit there of Duke Sigismund, for a wedding (b. 1413 c. 90).

⁽³⁵⁾ e.g. letter of Bartolomeo Marasca to Barbara, Tivoli, 20 August 1463 commented on the possibility for Francesco of two benefices in the Kindom of Denmark: 'sarebbe ben meglio lo vescovato di Trento' (b. 842 c. 240).

⁽³⁶⁾ Giovanni Pietro Arrivabene to Barbara of Brandenburg, Rome, 6 April 1466: '...Trento finalmente me pare vedere sarà pur de Hinderbach, ma Monsignor mio ha gran speranza ch'el Papa al mancho li reserverà sopra una pensione de mille ducati. Suoa Sanctitate ha havuto a dire col cardinale de Pavia [Ammannati] che grandemente desiderava darlo al cardinale de Mantua, e Dio sa quanto l'ha fatto e praticato occultamente per puotergerlo dare...' (ASMN AG b. 843 c. 72).

⁽³⁷⁾ Arrivabene to Barbara, Rome, 20 April 1466: '...El vescovato di Trento pur pende. L'Hinderbach, secundo intendo, sta obstinato a non voler *ullo modo* pagare quella pensione, e dice che più presto se levarà de corte. El decano de Bamberg monstra che molto più sarà el duca d'Austria inclinato a darlo al Reverendissimo Monsignore mio che a costui' (b. 843 c. 73).

⁽³⁸⁾ Marasca to Barbara, Rome 11 May 1466: 'questa matina è expedito lo vescovato di Trento a lo Hinderbach, cum graveza picola di cinquecento ducati al Reverendissimo Monsignore mio et a vita' (b. 843 c. 121); Guglielmus Molitor, the notary dealing with the matter, in a letter dated 'die Pentecostis 1466' noted that the pension was to be paid in Rome every Michaelmas (b. 843 c. 176).

it remains uncertain whether it was ever received. However, Hinderbach⁽³⁹⁾, a doctor of Padua and old humanist friend of Pius II, was acceptable not only to the Emperor and to Venice (where he had lived for a while) but also to Cardinal Gonzaga's parents. Within a short while he was in correspondence with Barbara of Brandenburg, sending her presents of chamois and choice local wine⁽⁴⁰⁾. For Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga Trent was a disappointment, as was the rich see of Brixen, to which the Pope had appointed him after the death of Cardinal Cusanus (1464), but the cathedral chapter and Duke Sigismund strenuously denied him possession⁽⁴¹⁾.

Nevertheless, some hope of installing a Gonzaga bishop in the south Tyrol still continued, and since the family was part-German as well as part-Italian, it might have been argued that a Gonzaga prelate would be particularly suitable for Trent. At all events, in 1493, when Hinderbach's successor, Ulrich von Frundsberg, died, there was an attempt to gain the title for the protonotary Sigismondo Gonzaga (younger son of the Marquis Federico Gonzaga and Margherita of Bavaria). The Gonzagas could also count on the fact that during this period they were close in the confidence of Giorgio de Fatis de Trilaco, Dean of the chapter of Trent⁽⁴²⁾; also, in 1493-4, the Podestà of the city of Trent happened to be Mantuan citizen, Ludovico Pavese, whose father Albertino had been a secretary and at one time treasurer of the

⁽³⁹⁾ See V. von Hofmann-Wellenhof, 'Leben und Schriften des Doctor Johannes Hinderbach, Bischofs von Trient (1465-1486)', *Zeitschrift des Ferdinandeums für Tirol und Vorarlberg*, 3 Folge, Heft 37, Innsbruck 1893, pp. 203-62; Zippel, pp. 32-34.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ e.g. writing to Barbara from Trent, 4 November 1466, Hinderbach acknowledged her request for 'vino nostro Trameno', though he was uncertain how to send it 'an per flumen Athesis an lacum Garde'; on 13 December he assured her 'mittimus autem ad presens unum vas octo urnarum vini Tramenici optimi ac melioris prout habere potuimus...' and 'unam capram silvestrem sive camutiam his diebus a nostris in montanis captam' (ASMN AG b. 1402 cc. 3, 4). He acknowledged in turn on 10 September 1467 a falcon and an astor, and on 19 December 1468 sent wine and wild goat as before (*ibid.* cc. 5, 7).

⁽⁴¹⁾ See A. Piccolrovazzi, *La contrastata nomina del Cardinale Francesco Gonzaga al vescovado di Bressanone*, Trent 1935.

⁽⁴²⁾ Various letters from this dignitary addressed to Marquis Francesco Gonzaga and Isabella d'Este are in ASMN AG b. 1407, e.g. on 5 January 1487 he had written assuring the Marquis Francesco Gonzaga of his family's longstanding attachment ('casa nostra fidellissima servitrice...') and sending him a chamois; more game was sent on 5 June 1487 and in subsequent years. Giorgio's brother wrote on 18 February 1500 announcing his death and the succession as dean of 'un mio honorando e caro parente nominato messer Hieronymo Balzano'.

chamber to Marquis Ludovico Gonzaga⁽⁴³⁾. Hearing in early August of the Bishop's death, the Dean and Podestà decided that the time for scheming had passed, and action was necessary: they dispatched a messenger with an urgent letter to Maximilian, King of the Romans and Emperor-Elect, asking him to propose to the cathedral chapter Sigismondo Gonzaga's name⁽⁴⁴⁾. However, they failed to prevail over the favoured German candidate, Ulrich von Liechtenstein; the following year a distinguished Mantuan jurist, Benedetto Tosabézzi (from a prominent family of wool merchants) was delegated to ask for the usual confirmation of feudal title⁽⁴⁵⁾ and also had a long talk with Giorgio Trilaco, who explained why (against his own wishes) it had been impossible to secure nomination for Sigismondo⁽⁴⁶⁾.

⁽⁴³⁾ Ludovico Pavese wrote to Marquis Francesco Gonzaga on 24 March 1493 from Trent 'mando uno messo mio a monstrare a Carlo da Nuvolono li libri de la bona memoria de mio patre, quale per la Illustrissima casa vostra tanto scrisse quanto mai facesse S. Augustino per la fede de Cristo...' (ASMn AG b. 1407). There was evidently a backdated inquiry in progress at Mantua about missing funds, and Pavese was anxious to clear his father's name.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ Ludovico Pavese to Marquis Francesco Gonzaga, 11 August 1493. 'hozi, che son XI, a l'alba, venene le littere de la morte del presente episcopo quala fu a dì X. Parse al prefato d. decano, a d. Zoan Petro [Vesconti] et etiam al Peschera che non era più bisogno de pratica ma de exequitione; onde concluseno per il mellio ch' el dicto Peschera solo andasse et vedesse de mandare, tra il termino de X giorni, littere de la Maestà del Re, ovvir ch' el capitolo supersedesse a la electione, ovver che elligesseno el Reverendissimo vostro fratello... et ne mandi li messi notificandone quello facia, là, a ciò sapere possiamo quello habiamo a fare qua. Et cossì se è partito: lo Angelo Raffaello si à in sua compagnia. Questa matina se dice già essere presentate littere de la Maestà del Re in favore de uno germano, il cui nome non se scia' (ASMn AG b. 1407).

⁽⁴⁵⁾ Copy of Ulrich von Liechtenstein's letter of 26 July to Marquis Francesco Gonzaga, enclosed with Tosabézzi's letter of 27 July: 'Tosabecius... nos visitavit, ac nonnulla nomine eiusdem Dominationis Vestre exposuit circa petitionem investiture feudorum que ab ecclesia nostra recognoscit...' (ASMn AG b. 1407). On Tosabézzi see E. Marani in *Il Palazzo D'Arco in Mantova* pp. 82, 95-96.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ Tosabézzi to -Marquis Francesco Gonzaga, 27 July 1494: 'io son stato in longo parlamento cum el Decano da Trilaco per comissione facta a me in nome di Vostra Excellentia da messer Zoan Benedicto di Preti, per intendere el modo et la via de la impetracione di questo episcopato de Trento, el quale de poche me ha facto chiaro el suo desiderio et voluntà che ha de vedere il Reverendo Monsignore una volta asumpto a questa dignità: me ha facto impossibile questa cosa per molte ragione efficacissime...' (b. 1407).

A different subject, but still to do with ecclesiastical relations between Mantua and Trent, is provided by the martyrdom cult of the *beato* Simone, the baby murdered at Trent in March 1475, and the alacrity of the Gonzagas to give their support, notwithstanding the belief this implied in Jewish ritual infanticide. Hinderbach himself, in no doubt about the murder and rejoicing in its religious outcome, had informed Pope Sixtus IV, who appointed as investigating commissary Battista de'Giudici, Bishop of Ventimiglia, to establish the truth of the matter⁽⁴⁷⁾. When Battista met with opposition he obtained a papal brief requiring all in authority to lend him their support, and he was apparently supported by Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga⁽⁴⁸⁾; but when Battista's investigations led him to exonerate the Jews of responsibility, Francesco did not comply with the verdict. It may be significant that the Cardinal's one-time humanist tutor and later household guest, Bartolomeo Platina, earned the special wrath of Battista de'Giudici for his hostility towards the Jews, and Platina, now papal Librarian, without doubt remained closely in touch with members of the Cardinal's household⁽⁴⁹⁾. Platina's prejudices may or may not have influenced Francesco, but it is significant that in the winter of 1477-78 Bishop Hinderbach wrote asking Barbara of Brandenburg to convey his thanks to the Cardinal

⁽⁴⁷⁾ See in particular ed. P. Bonelli, *Joannis Hinderbachii Episcopi Tridentini Collectanea in Iudeos B. Simonis tridentini pueri interemptores*, in *Monumenta Ecclesiae Tridentinae* iii (pars altera), Trent 1765, pp. 420-62; G. Menestrina, 'Gli ebrei di Trento', *Tridentum*, vi, 1903, pp. 304-16, 348-74, 385-411; Zippel, pp. 35-38; P. Ghinzoni, 'San Simone da Trento: Nuovi Documenti, 1475', *Archivio storico lombardo*, xvi 1889, pp. 134-44; ed. D. Quaglioni, Battista de Giudici, 'Apologia iudeorum', 'Invectiva contra Platinam': *Propaganda antiebraica e polemiche durante il pontificato di Sisto IV (1471-1484)*, Rome 1987. On the diffusion of the cult of Simone there is some interesting material in G. F. Piccaluga, 'Economia, devozione e politica: immagini di francescani, amadeiti ed ebrei nel secolo xv', *Il Francescanesimo in Lombardia. Storia e Arte*, Milan 1983, pp. 107-22.

⁽⁴⁸⁾ Battista de' Giudici to Marquis Ludovico Gonzaga, Rovereto, 13 November 1475: 'propter debitum servitutis et singularem familiaritatem quam habeo cum Reverendissimo Cardinali vestre Excellentie filio' (ASMN AG b. 544 c. 284).

⁽⁴⁹⁾ For the *Invectiva Baptiste episcopi Interbeliensis contra Platinam* see Quaglioni, as above, pp. 93-127; and for Platina's links with Cardinal Gonzaga see D.S. Chambers, 'Il Platina e il cardinale Francesco Gonzaga', in *Bartolomeo Sacchi il Platina*, ed. A. Campana and P. Medioli Masotti, Padua 1986, pp. 9-19. Francesco Maffei, by then master of the Cardinal's household, not to mention Pomponio Leto himself, were reported in December 1478 to have avidly supported the cause of Simone; so was Marasca, former master of the household (Bonelli, nos. cx, clii, clxiii, pp. 446, 454, 456).

and also to «her Giulano» (the same Mantuan who had written from Bolzano and Trent in 1463) (50) for having done everything possible to sustain the cause of the «blessed infant and our holy innocent, Simone» (51); a month later Hinderbach wrote directly his thanks to Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga (52). Hinderbach, who had built the chapel dedicated to Simone (53), was evidently anxious to promote a cult which would enhance piety, episcopal authority and even prosperity in his principality; maybe the Gonzagas, with an eye to the possible succession, tended to support it partly for similar reasons.

But in addition, the Gonzagas' support of the child-martyr cult may - to give them the benefit of the doubt - have had more to do with sentimental piety than anti-semitism. The idea of a holy innocent may well have appealed to the maternal and affectionate nature of Barbara of Brandenburg, who had already been a grandmother since 1465, barely two years after the youngest of her own ten children was born; the growing reputation of Simone's shrine for cures and other miracles would have strengthened its appeal. Certainly there was no lack of pilgrims coming from Mantua. In January 1478 Federico Gonzaga, his wife Margherita and three of their children performed a vow to visit the sanctuary at Trent (54) and Stefanino Guidotti, after one of his stops at Trent in the course of making Paola Gonzaga's wedding arrangements, wrote that the blessed Simon of Trent had totally cured him of a fever (55). In January 1480 Barbara of Brandenburg herself visited the shrine of Simone, accompanied by Gianfrancesco (her third son), and met Paola

(50) See above n. 34.

(51) Giovanni Hinderbach, Bishop of Trent, to Barbara of Brandenburg, Trent, 29 December 1477: 'Habeo denique gratias plurimas Vestre Illustrissime Dominationi de commendatione facta Reverendissimo Domino Cardinale Mantuano pro adiutorio ac tuitione cause beati infantis ac innocentis nostri Symonis, nec minus illi civi vestro Juliano...' (ASMn AG b. 1402 c. 12).

(52) Letter of 31 January 1478 (Bonelli, no. cxxxviii, p. 451).

(53) Zippel, p. 34.

(54) 'Federico da Gonzaga con la sua donna e una figliola e doi figlioli maschi per voto fatto al beato Siomone [sic] a Trento, vano lì per exequire el voto e nel ritorno viene a Verona a la festa del palio, che tunc fu a dì domenica primo febraro mcccclxxvii' (G. Soranzo, *Cronaca di Anonimo veronese, 1446-88, Monumenti storici pubblicati della R. Deputazione veneta di Storia Patria*, ser. 3, vol. 4, Venice 1915, p. 333).

(55) Stefanino Guidotti to Barbara of Brandenburg, Bolzano, [day and month illegible, but presumably October or November] 1478, refers to '...la febre mia, che me ha in tutto levata el beato Simone da Trento...' (ASMn AG b. 544 c. 300).

there, bringing her home with them⁽⁵⁶⁾. This pilgrimage also excited interest at Verona, where the authorities were asked to ensure the party's safety⁽⁵⁷⁾. The young Francesco's visit with his parents in 1478 was recalled years later (and after he had become Marquis) in a letter of the Archpriest of Mori, recommending a couple of young men who wanted to serve in the Mantuan court and were bringing him two owls as a present⁽⁵⁸⁾. In October 1487, Marquis Francesco came again to the shrine of Simone, incognito but with Venetian protection⁽⁵⁹⁾. Finally, Benedetto Tosabézzi mentioned in July 1494 that Trilaco had shown him many relics in the cathedral, and that he had heard Mass at *beato* Simone's tomb and gazed upon him (presumably the mortal remains, rather than an effigy or image) with reverence⁽⁶⁰⁾.

A third subject connecting Mantua and Trent in this period is the War of Rovereto in 1487, that final war of the indomitable Sigismund Duke of Austria, allied again with the Prince-Bishop of Trent, but this

⁽⁵⁶⁾ Andrea da Schivenoglia, in his Mantuan chronicle, wrote: 'A dì 14 de zenaro 1480 la Illustrē Madona Barbara con messer Zohanfrancesco so fiollo, se partì de Mantoa per andare a Trento al biato Simon, e si menoe con sego cercha bochi 90 e foe accompagnata fora de Mantua dal gardenallo e dal marchexo con una gran zente, moy, a la retornata soa, vene Madona Pavolla' (Biblioteca Comunale, Mantua, Ms. 1019 fol. 85r); this is also noted by Billo, as above n. 21, p. 9.

⁽⁵⁷⁾ Marquis Federico Gonzaga to the governors of Verona, 10 January 1480, requests free passage through Venetian territory 'havendo deliberato la Illustrē domina nostra matre de andar pro sua devotione a Trento a visitare el corpo del beato Simone, dove spera ritrovare la illustrē contessa de Goricia [Paola Gonzaga] nostra sorella' (ASMN AG b. 2897 lib. 98 fol. 4r). Cf. Soranzo, *Cronaca di Anonimo veronese*, as above n. 54, p. 353: 'Madonna Barbara da Gonzaga com misser Zohan Francesco suo figliolo da Mantua se parteno de genaro MCCCCLXXX, per essere a Trento al beato Symone, e misser Augustino Barbarigo, potestà di Verona, li va contra a Guxolengo et honora...'.

⁽⁵⁸⁾ Gabriel, Archpriest of Mori, who described himself as brother to Mateo Mareschalchi of Carpi, to Marquis Francesco Gonzaga, wrote from Mori, 7 May 1486, about the dispatch of these *dugi*: 'e dicti latori racordandosi de Vostra Excellentia la quale passò per di qui quando Quella fu al beato Symone da Trento et dissono "portiameli a quello exelento e magnanimo marchexe de Mantua"' (ASMN AG b. 1407. I am grateful to Professor Gianmaria Varanini for this reference).

⁽⁵⁹⁾ See below, n. 79.

⁽⁶⁰⁾ Tosabézzi to Isabella d'Este, Trent, 27 July 1494: 'havemo olduto missa al beato Simone et vedutelo cum riverentia, poi nel domo il prefatio domino decano ne ha monstrato de molte digne reliquie' (ASMN AG b. 1407). The letter is cited by E. Marani, *Il Palazzo D'Arco*, as above n. 5, p. 82.

time in conflict with Venice. The principal historian of this war made use of the Este but not the Gonzaga archives⁽⁶¹⁾. It emerges from surviving correspondence that Marquis Francesco Gonzaga, although not directly involved in the war, was much concerned and informed about it.

In fact the Marquis of Mantua's friends, the Counts of Arco (by then co-citizens and relatives by marriage) had been largely responsible for the war's outbreak, by their frontier clashes with the Venetians at Riva, Nago and Torbole, near the northern extremity of Lake Garda. They had notified him in April 1487 of the dangerous situation developing there, and asked for his assistance in providing them with an expert in up-to-date artillery techniques⁽⁶²⁾. They even suggested that such a military adviser should come secretly, disguised as a pilgrim to the shrine of *beato* Simone (a new function of the cult, to assist military secrecy): otherwise the Venetians would probably arrest him. But if the brothers d'Arco were resisting the encroachments of Venetian jurisdiction and feared armed invasion of their territory, they were expecting too much by trying to involve Mantua in possible hostilities with the Republic of San Marco. Marquis Francesco Gonzaga, the descendant of several generations of professional military captains, aspired to the supreme command of Venice's own armies; at the age of twenty, he was somewhat young and inexperienced but was indeed appointed only a few years later⁽⁶³⁾. Not wanting to antagonize the Republic, for this

⁽⁶¹⁾ G. Onestinghel, 'La guerra tra Sigismondo conte del Tirolo e la Repubblica di Venezia, 1487', *Tridentum*, viii-ix (1905-06); I am grateful to a member of the audience at the Convegno in Rovereto in May 1989 who explained to me that Onestinghel was under suspicion from the Austrian authorities and it would have been difficult for him to have worked in Mantua. An account of the war from Venetian sources is provided in S. Romanin, *Storia Documentata di Venezia*, IV, Venice 1855, pp. 425-31. For near-contemporary narrative accounts, see P. Chiusole, *La Guerra Veneta-Tirolese del 1487 in Vallagarina*, Rovereto 1987.

⁽⁶²⁾ 'noi dubitiamo de gran guerra et presta in queste nostre parte... pregamo che subito dignar si voglia mandarne qui ad Archo una persona pratica et experta de guerra, che sapia trare de spingarde, passavolanti et simile artiglierie, et che venga secretamente come potrebbe fingere voler visitare il beato Symone, perché intendendose non sarebbe lassato passare...'. In a postscript they asked also for up to ten 'experti de guerra, che stagino cum noi per consiglio de le cose che occorserano, et de li quali non ne possamo integramente fidare' (ASMn AG b. 1413 c. 132; cited by G. Amadei, *Il Palazzo D'Arco*, as above n. 5, p. 45; Rill, *Storia dei Conti d'Arco*, p. 45).

⁽⁶³⁾ In March 1489 he was appointed commander and in June 1495 governor-general (M.E. Mallet and J.R. Hale, *The Military Organization of a Renaissance State: Venice c. 1400 to 1617*, Cambridge 1984, pp. 54, 168).

and other reasons he was anxious to keep out of the conflict altogether.

He nevertheless followed events, and principally the German offensive around Rovereto, with attention. He was urged to visit the war zone by his friends in the Venetian army, and during the siege of Rovereto, one of them, Galeazzo da Sanseverino, a son of the *condottiere* Roberto (who was shortly to take over the command) urged him to come in disguise. Francesco again played safe; he replied that he could not possibly come without being recognized, and for all his affection towards Venice, to do this would be at the expense of his honour⁽⁶⁴⁾. Another of the sons of Roberto, Gasparo da Sanseverino, who regarded Francesco as a companion in arms, sent him two «German» dogs described as part of the booty⁽⁶⁵⁾, but other stipendiaries in Venetian service were likewise disappointed at his failure to join them. Several wrote from Rovereto that they had been expecting him for over a month, and were delighted to hear the rumour he had arrived at Serravalle⁽⁶⁶⁾. No doubt the Marquis did wish to keep their friendship and also preserve good faith with Venice, but he was in a difficult position, having links and interests with the other side as well. Only by keeping to strict neutrality could he find a role in the war, and in fact he was requested by the Duchess of Ferrara, his mother-in-law, to intervene on behalf of a Ferrarese court lady to secure the safety of her son, who was among the soldiers besieged in the castle of Rovereto (indeed, one of those who had recently written about Francesco's expected visit). Francesco replied

⁽⁶⁴⁾ Marquis Francesco Gonzaga to Galeazzo Sanseverino, Mantua, 29 May 1487: 'Habiamo recevuto la litera de la Signoria Vostra per la qual ne fa intendere la voluntà sua et del Illustre Signor suo patre, che ne trasferissemò in campo, come già havevamo deliberato, che era de venirli privatamente incognito per li respecti ne occurevano. Ma doppo che lo parere del prefato Signore e de la Signoria Vostra sarìa che venessimo in quella forma che la ce scrive, comprendendo manifestamente, che senza esser conosciuti non poteressimo venire et che ad altri sarìa noto, habiamo molto bene pensato...' (ASMN AG b. 2902 lib. 129 fol. 65v).

⁽⁶⁵⁾ Marquis Francesco Gonzaga to Gasparo Sanseverino, Mantua, 1 June 1487 thanks him for 'duoi cani todeschi del botino facto per quella in campagna' (ASMN AG b. 2902 lib. 129 fol. 68v).

⁽⁶⁶⁾ Letter in the names of 'Petrus Franciscus de Mugano, Alexander Beraldus, Martinus de Lodi, Roberto Strozzi', Rovereto, 24 May 1487: 'Dipoi si partimo da Vostra Signoria, abiamo recevuto due vostre, una al rastello, e l'altra dipoi fumo giunti in Rovere', per la qual Vostra Signoria ce avisò sarìa qui fra sei giorni, et in fino a quest' ora sono pasato giorni 29 che de la Signoria vostra non abiamo inteso cosa alcuna, salvo che a bocha per uno meso venuto de qua abiamo inteso Vostra Signoria eser a Saravalle. Essendo cusì, ne abiamo preso grande apiacere...' (ASMN AG b. 544 c. 320).

that he would do everything possible, but he had never been able to find out for sure whether any of his German relatives were in the opposing army. He promised to send a German trumpeter, who had been brought up in his household, to find out. Francesco also wrote to Giulio Cesare Varano, at this point (before Sanseverino displaced him) the principal commander for Venice, and to the Venetian *proveditori*, asking them to give free passage to this young German⁽⁶⁷⁾. The outcome is uncertain, however, for shortly afterwards Rovereto had fallen, not only the town (as Gasparo da Sanseverino informed the Marquis)⁽⁶⁸⁾ but also, by 10 June, the castle⁽⁶⁹⁾. Relatives of the Gonzagas probably, and certainly friends - in addition to the d'Arco - were serving with the anti-Venetian forces. Correspondence evidently passed through the lines⁽⁷⁰⁾ and, for instance, a certain captain called Sigismund of Freiburg wrote (in Italian) from Rovereto, declaring that he had formerly been in the service of Francesco's mother, Margaret of Bavaria, and would like his own son to serve in the court of Mantua⁽⁷¹⁾.

⁽⁶⁷⁾ Letters of 20 May 1487 in ASMN AG b. 2902 lib. 129 fols 59v-60r. The letter to Giulio Cesare Varano da Camerino (fol. 60r) contains the most detail: 'Siamo certificati che in la rocca di Rovereto, a l'oppugnazione de la quale se retrova lo exercito alemanico, è uno Roberto filiolo de la magnifica Madonna Aloysa de li Strozzi, la quale è al governo de la Illustrissima Isabella, nostra dilectissima consorte, e lui è squadreto de la Illustrissima Signoria de Venetia in la compagnia del magnifico conte Bernardino da Montone; e dubitando che, pervenendo la terra e rocca in potestà de li alemani, non usino crudelità, come se demonstranno volerà fare contra chi sonno a quello presidio, nui, quali per ogni respecto haveressimo molestissima la morte del dicto Roberto, per aiutarlo in qualunque caso, mandiamo al canto de là Zohanne nostro trombone, alevo de casa nostra e de la natione germanica, ch'el vedi se a quella impresa se retrovassero alcuni di parenti nostri signori alemani, e cum loro signorie procurare et instare in nome nostro che, accadendo lo caso de la expugnatione, volianno conservare questo giovane, e donarcelo in modo ch'el resti libero e salvo'.

⁽⁶⁸⁾ In a letter dated from Verona on 1 June: 'per l'ultima mia Vostra Signoria ha-rà inteso dil perder di Rovereto... la rocha anchor se tiene, et per qualche dì è ben fornita che ben potranno tenirsse' (ASMN AG b. 1596).

⁽⁶⁹⁾ Soranzo, *Cronaca di Anonimo veronese*, as above n. 54, p. 449, correcting One-stinghel on the date.

⁽⁷⁰⁾ e.g. Giulio Cesare Varano to Marquis Francesco Gonzaga, Rovereto, 2 June: 'lo magnifico Signor Gudentio conte di Maza, capitano del duca illustre de Austria, me ha mandato lo presente socholo de litere, pregandomi le mandasse ad Vostra Illustrre Signoria' (ASMN AG b. 544 c. 322).

⁽⁷¹⁾ The letter is signed 'ex castris felicibus Illustris Archiducis Austrie in Rovere-do, feria secunda post festum Corporis Christi, Celsitudinis vestre servitor Sigismundus de Freyburg miles capitaneus' (ASMN AG b. 544 c. 324).

After that old friend of the Gonzagas, Roberto Sanseverino, became Venetian commander, Francesco was even more concerned to keep in touch. On 20 July he wrote asking Roberto what were his plans⁽⁷²⁾. In reply, Roberto replied optimistically, announcing that the Germans had abandoned Rovereto and district, and were in retreat, apart from some still remaining in Trent and elsewhere. He could not judge what they were planning to do, but his opinion was that either they would regroup and attack, again, or else, and provided that the Venetian army took some initiative (*facto nui qualche cosa*), peace would soon follow⁽⁷³⁾.

A few days later, the Venetians did go on the offensive, recaptured Rovereto and advanced north towards Trent, but as is well known, Sanseverino's *qualche cosa* resulted in disaster on 10 August at the Battle of Calliano, when, trying to reduce the castles of Pietro and Beseno, many of the Venetian troops ended in the Adige, and he himself died there⁽⁷⁴⁾. This sad event inspired Battista Spagnoli (Mantuanus), the most famous Latin poet from Mantua since Vergil, to compose his long poem *Somnium Romanum* in Roberto's honour⁽⁷⁵⁾.

Meanwhile the war had been continuing, but in a desultory fashion, so Gasparo Sanseverino wrote⁽⁷⁶⁾. Ten days later he complained again of the inactivity, and above all of his disappointment at Francesco's non-appearance, but reassured the Marquis that peace was in sight, thanks

⁽⁷²⁾ '...haverà piacere sapere dove se ritrova la Signoria Vostra, dove sono iti li todeschi, et che penser sia el suo et che iudico Lei ne facia' (ASMn AG b. 2902 lib. 129 fol. 78v).

⁽⁷³⁾ Appendix no. 3. Another letter from Roberto, dated 25 July 'ex castris apud Castrum Barchum' is in commendation of a priest with a legal dispute in Mantuan territory: 'per essere luy informato de questo paese e adoperato assay, et da questi magnifici proveditori et da mi' (ASMn AG b. 1415).

⁽⁷⁴⁾ See L. Rambaldi, 'La Battaglia di Calliano e la morte di Roberto Sanseverino', *Archivio tridentino*, xv, 1900, pp. 5-36.

⁽⁷⁵⁾ G. Zippel, 'La morte di Roberto da Sanseverino nella poesia contemporanea', *Storia e Cultura* (as above n. 1), pp. 4-9. Gaspare da Sanseverino wrote to Marquis Francesco from Verona on 18 August, thanking him for condolences, rather hopelessly adding 'benché insino hora nulla certezza habiamo di morte né di vita di sua Excellentia' (b. 1596).

⁽⁷⁶⁾ Gasparo da Sanseverino to Marquis Francesco Gonzaga, Rovereto, 19 September 1487: '...De le cosse de questo campo non ne scriverò altro a Quella per non farsse nulla, per questi pessimi tempi, et poi per esser nemici pochi. Molte volte sum cavalchato insino a presso la preta [sic], et mai nemici hano voluto uscir fora' (ASMn AG b. 544 c. 353).

to the Emperor's intervention⁽⁷⁷⁾. Frederick III had not given any support to Duke Sigismund in a war so ruinous for transalpine trade and was honestly seeking to bring peace about with Venice⁽⁷⁸⁾. Marquis Francesco in early October did at last come to the Trentino, in disguise or semi-disguise, and at Venetian expense, when he visited the shrine of *beato* Simone⁽⁷⁹⁾, but probably the reason for his coming was at least in part political. At all events, he was thanked some months later for his intercession on behalf of those of the local nobility who had been penalized for siding against the Duke of Austria⁽⁸⁰⁾. On 6 June 1487 Marquis Francesco wrote to the Archduke of Austria thanking him for his goodwill towards such friends of his and towards Mantuan merchants⁽⁸¹⁾, and a week later reaffirmed his own total neutrality in the conflict, which had arisen from reasonable and sufficient causes against Venice, and particularly to uphold the lords of Arco⁽⁸²⁾. But this *casus belli*, the d'Arco family's rights in the frontier zone, remained an open problem. In the end it fell to another Mantuan to find the solution. The Emperor, Duke Sigismund, and the Venetian government all agreed to delegate the matter to selected legal experts. On account of this, in March 1488 Odorico and Andrea d'Arco wrote to the Marquis asking to have a consultation about their claims with the Archdeacon of Mantua, Bendetto Mastino, whom they praised as a most eminent jurist and

⁽⁷⁷⁾ Letter of 28 September in Appendix no. 4.

⁽⁷⁸⁾ Romanin, IV pp. 430-31.

⁽⁷⁹⁾ Letter of the Doge and Signoria to Luca Pisani and Hieronimo Marcello, Provveditori of the army, Venice 23 October 1487: '...per vegnir de lì a vuy lo Illustre Signor Marchese de Mantoa incognito cum quattro cavalli per andar a Trento a visitacion, come se dice, del beatto Simone, volemo però et commandàmove, che la Excellentia Soa honorar dobbiate cum demonstratione de l'amor et benivolentia nostra in quella, fazendoli le spexe de i danari de la Signoria nostra' (Archivio di Stato, Venice, Collegio, Lettere (1486-88) c. 205, cited by Onestinghel, as above n. 61, *Tridentum*, viii, 1905, p. 369).

⁽⁸⁰⁾ G. de Fatis di Trilaco and his brother to Marquis Francesco Gonzaga, Trent, 6 January 1488. '...Dio omnipotente, oltra le falsitade et ingani a nui et altri zentilhomini del paese fatti, ha redutto in luce soi altri tradimenti ordinati contro lo Illustrissimo Archiduca nostro et tuto il territorio suo, per la quale cosa essi si sono posti in fuga et alchuni de loro sono presi, et nui siamo liberati, et ni sono stati restituiti li beni nostri stabili... possiamo dire che la vita e le facultate nostre per la gratia de Idio, adoperata per mezo de la Excellentia Vostra, habiamo rehabuto' (ASMN AG b. 1407; Rill, p. 48).

⁽⁸¹⁾ ASMN AG b. 2902, lib. 128 fols 88r-88v.

⁽⁸²⁾ ibid. fol. 92v.

canonist⁽⁸³⁾. Three months later they hailed the outcome a triumph, thanks to Mastino, that «most excellent doctor and luminary of justice»; even though the other side had among their number two of the most famous legal experts from Padua, he had reduced them to silence⁽⁸⁴⁾.

These three Mantuan-Tridentine themes connect, in demonstrating that for the Italo-Germanic Gonzaga dyasty, marquises of the Empire and lords of Mantua, the Trentino did have considerable significance. They wanted the prince-bishopric to retain its political and religious integrity, not least the flourishing local cult of the infant Simone, and would have liked to see Trent in the hands of a Gonzaga bishop; they also wished to favour and protect the d'Arco family and maybe other feudal lordships. But they were unwilling to risk too much and prejudice their relations with Venice, the terraferma dominions of which surrounded the greater part of Mantuan territory. What they wanted was the *status quo*, and the Battle of Calliano, which put an end to Venetian expansion up the Adige valley, assured this.

⁽⁸³⁾ Letter of 12 March 1488 (ASMN AG 1413 c. 133). On Mastino, who had formerly been the auditor of Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga at Bologna, see D.S. Chambers, 'A Defence of Non-Residence in the Later Fifteenth Century: Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga and the Mantuan Clergy', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 36, 1985, at pp. 613, 623-24.

⁽⁸⁴⁾ Letter of 20 June 1488 thanks the Marquis 'per il maximo favore... in haverne conceduto a questa nostra amplissima disputatione de' confini il suo Reverendissimo Archidiacono d. Benedetto Mastino, excellentissimo doctore et lume de iusticia. El quale, benché da nui fusse solamente desyderato per consilio secretamente, tamen, vedendo grande copia de doctori per la parte contraria, tra li quali erano doi de li principali legisti di Padoa, a li quali per niun modo noi potevamo havere advocati li quali in scientia ge potesseno resistere... se pose in contradictione a disputare et allegare tam in iure quam in facto contra tanta copia de advocati adversi, ogni zorno doe volte la maior parte del tempo nel quale è stato qui, cum tanta elegantia, cum tanta lege civile e canonice, et cum tanto modo che ogni auditore se maravigliava de la sapientia sua, adeo che li advocati adversi tandem remaseno victi et confusi che non sapeano che dire' (ASMN AG b. 1413 c. 134; Rill, p. 48).

APPENDIX

1. Francesco d'Arco to Barbara of Brandenburg, Arco, 19 June 1475
 (ASMN AG b. 1413 c. 104).

Illustrissima et Excellentissima domina,

Questi giorni passati receveti littera de Vostra Excellentia che io volesse mandare là, per meter ordine a li fati de la Illustrre mia nora, et cossì per satisfare a la mente de Vostra Illustrissima Signoria, mando el venerabile don Paulo arciprete in questa terra, informato de quanto mi va per mente si à da fare in questo principio per fare el sponsalicio de questa illustre sposa, et per intendere quello pare a dita Vostra Illustrissima Signoria per adatate le cosse cum quella convenientia parerà a Vostra Excellentia, la quale prego me sia guida de conseglio in questa et ogni altra cossa necessaria a bon fine, pregando dita Vostra Signoria si degni dar piena fede a dito don Pollo arciprete, mio messo, cossì ne lo sborsare de dinari, como de le altre cosse, altro per questa se non che a Vostra Excellentia mi ricomando, pregando fra le altre cosse che la Excellentia del Signore e Vostra proveda de homo perito et suficiente in cognoscere quelle zoye se haverano a comprare a Venesia, et compiacermi de tal persona che le cosse passano bene, perché io voglio far la spesa del mandare el dito messo che sarà, over andrà a comprare le dite zoye. Et perché io son certo che la Excellentia del Signore e Vostra habbia de li amici a Venesia, prego la Signoria del Marchese e la Vostra si degni scriverli, et faticharli a questa nostra comune facenda. Questa confidentia piglio da Vostra Excellentia, sperando che per mezo de suo messo se haverano cosse bone senza pericolo di esser defraudati. Archi, die xviii^o Junii 1475.

Eiusdem Excellentie Vestre servitor Franciscus comes Archi.

2. Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga to Marquis Ludovico Gonzaga, Todi, 12 December 1462. (ASMN AG b. 1100 cc. 77-79).

Illustrissimo Signor mio padre, Ritrovandome qua a Gianciano, terra de Senesi, presso Montepulciano a 3 miglia, loco in verità assai tristo e sencia piacere, nè occorendome altre facende, vedendo le cose mie non andare bene per le grande spese me acadeno, comenciai uno poco a pensare suso li fatti miei, e maxime a la facenda del vescovado de Trente, pensando quello che altra fiata ne fo praticato, cercando se via alcuno potesse ritrovare de condure la cosa a bon fine. Et havendo io circha

cio fatto grando pensere e discorso, prima che de qua atenti altro, m'è parso de lo tutto darne aviso a la Illustrissima Signoria Vostra a ciò che, laudando Lei el pensensere [sic] mio, questa trama se possi governare secondo il parere e commandamento suo. Quando anche Essa iudicasse, che de questo per via alcuna non se ne havesse a far regionalmente alcuno, da ogni praticha e impresa io desisteria. La Vostra Signoria credo saprà in che termino lasoe Bertolameo Bonato questa facenda, e li impedimenti che ge furen a non havere esecuzione, e quanto la voluntade de nostro Signore in questo era bona e bene disposta. E così credo, che de novo facielmente se intrarebe suso queste pratiche, che sua Signoria me la concederia, e maxime per la via del Reverendissimo Monsignore S. Petro in Vincula, el quale existimo me adiutaria gaiardamente e seria propicio al deposizione de questo vescovo, perché me pare habia datto molti socorsi a lo ducha Sigismondo. E adesso lo decano de Trente e uno altro suo zentilomo sonno venuti ambasatiri per esso duca a Vinesia, e così facendo per lo Reverendissimo Monsignore renovare questa praticha, pareme che facilmente se conduria la Sanctità de nostro Signore a fare formare el processo de la privacione e deponere esso vescovo; e perché seria molto necesario de po' la privacione de lo vescovo, condure secretamente per me la praticha de essere investito de questo vescovato, vederia de tenere modo che la Sanctità de nostro Signore secretamente me ne investisse in concistorio, coadunando quelli de' quali se potesse confidare no lo publicaseno in absencia de coloro che verisimelmente se pensasse doveseno avisarne la Signoria de Venezia, a ciò che, nanti el fatto, non fusse turbato. Questo è quello, che a otener la institutione de lo beneficio e consequere el titulo de lo vescovado me pare seria necesario. Quanto mo a potere consequere la posezione de lo vescovado, dove sta la maziore dificultà, m'è andato per mente ch'el besognaria avere qualche inteligencia come lo conte Francesco de Archo e como quelli nostri amici sonno lì, che altra fiata me disse la Illustrissima Madonna mia madre, ge erano molti che desideravano havermi in questo loco. Io li ho anche in Archo uno prete, el quale à da mi una litera de capelanaria, e intendo ha grande sequito de partesani e adoperarialine voluntere in mio favore a cerchare mo de pratichare questa cosa e vedere se lo conte Francesco volesse farne spalle. Me pareve sarò bono maistro Zoaanne da Grignano, ch'è pratico ne la paese e conosce le voluntade de li homeni. Io ho anche el priore de S. Antonio, che à tramane questa cosa de là. Serà molto bono et atto. La cosa, quando lo conte Francesco se ce volesse adiutare, seria de condure in questa forma: intendo che esso conte ha facilmente el modo de potere pigliare el vescovo quando voglia, nè anche me pare dure a credere che

intendo el vescovo essere uno homo da pocho e imbriacho, et havere in consuetudine de andare spesso come uno compagno, vestito curto, fura de la tera a balare a la piva, e questo ha visto persona che io ho in casa. Poterìa el conte Fracensco como li soi partesani farlo pilgiare e condure in Archo, e quando lui fusse preso, come ogne pocha inteligenzia se havesse dentro, serìa facibile de otinere le terre et haverle inter li mane. Vederìa anche de fare mandare uno breve apostolico al conte Francesco per il quali li fusse (c)oma(n)dato da la Sanctità de nostro Signor me dovesse dare ogne aiuto e favore, e così lui, a soa iustificacione, se porìa fondare sopra esso breve. Qui è uno dubio che me ochoreva, che la Signoria de Vinesia *armata manu* non se desse impazio, il che, quando faceseno publicamente e pilgiaseno l'arme per questo vescovo, me parerìa de farli questa provisione: far excomunicare in genere ciascuno che desse aiuto e favore a questo vescovo, e in specie a loro Veneziani da pocho haveseno tolto la impresa, e che la Sanctità de nostro Signore desse *omnia sua in predam*, come se fece de lo Ducha Sigismondo per quello haveva fatto a lo cardinale. Et io anche me poterìa dolere de loro, che esendo io a questi dì a Monte Oliveto, venne a visitarme lo ambasatore de la Signoria, e diseme havere certe litere de credencia de la Sua Signoria a me, quale perhò non me dede, ma disse me la daria *loco et tempore*, che forse haveva intencione darmele quando fusse dove se ritrovasse la Sanctità de nostro Signore, e qui me hofersse el stato, la roba, et ogne aiuto de la Signoria, de la quale potesse disponere come de mei figlioli; sì che loro, quando se moveseno contra di me, haverìa legitima casone de lamentarmene che *non solum* non ce aiutasero, ma fosero contrarii. Non dico zià che io creda stesero per non convenire a questa oferta, ma più presto credo forse restarrano per la vergogna de non esere excommunicati etc., e così per questo rispetto, tentariano la via de l'altra volta, riducendose a lo Illustrè signor Duca de Milano per farme desistere da questa impresa, il che, quando atentaseno, me pare ch'el Duca se parìa iustificare, respondendoli che le cose non sonno hora in li termine e condicione de l'altra volta, che ponno existimare la Sanctità de nostro Signore havere fatto questo de darmel vescovado de Trente non a contemplacione sua, ma per amore porta specialemente a me, e porìa dire mazor demostracione de amore fece lo papa quando lo promosse al capello, sì che non he grando fatto che la Sua Sanctità per rispetto *solum* d'esso cardinale se sia mossa a volerla far questo bene, che essendo anche lui cardinale non gli è dificele otenerne ziò che vole. Quando dicesseno che Vostra Signoria me dovesse fare desistere, Quella, parendoli così, porìa responderli (benchè io in ogne cosa voglia essere sudito ad ogne comandamento e voluntà de Vostra Signoria): «Io

hora non li posso, essendo mio figliolo cardinale, comandare. Lui ha libera potestate da fare ciò che vole; e quando io voglio più una cosa cha un'altra, me besogna confortarlo e pregarlo, e questo è quello che io posso fare. Forse che per le grande oferte indendo haverli fatto sempre la Vostra Signoria lui se mosse a questa impresa cerchando el facto suo, e confidendosse che a ciò li debiati essere propicii e non adversi, e *maxime in re iustissima* de che lui da la Sanctità de Nostro Signore ha impetrato el vero titulo; e così volendo lui proseguire, io non lo posso fare desistere. «Facendoli questa risposta Vostra Signoria, me pare veneria a iustificarsse per modo non pariano dire che da Lei procedesse questa cosa. Ad havere mo el Ducha Sigismondo favorevole, se poria operare quelli signori de Monacho, tra quelli sento è granda inteligenzia, e fare intendere al Ducha che ne la facenda soa al tempo mio, io li sonno stato propicio, et ho sempre cerchato mitigare la cosa, et *eciam* impetrato che li merchadanti de Mantua posino pratichar de là. Questo mio pensere, qual, come è ditto, ritrovandome ocioso, ò rummato tra mi, ho voluto signifcare a Vostra Signoria, a ciò che, concorrendo Lei in questo mio desegno, e parendoli se habia a tore questa impresa el tutto como li recordi soi, se possa governare. E se per el scrivere mio Quella non me intende bene, La prego ne voia parlare como Bertolameo Bonatto, e mandarlo qua a me, informato del parere suo, che forsi a bocha per relacione d'esso Bertolomeo li faria da po' intendere meio el tuto. Quando anche Vostra Signoria termine che non se intre in questa trama, io non ne farò rasonamento alcuno, ma per misera de carta e de inchiostro non ho voluto restare de notificarli e questo mio pensere. *Praeterea* ho ricevuto una de mane de la Vostra Signoria, la quale non besognava pigliasse questa fatica, ma da pocho la Illustre Signoria Vostra s'è dignata piarla, la ringracia sommamente. Me ricomando a la Illustre Signoria Vostra. *Ex Tuderto, die X decembris 1462.*

*Illusterrimae Dominationis Vestrae filius F. Cardinalis de Gonzaga
manu propria.*

3. Roberto da Sanseverino to Marquis Francesco Gonzaga, Rovereto, 22 July 1487. (ASMN AG b. 544 c. 330).

Illustris et Excellens Domine, affinis et tanquam frater honorandus, Gionse da me questa matina, cum una letera de Vostra Excellentia, el suo capo de squadra, nela quale me richiedea fosse contento darli vera noticia de questi nostri progressi. Dipoi è capitato qui el presente suo cavallaro, quale venendo da Lei me è parso retenere per domane dicto suo capo de squadra, et per el cavallaro satisfare a la sua richiesta, che

lo desidero non solo in questa cosa, ma in ogni altra a me possibile, cercando cossì li oblighi tegno cum Vostra Excellentia et li piaceri ho recevuto da Essa. Unde li significo ch'el magnifico misser Nagal suo partì de qui per Ispruch per exequire la commissione sua, et per quanto ne ha referto el predicto cavallaro, lo ha trovato in camino et ha trovato anchora Antoniomaria mio figliolo cum li altri presoni che erano conducti ad Ispruch.

Sono certo che misser Nagal, gentilissima persona, farà bono officio et opera. Li Todeschi partirono et abandonorno Rovereto et questi luochi, et se sono disciolti de sieme, salvo che a Trento et questi altri soi luochi sono restati qualche numero de Todeschi. Non se può iudicare li soi pensieri, et quello sia l'animo suo, ma ad mio parere tengo o che de novo se unirano per contrastare a le force nostre, o che, facto nui qualche cosa, seguirà bona pace. Io ho reducto el campo qui ad Sacho, facio tuttavia fortificare Rovereto, et ho facto fare uno ponte sopra l'Adese, scontro ad Sacho, cum proposito levarme domane col campo et redurlo a presso ad Numi, luocco de' inimici. Ho mandato per le bombarde quale aspecto o dimane o l'altro ogni modo. Gionte, le farò piantare ad Numi, quale spero havere subito. Poi cum esse bombarde è mio pensiero andare a la Preda, passo et luocco forte de inimici, et bene munito de artigliarie. Questo passo è molto de importantia per dividere el Stato de' Todeschi cum questa illustrissima Signoria. Pure ho speranza de haverlo et poi etiam seguire in altre cose et fare qualche opera laudabile. In questo megio ho ordinato per dimane fare correre li nostri cavalli ligieri insino su le porte de Trento. Del numero de le persone al presente, in questo campo, sono circa octomillia persone. Vostra Excellentia sarà di poi più a pieno informata del sito de questi luochi e de le altre cose dal suo capo de squadra, che ne verà ben instructo. A la quale recordo che, potendola in altro compiacere, può di me, de li figlioli et de le facultate disponere tanto quanto sia el suo desiderio, et ad lei de bon core me offero et recommando. *Quae bene valeat. In castris serenissimi venetorum dominii apud Sachum, die xxii julii 1487, hora xx.*

Excellentie Vestre affinis Robertus de Aragonia de Sancto Severino, locutus illustrissimi dominii venetiarum ac Sancte Romane Ecclesie Confalonierius.

4. Gasparo da Sanseverino to Marquis Francesco Gonzaga, 28 September 1487. (ASMN AG b. 544 c. 454).

Illustrissimo Signor mio, non piglia Vostra Signoria admiracione se

io non gli scrivo più spesso, et questo he per dui respecty. El primo, per non si far qua cosa alcuna, et tucto mancha da noy, perché si porria far cose digne et relevate, ma non si vole per non si conosserè più per chi governa. L'altra per haver la Signoria Vostra ditto tante volte de voler venir de qua, che continuamente aspectavo Quella l'improvviso. Vedo per experiencia che Quella così verrà a noy com[o] fa a li zudey el Messia, et tucto questo d'altro non proceda se non d'aver gran filo de li Todeschi como hanno la mazor parte de questy sono in campo, siché stative pur a buzerare et biastemar chomo è vostra usanza. Messer Sigismondo Brandolino m'è ditto alcune cose per parte de Vostra Signoria, quale non scriverò, per non ho molto a piacer el scrivere. Mi governarò a la venuta de Quella con hogni arma in mano hovero co la balla, ch'io sonno per render bon conto di me. Con tanto desiderio aspecto la Signoria Vostra ch'io nol porria scrivere, a la Qual quanto più posso me raccomando. S'el mio caro compare havesse a combattere col Conte Federigo senza io non gli vedesse, seria disperato. Prego Quella se fussino per far che aspectano tanto che la pace segui, che spero serà fra pochi zorni per el mezo de lo Imperatore, et sono certo sortirà bono effecto per lo melio de tute dua le parti. La Signoria Vostra serà avisata como messer Antonio Maria mio fratello è stato liberato per lo mezzo del sopradetto Imperatore et re Maxsimiliano per quello medesimo ambasatore che è a Venecia per tratar ditta pace, et quando da la Illustrissima Signoria manchasse, bisognaria ritornasse in prygione, pur tute le cosse ceseranno, perché servirà pace, el qual mio f[r]atello assai se raccommenda a Vostra Signoria. *Ex Rovereto die 28 setembris 1487.*

S[ervitor] Gaspar manu propria.

RIASSUNTO - In questo saggio si tratta più degli interessi mantovani nel Trentino che viceversa, ma si fa anche cenno a coloro (soprattutto la famiglia d'Arco) per i quali Mantova era la fonte più vicina (relativamente) alla civiltà del Rinascimento. Per i Gonzaga, al di là dei semplici interessi commerciali dei Mantovani, il Trentino era di somma importanza. Marchesi dell'Impero e parenti di principi tedeschi, i Gonzaga per motivi politici avevano sempre bisogno di libero transito nella Germania e di buoni rapporti con i principi vescovi e con i conti del Tirolo, nonché con Venezia. Tre argomenti sono esaminati per illustrare ciò: (1) I tentativi dei Gonzaga di prendere possesso del principato vescovile di Trento, con riferimento particolare alle aspirazioni (perfino facendo ricorso a mezzi violenti) del cardinale Francesco Gonzaga; (2) Il loro sostegno al culto di santo martire del bambino Simone di Trento, ucciso nel 1475; (3) Le preoccupazioni del giovane marchese Francesco Gonzaga per la sorte della guerra di Rovereto del 1487 e la sua propria neutralità, a causa degli obblighi ch'egli aveva verso le parti in conflitto.

SUMMARY - This article is more about Mantuan interests in the Trentino than vice versa, but it also refers to some persons - particularly the d'Arco family - for whom Mantua was (relatively) the nearest source of Renaissance civilisation. For the Gonzagas, and apart from Mantuan commercial interests there, the Trentino was of great importance. Marquises of the Empire and relatives of German princes, the Gonzagas had always needed, from political motives, free access to Germany, and good relations with the Prince Bishops and the Counts of the Tyrol, not to mention with Venice. Three themes are examined to illustrate this: (1) The attempts by the Gonzagas to take possession of the Prince Bishopric of Trento, with particular reference to Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga, (who even planned to resort to violence); (2) Their support for the cult of holy martyr of the baby Simone of Trent, killed in 1475; (3) The young Marquis Francesco Gonzaga's concern for the outcome of the War of Rovereto in 1487, and his own neutrality because of the obligations he had towards both sides in that conflict.

RÉSUMÉ - Der vorliegende Artikel handelt in erster Linie von mantuanischen Interessen im Trentino, daneben aber auch von tridentinischen Kreisen (vor allem der Familie d'Arco), für welche Mantua die (relativ) nächste Quelle der Renaissancekultur war. Für die Gonzaga war das Trentino über blosse Handelsinteressen der Mantuaner hinaus von grösster Bedeutung. Als Reichsmarkgrafen und als Verwandte deutscher Fürsten benötigten die Gonzaga aus politischen Gründen stets freien Zugang nach Deutschland und gute Beziehungen zu den Fürstbischöfen und den Grafen von Tirol, wie auch mit Venedig. Drei Themen werden untersucht, um dies zu erhellen: (1) Die Versuche der Gonzaga, in den Besitz des Trienter Fürstbischoftums zu gelangen, mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Aspirationen Kardinal Francesco Gonzagas (selbst bis zur Anwendung von gewaltsamen Mitteln). (2) Ihre Unterstützung für den Märtyrerkult des 1475 ermordeten Kindes Simon von Trient. (3) Die Besorgnisse des jungen Markgrafen Francesco Gonzaga um den Krieg von Rovereto von 1487 und seine eigene Neutralität, bedingt von den Verpflichtungen, die er gegenüber beiden Konfliktparteien hatte.

