

LUCCA IN THE *SIGNORIA* OF PAOLO GUINIGI, 1400-1430

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This study analyzes the once great medieval Tuscan capital of Lucca's struggle for survival at the beginning of the fifteenth century. This was the age of the rise of regional states in Italy, and the expansionistic aims of Milan, Florence and others were a constant challenge to city-states such as Lucca which desired a political and cultural *status quo*. Yet, it was a challenge that was successfully met; unlike Pisa, Siena, Perugia, and various other major Tuscan cities, Lucca did not succumb to Milanese or Florentine aggression in the early *Quattrocento*. Why it did not is a major topic of discussion here.

One of the means in which the Lucchese faced the new political and military realities of the time was the establishment of a monarchical system of government in the *signoria* of Paolo Guinigi (r. 1400-1430). The Guinigi *Signoria* was not characterized by the use of intimidation and violence, but rather by clientage, kinship and neighborhood bonds, marriage alliances, and the general consent of the people. Paolo garnered the consent of the

people at first because his wealth allowed him to protect Lucca and its *contado* to a greater extent than would have been possible otherwise, and because of his family's long ties with the powerful Visconti of Milan; he held it later because he provided the city-state with capable leadership.

This study extends the evidence of recent scholars that every Italian Renaissance city was unique based on its particular geography, alliances, civic wealth, and a number of other factors. Lucca in the period of Paolo Guinigi, a monarchy in the setting of one of the traditionally most republican cities of Italy, provides a most interesting example. "Civic humanism," for example, has a decidedly different slant in Lucca than elsewhere, and is best exemplified in the figure of Giovanni Sercambi. This study also provides new perspectives from which to view Florence and Milan during the period of "crisis" at the beginning of the fifteenth century, and thus contributes to the mass of scholarship concerning the Baron thesis.

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Map 1. Italy

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

On 6 April 1369, a day that was to become a celebrated holiday in Lucca, the Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV liberated the city from more than forty years of foreign subjugation. Ever since the death of the native ruler Castruccio Castracani in 1328 Lucca had been subject to outside rule, first to a series of short-lived, absentee Lombard lords, then after 1342 to its neighbor and hated rival Pisa. Release from the "Babylonian servitude," as the Lucchese perceived it, was cause for widespread celebration throughout the city.

Giovanni Sercambi (1345-1424), Lucchese chronicler who witnessed the events of April 1369, wrote that the citizens stormed the gates of the fortress of the Augusta, which had become the symbol of Pisan tyranny in Lucca, and had managed to dismantle them before the end of the day: "There remained neither man nor woman, noble nor peasant, who had not ascended to the top, some with hammers, some with pick-axes, some with other iron tools, and some with only their hands to destroy the parts of this wall." Sercambi, who later participated in the driving out of Pisan soldiers from their

last strongholds in Lucca, leaves the impression not so much of hostility in the crowd, but rather of great cheer: "There was such an atmosphere that many cried tears of joy, and many seemed to have gone mad and outside of themselves. Truly, the happiness was such that the language of man is incapable of describing it."¹

Nor was this an event noticed only in Lucca. The noted humanist Coluccio Salutati, though early in his own political career, wrote to his friend Niccolosio Bartolomei in Lucca that the whole world is happy about the liberation of Lucca: "For what could be more pleasing, what better, what more admirable, what more full of joy than to speak of the freedom of the fatherland?"² Salutati in fact would come

¹Giovanni Sercambi, *Le Croniche Lucchesi*, ed. Salvatore Bongi, 3 vols., in *Fonti per la Storia d' Italia* (Lucca: Giusti, 1892), 1: 188, "*andarono alla dicta porta et quine le porti gictaron per terra, & il muro smurando, in tal modo che, inanti che fusse ora di vespro, non rimase homo nè femina, grande nè picciolo, che non montasse in su le dicte mura, chi con maresecuri, chi con sicuri, chi con altri ferrimenti, chi colle mani, a disfare i merli di tale muro...E con tanto inpito d' allegrezza, che molti d' allegrezza lagrimavano & molti parevano macti e fuor di loro. E di vero l' alegrezza fu tale che lingua d' omo dire nol potre.*"

²*Epistolario di Coluccio Salutati*, ed. Francesco Novati, 4 vols. (Rome: Forzani, 1891-1911), 1: 88-89, "*quid enim gratius, quid maius, quid admirabilius, quid gratulatione plenius quam dicere de patrie liberatione?*" Salutati would build friendships with a number of Lucchese citizens during the early 1370s when he was Chancellor of Lucca, which in some cases lasted into the next century, as can be seen in

to help the Lucchese get the new government running as he was named Chancellor of Lucca in 1370-1371, one of his first important political offices before beginning his long career in Florence.

The Lucchese, having experienced the loss of their independence, never appreciated it more than in 1369 and afterwards. Civic leaders after 1369 would be constantly vigilant above all else about doing everything possible to preserve self-rule, including abandoning some of their cherished republican institutions. Foreign as well as domestic policy was to be focused on achieving this end. The experience of foreign subjugation throughout the middle decades of the fourteenth century did much to shape the future history of Renaissance Lucca.

Yet, only thirty years later, at the beginning of the fifteenth century, the future of the Republic of Lucca again looked uncertain as another period of crisis had arisen. Lucca was caught in the middle (literally) of the ongoing,

this edition of his letters. For Salutati's stay in Lucca, see Giorgio Tori, "Coluccio Salutati, Chancellor of the Republic of Lucca and the Problem of the *Minute di Riformagioni Pubbliche* (1370-1371)," in *The Other Tuscany: Essays in the History of Lucca, Pisa, and Siena during the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Centuries*, ed. Thomas Blomquist and Maureen F. Mazzaoui (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Western Michigan University, 1994), 111-122; Ronald Witt, "Coluccio Salutati, Chancellor and Citizen of Lucca (1370-1372)," *Traditio* 25 (1969): 191-216.

epic struggle between the superpowers Florence and Milan; the lands of the former bordered Lucchese territory to the east, while the lands of the latter touched those of Lucca to the northwest. This meant, among other things, an almost constant intrusion of foreign troops prone to robbery and land devastation through the outer parts of the city-state.

In addition, Lucca was struck by another deadly bout of the plague in the year 1400, which did much to shut down the normal working life of the city.³ When the plague worsened in the hot summer months of that year, the population suffered so much from death and the flight of citizens from the contagion that it was openly wondered if anyone would remain to defend the city. Important offices in the government fell vacant, farmlands went unworked because of a lack of labor, and populations of entire villages in the countryside ("contado") of Lucca were lost.⁴

Moreover, the Guinigi family, which had emerged as the leading family of Lucca after 1369, met with much ill

³After the Black Death of 1348, Lucca was hit by the bubonic plague in 1362, 1373, 1383, 1390, 1400, 1410, 1418, 1423, and 1430. See Franca Leverotti, *Popolazione, famiglie, insediamento: Le Sei Miglia Lucchesi nel XIV e XV secolo* (Pisa: Pacini, 1992), 80.

⁴For example, on 2 July 1400 almost one-half of the seats of the General Council (65 out of 135) had to be replaced; Series *Consiglio Generale, Riformagioni Pubbliche*, 13, p. 343-47.

fortune at the turn of the century. Under Francesco, the unofficial "*pater patriae*" of Lucca, many gains had been made by the Guinigi after 1369 as they developed into the most financially and politically prominent family of the city.⁵ Lazzaro, his oldest son, took over leadership of the family and became the unofficial leading citizen of the city upon his father's death in 1384, and though somewhat less respected (and more ruthless) than his father, was nevertheless a capable ruler. But in February 1400, Lazzaro was slain by a jealous brother, Antonio, and another rival. Antonio was beheaded the next day for his crime. Bartolomeo, the third son of Francesco, died as result of the plague in May; the fourth son, Paolo, the major subject of this study,

⁵Several Lucchese chroniclers refer to Francesco as the "father of the fatherland;" the first mention of him in Sercambi's *Le Croniche* concerned his refusal to submit to the Pisan governor of Lucca's demand for a "loan," as he knew it would not be repaid to him. He appears to have been well respected even outside Lucca, as he had a large role in bringing about Lucchese independence in 1369 through his negotiations with Charles and through his wealth. Francesco and the "*pater patriae*" of Florence, Cosimo d' Medici, had many similarities in the type of rule they established in their respective cities; for example, both held near undivided power within their own families, maintained loyal bodies of friends within the city as supporters of their rule, and enjoyed the general support of the *popolo*. Though both claimed that their power had been attained by purely constitutional means, they also made use of special commissions (*balie*) to further consolidate their regimes (thus holding on to outward forms of "republicanism"), which, though not being innovatory measures in themselves, were quite unusual in that they were for unprecedented durations and purposes.

was ill and had moved into the countryside while the pestilence raged. Paolo (1372-1432) at the time was twenty-eight years old and did not have extensive political experience having only recently entered public life. The future of the Guinigi and Lucca did not look promising in this summer of 1400.

In addition, other prominent family members from other branches were deemed unreliable insofar as succeeding to leadership of the family after Lazzaro's murder; Dino, for example, a cousin of Francesco, was a candidate for a time to assume leadership of the family, but in the end was considered too old. Michele Guinigi, the brother of Francesco, though well-respected, had a terminal illness and would not live beyond the end of the year 1400. Because of the sudden diminution of the Guinigi house, and the general state of confusion in Lucca due to plague and war, the threat of vengeful exiles returning grew throughout the year. Emergency steps, the Lucchese had come to believe, had to be taken in order to save the city from total collapse.

In a meeting of the General Council on 2 July 1400, the suggestion was made by Guinigi supporters that rule over the city ought to be entrusted to a special *balìa* of twelve citizens in order to solidify civic policy.⁶ It is clear

⁶*Riformagioni*, 13, p. 345-47; Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 8.

from the Council's vote of 101-30 in support of this special commission that gave the Twelve "power to do everything that was necessary to save Lucca, and to do whatever pleased them, both inside the city and in the countryside," that the majority of Lucchese citizens perceived the real state of danger they were in, and were willing to cede some of their customary freedoms.⁷ Though the *balìa* was given extraordinary powers, even having the right to replace members of the *Anziani* (the executive branch of the government in normal times) according to Sercambi, it could essentially only stave off trouble, not prevent it.⁸ For the enactment of *balie*, or special commissions which were increasingly used by Italian cities in the early Renaissance as a means of dealing with emergency situations and centralizing rule, could merely synchronize local opinion and effort, not actually remove foreigners and exiles from their lands.⁹ Thus, by the end of the summer, several

⁷Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 8, "imperio di tucto ciò che fusse di bizogno a riparo di Luccha; e quello che a loro piaceva, cosi dentro come di fuori."

⁸Ibid., "con piena giurisditione et balìa, senza avere li antiani a esser in pratica nè a consiglio con loro....potea rimuovere l' officio dello antianatico, e cassare ufficiali e soldati, e di nuovo elegere."

⁹On the general topic of the types of authority given to the *balie* of Italian cities at this time, see Marvin B. Becker, "The Florentine Territorial State and Civic Humanism in the

prominent families had departed Lucca for safer places to live.

Outsiders detected the vulnerability of Lucca as well. Lucchese exiles who had been harbored in Genoa, Bologna, Florence, and various Lombard cities were showing heightened interest in events in Lucca. The Florentines themselves, who had moved troops into position in the Valdinievole and Valdarno, held many discussions on how to sack the Guinigi house and destroy their supporters.¹⁰ In a letter written in July 1400 to Giovanni Testa, the *Gonfaloniere* of Lucca, Giovanni di Sala from Bologna warned: "I pray you govern Lucca well, as you do not know whom to trust....Today Lucca is in the greatest danger that it has ever been in to fall under the rule of others, and I know well about that which I write to you."¹¹ By the end of the summer of 1400, as the

Early Renaissance," in *Florentine Studies: Politics and Society in Renaissance Florence*, ed. Nicolai Rubinstein (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1968), 119-20; Anthony Molho, "The Florentine Oligarchy and the Bali'e of the Late Trecento," *Speculum* 43 (1968), 29-30.

¹⁰Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 10, "E molto altamente se ne parlava, intanto che il comune di Firenze, con alquanti usciti di Luccha et etiandio con alquanti asentati, preseno pensiero e molti ragionamenti del modo di mandare per terra la dicta casa de' Guinigi e loro amici."

¹¹Series *Anziani al Tempo della Libertà*, no. 1984, *Lettere originali*, 1369-1400 (letter of 5 July 1400), 439, "Pregote che la sapi bene governare, perchè tu non sai di chi fidarte....Ogi è maggiore pericolo di Lucca che mai fosse, che

plague began to slacken and the likelihood of foreign armies or exiles entering Lucchese lands appeared even greater, civic independence hung in the balance.

When Michele Guinigi, the brother of Francesco, died on 11 October it was apparent to the governors of the city that it was necessary to take action immediately, or else the city would be lost. Michele's death meant to many that all remnants of Guinigi power in Lucca were gone; first the deaths of Francesco's three eldest sons, and then of his distinguished brother all within the space of a few months signified both inside the city and out that Lucca was without any source of leadership or protection. Paolo, the fourth and now suddenly oldest son of Francesco, had not established himself yet in public life having only recently come of age to hold political office; some Lucchese, moreover, thought he was not up to the task of being leader of the city.¹² What happened next has become a widely misunderstood part of Lucchese history, yet it points out that the concern for preserving civic independence from foreign rule continued to be the guiding principle of

voi non vegnate soto altrui, et io so quello che io te scrivo."

¹²One member of the di Poggio family, for example, stated in August 1400 that "*pero che non si sosterrà che Paolo Guinigi maestri, e prima che si consentisse...voremmo prima morire,*" Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 11-12.

Lucchese rulers well into the fifteenth century -- even though at this time it meant sacrificing the institution of the republic.

On 14 October, three days after the death of Michele, Paolo Guinigi was thrust into a position of supreme power by a group of high-ranking members of the Lucchese government. He was named as the Captain and Defender of the People of Lucca and set up to rule alongside the *Anziani*, because it was felt by this group of patriotic conspirators that this situation offered the city the best chance for Lucca to remain free from foreign control. Paolo's wealth, which could help as a means of protection for their territories, and the fact that the family had well-established ties with the powerful Visconti family were the two vital factors which led the republican heads of Lucca to put their hopes in him.¹³

¹³For the wealth of the Guinigi, and of Paolo in particular, see Salvatore Bongi, *Di Paolo Guinigi e delle sue Ricchezze* (Lucca: Benedini Guidotti, 1871), 8-11, and Eugenio Lazzareschi, "Il tesoro di Paolo Guinigi," *Bollettino Storico Lucchese* 3 (1931), 73-79; for the Guinigi ties with the Visconti, see Franca Ragone, "Le spose del Signore: Scelte Politiche e Ceremonie alla Corte di Paolo Guinigi," in *Ilaria del Carretto e il suo monumento: La donna nell'Arte, la cultura, e la società del '400*, ed. S. Touissaint (Lucca: S. Marco, 1995), 121, where the author claims that when Paolo took over in 1400, the decision to tie the family's fortune with that of the Visconti had already been made by Lazzaro, Paolo's older brother, when he went to visit Giangaleazzo Visconti in Pavia in 1399. Lucchese alliances with Milan actually went much deeper into

It is uncertain exactly who instigated this takeover of the government, exactly what Paolo's role was, and to what level the *coup* was known about beforehand by some of the members of the *balìa* of 2 July and the *Anziani*, among other things -- but it is clear that this step was taken for the purpose of conserving self-rule.¹⁴ A month later, in November 1400, after a failed plot on the life of Paolo, a further step for internal security was taken, as the *balìa* and the *Anziani* for the November-December term accepted the further elevation of the recently-elected Captain and Defender of Lucca to the office of absolute *Signore*. The city fathers of Lucca cherished living as a self-governing commune to such an extent that they were willing to live under a *Signoria* in order to keep it.

By the year 1400, the Lucchese had come to be distrustful of their republican form of government. They believed that republican regimes had certain advantages, and

the past, as shown by Giuliano Lucarelli, *I Visconti di Milano e Lucca* (Lucca: Maria Pacini Fazzi, 1984).

¹⁴Sercambi is vague on these matters, stating only that he discussed many times the dangers that were to come with Paolo, and that Paolo, "*come savio*," understood that action must be taken, *Le Croniche*, 3: 12; it is certain, however, that other citizens, especially members of the *balìa* of 2 July and of the *Anziani* for the September-October term would have been supportive of the nomination. It is also very probable that the elevation of Paolo had been discussed by civic leaders long before 11 October.

in fact, that in certain times and places was the best form of government. Lucchese governors had also come to see some of the disadvantages of republics, chiefly that the rapid rotation of offices did not allow much continuity (and thus efficiency) in the administration of civic rule. Another common criticism was that republican governments tended to lead to violent factionalism, as had occurred in Lucca in 1392 when civil war erupted between the Guinigi and Forteguerra factions.

Considering the many emergencies confronting the Lucchese at the beginning of the fifteenth century, it is understandable that they would have believed that in their present circumstances a republic would not be suitable to their needs. Actually they had apparently begun to question the merits of republicanism soon after regaining their independence in 1369, as Lucca fell under the real power of several *balie* from 1374-1400, which effectively usurped much of the power of the councils. The last thing that was needed in 1400 was for internal dissension to hamper their already difficult state of affairs. In October 1400, Lucca resorted to a monarchy under the assumption that the circumstances called for it as the best chance for a regime in Lucca to rule effectively.

Thus the Lucchese *Anziani* and the *balìa* of twelve in a sense came to something of a mutual agreement with Paolo -- the power and prestige of being the most powerful citizen of Lucca in exchange for protection of their lands. Renaissance wars were characterized not so much by killing and bloodshed as by the plundering and looting of lands belonging to one's enemy.¹⁵ This group made up mostly of merchants who comprised the *Anziani* and the *balìa* would have thus wanted Paolo to assume supreme power since his protection would have extended to the Lucchese port of Motrone, and thus helped secure their livelihood in trade. In the countryside of Lucca, the majority of middle-class farmers, if they had a political voice, also would have plausibly supported Paolo's new position because he would have been able to provide greater defense of the region than there had been in the previous months, so that they could get back to a less disruptive life of work on their farms.

During the reign of Paolo Guinigi in Lucca the desire to remain free from foreign intervention continued to dominate governmental policy. This explains why the bulk of Lucchese money and effort went to the maintenance of mercenary armies, the building of bridges and walls, the

¹⁵See Michael Mallett, *Mercenaries and their Masters: Warfare in Renaissance Italy* (London: Bodley Head, 1974), esp. 1-4.

repair of city bells and ditches, and the assignment of information-gathering agents to various places throughout Italy, rather than to the patronage of schools of artists and scholars to study classical languages, or to finance their own efforts at expansion. The Lucchese were not trying to "propagandize" their city -- they were trying to preserve it.

Yet, in 1400 Paolo Guinigi took over Lucca setting up a leadership that until very recently has been characterized by most observers as despotic. Foreign and even Lucchese chroniclers and historians have tended to depict his regime as heavy-handed and arbitrary.¹⁶ There are several reasons for this historiographical misconception. Perhaps the most important is that we tend to view the situation from a

¹⁶A typical assessment of Paolo may be seen in the sixteenth-century Lucchese chroniclers Giovanni di Vincenzo Saminati and Lorenzo Trenta. Saminati in his chronicle of Lucca sub-heads one book with the title "*Qui hebbe principio la tirannia di Paolo Guinigi*," A.S.L. Biblioteca *Manoscritti*, n.15 (no page numbers); and Trenta, who asserted in his work that "*nel tempo che dal Signore Paolo Guinigi, era detta città governata, e da lui stata levata di libertà per tiranneggiarla come fece in trent'anni che egli la possedette*." A.S.L., MS. 103, *Memorie di uomini illustri lucchesi e cronaca della guerra dei fiorentini fatta à lucchesi nel sec. xv di Lorenzo Trenta*, 33v. It did not take until the 16th century for this view of Paolo to emerge, however; in 1431, the year after he was removed from power, the *Podestà* of Lucca issued a declaration to the curia accusing him of holding the city tyrannically for twenty-nine years and usurping the public's money; Bonghi, *Di Paolo Guinigi*, 39-40.

modern ideological perspective. Classical (and thus, Renaissance) republicanism, as James Hankins has recently shown, was not opposed to monarchy, and did not exclude monarchical institutions. The use of the term "republican" as the opposite of monarchical goes back only to Montesquieu; in the classical republican tradition, "republican" means simply "commonwealth" and its opposite was tyranny or mob rule.¹⁷ Thus, the Lucchese could accept a government headed by a *Signore* since they believed this form of government could produce competent rule which was in the interests of the people, just as it could produce tyrants -- and just as *popolo* regimes could rule well or badly.¹⁸

Another reason the Guinigi, especially Paolo, have a maligned reputation is that the years 1400-1430 comprised one of the most anti-Lucchese periods in Florentine history (and vice versa), and since it is the chroniclers, legislators, and literary figures of "republican" Florence that have been most studied from this period of Italian and Renaissance history, we are familiar with only the most

¹⁷James Hankins, "Rhetoric, history, and ideology: the civic panegyrics of Leonardo Bruni," in *Renaissance Civic Humanism: Reappraisals and Reflections*, ed. James Hankins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 151.

¹⁸James Hankins, "The 'Baron Thesis' after Forty Years and some Recent Studies of Leonardo Bruni," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 56 (1995), 328.

negative comments concerning Lucca, especially in regard to their "tyrant" *Signore* Paolo Guinigi.¹⁹ For example, students of the Renaissance who have taken the Florentines at their literal word, have generally been sympathetic to their quest to conquer Lucca in the early fifteenth century since the Florentines claimed that in attempting to do so they were only trying to restore liberty to the citizens of Lucca. This liberty had been removed from the Lucchese, Florentine rhetoricians argued, when Paolo Guinigi was first set up as ruler of the city in 1400.

Thus the failed plan of the Florentine architect Filippo Brunelleschi to divert the waters of the Serchio River in order to inundate Lucca, only one of several attempts to subdue the Lucchese, has been seen by many as a

¹⁹For example, the Florentine chronicler Giovanni Cavalcanti, *Istorie Fiorentine*, ed. Guido di Pino (Milan: Aldo Martello, 1944), 160-62, states that Paolo was a "*uomo rozzo e non esperto nel governo*," and he addresses him, "*O Paulo, tu ti hai un tuo folle modo sempre governato! Non sai tu quanto dagli uomini savii si sgrida colui che compera da pochi quelle cose che sone di molti?...Ti sei mostrato lieto delle fiorentine sventure*;" Giovanni di Pagolo Morelli, *Ricordi*, ed. Vittore Branca (Florence: Monnier, 1956), 422-25, abhors Paolo for not allowing the Florentines the right of the port of Motrone, and writes that he is the "*grande nimico del nostro comune, e ben l' dimostrato molte volte a certi disastri avvenuti al nostro*;" even the more objective Sozomeni Pistoriensis, *Chronicon Universale*, ed. Guido Zaccagnini (Città del Castello: S. Lapi, 1907), 17, was not pleased ("*Odia tamen suberant*") with Paolo's alleged sending of his son Ladislas to Milan to secretly negotiate with Filippo Maria Visconti in 1428.

setback for the cause of liberty, rather than an outright mark of unprovoked expansionistic aggression.²⁰ The rhetorical nature of the Florentine claim to be attempting to restore "liberty" to the citizens of Lucca comes into clearer light, however, when it is seen that when the supposed "tyrant" Paolo was finally removed from power and a republican regime re-established in 1430 -- that Florence nonetheless continued to pursue domination of Lucca and its *contado*.²¹

A third reason the *signoria* of Paolo Guinigi has been subject to misinterpretation has been due to the inclination

²⁰There are several sources for this episode, and all concur that the outcome was a disaster for Florence. See the comments of Cavalcanti, *Istorie Fiorentine*, 176; Pistoriensis, *Chronicon*, 18; and Niccolò Machiavelli, *Florentine Histories*, trans. Laura F. Banfield and Harvey S. Mansfield, Jr. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 169-70.

²¹One of the recent historiographical debates concerning Lucca has been concerned with the existence of the threat of Florence during the fifteenth century. Michele Luzzati states that in this period there still existed in Lucca a "certain autonomy of action" with regard to Florentine expansion in "Politica di salvaguardia dell'autonomia lucchese nella seconda metà del secolo xv," in *Egemonia fiorentina ed autonomie locali nella Toscana nord-occidentale del primo rinascimento: Vita, arte, cultura. Settimo convegno internazionale del Centro Italiano di Studi di storia e d'arte, Pistoia, September 18-25, 1975* (Pistoia: Centro di Studi, 1978), 580, but M.E. Bratchel in his *Lucca 1430-1494: The Reconstruction of an Italian City-Republic* claims there was a "covert intervention of the Florentines in Lucchese affairs...throughout the fifteenth century, to Lucchese territories and to Lucchese political stability," 7.

of chroniclers and historians to depict Italian cities in the early modern period as *either* one in which a republican government ruled or as one under the control of a tyrant. And since the republican councils and the *Anziani* of Lucca did not exist during the thirty years of Paolo's reign, he has been generally assigned the label of tyrant. We now understand, however, the "despotisms" and the "republics" of the Renaissance period to have been much more similar than previously believed, though the Burckhardtian notion of the ruthless, self-serving, and immoral prince has had a large and long-lasting impact on the historical imagination. As Brian Pullan has observed, there are hardly any cases in which a city may be unequivocally placed into one of these two categories; in fact, the many similarities of the political establishments in the early Renaissance city-states has led some scholars to point out that no matter what form of government a city claimed to adhere to, no matter what they called it, it can in reality be most precisely defined as oligarchical.²²

²²Brian Pullan, *A History of Early Renaissance Italy* (New York: St. Mark's, 1972), 265-68; also see P.J. Jones, "Communes and Despots: The City-State in Late Medieval Italy," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, ser. V, 15 (1965), 74.

One of the striking themes to emerge from a comprehensive study of Lucca at the beginning of the fifteenth century is that of continuity, a theme which contrasts with the long-established historiographical tradition of the larger Italian city-states. The sharp break, for example, depicted between medieval and modern by Burckhardt which maintained there were significant changes in Italy around the year 1400, does not seem relevant to Lucca. In Lucca, emphasis above all was placed on making sure certain lessons and conditions of the past were not forgotten. Foreign policy after 1400 continued to be based on the careful acquisition of military alliances, especially with the Visconti of Milan. At home Paolo served as the head of an oligarchical merchant class, a situation that is hardly different from Lucca under Francesco Guinigi in the republican years of the 1370s and 1380s when real power fell to a special group of Guinigi supporters, the "*conservatores libertatis*." Nor does Paolo's regime appear dissimilar to the republican government that replaced it in 1430, in the sense that real power on this latter date soon fell to another *balia* specially enacted to deal with the emergency situation after Paolo's removal from power.

The continuity evident in Lucchese society from the *Trecento* to the *Quattrocento* is noteworthy since it

separates Lucca from the larger cities, many of whom were seeking to carve out regional states for themselves in this period. The thesis of Gene Brucker's seminal work on Florence in these years, for instance, which considers the period from the Ciompi revolt of 1378 to the rise of the Medici in the 1430s, is that there was a change from a "corporate" order to an elitist order, but this shift was one more of "style and mentality" than a radical alteration of Florentine institutions.²³ Lucca, on the other hand, provides an interesting variation from Florence in that the changes in Lucca upon the arrival of Paolo Guinigi, who late in 1400 was led to dissolve the representative councils because of the secret plot to remove him, in the end proved to be changes *only* in the institutions of the city, *rather* than in style and mentality.

Paolo Guinigi certainly does not fit the Burckhardtian definition of the Renaissance tyrant who ruled arbitrarily in order to achieve selfish ends. He ruled in the only way possible that a Lucchese ruler at this place and time in the city's history *could* have ruled in order to survive: he adopted a policy of strong defense at home, isolationism in foreign affairs if possible, and an aggressive search for

²³Gene Brucker, *The Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), 11-13.

strong alliances if not. He thus had an activist domestic policy and an isolationist foreign policy, but both were designed for the ultimate objective of preserving the self-rule of Lucca.

Nor did Paolo often take recourse to violence, as in the Burckhardtian model of the Renaissance prince; he was, in fact, quite the opposite. On many occasions Paolo pardoned criminals, even those who had threatened his own life or the security of the state, such as the Bishop of Lucca in November 1400 or Jacopo Viviani in 1407, both of whom almost certainly would have been executed for like crimes elsewhere. Paolo was not the sword-bearing executioner. He was not the swashbuckling, aggressive man of war that Castruccio Castracani had been as lord of Lucca in the early fourteenth century. The use of arbitrary violence to impose one's will was something by which *no* ruler of Lucca at this place and time in its history could have gotten away with, however. A strong anti-authoritarian mindset had long prevailed in Lucca by the time of Paolo Guinigi.²⁴

²⁴See John M. Najemy's essay "The Dialogue of Power in Florentine Politics," in *City-States in Classical Antiquity and Medieval Italy*, ed. Anthony Molho, Kurt Raaflaub, and Julia Emlen (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1991), 269-88, which is also relevant to Lucca. Najemy argues that with the rise time after time of *popolo* regimes in Florence,

Paolo was a traditional man, a family man, and a sincere Christian. He kept an eye on the conditions of the populace and the lands on which they lived. He undertook an energetic reform of the monasteries of Lucca because of a real concern for what he saw as immoral activities happening there. He travelled throughout Lucchese territories in order to see firsthand the devastated lands and disrupted living conditions of his subjects. This is not to say that from time to time he did not "exploit" his position for personal or civic gain (at least what the modern age would call "exploitative"), but he generally did so only for the purpose of protecting Lucca. He also does not fit the Burckhardtian type of leader who perceived statecraft as a work of art; rather Paolo was forced into a type of rule that was defensive and reactionary. He was not able to "plan" his reign so much as he was forced to respond to outside events in order to save it from collapsing.

The single-most important factor in Paolo's success in sustaining his position for thirty years was the general support of the Lucchese people. Even the Florentine chronicler Minerbetti, though critical elsewhere in his remarks about Paolo, acknowledged this:

their influence on government was such that even when they had to hand power back over to the elite class that the

"In the month of October 1400 Paolo, son of Francesco of the Guinigi family of Lucca, having sent for troops from the countryside in the Garfagnana, and having troops sent from Pisa from the Duke of Milan, arranged with certain friends of his party in the city that he be made Captain of the People of Lucca. He [Paolo] said that he did this because many of the Guinigi had succumbed to the pestilence, and that more than half the citizens had died from it; and thus for the salvation of the state, its people, and the Guinigi family he desired to be elected Captain and Defender of the People of Lucca; and thus it was done in accordance with the agreement of all the citizens."²⁵

Though his authority was enhanced somewhat by such ceremonial tokens as the imperial vicariate given him by the Holy Roman Emperor Sigismund in 1413, or the papal *rosa dell' oro* awarded him by Pope Gregory VIII in 1408, these were rewards given Paolo since he was *already* sovereign in the city, and in order for these traditional authorities

elite class took on many of the ideas of the *popolo*, and thus they ruled "in the image and language of the *popolo*."

²⁵*Cronica Volgare di Anonimo Fiorentino dall' anno 1385 al 1409 già attribuita a Piero di Giovanni Minerbetti*, ed. Elina Bellondi, in *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, n.s., Vol. XXVII, pt.ii (Città di Castello: S. Lapi, n.d.), 251, "Del mese d'ottobre 1400 Paolo di Francesco de' Guinigi da Lucca, avendo fatto venire di Carfagnana [sic] molti fanti nella città e ancora v'avea della gente del Duca di Milano venutavi da Pisa, e per questo sentendosi molto forte, ordinò con certi suoi amici cittadini e di sua parte, d'esser fatto capitano del popolo di Lucca; e disse che questo volea che si facesse però che molti de' Guinigi avea ispenti la moria, e ancora più che mezzi gli altri cittadini avea morti la mortalità; e per buono istato della città e del popolo e de' Guinigi volea che lui eleggessero capitano e difensore del popolo di Lucca; e così fu fatto di concordia di tutti li cittadini."

themselves to enhance their own standing -- not so that Paolo might *become* sovereign. *De facto* authority, as has been amply illustrated, was given to rulers of Renaissance cities in Italy from below, while only titular, or *de iure* sovereignty came from above, from the emperor or from the pope.²⁶

Indeed, Paolo was able to garner the favor of the majority of the Lucchese populace in this relationship of mutual agreement between *Signore* and subjects. When the Florentine Filippo Salviati in 1407 offered to remove Paolo from power and restore Lucca to a republican state, the Lucchese citizen Jacopo Viviani claimed there were three things the people believed in steadfastly: "first, that one should not touch the purse of another person; second, that neither themselves nor through others do they want to hear of the dishonesty of women; and third, that up to now Paolo has yet to be cruel, on the contrary he has been merciful

²⁶F. Ercole, *Dal Comune al Principato* (Florence, 1929), 271; also see Pierangelo Schiera, "Legitimacy, Discipline, and Institutions: Three Necessary Conditions for the Birth of the Modern State," in *The Origins of the State in Italy, 1300-1600*, ed. Julius Kirshner (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 12, 32-33.

and he makes for himself a grand dearth, being very strict on expenditures."²⁷

It is thus clear that a new interpretation of Lucca in the first thirty years of the fifteenth century needs to be forged. There is certainly a historiographical gap for this period, as clearly pointed out by the monographs of Christine Meek and M. E. Bratchel.²⁸ Important recent articles have appeared, such as those by Giuseppe Benedetto, Franca Ragone, Franca Leverotti, and Sante Polica that have dealt wonderfully with specific aspects of Lucchese history during this period.²⁹ What is needed at this point is a work

²⁷Quoted in Franca Ragone, "Paolo Guinigi, i suoi collaboratori, i suoi nemici: l'emergere di nuovi ruoli politici in una corte toscana del Quattrocento," *Momus* 1 (1994): 17, "Una è che non toccha la borsa a persona, l'altra che per sè nè per altri vuol sentire disonestà de donne; la terca che fino a qui [Paolo] non è stato mai crudele ma molto misericordioso in contrario, e che de sè grande carestia et è molto stretto nello spendere."

²⁸Christine Meek, *Lucca 1369-1400: Politics and Society in an Early Renaissance City-State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978); Michael Bratchel, *Lucca 1430-1494: The Reconstruction of an Italian City-Republic* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995). Several scholars of Lucchese history, including Bratchel in this work cited, have lamented the lack of a full-length study on the *Signoria* of Paolo Guinigi.

²⁹Benedetto, "Potere dei Chierici e potere dei Laici nella Lucca del Quattrocento al tempo della Signoria di Paolo Guinigi (1400-1430): Una simbiosi," in *Annuario della Biblioteca Civica di Massa* (1984): 1-54; Ragone, "Le Spose del Signore: Scelte Politiche e Ceremonie alla Corte di Paolo Guinigi," in *Ilaria del Carretto e il suo monumento: La donna nell'Arte, la cultura, e la società del '400*, ed.

bringing all the specific issues together into a more comprehensive view of the period, and at the same time filling in the gap created by the works of Meek and Bratchel; this work proposes to do that. There are a somewhat limited amount of resources for consideration in the *Archivio di Stato* in Lucca, as well as the *Biblioteca Governativa*, that relate to the first thirty years of the fifteenth century. This is because these years are distinguished by breaks in a number of archival series, most importantly the proceedings of the *Anziani*, and of the two major councils, the Council of the People, and the General Council since these governmental bodies were abolished at the onset of the *signoria*. Much of the material that does exist has yet to be adequately studied, and thus much of the history of early *Quattrocento* Lucca has yet to be told. My research in Lucchese libraries has usually been directed to answering specific questions, and thus my understanding of

S. Toussaint (Lucca: S. Marco, 1995), 119-36; Leverotti, "Gli Estimi Lucchesi del 1411-1413: Una Fonte per lo Studio dell'amministrazione del paesaggio agrario e della demografia," in *Scritti in Ricordi di Giorgio Buratti* (Pisa: Pacini, 1981), 199-222; and Polica, "Le Famiglie del Ceto Dirigente Lucchese dalla Caduta di Paolo Guinigi all'Fine del Quattrocento," in *I Ceti Dirigenti nella Toscana del Quattrocento: Comitato di Studi sulla Storia dei Ceti Dirigenti in Toscana, Atti del V e VI Convegno: Firenze, 10-11 Dicembre 1982; 2-3 Dicembre 1983* (Florence: Francesco Papafava, 1987), 353-84.

certain aspects of Lucchese society has been much supplemented by the work of recent scholars.

This study proceeds with introductory material which will consider the highlights of the fourteenth century and of the early Guinigi in Lucca, which will place the reign of Paolo Guinigi into clearer perspective. One of the themes of this chapter is the valued history of republicanism in Lucca in the late Middle Ages and early Renaissance, a history that perhaps saw Lucca in the age of the rise of the *popolo* surpass even Florence in "democratic" tendencies. This is essential to understanding Renaissance Lucca, and makes the accomplishments of Paolo Guinigi all the more remarkable. Chapter three will consider more closely how Paolo was thrust into the position as absolute *Signore* of Lucca in October 1400, and the measures undertaken with great effort to strengthen the regime thereafter.

The fourth chapter seeks to provide a new perspective from which to view the Florentine-Milanese conflict of the early fifteenth century, that conflict that shaped so much of the history (and historiography) of the period. A look at the struggle from the Lucchese perspective shows the difficult position the small and medium-sized city-states of northern and central Italy were plunged into because of the war; this chapter also presents an example of the manner in

which Lucchese policy moved back and forth between supporting Florence or Milan, depending on what their own needs and fears were at that time. Chapter four also shows a different view of Florence than that which has come to be widely accepted which holds that Florence at this time was the beacon of liberty and democracy, struggling valiantly to preserve these ideals for future generations.

Chapter five will be concerned with the territories of Lucca, the natural and human resources of the city-state, its population, and the relationship of the mother city to the *contado*. This chapter is the first of this study in which the discussion moves away from political and foreign affairs to other aspects of Lucchese history; yet the central theme can be followed through these chapters as well. The following chapter, for example, which will be centered on Lucchese relations with the Church during the period of Paolo Guinigi, will point out that whatever Lucchese relations with the Church were at any particular time, they were attributable to the level of safety they felt at that moment around them. Paolo aggressively sought alliances with the popes on some occasions; on others he ignored their entreaties for as long as possible. The first half of Paolo's reign coincided with the Papal Schism, and the Lucchese attitude towards the contesting popes will also

reveal that concern for preserving the independence of Lucca was held above all else.

Chapter seven will be centered on the cultural ambience of Lucca in the early *Quattrocento*. Certainly Lucca did not foster the current humanistic interests and activities that were occurring in Florence to nearly the same degree, at least in the early *Quattrocento*. It might be said that Lucca was a generation behind Florence in that a classical scholar of note appeared for the first time in Lucca only in the 1450s (Gian Pietro d' Avenza); and secondly, that from the extant inventories of libraries of persons living in Lucca in the years of Paolo Guinigi, it is evident that local interest was still consumed by the writings of the "Three Crowns" of Italian literature (Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio), especially with Dante. This does not mean, however, that Lucca had no interest in the classical world in the Guinigi period, only that attention and funds were diverted from books on occasion to weapons, defense, and mercenaries. This chapter will consist of a characterization of the civic humanism of Sercambi, as well as a discussion of the role the imperialist thinker Dante had on the thought of the Lucchese.

The concluding chapter of this work will consider Lucchese foreign affairs in the later part of Paolo's reign,

and will continue to show the isolationist tendencies of the regime, and his and the Lucchese' struggle for survival. Paolo made alliances with the King of Naples, Pope Gregory XII, and Filippo Maria Visconti (among others), all of which reveal how difficult a period it was for the medium-sized city-states that had a great deal of territory, but not much means to protect it; this was the age in which the superpowers were aggressively carving out regional states for themselves. There was never an entirely peaceful period during Paolo's reign. After the death in 1414 of the King of Naples, Ladislas of Durazzo, who had become the major ally of Lucca, the Lucchese had to scramble to make other alliances to guard against Florentine ambitions. In 1418 the Lucchese faced another crisis with the arrival of the *condottiere* Braccio da Montone, who invaded Lucca, laid it to waste, and left only after Paolo paid him off with a large sum of money. And to make matters worse, it was discovered there had been an act of treason committed by Paolo's secretary Guido Manfredi in allowing Braccio's entry into Lucchese territory.

The reign of Paolo Guinigi occurred at a time of great change in Italy. It coincided with long periods of war, a time when Florence, Milan, Venice, Rome, and the Church were attempting to create larger regional states for themselves

out of surrounding territories and the smaller city-states. The reign of Paolo Guinigi in Lucca also coincided with five bouts of the plague in thirty years and numerous other internal problems. That Lucca was able to remain independent in the violent and confused period of Paolo Guinigi should be remembered as a proud part of the city's rich history, and not as the unfortunate exception to their great republican heritage.

CHAPTER 2

LUCCA IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

Il popolo

In the year 1300 Lucca was governed by a *popolo* regime.¹ The *popolo* as a class appeared early and was very influential on late medieval society in Lucca; it had emerged as an important factor in civic life as early as 1203, the date of the establishment of the *Società de' Pedoni*, and the year in which the civic militia infantry troops of Lucca inflicted heavy damage upon the cavalry forces of the nobility.² From this point forward the nobility of Lucca did not have the near unlimited power they had grown so accustomed to throughout the late medieval period, as they were increasingly challenged, and at times

¹The *popolo* were by no means the masses, but rather the upcoming class of merchants, bankers, businessmen, shopowners, etc., that was becoming prominent in politics in many cities of Italy, to the exclusion of the nobles, or *magnati*, whose traditional hold on power had been based on land accumulation; see Lauro Martines, *Power and Imagination: City-States in Renaissance Italy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 45-71.

²Girolamo Tommasi, *Sommario della Storia di Lucca, dall'anno MIV all'anno MDCC* (Florence: G. P. Vieusseux, 1847), appendix, documents 5 and 7; also see Ermando Dianda, "Le Milizie della Repubblica Lucchese," *Bollettino Storico Lucchese* 13 (1941): 44-54.

overcome by the *popolo*, or the mercantile, banking, and artisanal families of the city and their substantial infantry military force.

In the *popolo* Statute of 1308, the nobility and the White Guelphs of Lucca were excluded from all important civic functions by a measure called "*cerna potentium*," in which the proscribed families were listed by name. Provisions were enacted outlining punishments for noble offenses committed against any *popolani*, whether by physical assault, or mere injurious words.³ Noble arrogance was to be further held in check by such means as setting a limit on the maximum height to which a family's tower could ascend. Thus, from the beginning of the fourteenth century and even earlier, there were aspirations to representative government in Lucca, and a tendency for the landed nobility

³"*Statuimus quod si aliqua persona lucane Civitatis Comunitatis vel fortie vel aliunde presumpserit offendere vel offenderet vel offendi faceret vel injuriari fecerit aliqui ipsarum societatum ex quacumque causa et in quocumque loco, si occidendo, puniatur talis offendens et fieri faciens capite ita moriatur, si vulnerando, puniatur in libris mille, si manumittendo percutendo vel vulnerando cum manu vel alia re, si sanguis non exiverit, in libris quinque, et si talis offendens vel fieri faciens, et committens predicta vel aliquod predictorum capi non poterit, ponatur in perpetuo bamno tanquam proditor lucani Comunis, et bona eius funditus destruantur, et lucano Comuni etiam publicentur, et si insultando sine manumissione, in libris L qualibet vice, et si verba injuriosa dicendo, in libris XXV qualibet vice....*" Quoted in Tommasi, *Sommario*, appendix, document 10.

to be given a much less participatory role in society than in the past and than in other places.

In fact, Lucca became one of the foremost early centers of republicanism in all of northern and central Italy.⁴ Ptolemy of Lucca, after all, derived from there -- he who according to one recent scholar was responsible for the resurgence of interest in classical republican thought in the early modern period (rather than Petrarch as has been traditionally claimed).⁵ Louis Green's recent studies have shown that Lucchese resentment of the noble classes in the early fourteenth century went beyond even that of the Florentines. By comparing the Florentine "Ordinances of Justice" of 1293 with the *popolo*-inspired Lucchese Statute of 1308, Green has shown that the anti-magnate sentiment in

⁴Lauro Martines, in *Power and Imagination*, 130, claims that Lucca was one of the four major republics of the early Renaissance in Italy.

⁵Charles T. Davis, "Roman Patriotism and Republican Propaganda: Ptolemy of Lucca and Nicholas III," in *Dante's Italy and Other Essays* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1984), 224, 250-53; also see his "Ptolemy of Lucca and the Roman Republic," in *ibid.*, 258, 263, 272. Ptolemy's *Determinatio compendiosa de iurisdictione imperii* and his *De regno sive de regimine principum* both claim the "Fourth Monarchy" to have been the ancient Roman republic, and both show clearly the author's admiration for republican heroes, and likewise a deep suspicion of the ancient caesars. Ptolemy favored a government based on law, rather than an arbitrary despotism

Lucca was stronger because a greater proportion of the population were declared members of the magnate class by the Lucchese, who "included in the category of *casastici* or *potenti* not just the old nobility, but a substantial section of the merchant class."⁶ Machiavelli more than two centuries later recognized that the anti-authoritarian spirit of Lucca had not diminished when he asserted: "The authority of the *Signoria* over the countryside is very great, but over the citizens (of Lucca), it is nothing."⁷

Lucchese foreign affairs in 1300 had long been dominated by its traditional alliances with the Guelph powers of Florence and the papacy, and by its rivalries with all Ghibelline regimes, especially that of long-time enemy and neighbor Pisa. The *primo popolo* regime of Florence, for example, took refuge in Lucca after the Guelph defeat at Montaperti in 1260, as they were welcomed into the city and given a safe place to stay at San Frediano inside the city

-- not unlike, incidentally, it might be argued, how Paolo Guinigi would later come to conceive of his own rule.

⁶Louis Green, "Society and Politics in Fourteenth Century Lucca," *Altro Polo* 4 (1982), 31.

⁷Niccolò Machiavelli, "Sommario delle cose della città di Lucca," in *Arte della guerra scritti politici minori*, ed. Sergio Bertelli (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1961), 237, "L' autorità della Signoria sopra il contado loro è amplissima, sopra i cittadini è nulla."

walls.⁸ Later, in 1289, the combined troops of Lucca and Florence, along with other Guelph forces defeated Arezzo at the battle of Campaldino.⁹ In 1304, in the midst of violent factionalism occurring in both Lucca and Florence between "Black" and "White" Guelphs, Florentine officials asked the Lucchese to intervene, help them in their troubled state, and rid their city of all sources of discord. The Lucchese responded by sending a group of twenty-one citizens to root out suspicious persons, and according to a letter of Pope Benedict XI in 1304 in which he referred to the many fines handed down by this body, they were quite active in the endeavor.¹⁰

After the Black Guelphs of both Lucca and Florence had overcome the White factions in their respective cities, they determined to wage war on the outside, against the Ghibelline regimes throughout Tuscany. In May 1302, their

⁸Ptolemy of Lucca, *Annales*, ed. B. Schmeidler, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum*, n.s., vol.VIII (Berlin: Weidmannsche, 1955), 143; Giovanni Villani, *Nuova Cronica*, ed. Giuseppe Porta, 3 vols. (Parma: Ugo Guanda, 1990), 7: 380-82 (hereinafter cited as *Cronica*, followed by book number and page reference).

⁹Villani, *Cronica*, 8: 584-87.

¹⁰Dino Compagni, *Chronicle of Florence*, trans. and ed. Daniel Bornstein (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986), 65; also see F. P. Luiso, "Dante e Lucca," in *Dante: La Vita, Le Opere, Le Grandi Città Dantesche, Dante e L' Europa* (Milan, 1921), 182.

combined forces lay siege to Pistoia and its subject city Serravalle, and the Lucchese soon benefitted by assuming control over the communes of Marliano, Lizano, Popiglio, Savignana, San Marcello, and Lancioula.¹¹ Though harsh tactics were used by the Florentine and Lucchese civic armies against Pistoia, the latter proved quite resistant, surrendering the city to the besiegers only in 1306 after several months of having starvation forced upon its inhabitants. The victory of the Florentine and Lucchese forces at last gave the two Guelph conquerors power over Pistoia and its *contado*, and each was in the future to supply in alternating fashion either the *podestà* or the *capitano* who were to both preside over the city.¹²

The attack on Pistoia would prove to be among the last instances in which Lucca and Florence would see eye to eye, for by 1308 Florence had become openly critical of Lucca's continued mistreatment of the Pistoiese. Though the two cities would unite upon occasion throughout the remainder of the fourteenth century, it would be for reasons of temporary

¹¹Giovanni Sercambi, *Le Croniche Lucchesi*, ed. Salvatore Bongi, 3 vols., in *Fonti per la Storia d' Italia* (Lucca: Giusti, 1892), 1: 50; Villani, *Cronica*, 9: 84-85.

¹²Compagni, *Chronicle*, 76-77; Villani, *Cronica*, 9: 165-66, 168.

convenience, to fight the destructive forces of foreign mercenary troops marauding through Tuscany, for example, or for the capture of prisoners who had escaped to the other's territory. The common ideological connection of the past based on the principles of Guelphism was lost forever in 1308. In short, Lucca and Florence had much basis for friendship in the early fourteenth century, chiefly that they were the two strongest proponents of Guelphism in Tuscany and northern Italy. Both city-states were highly involved in international trade (Lucca in silk, Florence in wool) and in international banking, including acting as papal bankers during the course of the fourteenth century. Most importantly, however, Florence at the beginning of the fourteenth century had not yet set out so aggressively as they later would to conquer other parts of Tuscany, while Lucca at this time had not yet alienated the Florentines by seeking close alliances with the powerful Visconti of Milan.

The *popolo* regime in Lucca was doomed to a short existence marked by internal factionalism and violence. In 1314, Ghibelline armies led by Ugucione della Faggioula and Castruccio Castracani overran Lucca. The Ghibelline warlords devastated lands, stole crops, and even robbed the papal treasure that had been temporarily stored at San Frediano in Lucca. Their entrance into Lucca culminated in the

establishment of the strongest Ghibelline regime in Tuscany, the recall of many Ghibelline and White Guelph families that had earlier been exiled, and the effective end of both the *popolo* government and a half century of Guelph ascendancy in Lucca.¹³

Castruccio Castracani

By 1315, Uguccione had assumed complete mastery over Pisa and Lucca and further strengthened his position in Tuscany with a decisive military victory over Florence at Montecatini, a "sorrowful defeat, according to the Florentine chronicler Villani, in which not only were 2,000 Florentines killed in battle and 1,500 taken prisoner, but "all the other men of arms fled, some toward Pistoia, some toward Fucecchio, and some through Cerbaia, from which it befell many to reach the marshes of the Guisciana," whence many were horribly drowned.¹⁴ But, after only a short time

¹³Ranieri Sardo, *Cronaca di Pisa*, ed. Ottavio Banti (Rome: Borromini, 1963), 68-69; the three-year hold of Uguccione on Lucca is discussed here in detail, 56-74; also see Villani, *Cronica*, 10: 261-64, "...non si ricorda di gran tempi passati che una città avesse una sì grande avversità e perdite per parte che vi entrasse com' ebbe la città di Lucca d' avere e di persone."

¹⁴Villani, *Cronica*, 10: 276, "...la qual battaglia furono di tutte genti morti tra uomini a cavallo e a piede da II^M e presi da MD. Il prenze con tutta l' altra gente si fuggì, chi verso Pistoia, e chi verso Fucecchio, e chi per la Cerbaia, onde molti capitando a' pantani della Guisciana,

as the most dominant figure in Tuscany, Uguccione's arrogance had alienated fellow Ghibelline leaders, and in April 1316 he was ousted almost simultaneously in Pisa and Lucca.

The new leader of the Ghibelline party immediately emerged in the person of Castruccio Castracani, who had been Uguccione's top general in the war against the Tuscan Guelphs, but who also had become increasingly troublesome to him as time went on. This was because of the local favor Castruccio received, being of a native Lucchese family that had been exiled by the *popolo* regime a few years earlier.¹⁵ Uguccione also had felt threatened because Castruccio many times insisted upon acting on his own initiative in waging war against the Guelphs without first receiving instructions or consulting with his high commander.

Castruccio in fact was imprisoned for a few days at the beginning of April 1316 by Uguccione for having started

del sopradetto numero de' morti senza colpi annegarono assai."

¹⁵On Castruccio, see Louis Green, *Castruccio Castracani: A Study on the Origins and Character of a fourteenth-century Italian Despotism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986); Thomas Blomquist, "The Castracani Family of Thirteenth-Century Lucca," *Speculum* 46 (1971): 459-76; and the collection of essays in *Castruccio Castracani e il suo Tempo, Convegno Internazionale, Lucca, 5-10 October 1981* (Lucca: Istituto Storico Lucchese, 1985).

military campaigns in the region of Lunigiana without his permission. Most likely Uguccione intended to have him murdered on this occasion, as by that time he had become fearful of Castruccio's growing strength.¹⁶ And Uguccione's fear was well-founded, since as soon as Castruccio managed to get himself released from prison he quickly emerged as the leader of the most dominant military force of Tuscany; he has been commonly referred to by contemporary and modern historians as the greatest military figure of the first half of the fourteenth century in Italy. The Florentine chronicler Villani in the last of his many discussions of Castruccio wrote that he was:

"a brave and magnanimous tyrant, wise and shrewd and prepared and hard-working and gallant in arms, and well-fortified in war, and very adventurous in his enterprises, and was much dreaded and feared, and in due course of time he did considerable and notable deeds. He was a great plague to his own citizens and to the Florentines and the Pisans and the Pistoiese and to all of Tuscany in the fourteen years that he ruled Lucca: and he was very cruel in having men executed or tortured."¹⁷

¹⁶Villani, *Cronica*, 10: 281-82, "[Castruccio] avendo fatto in Lunigiana certe ruberie e micidi contra volontà d' Uguccione, preso fu in Lucca dal figliuolo d' Uguccione per giustiziare."

¹⁷Ibid, 11: 628, "Questo Castruccio fu uno valoroso e magnanimo tiranno, savio e accorto, e sollecito e faticante, e prode in arme, e bene proveduto in guerra, e molto avventuroso di sue imprese, e molto temuto e ridottato, e al suo tempo fece di belle e notabili cose, e fu uno grande fragello a' suoi cittadini, e a' Fiorentini e a' Pisani e Pistoiesi e a tutti i toscani in XIV anni ch' egli

Castruccio was certainly a thorn in the side of the Florentines. When he took over Lucca as Captain and Defender of the People in 1316, he was content to consolidate and strengthen Lucchese border areas, but by 1320 he was in open pursuit of lands in other areas of Tuscany.¹⁸ In April 1320, by now having proclaimed himself master (*dominus generalis*) of Lucca for life, he broke the peace terms established three years earlier between the Guelphs and Ghibellines of Tuscany when he initiated war preparations against the Florentines, and began to seize control of some of their border fortresses. On this occasion, in the span of a few days Castruccio and his armed brigades inflicted great damage on the Florentine army, returned to Lucca in triumphal procession, and brought with them several tortured prisoners of war, who upon entry into Lucca were at once imprisoned where they were forced to languish until they died.¹⁹

signoreggiò Lucca: assai fu crudele in fare morire e tormentare uomini."

¹⁸Green, *Castruccio Castracani*, 125-27.

¹⁹Villani, *Cronica*, 10: 309-10, "...in pochi giorni ebbe, pero che' terrazzani per tradimento l' arenderono, di xxv d' aprile; e Fiorentini non erano proveduti come si convenia: credendosi conservare la pace, non poterono acciò riparare; e avuta la terra, tornoè a Lucca con grande trionfo, e quegli traditori che gli aveano renduta Santa Maria a Monte

The Florentines suffered another huge loss at the hands of the lord of Lucca in September 1325 at Altopascio, where by "holding protected and fortified all the hills of Viviana, Montechiaro, Cerruglio, and Porcari up to the marshes of Sesto, so that the Florentine army was not able to pass through," Castruccio was able in a brief time to capture thousands of the enemy, most of their military equipment, and even the treasured war carriage ("carroccio").²⁰ He led several other skirmishes during the decade of the 1320s against the Florentines, constantly frustrating them by blocking their routes to the sea, harassing Florentine holdings in the countryside, and threatening to take over border regions. The threat felt by Florence, so vividly recounted by the chronicler Villani, was so great that the officials of the city decided to abandon their own republican constitution by opting to bring

per sospetto menò a Lucca, e in pregione languendo gli fece morire."

²⁰Ibid., 10: 470; also for this incident, see Ferdinand Schevill, *History of Florence from the Founding of the City through the Renaissance* (New York: Fredrick Ungar, 1961), 203. The Italian communes and later cities often took with them into battle "carrocci," which were carriages that were the symbols of that commune, and which were considered sacred vehicles, carrying the standard of that commune, altars, and other objects deemed important.

in Charles, Duke of Calabria, to Florence to take charge of the desperate state of their military affairs.²¹

By the end of his reign as *Signore* of Lucca, Castruccio had attained vast territorial holdings throughout the Tuscan region, including control over Pisa, Pistoia, and the communes belonging to these two cities.²² After the battle of Altopascio in 1325, Castruccio had even been at the very walls of Florence before having to reluctantly admit that his forces and equipment were inadequate to lay full siege to the city. After three days encamped there pondering his next move, apparently without fear of counter-attack, Castruccio began to retreat westward toward Lucca -- but not before burning and pillaging the Florentine countryside, and even some residential areas, before he left the fearful citizens of Florence behind.²³ Castruccio's tie with the Holy Roman Emperor Ludwig, who had bestowed upon him the title of Duke in return for military protection, was also a

²¹Marvin Becker, *Florence in Transition*, 2 vols. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1967), 1: 84-87.

²²Villani, *Cronica*, 10: 346; Schevill, *History of Florence*, 201-202; Raoul Manselli, "Castruccio Castracani degli Antelminelli e la politica italiana nei primi decenni del Trecento," in *Castruccio Castracani*, 14-16.

²³Villani, *Cronica*, 10: 468-77.

constant aggravation to the Florentines.²⁴ But just at the very moment when Castruccio had become the greatest threat of all to Florence as well as to other areas of Tuscany, the Florentines escaped, like they later would in 1402 with the death of Giangaleazzo Visconti, because of the sudden and unexpected demise of the master of Lucca in September 1328 at the height of his power.

Pisan Years, 1342-1369

The Florentines immediately began to exact revenge for Castruccio's acts. The lands of Pistoia which he had conquered were seized at once, and Lucca itself "seemed ripe for subjection."²⁵ Throughout the 1330s Florence made sporadic, but violent excursions into the Lucchese countryside. In 1332, sixteen villages in the parishes of S. Gennaro and Segromigno were laid to waste; in the next year devastating invasions were made through the Valdilima and Valdiserchio up to Barga. An even more intense raid occurred in 1336, when many suburbs close to Lucca were raided.²⁶ In

²⁴In November 1327, Castruccio received from the Emperor the title of Duke of Lucca, Pistoia, Luni, and Volterra, and later received an imperial vicariate over Pisa.

²⁵Schevill, *History of Florence*, 216-17.

²⁶Franca Leverotti, *Popolazione, famiglie, insediamento: Le Sei Miglia Lucchesi nel XIV e XV secolo* (Pisa: Pacini, 1992), 63-67.

short, the decade marks the emergence, or perhaps the return, of Florentine attempts to expand their borders.²⁷

After the death of Castruccio control of Lucca fell to a series of short-lived, absentee lords from northern Italy, none of whom in the end could afford to protect the city, and all of whom had to quickly sell to the highest bidder.²⁸ By 1342, after a long struggle with Florence for rights to Lucca, Pisa assumed control over the city. The more than quarter century of Pisan control over Lucca that followed was thought by contemporaries as the low point in the city's rich history; Lucchese chroniclers thereafter referred to the period as the age of Lucca's own "Babylonian captivity." Sercambi asserted that in these years the citizens were "treated like dogs, with every villainy and every outrage."²⁹ Modern writers on the subject on the other hand have tended to regard the period as perhaps fortunate for Lucca, in that since it fell under the control of the

²⁷For the renewed emphasis in Florentine expansion in these years, see *I Capitoli del Comune di Firenze*, 2 vols., in *Documenti degli Archivi Toscani* (Florence: M. Cellini, 1886), 1: 28, 46, 67, 70, 105.

²⁸For the best discussion of Lucca from 1328-1342, see Louis Green, *Lucca Under Many Masters: A Fourteenth-Century Italian Commune in Crisis* (Florence: Leo Olschki, 1995), esp. 17-41.

²⁹Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 1: 198, "Tractando i ciptadini si come cani/ Con ongni villania & ongni oltraggio."

Pisans, it was at least spared from becoming subject to the Florentine state, under which it probably would have succumbed to an even worse fate. Others have stressed the generally mild character of the Pisan subjugation of Lucca.³⁰

Contemporaries, however, did not see their Pisan governors as anything but unwelcome, and on one occasion a certain group of Lucchese citizens inside the city even plotted with a group of Florentines to allow them secret entry inside the city walls at a pre-determined time in order that they might oust the reigning Pisans.³¹ For their most cherished liberties, such as the right to conduct their own elections, collect their own taxes as they saw fit -- in short, to manage their own affairs -- had been removed from them, and the Lucchese perceived that the arrogance of their Pisan governors was the source of these problems. Finally, to make matters worse, although the original agreement of 1342 had called for a fifteen-year "league" between the two

³⁰Christine E. Meek, *The Commune of Lucca under Pisan Rule, 1342-1369* (Cambridge: Medieval Society of America, 1980), 119-124.

³¹Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 1: 118, "vedendo alquanti ciptadini di Luccha quanto era duro l' affanno d' esser soiecto, et maximamente quella de' Pisani, ordinoro col comune di Firenze di tale soiectù uscire, con dare ordine & tractato di dilevarsi al tucto da Pisa."

which was to last until 1357, two years before this period ended, the emperor granted an extension to the Pisans of the imperial vicariate over Lucca, and a new "league" was established for an additional twenty years.

Upon receiving this news the Lucchese were devastated, and reacted in a fashion that reveals their true sentiments about Pisan rule. They set about to hire armed assistance from the Lucchese countryside, and when the Pisan rectors tried to return to their residences at the Augusta in May 1355, the Lucchese rebels attempted to prevent them from entering. During two consecutive days of fighting the rebels were able to take back control over all the central squares and gates of the city, except for one.³² Though the rebellion was eventually extinguished by Pisan officials with the aid of some Lucchese citizens, this sort of protest was not uncommon -- at least in the early years of their subjection.

The character of Pisan rule in Lucca became more harsh under the authoritarian Pisan *Signore* Giovanni dell' Agnello during the Pisan war against Florence in 1362. The conflict began when the Florentines became offended that the Pisans passed a measure which called for the taxation of Florentine

³²Meek, *The Commune of Lucca*, 94-95.

goods in transit through Pisan territory. Florence initially responded by seeking another port from which to ship and receive their goods (the Sienese port of Talamone), but Pisa in turn put up resistance to their use of that port as well. When the two had another conflict soon after concerning the possession of the commune of Pietrasanta, war broke out between them.³³

Being a subject city of Pisa at the time, the Lucchese were forced not only to bear a portion of the total cost of the war, but also to supply troops and equipment for it. Thus, the Lucchese found themselves in the precarious position of being forced to give support to the side in the war that many quite possibly hoped would lose.³⁴ In the struggle against the Florentines, the Pisans gained the early advantage partly as a result of a loan of 100,000 florins from Bernabò Visconti, but by 1364 the Florentines were able to reverse the early course of the war and emerge victorious.³⁵ One Florentine chronicler recounted that the war came to an end when the Florentine army had captured

³³Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 1: 115-17, 120-21.

³⁴Meek, *The Commune of Lucca*, 101.

³⁵Giovanni Morelli, *Ricordi*, ed. Vittore Branca (Florence: Felice Le Monnier, 1956), 307.

enough of the Pisan troops to fill fifty wagons full with them, having bound them with their own ropes for further insult for the long and tortuous ride back to Florence.³⁶

After the end of the Florentine-Pisan war matters worsened for the Lucchese. Partly due to the plot of the Lucchese citizens to help Florence gain entry to the city during the war, the Pisans began to implement policies which further restricted Lucchese liberties. Meetings of more than four persons were prohibited, in part to help prevent the possibility of future uprisings by Lucchese citizens. In addition, the Pisans at one point forced all Lucchese citizens from the ages of fourteen to seventy (except long-time Ghibellines) out of the city and into the countryside, where they would be less able to cause any disturbances within the city walls.³⁷ The nature of the Pisan reign from 1342-1369 over Lucca was arbitrary, oppressive, and most of all, unwanted. Yet, it was not so much the *type* of

³⁶Ibid., 311-12, "e furono legati i Pisani colle loro funi medesime e furono caricati 50 carra propi de' pisani, e nel primo carro era l' aguglia loro impiccata, none in forma potesse morire, però ch'ella s'appoggiava co' piedi al carro e forte si dibatteva."

³⁷Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 1: 115, "E non stante le spese della borsa, che i Luchesi aveano, erano tucto di collati, stratiati et rubbati. Et era venuto a tanto Lucha e' ciptadini, che non si poteano raunare in Luccha insieme .IIII. ciptadini o più senza licentia;" also see Meek, *The Commune of Lucca*, 106.

government (monarchial) which had been established over Lucca that was so much hated by the natives; it was instead the *results* of Pisan rule, which the Lucchese deemed as not being in the best interests of the people as a whole.

Self-Rule at Last

It had been nearly a half century since the Lucchese had held complete hegemony over their internal affairs of government when Emperor Charles IV arrived in Lucca in September 1368. He had come to Italy to take the imperial crown in Milan, and one of his secondary missions was to restore some balance to the disorder in Tuscany. Charles had of late become disenchanted with the Pisans, particularly with the lack of gratitude shown him by Pietro Gambacorta, who had recently proclaimed himself *Signore* of Pisa; Charles would eventually declare the city a rebel of the Empire.³⁸

It was in this atmosphere that Lucchese leaders saw their chance to try and persuade Charles, who earlier had extended the length of Pisa's vicariate over Lucca an additional twenty years, to change his mind and cancel the Pisan hold over their city. They began to bribe the emperor with large sums of money, precious gifts, and promises of much more to come in the future. And, unlike in 1355 when

³⁸Tommasi, *Sommario*, 235.

Charles sided with Pisa by extending the vicariate, this time he favored the Lucchese, formally releasing the city from the hold of the Pisan governors on 6 April 1369.³⁹

The Lucchese agreed to pay the sum of 100,000 florins to Charles to secure from him the imperial edict which allowed for their independence from Pisa, beginning with a payment of 50,000 florins and the rest agreed upon to come later. Sercambi wrote that the total cost for Lucca to purchase its independence was 300,000 florins, a remarkable sum in that it would have been an amount approximately equal to four and one-half years of city revenues, though most modern scholars believe Sercambi over-estimated this amount.⁴⁰ At any rate, the Lucchese were to commence the new period of self-rule in a severe state of economic crisis. Loans were taken out from the papacy, Florence, the Este ruler of Ferrara, the Carrara ruler of Padua, and other city-states in order to help defray the expenses of paying off Charles and in order to take defensive measures to strengthen the new regime.⁴¹

³⁹Sercambi, *Croniche*, 1: 138, 161-65.

⁴⁰Ibid., 1: 174.

⁴¹Christine Meek, *Lucca 1369-1400: Politics and Society in an Early Renaissance City-State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 54.

The dominant theme running through the Lucchese *Riformagioni* in the months after Charles' arrival in Lucca was the financial straits of the city. Not only were there frequent shortages of essential provisions, especially of grain, but there were also difficulties in paying for even the most basic of necessary expenses to get the new government off and running, such as the salaries of officials, the manning and repairing of Lucchese fortresses, gates, and walls, and the maintenance of at least the most rudimentary regiment of mercenary soldiers. In order to help meet ends the government was forced to increase taxes, which was an additional burden on the populace. In addition, the new government enacted other provisions to help raise revenues such as forced purchases of salt and other commodities, and obligation of citizens to military duties or to stand guard over parts of the city or *contado*.⁴²

When Charles first entered Lucca in September 1368, he took over the government of the city himself, allowing the Lucchese time to consolidate and prepare themselves to defend their new status as an independent state. Pisan officials and soldiers were forced out of the Augusta by Charles, and his imperial troops took command of it. He also

⁴²Ibid.

aided the Lucchese in restoring some of their previous strongholds in the countryside, particularly at Pontetetto, in the Garfagnana, and near the port of Motrone, all of which helped ensure the Pisans would not be as tempted to attempt a return to Lucca once Charles decided to depart.⁴³ In addition, before departing Charles awarded the city the right to coin money, establish a *studium* (never fulfilled), confer *lauree*, create notaries as they saw fit, and hold the authority to legitimize and authorize adoptions.⁴⁴

In November 1370, the governors of the new free city of Lucca began the process of drawing up a new Statute for the city, as the current one was long outdated, having been instituted in 1342 during the period of Pisan rule. Even before the Emperor had departed Lucca the city had been redivided into three *terzieri*, which took the names of the three principal churches, San Martino, San Paolino, and San Salvatore. Under the previous division of the city into five *porte* there had over time arisen a number of inequalities

⁴³Tommasi, *Sommario*, 233-37; Augusto Mancini, *Storia di Lucca* (Florence: Sansoni, 1950), 162-65.

⁴⁴Tommasi, *Sommario*, 237.

pertaining to certain civic duties such as military obligations, or in the assessment of taxes.⁴⁵

At the basis of the new Statute was the method of election for the most powerful governing body of the city, the *Anziani*, and for the two major councils. It was determined that three citizens from each *terziere* be chosen as members of the *Anziani*, who along with the *Gonfaloniere di Giustizia* would comprise a body of ten. They were to be chosen by method of direct election (rather than the general practice of Italian cities of drawing lots) for two-month terms by the outgoing group of ten *Anziani*, the Council of Thirty-Six, and eighteen other invitees, six from each *terziere*. The Council of Thirty-Six, whose chief duty was the defense of Lucca and its *contado*, was made up of four "neighborhood" *gonfalonieri* and eight others from each *terziere*. They served six-month terms, and they too were elected directly by the outgoing *Anziani* and four other citizens from each of the three divisions of the city.

In addition, the membership of the General Council was established at 180, 60 from each *terziere*, and this group

⁴⁵*Riformagioni della Repubblica di Lucca (1369-1400)*, in *Accademia dei Lincei, Commissioni per gli Atti delle Costituzioni Italiane*, ed. Antonio Romiti, Vol. 1, (March 1369-August 1370), (Rome: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 1980), 208-17; Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 1: 185-86.

was to hold office for one-year terms. The General Council was also elected by the departing members of the *Anziani* and part of the Thirty-Six.⁴⁶ In short, the 1372 Statute reveals a quite different form of electoral procedure in Lucca than in other Tuscan cities such as Siena and Florence, where the process involved the drawing of lots of those citizens deemed politically eligible. The Lucchese, after having just attained self-rule after a long period of foreign subjugation, apparently desired as much participation as possible in the election of their officials. They wanted to take no chances of pulling unsuitable names out of the election *borse*.

There were other variations in the particulars of Lucchese electoral methods from those elsewhere in Tuscany. In Lucca, for example, the only requirements for holding office as an *Anziani* or on one of the two major councils were that one be twenty-five years old, a male citizen of Lucca, and of legitimate birth.⁴⁷ There were no property qualifications which, at least in theory, made the possible number of those eligible for office greater than in other cities where ownership of land was required. Another

⁴⁶ Meek, *Lucca 1369-1400*, 8-9.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

distinctive feature of the electoral procedure in Lucca was that offices were still determined solely according to geographical district. The *Anziani*, for example, consisted of three members from each of the three districts of the city. Though this was common elsewhere in Italy much earlier, many cities by the fifteenth century dispersed the highest political offices on the basis of guild, or artisan membership, rather than according to the geographical district of the city in which one lived. In post-1369 Lucca, occupation never played such an important role in determining who their highest governors were.

Finally, the republican Statute of 1372 reveals the decision of the Lucchese to have a government "*a popolo*" rather than a government "*a comune*." This meant that thereafter it would fall under the rule of the merchant class, the bankers, goldsmiths, and other small businessmen of the city; that certain members of the traditional landed elite would be excluded from attaining the highest offices in the city; and that above all, the Lucchese were hopeful of the rebirth of their republican past.⁴⁸ Yet, although it may be true that, as Sante Polica argues, those men who wrote the Statute of 1372 were true members of the "*partito*

⁴⁸Ibid., 179-93.

popolare" who feared the loss of republican institutions -- it also stands true that a good portion of the period from 1369 to the arrival of Paolo Guinigi in 1400 saw Lucca under the *de facto* rule of government by *balie*.⁴⁹

Thus, despite the lack of property qualifications for holding office and other features of the Lucchese electoral method which may have been enacted to give the appearance of a desire to keep the government in the hands of many, there occurred over the course of the latter fourteenth century a gradual, yet definite narrowing of the number of politically-eligible citizens.⁵⁰ The Lucchese for the remainder of the century would frequently fall under the real control of a *balia* whose powers usurped those of even the *Anziani* at times. Yet this all occurred while Lucca was still within the framework of their "republican"

⁴⁹Sante Polica, "Le Famiglie del Ceto Dirigente Lucchese dalla Caduta di Paolo Guinigi alla Fine del Quattrocento," in *I Ceti dirigenti nella Toscana del Quattrocento: Comitato di Studi sulla storia dei ceti dirigenti in Toscana, Atti del V e VI Convegno: Firenze, 10-11 Dicembre 1982; 2-3 Dicembre 1983* (Florence: Francesco Papafava, 1987), 361.

⁵⁰For example, in the Statute of 1308 the General Council consisted of 550 members who served six-month terms, thus allowing 1,100 different citizens to hold this office annually, and as we have seen, the Statute of 1372 calls for the General Council to consist of 180 members who served one-year terms. In 1397, the number was further reduced to 135.

constitution; this is evidence that the Lucchese were beginning to question whether that very republican system set up by the constitution was right for them in such dangerous times as those that they presently lived in.

Francesco Guinigi

One notable change to occur in Lucca after its liberation from Pisa was the consolidation of the Guinigi family into a position of supreme power. The Guinigi had for years been an important factor in the social, economic, and political affairs of the city, but after 1369 they quickly managed to secure an unparalleled position in Lucchese civic life because of their wealth, foreign connections, marriage alliances, and the ability to help defend the city-state, a position which would persist until the removal of Paolo in 1430.

The first documented citation of the family is under the name *Vuinitio*, and dates to the ninth century. Around the beginning of the tenth century they apparently moved from the Orvieto region and settled into the countryside surrounding Lucca.⁵¹ The noted Lucchese geneologist G. V. Baroni claimed the early Guinigi were "*nobili di Torre, di*

⁵¹L. Fumi, *Nuovi Aumenti al R. Archivio di Stato in Lucca* (Rocca S. Casciano: Cappelli, 1904), 5.

Loggia, di Corte, di Chiesa, e di contrada."⁵² The family moved into Lucca in the eleventh century and established themselves as one of the more important families in the city, and for the next two centuries were involved in land ownership in the Florentine, Pisan, and Lucchese countrysides, as well as in other areas of central Italy.⁵³ Around 1250, the Guinigi began to expand their activities, becoming increasingly involved in international trade, and less dependent solely on land ownership as their main source of revenue.

The family was recorded in the *Memorie* of Michele Guinigi as holding a merchant company as early as 1284, which dealt especially in the thriving Lucchese silk trade, but also in other types of products (by the time of Francesco Guinigi in the latter half of the fourteenth century, the Guinigi Company was the largest mercantile company in Lucca, consisting of twenty-two members and having branches in many of the major cities of Europe, including London, Rome, Naples, Avignon, Pisa, Bruges, and others).⁵⁴ At the beginning of the fourteenth century the

⁵²Quoted in *ibid.*

⁵³Meek, *Lucca 1369-1400*, 200-202.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, 41-43.

family was driven into exile by the *popolo* regime of Bonturo Dati as Ghibellines and as among the members of the "potentes et casastici." By 1310, however, they had been able to return and thus participate in the economic revival of the 1320s in Lucca, a time which coincided with the rule of Castruccio Castracani.⁵⁵

Records for all Lucchese families are scarce for the period in which Lucca was under foreign rule; the first mention of Francesco Guinigi, the father of Paolo, by the chronicler Sercambi dates to the period of Pisan rule when he refused to give a "loan" of 6,000 florins to the hated *Signore* of Pisa, Giovanni Dell' Agnello.⁵⁶ Francesco was the center of the family in the years following the liberation from Pisa in 1369, along with his two brothers Niccolò and Michele, their cousins Dino, Lazzaro, and Jacobo, and the several sons of these six men.⁵⁷ Francesco at the time was the single wealthiest individual in the city; his fortune along with that of Dino had been assessed at 200,000 florins

⁵⁵Sante Polica, "An Attempted 'Reconversion' of Wealth in XVth Century Lucca: The Lands of Michele di Giovanni Guinigi," *Journal of European Economic History* 9 (1980), 657-58; also see Louis Green, *Castruccio Castracani*, 112-13.

⁵⁶Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 1: 134. Francesco had been the head of the family since 1358 with the death of his uncle Francesco di Bartolomeo Guinigi.

⁵⁷Meek, *Lucca 1369-1400*, 207.

in 1369, which was greater than the usual annual income of the city of Lucca.⁵⁸ Guinigi wealth was a major reason that they were able to attain and hold their supreme position in Lucca.

In addition, the Guinigi became involved in another profitable activity besides land ownership and trading goods during the lifetime of Francesco: they became bankers to the papacy. After Florentine bankers were shunned by the papacy as a result of the War of the Eight Saints, the Guinigi Company for fifteen years (1376-1391) took the place of the Florentine bankers, which undoubtedly added much to the family coffers.⁵⁹ Although there were two branches of the Guinigi family, both prospered from their trading and banking activities and as a unit the family managed to stay remarkably united in their ambitions in these very difficult years after Lucca regained its independence. Francesco was thus able to remain the undisputed leader of the family and of the city until his death in 1384.

⁵⁸Ibid., 45.

⁵⁹Ibid., 142-43, 200; also see George Holmes, "How the Medici became the Pope's Bankers," in *Florentine Studies: Politics and Society in Renaissance Florence*, ed. Nicolai Rubinstein (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1968), 357-80.

It is no easy task to explain how one individual became the unofficial leading citizen of the city in a government that called itself a republic. One must remember, first of all, that Lucca in the late *Trecento* was a clannish, neighborhood-oriented city where familial and neighborhood ties were the basis of one's loyalties. Unlike other places, Florence for instance, occupation played little part in Lucchese political society or in the making of allegiances, especially at this late date. Francesco's wealth has been mentioned, and that was the basis of much of his power; as a result of his wealth, for example, he was able to provide the commune with a significant loan in the financially troublesome months after Pisan liberation, in effect, helping Lucca purchase its independence.⁶⁰

Francesco apparently gained a place in the hearts of the Lucchese for a variety of reasons, but especially for his leadership in the period of liberation from Pisa. He represented Lucca in the negotiations with the Emperor. He appears to have had a large influence over the Emperor's vicar (Cardinal Guido), who remained in Lucca for a short time after Charles departed. He persuaded Guido, for instance, to resist the entrance of Alderigo Antelminelli

⁶⁰*Riformagioni della Repubblica di Lucca (1369-1400)*, 333-35.

and Bernabò Visconti into Lucchese territories in 1370.⁶¹ Earlier, in August 1369, Francesco convoked the first meeting of the General Council for the newly-freed city, which was held to discuss the sending of embassies to the superpowers to inform them of Lucca's new status as a free city.⁶² He was also responsible for the enactment of public projects, such as canalization of waters he brought about for the use of the city as a whole.⁶³ These types of things help explain how Francesco came to be highly regarded in Lucca; above all, he was their "*pater patriae*" who had done a great deal to allow them to escape from the Pisan stranglehold.

The decisive point for the Guinigi *fortuna* in Lucca arrived in November 1374 with the establishment of the *conservatores libertatis*, a body of twelve men who assumed a large degree of authority in decision-making for the city, and whose mandates began to take precedence over the *Anziani*, General Council, and the Council of Thirty-Six. It was Francesco himself who proposed the establishment of this body, and in a short time the Guinigi were not only able to

⁶¹Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 1: 176-77, 180-81.

⁶²Mancini, *Storia di Lucca*, 168.

⁶³Ibid., 181.

see to the passage of this act, but also to fill the twelve-member group with loyal supporters. Moreover, the same twelve men stayed in the office for the entire period of 1374-1381, and with the addition of twenty-four others, until 1385. This brought about an unusual degree of continuity in governmental affairs for this period, especially for a city which claimed to adhere to a republican constitution.⁶⁴ The Lucchese under Francesco were obviously subverting this republican constitution on a frequent basis, and were starting to move more quickly now toward a highly centralized regime.

This commission of the *conservatores libertatis* differed in both purpose and duration from previous *balie* in that earlier special commissions had been set up to have a predetermined life span, that is, to come to an end at a definite point in the future, usually half a year or less.⁶⁵ Also, the specific duties of the *conservatores libertatis* were much broader than those given *balie* in the past, to the point that at times their actions "modified the statutes of

⁶⁴Meek, *Lucca 1369-1400*, 237-38.

⁶⁵This sort of extended emergency commission with such extraordinary powers was not unusual by the late fourteenth century; Florence, for example, also had a single *balia* with similar powers from 1386-1406.

the commune, and they should properly have been decided in one of the statutory councils."⁶⁶ Thus Francesco, while staying within constitutional parameters in only the broadest sense, was able to use this special "emergency" commission to bring about greater security for both the Guinigi family as well as for the city-state of Lucca.

The chief concern of the Lucchese by 1374 remained the preservation of independence. It was increasingly evident to the leading families of the republic that greater measures were going to have to be taken for defense of their lands. The Lucchese could not have been too experienced in 1369 at knowing how to protect their territories since defense of the city-state had been someone else's responsibility ever since 1314. But large bands of mercenary companies and the threat of returning exiles convinced civic leaders that more direct attention needed to be given to defense.⁶⁷

⁶⁶Meek, *Lucca 1369-1400*, 237-245, for quote, 240.

⁶⁷The company of Conrad Wettingher, for example, later discovered to be in agreement with Florence, invaded Lucchese territory in late 1373; the Republic was forced to make substantial payments to him in November and December 1373, and again in January of the next year in order to turn him away from the city. Payments to other mercenary companies were made by Lucca in August 1374, including the one led by the Florentine *condottiere* John Hawkwood. See Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 1: 209, "*si pensi che gostò molto al comune di Luccha d' onorare & presentare li capi di tali brigate;*" also see Meek, *Lucca 1369-1400*, 61, 67.

The main factor, however, that persuaded the Lucchese to take steps to tighten up their defenses was the increasing threat that Florence had come to be. Though the Florentines had actually aided Lucca in 1369 in attaining its independence by supplying a loan to the commune to help cut down on their costs of paying off Charles, by 1372 troubles between the two began when the Florentines built a road in territory that both claimed as their own.⁶⁸ Throughout 1373 armed companies passed through Lucchese territory, always raising suspicion of Florentine enticement. It is true that Francesco carried on a friendly correspondence with the Florentine priors for a brief period in 1374, but it was mostly a show of words. He never trusted Florentine intentions concerning Lucca. Considering the territorial acquisitions the Florentines had made in the half century before that time, no wise ruler would have. Writing at a later time, Sercambi recalled that when Francesco ruled Lucca, he "knew well of the ill will that the Florentines had for Lucca, and that he, always in

⁶⁸Meek, *Lucca 1369-1400*, 137.

consultation with his friends, determined in good faith to never agree to be united with Florentines.”⁶⁹

The *conservatores libertatis* from the beginning had as their main task to strengthen Lucchese defenses against invasion. They were concerned not only with the maintenance of the walls and other fortifications of Lucca, but also with the fortresses, bridges, town bells, and ditches of the Lucchese *contado*. The *conservatores* also brought about the hiring of additional mercenaries for the protection of both city and countryside. They also seized authority over the *cerne*, or over the mustering of troops from the countryside. The threat of foreign invasion, especially from Florence, was behind the origin (and the duration) of the *conservatores libertatis*. The republic meant a great deal to the Lucchese, but external liberty always meant much more.

⁶⁹Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 309, "...bene cognoscea la mala volontà che i Fiorentini aveano verso Luccha, e lui, sempre co' suoi amici stringendosi, sempre si mantenne in buona prosperità nè mai consentio esser con Firenze unito."

CHAPTER 3

THE RISE OF PAOLO TO POWER

Coup d' etat

The pestilence which began to take the lives of hundreds of Lucchese beginning in 1399 took a turn for the worse during the steamy summer months of 1400.¹ Many avid supporters of the Guinigi house such as Niccolò Ser Pagani succumbed to the plague during this summer, as well as some of the remaining important members of the Guinigi family itself. Lazzaro di Niccolò Guinigi died on 27 June, and on 5 July his son Giovanni suffered the same fate.² In addition, many citizens fled from Lucca during the first half of the year in an attempt to escape the contagion, though they had been ordered by civic leaders not to do so. Sercambi wrote that there "remained few persons of note in Lucca, and that those who did stay who held the power of money were largely

¹Sercambi estimated that 150 persons were dying on a daily basis from this bout with the bubonic plague, although this is generally accepted as an overstatement on his part, *Le Chroniche Lucchesi*, ed. Salvatore Bongi, 3 vols., in *Fonti per la Storia d' Italia* (Lucca: Giusti, 1892), 3: 4.

²*Ibid.*, 3: 4-5.

compelled to remain for the salvation of the city and the state, standing under the hope of God to guard the city."³

As a result of these difficulties, which led to a much depopulated city-state, the Lucchese suffered a variety of problems. Farmlands suffered, taxes went uncollected, rents went unpaid, the people of the *contado* became more restless -- not to mention the incalculable psychological effects that a half-century of sporadic plagues must have caused.⁴ In addition, a large number of seats in the various consiliar bodies of the Lucchese government became vacant due to the widespread death and flight of citizens. The net

³A note on Sercambi is necessary at this point; he was a central figure in Lucca during the period of Paolo Guinigi. Not only was he the chronicler for the city during this period of its history, as he wrote a history of Lucca from the 12th century to his own day, but he also wrote the *Novelle*, the literary masterpiece of the Guinigi period. It was a fictional series of 166 tales told by a group of youth wandering the countryside in an attempt to escape the plague, very much a work influenced by Boccaccio's *Decameron*. In addition, Sercambi was active in the public sphere his whole life, holding many important offices during Paolo's regime, thus providing a unique source for the study of early *Quattrocento* Lucca. For quote, see *ibid.*, 3: 4, "...in Lucca rimaseno poche persone da facti. E quelli che aveano potentia di denari, li quali ristettero in Luccha, funno gran parte costretti a rimanere in Luccha per salvezza della ciptà et dello stato, stando socto la speranza di Dio a guardare la ciptà."

⁴See, for example, the effects of the plague on the painting of the years 1350-1400, as shown by Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death: The Arts, Religion, and Society in the Mid-Fourteenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951).

effect of all the above meant that the perception of the Lucchese state and of the Guinigi house across Tuscany and beyond was that of a much weakened power, thus making it more susceptible to foreign intervention.⁵

One of the main threats to Lucca in the early part of the fifteenth century was from that of their exiles, as was the case with most other Italian cities of this time. Many who had been banished at various points in the recent past began to look upon this troublesome situation in Lucca as their opportunity to make a successful return; the deaths of Francesco's three eldest sons in the early months of the year 1400 made this even more of an attractive proposition. Even some who had recently supported the Guinigi faction began to question whether they still had the ability to preserve that one thing desired by most Lucchese more than anything else, self-rule.

When Domenico Lupardi was chosen to serve as *Anziano* for the term of September-October 1400, he declared that not only would he not return from Bologna to assume the office, but also that he did not even desire that the Guinigi

⁵Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 11, "E molto per la morte di tale et delli altri nomati aveano preso cuore, stimando lo resto de' Guinigi esser messo al disotto, dicendo ogimai: la casa de' Guinigi non vale uno boctone, però che si congnoce in essa non esser persona, che alle potentia di chi mal vuole loro, possano resistere."

maintain hegemony in Lucca.⁶ Earlier, Turco Balbani, another one-time supporter of the Guinigi, departed Lucca in the summer in opposition to the family, even though he had been selected to the prestigious office of *Gonfaloniere di Giustizia*.⁷ The Florentines, in addition to the exiles, were another danger likely to meddle in Lucchese affairs while they were in this weakened state.⁸ In short, the future prospects for Lucca had not looked so bleak since before 1369 as they did at this point in the late summer of 1400.

The *Anziani* chosen for the July-August term of office that year believed that the decline of the Guinigi house, the wealthiest family of Lucca, meant possible disaster for the city-state as a whole. They understood that the fall of the Guinigi meant not merely that another Lucchese family would emerge and assume leadership in the city, but rather that it would most likely lead to some kind of foreign

⁶Ibid., 3: 9-12.

⁷Giuseppe Civitali, *Historie di Lucca*, ed. Mario F. Leonardi, 2 vols., in *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores Recentiores* (Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano per L'Età Moderna e Contemporanea, 1988), 2: 261.

⁸Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 10, "E molto altamente se ne parlava, intanto che il comune di Firenze, con alquanti usciti di Lucca et etiandio con alquanti asentati, preseno pensiero e molti ragionamenti del modo di mandare per terra la dicta casa de' Guinigi e loro amici."

intervention. Thus, the *Anziani* chosen for this term began to take steps to enhance Guinigi supremacy in Lucca for the ultimate purpose of preserving the independence for all citizens. An extralegal substitution to the office of *Gonfaloniere*, for example, was made in the summer of 1400 with Giovanni Testa, a loyal Guinigi supporter. Testa had been elected to this same office earlier in the year, which made a subsequent assignment in the same year illegal, since according to Lucchese statutes a person was not eligible to serve again in this office until one year had elapsed. This was only one of many instances in the summer of 1400 in which offices were given to people who were, according to the constitution, ineligible for them. But, desperate times called for a high degree of political centralization.

The *Anziani* and General Council of the July-August 1400 term took a more decisive step in bringing about cohesiveness in regard to the governing of the city by naming a special commission of twelve men to have full authority in all matters.⁹ This group, according to

⁹Ibid., 3: 8, "*si facesse con consiglio generale dodici ciptadini di balia, li quali avessero piena autorità, mero et misto imperio, di tucto ciò che fusse di bizogno a riparo di Luccha; e quello che a loro piaceva, così dentro come di fuori, quanto potesse mai avere il comune e 'l popolo di Luccha;*" Sercambi here claims for himself a large role in persuading the Guinigi to enact the special commission. See, however, Giuliano Lucarelli, *I Visconti di Milano e*

Sercambi, was bestowed with powers that allowed it to override the decisions of all other legislative bodies, including that of the *Anziani*. But this was nothing new to the Lucchese. By the middle of the year 1400, the people of Lucca had for thirty years lived under a regime republican in name, but in reality governed by bankers, merchants, and business elites; they had become increasingly accustomed to having the authority of their republican institutions usurped by the special powers given to a number of successive *balie*, including the one enacted in this year. By the end of the fourteenth century republican government no longer worked in Lucca. The various emergency situations the Lucchese found themselves in required a more centralized approach to government. Civic leaders over the past generation had become convinced of that, as seen in the number of special commissions enacted between 1369-1400. Lucca thus turned away from republicanism -- but not out of fear or pressure from a tyrannical warlord; they turned away from republicanism because it no longer worked for them.

Lucca risorta a stato autonomo (Lucca: Maria Pacini Fazzi, 1984), 98, where it is stated the proposal for a *balia* was suggested by Tommaso da Ghivizano. In addition to Sercambi and Ghivizano, the other members of the *balia* were Nuccio Giovanni, Francesco Berindelli, Franceschino Buzolini, Antonio da Volterra, Bonacorso Bocci, Dino Guinigi, Giovanni Bernardini, Giovanni Testa, Nicolao di Filippo, and Paolo Guinigi.

Despite such measures as the establishment of special commissions taken by the city fathers to keep Lucca an independent city-state, the danger of external aggression still remained. Foreign states certainly realized the touchy situation in Lucca. In September, the pestilence which had driven so many from the city began to ease, meaning that now invasion by armed bands of soldiers replaced the threat of highly contagious disease. The threat of exiles returning accompanied by bands of soldiers, such as the Obizzi family, which had been harbored in Florence for years, was the overriding concern of the Lucchese councils during these weeks in the latter part of the summer and early fall 1400. Finally, when the highly esteemed Michele Guinigi died on 11 October, one of the last remaining elder spokesmen of the family, we can see in retrospect that the outlook for Lucca and the Guinigi family at that point was at its gravest point. If the Lucchese wanted to keep foreign armies out of their territory and keep their independence intact, then immediate action was necessary. In short, it was time to attempt a "coup d' etat."¹⁰

¹⁰Girolamo Tommasi, *Sommario della Storia di Lucca dall' anno MIV all' anno MDCC* (Florence: G. P. Vieusseux, 1847), 286-87.

The first step taken by this group of Lucchese elites in order to preserve the self-rule of the city-state was to ensure there was sufficient armed support to deter outside aggressors, as well as to lay claim to establishing an internal order. Nine companies of arms were hired from the Lucchese countryside, the most prominent of which was an infantry force from the region of the Garfagnana.¹¹ Next, the Twelve met with the elites of the Lucchese countryside to secure assurances from them to do everything in their power to help the Guinigi. In addition, the Twelve secured military aid from the vicar of the Duke of Milan in Pisa, Giovanni da Nuola. In early October, Guido Manfredi of Pietrasanta, who was soon to become the primary secretary of Paolo, had been sent to Pisa to garner reinforcement from the Visconti vicar. Da Nuola had been instructed earlier by the Duke of Milan to do whatever he could to assist the Lucchese.¹² When fifty Visconti lance approached the perimeter of Lucca in the early morning of 14 October, the

¹¹*Cronica Volgare di Anonimo Fiorentino dall' anno 1385 al 1409, già attributa a Piero di Giovanni Minerbetti*, ed. Elina Bellondi, *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, n.s., Vol. XXVII, part ii (Città di Castello: S. Lapi, n.d.), 251.

¹²Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 13-14.

stage was set, and the *coup d'etat* staged by the most avid supporters of the Guinigi family was now in progress.¹³

Paolo was thrust into position as the head of the *coup* because it was believed that his financial standing offered Lucca the best possible chance of avoiding foreign intervention. There apparently was some thought to placing the elder statesman Dino Guinigi into the position as head of the Lucchese state, but his age and physical condition led the group of twelve to settle on Paolo.¹⁴ The *balìa* understood the defense of the city was of paramount importance because of the imminent threat of returning exiles or other foreign powers who might have intentions of taking Lucca for themselves. Paolo, then, was in a sense *pushed into* a position of supreme power via a plot hatched by several patriotic, pro-Guinigi members of the *balìa*; since he happened to emerge from the summer of 1400 as suddenly the oldest son of the "*pater patriae*," Francesco Guinigi, and as one of the wealthiest men in all of Tuscany, he was bestowed with the honor of leading their civic and

¹³Other Lucchese chroniclers such as the *Cronica di Lucca da Giovanni di Messer Vincenzo Saminati*, 3 vols., A.S.L., Biblioteca Manoscritti, n. 15 (no page numbers), claim there were forty lance, not fifty, which had been sent from Pisa to aid in the Guinigi takeover.

¹⁴Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 11.

foreign affairs -- as well as with the responsibility of protecting them.¹⁵

At the beginning of the year 1400, it would have seemed as if there were little chance Paolo Guinigi would emerge as not only the leader of the family, but also as the ruler of Lucca by the end of the year. In January, Lucca was a republic and Paolo was fourth son of Francesco Guinigi; by December, Lucca was a *Signoria* and he was its head. The memory of life before 1369 was still vivid to the Lucchese, and they were willing to take any step, including enacting a *Signoria*, in order to maintain self-rule. To them, the "means" of good rule, that is the form of government either republic or signorial did not so much matter; what was important was that there was competent leadership which kept an eye on the interests of the people.

At dawn on the morning of 14 October 1400, Paolo with armed support from the countryside, along with the lance sent from Pisa at the Lucchese request, took the symbolic step to attaining supremacy in a city by seizing the central *piazza*, S. Michele. The armies of Paolo seized the corners of the *piazza* and then began to set up barricades

¹⁵See Franca Ragone, "Paolo Guinigi, i suoi collaboratori, i suoi nemici: l' emergere di nuovi ruoli politici in una corte toscana del Quattrocento," *Momus* 1 (1994), 12-13.

prohibiting passage inside, and after a few hours and an essentially bloodless takeover, Paolo was able to ride the principal streets of Lucca proclaiming "*Viva il popolo e libertà!*"¹⁶

Early Contests to Paolo's Rise to Power

Though the seizure of supremacy in Lucca by Paolo was a move supported, and even set up by some members of the Twelve, it was not a move undertaken with the knowledge of *all* the members of this elite group. Dino Guinigi and Giovanni Testa, two ardent supporters of Paolo, were initially unaware of the scheme to push him into the highest office in Lucca. The plan seems to have been the work primarily of Sercambi, Tommaso da Ghivizano, Guido Manfredi, and Marco Martini, along with Paolo who consented to take on the new office of Captain and Defender of the People. While he with his supporters took the *piazza* of S. Michele on the morning of 14 October, the *Gonfaloniere* Sercambi positioned himself, armed under his clothes, and ready with other soldiers to protect the governor's palace, the *Palazzo Decemvirale*, from any possible opponents of the Guinigi.¹⁷ But as expected, an opposition never emerged.

¹⁶Civitali, *Historie*, 2: 263-64.

¹⁷Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 12-17.

The members of the *balìa* who had not been made aware of Paolo's assumption were summoned to come to the Palace to be informed of the new situation. When they became aware of what was occurring literally before their eyes, certain members of the *balìa* began to question Paolo's motives.¹⁸ The *Gonfaloniere* Sercambi responded to their questions by telling the group that such action had been taken because the imminent threat of exiles and foreign powers had become so great that again outside rule loomed in the near future if immediate steps were not taken to prevent it. But they pointed out that Paolo was not the only one who wanted to preserve the independence of their city, and that they were not so certain that his way was necessarily the best way.¹⁹

Two members of the *balìa*, Giovanni Testa and Antonio da Volterra, wanted an explanation for the events of that morning from Paolo himself, and so proceeded to *piazza* S. Michele. We are not sure of what they saw or were told there by Paolo; in his *Chronicle*, Sercambi wrote only that

¹⁸Ibid., 3: 15, "et alcuni de' dicti .XII. meravigliarsi come a tale hora fusseno richiesti, domandando i dicti di balia quali chagioni poteano esser quelle che aveano induto Paolo ad armarsi per quello modo."

¹⁹See A. N. Cianelli, "Dissertazioni sopra la storia lucchese: Sistema di Governo in Lucca dal 1369 fino al 1430," in *Memorie e Documenti per Servire all' Storia della Città e Stato di Lucca*, vol. II, part i (Lucca: Francesco Bertini, 1814), 117.

Paolo told the two when they arrived to return to the *Gonfaloniere* and to do as he ordered. Whatever it was that was revealed to them seemed to satisfy them, however, as they returned to Sercambi and the others, and soon proclaimed they were ready to follow their lead.²⁰

When the members of the *balìa* assembled again at the Palace, Sercambi gave them further justification for the sudden exaltation of Paolo to the head of command in Lucca:

"You can be certain that through the exiles, and through some other communities the destruction of Lucca has been sought, and especially that of the Guinigi house and their friends...And therefore Paolo, wanting that he and his family live securely, has taken steps to see to it that anyone who wants to put the liberty of Lucca and its state into a confused situation would not be able to do so."²¹

Thus, through the persuasive words of Sercambi, Ghivizzano, and the other supporters of the move to exalt Paolo, the remaining members of the *balìa* were quickly brought over to the notion that it was the best move for the overall safety

²⁰Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 15-16.

²¹Ibid., 3: 15, "Voi dovete esser certi che per li usciti di Luccha, and simili per alquanti altri insieme con alcuna comunità, s' è cerchato il disfaccimento della libertà di Luccha, e massimamente della casa de' Guinigi e de' loro amici....E pertanto il dicto Paolo, volendo lui e i suoi vivere securi, à preso pensieri di voler e tener modi, che chi volesse la libertà di Luccha e lo stato mettere in confusione, non possa."

of Lucca. Perhaps the sight of soldiers with Visconti banners in support of Paolo helped persuade them. What sort of government would have emerged from this situation will never be known, however, as within a month a domestic plot to overthrow Paolo Guinigi had been hatched, leading the Twelve to take the further step of elevating him to absolute *Signore*.²² What it seems that Paolo and the *balìa* initially had in mind was for him to coexist alongside the *Anziani*, to maintain their previous political institutions, and to keep as much of an outward resemblance to the republic as possible.²³ In the end, however, it was security, not a republican form of government, that the Lucchese so badly wanted.

As mentioned, what Paolo and the other members of the *balìa* ultimately had in mind for the government of Lucca as it stood after 14 October never came to pass. In early November, the Bishop of Lucca, Nicolao Guinigi, a second cousin of Paolo, along with some canons of the cathedral of S. Martino and the surgeon Bartolomeo di Duccino da Aramo, plotted to poison Paolo.²⁴ Sercambi claimed the reason for

²²Ibid., 3: 21-22.

²³Ibid., 3: 17, "*E così dimorò chapitano in palagio, & come antiano, tucto il mese do ottobre.*"

²⁴Cianelli, "Dissertazioni," 119.

the attempt to remove Paolo was jealousy on the part of the young Bishop of Lucca, and no other accounts of the event give any further explanation of the Bishop's motives.²⁵

Paolo handled the situation with leniency; the Bishop of Lucca in fact had returned to his full duties as bishop only days afterwards.²⁶ But the real significance of the failed plot was that it gave the *balìa* justifiable reason to further centralize Lucca under the Guinigi house, as it led to the declaration of Paolo as absolute *Signore*.

The Bishop of Lucca and the canons of S. Martino were pardoned for their crime of treason against the state, which in most instances would have met with the fate of immediate execution. Bartolomeo da Aramo was eventually executed, but even this decision seems to have been one in which city leaders pondered carefully for a while before proceeding.²⁷

²⁵Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 21, "...avendo invidia di tale capitanatico preso per lo dicto Paolo, e come iovano, si comferiò con alcuna chalonaco di santo Martino."

²⁶Giuseppe Benedetto, "Fra Corruzione e Riforme: I Monasteri Femminili della Città e del Territorio di Lucca nella seconda metà del Trecento e nel primo Trentennio del Quattrocento," in *Ilaria del Carretto e il suo Monumento: La Donna nell'Arte, la cultura, e la società del '400*, ed. S. Toussaint (Lucca: S. Marco, 1995), 189.

²⁷*Ibid.*, 3: 21, "...per qual cosa, doppo alquanti giorni, al dicto maestro Bartolomeo, in vernadi, adì .XVIII novembre in 1400, li fu per lo capitano del popolo in sulla piassa di santo Michele la testa tagliata."

Though Paolo has been characterized as being lenient in response to some of the criminal activities that went on in his territory, even such serious wrongdoings as treason, on this occasion he had motive in doing so. The mild treatment accorded the Bishop by Paolo had little to do with the fact the he was a member of the Guinigi house; when Lazzaro was murdered by their own brother Antonio in February 1400, Paolo was in favor of a quick redemption for this crime of an immediate death sentence. What really mattered to Paolo at this point was consolidating his new regime, and by pardoning the high church official he figured to stand a better chance of getting on the good side of Pope Boniface IX.

The reason that Paolo wanted to gain the immediate approval of Boniface IX was that Lucca had for three-quarters of a century been forced to make a costly annual payment to the Church, as well as having to fulfill other shameful obligations as a result of the crimes against the Church committed by Castruccio Castracani. It was one of the new *Signore's* first objectives to end this mandatory contribution to the coffers of the Church, and he was able to do so, as will be discussed in Chapter six, below. Thus, through good friends, some astute political maneuvering, and

good fortune, Paolo was able to withstand the initial attempts to question his new authority in Lucca. During the first few months of his reign, the new leader of Lucca was concerned with strengthening his rule both inside and outside the Lucchese state, but his initial efforts were to be centered within his own city-state.

Consolidation of the Regime

Despite the fact that Paolo was able to successfully maintain power through the important early weeks, the overall situation of Lucca upon his assumption to *Signore* was hardly better than before. The city-state still faced problems on many different levels, and thus, the primary objective of Paolo at the outset was to strengthen his recently-won power. One of the first steps taken in order to gain favor at home was the freeing of certain individuals who had been imprisoned for debt to the commune of Lucca, as may be seen in his decree of 24 November 1400.²⁸ In addition, Paolo stipulated on this same day that those officials who had been forbidden to leave Lucca during the height of the plague, but had done so anyway, were granted

²⁸A.S.L., *Governo di Paolo Guinigi*, n. 1, c. 13v., p. 22.

pardons and were allowed to return freely to Lucca with no penalty.²⁹

Another attempt to bring immediate favor to the regime was the liberation of certain families of exiles. These families were required only to pay a modest tax to the new government to be able to return, and several groups resumed residence in Lucca after the decree was handed down.³⁰

Paolo undoubtedly enacted these measures in order to at once enhance the popularity of the regime, but they were also intended to help solve some problems of a more practical nature, specifically the economic crisis that the city faced at the beginning of the fifteenth century. For example, the tax requirement for returning exiles provided money for the coffers of the new government, the return of high-ranking officials who had fled the pestilence would have helped fill the offices of the de-populated state, and it may be argued that it was a sound political move to free prisoners who had fallen into debt because of the burden on the state simply to keep them imprisoned.

In addition, Paolo consolidated his regime by making the institutions and offices of government as similar as

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Civitali, *Historie*, 2: 270-71.

possible to those associated with the republic. Even after he assumed the title of absolute *Signore* on 21 November after the failed plot of the Bishop of Lucca, Paolo allowed the *Anziani* of the November-December term to fulfill their offices until the end of the year. Though the councils were abolished at the end of the year when the duration of their term had expired, on the first day of 1401, the Council of the *Signore* ("*Consiglio Domini*") was established, which in many ways resembled the college of the *Anziani*.³¹ Thirty-six individuals were selected for the purpose of serving as one of the private counselors to the *Signore*. The names of these thirty-six, twelve from each of the three *terzieri* of Lucca, were then placed in a *tasca* and drawn out nine at a time, so that these officials served for three-month terms in this privileged office.³²

Though the terms of office were slightly longer for the new *consiglieri* of the *Signore* than the two-month terms previously held by members of the *Anziani*, many of the same powers and responsibilities concerning civic matters were held by the two bodies. Paolo was quick to make provisions not only for who the *consiglieri* were to be for the ensuing

³¹A.S.L., *Governo di Paolo Guinigi*, n.1, c. 23, p. 43.

³²Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 34; also see Cianelli, "Dissertazioni," 119-122.

year, but also what specific powers they were to have. On 1 January 1401, the day after the College of the *Anziani* had been dismissed, Paolo defined the rights of the new officers. They were to have the ability to do the following: to handle any sort of appeal, or petition concerning the present form of the Statutes; to elect the *provisores* of the fortresses and citadels of Lucchese territory, as well as providing for the "*victualia arma et alia infortilitiis*" for these military structures; to handle all matters concerning revenues ("*super introitibus*"), including the selling and alienation of the goods of the rebels and exiles of the state; to take a role in whatever pertained to the offices of the *Dovana* and the *Abbondanza*; to legally bear arms in the city and countryside of Lucca (along with one of their servants); and to watch over and guard the widows, pupils, the poor, and the *religiosi*, in addition to all of the pious places of the city -- just to note some of the powers that Paolo bestowed upon his private counselors.³³

The new *Signore* of Lucca not only gave these officials extensive powers throughout the realm, but he also enacted strict measures to protect them under the law in a document

³³A.S.L., *Governo di Paolo Guinigi*, n. 1, c. 22-22v., p. 41-42.

that fittingly begins, "If any malicious person kills one of our counselors, they will be dragged through our city of Lucca without a *tabula* up to the place of Justice, and there suspended from a noose as a thief until they die."³⁴ Paolo also stipulated that if one of his *consiglieri* were wounded in such a way while inside the Palace that there was a showing of blood, then the offending person would be executed; if, on the other hand, the attack came outside of the Palace and there was evidence of bloodshed, then the assailants would have both of their hands cut off.

Paolo was not a cruel man, by his contemporaries standards, but he did intend on having the edicts of his court officials carried out throughout his territories, without them having to fear any form of retribution.³⁵ For this was the mark of a solidified state. Without internal order, independence from other powers would persist only a short period of time. In his Oath of the Counselors (*"Iuramentum Consiglieri"*), another measure passed by Paolo in the early days of January 1401, it was decreed that the new *consiglieri* should never in any way consent to any

³⁴Ibid, n. 1, c. 23, p. 43, "*Et si qua persona dolose interfecerit aliquem ex nostris consiliariis strascinetur per civitatem nostrum lucanii sive tabula usque ad locum Iustitie et ibi furcis laqueo suspendatur ita que moriatur.*"

³⁵Ibid.

diminution of their powers, another piece of evidence that what the *Signore* wanted above all was to strengthen the Lucchese state, not his own personal prerogatives.³⁶

The *Signore* kept in place many other offices under their same names that had served Lucca in the republic. He appointed other citizens to fill such ancient offices as those of the *podestà*, the *camerarii*, the notaries for the civil and criminal courts, those of the *Fondaco*, and many others. In addition, the new government kept the system set up for the Lucchese *contado* during the late fourteenth century of having nine *vicarie*, and Paolo accordingly appointed nine vicars at the beginning of 1401 to head these sub-regions of the Lucchese state.

Another method in which Paolo sought to strengthen the new regime at home was to ensure that the best defense mechanisms possible were at the disposal of the citizens in the *contado*. He was very insistent that the defenses in the countryside be kept up to par, as seen in the letter that he received on 19 December 1400 from a relative of the vicar of Valdariano explaining to Paolo why there had been a delay in building the trench there. The *Signore* had apparently

³⁶Ibid., n. 1, c. 23v., p. 44.

inquired why work on the project had not already begun.³⁷ Upon taking over Lucca in late November 1400, Paolo had ordered all the vicars to immediately set in order their town defenses, and on 23 December, the *podestà* in the commune of Montecarlo, Nicolao Gelli, wrote to him claiming the workers there had need of tools in order to carry out the digging of the trench around the fortress.³⁸ Five days later apparently the tools had arrived, because Gelli wrote again claiming that the work on the trench had begun.³⁹ The news was not all bad from the outerlying areas in these early days, however; on 10 January 1401, the *Signore* received word via letter from his vicar at Castiglione that the fortresses of Castelnuovo, Palleroso, and Castiglione were all in good shape.⁴⁰

City bells were also an important means of defense for early Renaissance cities and towns for calling men to arms or sounding warnings of approaching invaders, and Paolo was also insistent that those in the smaller communes of the

³⁷*Carteggio di Paolo Guingi 1400-1430*, in *Regesti del R. Archivio di Stato di Lucca*, ed. Luigi Fumi and Eugenio Lazzareschi, Vol. III, pt. i (Lucca: Giusti, 1925), regesto n.12, p. 166.

³⁸*Ibid.*, regesto n.18, p. 167.

³⁹*Ibid.*, regesto n.26, p. 168.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, regesto n.44, p. 170.

state be in place and in good repair. On 30 December 1400, Paolo received a letter from his vicar at Massa Lunense, Petrus de Bernardinis, that the new bell the *Signore* had ordered for them had been placed in the tower and the old one sent back to Lucca.⁴¹ One letter in particular to Paolo in these early active days of the new regime shows the intense effort put forth to secure the border territories of Lucca. The vicar of Montecarlo, Nicolao Martini, informed the *Signore* that at Avellano, Sorana, Castelvecchio, and Pietrabuona all they do day and night is make *bertesche*, *palancati*, and other fortifications for their towers, and that at Montecarlo work went on continually on the trench around the fortress.⁴²

Paolo also provided for the defenses of Lucca itself, spending large sums throughout his thirty-year reign on the maintenance and upkeep of the city walls and gates. The frequent appearance of foreign armies in Tuscany during the initial months of the fifteenth century meant that keeping uninvited invaders out of Lucca and its border regions was going to be a difficult, if not impossible task, but Paolo

⁴¹Ibid., regesto n.28, p. 168.

⁴²Ibid., regesto n.46, p. 170.

at the onset of his regime set out to do everything he could for its well-being, both in the city and in the countryside.

One of the primary ways that Renaissance rulers consolidated their positions within a certain geographical region was through marriage alliances, and in this respect Paolo Guinigi presents us with a prime example. Though there is little extant evidence concerning Paolo's first marriage to Maria Caterina of the Antelminelli family, the only remaining direct descendent of Castruccio Castracani, it was this marriage because of the immediate wealth that it bestowed upon him that should be held as at least partly responsible for his ascent to the head of the family.⁴³

Franca Ragone recently argued that Paolo's marriages were generally political decisions designed to enact powerful alliances in order to strengthen their anti-Florentine position.⁴⁴ The first outside support that Paolo sought after his assumption to the *Signoria* was that of the Duke of Milan. He sent agents to Lombardy as early as November 1400 to inform him of the change in Lucca, and to

⁴³Salvatore Bongi, *Di Paolo Guinigi e delle sue Ricchezze* (Lucca: Benedini Guidotti, 1871), 8, 108.

⁴⁴Ragone, "Le spose del Signore: Scelte Politiche e Cerimonie alla Corte di Paolo Guinigi," in *Ilaria del Carretto e il suo Monumento: La donna nell' Arte, La Cultura, e La Società del '400*, ed. S. Toussaint (Lucca: S. Marco, 1995), 122.

seek his good will toward the new regime there.⁴⁵ One of the chief reasons that Paolo wanted to make early contact with the Duke was so that he could settle on a second marriage partner who was agreeable to Milan. Paolo's earliest state correspondence, as seen in his *Carteggio*, was directed to the Duke and some of his officials, especially Francesco Barbavaro, concerning this question. Paolo balked, however, when he received the suggestions of Giangaleazzo because of the fact that the girls mentioned were of too young an age, implying that he was also very interested in having heirs as soon as possible.⁴⁶

The eventual choice made for his second wife turned out to be Ilaria, daughter of Carlo del Carretto, whose family has been shown to have had ties with the Visconti, and so this marriage may have been made through the agency of Milan as well.⁴⁷ After the sudden death of Ilaria in 1405 due to complications from the birth of their second child, which

⁴⁵Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3:21.

⁴⁶*Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi*, regesto n.4, 6, p. 4.

⁴⁷Ragone, "Le spose," 126; also see Francesca Imperiale, "I Marchesi del Carretto di Finale dell' Ambito della Politica Genovese tra fine '300 e primi '400," in *Ilaria del Carretto e il suo Monumento: La donna nell' arte, la cultura, e la società dell' '400*, ed. S. Toussaint (Lucca: S. Marco, 1995), 115-16.

led to the production of the marvellous funerary monument for her by the artist Jacopo della Quercia still situated today in the *duomo* of the city, the *Signore* established a period of extended mourning in the city revealing his true love for her. Paolo was heartbroken, but the business of managing the state soon had to go on, and a big part of managing the state in fifteenth-century Italy had to do with the production of as many descendents as possible.

Before the end of 1405, Paolo was already beginning to hear proposals for his next marriage alliance from those in his court; on this occasion he settled on Piacentina of the Camerino family. Ragone writes that this marriage was partly the result of Paolo's friendship with Rodolfo da Varano, but also was due to the ascent of Gregory XII to the papal throne, both of whom had troubled relations with Florence.⁴⁸ Finally, Paolo's last marriage in 1420 to Jacopa Trinci was an attempt to actually improve relations with the Florentines. Florence had recently dispatched the armed brigades of the *condottiere* Braccio to devastate Lucca, and this marriage alliance was an attempt to appease them, according to Ragone.⁴⁹ In short, the marriage alliances of

⁴⁸Ragone, "Le spose," 127.

⁴⁹Ibid., 131-32.

Paolo were all made with an eye toward the continuation of the principle of self-rule, and toward the consolidation of the Guinigi regime in Lucca.

Another means in which we may see Paolo seeking to consolidate his rule in the early weeks was by having a citadel constructed, since he was "hearing that in Florence and elsewhere there were discussions about bringing down his dominion."⁵⁰ Sercambi relates that the construction of the citadel, which was built on the ruins of the building once used as a fortress by Castruccio Castracani, was begun on 9 May 1401, and was already completed by October of that year.⁵¹ Even though some of the groundwork had obviously already been laid, the speed at which the construction of Paolo's citadel was carried out marks the urgency of the new regime to consolidate power. According to the description provided by Sercambi, the citadel appears to have been quite extensive.⁵² Such a project required a large number of

⁵⁰Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 36, "...sentendo che in Firenze e altro' si faceano ragionamenti di abassare il suo dominio, e altra volta se n' era alchuno scoperto; posto che a tucto si riparasse, nondimeno dispuose il dicto Paolo di fare una ciptadella, per potere securamente in Luccha stare."

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²"Ibid., 3: 36-37, "la qual comprende dal canto che va allo spidale della Misericordia, distendendo verso mezzodi, fine alle mura della ciptade, che è circa braccia 280 di lungessada quella parte; dalla parte di verso sectentrione

workers, both unskilled laborers from the countryside and skilled craftsmen from all parts of Italy, including "maestri di pietra, di legname, e di ferro," such as Ambrogio and Donato da Fiesole, Pietro da Brescia, Giovanni Ganti, Jacopo da Marti, Domenico and Giuntino Guide, and Jacopo da Siena.⁵³

Finally, one last example of Paolo's early attempts to strengthen the regions of his domain was his trip throughout Lucchese territory in 1403 with his new wife Ilaria to see first hand what sort of living conditions his subjects in the countryside had to deal with, an affair that reveals his concern for the well-being of the state.⁵⁴ Though his *consiglieri* appear to have been somewhat leery about the possible dangers that the *Signore* might be subjected to while on such an endeavor, he insisted that the trip be

distendendosi fine alle mura del prato della ciptà, che è circha braccia 120 di lungessa. E dal quella parte conpuose una porta maestra, avenso per difesa da quella parte du' torrioni."

⁵³Eugenio Lazzareschi, "Paolo Guinigi: Magnifico Signore di Lucca," *Rassegna Nazionale*, ser. 2, 55 (1927), 105.

⁵⁴A.S.L., *Governo di Paolo Guinigi*, n. 1, c. 104v., p. 206, "Cogitans et mente revolvens quod segnus irritant animos dimissa per aures quam que sunt oculis subiecta fidelibus et longe melius et clarius per visum quam auditum omnia comprehenduntur voluit tam situm, statum et conditiones terrarum suarum quam conditiones et mores suorum subditorum."

carried through. Moreover, in order to provide some stability at home while he was away, Paolo established a Council of Regents who were given full authority in all matters of the state.⁵⁵

It was determined that the twelve-member Council be divided into two groups of six, with each group being responsible for residing in the Palace twelve hours each day, one group from breakfast (*prandium*) to dinner (*cena*), the other from dinner to the next day's breakfast. Upon the end of one shift, at least two members of the departing group were required to stay with the incoming group for one or two hours to discuss or take action on any necessary business of the state. Thus, Paolo's sincere desire for the interests of Lucca as a whole may be seen both in the trip to personally survey the conditions of his people and the lands of Lucchese territory upon which they lived, as well as in the careful provisions he made for the governing of the mother city while he was away.⁵⁶ In order to best know

⁵⁵Ibid., n.1, c. 104v.-105, p. 206-207, "*Quod infrascripti Lucanun cives quos inter ceteros sibi devotissimos et fidelissimos preelegit de quibus que non aliam quam de seipsos gererit confidentiam singularem toto tempore visitationis...possint providere, disponere, et ordinare Consilium prefati Domini de quibus apparet in actis Cancellarie.*"

⁵⁶See Cianelli, "Dissertazioni," 126-128.

how to protect Lucchese independence he wanted to know first-hand what were the weakest links in the Lucchese *contado*.

It can hardly be underestimated the troubles Lucca that faced at the beginning of the fifteenth century. One obstacle that the Lucchese shared in common with other cities of Tuscany at the beginning of the century was that of finding a way to keep armed bands of soldiers out of their territory. Lucchese officials were constantly searching for information concerning the movements and intentions of foreign troops from their vicars in the countryside and others residing throughout the Tuscan region. Sercambi noted that "while there are being made some remedies throughout Lombardy...in Tuscany what governs are those things that naturally the planet of Mars has arranged, that is, battles."⁵⁷ The difficulty for Lucca, of course, was that in order to maintain security in the state, large costs were necessary in order to keep up their defenses from these territorial invaders. Not only were the military constructions expensive to man and maintain, but the single

⁵⁷Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 48, "*Mentre che in Lombardia si faceano i ripari...in Toscana simile s' ordinava di quelle cose che naturalmente il pianeta di Marte dispuone, cioè bactaglie.*"

largest cost for the Lucchese was in keeping men of arms under constant hire.⁵⁸

In addition to the threat of armies masquerading across the peripheral regions of the Lucchese countryside, the other major obstacle that called for immediate attention on the homefront was the depopulated state of the city and its *contado*. Wars, famine, and especially the recent bout with the plague in the year 1400 had severely decreased the number of people in the countryside of Lucca. Many of the communes in these regions felt oppressed because of what they considered exorbitant taxation, chiefly because of the fact that there now fewer people to help derive the communal sums required by Lucca. Petitions from the rural areas to Lucca to lower taxes had begun much earlier, but continued into the period of Paolo.⁵⁹ One measure taken in order to help re-populate the countryside of Lucca was the entreaty

⁵⁸Christine Meek estimated that in 1400, the cost of keeping men of arms was at least 23,000 florins per year, or approximately one-third of annual revenues; see *Lucca 1369-1400: Politics and Society in an Early Renaissance City-State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 124-25.

⁵⁹Unrest in the subject communes over taxation was almost universal throughout Italy in the early fifteenth century, and actually Lucca seems to have been more responsive to matters in the countryside than elsewhere. See, for example, David Nicholas, *The Later Medieval City, 1300-1500* (London: Longman, 1997), 89-90, where Lucchese exploitation of the *contado* is defined as "problematical;" this will be

the *Signore* made to foreign citizens to come and live in the *Sei Miglia*, that part of the Lucchese state that was situated closest to the city itself. Those persons who accepted this offer were given fiscal immunity from taxation for a subsequent ten-year period, except for the tax on salt and the *gabelle*.⁶⁰ And while this may have brought a few new families into Lucchese territory, it must have produced some adverse feelings from those citizens already living in the *Sei Miglia* who still paid taxes; this exemplifies the various difficult decisions that the new regime had to face in the initial weeks and months on the homefront. But Paolo had more to deal with than the problem of consolidating the new regime at home. Just as important as it was for the new *Signore* to bring together Lucca and its neighboring regions, it was perhaps even more vital to immediately attain, and then maintain, friends outside of the state.

discussed further in Chapter five, below.

⁶⁰A.S.L., *Governo di Paolo Guinigi*, n. 1, c. 134v., p. 266.

CHAPTER 4

LUCCA IN THE FLORENTINE-MILANESE CONFLICT

A Time of Crisis, 1400-1402

The historiography of early Quattrocento Lucca has generally stressed that Paolo Guinigi, following the precedent set by his older brother Lazzaro in 1399 and by other Lucchese leaders of the fourteenth century, took a position of strong and undeterred support for Milan during the course of Milan's final conflict with Florence from 1400-1402.¹ This quite naturally follows Florentine historiography, which has claimed that in this period of crisis against Milan, Florence was without allies and forced to struggle against the Duke of Milan alone.² Undoubtedly there were many occasions during this time in which the *Signore* of Lucca proclaimed a willingness to do everything

¹A typical assessment may be seen in Francesco Landogna, *La politica dei Visconti in Toscana* (Milan: Società Dante Alighieri, 1929), 103, "Paolo Guinigi, sin dal momento in cui era giunto alla Signoria di Lucca, non aveva dubitato un istante di dover seguitare in tutto la politica della Repubblica lucchese, quella cioè di tenersi amici i signori di Milano."

²See especially Hans Baron, *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance: Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny*, 2 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955).

in his power to further the dominion of the Duke.³ Toward the middle of 1401, however, as the territorial gains of Giangaleazzo Visconti continued to pile up, there began in Lucca a policy suddenly less inclined to show such pro-Visconti favoritism, and one in which Paolo and his court came to favor the Florentines because of their growing concern of the real dangers inherent in any additional Milanese expansion. Lucchese, as well as a small part of Florentine historiography, therefore, may need to be slightly amended on this note. Most of all, however, the shift toward Florence in Lucchese foreign policy in 1401 points out their overriding concern for the liberty of their own state.

In 1401, the Lucchese were forced to consider the long-term repercussions for their own city of a total defeat of Florence by the troops of Milan, which was beginning to seem like a real possibility. Their policy of tending to support one of the two powers (Florence or Milan) because the *other* at that moment was the one which they perceived as the bigger threat to their own independence thus continued

³For example, see A.S.L., *Governo di Paolo Guinigi*, n.5, c. 26, p. 51, "...*Decreveram tamen non calamo sed vivis vocis rem hanc Dominationi Vestrae personaliter explicare et pedibus et circumfusum vestris desideratissimum conspectum Excellentiae Vestrae quem semper internis oculis video vivis intueri luminibus et gratas voces arridentis oris Vestri..*"

to hold true. Throughout 1400 and part of 1401, the Lucchese feared Florence most of all, and thus had looked to maintain positive relations with the Duke of Milan for protection if needed.

But at this end of this period, sometime between April and October 1401, it began to appear to the Lucchese that the Milanese tyrant was perhaps a bigger menace than had been thought, as the Florentines had been proclaiming all along. Correspondence with the Duke of Milan continued to be reverential in tone, masking the true change of heart in Lucca. It is certainly impossible to note the change in the writings of Sercambi, who was throughout his life hostile to what he perceived as the ever-expansionistic ambitions of Florence.

After the disaster of the imperial troops (whom the Florentines had hired) against the armies of the Duke of Milan at Brescia in October 1401, matters began to look much worse for all the Italian city-states that still clung to hopes of keeping their liberty, for now the Duke appeared truly unstoppable.⁴ Though Tuscan cities all around them had fallen to Milan, Lucca had remained independent up to that point, and the Guinigi regime had even received signs of

⁴Gene Brucker, *The Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), 176-79.

support from Milan; but, why would the Duke continue to allow this if Florence and the rest of northern and central Italy were defeated, the Lucchese must have wondered. Indeed, Lazzaro Guinigi had come to some agreement with the Duke in 1399, but that was before Milanese armies had proceeded to take possession of Pisa, Perugia, Siena, Assisi, Spoleto, Nocera, and various other communes of Tuscany in the following months -- not to mention nearly the whole of Lombardy.⁵ The fall of Bologna to Milan in June 1402 meant that now nothing lay between the ducal lands and Florentine territory. And it was at this "Baronian" point of crisis that Lucchese sentiment turned as pro-Florentine as it had been in some time.

Another matter to consider is why the Duke of Milan did not attempt to subjugate Lucca in 1399 or afterwards, during the period when he was conquering Pisa, Siena, Perugia, and various other cities. The Florentine Leonardo Bruni claimed that Lucca had not yet given itself up to the protection of

⁵For the military successes and territorial gains of Milan in these months, see Nino Valeri, *L' Italia nell' Età dei Principati: dal 1343-1516* (Verona: Arnaldo Mondadori, 1949), 284-85; Francesco Cognasso, "Il ducato visconteo da Gian Galeazzo a Filippo Maria," in *Storia di Milano* (Milan: Treccani degli Alfieri, 1955), 6: 43-46.

Milan, but that "they were not far from obedience."⁶ One may surmise that considering the military strength Milan could muster, the obedience of Lucca might have readily been achieved had the Duke wanted to bring it about. He had conquered all of northern and much of central Italy by 1401; all that remained in this area out of his grasp were essentially the territories of Florence, Venice -- and the city-state of Lucca.

One reason the Lucchese were able to maintain their independence through the first two years of the turbulent fifteenth century was that by the beginning of the century the Duke had begun to feel the ill economic effects of having extended the Milanese state so far in such a short period of time. One biographer has claimed that the growing size of the Milanese state by 1400 had even become something

⁶"*Lucenses quoque haud multum a parendo distabant,*" *Commentarius rerum suo tempore gestarum, 1378-1440*, ed. Carmine Di Pierro, *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, n.s., vol. xix (Bologna: Nicola Zanichelli, 1926), 433; elsewhere Bruni pointed out that in 1400, "*Lucenses vero Pisanis finitimi, sive sponte sive metu coacti, ad Mediolanensis amicitiam magis respicere videbantur, nec foedus renovare cum Florentinis voluerant,*" *Historiarum Florentini populi dalle Origini all' anno 1404*, ed. Emilio Santini, *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores* (Città di Castello: S. Lapi, n.d.), 279.

of an embarrassment to the Duke.⁷ He may have believed that he could maintain a degree of control over Lucca simply by supporting the local ruler there (whoever it was), thus escaping the need to keep officials and a costly military presence there. Or perhaps the Lucchese, based on the wisdom gained from their experience of foreign subjugation from 1342-1369, had been more careful in the enactment of foreign alliances over the years than those cities which had recently lost their independence to the Duke; perhaps Lucca's insistence on maintaining close ties with the Visconti over the years did actually pay off in friendlier treatment from Milan in these months of crisis.

Giangaleazzo certainly thought that control over Pisa and its port was the greatest priority in Tuscany. He may have had it in his plans in the summer of 1402 to appease Lucca, get their support against Florence, and then afterwards, make an about face and assume command of Lucca. Much of the Duke of Milan's intentions in this period of crisis in Tuscany remains unclear; what lay at the basis of Lucca holding onto its independence in this period of the height of the Visconti aggression is in the end difficult to explain fully. The Duke's position toward Lucca is no more

⁷E. R. Chamberlain, *The Count of Virtue: Giangaleazzo Visconti, Duke of Milan* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons,

puzzling, however, than other decisions that he made, especially the question of why he did not attack Florence in the summer of 1402 when he held the decided advantage, a question that has been raised by historians of this conflict since that very day.

Upon assumption of the *Signoria* of Lucca in November 1400, Paolo immediately dispatched agents to Milan to seek the good will of the Duke. He expressed a strong devotion to Giangaleazzo in his earliest correspondence with Milan, referring to him as "*illustrissime princeps excelse et gloriose domine pater*," and stating that he desired above all to do "that which ought to please your Dominion."⁸ In addition, Paolo was quick to let Lucchese officials in the countryside know who his ties were with; in January 1401, the Vice-vicar of the Lucchese commune of Pietrasanta wrote to Paolo stating that his order had been fulfilled, as the bridge at Motrone had been constructed so that the Duke of Milan, or any of his knights, messengers, or family members would have free passage and access to Pisa.⁹ Paolo's letter

1965), 63-67.

⁸A.S.L., *Governo di Paolo Guinigi*, n. 5, c. 26, p. 51.

⁹*Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi 1400-1430*, in *Regesti del R. Archivio di Stato di Lucca*, ed. Luigi Fumi and Eugenio Lazzareschi, vol. III, pt. i (Lucca: Giusti, 1925), regesto n.47, p. 170.

to the Duke on 8 April 1401 is especially revealing as to the Lucchese reliance on Milan, for Paolo was apologetic for not having come to visit him personally in Milan, claiming that he was ever desirous of seeing him, but "could not yet leave without danger to my state, which is your state."¹⁰

Meanwhile, Florence by 1401 had grown desperate to reverse the course of this latest struggle with the Visconti. They had by now witnessed the fall of several neighboring cities of Tuscany to the aggression of Milan. The deliberations in their councils during the first part of 1401, which Brucker characterized as "nervous, vacillating, and uncertain," produced little, save an offer of 100,000 florins to the Holy Roman Emperor to come to Italy and assist them in the war against the Duke. The Florentines had been attempting through diplomacy the previous few weeks to convince other powers such as Rome, Naples, Venice, and Genoa (as well as Lucca) that the Duke's presence in Tuscany was bad for everyone.¹¹

After the defeat of the troops of the Holy Roman Emperor Roberto by the Milanese *condottieri* at Brescia in

¹⁰A.S.L., *Governo di Paolo Guinigi*, n.5, c. 26, p. 51, "*Sed quoniam sine periculo status mei qui vester est nondum abscedere possum.*"

¹¹ Brucker, *Civic World*, 175.

October 1401, the Florentine outlook became increasingly bleak. In this state of despair, the Florentines decided to adopt a more aggressive strategy against Milan as they attempted to cut off all passes between Pisa and Milan. At this point, once again the Florentine *Signoria* appealed to Paolo to join their side against the Visconti aggression in Tuscany. Yet Lucca, despite having made some recent moves in the direction of an understanding with Florence, claimed they were still opposed to making any firm commitments and were only willing to listen. Paolo proclaimed to the Florentine agents that he wanted to remain neutral, not wanting to go to war with anyone, but rather to live in peace.¹² The delay-tactics of the Lucchese were soon to end, however, as the Milanese threat continued to mount.

When the fighting season opened in the spring of 1402, and the city of Bologna was surrounded, and then quickly captured by ducal troops (in June), it appeared to almost all witnesses who left an account of the events that the next likely move of the Duke of Milan would be to attack Florence. The Florentines, without the forces of the emperor

¹²Giovanni Sercambi, *Le Croniche Lucchesi*, ed. Salvatore Bongi, 3 vols., in *Fonti per la Storia d' Italia* (Rome: Giusti, 1892), 3: 50-51, "Alla quale fu facto alcuno presente; et exposta loro inbasciata, fu per lo dicto singnore risposto a compimento, in forma debita, in modo che

who departed Italy in shame in April 1402, and now without its ally Bologna, were in desperate need of friends. Although they probably did not expect much in terms of a firm commitment, the Florentines continued to appeal to Paolo Guinigi to join forces against the tyrant of Milan. The fact that they did continue to appeal to him, moreover, shows that Paolo had not ceded governorship of the city to Milan (as is implied by some Florentine rhetoricians like Bruni), and that the Florentines were holding on to the hope that Paolo would change his mind.

The Lucchese had begun to attract more interest from Florence as the Milanese threat in Tuscany became more urgent. By inspecting the *Carteggio* of Paolo, it appears that during the first full year of his reign, his authority in Lucca was hardly acknowledged by the Florentines, much less accepted. Only two letters from the year 1401 arrived to Paolo from Florence, both from Nuccio Giovanni. In the next year, however, from March to September alone (the latter the month in which the Duke died), there were at least seventeen letters sent from Florence to the *Signore* of Lucca, seven of which were from the Ten on War ("*Decem*

pogo overo nulla acquistaron della intentione che Fiorentini aveano preso."

Officiales Balie Comune Florentie"), and four others from the Florentine Priors ("*Priores artium et vexillifer.*")¹³

The Florentines at this time were undoubtedly looking to make any alliances they could in order to better oppose Milan, but they became especially friendly to Paolo in the spring of 1402 because they thought for a time that they would be able to use the Lucchese port of Motrone. In a move that many presumed a precursor to an upcoming assault on Florence, earlier that spring the Duke's *condottiere* had begun to take control of the roads leading into and out of the Arno city. This blockade led to a tight restriction of goods able to enter Florence and, as evidenced by the outcries of Florentine merchants, forced them to abandon their usual ways of sending their own goods abroad; they looked to Lucca for some relief in regard to this problem.

In April 1401, the Florentine Antonio di Ser Chello was sent to Lucca to inform them that the Duke of Milan had cut off their usual roads to transport goods and to ask that permission be allowed to use the port of Motrone. Antonio was given instructions to flatter Paolo if necessary, tell him how much hope they had in him, and to urge him to

¹³See *Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi (1400-1430)*, in *Regesti del R. Archivio di Stato di Lucca*, ed. Luigi Fumi and Eugenio Lazzareschi, Vol. III, pt. i (Lucca: Giusti, 1925).

maintain amicable relations with Florence.¹⁴ Paolo, whether because of the revenue this would bring to Lucca,¹⁵ or perhaps because he was by now beginning to perceive what the defeat of Florence would inevitably mean to his own state, agreed to help -- *despite* the expected displeasure of Giangaleazzo.¹⁶ After Antonio returned to Florence, Paolo received a letter from the Ten on War stating they were appreciative of his recent response in agreeing to help oppose the unjust demands of the Duke.¹⁷

Other Florentine correspondence to Lucca in the late spring and summer of 1402 also verifies that some mutual

¹⁴*Commissioni di Rinaldo degli Albizzi per Il Comune di Firenze dal MCCCXCIX al MCCCCXXXIII*, 3 vols., (Florence: M. Cellini, 1867), 1: 10-11, "Serai a Lucca con quel Signore, e salutato amorevolmente, farai introito della novità fatta per lo Duca contra' Fiorentini, sì dell' arrestare le mercatanzie, e sì del vietare ch' e nostri cittadini a Pisa, o vero a Siena, non possano usare. E poi dirai come li nostri mercatanti deliberano di fare scala a Mutrone [sic] e per lo suo terreno...mostrandoli quanto questa Signoria e tutta la cittadinanza e università dei mercatanti hanno speranza in lui; e confortandolo sì per mantenere l' amicizia e fratellanza con noi...."

¹⁵The Florentine chronicler Morelli claimed that it was to cost Florence 36,000 florins per year to have use of Motrone; see Giovanni di Pagolo Morelli, *Ricordi*, ed. Vittore Branca (Florence: Felice Le Monnier, 1956), 424.

¹⁶Chello reported back to Florence that Paolo agreed to help them with the transit of their goods "*non obstante quod ipse putaret predicta cedere in displicentiam Ducis*," *Commissioni di Rinaldo*, 1: 11.

¹⁷*Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi*, regesto n.101, p. 178.

agreement had been reached.¹⁸ On 29 April, nine days after Chello made his report of his visit to Lucca to the governors of Florence, the Ten on War wrote Paolo asking permission to move an army of lance through Lucchese territories from Genoa to Florence.¹⁹ In May, the Ten requested from Paolo that free passage through Lucchese territory be given to Antonio del Fiesco, a *condottiere* under their hire, along with his 100 *balestrieri*.²⁰ Later in the summer the Ten asked that the *Signore* of Lucca help the Florentine agents in Pietrasanta, who were not able to return to Florence without his assistance.²¹ These are the sorts of requests that would not have been made between two belligerent states.

One incident particularly reveals the Florentine desperation to get Lucca to oppose the Visconti. During the summer of 1402, while the Florentine Buonaccorso Pitti held

¹⁸In April 1402, Paolo did promise the Florentines use of Motrone, but would not sign a formal contract concerning this matter; D. M. Bueno de Mesquita, *Giangaleazzo Visconti, Duke of Milan (1351-1402): A Study in the Political Career of an Italian Despot* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1941), 286.

¹⁹*Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi*, regesto n.94, p. 177-78.

²⁰*Ibid.*, regesto n.109, p. 179.

²¹*Ibid.*, regesto n.163, p. 186.

the office of Captain of Barga, a commune of the Florentines, he was ordered by the Ten on War to shut down the roads between Milan and Pisa, and to confiscate all the goods that were seized on them. Part of the booty seized on the roads turned out to be eleven mules carrying twenty-two bales of English wool belonging to the merchants of Lucca, however, and Paolo responded by demanding from the Florentines, with "scarcely veiled threats" that they be returned at once. Pitti wrote in his *Diary* that the Florentine *Signoria*, fearful that Paolo would become an enemy, made an exception to their rule, gave in to his threats, and asked Pitti to return the goods to the Lucchese.²²

Cordial relations with Florentine merchants were short-lived, however. When Giangaleazzo received word that the Florentines were being given access to move their merchandise by way of the road through Lucca, he sent immediate warning to Lucca to desist from such allowances to

²²Pitti also noted that Bartolomeo Corbinelli, who was friends with Paolo, apparently pressured the *Signoria* to release the goods to Paolo; see *Two Memoirs of Renaissance Florence: The Diaries of Buonaccorso Pitti and Gregorio Dati*, trans. Julia Martines, ed. Gene Brucker (Prospect Heights, Illinois: Waveland Press, 1991), 76; also see *Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi*, regesto n. 148, p. 185.

the Florentines.²³ Sercambi noted that the Duke made clear what he wanted by sending 800 lance from Pavia to the borders of Lucca.²⁴ In addition, a Visconti ship was positioned in the mouth of the Magra near Motrone to ensure Florentine goods did not enter or exit from there.²⁵

The Lucchese were quick to follow the Duke's order, and deny access to the western coast of Italy to the Florentines. The *Signore* of Lucca justified the change to Florence by claiming that Lucchese roads in those bellicose days had become too dangerous to leave open to traffic.²⁶ On the other hand, in June 1402 Paolo sent an embassy to Milan led by Nicolao da Berla Guinigi and Nicolao Cecchorini di Poggio to appease the Duke, but apparently some sort of snag was hit along the way. Sercambi does not elaborate on why the embassy turned back; perhaps en route to Pavia problems arose, or perhaps the Lucchese agents were denied admittance to see the Duke once they arrived at their

²³See Francesco Cognasso, "Il ducato visconteo da Gian Galeazzo a Filippo Maria," *Storia di Milano*, 17 vols. (Milan: Treccani degli Alfieri, 1955), 6: 66.

²⁴Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 59-60.

²⁵DeMesquita, *Giangaleazzo*, 286.

²⁶*Ibid.*, 287.

destination.²⁷ Later in the summer, however, the Lucchese were able to appease Milan to some degree; another embassy led by Paolo's secretary Guido Manfredi and Stefano di Jacopo di Poggio went in August and returned having reconciled with the Duke.²⁸

There are signs that Paolo continued to support the Florentine side underhandedly during the late summer months of 1402, however. Undoubtedly closing the Lucchese road was not popular in Florence; that it was done to prevent immediate attack on their own city did not seem to matter. Buonaccorso Pitti, the Florentine Captain of Barga during the summer of 1402, wrote to the Ten of War after the blockade was re-established that he was willing to start a rebellion against the *Signore* of Lucca, claiming he would take personal responsibility if the Florentine government wanted to distance itself from the act.²⁹

Yet, there is evidence that other Florentines saw Paolo in a more positive light. On 20 July, Loccius de Tuscanella

²⁷Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 59, "...andassero ambasciatori al dicto duga, con intentione che s' adolcisse la mala voluntà del dicto duga contra del prefato signore, et chaminoro del mese di giugno...E del dicto mese ritornoro, non con tale inbasciata."

²⁸Ibid., "li quali andonno del mese di agosto e tornorno con reconciliatione."

²⁹Pitti, *Diario*, 76-77.

wrote in gratitude to Paolo for the kindnesses shown to their Captain Bernadone da Serri.³⁰ Five days before the death of Giangaleazzo on 2 September, Paolo received a message from the Visconti agents in Pisa, Guido dal Bagno and Giovanni da Cremona, stating that the mercenary Captain taken into custody and imprisoned in Lucca was a Visconti Captain, and therefore an enemy of the Florentines.³¹ It is highly unlikely that Paolo was not aware of such fact. Finally, it was Paolo who first informed the Florentines of the death of the Duke of Milan, setting off a days-long frenzy of celebration in that city.³²

Thus, for a short period of time, Paolo and the Lucchese seem to have decided that the ambitions and successes of the Duke of Milan had grown to the extent that Lucca itself would be threatened if Florence were conquered by Milan. The fall of Bologna to the Duke, the fatal blow

³⁰*Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi*, regesto n. 151, p. 185.

³¹*Ibid.*, regesto n. 178, p. 189.

³²Many Florentine sources concur that Paolo was the first to reveal news of the Duke's death to the Florentines, something he probably would have shied away from doing if he expected acts of revenge from Florence for supporting the Duke; e.g., see *Cronica Volgare di Anonimo Fiorentino dall'anno 1385 al 1410 già attributa a Piero di Giovanni Minerbetti*, ed. Elina Bellondi, *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, n.s., vol. XXVII, pt. ii (Città di Castello: S. Lapi, n.d.), 251; and Morelli, *Ricordi*, 400.

coming in the early summer of 1402, was an event of monumental importance in the minds of the Lucchese, as evidenced by the amount of space Sercambi gave to it in his *Chronicle*. The development of friendlier relations with Florence in these few months of 1402 was not to last for long, however; after the death of Giangaleazzo Visconti in September 1402, the Lucchese ironically looked again to establish cordial relations with Milan.

Thus, throughout the period of crisis in Tuscany in which Giangaleazzo came to threaten the entire region, the Lucchese were not blindly devoted to the powerful lord of Milan out of some remembrance of past ties. Paolo did not "trust" the Duke so much as it appears that he did from their correspondence. When Lucchese independence in late 1401 suddenly came to appear more threatened by Milan than by Florence, then the Lucchese were quick to abandon their Milanese ties (though subtly) and to seek to appease Florence.

The Aftermath of the Death of the Duke of Milan

The sudden death of Giangaleazzo Visconti in September 1402 brought forth drastic changes throughout the Italian peninsula. The event was of such note that many people believed there had to have been divine intervention. The Florentine chronicler Dati, picking up on this popular

notion, wrote that on the night of his death there were terrible winds, thunder, and lightning storms throughout all his lands.³³ Sercambi claimed that for many months a large comet had been appearing in the skies, but that upon the Duke's death, it had abruptly disappeared.³⁴ Leonardo Bruni, the future Chancellor of Florence, noted that all things in Italy amazingly turned around, as the cities that had previously been terrified of Visconti aggression now became joyful, and those that had supported the Visconti cause, or had succumbed to it, now became fearful.³⁵ Niccolò d' Este, for example, had immediate hopes of restoring into his domain Parma and Reggio, lands recently seized from him by the Duke of Milan's soldiers; the Carrara ruler of Padua likewise began immediate efforts to regain territories once his which had recently come under the banner of the Visconti.³⁶

³³G. Dati, *Istoria di Firenze dal 1380 al 1405*, ed. L. Pratesi (Norcia, 1904), 245, "la notte ch' e' morì fu in tutta la sua terra tanto terribile tempo di cioè d' acque, di venti con le folgori e tremuoti."

³⁴Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 60, "E più mesi dinanti che 'l dicto duga morisse, fu veduta in cielo una chometa con grande coda dirieto. E morto tal duga, la dicta cometa non apparìo più in queste contrade."

³⁵Bruni, *Commentarius rerum suo tempore*, 433.

³⁶De Mesquita, *Giangaleazzo*, 299.

The Roman Pope Boniface IX was also pleased with the demise of the Visconti lord, since he was able to resume control of lands which had belonged to the Church, especially those of Bologna and Perugia. Perhaps the loudest cries of happiness, however, came from Florence, the city that had been Giangaleazzo's arch-enemy for well over a decade. Florence had been the most active power in attempting to stem the tide of Visconti expansion southward through Italy; as the leader of the anti-Visconti movement in the early years of the *Quattrocento*, the Florentines would be among those that benefitted most from his death.

On the other hand, those cities that had become subject to Milan in the recent wars were pushed into an increasingly precarious situation. In these cities Visconti officials, with the support of Milanese troops, had previously seized control at the expense of the native families who would now certainly begin to take steps to regain power in their homeland. In Pisa, Perugia, Siena, and Bologna, as well as in many parts of Lombardy, Visconti officials were soon to see the rise of local rebellions.³⁷ In addition, they were to see the supply of provisions, reinforcements, and other necessities coming from the mother city of Milan slow to a trickle. Many of the ducal troops guarding Bologna, for

³⁷ Valeri, *L' Italia*, 304-323 *passim*.

example, were summoned to Milan after the Duke's death in order to guard the interests of his sons there. The Visconti would face many severe tests in the months after the Duke's death in holding on to the territorial acquisitions he had made during the latter stages of his lifetime.

The reaction in Lucca to the new political realities, and the unstable conditions that the death of Giangaleazzo produced across northern and central Italy was at first more ambivalent than elsewhere. It has been seen that for a period in 1401 until the Duke's death in September 1402, the Lucchese perceived the Duke as more of a threat than earlier believed, and they had thus established friendlier relations with Florence. There can be no doubt that the Lucchese remained skeptical about the Duke's intentions in regard to Lucca through the end of his life, despite the conciliatory tone of their official correspondence with Milan.

The Duke's death did not mean the Lucchese were ready to throw themselves at the feet of the Florentines in a state of submission; rather, just the opposite. For what soon emerged in Lucca in the aftermath of the change in Milan was the adoption of a foreign policy that was remarkably consistent with that of the previous decade, that is, a policy that sought protection from the one superpower, either Florence or Milan, which had come to a temporary

disadvantage in their overall conflict. The Lucchese took this policy since whichever of the two powers had gained the advantage in the overall conflict generally became a threat to the border regions of Lucca, and was thus the power feared the most by the governors of Lucca.

One reason that the Lucchese were able to pursue this foreign policy was that they were confident neither Florence nor Milan (nor the other major Italian superpowers) would tolerate the other gaining full and permanent control of Lucca, and thus control over the many important roads and passes in its territories. Neither power was thus willing (or possibly able) to log the tremendous expense that a long siege of a city like Lucca would have required. Thus the geographical situation of Lucca is again seen as a major factor in understanding the importance of this city-state in the early modern period. On the other hand, this very geographical situation that the Lucchese found themselves in was also responsible for their having to adopt a foreign policy in the first place -- at a time when they would have preferred to have been left alone to worry with their own affairs.

Thus, in the weeks following the death of the Duke of Milan, the Lucchese were to abandon the friendlier relations they had briefly established with the Florentines, moving

instead back towards a reconciliation with the new governors of Milan.³⁸ The Lucchese were quick to suspect that Florentine aggression in the face of the new political atmosphere would again become a paramount problem not only to them, but also to the rest of Tuscany. As it turned out, they were right.

Barely a month had passed after the Duke's death before the Florentines had enacted an alliance with Pope Boniface IX to rescue certain lands of the Church that had previously been seized by the Duke. The two allies in addition agreed to take on the more difficult task of eliminating the Visconti presence from all of Tuscany.³⁹ When Paolo Guinigi was asked by the Florentine government to join the alliance he refused, claiming that what he really wanted was peace in Lucca, and that any alliance with another state would jeopardize this.⁴⁰ He gave the same reply to Rome, as he

³⁸The oldest son of Giangaleazzo at his death was Giovanni Maria, who was 14, while the second oldest, Filippo, was only 10 at Duke's death; thus the immediate powers of government fell to the Duke's wife Caterina and to Francesco Barbavara, an official who had risen from a humble background to become one of the Duke's most ardent supporters at the time of his death.

³⁹Morelli, *Ricordi*, 400-401.

⁴⁰See Franca Ragone, "Ambizioni territoriali sulla Lunigiana Viscontea dopo la morte di Gian Galeazzo: La cessione del Vicariato di Carrara a Paolo Guinigi ad opera di Giovanni

wrote in November to the notary of Pope Boniface IX, Ser Nicolao de Imola, that even though he was most devoted to the Pope, he was very hesitant to contract alliances that would possibly create enemies for Lucca.⁴¹

Undoubtedly Lucca would have faced a more vengeful neighbor in Florence in the aftermath of the collapse of the Visconti state in Lombardy had the Florentines not been distracted by such a strong desire to conquer Pisa. Control of Pisa would provide the Florentines a port from which to ship their goods, and would help diminish the Visconti presence in Tuscany. The blockade of Florentine roads imposed by Milan, as well as the recent wars in general had severely hurt Florentine mercantile interests. An outlet to the sea would have put the wool shops and other businesses back into working order. Florentine interest in Pisa dictated "friendly" relations with the Lucchese in the initial weeks following the Duke's death. Not only did the Florentine desire for Pisa make Lucca of secondary importance to them, but it also necessitated extracting permission from the Lucchese for their officials, soldiers, provisions, weapons, reinforcements, and other necessities

Colonna (1402-1404)," *Archivio Storico Italiano*, ser. 4, 146 (1988), 550.

⁴¹A.S.L., *Governo di Paolo Guinigi*, n.5, c. 31, p. 61.

of war to cross through Lucchese territory on a more or less constant basis.

Meanwhile, the new governors of the Visconti state, seeing rebellions breaking out across their dominions, began to salvage what they could. Their efforts to retain supremacy in those areas under the Visconti banner were subverted by the civic turmoil in Milan that occurred after the Duke's death. Before long, they had to abandon efforts to maintain the faraway territories, and center their efforts on the central area around Milan and the other vital places of the Lombard region.⁴²

Giovanni Maria, the oldest legitimate son of Giangaleazzo, was only fourteen years old at his father's death in 1402; his brother, Filippo, was only ten. A third son, Gabriele, had only recently been legitimized by the Emperor Wenceslaus, and though slightly older than the other two, never held their status as possible heirs.⁴³ Yet it was this son with whom the Lucchese were to have extensive relations with, since Gabriele had been accorded mastery of nearby Pisa in the Duke's last will. Since the Duke's heirs were still minors, executive power was divided amongst a

⁴²Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 61-67.

⁴³Valeri, *L' Italia*, 293-94.

group of seventeen ministers also determined by the will, but the government was to be headed by the Duke's widow Caterina and Francesco Barbavara.⁴⁴

By the end of 1402 the shift in Lucca towards friendlier relations with the state of Milan can readily be seen. Apparently Paolo had made these pro-Visconti sentiments known in Pisa, where Milanese officials braced for what they perceived as an imminent Florentine attack. In November, the *Podestà* of Pisa, Gosadinus de Gosadinis de Bologna, who had been assigned this office by order of Milan, wrote to Paolo informing him he had taken office in Pisa, and offering him his services as *condottiere* if the Lucchese had need of military assistance.⁴⁵ It is very possible Gosadinus had been advised, or perhaps ordered, by the governors of Milan to maintain good terms with the Lucchese. Later in November 1402, Milanese officials in Pisa wrote to Paolo of the news they received that Florence, "*in eorum prava malitia*," wanted to begin war not only in Pisa but also in Siena, and they requested Paolo send them any information he might have on the matter.⁴⁶

⁴⁴Cognasso, "Il ducato visconteo," 72.

⁴⁵*Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi*, regesto n.217, p. 194.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, regesto n. 266, p. 201.

The following months, which saw an increase in Florentine hostility towards Pisa, also witnessed Paolo continuing to give support to the Visconti cause. When Gabriele Visconti, his mother Nieza (the Duke's ex-mistress), and a band of troops arrived in Pisa in November 1403 to take over governorship of the city, they were not well-received by the local population. Paolo, on the other hand, was relieved at their arrival because he had hopes it would quieten things down in Pisa (and thus also around Lucca). An embassy had earlier been sent to Gabriele and his mother from Paolo at Massa Lunigiana to honor and escort them.⁴⁷ The Lucchese *Signore* was likely hopeful at this early stage of Gabriele's rule in Pisa that he would somehow be able to assume power, restore order, and remove the Florentine threat from Pisa. If so, it would not be long before he saw Gabriele for what he turned out to be -- an enemy to Pisan independence.

After the Church backed out of the alliance it made with Florence and came to terms with the governors of Milan in August 1403, Paolo had another power on which to appeal

⁴⁷Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 68-69; Sercambi elsewhere claimed Gabriele and his mother had a dispute over the former's supposed close ties with Paolo, although it is not clear why this would have offended her.

in order to restore order to Pisan affairs. Through the Lucchese agent Jacopo Faitinelli, who had been sent to Rome in 1401 to act as the representative of Lucchese and Guinigi interests, Paolo constantly requested during the winter and spring of 1404 that Boniface IX make use of the young and militant King of Naples, Ladislas of Durazzo, in order to bring about a peaceful solution to the question of Pisa.⁴⁸ The Florentines, Paolo informed the Pope in one letter, had grown truly arrogant concerning their control over Pisa, as it "seemed to them they were able to touch the sky with their finger."⁴⁹

Nor did Paolo did not limit his support of the Visconti cause in Pisa to attempting to get others involved. In April 1404, he dispatched Lucchese troops to Sarzana, a city north of Pisa that Florence had also become covetous of possessing.⁵⁰ In July 1404, he received a receipt from the governors of Pisa for having made loans to them of more than 1,000 florins of gold for the costs of paying for the "guard

⁴⁸A.S.L., *Governo di Paolo Guinigi*, n. 5, c. 32, p. 63; n. 5, c. 32v-33, p. 64-65; n. 5, c. 34, p. 67; n. 5, c. 36, p. 71.

⁴⁹Ibid., n. 5, c. 33v., p. 66, "*fanno gran festa et trionfano assai di queste nuove et pare a loro toccare lo cielo col dito.*"

⁵⁰Brucker, *Civic World*, 195-97.

and protection of the city of Pisa.”⁵¹ That same year Giovanni Maria sent a letter of gratitude to Paolo from Milan for dispatching reinforcements to certain parts of Lunigiana for help in conserving Visconti rule there.⁵² Though the net effect of the forces of Lucca on the Visconti *fortuna* was minimal, their efforts were appreciated by the Milanese, at least on the surface.

Paolo did not limit his concern for the Visconti cause only to Pisa, as he was in constant search of information about the general conditions of Lombardy and Lunigiana, as seen in his correspondence from this period. He was in frequent contact with the vicars of his realm, Lucchese ambassadors in other cities, private citizens who had gone abroad for mercantile or other purposes, and even foreign heads of states to learn of the movements of bands of soldiers, the plots of exiles, the state of wars, and other such important matters. This information then would be used to fortify Lucchese borders if necessary, or it would be forwarded along by *corrieri* to their allies.

The Lucchese *Signore* was also in frequent correspondence with the heirs and officials of the Duke in

⁵¹*Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi*, regesto n.367, p. 216.

⁵²*Ibid.*, regesto n.312, p. 209.

Milan, who kept him informed of certain new developments in the Milanese state. In December 1402, for example, the Duchess and Duke of Milan (Catherine and Giovanni Maria) addressed a letter to Paolo informing him of the alliance just signed with the *Signore* of Padua, and suggesting to him that it be publicly proclaimed in Lucca.⁵³ Later they wrote to Paolo concerning the restitution of the city of Piacenza to Visconti rule.⁵⁴ Other correspondence between the two was of a more typical nature between two Renaissance city-states, such as the several recommendations made by the Milanese minister Francesco Barbavara for Milanese citizens to be considered for positions in the Lucchese government.⁵⁵ In short, it has been seen that the Lucchese made another policy change concerning whom to tie their fortunes with after the Duke of Milan's demise; since Florence was now again seen as their greatest menace, then improved relations with the Duke's heirs were soon after being sought by Lucca.

Florentine Aggression Increases

Though initially after Giangaleazzo's death the Florentines attempted to avoid overtly offending the

⁵³Ibid., regesto n.248, p. 198.

⁵⁴Ibid., regesto n.320, p. 210.

⁵⁵Ibid., regesto n.296, p. 206.

Lucchese, eventually their dogged pursuit of Pisa and their growing confidence would conflict with the Lucchese desire to be left alone. When Paolo complained of the still-unsettled issue over a certain quantity of wool in November 1402, the Florentine Priors, perhaps still hopeful he would take part in their league with Boniface IX, appeased the Lucchese *Signore* by assuring him his requests for the restoration of the wool would be carried out.

Yet only a month later, the Florentines had apparently grown tired of the belligerent demands from Lucca, and in a tone that showed their displeasure, wrote Paolo that they wanted the issue over the wool settled once and for all.⁵⁶ The different tone evident in Florentine correspondence to Lucca was reflective not only of their unhappiness with Paolo, but of a general trend by the end of 1402 towards a more aggressive foreign policy. In Brucker's words, "By year's end...the leadership had rejected the arguments for peace and economy and had opted for a major offensive against the Visconti."⁵⁷

Though losing their military alliance with the Church at the end of the summer in 1403, the Florentines had by

⁵⁶*Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi*, regesto n. 255, p. 199.

⁵⁷Brucker, *Civic World*, 188.

then contracted other alliances to help diminish the Visconti state. Agreements reached with the powerful Malatesta family of Rimini, the Carrara lord of Padua, and the Rossi family of Parma allowed the Florentines to carry out this objective not only in Tuscany, but in some of the northern regions of Italy as well. The rise of Florentine aggression after 1402, however, was most evident in Pisa.

In April 1403, the Florentine Ten on War ordered their agent in Pisa, Bartolomeo Valori, to make an offer of 100,000 florins to the Visconti representatives there for the purchase of the city.⁵⁸ Although nothing decisive emerged from this offer, the Florentines continued to debate ways to possess Pisa. In January 1404, the Ten sent a band of invaders to gain entry through what was thought a weak part of the Pisan wall, but they were unsuccessful.⁵⁹ However, after Florentine troops entered the area of Lunigiana in March 1404 in an attempt to stir local sentiments against the Visconti and to gain a stronger foothold in this important region surrounding Pisa, the

⁵⁸Ibid., 192.

⁵⁹Ibid., 196.

French as well as Genoa came to the aid of the Pisans.⁶⁰

French and Genoese intervention, however, only staved off Florentine aggression for a while, by no means killing off the tendencies of the Florentines in these months.⁶¹ When the French became involved, this brought about a general increase in the power and prestige not only of the French monarchy in Italy, but also of the French papacy --- a circumstance which stirred the anger of the Roman Pope Boniface IX. Boniface responded by drawing into the conflict his protector Ladislas of Durazzo, the young King of Naples. The French and the Genoese, not foreseeing the impact the arrival of Ladislas would have, began to back off from the earlier restrictions placed on Florence, thus paving the way for their subsequent takeover of Pisa.⁶² Florence's takeover of Pisa in 1406 certainly did not sit well with Lucca; now their lands were bordered on many sides by Florentine

⁶⁰The French came to see Florentine hegemony in Pisa as a threat to their own interests in Liguria; see Valeri, *L' Italia*, 346-49.

⁶¹James Hankins noted that the four years between the death of the Duke of Milan in 1402 and the taking of Pisa in 1406 "was probably the moment when Florence exercised more power in Italy than at any other time in her history;" see "Rhetoric, history, and ideology: the civic panegyrics of Leonardo Bruni," in *Renaissance Civic Humanism: Reappraisals and Reflections*, ed. James Hankins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 145.

⁶²Brucker, *Civic World*, 204-07.

territory. This resulted in a renewed effort to establish closer ties with Ladislas, as well as with the sons of Giangaleazzo; it also resulted in Paolo having all the trees within a mile of the city cut down in 1406 with the order that nothing else be replanted there.⁶³ The Lucchese cherished their self-rule, and they wanted to know as soon as possible when it might become threatened in any way.

In conclusion, Lucchese relations with the Duke of Milan during his last conflict with Florence were not entirely cordial as has been sometimes assumed. Lucca's foreign policy always *tended* to be pro-Milan in the Guinigi period, but by no means was that absolute, as seen in the period 1401-02. Lucca was not blindly loyal to Milan based on some shared ideology or some ancient tie with the past; rather Lucca was supportive of Milan (when it was) because it was that alliance that gave them the best opportunity to remain independent.

⁶³Giuseppe Civitali, *Historie di Lucca*, ed. Mario F. Leonardi, in *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores Recentiores*, 2 vols. (Rome: Istituto Storico Italiana per L' Età Moderna e Contemporanea, 1988), 2: 274.



Map 2. The Lucchese *Contado*

CHAPTER 5

LUCCA AND ITS COUNTRYSIDE

Geography

Lucca today is a medium-sized Italian city, but at the beginning of the fifteenth century it was the capital of a rather extensive city-state. Less than a century before that time, moreover, Lucchese territorial holdings in Tuscany had been even greater; now in the year 1400 they were merely trying to hold on to what they still had -- an increasingly difficult task in this age of the rise of powerful regional states throughout Italy. Nevertheless, in 1400 the Lucchese city-state was still quite impressive: it has been asserted that in the year of its independence (1369), 277 communes were restored to the possession of the mother city of Lucca by imperial edict.¹

The city itself is circled by a fertile plain situated between the Serchio and Arno rivers in western Tuscany. The Serchio runs through the plain just to the north of Lucca toward the sea, and its various tributaries have over time supplied the city and its *contado* well; so well that one

¹Janet Ross and Nelly Erichsen. *The Story of Lucca* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1912), 59; the authors unfortunately do not reveal their source for this information.

modern scholar of the Tuscan countryside has claimed that "all that around Lucca is watery."² To the northwest of Lucca are the Alps, to the northeast are the Apennines, meaning parts of Lucca territory are rugged and mountainous. These foothill areas are not worthless, however, as is sometimes implied. The *Sei Miglia* and some of the towns in the plain such as Camaiore and Pietrasanta were undoubtedly the most prosperous agriculturally, but the other areas contributed also. In the mountainous regions there was pasturing, the production of chestnuts, and olive-growing, among other things.³ Lucca lies 12 miles to the northeast of Pisa, 40 miles northwest of Florence, 130 miles south of Milan, and 170 miles north of Rome, all cities with a large influence on Lucchese history in the fifteenth century.

One of the more important parts of the territory of Lucca was the port of Motrone on the Tyrrhenian coast. Though Lucca is located roughly fifteen miles inland, the port had belonged to it since 1081 when Emperor Henry IV ceded it, as well as the surrounding district up to six miles (*Sei Miglia*), to the commune when he recognized its

²Chris Wickham, *Community and Clientele in Twelfth-Century Tuscany: The origins of the rural commune in the plain of Lucca* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 48.

³Christopher F. Black, *Early Modern Italy: A Social History* (London: Routledge, 2001), 48-49.

independence from imperial authority.⁴ The port was important to Lucca not only because it allowed their merchants an accessible place from which to ship and receive goods, but it was also a source of revenue, as they frequently let the port to others for their own shipping purposes. Thus Motrone, despite that it was sometimes closed or of limited use because of blockaded roads, wars, plague, or other factors, nevertheless was a vital part of the Lucchese state. It not only made international trade much more conducive for Lucchese merchants, but it also gave them a bargaining chip with other cities.⁵

On the road from Lucca to Motrone on the coast was another vital area of the Lucchese state, the town of Pietrasanta, some twenty miles to the northwest. One reason for its importance was that it lay in the most agriculturally-rich part of Lucchese territory, an area known especially for its fruit production.⁶ Pietrasanta, the

⁴Duane J. Osheim, *An Italian Lordship, The Bishopric of Lucca in the Late Middle Ages* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 5.

⁵Florence, for example, was forced to pay a high price to use Motrone in the early fifteenth century after they had to abandon the Pisan port and the Sienese port (Talamone); see Giovanni Morelli, *Ricordi*, ed. Vittore Branca (Florence: Felice le Monnier, 1956), 422-24.

⁶Some argue that the plain near Pietrasanta and Camaiore was the *only* area of Lucchesia that was agriculturally plentiful

largest Lucchese commune at this time, was valued also for its minerals, especially iron and marble.⁷ Local wool and leather products were exported from there as well, and Lucca benefitted from a superb fishing industry at the Lake of Perotto, which was close to Pietrasanta.⁸

Pietrasanta was important to many Lucchese citizens who owned land in the vicinity and who were thus able to derive income from it, but it was personally dear to Paolo. He had a palace built there which he and his immediate family used as a retreat, and where he would lodge foreign embassy-members or heads of states at times.⁹ On other occasions such as when plague struck Lucca, for safety purposes, or

outside of the *Sei Miglia*, and that for the most part all other regions were too mountainous for productive farming. See Christine Meek, *Lucca 1369-1400: Politics and Society in an Early Renaissance City-State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 97; also see M. Berengo, *Nobili e mercanti nella Lucca del Cinquecento* (Turin: Giulio Einaudi, 1965), 292-93.

⁷Meek has established a population of 2,500 for Pietrasanta based on a 1383 account which had 2,172 *bocche* for the salt tax, *Lucca 1369-1400*, 16; Michael E. Bratchel, in *Lucca 1430-1494: The Reconstruction of an Italian City-Republic* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 235-37, has claimed it was closer to 1,000.

⁸Bratchel, *Lucca 1430-1494*, 174-80, 236-37.

⁹F. Buselli, "La rocca di Pietrasanta e il suo palazzo," *Giornale storico della Lunigiana*, n.s., XIV (1963): 92-139. Ladislas of Durazzo, King of Naples, for instance, stayed in Pietrasanta as a guest of the Lucchese in 1409.

for summer vacations Paolo would send his family off to Pietrasanta, many times accompanying them there himself.¹⁰ He brought in individuals from all corners of the *contado* to work for the Lucchese government in some capacity, but he was especially drawn to hiring the citizens of Pietrasanta, including his secretary of many years, Guido Manfredi.¹¹ Perhaps Antonio Gigli, Lucchese official in Pietrasanta, was aware of Paolo's inclination to favor the Pietrasantanese, as he wrote to Lucca about a native from there (who was apparently unknown in Lucca from the context of the letter) named Lorenzo di Lemmuccio Martini who had returned home after twenty years of military service to find his possessions destroyed, and who now wanted to enter the service of the *Signore* of Lucca.¹²

After 1420, the year in which the palace was finished, Pietrasanta became almost an alternative place from which to

¹⁰Giovanni Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, ed. Salvatore Bongi, 3 vols., in *Fonti per la Storia d' Italia* (Lucca: Giusti, 1892), 3: 373.

¹¹Bratchel, *Lucca 1430-1494*, 246.

¹²*Carteggio di Guido Manfredi, Cancelliere della Repubblica di Lucca, Segretario della Signoria di Paolo Guinigi*, in *Regesti del R. Archivio di Stato*, ed. Luigi Fumi, vol. III, pt. ii (Pescia: Benedetti, 1933), regesto n. 920, p. 171-72.

conduct the affairs of the city-state for Paolo.¹³ He also began to bring about large improvements to the industry of the commune. In March 1420, construction of new grain mills and olive presses ("*molina di badia et olio*") were begun, which included among other things, the hiring of expert engineers to divert the waters of the Corvaia River and to lay out the foundations for the new buildings.¹⁴ The next month it was decided to build a storehouse for the iron industry there ("*un fondacho di vena e di ferro.*")¹⁵ Though the commune of Pietrasanta as a whole certainly benefitted from these improvements since it brought them additional revenues, not all were happy with the intrusions of Lucca. After the granary and olive-presses were begun in 1420, the *tavernario* Giuffredo Moroni went to Lucca to complain that he had two shops that relied on the waters that the engineers were presently taking steps to divert, and that this would destroy his business.¹⁶ The new storehouse for the iron industry of the region also had its opponents;

¹³Franca Ragone, "Paolo Guinigi, i suoi Collaboratori e i suoi Nemici: L'emergere di nuovi ruoli politici in una corte toscana," *Momus* 1 (1994): 14.

¹⁴*Carteggio di Guido Manfredi*, regesto n. 887, p.165.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, regesto n. 938, p.175.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, regesto n. 889, p. 165.

Giovanni Nicolai Nuti wrote that if constructed "it would bring great damage to many."¹⁷ Paolo nevertheless continued to diligently carry out his construction plans in Pietrasanta, and it remained a vital center of the Lucchese government until Paolo's fall from power in 1430.

Other communes were important not so much as administrative centers, but for providing a measure of protection to the interior of the city-state (Lucca). In many of the larger communes along the peripheries of the state, such as Montecarlo, Nozzano, Castiglione, Galliciano, Coreglia, Collodi, and Pietrasanta, recently built or newly-repaired fortresses helped ward off invaders.¹⁸ But it was not only the larger towns of the city-state that had this means of defense: Ruota, Sasso, Pedona, and many of the smaller villages had fortresses as well.¹⁹ In 1401, the

¹⁷Ibid., regesto n. 938, p. 175, "*serà grande danno di molti.*"

¹⁸This was a period in which the Italian city-states as a whole began to put much more effort and money into the fortification of their countrysides. In the years 1363-1371 alone, for example, the Florentines constructed or restored forty fortresses in the communes of their *contado*. See Charles M. De la Ronciere, "Indirect Taxes or 'Gabelles' at Florence in the Fourteenth Century: The Evolution of Tariffs and Problems of Collection," in *Florentine Studies: Politics and Society in Renaissance Florence*, ed. Nicolai Rubinstein (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1968), 142.

¹⁹Meek, *Lucca 1369-1400*, 122.

vicar of Castiglione reported to Paolo that not only was the fortress ("rocca") of Castiglione in good shape, but also that the fortresses of Palleroso and Castelnuovo, two of the smaller communes in his vicariate, had no immediate need of repairs.²⁰

There was much communication between Lucca and those towns in its outer territories that were essentially the first lines of defense for the state. This communication generally concerned the condition of communal walls, fortresses, trenches, city bells, and other mechanisms of defense, as well as any information concerning the passage of foreign troops. In January 1401, Paolo was informed by two of his officials in Montecarlo that improved defensive mechanisms were essential there. Nicolao Honesti, vicar of the commune, focused on the immediate need for Lucca to supply munitions and troops to guard the fortress in his letter to Paolo, while the *commissario*, Lunardo di Massa, wrote concerning the clearing out of the trenches in front of the fortress.²¹

²⁰*Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi*, in *Regesti del R. Archivio di Stato di Lucca*, ed. Luigi Fumi and Eugenio Lazzareschi, Vol. III, pt. i (Lucca: Giusti, 1925), regesto n. 44, p. 170.

²¹*Ibid.*, regesti nos. 30, 40, p. 168-69.

In May 1421, the vicar of the Lucchese commune of Massa, Bectus Antelminelli, informed Paolo that the buttress of the fortress there was in need of much work, and that the community was unable to be protected unless work was done on it; apparently the vicar considered it urgent as he proposed to use the funds of the "*condanne dei danni dati*" for the repairs.²² Dino Avvocati, the vicar of Castiglione in 1415, wrote to Lucca that part of the wall there had fallen, and that much evil might happen if it were not restored.²³ Paolo was willing to respond to appeals such as these, either by funding the restoration, or by sending engineers or other specialists to the commune to get the work underway. He knew that he must, for the safety of the state as a whole depended upon it.

The territory of the Lucchese city-state in the early fifteenth century may be divided into two broad categories; first, Lucca itself and the area outside the walls, but nearest to the city known as the *Sei Miglia* (Six Miles), which was under the direct jurisdiction of Lucca; and second, the areas that lay outside the *Sei Miglia* which fell

²²Ibid., regesto n. 1461, p. 453.

²³Ibid., regesto n. 93, appendix, p. 486, "*uno pezzo di muro castellano apresso a santo Piero, lo quale è caduto et ista molto male se non si raconcia.*"

under the indirect control of the mother city.²⁴ This latter area had seen many administrative changes over the years, but in the period of Paolo Guinigi it was divided into nine vicariates, each under the rule of Lucchese officials called vicars.²⁵ The vicars were appointed by Lucca, generally for six-month terms, although the same person often continued to hold the same office for longer periods of time.

Geography has played a large role in the history of Lucca. Being a Roman town, it was situated on the major road, the *Via Francigena*, which connected Rome to northern Italy, as well as to the rest of Europe.²⁶ To the extent

²⁴The *Sei Miglia* was an area surrounding Lucca that encompassed about 250 sq. km., an area corresponding to the ancient *comitatus*; it had been declared under Lucchese jurisdiction by the Emperor Henry IV in 1081. See Franca Leverotti, "La famiglia Contadina Lucchese all'Inizio del' 400," in *Strutture Familiari Epidemie Migrazioni nell'Italia medievale*, ed. Rinaldo Comba, Gabriella Piccinni, and Giuliano Pinto (Naples: Scientifiche Italiane, 1984), 237.

²⁵Carrara was made an additional vicariate in 1404, Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 78-79; also see Franca Ragone, "Ambizioni territoriali sulla Lunigiana viscontea dopo la morte di Gian Galeazzo: La Cessione del vicariato di Carrara a Paolo Guinigi ad opera di Giovanni Colonna (1402-1404)," *Archivio Storico Italiano*, ser. 4, 146 (1988): 542-82; Augusto Mancini, *La Cessione di Carrara a Paolo Guinigi* (Lucca: A. Amadei, 1909).

²⁶There was a network of roads leading into and out of Lucca by this time, ranging from a very poor quality to those in frequent use and good condition. See Sante Polica, "An Attempted 'Reconversion' of Wealth in XVth Century Lucca: the Lands of Michele di Giovanni Guinigi," *The Journal of European Economic History* 9 (1980), 666.

that the Lucchese military was capable at any given time, it could control traffic between northern and southern Italy since the road went through Lucca. The *Via Francigena* undoubtedly brought the city much prosperity in trade during the ancient and medieval periods, but by the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, it was just as likely to bring to Lucca armed brigades as travellers and traders.

Population

The population of Lucca is difficult to determine with certainty in the early fifteenth century, but most estimates have been around 10,000.²⁷ In addition, the total number of people living in the nine Lucchese vicariates was around 30,000 and those living in the smaller communes of Lucchese territory outside the vicariates numbered about 9,000. Thus the total number of people in the city-state of Lucca at the beginning of the *Quattrocento* was slightly less than 50,000.²⁸ This does not come close to the size of the

²⁷Christine Meek, in *Lucca 1369-1400* states the population in 1400 was 10,000; Bratchel, in *Lucca 1430-1494* claims that in 1380 it stood at 10,000; J.C. Russell's estimate in *Medieval Regions and their Cities* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1972) of 23,800 in the mid-fourteenth century is thus probably too high, although certainly the city undoubtedly suffered widespread population losses during the latter fourteenth century due to the plague.

²⁸Meek, *Lucca 1369-1400*, 9-10, 22-26.

Florentine city-state, which had a population in the city alone of around 100,000 before 1348;²⁹ Lucca's population did, however, compare to the other Tuscan cities of Siena, Arezzo, and Pisa.

Although the Florentine population at the beginning of the fifteenth century was larger than Lucca's, the basic structure of the Lucchese *contado* was very similar to that of the Florentine *contado* in that there were large families, large numbers of people of foreign origin, and a large number of widows and orphans.³⁰ The Lucchese *estimo* of 1411-13 shows a clear trend toward "enlarged and complex" families (and a trend away from "nuclear" families) in the *Sei Miglia*, which was also a circumstance found in the

²⁹It is the often-cited estimate of Villani that Florence had 100,000 people at the beginning of the fourteenth century that is referred to here; undoubtedly by a hundred years later, at the beginning of the fifteenth century, the Florentine population had suffered dramatically as had other Italian cities due to the plague. It has been estimated at 40,000 for the city itself in 1427. See Lauro Martines, *Power and Imagination: City-States in Renaissance Italy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 168.

³⁰Franca Leverotti has published a number of masterful works based on her study of the Lucchese *estimo* of 1411-1413, which was a survey made by Lucchese notaries and surveyors of the population and lands of the *Sei Miglia*. In one of these studies, "La famiglia Contadina" (see note 24, above), Leverotti has compared her findings for the makeup of the families in the Lucchese *Sei Miglia* with those in the Florentine *contado*, as determined by D. Herlihy-Ch. Klapish-Zuber, in *Les Toscans et leurs familles: Une étude du catasto florentin de 1427* (Paris, 1978).

Florentine *contado*. The *Sei Miglia* in addition consisted of a large percentage of families who had recently (within ten years) migrated there from foreign lands; sixty-five percent of families living in the outermost circles of the *Sei Miglia*, for example, were families native to Pisa, Florence, or Pistoia. The Florentine *contado* also had a large number of people of foreign origin, as shown by Herlihy and Klapish-Zuber (although it is hardly true, as Leonardo Bruni argued in his *Laudatio Florentinae urbis*, that Florence was the common *patria* of all Italian exiles). Finally, the population of the Lucchese countryside was very young. Of a group of over 4,000 persons from the *estimo* taken into account, forty-five percent were under nineteen years old, and another forty percent were between twenty and fifty-nine, again percentages which are very similar to those found for the *contado* of Florence.³¹

The most significant aspect of the population of the city-state as a whole, as contemporaries of the early fifteenth century would have perceived it, was that it had decreased so significantly over the previous half century. The chief reason was of course the plague. After wiping out half of the population (in some places) in the first assault

³¹Leverotti, "La famiglia Contadina," 246-51, 257.

of 1348, the plague continued to spread through Italy, striking cities sporadically every ten or fifteen years afterwards well into the fifteenth century.³²

This brought forth a number of new realities in the Italian city-states, including the virtual emptying of many villages to take up better opportunities left by those in the mother cities who had died or fled.³³ The population of the Lucchese countryside was so depleted in the early fifteenth century that when officials began taking the *estimo*, they found that certain farmlands in the outerlying regions were not being cultivated, and that property owners in many cases could not even be found.³⁴ Thus, Lucca faced a difficult challenge during the period of Paolo Guinigi's government: how to not only beef up security along the borders in order to better repel foreign invaders, but how

³²Franca Leverotti, *Popolazione, famiglie, insediamento: Le Sei Miglia Lucchesi nel XIV e XV secolo* (Pisa: Pacini, 1992), 78-80.

³³It is of course true that the most immediate consequence when plague struck was not an emptying of the countryside, but rather flight to the countryside; the process soon reversed itself, however, after the pestilence began to ease. Besides, while the plague did drive people into the rural areas, two other factors of not uncommon occurrence at this time (war and famine) tended to drive people into the cities.

³⁴Leverotti, *Popolazione*, 38.

to stabilize the *contado* itself so that the basic processes of local administration were able to be carried out.

Lucca and its *Contado*

One of the traditional themes in Renaissance historiography has been concerned with what degree the cities of Italy used the physical and natural resources of their *contado* to enhance their own interests.³⁵ It has been often held, particularly until very recently, that the mother cities of the Italian city-states did overburden their countrysides rather mercilessly for their own benefit.³⁶ Lucca in the years of the supposed "tyranny" of Paolo Guinigi, however, does not fit this interpretation since to the extent that Lucca exploited its *contado* in the first thirty years of the fifteenth century, it was done out of a real concern for its safety, and for the good of the state as a whole. Much of the money collected from the

³⁵The term "*contado*" has been used by historians to denote various things, and as Anthony Molho points out, is still used ambiguously. In this discussion, "*contado*" will simply refer to all those areas belonging to a state outside the city walls of the mother city. See Molho, *Florentine Public Finances in the Early Renaissance, 1400-1433* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 25, n.5.

³⁶To use the most extreme example, David Herlihy found that in the late thirteenth century, the *contado* of Pistoia was paying some six times the amount of direct taxes as the inhabitants of the city; see his *Women, Family and Society in Medieval Europe: Historical Essays, 1978-1991* (Providence: Berghahn, 1995), 303.

contado through taxation would in fact come to be spent on the protection of it. Again, arbitrary exploitation is not something the *Signore* of Lucca could have gotten away with, either inside Lucca or in the *contado*, for his stay in power was based largely upon the maintenance of popular support.

Perhaps the best evidence that there was a sincere interest in the welfare of the *contado* by Paolo Guinigi and his *consiglieri* is the visit the *Signore* made with his new wife Ilaria in 1403 to view first-hand the conditions of the lands and the people of the rural areas.³⁷ It is understandable that the *contado* would be highly valued, for like those of other Italian cities, the Lucchese countryside had much the mother city knew it could benefit from, such as grain, barley, taxes (both direct and indirect), military enlistments, and many other things.³⁸

Yet, the Lucchese really had no choice in how to handle the border regions; they could not overburden the rural population any more than they already were.³⁹ There was fear

³⁷A.S.L., *Governo di Paolo Guinigi*, n.1, c. 104v., p. 206.

³⁸See David Nicholas, *The Later Medieval City, 1300-1500* (London: Longman, 1997), 87-91, concerning the methods in which Italian cities generally came to dominate their *contado*.

³⁹Guido Manfredi received a plea from a Lucchese nun (Sister Agnena) on one occasion claiming that since "*della pietra*

that the people still inhabiting a given town or village would simply pack up their scanty belongings and leave if the conditions became any worse. The population of certain parts of the *contado* in 1411 stood at only about one-third what it had been before the "Era of Plagues" began in 1348.⁴⁰ This was chiefly due to the plague, but also famine and frequent wars were contributing factors. Thus, Lucca time and time again was forced to ease the burden on the tax-payers of the countryside. Small communes were allowed in some instances to unite in order to lower the tax requirements of each.⁴¹ Financial incentives for foreigners to come and live in the *Sei Miglia* were established by Paolo in 1404 (being exempt from all taxes for ten years except the salt tax) in hopes of repopulating the state.⁴² Lucca was certainly in no position to burden the people of the

non si può cavar sangue," the monastery's recent bad harvest meant they would be unable to pay the *gabella*; *Carteggio di Guido Manfredi*, regesto n. 1165, p. 214.

⁴⁰Leverotti, *Popolazione*, 31.

⁴¹A.S.L., *Governo di Paolo Guinigi*, n. 1, c. 48, p. 114.

⁴²Ibid., n.1, c. 134v., p. 266, "*voluit, mandavit, statuit atque iussit quod omnes et singuli qui venirent ad habitandum in territorium et districtum lucanum, gratia et laborandi terras bene quam agendi et honeste vivendi, sint liberi, immunes, et exemptum per decem annos ab omnibus et singulis oneribus.*"

countryside with higher taxation because they could not have tolerated any more disruption in their lives.

Yet most individuals of the countryside still *felt* as if they were being overburdened, as may be seen by the large number of petitions made to Lucca that their taxes be lowered. And on many occasions the government did not turn a deaf ear to their appeals; there were instances in which Paolo allowed communes to not only have their taxes lowered, but dismissed altogether.⁴³ Undoubtedly, one reason the rural regions believed they were paying an unfair share of Lucca's revenues was that in 1397, three years before the Guinigi *Signoria* was established, the *estimo* had been discontinued in the city -- but retained in the countryside.⁴⁴ The countryside had become increasingly filled with people who did not like this new arrangement at the time Paolo came to power.

The villages and towns of the Lucchese *contado* were also required to pay other taxes, in addition to the *estimo*.

⁴³For example, in August 1420 Paolo arranged with the tax official at Massa not to carry out the tax exactions for grain extracted from Massa, as there was need of the grain there; A.S.L., *Governo di Paolo Guinigi*, n. 6, c. 141, p. 283.

⁴⁴The central city of Lucca shared the burden of the *estimo* with its *contado* for much longer than some cities, however. Florence, for example, discontinued the *estimo* for Florentine citizens in 1315.

Indirect taxes on such things as food and wine were also assessed to them. Most Italian cities at this time relied heavily on the countryside to feed the population, and Lucca was no different in this respect. Though Lucca's *contado* was able to feed the population of the mother city better than most, still there were rarely years in which imports were not needed.⁴⁵ In addition, military service was required from the *contado*, and though this was by no means unusual since all cities drew recruits from the rural areas, it nevertheless was not always well accepted. Finally, the inhabitants of the communes were responsible for carrying out prescribed amounts of labor for Lucca, such as the building, repairing, and guarding of fortresses or walls. The individuals living in the rural areas thus had definite responsibilities, but comparatively speaking as will be shown, they lived in a less repressive situation than did the country-dwellers of most other Italian city-states.

The people in the *contado* of Lucca were fortunate in that they were not faced with the expansionistic ambitions of a mother city. Because the larger city-states such as Florence and Milan were attempting to widen their territories at this time, much greater military expenditure

⁴⁵Nicholas, *Later Medieval City*, 86-88.

was necessary -- and who bore the brunt of this was the rural areas (and their new acquisitions).⁴⁶ Thus, measures that came to be used in some places to increase revenues, such as forced loans (*prestanze*), were not resorted to in Lucca.⁴⁷ The records that might show us the percentage of both city and *contado* contributions to the annual income of Lucca are not available for much of the Guinigi period (and before), but other factors point out the people of the countryside were not being arbitrarily exploited by the ambitions of selfish governors. When a wine tax was forced on the *contado* earlier in 1388, for instance, taxes on wine were also increased in Lucca. In that same year purchases of

⁴⁶In the year 1400, Lucca spent approximately 23,000 florins for mercenary troops (which was still about one-third of revenues for the year), which were used mainly for the guard of the city and *contado* -- while the Florentines for the twelve years from 1390-1402 used approximately five million florins on military expenditures, or an average of over 400,000 florins per year. See Molho, *Florentine Public Finances*, 9; Meek, *Lucca 1369-1400*, 125-27.

⁴⁷In comparing the financial state of Lucca with its neighbors, the *Gonfaloniere* of Lucca in 1390 reported that people in other lands were "*non senza graveze e molestie di compagne non senza graveze d'imposte e di smesurate carestie e mortali guerre sono state, dove Idio, a noi a conceduto gratia, di ripararsi da le insidie de' vicini, da le graveze de le compagne, senza cavare di borsa sforsatamente denaio a persona*," A.S.L., *Consiglio Generale*, 11, p. 371, 16 December 1390; though this was ten years before the reign of Paolo began, similar attitudes prevailed into the fifteenth century.

salt, which had been enforced on the villages and towns of the *contado*, began to be imposed on Lucca as well.⁴⁸

Perhaps the best measure of determining whether the towns of the Lucchese countryside were oppressed by the mother city is to look at the inhabitants themselves. There is not an abundance of source material here, but there are some clues. Giorgio Chittolini has pointed out that around the beginning of the fifteenth century, when Florence began aggressively seeking to extend its frontiers they met fierce resistance when they began to enter communes in the diocese of Lucca. Taking over the border communes of Montecatini, Buggiano, Fucecchio, Pescia, and Castelfranco proved much more difficult for Florence than other areas had been, Chittolini argues, not because of resistance from the Lucchese, but because of the determination put up by the communes themselves who did not want to live under harsh rule, such as Florence imposed upon its new acquisitions.⁴⁹

⁴⁸Nicholas, *Later Medieval City*, 89.

⁴⁹Chittolini, "La Formazione dello Stato Regionale e le Istituzioni del Contado: Ricerche sull' Ordinamento Territoriale di Dominio Fiorentino agli Inizi del Secolo XV," in *Egemonia Fiorentina ed Autonomi Locali nella Toscana Nord-Occidentale del Primo Rinascimento: Vita, Arte, Cultura* (Pistoia: Centro di Studi, 1978), 58-59; also see S.R. Epstein, "The Peasantries of Italy, 1350-1750," in *The Peasantries of Europe: From the Fourteenth to the Eighteenth Centuries*, ed. Tom Scott (London: Longman, 1998), 78, where the author claims that from 1384-1434 Florence treated

In addition, in October 1413 Paolo wrote to the rulers of Folignano concerning complaints that he had received from the Lucchese communes of Cervarolo, Gazano, and Cervardo that certain noble families of Folignano had been trying to force these communes into submission. Apparently in their appeals for help to Lucca the communes made clear what they wanted since in his letter to Folignano, Paolo wrote that the communes "were content to remain under my jurisdiction and protection."⁵⁰ Finally, in 1418, Paolo received word from Casale, a small commune in the region of Lunigiana to the northwest of Lucca that was under the rule of the Malaspina at that time, that many men and lands of that region would willingly give up power over the commune to him. Giovanni of Castiglione wrote Paolo in December from Casale that all the people of the neighboring commune of Verrucola, out of fear they would be overtaken by Florence due to their allegiance to the Malaspina, had departed the city under cover of the night to escape. Moreover, Giovanni informed him that many of these people, as well as those of

conquered areas "more like a subject hinterland than a confederacy of equals, depriving them of their own *contadi* altogether and extending Florentine fiscal jurisdiction to the entire state."

⁵⁰A.S.L., *Governo di Paolo Guinigi*, n. 6, c. 44, p. 87, "...*contenti quod sub mea Iurisdictione et protectione remanerent.*"

the commune of Regnano, wanted to give themselves over to Paolo's protection.⁵¹ It is clear that if Lucca was repressive over its *contado* in the first part of the fifteenth century, then others, especially the large, expanding city-states of Italy -- were even more so.

This is not to imply that the rural parts of Lucchese territory were free from problems. Constant watchfulness over the *contado* by Lucca was essential, and great efforts were made to maintain order in the peripheral regions. Yet, violence was commonplace in the countryside of the Italian cities of the fifteenth century, and in many parts of Lucchese territory it was no different. There were disputes, for example, between the communes lying along Lucchese borders and the communes nearby belonging to other city-states. In 1412, Paolo complained in a letter to the Florentine Priors about certain men from the Florentine town of Portovenere who had violated the borders of Pietrasanta "not once but several times."⁵² In the early years of the century the Lucchese vicariate of Coreglia had an ongoing struggle with the community of Fiumalbo, a possession of the

⁵¹*Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi*, regesti nos.1207, 1404, p. 403, 444.

Este rulers of Ferrara. In June 1402, some 300 sheep belonging to the citizens of Fiumalbo were stolen by the people of Coreglia, prompting Niccolò III, ruler of the Este, to write to Paolo in protest.⁵³ Fighting between the two communes lingered, however, as in May 1404, Paolo received a message from the *Podestà* of Sestola that much damage had been done to the forests and pastures of Fiumalbo by the citizens of Coreglia.⁵⁴ In 1409, the tables were turned, and the aggressor became Fiumalbo, as farm animals were stolen from the Lucchese communes of Tereglio and Vitiana.⁵⁵ Despite the measures taken by Lucca to maintain order in the *contado*, at times the peace terms established between two communes turned out to not last long.

In addition, there were often disputes between two Lucchese communes that had to be smoothed over by Paolo and the vicars. In 1415, the Lucchese vicar in Camaiore, Nicolao

⁵²A.S.L., *Governo di Paolo Guinigi*, n. 6, c. 3, p. 6, "*Licet homines de portoveneris quod cavere decreveram meos fines non semel sed iteratis vicibus violaverint et invaserint...*"

⁵³*Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi*, regesti nos.126, 200, p. 182, 192.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, regesto n. 317, p. 210.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, regesti nos. 673-675, p. 267-68; the problems continued between the two communes for the entirety of the reign of Paolo Guinigi as he wrote again in 1428 to the "Commune and Men of the Land of Fiumalbo" concerning the differences between Fiumalbo and Coreglia, see A.S.L., *Governo di Paolo*, n. 6, c. 229, p. 459.

Dardagnini, wrote to Paolo that he had received a petition from a group of fishermen from the village of Schiava concerning fighting that was occurring at the marina with some fishermen of Camaiore. Dardagnini went on to say that he had informed the parties they would have to wait for their differences to be settled by the *Signore* of Lucca.⁵⁶ The fishermen of Camaiore apparently had many rivalries; in January 1428, they became involved in another dispute, this time with Pietrasanta. Paolo wrote to Antonio de Gigli, vicar of Pietrasanta, to see to it that the fishermen there stop using barriers to block the mouth of Motrone as it was hurting the fishing for the people of Camaiore since fish were being impeded.⁵⁷

Lucca was asked many times to settle territorial disputes that had arisen between two of its communes. In 1413, the *Anziani* of Pietrasanta wrote to Paolo that Cappella, a small village that had recently legally separated itself from the vicariate of Pietrasanta, was now urging their neighbor Serravezza to appeal to the authority of Lucca to try and also separate from the jurisdiction of

⁵⁶ *Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi*, regesti nos. 1106, 1118, p. 387-88.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, regesto n. 813, p.145.

Pietrasanta.⁵⁸ The *Anziani* of Pietrasanta asked that Paolo not consent to this, as they stated it would be harmful to them.⁵⁹ On other occasions it seems as if there were little anyone could do to prevent violence in the countryside. In 1418, the *Podestà* assigned to Collodi, Michael of Casabasciana, wrote to Guido Manfredi informing him that upon Paolo's request he had attempted to settle the fighting between the communes of Coccilia and Limano by establishing the limits of Coccilia's pasturing grounds. He saw no hope for accord, however, and warned Guido that "unless the said communes are not made to remain at peace with a stick, then their animosity will spread to other communes."⁶⁰ Fighting amongst Lucchese communes was not restricted to the outermost lying areas; in 1410 violence broke out between

⁵⁸The fact that Pietrasanta had an *Anziani* is perhaps the best proof of the important place it held among Lucchese communes. Though most of Lucca's communes had no independent government of their own, some of the larger and vital communes had special arrangements. For example, Camaiore was divided into four quarters, each under the authority of a Captain, and Coreglia also had four Lucchese officials assigned there. See Meek, *Lucca 1369-1400*, 16.

⁵⁹*Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi*, regesto n. 867, p. 318.

⁶⁰*Carteggio di Guido Manfredi*, regesto n.137, p. 25, "se non si fano li ditti comuni stare in pace col bastone la ditta animosità si distenderà in altri comuni."

the citizens of Migliano and Fibbiano, both communes of the *Sei Miglia*.⁶¹

There were several other types of disturbances in the countryside that the Lucchese had to keep a constant eye on. The regime and the city-state were only as strong as its weakest point in the *contado*, for at that spot exiles and other dangers would soon appear. There were problems not only between Lucchese communes and communes belonging to other city-states, and between two Lucchese vicariates, such as we have seen with Camaoire and Pietrasanta, but there were also differences that arose between vicariates and the communes under *their* jurisdiction over military enlistments, payment of taxes, and other issues. Some Lucchese communes even raged with their own internal factionalism.⁶² There arose struggles even between two Lucchese officials assigned

⁶¹*Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi*, registi nos. 795, 796, p. 302.

⁶²In writing about an earlier period, Chris Wickham in "Rural Communes and the City of Lucca at the Beginning of the Thirteenth Century," in *City and Countryside in Late Medieval and Renaissance Italy: Essays Presented to Philip Jones*, ed. Trevor Dean and Chris Wickham (London: Hambledon Press, 1990), 6-7, implies that in general this may have been less a problem in Lucca than in other city-states, since there were not many villages in the *contado* that had native, powerful landowners and thus not much tension between social classes existed.

to one town.⁶³ One of the great accomplishments of the thirty years that Paolo remained in power was that the countryside was kept as stable as it was. This often proved difficult, and even impossible at times, but it was certainly not because of a lack of concern from Lucca. There is no better place to view the activist domestic policy of the Guinigi period than in Lucca's relations with its *contado*; but, as has been seen, the establishment of internal law and order was not the "end," but only a "means" to the continuation of self-rule.

Officials in the *Contado*

Lucca was able to maintain security in the countryside in a variety of ways. A number of different types of officials were assigned to the various towns of the *contado* for such things as making sure taxes were paid on time, recruits were being enlisted if necessary, and that law and order in general were being upheld. The vicars held supreme power in the *contado* in most cases; they were responsible for collecting taxes⁶⁴, mustering troops⁶⁵, making sure laws

⁶³For example, in 1419 Guido Manfredi received word from Massa Lunense of a quarrel that occurred between the vicar of Massa (Guaspere Sbarra) and the Chancellor (Aluiso Gucci), and apparently it became serious as the vicar tried to arrest Gucci; see *Carteggio di Guido Manfredi*, regesto n. 432, p. 81.

⁶⁴Ibid., regesto n. 1213, p. 228.

relating to the town which had been passed in Lucca were publicly proclaimed⁶⁶, keeping the area free from exiles⁶⁷, overseeing town defenses⁶⁸, making sure the ban on fires was carried out⁶⁹, and a variety of other tasks. The vicars were, however, generally thought to have authority only in those criminal matters punishable by fine.⁷⁰ For crimes which merited further punishment the Lucchese were prepared to send officials with the proper authority to handle the matter. In particularly troubled times additional officials or special agents of the government might be sent to restore order to an area.

The two offices which did the most to maintain order in the countryside were the Captain of the *Contado*, an office that had been established after 1369, and which came to have its greatest powers under the Guinigi rulers; and secondly,

⁶⁵*Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi*, regesto n. 1228, p. 407.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, regesto n. 1468, p. 455.

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, regesto n. 1136, p. 391.

⁶⁸*Ibid.*, regesto n. 40, p. 169.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, regesto n. 761, p. 135.

⁷⁰See the discussion of this in Antonella Casali, "Aspetti della Criminalità nel contado Lucchese intorno alla metà del 1400, secondi i registri del '*Capitaneus Comitatus*,'" *Annuario della Biblioteca Civica di Massa* (1981), 1-21.

the establishment of the *podesteriè* of the *Sei Miglia* in 1411, which came about as Paolo began to perceive the situation in the countryside as getting out of hand.⁷¹ This is a point upon which to dwell for a moment: Paolo was ready when the occasion warranted it to create new offices or to propose innovative sorts of legislation when the security of the state was at issue. Moreover, he was willing to create new offices in emergencies whose powers overlapped the jurisdiction of others; when he elected the "*officialis ex ordinarium*" in 1407, essentially what was created was a new office whose powers were the same as those of the Captain of the *Contado*.⁷² Paolo Guinigi did not conceive of the state as a planned "work of art;" rather he handled problems in a more pragmatic fashion, as may be seen in the creation of new offices with overlapping boundaries and whose "*mero et mixto imperio*" extended to "each and every foreigner living in the *comitatus* or district of Lucca."⁷³

⁷¹A.S.L., *Governo di Paolo Guinigi*, n. 2, c. 44v., p. 106, "*Essi veduto per piccola cosa nascere molte inconueniense e crescendo tali inconueniense multiplicando homicidii et altri mali. Et per questo principalmente li podestà sono stati creati in nelle VI Miglia.*"

⁷²Ibid., n.1, c. 81, p. 159; also see Casali, "Aspetti," 1.

⁷³Ibid., "*omnes et singulos forensis habitantes in comitatum et districtum lucanum.*"

The Lucchese first appointed a Captain of the *Contado* in 1369 as an emergency measure, but by the next year the powers of the office were severely curtailed as the state of crisis passed. From 1370-1375 the office was maintained, but became clearly subordinate to that of the *Podestà* of Lucca, having the authority merely to capture "*delinquenti*."⁷⁴ Beginning around 1375, however, the office began to be increasingly given the authority to deal with "all persons and all crimes" of the countryside. In theory, the Captain was to handle those cases of a more serious nature that were out of the jurisdictional realm of the vicars.⁷⁵

Yet in reality the Captain, as were the vicars, was involved in a wide variety of matters to help ensure the integrity of Lucchese borders. Some of the tasks given to the Captain were seemingly more in the realm of the vicars or tax officials; other duties related to the highest security of the state. For instance, sometimes the Captains were sent to the various communes to extract taxes that were due from the local population, or to impose peace upon a locality that had erupted in violence, both tasks which in

⁷⁴Antonella Casali, "L' Amministrazione del Contado Lucchese nel' 400: Il Capitano del Contado," *Actum Luce* 7 (1978), 131; in the Lucchese Statute of 1372, the Captain of the *Contado* was listed as a "*socius*" of the *Podestà*.

⁷⁵Casali, "Aspetti," 3-4.

most cases seem to have been part of the job of the vicars.⁷⁶ On other occasions the Captains were given the difficult job of ridding the *contado* of immoral activities, such as when Giovanni de Griffis condemned two Florentines to prison for coming to Lucca and gambling with dice having two sixes on them.⁷⁷ The Captains also dealt with the most serious matters of state security, such as guarding against returning exiles ("*banniti*"), keeping tabs on the movements of foreign mercenaries along the borders, and with more serious domestic offenses, such as murder.⁷⁸

Although in theory the Captain had unlimited power to prosecute in the countryside, this was very rarely exercised. Nor would it have been accepted for long by the populace. It is clear from studying the correspondence of the Captain Giovanni de Griffis that he was no madman out to induce conformity on the people. He, like the regime as a whole, was reluctant at times to act without referring to higher powers for fear of the possible repercussions. When Griffis had captured the criminals Pardo Lotti and Matteo

⁷⁶*Carteggio di Guido Manfredi*, regesti nos. 286, 645, 762, 991, pp. 52, 119-20, 141, 184.

⁷⁷*Ibid.*, regesto n. 865, p. 160, "*che ànno doi sei per dado.*"

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, regesti nos. 60, 466, pp. 11, 88.

Martinelli in August 1415, for example, he knew they were to be exiled, but consulted with Lucca first before carrying out the order to determine if the mandate of exile meant only the guilty party or their entire families.⁷⁹ When the thief Lazzaro, brother of the priest Donato, was arrested in 1419, Griffis wrote to Lucca asking what should be done with him.⁸⁰ In dealing with some classes or some individuals, Griffis' "unlimited" authority was questionable, at least in his own mind.

Yet others met with swift treatment by the Captain. After the murderer Landuccio was captured (being wounded in the process), Griffis in January 1419 sent the accused to the bottom ("*fondo*") of the prison at Sasso, where "he will be able to talk to noone".⁸¹ Another person was committed to the prison of Sasso not because of a crime he had committed, but because it was believed by the Captain that he *might* commit one: in February 1419, Griffis imposed the order on Tomeo Pasquini of promising ("*di dare sicurtà*") not to

⁷⁹Ibid., regesto n. 74, p. 13.

⁸⁰Ibid., regesto n. 577, p. 106, "*In su le ventitre hore, Lazaro capitò al ponte di san Piero, e vistomi in sul ponte levatoio di qua rimase lui abatuto; lo distavarcai e fecelo ligare, e poi per doi famigli legato lo mandai a Nozano.*"

⁸¹Ibid., regesto n. 244, p. 46, "*lo mandato al Sasso in del fondo e che niuno non ge parli.*"

offend in any way his fellow citizen Andrea di Biagio, but since Tomeo's response did not fully satisfy Griffis, he was promptly incarcerated.⁸²

On another occasion Griffis was dispatched to the place where the murder of Andrea Giovannetti had occurred, but was unable to go at first because of illness. He wrote to Guido Manfredi that as soon as he was able to ride a horse he would proceed to punish severely those guilty of the crime.⁸³ The Captain was also responsible for the confiscation of illegally-owned arms; a visit to the house of a man named Stefanuccio to arrest him for a crime he had committed netted the Captain not the criminal since he was not at home, but instead "three shields, three lance, two large cutting knives, a spear, and a crossbow."⁸⁴ The Captain's letter to Guido concerning this matter gives evidence of just why the office of the Captain of the *Contado* wielded so much authority. Since the person he was seeking could not be found, the Captain informed Guido that he returned to the bridge at Moriano "with all of the

⁸²Ibid., regesto n. 306, p. 55.

⁸³Ibid., regesto n. 229, p. 43.

⁸⁴Ibid., regesto n. 495, p. 93, "*tre rotellini, tre lanciae, due falcioni, una spada e una balestra.*"

brigade."⁸⁵ Thus, the Captains of the Lucchese *contado* were involved in a wide range of affairs designed to bring about security to the state, and they were provided with a small army in which to help them bring it about.

A brief look at the travels of the Captain Giovanni de Griffis in a half year span in which he held the office in 1419 will reveal how he was constantly on the move, being sent from place to place throughout the realm by Paolo, Guido, or other Lucchese officials to restore order. The following is a list of towns from which Griffis sent letters to Guido Manfredi in Lucca during the first six months of 1419: 10 January (Nozzano); 17 January (Marlia); 20 January (Segromigno); 5 February (Nozzano); 17 March (Avenza); 23 March (Santa Maria a Colle); 25 March (Nozzano); 18 April (Carrara); 26 April (Nozzano); 3 May (Quiesa); 21 May (Nozzano); 15 June (S. Gemignano di Moriano). The frequency of Nozzano in the list does not imply a trip back to his home, but rather to what was at the time a particularly troubled area of Lucchesia. Griffis indeed longed to return to his home in Massa, but would not depart until his office was complete.⁸⁶ Thus, Griffis headed an effort in the

⁸⁵Ibid., "*cum tuta la brigata*."

⁸⁶Ibid., regesto n. 410, p. 77.

countryside of Lucca to maintain law and order, and to see to it that no foreign threats arose.

This does not mean he acted ruthlessly in carrying these things out, though he could and did use the powers bestowed upon his office if necessary to follow orders from Lucca. It is clear Griffis was not acting arbitrarily or without consent from the mother city. Other citizens of Lucca even advised him on how to handle matters. In one letter, he was told: "I beseech you, if honor and the dignity of your office permits, you ought to release Matheus and the others from the rigors of our statutes, for these are not the times for losing our rural folks and farmers...In my opinion, it is better that they pay for their crimes with fines rather than remaining in prison calling out that alms be given them, for there they are not useful to themselves nor to others."⁸⁷ This provides another example of the pragmatism of the period of Paolo Guinigi;

⁸⁷Ibid., regesto n. 1276, p. 241, "*Vos precor ut, si honestas et officii vestri dignitas patitur, Matheus et reliquos ex forma statutorum nostrorum relaxari iubeatis; non enim sunt tempora ruralibus et colonis nostris perdenda...Melius est, meo iuditio, quod cum pecunia luant penas quam stantes in carcere elemosinas miseris datas vocent, neque sibi neque aliis utiles sint.*" See Franca Leverotti, "Gli Estimi Lucchesi del 1411-1413: Una fonte per lo studio dell' amministrazione del paesaggio agrario e della demografia," in *Scritti in Ricordi di Giorgio Buratti* (Pisa: Pacini, 1981), 199-222.

the "*forma statutorum*," that is, at times took second place to the adoption of more practical political policies.

The second office which came to be of great help in preserving order in the Lucchese countryside was the establishment of the office of *Podestà* throughout the region of the *Sei Miglia*. The office of *Podestà* was an old office, dating back to the thirteenth century, that many Italian cities had adopted as a result of bitter factionalism. By the end of the thirteenth century, however, it had lost much of its previous authority in most places to the *popolo* regimes. Nevertheless, it was retained in the cities in some form, sometimes even as one of the more important offices responsible for police-type duties. By the end of the fourteenth century, the office had evolved so that most city-states had several *podestà*, and thus it had become a less prestigious office. Those who were given the office were typically being assigned to the more vital areas of that city's border territories; this was the situation in Lucca when Paolo came to power in 1400.

At the beginning of Paolo's reign there were only a few *podestà* in the most distant and militarily-vital places of Lucchese territory, such as Casola, Collodi, Coreglia, and Nozzano. After Carrara became a vicariate of Lucca in 1404, the town of Avenza (in Carrara's vicariate) had a *Podestà*

assigned to it by Lucca in the next year as well.⁸⁸ In January 1405, Paolo named a *podestà* to the parish of S. Gennaro, and another was created in the following year (1406), but after that for five years no more were established. Until 1411, that is, for at that time in the entire *Sei Miglia* was instituted the system of the "podesteriè." Up to that time the *Sei Miglia* had been divided into parishes, but with the nomination of the "*Potestates Plebeiorum*" on 27 April 1411, the region was recast into nine *podesterie*. The primary reason for this clamping down of authority in the area of the *Sei Miglia*, the area closest to the city but outside the walls, was again for security purposes.⁸⁹

Lucca in the first thirty years of the fifteenth century kept a close eye on its *contado* regions. An activist Lucchese domestic policy within Lucca itself carried over into its subject communities. The attempt to gain control over the religious sphere of Lucchesia was included in this effort, an effort that will be discussed in the following chapter.

⁸⁸A.S.L., *Governo di Paolo Guinigi*, n.1, c. 10v., p. 314.

⁸⁹Leverotti, "Gli Estimi," 209-10.

CHAPTER 6

LUCCA AND THE CHURCH

Confrontation of Church and State

The Church in the early fifteenth century remained a vital and influential part of Italian society; it has been noted that in the territory of Florence alone there were more than 2,100 parochial churches and 300 *pieve* during the *Quattrocento*, and that ecclesiastical persons constituted some 3.7% of the overall population.¹ Gene Brucker has argued that the Florentines eventually became hostile toward the clergy not so much because of the "occasional scoundrel or blackguard in clerical robes," but rather because the clergy seemed to be everywhere one turned.² Large numbers of *religiosi* would have been omnipresent in Lucca as well; according to the findings published by Martino Giusti and Pietro Guidi, Lucca and its *contado* had more monasteries,

¹Roberto Bizzocchi, *Chiesa e potere nella Toscana del Quattrocento* (Bologna: il Mulino, 1987), 13-14.

²Brucker, *Renaissance Florence* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 180.

canonries, and hospitals than not only Pisa and Siena, but also Florence.³

However, while many of the local churches of Italy flourished at the beginning of the fifteenth century, the universal Church was experiencing troubled times. The Church had come to have less of an impact on the affairs of the Italian cities during the course of the fourteenth century because of the relocation of the papal court to Avignon; in addition, at the outset of the fifteenth century, the Church was undergoing criticism from all parts of Christendom for having fallen into schism.⁴ The Church had lost the status of superpower in Italian political affairs, as well as the ability to sway the strongest heads of state with its spiritual powers; now because of the schism each of the disputing popes was in search of friends they could call their own and to destroy the rival pope.⁵ Paolo Guinigi was

³See Duane Osheim, "I Sentimenti Religiosi dei Lucchesi al tempo di Castruccio," in *Castruccio e il suo tempo : Convegno Internazionale, Lucca 5-10 Ottobre 1981* (Lucca: Istituto Storico Lucchese, 1984), 100.

⁴From 1378-1417, the Church was divided as there was a Roman pope and a French pope; for a time after the Council of Pisa in 1409 there were three claimants to the papal throne. This opened up the Church to severe criticism for being more concerned with political and military matters than spiritual ones.

⁵Peter Partner in "Florence and the Papacy in the Earlier Fifteenth Century," in *Florentine Studies: Politics and*

able to utilize the new realities the popes and the Church as a whole faced as result of the Schism for the betterment of Lucca.

During the course of the fourteenth century, Church officials gradually had lost the traditional privilege of exemption from taxation by secular rulers; by the beginning of the fifteenth century, most Italian cities had become quite experienced in using the resources of the Church whenever the need arose. Lucca was no different in this regard.⁶ For example, in February 1419, the Captain of the *Contado* Giovanni de Griffis wrote to Paolo's secretary Guido Manfredi from Nozzano informing him that in conformity with the order received earlier from the *Signore*, he had ordered a notary to make an *estimo* in the *pivieri* of Arliano and Massaciuccoli of not only "all the houses of the countryside, but even the citizens and monasteries."⁷ Later

Society in Renaissance Florence, ed. Nicolai Rubinstein (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1968), argues that whereas Italian politics allowed for an active and powerful role for the papacy until 1346 (and a passive one for Florence), after 1378 these roles were reversed.

⁶Enrici Coturri, "La chiesa lucchese al tempo di Castruccio," *Actum Luce* 13, 14 (1984-1985), 115, where he states that the commune of Lucca first taxed the clergy no later than 1303.

⁷*Carteggio di Guido Manfredi, Cancelliere della Repubblica di Lucca, Segretario della Signoria di Paolo Guinigi*, in *Regesti del R. Archivio di Stato*, ed. Luigi Fumi, vol. III, pt. ii (Pescia: Benedetti, 1933), regesto n. 286, p. 52, "a

that same year, in August, Guido received word from Pietrasanta that the grain tax imposed on the churches of Massa by Lucca was currently being conducted.⁸ Taxation of the clergy was a right that had been won by the communes over the course of the fourteenth century, and Paolo Guinigi did not lose the advantage (nor did he abuse it) for Lucca at the turn of the fifteenth.

Lucca can also be seen as having emerged victorious in the struggle for supremacy between church and commune in that it gained control over the episcopal sees of Lucca and Luni. Church appointments, particularly over such important offices as bishop, had traditionally been the sole domain of the Church, but this privilege was gradually lost as secular rulers had to be increasingly accommodated, and sometimes obeyed. The bishoprics in theory were named by the pope, but in reality he had to listen to the suggestions of local rulers in many cases; that was the case in Lucca.⁹ Hardly

scrivere lo vino, grano, miglio e ogni biada grossa e minuta, che troverà in le case de contadini et etiandio de citadini e de monestieri" [sic].

⁸Ibid., regesto n. 568, p. 105.

⁹Denys Hay, *The Church in Italy in the Fifteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 12. For example, the bishops of Lucca from 1330-1373 were Frenchmen appointed from Avignon, the bishops from 1374-1383 were Italians, but were nonetheless not those requested by the Lucchese *Anziani*; finally in 1383, with the nomination of

any other Italian city was as successful as were the Lucchese in bringing their hopes for the office into effect: both the Bishops of Lucca and Luni during the reign of Paolo Guinigi came to be persons that he favored in the positions.

The Bishop of Lucca was actually a second cousin of Paolo, Nicolao Guinigi, who had been appointed by Pope Boniface IX before Paolo took over, in 1394. Though Nicolao had plotted to remove Paolo from power in November 1400, they later reconciled and the bishop became one of his strongest supporters. The Bishop of Luni after April 1415 was Francesco Manfredi, the son of Paolo's secretary Guido Manfredi. It is clear from Paolo's correspondence that he was at least partly responsible for persuading Pope Boniface to name Francesco as head of the bishopric at Luni. On 13 April he wrote to D. Bartholomeo de Bosco of Genoa that "it pleased him recently when our Most Sacred Father while he was at Constance promoted to the bishopric of Luni Franciscus, son of my most beloved secretary Sir Guido of

Giovanni Salvucci da Fucecchio as Bishop of Lucca, the Lucchese succeeded in getting someone in this office who they favored. There still were a number of warnings from the Bishop to the *Podestà* of Lucca in these years for trying to exercise civic jurisdiction over persons subject to church law only. See Giuseppe Benedetto, "Potere dei Chierici e potere dei Laici nella Lucca del Quattrocento al tempo della Signoria di Paolo Guinigi (1400-1430): Una simbiosi," *Annuario della Biblioteca Civica di Massa* (1984), 7-14.

Pietrasanta, because of his kindness and because of my interceding on his behalf."¹⁰ It was not unusual by the fifteenth century for the city-states of Italy to assert their will with the popes concerning the appointment of church officials in their territories, but the Lucchese had as much or more success as any other Italian city in actually getting who they wanted into these important positions.¹¹

Roberto Bizzocchi in his studies on the relations between the secular and spiritual rulers of Italy has claimed that there indeed was a close relationship between commune and church in the fifteenth century, a relationship based not so much on close contacts and mutual exchanges, but rather one that saw the communes actively gaining control over local church structures.¹² He has argued that

¹⁰A.S.L., *Governo di Paolo Guinigi*, n. 6, c. 64, p. 127, "*Placuit nuper Sanctissimo Papa nostro dum esset in constantia sue benignitatis gratia et intercessionibus meis quam efficaces libens fide promovere ad episcopatem lunensi dominus francescus filium dilectissimi secretaris mei Ser Guidonis de petrasanta.*"

¹¹Florence, for example, tried valiantly to push the Augustinian scholar Luigi Marsili into the bishopric of Florence in the 1380s, but were unable to persuade the pope to accept their choice, despite the office coming vacant three times during the decade; see Brucker, *Renaissance Florence*, 184.

¹²See Michael Bratchel's interesting analysis of church/commune relations for the latter part of the

in various Italian city-states of this period, secular rulers began to utilize the Church in order to enhance their own power and prestige. One of the ways this utilization, or "aristocratization" of the Church was brought about was by the various cities gaining control over the canons of the local cathedral chapters. Giuseppe Benedetto, using Lucca as a test case in this scenario, has proven that this process of the "aristocratization" of the Church was indeed carried out in Lucca as well during the period of Paolo Guinigi: in 1400, the year in which Paolo came to power, only four of the sixteen canons of the cathedral of S. Martino belonged to families which had members in the Lucchese *Anziani* from 1369-1400, but of the next sixteen canons that entered the chapter from June 1401-September 1418, eleven were supporters of the Guinigi government.¹³

Another aspect of the Bizzocchi thesis has to do with the communes gaining influence over the leadership of the Franciscan and Dominican orders in their cities. Bizzocchi claims that by the fifteenth century, the leaders of the two

fifteenth century in *Lucca 1430-1494: The Reconstruction of an Italian City-Republic* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 256-80; on Bizzocchi, see above, n. 1. For the exposition of his basic arguments, see "Chiesa e aristocrazia nella Firenze del Quattrocento," *Archivio storico italiano* 142 (1984): 191-282.

¹³Benedetto, "Potere dei Chierici," 17-18, 28.

orders in various cities across Italy had come to closely resemble the cathedral chapters (and thus, the civic rulers) in terms of social composition. Though this does not hold true in Lucca for the Dominicans of S. Romano since most of the priors there were non-natives, it does for the Franciscans. The Franciscans at S. Frediano in Lucca were from 1414-1430 under the priorship of Dino di Poggio, member of one of Lucca's most ancient families.¹⁴

Paolo knew the importance of establishing good relations not only with the local Church, but also with the Church in Rome. Only a month after had he declared himself *Signore* of Lucca in November 1400 he had an agent, Jacopo Faitinelli, stationed in Rome.¹⁵ Faitinelli was likely sent there originally to announce the change of government in Lucca and to try and garner support for the new regime, but he ended up staying in Rome until at least April 1405, becoming in the meantime a personal favorite of the Roman Pope Boniface IX.¹⁶ There are at least eighteen extant

¹⁴Bratchel, *Lucca 1430-1494*, 271-72.

¹⁵*Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi 1400-1430 in Regesti del R. Archivio di Stato di Lucca*, ed. Luigi Fumi and Eugenio Lazzareschi, Vol. III, pt. ii (Lucca: Giusti, 1925), regesto n. 6, p. 165.

¹⁶In June 1404, Paolo received word from Rome that his request to recall to Lucca the "*nobilis et circumspectus vir*

letters of Paolo to Faitinelli in Rome from the years 1401-1405; the correspondence may be characterized as being an attempt by Lucca to foster good relations with the Pope without conceding too much.

Paolo did his best, for example, to get the latest and most important information through Faitinelli to Rome concerning affairs elsewhere in Italy. He let Boniface know about such things as the movements of troops associated with the Pope of Avignon (Benedict XIII),¹⁷ the danger that Pisa was in due to Florentine aggression,¹⁸ and the widespread confusion in Lombardy at this time as the Duke of Milan's empire was collapsing.¹⁹ In several letters, Faitinelli was instructed to try and establish good relations with Boniface; in others, Paolo's tone was vastly changed. Faitinelli was instructed by Paolo not to concede too much to Boniface, or to take care that he only divulge information to certain officials of the Church. "Open the ears of Pope Boniface and Cardinal Cossa," Paolo wrote to

Iacobus de Faytinellis, ambaxiator vester" was not agreeable to the pope, who had grown very fond of the Lucchese agent; See *ibid.*, regesto n. 345, p. 213-14.

¹⁷A.S.L., *Governo di Paolo Guinigi*, n. 5, c. 32, p. 63.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, n. 5, c. 34v., p. 68.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, n. 5, c. 33, p. 65.

Faitinelli on one occasion after his earlier advice to Rome had been rebuffed.²⁰ In other instances, Paolo instructed Faitinelli to do just the opposite, to say less; in June 1404, he advised him to "always with good integrity excuse yourself on difficult questions by saying you cannot discuss such things without permission."²¹

Moreover, it is clear from Paolo's correspondence with Faitinelli that in some cases Paolo was unhappy with Boniface, and vice versa. In February 1403, Boniface wrote Paolo in astonishment that he had imprisoned Anselm, the abbot of the monastery of S. Salvatore di Sesto, and had continued to withhold him from the jurisdiction of the bishop, which was (according to the pope) not only going against his ecclesiastical liberties, but also was setting a bad example.²² On the other hand, in June 1405, Paolo complained bitterly to Faitinelli about the recent papal proclamation of excommunication and interdict against the Lucchese commune of S. Quirico in the Valdriana, and requested that he do his best to persuade the Pope to remove

²⁰Ibid., n. 5, c. 37, p. 73, "*Apri li orecchi a Angelo (Pope Boniface) et al Signor Benigno (Card. Cossa).*"

²¹Ibid., n. 5, c. 36, p. 71, "*ma sempre con buona honesta ti scusa che tu non ai commissione di tal pratica nè senza licentia.*"

²²*Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi*, regesto n. 282, p. 204.

the bull.²³ That the pendulum was swinging in favor of the communes in their struggle with the Church for supremacy in the early fifteenth century can be seen in a variety of ways, including in the personal correspondence between church officials and the leaders of secular governments.

The character of Lucca's relations with the Church is also revealed by the number of times various pontiffs were willing to make exceptions to the standard procedure of giving church offices, making clear the weak position of the Roman Church and its need to appease others. On several occasions Lucchese citizens were made exempt from certain disqualifications which had been preventing them from ecclesiastical office. In 1400, Boniface exempted Francesco Manfredi, son of Guido, from a requirement that he be of certain age before attaining ecclesiastical benefices.²⁴ Others seeking to join the priesthood were exempted from the traditional disqualification of being of illegitimate birth.²⁵ Nor was it only the leading family or two of the

²³A.S.L, *Governo di Paolo Guinigi*, n. 5, c. 37v., p. 76.

²⁴*Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi*, regesto n. 1, p. 165. Two years later, in 1402, Boniface made Francesco exempt from another prohibition that was keeping him from entering a *studio generale* in order to study civil and canon law, see *ibid.*, regesto n. 60, p. 173.

²⁵*Ibid.*, regesto n. 1403, p. 444.

city who benefitted from a papacy in Rome that was temporarily disposed to giving offices: the Cenami, Arnolfini, Poggio, and Trenta families (among others) of Lucca also pressured Rome to get family members into ecclesiastical offices.²⁶

The most blatant example I have discovered of the manipulation by the popes of the requirements for church office, and of their complete refusal to abide by the traditional steps one usually passed through to get from one stage of the church hierarchy to the next occurred in relation to the rise of Nicolao Guinigi in 1394. When Nicolao was appointed Bishop of Lucca by Pope Boniface IX in January 1394, he was only a cleric in minor orders; by March, however, he had been made sub-deacon, by 4 April he

²⁶Sante Polica, "Le Famiglie del Ceto Dirigente Lucchese dalla Caduta di Paolo Guinigi all' Fine del Quattrocento," in *I Ceti Dirigenti nella Toscana del Quattrocento: Comitato di Studi sulla Storia dei Ceti Dirigenti in Toscana, Atti del V e VI Convegno: Firenze, 10-11 Dicembre 1982; 2-3 Dicembre 1983* (Florence: Francesco Papafava, 1987), 373. Something like this occurs in many cities with ties to Rome; for Florence, for example, see George Holmes, "How the Medici became the Pope's Bankers," in *Florentine Studies: Politics and Society in Renaissance Florence*, ed. Nicolai Rubinstein (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1968), 360, where he states it is "conceivable that in the long period of strained relations under Urban VI and Boniface IX the political colouring of these families [Alberti, Spini, Ricci, and Medici] was a recommendation for them at the Curia."

became deacon, and on 5 April 1394, was elevated to priest. Later that month, Nicolao was consecrated and entered the priesthood.²⁷

Victory of commune over local church is further evident in that in the event that the churches or monasteries in Lucchese territory had issues they wanted addressed, or problems they wanted solved, they tended to look not to Rome -- but to Lucca. Antonius de Casabasciana wrote to Guido Manfredi in September 1419 thanking him for conferment of the office of rector at the church of S. Maria Corte Orlandinghi, but also requesting from him that an altar be built there with the names of those inscribed who built the church.²⁸ In June 1419, Paolo received a request from Antonio degli Alexandri of Florence that he become involved in a dispute that Alexandri had with the monastery of S. Domenico in Pisa -- since the Bishop of Lucca was refusing to deal with the matter any longer.²⁹

In February 1420, the *Anziani* of Pietrasanta complained to Guido about the priest who had been assigned to the principal church there, a man named Nicolao di Ser Piero

²⁷Benedetto, "Potere e Chierici," 15, n. 48.

²⁸*Carteggio di Guido Manfredi*, regesto n. 584, p. 108.

²⁹*Ibid.*, regesto n. 1227, p. 232.

Pandoni. The priest badly governed the church, the *Anziani* argued, by doing such things as denying the sacraments to certain people, and not presiding over the candle-lighting on the morning of "*Sancta Maria Candelaria*" as was his duty -- not to mention that he was entirely unwilling even to enter the church.³⁰ The Pietrasantanese in their petition were clearly looking for Lucca to remove the priest.

Lucca's control over the personnel associated with the churches and monasteries of its territory was evident throughout the thirty years of Paolo Guinigi's government. The Dominican Alessio de Strozzi, of the famous Florentine family who was residing at the Florentine convent of S. Maria Novella, was sent to the convent of S. Romano in Lucca by the order of "*il Maestro*" of the Dominican Order. Behind the order was the initial request of Paolo Guinigi, however, who wanted to restore the religious houses in his lands to places of respect.³¹ In another matter involving S. Romano, Thomas, Prior of the convent, wrote to Guido that in conformity with *their* (meaning Guido's and Paolo's) wishes, two *maestri* had been assigned to the house, one a master in

³⁰Ibid., regesto n. 857, p. 159.

³¹Ibid., regesto n. 143, p. 27.

theology and the other assigned to preaching future Lent sermons.³²

Perhaps where the communal victory over church is most evident in regard to Lucca was Paolo's achievement in getting the papal strictures revoked which had been levelled on the city since Castruccio Castracani's day more than three-quarters of a century earlier. In 1314, Uguccione and Castruccio had plundered Lucca, and among the prizes they looted was a large portion of the papal treasure that had been temporarily stored at S. Frediano by a papal court bound in haste from Rome to Avignon a few years earlier. Ever since this event Lucca had suffered in its relations with the Church; since 1340, Lucca had been obligated to pay a certain fine every year to the papal court, as well as it being mandated that all citizens attend an annual sermon in the church of S. Martino which was focused on the sins of the Lucchese.³³ The papal interdict against Lucca, at least in theory, was still in place in the year 1400 when Paolo Guinigi came to power.

³²Ibid., regesto n. 1099, p. 203.

³³According to the decree of Boniface, Lucca had been subject to "*poenas, provisiones, juramenta, obligationes, sententias, et alia*," see Boniface's bull retracting the penalties printed in A. N. Cianelli, "Dissertazioni sopra la storia lucchese: Sistema di Governo in Lucca dal 1369 fino al 1430," in *Memorie e Documenti per Servire all' Istoria*

Very soon after coming into leadership of the city, however, Paolo began to initiate removal of the papal demands. By early 1401, in the space of a few weeks, he had accomplished the objective as the Lucchese were absolved by Boniface from carrying out these obligations in the future. The Lucchese agreed to obey the Church in all matters in the future, respect ecclesiastical liberties, build a chapel in S. Martino dedicated to Saint Benedict, and provide alms for 1,000 persons -- yet the whole affair may be clearly perceived as a victory for the commune. Removal of the papal interdict against Lucca which had humiliated the city for such a long period helped Paolo's estimate in the eyes of his fellow citizens. It is clear from the wording of the papal bull decreed by Boniface which removed the interdict against Lucca that the matter had been initiated by Paolo. From Sercambi's account it is also evident Paolo was the one responsible for pursuing the matter with Rome from the beginning.³⁴

della Città e Stato di Lucca, vol. II, pt. i (Lucca: Francesco Bertini, 1814), 124-25.

³⁴Giovanni Sercambi, *Le Croniche Lucchesi*, ed. Salvatore Bongi, 3 vols., in *Fonti per la Storia d' Italia* (Rome: Giusti, 1892), 1: 66; where it is stated that Boniface released Lucca from the annual obligations "*a preghiera del comune di Luccha e d' alquanti ciptadini*."

The victory of the communes over the Church was being played out in various places all across Italy at this time, and Lucca was no exception. It was a victory, however, that was far from a complete victory -- primarily because the winners chose not to push their advantage.³⁵ Secular rulers came to understand the Church might be used not only as an ally in foreign affairs, but that the local church could be used as a buttress to their own authority at home. In the same manner that Lucca exerted its will over the *contado* for the sake of state security in the period of Paolo Guinigi, as was seen in the previous chapter, so did it also succeed in establishing a greater influence over the personnel and activities of the Church in Lucchese territory.

Monasticism

Monastic life in general was experiencing great difficulty in Italy at the beginning of the fifteenth century. Some of the problems monasteries faced were the same problems society as a whole encountered, such as plague, famine, and war. The populations of monasteries suffered horribly in times of plague, probably because of the close living quarters of their inhabitants; the Dominican convent of S. Romano in Lucca lost twenty-nine

³⁵Brucker, *Renaissance Florence*, 181-89.

brothers during the Black Death of 1348.³⁶ S. Jacopo de Ripoli in Florence came out even worse, as only three survivors out of a community of one hundred lived through that year's plague, although this is citing an extreme example.³⁷ One result of the devastated populations of monasteries was that in order to refill them quickly they had to accept youth, many of whom had questionable motives for entering, and most of whom were admitted with little concern for their particular religious interests or inclinations.³⁸ Guido Manfredi in 1418 informed the Master General of the Dominican order in Florence that there were no learned brothers at the Dominican convent in Lucca; in addition, he complained, there were many who could care less about their state of ignorance: "I wish that if they are not learned -- that they at least be good!"³⁹

³⁶Innocenzo P. Taurisano, *I Domenicani in Lucca* (Lucca: Baroni, 1914), 32-33.

³⁷Brucker, *Renaissance Florence*, 191.

³⁸Taurisano, *I Domenicani*, 31-33.

³⁹*Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi*, regesto n. 386, p. 77, "non sunt hic fratres, exceptis priore admodum et Vicario, qui litteras norint, qui non tantum literaliter missas, que de raro dicuntur, proferre nesciant, sed frequentatas et que continuo celebrantur, ignorant. E, o utinam, si non docti, saltem boni esse vellent!"

Another source for the troubled times that monastic life in Italy faced was that the papacy had been for the greater part of the fourteenth century located at Avignon in France. This meant that close papal scrutiny over Italian monasteries and their activities had been more difficult to carry out during that time, which allowed for ample time by the beginning of the fifteenth century for the monasteries to have fallen into some bad habits. Furthermore, immediately upon the return of the papacy to Rome in the 1370s, the church erupted into a divisive schism. The effects of the schism were completely numbing to Christian society; the popes cannot have inspired much spiritual resuscitation among their congregations in these years as they were busy leading armies, trying to secure political allies, and attempting to create enemies for the other pope. Finally, monastic society suffered from a lack of organization sufficient to supervise the upbringing and education of the clergy that it once possessed.⁴⁰

Other difficulties the monasteries faced were not so much reflective of the times, but rather were problems they

⁴⁰Giuseppe Benedetto, "Fra Corruzione e Riforme: I monasteri femminili della città e del territorio di Lucca nella seconda metà del Trecento e nel primo trentennio del Quattrocento," in *Ilaria del Carreto e il suo monumento: La donna nell'Arte, la cultura, e la Società del '400*, ed. S. Touissaint (Lucca: San Marco, 1995), 175-76.

seemed to create on their own. Sister Agnes de Sartoi, the abbess of S. Chiara, pleaded with Paulo for help in May 1411 as a loan of 400 florins had come due which had been made to her monastery twenty-three years earlier (1388) by Lazzaro for the building of a *dormitorio*.⁴¹ This case reveals how financially strapped most monasteries had become by the fifteenth century. Nine years later, Sister Agnes had apparently again upset members of Paulo's inner court. She wrote to Guido: "I received the response from the messenger concerning the matter I sent there, from which I have the greatest bitterness and sorrow, and I recognize that I have wandered and erred, but it was done in ignorance."⁴² On other occasions, there appeared to be no doubt why a monastery was about to collapse financially. In January 1417, Paulo wrote to Fr. Manfredino, the "*ministro fratrum Minorum*" in Tuscany, that the reason the monastery was in such poverty was that the brothers did not diligently beg for alms as did the other orders; more importantly, Paulo

⁴¹*Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi*, regesto n. 806, p. 303.

⁴²*Carteggio di Guido Manfredi*, regesto n. 918, p. 171, "Ò ricevuta la risposta dal lettore sopra la materia che vi mandai a parlare, della qual cosa ò avuto grande amaritudine e dolore, e cognoscho che iò errato e fallito, ma ignorantamente questo è stato."

noted, because the brothers perhaps may prefer to take their alms to their own cells.⁴³

Lucca, just as most other cities of Italy at this time, had monasteries that from time to time had members engaging in what were perceived as questionable behaviors. Lucchese criminal courts came to be particularly focused on the sexual activities of the *religiosi* in areas under their jurisdiction. In 1369, the entire community of the female monastery of S. Paolo di Coselli was brought to trial in the Episcopal Tribunal of Lucca; in the end, all the sisters were found guilty of "*carnale peccatum*," and were condemned to prison at the monastery of S. Marco until their death.⁴⁴ The problems apparently continued, as in 1382 Bishop Antonio da Riparia made "*visite pastorali*" to further examine the state of the religious houses; it was reported that the most orderly monastery in 1382 was that of S. Nicolao Novello, but that at S. Quirico, there were two sisters in bad relations with the abbess because she refused to allow them friendships with men.⁴⁵ Though I have found no evidence of

⁴³A.S.L., *Governo di Paolo Guinigi*, n. 6, c. 93, p. 185, "*putantes fortasse quod elemosine usque ad eorum cellulas desirantur*."

⁴⁴Benedetto, "Fra Corruzione," 182-83.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, 186-87.

such harsh treatment of an entire congregation during the years of Paolo Guinigi as that which S. Paolo di Coselli suffered in 1369, the activities of nuns and brothers continued to be a real concern of Lucchese governors well into the fifteenth century.

Three criminal trials involving the sexual misconduct of Lucchese *religiosi* which occurred in the first few months of Paolo's reign reveal that the issue still existed, and may have helped persuade him that stringent reform of the monasteries was necessary to preserving order. In July 1402 occurred a trial of a sister who had abandoned the monastery of S. Bernado without permission, and had gone to reside with a man; the second case involved a priest, Giovanni di Bartolomeo Lupori and a sister of the monastery of S. Paulo di Coselli; and finally, a trial which concerned a canon of the cathedral of S. Martino (Giovanni Nicolai) and the abess of S. Michele nei Monti di Brancoli.⁴⁶

Paolo, along with the Bishop of Lucca, had actually first conceived of the need to reform the female monasteries of Lucca no later than February 1402.⁴⁷ During the *Signore's*

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, " 188.

⁴⁷A.S.L., *Governo di Paolo Guinigi*, n. 5, c. 30, p. 59; in this letter to Faitinelli, Paolo urged him to support the Bishop of Lucca's attempt to clean up the monasteries, and to get a papal bull from Boniface authorizing "*che possa*

visit to inspect Lucchese territories during the next year, he undoubtedly came to more fully understand the extent of the "*disonesto vivere*" occurring in the monasteries. In 1404, the efforts of Paolo and the Bishop of Lucca to reform the pious places of the city and *contado* were finally approved and carried out; on 29 February, the Bishop shut down six female monasteries, the inhabitants of all six moving into the more reputable and well-established houses of S. Giustina and S. Nicolao Novello.⁴⁸ Nor did the Lucchese attempt to keep close watch over the monasteries cease with this massive administrative effort of 1404.

In June 1420, Paolo wrote to the Cardinal of Ursinis to ask that he persuade Pope Martin V to restore control over the monastery of S. Salvatore of Fucecchio, the parish of S. Giovanni of Fucecchio, and the church of S. Bartholomew of Cappiano to its rightful possessor, which was the Lucchese monastery of S. Clare (Gattaviola). These had been wrongfully removed from S. Clare's jurisdiction in 1412, Paolo argued, since they had been ceded to the monastery

visitarli, corregerli, punire, ordinare et statuire sì in de capi come in de le membra tutto cio che li paresse di bizogna."

⁴⁸Ibid., n. 5, c. 32v., p. 64.

long ago by Pope Alexander IV.⁴⁹ Later that summer of 1420, the *Signore* requested from the Cardinal of Brancaccis that the abbey at Pozzevoli not be taken away from the canons of S. Martino since Pope Gregory had given it to the chapter when he was in Lucca in 1408. Its recent decay, Paolo claimed, was not due to the canons but to the "misgivings and negligence of those who in recent times presided over it."⁵⁰

In other cases, Paolo tried to avert mischances such as these and take action first. When Paolo perceived the Dominican Order in Lucca to have fallen into a state of sterility, he asked the Cardinal of Brancacciis to intervene and send from Venice the esteemed Fr. Giovanni Bartolomei da Lucca to resurrect it, so that it once again might become a place of "modesty, self-control, and fasting." This religious house was obviously of great importance to Lucca, for according to Paolo's letter to the Cardinal, "if anyone

⁴⁹Ibid., n. 6, c. 138v., p. 278, "*iam dudum per felicissime recordationis Dominus Allexandrum papam quartum monasterium S. Salvatoris de Fucecchio cum plebe S. Iohannis de Fucecchio et ecclesia S. Bartholomei de Cappiano, Iurisdictionis et Iurium detti monasteri...concessum et collatum fuitur monasterio de Gattaviola quod vulgariter dicitur monasterium S. Clare de Luca, et semper ab eo tempo citra usque ad Annum MCCCCXII.*"

⁵⁰Ibid., n. 6, c. 141v., p. 284, "*culpa et negligentia eorum qui ei retroactis temporibus...*"

wanted to live in a celebrated (holy) place, not only in Italy, but also from foreign nations, they made haste quickly and eagerly to this aforementioned Lucchese convent."⁵¹

Thus, Paolo Guinigi during the first thirty years of the fifteenth century was able to establish a firm grip on the churches and monasteries of Lucchese territory. No stone could be left unturned for this regime in the context of the larger attempt to preserve Lucchese independence. Yet, whatever the motives were in closing down the morally questionable monasteries, Paolo's Christian sincerity cannot be doubted. His desire to purify the city was a moral quest just as it was an attempt at political consolidation. Undoubtedly, at least part of the reason he undertook the campaign to root out indecent living in the monasteries was because he believed such ways of life were not Christian-like.

The *Signore* of Lucca certainly believed in right codes of living, and he was as likely to dismiss an official over some act that was considered immoral as any other type of

⁵¹Ibid., n. 6, c. 144, p. 289, "*tanta modestia, continentia et ciborum abstinentia peditum, ut quisquis non solum apud Italos, sed etiam externas nationes in celebri loco vitam ducere proponeret, ad conventum lucensium cupidus et celer accederet.*"

offense. He evicted, for example, the Augustinian brother Giovanni from the order for the "*immoralità commesse*."⁵² The Lucchese court records of the 1420s are filled with cases of alleged sodomy and male homosexuality, also pointing out the regime's moral concerns.⁵³ Sumptuary laws, established in Lucca in 1331, were kept intact through the Guinigi regime, although they were sometimes eased for special occasions. Still, in 1409 there was a decree passed whose aim was to rid of the "*super fluitates expensarum*" of women's dress.⁵⁴

Paolo's real concern, however, lay only with the visible church, with the buildings and the personnel of the churches and monasteries of Lucchese territory; the invisible church was something he would have thought to be only the domain of properly-trained *religiosi*. In a letter to the Priors of Siena in January 1420, he claimed that as far as ecclesiastical matters go, he left them up to the

⁵²*Carteggio di Guido Manfredi*, regesto n. 814, p. 151.

⁵³ Bratchel, *Lucca 1430-1494*, 14.

⁵⁴See Marco Paoli, *Arte e committenza privata a Lucca nel Trecento e nel Quattrocento* (Lucca: Maria Pacini Fazzi, 1986), 61-62.

experts.⁵⁵ Paolo would have felt that to interfere in the affairs of the visible church would be beneficial, even necessary, to the state as a whole; but, to tread in doctrinal matters would have been detrimental to his true Christian beliefs. Yet Lucca's close involvement with the personnel and activities that went on in its territory are reflective not of a desire to induce conformity on its populace, but rather of a desire to keep a close handle on the overall security of the state.

Lucca in the Great Schism

The Great Schism (1378-1417) of the late medieval church began after a group of cardinals unhappy with the election of Urban VI (r.1378-89) as pope in 1378 abandoned him and named another pope, Clement VII. Clement (r.1378-94) established his court in France at Avignon, where the papacy had been centered for much of the fourteenth century, while Urban resided in Rome. For the next forty years until the election of Martin V at Constance (r. 1417-31) as the one true pope in 1417, Christendom was deeply divided between the rival candidates of Rome and Avignon. The situation became even more complicated after the Council of Pisa in 1409 when both the then popes Gregory XII (r. 1406-1415) and

⁵⁵A.S.L., *Governo di Paolo Guinigi*, n. 6, c. 131, p. 263, "*Cum autem de rebus ecclesiasticis illis delibertionem et*

Benedict XIII (r. 1394-1423) were deposed and Alexander III (r. 1409-10) elected as the valid claimant of the holy see. The problems arose when the two deposed popes refused to accept the ruling of the council, and thus, for a time there were three who claimed to be the legitimate vicar of Christ. One consequence of the Great Schism was that now the popes were forced to seek others to join their cause.⁵⁶ Lucca used this new situation of a weakened papacy for its own benefit at the beginning of the fifteenth century.

The first point that should be made concerning Lucca's relations with the various schism popes is that they remained obedient to the Roman Urbanist tradition -- not only up to the Council of Pisa in June 1409 like virtually every other Italian city -- but for some time afterward, perhaps as late as 1412. Why Lucca did not immediately adhere to the decision of the Council of Pisa was mainly due to their alliance after 1408 with Ladislas, the King of

decisionem ad quos de iure pertinent..."

⁵⁶Though it is generally true that England, Flanders, Germany and the city-states of Italy mostly supported the Roman popes, while France, Spain, and Scotland favored the Avignon popes, both sides still were active propagandists against their rivals, excommunicating them, hurling insult after insult at them, appealing to various heads of state across Europe to uphold their edicts, and other types of aggression. There were always exceptions, however; for example, Genoa removed its support from the Roman popes, while the French government from 1398-1403 removed its support of the Avignonese pope, Benedict XIII.

Naples, a topic that will be discussed further below.⁵⁷ In short, whatever stance Lucca took at any one point in regard to the popes of the schism may be explained by it being the stance that gave them the greatest possible security.

Lucca particularly benefitted at the onset of the Great Schism because there had been deteriorating relations between Florence and the Church in the 1370s, which had culminated in the War of the Eight Saints (1375-78). As a result of the war, Lucchese bankers, especially the Guinigi, took over the profitable position as papal bankers from the Florentines, who no longer were in the good graces of Rome.⁵⁸ Yet, despite seemingly every motivation to stay on good terms with the first Roman pope, Urban VI, much

⁵⁷Ladislas of Durazzo (1380-1414) was King of Naples from age six until his death. After first conquering Naples in 1399, he turned his attention northward. He became an increasing threat to various cities of the papal states and Tuscany from 1404-1414, beginning with his takeover of Rome in 1404, although earlier he had been the protector of the Roman line of popes. Ladislas first became involved in Tuscan affairs after the Pisan *Signore* Gabriel Maria Visconti began to consider ceding Pisa to the French in 1404-05, which would have been a victory not only for the French Pope Benedict XIII, but also would have helped the cause of Ladislas' own rival, Louis II of Anjou, the other claimant to the throne of Naples.

⁵⁸Holmes, "How the Medici," 359-60. The Lucchese were the main papal bankers from 1377-1392, the Guinigi Company being used by the papacy as well as those of Lando Moriconi and Bartholomeo Turco.

evidence points to Lucca's hesitancy to endorse him fully. Even though Lucca was officially loyal to the Roman line of popes from 1378-1412, it was a thinly-veiled loyalty without much zeal behind it. This is not because they did not truly favor Urban over the French candidate, Clement VII; indeed most Italian cities, Lucca included, were happy to finally have a native-born Italian pope. But the Lucchese did not want to offend the French pope (or his allies) if they could at all avoid it. French troops, after all, were often within range of Lucchesia in these years. In short, Lucca like the large majority of Italian cities, favored Urban; they just were not in a position to be active propagandists for him.

For example, the Lucchese received with joy the news that Urban had been elected in April 1378, providing the holy see with an Italian-born pope for the first time in decades; yet in December 1378, and again in March 1379, the republican government of Lucca did not feel it could reject proposed visits from representatives of the "anti-pope" Clement. These visits, moreover, were received so courteously that they were upsetting to Urban.⁵⁹ The Lucchese penchant for a non-committal foreign policy may be

⁵⁹Christine Meek, *Lucca 1369-1400: Politics and Society in an Early Renaissance City-State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 153, n.1.

seen again in 1382, when constant delay tactics and evasive responses were given to Urban's representatives when they were calling for Lucca to join the war against Louis of Anjou of France.⁶⁰ Finally, Urban's visit to Lucca in 1386 is very revealing. When Lucca finally accepted the pope's request to visit Lucca in October 1386 (the initial request was made in April), it was done only with the stipulation that the pope would agree that none of the armed troops that would accompany him on his journey were to be allowed inside the city. The Lucchese supported Urban -- but they trusted no one when it came to putting their state at risk.

Turning to a discussion of Lucca's relations with the popes of the schism during the period of Paolo Guinigi, it is evident that in the aftermath of the death of the Duke of Milan, the Lucchese made a wise choice in whom they would attempt to align themselves with in the future. Apparently more clearly than other Tuscan and Lombard cities, the Lucchese perceived the potential that lay in the young King of Naples, Ladislas. As early as 1403 they were corresponding with Ladislas in an attempt to build cordial relations. The King thanked Guido for the "affection which you hold for us which arises from your innate virtue, news

⁶⁰Ibid., 162, n. 33.

which was brought us by Bartholomeus, your venerable and pious orator and our faithful disciple."⁶¹ In responding to a gift sent by the Lucchese in May of the following year, Ladislás again reminded Guido of his devotion to them."⁶² In September 1404, the Lucchese desire to tie themselves to the young king became evident for all to see when the first-born son of Paolo Guingi was named in honor of the king.⁶³ In June 1405, Gabriele Maria Visconti, still hanging by a thread to the inheritance of Pisa that his father had bestowed upon him in his will, received an offer from Ladislás to join a league with him, a league which included as a member the *Signore* of Lucca.⁶⁴ From this point until his death, the Lucchese never faltered in their attempt to

⁶¹*Carteggio di Guido Manfredi*, regesto n. 3, p. 1, "de affectione quam ex innata virtute tua venerabilis et religiosus frater Bartholomeus orator et devotus noster erga nos habere te retulit, referimus grates dignas."

⁶²*Ibid.*, regesto n. 5, p. 1, "parati sumus devotioni tue...cognoscentes tue sinceritatis et devocionis affectum procedere ex dilectionis fervore quam ad nos ipsa devocio tua gerit."

⁶³On 24 September 1404 Paolo and Ilaria had their first son, who "a petitione del re Lancilao di Napoli, fu bategiato in suo nome proprio per uno barone del dicto re...Al quale batismo funno molti venerabili ciptadini di Lucha e molte venerabilissime donne; e puoseli nome Lancilao," Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 77.

⁶⁴Francesco Cognasso, "Il ducato visconteo da Gian Galeazzo a Filippo Maria," in *Storia di Milano*, 17 vols. (Milan: Treccani degli Alfieri, 1955), 6: 114-115.

remain on good terms with Ladislas -- much to the chagrin of several of their neighbors.⁶⁵

When Boniface died in October 1404, Ladislas immediately moved his army into Rome so that by the time the next Roman pope Innocent VII was elected, he was elected with Ladislas' troops presiding over the city. Ladislas' control of the Roman line of popes dates from Innocent's reign and it continued virtually until his death in 1414; Innocent VII himself, in fact was an old subject of the King, the Sulmonese Cosimo dei Migliorati. Ladislas forced Innocent to accept a popular government in Rome, with the King to act as arbiter between the pope and commune if disputes arose.⁶⁶

After Innocent's brief reign ended with his death in November 1406, the Roman line was restored with the papacy of Gregory XII. With the ascension of Gregory the call to end the Schism became even more urgent, led by Florence. Both Gregory and the Pope of Avignon, now feeling increased

⁶⁵Florence, for example, carried out land devastations in Lucchese territory because they believed that Paolo Guinigi was responsible for urging Ladislas to come to Tuscany in 1408-09; Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 149.

⁶⁶Peter Partner, *The Papal State Under Martin V: The Administration and Government of the temporal power in the early Fifteenth Century* (London, 1958), 16-17.

pressure from all sides to end the schism, claimed that they were willing to step down from the office if their rival would also resign in order that a third person could then be elected for the sake of ending the division in Christendom.⁶⁷ It was decided in April 1407 that a suitable meeting place for the two popes was at Savona, an Italian port city southwest of Genoa, but which at the time was under French control.

The problem was that neither pope was in any particular hurry to lay down his office, though Gregory was the more fearful of the two of the consequences of being forced to meet by secular rulers, their cardinals, or others. After some delay, Gregory decided Savona was not a suitable place and proposed meeting instead at Pietrasanta in Lucchese territory.⁶⁸ The French pope agreed to this and finally, after more delays Gregory arrived in Lucca in late January

⁶⁷Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 121; also *Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi*, regesto n. 435, p. 230.

⁶⁸Papal agents contacted Lucca in December 1407 concerning permission for "*accessu ac residentia per nos ad Civitatem lucanum et terram Petresancte comitatus lucanum cum nostra Curia vel eorum altera faciendis, occasione extirpationis scismatis et pro consecutione desiderabilis unionis;*" see *Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi*, regesto n. 447, p. 232.

1408, while the galleys of Benedict XIII sailed from Savona and proceeded to the nearby town of Portovenere.⁶⁹

Although given a grand reception upon entering the outskirts of Lucca at Pietrasanta, where Gregory's assemblage was initially lodged, it cannot be said the Lucchese were happy to have their papal guests. The primary reason was that accompanying the pope to Lucca were 450 knights.⁷⁰ Certainly once Gregory was in Lucca the hosts were hopeful of a quick resolution between the two popes, and a quick exit by Gregory and his armed guards. They got neither. Paolo refused Gregory's request of occupying certain castles in Lucchese territory that were deemed too vital to give up for the security of the state.⁷¹ Throughout the winter and spring of 1408 the two popes sent stipulations, requests, warnings, and other types of messages to one another, but never met even though only a few miles apart. Though little was accomplished as far as ending the schism in these few months of 1408 when the popes

⁶⁹Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 127-29.

⁷⁰*Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi*, regesto n. 482, p. 239.

⁷¹Mancini, *Storia di Lucca* (Florence: Sansoni, 1950), 191.

were in Lucchese territory, Paolo Guinigi did receive the gift of *rosa d' oro* from Gregory in March.⁷²

Meanwhile, as Gregory continued to delay meeting with Benedict XIII, Ladislas again took control of Rome and much of the surrounding area of the papal states in April 1408.⁷³ This action was perceived as a threat to the Florentines since the papal states bordered their territory to the south and to the east; it was more than just a threat to Siena as their lands were part of those already being devastated.⁷⁴ According to Sercambi, Florence, believing that an end to the schism of the church was necessary before Ladislas consolidated his gains in the papal states and moved toward Tuscany, and losing hope that Gregory was ever going to

⁷²This token marked the highest "*successo della politica ecclesiastica e il riconoscimento della Signoria di Paolo Guinigi*;" see Eugenio Lazzareschi, "I Domenicani nel Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi," *Memorie Domenicane* XLIII (1926), 479.

⁷³Gregory by 1408, like Innocent earlier, had become a puppet of Ladislas. Since Ladislas did not want the Schism to end because he feared a French pope would be named to replace the two current ones (which would mean a general French resurgence in Italy), this gave Gregory even more incentive to continue avoiding meeting with the French pope.

⁷⁴C.C. Bayley, *War and Society in Renaissance Florence: The 'De Militia' of Leonardo Bruni* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961), 77.

consent to meet with Benedict, decided to secretly negotiate with the Avignonese pope.⁷⁵

It was agreed that the Florentines would attempt to get Gregory to go to Pisa (under Florentine control since 1406) under their protection, where he could be watched more closely and kept away from Ladislas, while Benedict should proceed temporarily to Genoa, a city which until September 1409 was friendly to the Florentines.⁷⁶ There was also beginning to be much discussion in these months at secular courts, churches, the University of Paris and many other places concerning the holding of a church council to settle the matter of the schism since apparently neither pope was willing to take steps to end the schism. The "via cessionis," from 1378-1408 favored by most of Christendom as the preferred way to end the schism, was now clearly giving way to the "via consilii."⁷⁷

⁷⁵Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 129, "Nicolò da Uzano & messer Mazo delli Albisi, con alquanta compagnia, et praticando col predicto papa socto nome d' unione, vedendo lo comune di Firenze che i re Lancilao era per aver Roma & che tucto di predea delle terre di santa Chieza, dubitando di tale re, conchiuseno secretamente col dicto papa che farenno tanto che papa Gregorio andare' a Pisa socto la loro signoria."

⁷⁶In September 1409, Genoa removed their French governor Boucicault from power, and entered into an alliance with Ladislas.

⁷⁷The King of France, for example, stated that if the Schism were not settled by the day of the Ascension of 1408 that he

Gregory made matters worse for himself when he broke a promise made at the time of his election not to elect any additional cardinals unless it was necessary to maintain an equal number as the Avignonese popes. On 4 May 1408, Gregory named four additional cardinals while in Lucca, two of which were his nephews.⁷⁸ His cardinals, already unhappy with Gregory over the numerous delays, were now ready to flee to the protection of Florence and begin proceedings for a future council. Gregory had promised the Florentines in April 1408 that he would go to Pisa with them, but when confronted with the matter later he responded, "Florentine ambassadors, you say that I promised you to go to Pisa, and you speak the truth. But I did not tell you neither in what manner nor when I will do so."⁷⁹

The majority of cardinals did indeed escape to Pisa at this point, despite the grave warnings of Gregory that all

was going to deny obedience to both popes. Nino Valeri, *L' Italia nell' Eta dei Principati: dal 1343-1516* (Verona: Arnaldo Mondadori, 1949), 356-57.

⁷⁸One of the four cardinals named in 1408 at Lucca was the noted Cardinal of Florence, Giovanni Dominici; for Dominici's activities in relation to the Schism, see George Holmes, *The Florentine Enlightenment, 1400-1450* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 57-58; also see Lazzareschi, "I Domenicani," 478-79.

⁷⁹Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 131-32, "ambasciatori fiorentini, voi dite che io vi promissi il venire a Pisa, et dite il vero. Ma io non vi dissi a che modo nè quando."

honors and benefices would be lost for anyone who left.⁸⁰ After some of the cardinals had abandoned Lucca, Gregory sent out some of his troops to try and bring them back forcefully. A few managed to escape to the safety of village populations, before making their way on to Pisa; others were caught and brought back to Lucca where they were briefly imprisoned.⁸¹ On 16 May 1408 Gregory posted in all the churches of Lucca his grievances against the cardinals; they were ordered to return within a certain number of days or else lose all ecclesiastical honors.⁸² None, however, did, and Gregory was now in the direst of situations.

Paolo Guinigi, however, found no justification in detaining the cardinals and after a few days released them from the Lucchese prisons;⁸³ Paolo's freeing of the cardinals in order that they might go to Pisa to participate

⁸⁰"...di perdere tucti honori et beneficii qualunque de' suprascripti si fusse partito di Luccha, o che si dovesse o volesse partire, e i partiti, se in fra certi dì non fusseno ritornati, si intendessero, chi contrafacesse, incorrere in nella pena dicta," Ibid., 3: 140.

⁸¹Ibid., 3: 135.

⁸²Ibid., 3: 140.

⁸³Sercambi wrote that upon Paolo's release of the cardinals, "*tucta Luccha fu meravigliosamente stupefacta, e' Fiorentini lieti che aveano avuto loro intentione di tale cosa;*" Ibid., 3: 136.

in a council that was being condemned by Gregory (while he was there in Lucca, moreover) reflects that the Lucchese were doing everything possible not to give the impression they were being overly friendly to one side.⁸⁴ By mid-May 1408 all of Gregory's cardinals had gone to Pisa, except for the four he had recently created. Once there, planning began in earnest along with some cardinals who had left the Avignonese pope to hold a special council in which the issue of the Schism was to be addressed; it was determined in August 1408 that the Council was to be held the following year in Pisa.⁸⁵

Meanwhile, Ladislas' military successes in the spring of 1408 continued to mount. By the summer he controlled not only Rome, but all the lands of the Church in Patrimony and in Umbria, and had begun to threaten Cortona, Arezzo, and other passes into Tuscany.⁸⁶ As the situation worsened for Florence, they made an alliance in May with Baldassare Cossa, the papal-legate of Bologna, to try and save what was

⁸⁴Mancini, *Storia di Lucca*, 191; it should also be noted that Paolo continued to correspond with the French pope in this pivotal year of 1408. See *Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi*, registi nos. 567, 569, 577, 578, 580, 584, 585.

⁸⁵Holmes, *Florentine Enlightenment*, 59.

⁸⁶Partner, *Papal State under Martin V*, 19.

remaining of the papal state from coming under Ladislas' control.⁸⁷

The Lucchese, on the other hand, in June 1408 sent a secret embassy to Ladislas to congratulate him on his recent acquisitions, and before the end of the month, had entered into a formal league with the King of Naples.⁸⁸ This alienated Lucca from the Florentines and others, and Lucca would pay for it in the future, but at the time it was the practical move for the Lucchese to make: Ladislas was the most powerful military figure in Italy after the death of Giangaleazzo until his own death in 1414. It would have been foolish for Paolo *not* to have sought alliance with him.

The beginning of 1409 saw similar successes for Ladislas. At the beginning of the year Perugia was taken by the King, and he was disposed to wage war against the Florentines, according to Sercambi, since he believed they were responsible for the cardinals being in Pisa readying to end the Schism.⁸⁹ Florence was still reconciliable with

⁸⁷Partner, "Florence and the Papacy," 387.

⁸⁸Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 140-42.

⁸⁹Sercambi was prone to blame Florence for many things, including for being the cause of the division in the Church: "*O astutia di Fiorentini et sagacità, con quanto provvedimento avete diviso il collegio de' cardinali dal capo loro, cioè dal papa! E non avete guardato a che ruina viene la Chieza per tale divizione,*" *Le Croniche*, 3: 136.

Ladislas during the first two months of 1409, but their mood changed in March when the king seized Cortona, lay siege on Arezzo, and resumed land devastations in Sienese territory.⁹⁰ Florence tried last-gasp negotiations with Ladislas with the demands that Perugia be freed, and that he sever his ties with Lucca and Paolo Guinigi. In the following month, a war *balia* was created in Florence, and from this point, conflict was inevitable.⁹¹ The Florentines blamed Paolo for being responsible for inducing Ladislas to come to Tuscany; according to Sercambi, they plundered Lucchese lands on several occasions in retaliation.⁹² Though 1409 had begun well for Ladislas, by mid-year he was running into serious difficulties. In June 1409, an alliance was agreed upon against Ladislas by a powerful league consisting of Florence, Siena, Louis II of Anjou, and Baldassare Cossa, a force which by the end of the year had begun to halt the

⁹⁰Gene Brucker, *The Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), 230.

⁹¹*Ibid.*, 229.

⁹²Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 149, "...dando suono che il predicto signore fusse stato chagione d' avere facto somuovere il dicto re del venire in Toschana, più volte deliberonno chavalchare et danneggiare il terreno di Lucha."

advance of Ladislas and inflict some defeats of their own on his troops.⁹³

At the Council of Pisa in June 1409, a widely announced event that attracted some 500 secular leaders from around Europe, the cardinals of the two popes quickly deposed Gregory XII and Benedict XIII, and elected as the true pope Alexander V. Most of Christendom after June 1409 accepted the conciliar Pisan (or perhaps more correctly "Florentine") Pope Alexander V; only Ladislas and Lucca continued to give their support to Roman legitimism. The Avignonese pope Benedict XIII had the support of no one, as even the King of France favored the newly-elect. Lucchese reluctance to accept Alexander may be seen in the writings of Sercambi. He wrote that at the Council of Pisa, the cardinals made many protests and recommendations, which in Lucca were not approved of.⁹⁴ He did not feel the election of Alexander had cured the ills of the division in the Church, rather it had made things worse: "Now Christianity and the Church are more divided than before since at the present there have been

⁹³Brucker, *Civic World*, 233; Valeri, *L' Italia*, 359-60; Bayley, *War and Society*, 77.

⁹⁴Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 159, "le quali qui non s' aprovano, però che non si sa se sono seguiti iuridichamente nè cattolicamente e in ciò pecchare non si vorre."

named three popes.”⁹⁵ Gregory XII obviously felt the same. Departing Lucca after a half-year’s stay in July 1408 for Siena, he wrote to Paolo in September that Alexander V has strayed from the Church under the pretext of seeking union, and he urged Paolo to treat him as a rebel.⁹⁶

What may best reveal the uneasiness the Lucchese must have felt about what was going to happen at the Council of Pisa was that Paolo prohibited the bishops and clergy of Lucchese territory from attending the council’s sessions.⁹⁷ Considering what many in attendance may have thought about any Lucchese representatives in attendance, it may have been a humane move on Paolo’s part not to send anyone. The Council, however, requested in June 1409 that he send a prelate to represent Lucca at the proceedings. But Paolo, seeing that much had already been done in Pisa without his consent or without any Lucchese representatives in attendance, declined to send anyone. Sercambi wrote that Paolo responded in his usual, respectful manner, alleging how much danger Lucca would incur if it broke its promises

⁹⁵Ibid., 3: 163, *“Ora la cristianità e la chiesa esser molto più diviza che prima, perchè al presente tre s’ intictolano papi.”*

⁹⁶*Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi*, regesto n. 642, p. 263.

⁹⁷Mancini, *Storia di Lucca*, 191.

and opposed the Holy Roman Church, as they had just been reconciled with Rome after the long period of being under papal inderdict.⁹⁸

There were at last some diplomatic overtures from Lucca to the newly-crowned Alexander in Pisa. In October 1409, an embassy was sent to Alexander led by Nicolao Arnolfini and Stefano d' Jacopo di Poggio, who were well-received by the Pope and who claimed Alexander openly demonstrated his benevolence toward Paolo and the state of Lucca.⁹⁹ It is not surprising that during the latter half of 1409 and into 1410 that the Lucchese would have become more conducive to the wishes of their neighbors, as Lucca's ally Ladislas had finally begun to suffer defeat at the hands of the League that had been established to oppose him.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 153, "*diliberò rispondere con honesto modo che s' apparteneva a lui. Alegando in quanto pericolo incorrea Lucha se contrafacesse a quello che già promesso fu a santa chieza, quando fu riconciliata dallo interdicto che papa Iohanni .xxii. avea facto contra Lucha...E con quelle scuze et ragioni fecie il predicto signore chiaro il collegio de' cardinali et altri prelati.*"

⁹⁹Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi, regesto n. 47, appendix, p. 478.

¹⁰⁰The League's army by mid-1409 was headed by some of the most notable mercenaries of the day, including Malatesta dei Malatesta, Muzio Attendolo Sforza, Braccio da Montone, Paolo Orsini (who had abandoned Ladislas); see Valeri, *L' Italia*, 360.

As early as April 1409 Ladislas had begun to be pushed back southward. When he set out from Orvieto for Siena, he was met by this powerful group of mercenary companies for the first time, and was halted near Arezzo in the early summer. By October 1409, the League had begun to free some cities that Ladislas had recently come to possess.¹⁰¹ The prospects for the newly-elected Pope Alexander suddenly appeared much better, but he died soon after in May 1410. This spelled disaster for Lucca as the pontiff named to replace him was Baldassare Cossa, the old papal-legate of Bologna -- who had come to dislike the Lucchese over the years, doing so moreover without much regard to making a secret of it.

Sercambi wrote that Cossa, who became Pope Giovanni XXIII in 1410, had a grudge against Lucca for some time before becoming pope. He once tried to persuade the troops of the French king to plunder Lucchese lands; Lucca escaped harm on this occasion, as the French king refused to allow it based on his previous good relations with Paolo Guinigi.¹⁰² Giovanni XXIII had close relations with Florence,

¹⁰¹Partner, *Papal State Under Martin V*, 20.

¹⁰²Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 169, "messer Baldassari sollicitò le genti de re Luizi ch' erano in Valdiserchio che venissero in sul terreno di Lucha a dannegiare....Il dicto re Luizi rispondendo: come vorrò io che le miei genti

and this perhaps best explains the new pope's attitude toward Lucca.¹⁰³ Sercambi, wondering how such a worldly warlord could become pope, determined that it must have been "through love or through force."¹⁰⁴ When Paolo was informed of Giovanni XXIII's ascension to the papacy in June 1410, he was warned by many cardinals of the evil intentions the new pontiff had against him and against Lucca for many reasons.¹⁰⁵ Paolo's reaction to the rise of Giovanni to the papal throne is not surprising. When the new pope sent an embassy to Genoa to announce his ascension, it was instructed to stop on the way at Lucca to announce the change there as well; when told of the news Paolo gave to the informants only those responses that were necessary for the protection of Lucca.¹⁰⁶

faccino novità al signore Paulo di Lucca, che ò tanto honore ricevuto da quel signore? E volete che io sia ingrato del servizio ricevuto? per certo questo non farei mai."

¹⁰³Holmes, *Florentine Enlightenment*, 59.

¹⁰⁴Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 165, "tra per amore o per forza."

¹⁰⁵Ibid., 3: 181, "Paolo Guinigi di Luccha da molti cardinali del predicto papa notificato che il dicto electo avea mala et ria intentione contra del dicto signore Paulo per più rispetti."

¹⁰⁶Ibid., 3: 177, "come savio, die' a quelli inbasciatori quelle risposte che bizognavano alla salvessa di Lucca."

Lucca hesitated initially in sending formal congratulations and recognition of his new office to Pope Giovanni, but by June 1410 Paolo had become convinced it was the prudent step to take, despite having many differences with the new pope.¹⁰⁷ On 30 June 1410 an embassy set out for Pope Giovanni in Bologna, headed by the Bishop of Lucca, Ciuchino Avogadi, and Stefano di Jacopo di Poggio. There had to have been some apprehension amongst this embassy bound for Bologna, but upon arriving the anxiety was relieved, as the Pope accepted the Lucchese agents and their various gifts graciously.¹⁰⁸

Lucca's touchy situation was relieved somewhat at the beginning of 1411 when their ally Ladislas was finally able to persuade the Florentines to withdraw from their own league and sign a separate peace with him.¹⁰⁹ Moreover, in the next year Ladislas was even able to induce peace, though

¹⁰⁷Ibid., 3: 181, "*i dicti cardinali si mossero a stringere et pregare il dicto signore a dovere fare visitare il dicto electo.*"

¹⁰⁸*Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi*, regesto n. 49, appendix, p. 478.

¹⁰⁹Ladislas in this agreement was to return Cortona and other nearby castles, while Florence was to drop its demand that 80,000 florins be returned (from an earlier confiscation); see Bayley, *War and Society*, 78-79.

short-lived, with Pope Giovanni.¹¹⁰ It was at this time that Ladislas dropped all previous ties to the Roman candidate Gregory XII and gave his nominal support to Giovanni XXIII; it is no surprise that letters of a much more sincere and pious tone began to be sent from Lucca to Pope Giovanni around this time as well.¹¹¹ Lucca was to continue to give nominal support to Giovanni XXIII until the election of Martin V in 1417.

Lucca's relations with the papacy during the years of the Great Schism reflect above all their desire to remain an independent state. Initially they were able to be more open about their hopes for the Roman pope and for the division in the church being healed since all their Italian neighbors agreed with them. After 1408, however, when a formal alliance was made with the King of Naples, and especially after the Council of Pisa in June 1409, the Lucchese were forced to be very low-key about their persuasions concerning the Schism. Their concern was not which of the two (or

¹¹⁰Partner, "Florence and the Papacy," 388.

¹¹¹Ladislas' peace with Pope Giovanni XXIII was made in the summer of 1412; in September of that year, Paolo wrote to the *commissario* in Bologna that he was happy to hear of Bologna's return to obedience of Giovanni. In November 1412, Paolo wrote to the Pope himself concerning his happiness that Ladislas now recognized him as the true pontiff. A.S.L., *Governo di Paolo Guinigi*, n. 6, c. 24v., p. 48; n. 6, c. 27, p. 53.

three) popes was the best spiritual leader for Christendom, but which was the best for maintenance of the political *status quo* in Italy. And thus is glimpsed a vital difference in the way the Lucchese perceived the Church during the late *Trecento* and early *Quattrocento* as opposed to their neighbor Florence: Whereas Florence "wanted a compliant and distant pontiff, who would give his moral support to her diplomatic objectives, but who would make no demands for help,"¹¹² -- the Lucchese did not want a pope detached from the temporal affairs of the contemporary Italian political scene. Lucca needed the papacy and the papal state to help uphold a balance of power in Italy, chiefly to act as guard against that very neighbor of hers, Florence.

¹¹²Brucker, *Civic World*, 114.

CHAPTER 7

CULTURE

When Lorenzo Trenta decided in 1412 to have a chapel built in his family's name in the church of S. Frediano in Lucca, he determined to spare no expense. He was at the height of his career, and in that year had been chosen as one of Paolo Guinigi's private *consiglieri*.¹ A member of a wealthy Lucchese silk-merchant family who spent much time abroad, Trenta likely felt he should take advantage of his stay in Lucca that year to tend to family and civic matters, such as the construction of the chapel that came to be known as S. Riccardo.² Wanting the project to be in capable hands

¹See Marco Paoli, "Jacopo della Quercia e Lorenzo Trenta: nuove osservazioni e ipotesi per la cappella in S. Frediano di Lucca," *Antichità Viva* 19 (1980), 27.

²The Trenta provide a good example of a leading Lucchese family who spent a great deal of time engaged in business in foreign lands, but which maintained close ties with their native city as well. The family had been active in France and Flanders since the fourteenth century; in 1390, Lorenzo's brother Galvano lived in Paris, in 1395 sold jewels to the Duke of Borgogna, and in 1406 loaned liv. 14,851 to him. See L. Mirot and E. Lazzareschi, "Lettere di Mercanti Lucchesi da Bruges e da Parigi," *Bollettino Storico Lucchese* 1 (1929), 166-69. From the correspondence of Paolo and Guido Manfredi it is clear Lorenzo himself spent much time abroad in Paris; for instance in 1407, he wrote to Lucca from there stating he would return to Lucca within a year; see *Carteggio di Guido Manfredi, Cancelliere della*

before his departure again from his homeland, he hired the talented Sienese sculptors Jacopo della Quercia and Giovanni di Francesco da Imola to complete the building of the chapel. The two sculptors, especially della Quercia, had established good reputations as workers in marble by 1412; a few years earlier della Quercia had carved the funerary monument of Paolo's wife Ilaria, a masterful work still on display today in the cathedral of S. Martino in Lucca.³

Before the chapel was completed, however, the two Sienese sculptors became engaged in a scandal that threatened their artistic reputations; they became involved with a married woman, Chiara Malpigli, who, though apparently residing with a husband of some wealth, had come into need of money. Her need of money had led her to Jacopo della Quercia and Giovanni da Imola at their workshop inside

Repubblica di Lucca, Segretario della Signoria di Paolo Guinigi, in *Regesti dal R. Archivio di Stato*, ed. Luigi Fumi, vol. III, pt.ii (Pescia: Benedetti, 1933), regesti nos. 11, 12, p. 2-3.

³The Ilaria project of della Quercia, one of his earliest major works, is important in that it provides a good example of early Renaissance sculpture as it was carved in the form of an ancient Roman sarcophagus; in addition, it may be considered the most significant work of art brought to fruition in Paolo's regime. It was completed sometime between Ilaria's death in December 1405 and the end of 1408. Da Imola may have been involved with Jacopo on this project as well. See James Beck and Aurelio Amendola, *Ilaria del Carretto di Jacopo Della Quercia* (Milan: Amilcare Pizzi, 1988), 11-13.

S. Frediano where they worked on Trenta's chapel. She began to pawn off to the two sculptors some of the prized possessions belonging to her husband in return for cash. These possessions included such things as silk clothes, ivory-works, an overcoat, an "agnus dei" made of silver, and other objects, all of which came to total (her husband later claimed) some 200 florins worth of goods.⁴ In addition, it was alleged that the relations of Chiara and Giovanni went beyond the realm of shady business-deals. At the trial, there were allegations of sexual involvement between the two, though Giovanni denied it.⁵ Giovanni, attempting to lay all blame on Chiara, alleged that she wrote six letters

⁴Giovanni Malpigli, a relative of Chiara's husband who was looking for retribution, wrote to Paolo Guinigi on 18 December 1413 that "...io penso che sia noto alla vostra Signoria dello abbominevole e vituperoso cazo occorsomi di mia cugnata, sia due volte per difecto e cagione di lei e operatione de' suoi parenti, cioè del cuzino carnale e di due altri ladroncelli senesi pichiapietre," Quoted in Eugenio Lazzareschi, "La dimora a Lucca d' Jacopo della Guercia e di Giovanni da Imola," *Bullettino Senese di Storia Patria* 31 (1924), 91.

⁵"*Constitutus personaliter coram capitano custodie lucane civitatis [Anthonio Nisterni de Tuderto] magister Iohannes magistri Francisci de Ymola sculptor lapidum in quadam salecta parvula palatij residentie ipsius capitani, et primo interrogatus per dictum dominum capitaneum si unquam carnaliter congnoverit dominam Claram uxorem Nicolai Malpili de Luca, dixit et respondit quod non,*" Ibid., 93.

describing her burning love for him.⁶ In the end, however, it was the foreign artist who was punished. Giovanni's more talented companion Jacopo della Quercia, who was initially charged with the harboring of stolen goods, was later found not guilty of all charges, and allowed to return to Siena, where he soon commenced his masterpiece, the *fonte Gaia*, located now in the *Palazzo Pubblico* in Siena.⁷ Giovanni da Imola was not so fortunate.

Giovanni was brought to trial in April 1414 by a judge who opened the case on the basis of hearing from a "trustworthy" person (all that was required) that "in the past months of November and December 1413, the aforementioned master Giovanni ran rampantly through the city of Lucca conducting himself disgracefully and in an unbecoming way."⁸ He was condemned to prison in Lucca after being convicted of theft, or the intent to offend ("*furto, o d'istigazione a delinquere*"), until a fine of 300 florins of

⁶"*Interrogatus si dicta domina Clara sibi magistro Iohanni aliquam licteram unquam scripsit respondit quod sic et dixit quod sibi scripsit in pluribus et pluribus vicibus licteras sex tenore et continentia infrascripta videlicet: - Io vorria, magistro Iohanni, venire da voi in casa vostra e parlar con voi, per ciò che tutto el bene mio ve voglio e ardo per lo vostro amore,*" Ibid, 95.

⁷Ibid., 67.

⁸"...discurrit per civitatem lucanum se turpiter et inhoneste gerendo," Ibid., 70.

gold was paid; this sum, moreover, was to increase by one-fourth if not paid in twelve days. The accused was unable to raise the large sum, and thus a young artistic talent ended up remaining imprisoned for three years, from April 1414-April 1417.⁹ During this time Lucca held steadfast to its decision to detain Giovanni, despite frequent appeals by the Sienese, Florentines, and others for his freedom. In Lucca, his crimes were taken as very serious in nature since they had threatened the general order of the city-state.¹⁰ The message was clear: art (and artists) whose message or whose example was not conducive to the overall good of the state were thus expendable. Just as the central government of Lucca had usurped power from local churches and monasteries, as well as from its *contado*, as has been shown in the two previous chapters, it also came to have a large influence over the existence and character of Lucchese art and culture. There was a practical, almost didactic element characteristic to Lucchese art of the early *Quattrocento*; Sercambi's *Le Croniche*, as well as his *Novelle*, his literary

⁹Giovanni was allowed to go free on 17 April 1417 after Paolo reduced the fine to 100 florins, which was promptly paid by Lorenzo Trenta's son, Girolamo, perhaps under the agreement with Giovanni to be repaid in artwork.

¹⁰See Paolo's response to the Florentine Priors in A.S.L., *Governo di Paolo Guinigi*, n. 6, c. 49, p. 97.

masterpiece, both of which contain many passages exhortatory in nature, provide examples of this in the field of literary art.

In general, Lucca was not in a position to finance large-scale art projects at state expense as was afforded in some cities. It would have been inappropriate for it to do so, considering the constant state of danger they faced from foreign lands, and the consequent need of funds more urgently elsewhere. A large proportion of the state budget, perhaps one-third or more of annual revenues in any given year, was spent to hire mercenaries. The Lucchese spent carefully only on a culture that would aid in its civic development; culture in Lucca was sponsored largely by the state, magnified Lucca, and gave the city some measure of the culture enjoyed in the larger Renaissance states. Looked at from this perspective, it could hardly be otherwise that Lucchese art and culture took on such a pragmatic character. Art in Lucca was not for art's sake, but rather for the communes.

Giovanni Sercambi: The First "Civic Humanist?"

In *The Crisis of the Early Renaissance in Italy* (1955), Hans Baron formulated probably the most important twentieth-

century interpretation of the Italian Renaissance.¹¹

Baron's thesis was that the artistic and intellectual developments associated with the Renaissance in Italy were the result of the "crisis" that arose in Florence during the years 1390-1402. The crisis was the military threat posed by the Duke of Milan, who, by the beginning of the fifteenth century, had made clear his intentions included taking Tuscany as well as controlling all of Lombardy. The Florentines in these years watched city after city fall to the Milanese aggression, Visconti armies inching nearer to Florence all the while.

Seeing themselves isolated, outnumbered, and as being the last hope to stop the Milanese assault from consuming all of Italy, what emerged in Florence was the heart of a

¹¹Baron, *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance: Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955). Other publications of Baron which focus on civic humanism are "Cicero and the Roman Civic Spirit in the Middle Ages and Early Renaissance," in *Lordship and Community in Medieval Europe*, ed. Fredric L. Cheyette (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1968), 291-314; "Franciscan Poverty and Civic Wealth as Factors in the Rise of Humanistic Thought," *Speculum* 13 (1938): 1-37. There has been (and still is) a mountain of scholarship in response to the Baron thesis, beginning with the debate of Baron and Seigel; see Jerrold E. Seigel, "'Civic Humanism' or Ciceronian Rhetoric?" *Past and Present* 34 (1966): 3-48. More recently, see the AHR Forum in *American Historical Review* 101 (1996): 107-44, which features several essays by leading scholars on the state of affairs in regard to current research concerning the Baron thesis.

champion, Baron argued. The Florentines accepted the challenge; they began to issue emotional appeals based on libertarian political concepts, raise more money and more armies, and to brace for war. This was the situation in the summer of 1402 when Florence's last remaining ally in Bologna succumbed to the Visconti onslaught (which Baron compared to Hitler's march through Europe in World War II). Nothing now lay in between Visconti armies and Florence. Everyone knew what the next move of the Duke of Milan would be -- except that at this point of crisis, the Duke of Milan unexpectedly died from the plague and the threat dissipated.

In the meantime, however, Baron claimed that the military threat of Milan had produced a new spirit in Florence which gave rise to, among other things, "civic humanism." Florentine scholars because of their recent experiences no longer tended to be ivory-tower intellectuals, but now came to be much more involved in the civic affairs of their homelands. The above is, in a nutshell, the Baron "thesis." But if Florentine intellectuals became civic humanists after the stimulus of the threat of the Visconti after 1390, then Lucchese intellectuals by that time should have been wild-eyed patriots -- in reaction to the threat of the Florentines themselves, as well as others.

According to Baron, the Florentines claimed that in their struggle against the Duke of Milan they were fighting to preserve the sacred concept (and the reality) of liberty for the Italian peninsula; this claim looks like biased rhetoric when studied from the perspective of the history of Lucca in the early fifteenth century (or from the perspective of any town which happened to fall under Florentine control). If any civic body at this time had the real occasion to appeal to "liberty," then one thinks it must have been the Lucchese, for they were under possible siege from all directions (i.e. both Florence and Milan) at any given time, and *earlier* than 1390. "Civic humanism," born in at atmosphere of crisis in Florence as their independence became suspect, should have, and I believe did, arrive earlier in Lucca. Civic humanism in Lucca was centered around the important figure of Giovanni Sercambi (1345-1424).¹²

In July 1400, with the fate of the Lucchese state seeming to worsen daily, Giovanni Sercambi decided to take action. According to his version of the events that unfolded

¹²Until very recently the birth of Sercambi has been accepted as 1348, but this has been revised by the recent article of Sergio Nelli and Maria Trapani, "Giovanni Sercambi: Documenti e fatti della vita familiare," in *Giovanni Sercambi e il suo tempo, Catalogo della Mostra, Lucca 30 November 1991* (Lucca: Nuova Grafica, 1991), 70.

in those danger-filled days surrounding the advent of the Guinigi *Signoria*, Sercambi went before the leaders of the Guinigi family (those that remained) and warned them of the terrible danger that would befall the city if immediate steps were not taken to prevent it. He advised that in such an emergency situation as this a *balia* with complete power over civic affairs ought to be created. Sercambi's advice, moreover, was heeded by the Guinigi, he tells us, as soon after the *balia* was established.¹³ Recent Lucchese history had demonstrated that benevolent, yet strong leadership was what was needed at this time; even a one-man regime and a streamlined government were increasingly becoming seen to be the only way to weather the storm.

Sercambi's efforts that summer and fall of 1400 in first the establishment of the Guinigi *Signoria*, and then in the subsequent consolidation of it, were instrumental to its early success, and they mark him as among Italy's first

¹³Giovanni Sercambi, *Le Croniche Lucchesi*, ed. Salvatore Bongi, 3 vols., in *Fonti per la Storia d' Italia* (Lucca: Giusti, 1892), 3: 8, "E raunato tale consiglio, fu per l' autore di questo libro, cioè Iohanni Sercambii, parlato in questa forma: o fedeli & dilecti ciptadini, molto v' è manifesto di quante ingiurie et danni per la superbia delli usciti di Luccha siamo stati dannificati; per la qual cosa siamo stati, non solamente alle genti d' apresso ma a quelli dalla lunga, in obrobio et dizinore. E per tanto a me parre' che si debbia tale officio di balia fare; et cosi si fe'."

civic humanists. In the eyes of Sercambi at the time, he was not so much helping establish a regime in which one family (and later one man) dominated as taking the steps that gave the Lucchese their best chance to remain independent. The summer of 1400 was not, however, the first time that Sercambi had subjected himself to personal danger for the sake of the commune by taking such a bold stance. Nor would it be the last.

Sercambi's patriotism can be partly explained by the circumstances of his early life: he grew up and was in his formative years at the time that the Pisans had control over Lucca (1342-69). After Lucca regained its independence from Pisa, Sercambi enlisted as a crossbowman for the revived commune. It would not be long before his military services were put to use, as he was included in those Lucchese forces that in 1369 drove out the last remaining Pisan troops from the citadel at Pontetetto.¹⁴ Like Dante the twenty-four year-old who went to battle for his beloved city of Florence in 1289 at the Battle of Campaldino, so also did the twenty-four year-old Sercambi take up arms in 1369 in order to fight for the cause of the liberty of his homeland.

¹⁴Giovanni Sinicropi, ed. *Novelle*, 2 vols. (Bari: Gius. Laterza & Figli, 1972), 2: 762.

When Sercambi returned home from battle to celebrate with his fellow citizens, it must have occurred to him that for the first time in his life, his native city was not under the governorship of foreign rulers. He would not forget this sentiment. Almost thirty years later in 1397 when he was *Gonfaloniere* of Lucca and when they were again at war with Pisa, in a speech to rally the citizens to make the necessary financial sacrifices for the war, he exclaimed:

"It is clear to everyone capable of true understanding and judgement that one of the most dear things God placed on earth was liberty, which may be recognized by its opposite, which is servitude....Certainly it is held that no virtuous citizen before they die wants to return into the hands of the cruel and treacherous Pisans."¹⁵

Sercambi went home from battle in 1369 to his beloved wife Pina, with whom he had been joined since age fifteen after their families had made such arrangement for the two; they

¹⁵"*Manifesto è a ogni homo il quale ae dele cose vero cognoscimento et iudicio che de le piu care cose che dio ponesse al mondo fu libertà, la quale si conosce per lo suo contrario cioè per la servitù, la quale servitù quanto sia dura et aspra molti citadini vivono li quali per prova et experientia ne possono rendere vera. Certo testimonianza veramente si tiene che ciascuno virtuoso citadino prima la morte volesse che ne le mani de' crudeli et perfidi Pisani ne d'altri ritornare*, Quoted in Christine Meek, "Il tempo di Giovanni Sercambi," in *Giovanni Sercambi e il suo Tempo*, *Catalogo della Mostra, Lucca, 30 Novembre 1991* (Lucca: Nuova Grafica, 1991), 4-5.

were to remained married for a total of sixty-four years, both dying only in 1424.¹⁶ Just coming of the age in which he could hold political office at the time that Lucca gained its independence from Pisa, Sercambi was active his whole life, both in the pursuit of political interests and personal wealth, as well as in propagandizing the interests of the fatherland in his various writings.

Sercambi adopted a career as a *speziale*, or someone involved in the sale of spices and other products,¹⁷ despite the fact that his father was a notary, as is evident by the family name. Though after 1372 Sercambi frequently held public office until the end of his life, he never gave up his chosen profession, perhaps because it allowed him to associate freely with regular citizens with whom he always

¹⁶Nelli and Trapani, "Giovanni Sercambi," 70. One of the important aspects of "civic humanism" had to do with the fulfillment not only of civic duties, but also of fatherly and husbandly duties; civic humanism in general was in opposition to the *vita contemplativa*, and to all things associated with that lifestyle.

¹⁷For example, there are records of payments made by the commune to Sercambi, the "*spetario*" in 1401-02 for supplying the court of Paolo and other Lucchese officials with books, ink, wax, string, pens, and other necessities ("*pro libris, cartis membranis et bombicinis, atramento, cera rubea et viride, spago, pennis, vernice, et aliis quampluribus rebus necessariis*"); see Marina Brogi, "Giovanni Sercambi e la Signoria di Paolo," in *Giovanni Sercambi e il suo tempo, Catalogo della Mostra, Lucca 30 Novembre 1991* (Lucca: Nuova Grafica, 1991), 171.

identified.¹⁸ Yet after 1372, his business may have suffered some as he was a frequent holder of a variety of offices for the commune of Lucca -- including offices which required him to leave the city for long periods of time.¹⁹

Sercambi's entry into the General Council in 1372 marks the beginning of his public life.²⁰ In 1377, he received an office as Keeper of the Seal of the Castles ("*ad tenendum et gubernandum Sigilla castellanorum*"), and in 1380 another minor bookkeeping-type job concerned with Lucchese castles

¹⁸In the opening lines of the first Book of *Le Croniche*, 1: 64-65, Sercambi laid out his division of the different types of writers. First, Sercambi notes there were theologians, whose job was to defend the faith; second, there were scientists and poets; and third, there were those without acquired learning, but with good common sense. It is in this last group that Sercambi goes to pains to include himself amongst: "*E così ora io, il quale ò preso pensieri di fare questo librecto, non amaestrato in scienza teologa, non in leggie, non in filozofia, non in astrologia, nè in medicina nè in alcuna delle septe arti liberali, ma come homo simplici e di pogo intellecto materialmente, ò compreso questo libro.*"

¹⁹For example, Sercambi was vicar of the Lucchese commune of Castiglione for the first six months of 1398, and on other occasions he was sent by the commune on diplomatic missions to other cities, such as in 1382 when he was dispatched to Arezzo to give warning there of the imminent invasion of the mercenaries of Count Alberico da Barbiano.

²⁰The General Council consisted of 180 persons, 60 from each *terziere* of the city.

(*"ad sigillandum mandatorias castellanorum"*).²¹ The next year witnessed Sercambi's entrance for the first time into the Council of Thirty-Six; this implies he was becoming increasingly seen by his peers as a person qualified to help govern the republic. Six times from 1381-1400, Sercambi was a member of the Thirty-Six (1381, 1386, 1391, 1398, 1399, 1400). Another step upward politically was made in 1390, when for the first time he was included in the *tasca* of the *Anziani*; from this point until his death in 1424, Sercambi was a pro-active patriot for Lucchese independence.²²

In 1391, Sercambi was named as Counselor over the Storehouses (*"Consigliere della Fondaco"*); in 1392, he was one of the six citizens named to supervise the election of the officers of the *dovane*; in 1393, he was named as Commissioner of the Palace (*"Commissario di Palazzo"*). In 1397, Sercambi moves another step forward into the inner circle of city fathers when he was named for the first time as *Gonfaloniere di Giustizia*, the same office, incidentally, that he held in 1400 at the time Paolo's assumption to power

²¹Giorgio Tori, "Profilo di una Carriera Politica," in *Giovanni Sercambi e il suo tempo, Catalogo della Mostra, Lucca 30 Novembre 1991* (Lucca: Nuova Grafica, 1991), 103-04.

²²Ibid., 104-05.

was made.²³ The change of regime in 1400, moreover, did not bring about much change in terms of Sercambi's increasingly busy political career.

Six times between 1411-1422 he held the important office of Counselor over the Office of Revenues (*"Consigliere all' Ufficio sopra le Entrate"*). Four times after 1400, he held the equally-important office of Counselor over the Office of Foodstuffs (*"Consigliere dell' Ufficio sopra l' Abbondanza"*). In 1402, and again in 1403, Sercambi was vicar of the Lucchese commune of Valleriano. Finally, by the final decade of his life Sercambi had at last made entry into Paolo's innermost court, as five times between 1415-23 he was a member of the private *"Consiglio di Stato"* of the *Signore*. Thus, Sercambi's contribution to the civic life of Lucca was immense based merely on the governmental posts that he held -- but by far his most significant contribution to civic humanism in Lucca was his writings.

Giangualeazzo Visconti once commented that a letter from the Florentine humanist Salutati was more powerful than many knights; one might think that Paolo Guinigi came to believe

²³Ibid., 105-07.

the same about Sercambi.²⁴ Sercambi was the major state propagandist for the Guinigi regime, and he did for Lucca much the same thing that Leonardo Bruni did for Florence, or Pier Candido Decembrio did for Milan. From an analysis of Sercambi's "*La Nota a voi, Guinigi*," and various passages in his *Chronicle*, I will consider his type of civic humanism. In "*La Nota*," written in 1392 before Paolo came to power, Sercambi made a series of recommendations to the heads of the Guinigi family. These recommendations pertained to a wide variety of subjects, but may be generally divided into three categories: those concerning the defense, political administration, and the finances of the city-state.²⁵

Sercambi begins "*La Nota*" by observing that since Lucca was presently subject to so many "inconveniences, offenses, dangers, and displeasures," steps must be taken so that both the Guinigi remain in power, and that the liberty of Lucca

²⁴One of the claims for the existence of civic humanism in Lucca is that the autograph copy of the first book of Sercambi's *Le Croniche*, though initially coming into the hands of Paolo either through gift or purchase, eventually was taken to the Public Palace (also why it has not survived), where citizens were given free access to the work. In the sixteenth century, the copy was rebound and returned to public access until 1804 when the now-mutilated copy was taken in by the *Archivio di Stato*. See S. Bongi, introduction to *Le Croniche*, xxviii-xxxii.

²⁵See Giovanni Sinicropi, "Giovanni Sercambi, *Nota ai Guinigi*," *Momus* 3,4 (1995), 10; the author has appended a useful critical edition of "*La Nota*" to this article.

was forever preserved.²⁶ One of the most interesting aspects of "La Nota" is that Sercambi was so specific in the recommendations he made to the Guinigi, even suggesting the exact number of armed guards he believed were required in the various strongholds throughout the city-state.²⁷ The author also was very careful to point out the importance of making sure the Guinigi themselves were safe at all times: "Let there be always at the lodge of the Guinigi fifteen guards provided with arms both day and night, and which are to accompany each of you."²⁸ Also, special measures should be adopted to protect certain castles, Sercambi argued, and his naming of these castles reveals exactly which areas were most important to the Lucchese defense at this time; also it

²⁶"La Nota ai Guinigi" is printed at the end of Sercambi's *Le Croniche*, 3: 399-407; "Veduto et continuamente si vede quante incoveniense & fatiche, pericoli & dispiacere in nella nostra ciptà & contado ocorreno," 399.

²⁷Ibid, 399-400, "bene che il comune si dispogna che alla guardia della ciptà & contado & delle vostre persone siano & esser debbiano soldati da piè & da cavallo & provigionati, in questa forma cioè: bandiere 36 da piè, in nelle quali abbia per ciascuna du pavesari, provigionati 36, lancie 36, ungari 25, & i conestabili siano homini amici & intendenti al vostro volere, li quali si stribuiscano: Prima a Pietrasanta bandiere 5, lancie 8. It. a Montecarlo bandiere 5, lancie 8. It. a Camaiore bandiere 1, lancie 2. It. a Castilioni bandiere 2."

²⁸Ibid., 401, "Sempre alla loggia de' Guinigi di dì et di nocte stiano provigionati coll'arme .xv., li quali siano presti per accompagnare ciascuno di voi."

was very important, Sercambi wrote, to make sure those governing the castles were loyal to the Guinigi party.²⁹

In the second part of *"La Nota,"* Sercambi points out to the Guinigi leaders the importance of maintaining in the *Anziani* a loyal body of supporters "so that you are able to have your intention." Power over other offices by the Guinigi was deemed vital as well by Sercambi; he advocated keeping control over offices such as the *"conducterii"* (those who hired mercenaries), the *"gonfalonieri"* (the standard-bearers), the vicars of Pietrasanta, Montecarlo, and others.³⁰ To enhance their control over the internal state, Sercambi advised the Guinigi to mandate that each citizen put in writing the number and types of arms that they possessed; furthermore, that the Guinigi then carefully examine that list and determine if any person was armed to a degree that went beyond what was needed for personal

²⁹Ibid., *"Che le castella & maximamente Pietrasanta, Motrone, Massa, Camaiole, Montecarlo, Coregla, Castillioni, & l' altre di pericolo, si diano a homini amici & comfidanti, con dovere tenere buoni & leali sergenti, se tali castellani et sergenti si dovessero mandare comandati."*

³⁰Ibid., *"L'ufficio dell'ansianatico sempre a' vostri amici si dia, & cosi conductieri, gomfalonieri [sic], vicario di Pietrasanta, Montecarlo, Camaiole, Castillioni, segretari, ufficio di balya overo comissari, & facciassi che si possino fare per quello modo più honesto, acciò che voi abbiate vostra intentione."*

protection, and if so to confiscate from them that which was in excess.³¹

Also, Sercambi addressed Lucca's need to be more careful and strict in dealing with Lucchese exiles, as he had seen in the past that they "always attempt to do evil to our liberty."³² He suggests that in the future those relegated to other cities be forced to pay a new bail ("*nuova cauzione*") in order to guarantee they did not leave their prescribed places of exile. Secondly, Sercambi warns of placing those relegated to any place where it would be likely that they would come across someone opposed to Lucca. Finally, he advocated confiscation of the person's goods and declaring them to be a rebel of the state should all else fail, and should any exile refuse to obey orders.³³

Finally, in a surprising passage (a passage that perhaps supplies the best proof that, unlike his *Croniche* and *Novelle*, the author meant this writing to be kept

³¹Ibid., "*Et acciò che altri non possa il vostro buono stato & libertà di Lucca sturbare, è bene che si mandi uno bando che ogni persona dia per scripto tucta l' arme che à, & quella examinata, secondo che a voi con .II. o tre vostri intimi & cordiali diliberiate, cholui che tale arme à, chui è, & quanta nelli bizogna.*"

³²Ibid., 402, "*Et veduto che quelli comfinati li quali di fuori sono, sempre atentano male per la libertà nostra...*"

³³Ibid.

secret), Sercambi writes: "Since the fear of death deters evil thoughts, all those who are condemned as rebels of the commune and who refuse to follow your orders ought to be able to be killed, seized, or robbed...I think that this fear will be enough to make everyone be content with peaceful living and with following your commandments."³⁴

Thus it is evident that Sercambi was not one overly enamored with republican institutions; representative government in his eyes would have been a recipe for disaster at that particular time. This being so, as James Hankins recently asked of his subject Leonardo Bruni, can Sercambi rightfully be called a civic humanist?³⁵ And the answer for Sercambi is yes, since in every measure he advocates in "*La Nota*" and elsewhere, the end is not communal conformity or Guinigi supremacy, although he probably believed these would

³⁴Sinicropi, in "Giovanni Sercambi, *Nota a Guinigi*," 8, claims "*La Nota*" was not intended by the author to be brought to light. For quote, *Le Croniche*, 402, "*Et perche la paura della morte raffrena i ma' pensieri, è bene che chi volesse esser ribello del nostro comune & dispregiasse i comandamenti del bene vivere & del vostro volere, che si provegha che qualunqua persona si fa ribello del nostro comune, sia & esser possa ucciso, preso & derubato in avere & in persona....Penso che questo timore farà ognuno star contento di vivere pacifico & ubidire a' vostri comandamenti.*"

³⁵See James Hankins, "Rhetoric, history, and ideology: the civic panegyrics of Leonardo Bruni," in *Renaissance Civic Humanism: Reappraisals and Reflections*, ed. James Hankins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 177.

have been beneficial, but rather the liberty, or independence of the Lucchese city-state from foreign rule. Sercambi's non-republican sentiments ironically make him a civic humanist in Lucca since Guinigi rule in his opinion gave the city its best chance to remain free.

As Hankins points out in regard to Bruni, if by the term "civic humanist" we mean that he considered his job to "promote an anti-monarchial form of republicanism and to disparage other political constitutions," then the term "civic humanist" would not fit. But, as pointed out in the introduction of this work, classical republican thought did not preclude coexistence with monarchial institutions. It is only since Montesquieu that the term "republican" has implied an opposite of "monarchy;" in the older republican tradition (which would include the Italian Renaissance era), the opposite of "republican" was tyranny, or mob rule.³⁶ A monarchy, then, had the capability of providing good leadership just as republican governments did, according to Italian Renaissance political thought, and according to Sercambi. He harbored no real sentiments toward

³⁶Ibid.,151; Quentin Skinner, *Liberty before Liberalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1998).

representative government, but he did hold dear Lucchese independence.

Sercambi in the end like Bruni, was a man with an imperialist mindset, yet his humanism, though supportive of a "monarchial" system of government, can still be considered "civic" humanism because the end was civic independence. His adherence to the old world imperialist-papal politics can be seen throughout his writings, but perhaps nowhere is it made clearer than in the Preface of Book II of his *Chronicle*, written in May 1400:

"And now I will begin [Book II] in May 1400, and I will finish as you will see by reading it. Taking help from Highest God in such a matter, from whom all good is derived, and submitting myself to His every wish; from all the celestial court; and likewise from the Most Holy in Christ, Our Father Signore Boniface IX; and from the Most Sacred Holy Roman Empire; and from that most peaceful prince and Signore Wenceslaus, who through Divine Providence is Emperor of the Romans and King of Bohemia."³⁷

³⁷Le Croniche, 3: 3-4, "E ora questo comincerà in chalende maggio in .MCCCC., e finerà come legendo sentirete. Prendendone di tale materia aiuto dallo altissimo Dio, da chui tucti li beni derivano, soctomettendomi a ugni suo piacere, e a tucta la corte celeste, e simile dal santissimo in Christo padre et signore messer Bonifatio, per la divina clementia papa nono, et del sacratissimo sacro romano imperio, e del serenissimo principe et signore messer Vincilao, per la divina potentia inperadore de' Romani et di Buemia."

Gene Brucker is one recent scholar who remained skeptical about the Baron thesis, as he saw in the Florentine *pratiche* of the summer of 1402 evidence that the government was reacting to the threat of the Duke of Milan calmly and without much panic. He did see a major change occur in Florentine politics after 1411, however, during the period when Florence was dealing with the threat of Ladislas of Naples and with disputes concerning Genoa. This "crisis" of Brucker manifested itself in the emergence in Florentine councils of speeches employing the skills of rhetoric and logic; more references to history, especially classical-age republican history; and in more insertions and emendations in speeches in order to strengthen a speaker's argument.³⁸

But, Sercambi was doing all these things in his *Chronicle* at least a decade before 1411. The rhetorical attributes of Sercambi's work are evident to anyone who scans a few pages of his *Chronicle*; it is filled with exhortations to Paolo and others to take certain actions (or not), speeches presented as if Sercambi were actually addressing a particular person, and other rhetorical devices. In addition, the two Books of his *Chronicle* are filled with insertions and emendations, sometimes even

³⁸Brucker, *The Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), 175-81.

fictional stories similar to those in his *Novelle*, that he adopted in order to strengthen a point he was driving at.³⁹ The appeal to historical example was a favorite tactic of Sercambi as well.⁴⁰ After Paolo's rise to power in late 1400, Sercambi wrote: "Take heed, Paolo Guinigi, to always remember the example of your father Francesco Guinigi who,

³⁹In her study of the prologues of Sercambi's *Chronicle*, Franca Ragone has characterized the insertions of Sercambi into his work as ethical-political *exempla*, which cannot be separated from his aim in this work: to teach his fellow citizens that internal turmoil would mean a loss of Lucchese independence; see "Le 'Croniche' di Giovanni Sercambi: Composizione e Struttura dei Prologhi," *Annali dell'Istituto Italiano per gli Studi Storici* 9 (1985-86), 15-16.

⁴⁰Sercambi as a historian has been underrated; certainly Eric Cochrane, in *Historians and Historiography in the Italian Renaissance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981) has misunderstood Sercambi's objective as chronicler as a "harmless pastime for the unlearned." Moreover, Cochrane's suggestion that Sercambi had not even heard of Ptolemy of Lucca, and even Salutati, is simply incorrect. Sercambi and Salutati both lived in Lucca simultaneously from 1370-72, and would likely have come into frequent, if not daily, contact. In addition, several members of Paolo Guinigi's court owned copies of Salutati's "*De fato et fortuna*." Sercambi's *Chronicle* was not the medieval variety of this type of work, concerned only with local interests or with the court in which the chronicler belonged, but takes on a much more "cosmopolitan" character; Sercambi discusses for example among many other topics, the Hundred Years War, the wars of the Duke of Milan and Florence, the conflicts between Ladislao and Rome, and the Great Schism.

being envied by many citizens who wanted to remove him, always maintained good relations with his friends."⁴¹

In another instance, Sercambi even advised that Paolo take a look at Lucca's more prosperous overall situation during the reign of the tyrant Castruccio Castracani; he stated that even though Lucca at that time had no arms or munitions and had been robbed, it still surpassed other Tuscan cities -- and now since Lucca is filled with good people, is full of arms and munitions, and has not been robbed -- then it ought to be doing better.⁴² It is clear, therefore, that Sercambi had designs on persuading not only the citizenry of Lucca on how to act and what to believe (in the *Chronicle*), but he was attempting to act as policy-guide to the Guinigi as well (in such writings as "La Nota"). His appeals to any imperial authority (even Castruccio), or his "civic humanism" were his means to being heard in Lucca.

Dante

It may seem odd to bring Dante (1265-1321) into a discussion of the culture of Lucca at the beginning of the

⁴¹*Le Croniche*, 3: 18, "...ricordansa a te, Paulo Guinigi, che sempre ti stia in nella mente l' exemplo del tuo padre Francesco Guinigi, il quale, essendo da molti ciptadini invidiato per volerlo abassare, lui sempre si mantenne colli amici suoi."

⁴²*Ibid.*, 3: 22-25.

fifteenth century but in this case it is appropriate. For in 1400, Dante was Lucca's favorite author. After his exile from his native Florence a hundred years earlier, Dante had actually lived in Lucca for a two-year period, either from 1307-1309, or from 1314-1316.⁴³ Yet of the six cities (besides Florence) that Dante criticized in the *Divine Comedy* (Lucca, Pisa, Pistoia, Siena, Bologna, and Genoa), Lucca received the most harsh rebuke. While other cities such as Genoa, Pisa, and Pistoia were attacked by Dante

⁴³The earlier date is accepted by some since F. P. Luiso in 1921 discovered amongst the notarial acts of the year 1308 at the *Archivio di Stato* in Lucca listed as witness in a case a "*Iohannes filius Dantis Alagherii de Florentia*." This seems to leave little doubt this was Dante's son, but as pointed out in M. Barbi, "Un altro figlio di Dante?" *Studi danteschi* 5 (1922), 6-8, the poet was married in 1295, which would have made having a legitimate child eighteen years old in 1308 (the age necessary to be a witness in these cases) impossible; also, it had long been held that Dante's only sons were Jacopo and Pietro. The latter date of 1314-1316 for Dante's stay in Lucca is preferred by other scholars, who have argued that at this time Lucca was governed by imperial "officials" (Uguccione da Faggioula and Castruccio Castracani), who would have been receptive to Dantean philosophy (i.e. *De monarchia*) -- whereas in the earlier period (1307-09), Lucca was governed by a staunchly democratic regime headed by Bonturo Dati, a character who Dante actually puts into the circles of hell in the *Inferno* (Cantos XXI-XXIII). Sercambi implied the latter date in *Novella LXXI* when he wrote that the Florentine poet, "*il quale non potendo stare in Firenze nè in terra dove la Chiesa potesse, si riducea il preditto Dante alcuna volta con quelli della Scala et alcuna volta col signore di Mantova, e tutto il più col duga di lucca, cioè con messer Castruccio Castracani*," *Novelle*, ed. Giovanni Sinicropi, 1: 314.

because of a single event or a single person, criticism of Lucca was more general as well as seemingly more heartfelt, as if the poet had a deeper grudge against the entire population.⁴⁴

In Canto XVIII of the *Inferno*, Dante accompanied by his guide found in the eighth circle of Hell the flatterers, whose punishment was being covered in excrement. When near the bottom of the circle, Dante:

 "...saw one with a head so smeared with shit,
 one could not see if he were lay or cleric.
 He howled: "Why do you stare more greedily
 at me than at the others who are filthy?"
 And I: "Because, if I remember right,
 I have seen you before, with your hair dry;
 and so I eye you more than all: you are Alessio
 Interminei of Lucca."⁴⁵

The other instance in which Lucca was mentioned in the *Inferno* occurs in Canto XXI; still in the eighth circle, but now in the part where barrators were being punished by being thrown into boiling pitch and guarded by armed demons.

Dante looked up, and:

⁴⁴F. P. Luiso, "Dante e Lucca," in *Dante: La Vita, Le Opere, Le Grandi Città Dantesche, Dante e L' Europa* (Milan, 1921), 172-73.

⁴⁵"vidi un col capo sì di merda lordo, / che non pareva s' era laico o cherco. / Quei mi sgridò: "Perche se' tu sì gordo / di riguardar più me che li altri brutti?" / E io a lui: "Perche, se ben ricordo, / già t'ho veduto coi capelli asciutti, / e se' Alessio Interminai da Lucca: / però t'adocchio più che li altri tutti," *Inferno*, XVIII, 116-23, in *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri*, trans. and intro. by Allen Mandelbaum (Toronto: Bantam Books, 1980).

"...then in back of us I saw a black
demon as he came racing up the crags.
Ah, he was surely barbarous to see!
And how relentless seemed to me his acts!
His wings were open and his feet were lithe;
across his shoulder, which was sharp and high,
he had slung a sinner, upward from the thighs;
in front, the demon gripped him by the ankles.
Then from our bridge, he called: "O Malebranche,
I've got a elder of Saint Zita for you!
Shove this one under-I'll go back for more-
his city is well furnished with such stores;
there, everyone's a grafter but Bonturo;
and there-for cash-they'll change a no to yes."
He threw the sinner down, then wheeled along
the stony cliff: no mastiff's ever been
unleashed with so much haste to chase a thief.
The sinner plunged, then surfaced, black with
pitch;
but now the demons, from beneath the bridge,
shouted: "The Sacred Face has no place here;
here we swim differently than in the Serchio."⁴⁶

The poet's reference in this passage to "Saint Zita," the
"Sacred Face," and the "Serchio" clearly are references to
Lucca. His criticism of "everyone" in Lucca should present

⁴⁶"...e vidi dietro a noi un diavol nero / correndo su per
lo scoglio venire. / Ahi quant' elli era ne l'aspetto fero!
/ e quanto mi pareane l'atto acerbo, / con l'ali aperte e
sovra i piè leggero! / L'omero suo, ch'era aguto e superbo,
/ carcava un peccator con ambo l'anche, / e quei tenea de'
piè ghermito 'l nerbo. / Del nostro ponte disse: "O
Malebranche, / ecco un de li anzian di Santa Zita! /
Mettetel sotto, ch'i' torno per anche / a quella terra, che
n' è ben fornita: / ogn' uom v' è barattier, fuor che
Bonturo; /del no, per li denar, vi si fa ita." / Là giù 'l
buttò, e per lo scoglio duro / si volse; e mai non fu
mastino sciolto / con tanta fretta a seguitar lo furo. /
Quel s'attuffò, e tornò su convolto; / ma i demon che del
ponte avean coperchio, / gridar: "Qui non ha loco il Santo
Volto! / qui si nuota altrimenti che nel Serchio!" *Inferno*,
XXI, 29-49.

no surprise, however. Lucca and Florence had evolved along rather parallel political lines at the beginning of the fourteenth century, and it should be expected that if one had drawn the ire of the poet, which Florence obviously already had for condemning him to eternal exile, then the other was bound to have drawn his disapprobation as well. When the *Divine Comedy* was being composed, Lucca was living under the republican government led by Bonturo Dati that Dante would have thoroughly despised as much as he did the liberal governors of Florence.⁴⁷ This explains why Dante at one time was so critical of Lucca; unfortunately for Lucca and its posterity, it just happened to be at the time he was composing the *Divine Comedy*. After the republican regime of Dati was removed in 1314, one assumes Dante would have felt much less hostile toward the city.

What is noteworthy about the popularity of Dante in Lucca at the beginning of the fifteenth century is that it made them unique. It would be difficult to overestimate the impact Dante had on the intellectual life of the fourteenth

⁴⁷Luiso also proved in his 1921 study "Dante e Lucca" (see above, n. 44) that Dante's character Martino Bottai in Canto 21 of the *Inferno* was really Bonturo Dati of Lucca. See Renato Piattoli, "I personaggi danteschi Lucchese Bonturo Dati e Alessio Antelminelli in Firenze," in *Miscellanea in memoria di Giorgio Cencetti* (Torino: Bottega d' Erasmio, 1973), 389-90.

century. Many cities beginning in the second half of the century had begun to hire public lecturers, or readers, of Dante to meet the public demand; many commentaries of the poem were published to explain its complexities during this time as well. But by the beginning of the fifteenth century interest in Dante and his works was well in decline in most places for a variety of reasons. In the first seventy-five years of the fifteenth century, for example, only two commentaries of the poem were produced at all.⁴⁸ The cult of Dante had apparently faded away. Paolo Cortesi claimed: "Alas, it happens with Dante just as with an old painting: the colours fade, and only the outlines remain to delight us."⁴⁹ In most of the other larger cities by 1400, interest among the intellectual classes in Dante and the *Trecento* Italian authors had been replaced by an absorption into the classical world and humanistic subjects in their more Latin-

⁴⁸Micheal Caesar, ed. *Dante: The Critical Heritage* (London: Routledge, 1989), 19.

⁴⁹For quote, see *ibid.*, 18. Paolo Cortesi (1485-1510) wrote *De hominis doctis*, a criticism of the Latin in use from Dante's time to his own day. It is interesting to note that in the work of Christian Bec, *Les marchands ecrivains: Affaires et humanisme à Florence, 1375-1434* (Paris: La Haye, 1967), the author concluded that interest in Dante thrived in one particular professional class in the early *Quattrocento*: the merchant class -- precisely who had come into power in Lucca with the rise of the Guinigi.

oriented culture.⁵⁰ But Dante did not fade away for the Lucchese as the *Trecento* came to a close, rather he continued to be a large influence on their thought throughout the fifteenth century.

To be a follower of Dante in *Quattrocento* Italy was more than a statement of one's taste in literary styles. It quite possibly meant a political assertion as well, as Deborah Parker pointed out in her discussion of Francesco Filelfo, a Florentine public lecturer on Dante who in May 1433 had his face slashed by someone of the Medici party whose interpretation of Dante (and politics) was different than his.⁵¹ This may explain why no state-sponsored public lectures or readings on Dante were ever held in Lucca like they were in Florence, Bologna, and other places. Civic leaders had problems enough keeping control over the state; they would not have desired risking political suicide by

⁵⁰In fact, the height of the resurgence of classical Latin letters and language very much coincides with the years of the reign of Paolo Guinigi; see Giuliano Tanturli, "Il disprezzo per Dante dal Petrarca al Bruni," *Rinascimento* 25 (1985): 199-219; Vittorio Rossi, "Dante nel Trecento e nel Quattrocento," in *Saggi e Discorsi su Dante* (Florence: Sansoni, 1930), 293-96; Maria Luisa Mansi, "La vita di Dante e del Petrarca di Leonardo Bruni," in *Dante nel Pensiero e nella Esegese dei Secoli XIV e XV* (Florence: Leo Olschki, 1975), 406.

⁵¹Deborah Parker, *Commentary and Ideology: Dante in the Renaissance* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 55; Filelfo had taken sides with the Albizzi faction of Florence.

inviting inside the city walls discussion on such controversial issues as Dante raised in his writings.

Yet, it was this very political aspect of Dante that was attractive to the Lucchese. While almost all fourteenth century commentators on Dante had centered their interest on the moral or allegorical interpretations of the *Divine Comedy*, the few Dante scholars that still remained in the early fifteenth century had started to look at the poet (and other of his works) differently.⁵² The Florentine Leonardo Bruni, after perhaps some indecision early in his life concerning the merits of Dante, came to reject the view of Dante as presented in Boccaccio's biography as the melancholic, brooding, lover of Beatrice;⁵³ to Bruni, Dante came to be first and foremost a Florentine patriot and a political activist, in short, a civic humanist. The Lucchese, like Bruni and most of the Florentine humanists,

⁵²Gianvito Resta states that after 1400, Dante was no longer seen as just the poet of a great spiritual adventure, but as an individual who had been actively involved in the social and civic life of his native Florence. See "Dante nel Quattrocento," in *Dante nel Pensiero e nella Esegesei dei Secoli XIV e XV* (Florence: Leo Olschki, 1975), 86.

⁵³In the first decade of the fifteenth century, Bruni's dialogue *Ad petram paulum histrum dialogum* expressed divergent opinions on Dante, while his later biography (1436) reveals him to be much more admiring of him. See D. Aguzzi-Barbagli, "Dante e la poetica di Coluccio Salutati," *Italica* 42 (1965), 122.

began to perceive Dante chiefly as a political thinker, but not so much for his civic activism as was the case in Florence, as for the whole of his political thought.

In Sercambi's *Novelle*, Dante appeared as the main character in two of the stories.⁵⁴ In both he is praised as a man of wisdom, including one instance in which the King of Naples addressed him as the "wisest man in all of Italy."⁵⁵ In *Novella* LXXI, the story evolves around Dante's visit to the court of King Uberto. Having heard in many places of the wisdom of the exiled poet, Uberto sent for Dante, wanting to

⁵⁴The *Novelle* was the literary masterpiece of the Guinigi period. It is a collection of 166 short stories reminiscent of Boccaccio's *Decameron*, and undoubtedly owing much to this work. The stories were told, for example, by a group of ten youth travelling around to escape the plague; in addition, twenty-four of Sercambi's stories were derived directly from the *Decameron*, some keeping entire sentences of Boccaccio, others more or less summaries of his tales. See Luigi Rossi, "Sercambi e Boccaccio," *Studi sul Boccaccio* 6 (1971), 152-53. Giovanni Cherubini, in "Vita Trecentesca nelle *Novelle* di Giovanni Sercambi," in *Signorie, Contadini, Borghesi: Ricerche sulla Società Italiana del Basso Mediovale* (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1974), 5, suggests that the *Novelle* of Sercambi were stylistically influenced by the *Decameron*, but were partly inspired by the real-life experience of the visitation of the flagellants ("bianchi") to Lucca in 1399.

⁵⁵Sercambi, *Novella* LXXII, p. 317, "più savio omo d'Italia."

judge for himself.⁵⁶ Arriving at the court clad only in his usual dress, however, Dante was given a place at the foot of the King's table away from Uberto and the court barons. Nor was he afforded the finer food and drink that was given to the more distinguished guests. Dante, not appearing in the least offended, simply ate what was given him and then calmly rose from his seat and slipped away from Uberto's presence.⁵⁷

When the king realized his error, he again sent for Dante in order to pay honor to the esteemed poet, inviting him to return to his court at a later time for a grand feast. The second time Dante entered the court in the clothing of nobility to show the king the folly of his ways. Now set at the head of the table near the king, when presented with the finest of wines Dante proceeded to pour it all over his clothes. Astonished, the king at last asked Dante why he did this, and he said to Uberto: "Holy King, I recognize that this grand honor that you have made has been made to the clothes, and therefore I wanted the clothes to

⁵⁶Ibid., LXXI, p. 314, "*Et essendo già la nomea sparta del senno del ditto Dante e i' re Uberto desideroso d' averlo per vedere e sentire del suo senno e vertù...*"

⁵⁷Ibid., LXXI, p. 314, "*Dante come savio vede quanto il signore ha avuto pogo provvedimento; nondimeno, avendo Dante volontà di mangiare, mangiò. E come ebbe mangiato, subito si partiò e caminò....*"

enjoy the things that have been prepared."⁵⁸ The story ends with the king, having seen the foolishness of his behavior thanks to the lesson taught him by Dante, believing the poet even wiser than he had heard from the beginning.⁵⁹

In the second of Sercambi's *Novelle* in which Dante appeared as the main character the plot is much the same, the *wisdom* of the poet becoming increasingly evident as the story unfolds. This time, however, King Uberto of Naples hired several buffoons to test Dante's wisdom (and patience) by having them address him with disrespect and with some very difficult (and inane) questions, such as why does a black hen lay white eggs. By diligently responding to each and every question in a direct, methodical, almost Socratic-like manner, Dante was able to reveal again to Uberto and the buffoons that he was indeed the wisest man in all of Italy.

In addition, Sercambi appealed to the authority of Dante several times in his *Chronicle*, all of which show his admiration for the *thought* (not the language, style, or

⁵⁸Ibid., LXXI, p. 315, "*Santa corona, io cognosco che questo grande onore ch' è ora fatto, avete fatto a' panni; e pertanto io ho voluto che i panni godano le vivande aparecchiate.*"

⁵⁹Ibid., LXXI, p. 315, "*trovò Dante esser da più che non li era stato ditto.*"

patriotism) of the Florentine poet.⁶⁰ Sercambi was interested in what Dante wrote, not how he wrote it. In one instance in his *Chronicle* in which he was making a point about the dangers of avarice, Sercambi drew on Dante's exact words, duplicating in his own work the first ninety-six lines of *Canto VII* of the *Inferno*.⁶¹ Other times he summarizes parts of the *Divine Comedy*, or merely states something in his own words to be followed by "as Dante says," or "as Dante writes." There is an unmistakable admiration, almost reverence, for the thought of Dante in the writings of Sercambi. Another way this admiration of Sercambi and his compatriots for Dante may be revealed is through an examination of the inventories of their libraries.

It is fortunate that there are four surviving inventories of libraries of the leading men of Paolo Guinigi's court; these include those of Paolo himself, his secretary Guido Manfredi, Sercambi, and Augustino Gherardi

⁶⁰Nor have I found in any Lucchese source of the fifteenth century any questioning of Dante for his use of Italian in the *Divine Comedy*, rather than Latin, which was perceived by many as the language for more serious subjects. This was one of the criticisms levelled at Dante by the Florentine humanists in the first half of the *Quattrocento*.

⁶¹Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 2: 198-203.

da Fivizzano.⁶² To briefly summarize the four, I begin with Paolo's library, which was one of the most outstanding in all of Italy for his day. It included more than thirty classical works, including such canons as Cicero's *De oratore*, Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*, Seneca's *Tragedies*, Aristotle's *Politics* (in Italian), and the recently published edition of Plato's *Phaedo* which had been translated by Leonardo Bruni. In his collection of modern authors was Dante's *Divine Comedy*. Paolo also owned the autograph copy of Francesco Buti's three volumes of *Commentary* on the *Divine Comedy*, which was purchased at Pisa for him by Jacopo della Testa in 1405.⁶³

The library of Guido Manfredi of Pietrasanta is also noteworthy for more than twenty classical books. Included in

⁶²The inventories may be found at the following: for Paolo, see Salvatore Bongi, *Di Paolo Guinigi e delle sue Richezze* (Lucca: Benedini Guidotti, 1871), 74-82; for Guido, see *Carteggio di Guido Manfredi*, regesto n. 1277, p. 242; for Sercambi, see *Novelle*, ed. Giovanni Sinicropi (Bari: Gius. Laterza & Figli, 1972), 2: 762, n.1; and for Gherardi, see Marco Paoli, *Arte e committenza privata a Lucca nel Trecento e nel Quattrocento* (Lucca: Maria Pacini Fazzi, 1986), 103-07.

⁶³Under the year 1405 in A.S.L., *Libro della Camera di Lucca*, c. 132, "Iacobo del Testa de Pisis, quos ipse Iacobus in civitate Pisarum pro dicto Domino solvit pro pretio trium librorum in quibus descripte sunt expositiones Dantis manu magistri Francisci de Buyti. Stefaninus camerarius dedit et solvit vigore provisienis facte die 9 octobris presentis, quod potuerit dedisse et solvisse florenos sexagintaquinque in auro."

Guido's collection were many writings of a religious nature, such as Augustine's *City of God*, his *Confessions*, Phaedon's *Immortality of the Soul*, Boccaccio's *Geneology of the Gods*, various types of psalters, and a volume containing the epistles of Paul. Of the four libraries, Guido's was the only one without at least one work written by Dante.

Sercambi's collection was the sparsest of the four, consisting only of two volumes having to do with his occupation as a *speziale*, another on herbs, a few religious and Latin writings -- but three *codici* of Dante. Finally, Augustino Gherardi's collection of books has been characterized as being as grand as the libraries of Petrarch and Boccaccio themselves.⁶⁴ Gherardi's collection included more than seventy classical works (all in Latin) of twenty-three authors, as well as many works of the medieval period, including the standard writings of Boethius and Thomas Aquinas. Also, of the four contemporary works in his library written in Latin, one was Leonardo Bruni's recent translation of Aristotle's *Ethics*, and another was Francesco Barbaro's *De re uxoria*, which had been published only in

⁶⁴Paoli, *Arte e committenza*, 105.

1416.⁶⁵ Finally, although Gherardi's library contained very few works written in Italian, there were two *codici* of the works of Dante.⁶⁶

Why the Lucchese were attracted to Dante's political thought is that is provided a large role for an imperial presence in Italy, a presence designed (in Dante's mind) to provide Christendom with a single authority over temporal matters. Lucca desired this same active involvement in Italian affairs on the part of the Holy Roman Emperor, but in order to bring about a general balance of power situation in Italy. Lucchese fear of Florentine expansion made them always welcome another superpower into Italy to disrupt, deter, or distract Florentine plans for expansion in Tuscany, as has been seen in their relations with the Duke of Milan and King Ladislas of Naples. Thus, Dante believed an imperial monarch was essential in order to keep an eye on

⁶⁵Paolo's secretary Guido Manfredi was corresponding with Francesco Barbaro around this time when the latter was in Venice, and he may have had some connection to Gherardi's attaining this work on 'Wifely Duties;' see *Carteggio di Guido Manfredi*, regesto n. 1075, p. 199.

⁶⁶Gherardi would perhaps have been the most inclined of the four under discussion to harbor a belief that Latin was a superior medium of communication to Italian, as he was an instructor of Latin for the commune of Lucca. See Paolo Barsanti, *Il pubblico insegnamento in Lucca del XIV alla fine del secolo XVIII* (Lucca: Alberto Marchi, 1905. Reprint, Bologna: Arnaldo Forni 1980), 115-16.

the papacy; the Lucchese believed it was necessary to help keep watch over the Florentines.

Dante's politics are best viewed in his *De monarchia* (c.1312), a work that despite being banned by the Church was widely known by the beginning of the fifteenth century as it had been frequently used as a basis of debate over papal-imperial relations.⁶⁷ Thus, despite the *Inferno's* graphic descriptions of the horrors of a Hell into which many churchmen had been thrust by Dante, it received nothing like the ecclesiastical censure that the *De monarchia* did. This explains why the Lucchese as well as everyone else did not have the work in their libraries -- or at least in their inventories of their libraries.⁶⁸ Regardless, one may be

⁶⁷Dante's *De monarchia* became widely known after it was used, along with other anti-papal texts, in the struggle over the accession of Ludwig of Bavaria in 1328, according to Boccaccio. See Caesar, *Dante*, 3. The work came under ecclesiastical censure and was burned in 1329 as a heretical work (as it stood until 1881) by the Cardinal of Poggetto. From 1327-34, the Dominican Guido Vernani da Rimini wrote a series of influential treatises against Dante, most notably his *De reprobatione monarchie composite a Dante Aligheri florentino*. See Gioacchino Paparelli, "Dante e il Trecento," in *Dante nel Pensiero e nella Esigies dei Secoli XIV e XV* (Florence: Leo Olschki, 1975), 46.

⁶⁸The vagueness of Sercambi's inventory suggests there is a possibility he might have owned a copy of *De monarchia*. In the inventory of his books printed in Novelle, Sinicropi, ed., p. 762, n.1, which is a word-for-word transcription from the "Atti civile del Podestà di Lucca" of the year 1426, in A.S.L., n. 1038, c. 52-53, the segment concerning Dante's books reads: "Un testo di Dante in carta montonina;

sure that many of the members of Paolo Guinigi's inner court were quite well-informed of the ideas put forth in the *De monarchia* -- whether they had it in their libraries or not.

The politics of Dante in early fifteenth century Italy was thus an old world politics. Derived at a time when universal, authoritative, interfering, external institutions such as empire and papacy were assumed to be more or less true, by the *Quattrocento* the system of Dante was no longer useful for the larger, expansionistic city-states. Milan, Florence, and Venice now perceived a strong emperor in Italy no longer as a check to papal authority, but rather as a threat to their own efforts at expansion. Those that still clung to the Dantean system, such as Lucca, did so because it had provided them a greater measure of security in the past -- and they hoped that it would again at some point in the future.

Una comedia di Dante del Paradiso; Uno comedia di Dante disposto, colle coverte bianche, cioè il Purgatorio." It is very clear what texts are referred to in the last two citations; the initial entry is the source of confusion. What makes it less likely, however, that Sercambi had *De monarchia* is that from the first half of the fourteenth century, no manuscripts of the work have survived, and only eight manuscript copies from the years 1350-1400 have survived. See Caesar, *Dante*, 3.

CHAPTER 8

FOREIGN RELATIONS IN THE LATER GUINIGI YEARS

The Rivalry With Florence

The period from 1390-1454 was one of the most violent periods in Italian history. From the beginning of the final conflict between Florence and Milan in 1390 to the Peace of Lodi in 1454, the peninsula was subject to almost incessant warfare. The Lucchese chronicler Sercambi noted that in 1421-1422, all of Christendom was filled with armed bands: Pope Martin V was opposed to Queen Joanna of Naples, the *condottiere* Pandolfus Malatesta aiding the former, while Braccio da Montone was in the service of the latter;¹ also, Florence and Milan were at war again, this time with Milan being led by the son of Giangaleazzo, Filippo Maria Visconti; finally, Sercambi noted that Charles, the son of

¹The Guinigi years coincide with the age of the Italian-born *condottieri*; for this period in which the mercenaries became important in the overall scheme of Italian politics, see Geoffrey Trease, *The Condottieri: Soldiers of Fortune* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1971); also see Michael Mallett, *Mercenaries and their Masters: Warfare in Renaissance Italy* (London: Bodley Head, 1974).

the King of France, was also now in Italy at the head of an army.²

As for Lucca, much of the history of the Guinigi period can be explained by the attempt to escape such violence and especially by its rivalry with Florence. Lucchese foreign policy at this time was dominated by the attempt to avoid coming under attack by Florence by means of the enlistment of powerful alliances who were also rivals of the Arno city. That Lucca was able to preserve its independence throughout the period of Paolo Guinigi, a time which coincides with this most violent phase of Italian history, should be considered a remarkable feat (Lucca remained an independent city from 1369 until the Napoleonic era).

How it was able to do so was due to a combination of factors, not the least important of which was the continued success of the isolationist policy that Paolo and his counselors had adopted from the beginning of the regime. Paolo Guinigi, where he lacked in military skills, made up for it in the art of diplomacy. He aggressively sought alliances with the greatest of the superpowers when he needed a source of protection, and he mastered the art of the delay-tactic when pushed into a corner himself. Such was

²Giovanni Sercambi, *Le Croniche Lucchesi*, ed. Salvatore Bongi, 3 vols., in *Fonti per la Storia d' Italia* (Lucca:

the fortune for those who held deeds to the small and medium-sized Italian cities in the age of the rise of regional states.

Also contributing to Paolo's success in keeping Lucca an independent entity was that elsewhere in Italy there was such a general state of confusion that the Florentines (and others) from 1400-1430 tended to be distracted from any enterprise concerning Lucca; even though there were always some war-mongers in Florence who coveted possession of Lucca, and even though there were some occasions in which Lucchese borderlands came under assault by Florentine arms it may be said that, in general, the Florentines had more pressing concerns than Lucca until the very end of Paolo's reign. From 1400-1402 the major concern of Florence of course was the Duke of Milan. After his death in 1402, the Florentines became interested first and foremost in the pursuit of Pisa.³ Florentine merchants had lost much business during the Visconti wars because Florence lacked a port; when the Duke died, one of their first and clearest

Giusti, 1892), 3: 295-96.

³See Michael Mallett, "Pisa and Florence in the Fifteenth Century: Aspects of the Period of the First Florentine Domination," in *Florentine Studies: Politics and Society in Renaissance Florence*, ed. Nicolai Rubinstein (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1968): 403-41.

objectives was to seize Pisa and its port and remove this problem.

Taking Pisa would not be easy for Florence, however, and it was brought about only in 1406 after much effort and expense. During this time, the Florentines maintained friendly relations with Lucca so that their seizure of Pisa would be made easier, as they needed access through Lucchese territories for their armies, diplomats, messengers, and other officials. Moreover, the Florentine government underestimated the reactions that their capture of Pisa in 1406 would stir up all around Europe, as many cities were at once opposed to the new status of Florence as a sea power.⁴ France and the Italian city-state of Genoa were especially resistant to the Florentine presence in Pisa, and several conflicts broke out between them and Florence in the decade after 1406 as a result. Ladislas of Naples entered into an alliance with Genoa in 1409, and as a result Florence was again faced with the prospect of war against the Neapolitan king. Ladislas' formal alliance with Paolo Guinigi, in

⁴Mallett, in "Pisa and Florence," 403, claims the possession of Pisa allowed for "much of the political, economic and cultural prestige which accrued to Florence during the course of the fifteenth century;" James Hankins stated that in 1406, Florence was more powerful than ever before in its history, see his "Rhetoric, history, and ideology: the civic panegyrics of Leonardo Bruni," in *Renaissance Civic*

addition, was another deterrent to any Florentine ambitions in Lucca.

The initial disputes between Florence and Genoa which resulted from the Florentine takeover of Pisa took place in 1411; at the beginning, the primary issue was control over the city of Livorno, a city some twenty miles south of Pisa. Florence wanted control of Livorno as it was believed essential to their continued hold and protection over Pisa; Genoa, on the other hand, desired Livorno in order to be able to better shore up their hegemony over maritime trade in the Tyrrhenian.⁵ Largely because Florence lacked a navy at this point, they were forced to negotiate with the Genoese over the issue of Livorno.⁶ A middle ground was chosen as the site for the negotiations to take place at Pietrasanta in Lucchese territory, and Paolo Guinigi was chosen as the mediator in these talks.⁷

Humanism: Reappraisals and Reflections, ed. James Hankins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 145.

⁵Gene Brucker, *The Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977, 340-42.

⁶Sercambi noted that in this "*guerra mortale*" between Florence and Genoa, the Genoese warships shut off the Tyrrhenian to Florence, so that none of their provisions could reach Florence and their merchants again had no place from which to ship and receive goods, *Le Croniche*, 3: 200-01.

⁷Domenico Corsi, "La pace di Lucca del 27 Aprile tra i comuni di Genova e di Firenze." *Atti dell' Accademia*

Paolo reluctantly agreed to act as mediator; at the first proceedings in 1411, Sercambi claimed that Paolo gave gifts to both sides on a daily basis, probably in an attempt to avert hard feelings as much as possible for any important decisions that had to be made later by the mediator.⁸ Nothing solid came out of these initial talks, but the two sides continued to meet in 1412 at Pietrasanta, Paolo continuing to monitor and mediate the proceedings. Finally, in 1413, when a settlement was finally reached, a letter from Paolo to the Doge of Genoa reveals the *Signore* of Lucca's desire to end the talks (and the whole affair) as quickly as possible; in the letter Paolo wrote that despite the fact that Florentine aims have to be questioned, it was necessary to accept the peace terms as they were in order to not disrupt the present state of peace.⁹ Thus, again it may be seen the Guinigi way of governing was not to be so concerned with the "*forma statutorum*," but can be characterized as dealing with problems in a more pragmatic fashion.

Lucchese di Scienze, Lettere, ed Arti, n.s. 11 (1961): 91-138.

⁸*Le Croniche*, 3: 189-90.

⁹A.S.L., *Governo di Paolo Guinigi*, n. 6, c. 37, p. 73.

Two other incidents around this time also show that Paolo held true to his isolationist policy in the latter part of his reign just as he had in the beginning years. When war broke out between Venice and the Holy Roman Emperor Sigismund in 1412, Sigismund wrote to Paolo threatening exile from the Empire for anyone who did not persist in harming Venetians and their followers, and shutting off all passages so that their soldiers and provisions could not pass through. Paolo responded by respectfully protesting the emperor's order, claiming the Venetians had been friends of the Lucchese for generations, and thus he could not obey the mandates.¹⁰

In the second incident, the Venetians became involved in another dispute in June 1415, this time with Genoa, and the two rivals decided to name Paolo Guinigi as the third mediator in their case. The *Signore* of Lucca had apparently learned from his experience as mediator earlier between Florence and Genoa: this time he refused, saying he could not intervene in such disputes, if not by law, then on the advice he had received.¹¹ Paolo did everything he could to

¹⁰*Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi*, in *Regesti del R. Archivio di Stato di Lucca*, ed. Luigi Fumi and Eugenio Lazzareschi, Vol. III, pt. I (Lucca: Giusti, 1925), regesto n. 823, p. 306-07.

¹¹*Ibid.*, regesto n. 235, p. 54.

avoid situations such as these in which he was required to take a side in a conflict, and if given a chance would refuse or back away from the task in order to not risk coming into future opposition; acting as mediator between two other city-states would have been a no-win situation for Paolo with not much to possibly gain, but a great deal to be potentially lost. It did not take him long to realize that.

After the death of King Ladislas in 1414, who had been the major ally of Paolo, Lucca was as susceptible to invasion as it had been at any point thus far in Paolo's reign. The son of Giangaleazzo, Filippo Maria Visconti, now Duke of Milan himself, had just started to consolidate power in Milan at the time of the death of Ladislas. Though in the 1420s Lucca would again come to benefit from an alliance with a powerful lord of Milan, Filippo had not yet reached that stage, and thus could not have been of much assistance to Lucca had Florence decided on a full-scale attack at this point. But again, Lucca benefitted from the fact that after Ladislas' death, the Florentines had become distracted from Lucca (and this time, from everything else of a foreign nature as well). In response to the growing financial concerns that had resulted from their protracted war efforts against Giangaleazzo and Ladislas in the previous decade,

Florentine governors after the death of Ladislas desired to embark on a period of isolationism themselves.¹²

The Braccio Affair

Yet, Lucca did not come out of this dangerous period totally unscathed. One Florentine attack must be mentioned because of the major consequences that it had in Lucca for the rest of the Guinigi period. In June 1418, Lucca was invaded by the troops belonging to the noted *condottiere* Braccio da Montone, who was almost certainly acting on the instigation of Florence.¹³ The Lucchese believed that the Florentines had put him up to it, and they received reports from several other places that that was the case.¹⁴ The fact that the Florentines denied any involvement in regard to

¹²Anthony Molho, *Florentine Public Finances in the Early Renaissance, 1400-1433* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 1-7; also see Brucker, *Civic World*, 194-208. It might be noted that when Florence re-emerged from this decade or so of relative isolation from foreign affairs that the Visconti of Milan were again a formidable power in Italian politics, and a power that would hold the attention of Florence for much of the decade of the 1420s, thus diminishing the importance Florence might have placed on gaining control of Lucca.

¹³See the description of Braccio da Montone in Trease, *The Condottieri*, esp. 190-91, 202-31.

¹⁴For example, Paolo received a letter dated 28 August 1418 from Bonfiglio de Bonfigli in Fermo stating that it was being said there in Fermo that Braccio had gone to Lucca at the petition of the Florentines; *Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi*, regesto n.1368, p. 435-36.

Braccio's invasion of Lucca probably shows more than anything they were going out of their way to convince their own still peace-hungry citizens that they were not involved in another costly war effort. It was not unusual for an Italian city-state at this time to free up a *condottiere* from further "official" service under that government, allow him to then become something of a "free agent" *condottiere*, then re-hire him secretly, thus relieving the regime in power from being held responsible for his actions; this is probably what happened in this case.

Though Lucca had been suspicious of Braccio since at least 1413, when Lucchese agents and spies first started tracking his movements, the attack that came in late June 1418 apparently achieved a complete surprise. Paolo was not even in Lucca, having gone to stay in Pietrasanta and leaving his secretary Guido Manfredi in power while he was away. The first mention of Braccio in relation to this invasion of June 1418 in either the official correspondence of Paolo or of his secretary Guido was a letter dated 28 June 1418 written to Paolo from Girolamo Trenta, who at the time was in Florence. In the letter, Trenta reveals with sadness that he heard while in Florence that Braccio was now near Siena with 3,000 men of war and was heading toward

Lucca.¹⁵ The next day preparations were made in Lucca to defend the important places in the countryside such as Pietrasanta, Motrone, and Massa. They did not matter much, however; on the following day, 30 June, Braccio entered Lucchese territory unimpeded.¹⁶

When he arrived, Braccio and his soldiers set up camp in the countryside, apparently near the town of Sasso, and immediately began to rob and pillage the surrounding lands. They also stole farm animals, grain, and other valuables.¹⁷ Braccio was only diverted from doing further damage to Lucchese lands after being paid off by Paolo a sum of 25,000 florins, a huge sum that would have been approximate to how much Lucca spent on the hiring of mercenaries for an entire year. It is evident from the meetings of the Council of Two Hundred in Florence in the summer months of 1418 that the Florentines had become very hostile toward Lucca; the cause

¹⁵*Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi*, regesto n. 1221, p. 406, "Questa ora ci è nuove ciertissime [sic] a dì 27 del mese prezente, a notte, Braccio dal Montone giunse a Siena con chavagli III m. e passò più qua circha miglia quatro, et ae qui scritto che a dirittura viene a-fferire a-lLucca [sic]; della qual cosa n' ò avuto et ò tanto dolore, che ne crepo, veduto quanto inconveniente ne puote incorrere."

¹⁶*Ibid.*, regesto n. 1224, p. 406.

¹⁷Franca Leverotti, in *Popolazione, famiglie, insediamento: Le Sei Miglia Lucchesi nel XIV e XV Secolo* (Pisa: Pacini, 1992), 76, writes that there were 30,000 staia of grain removed from Lucca by Braccio's men in 1418.

of this sudden hostility, as is that of Braccio's invasion, is not entirely clear. Sercambi wrote that Braccio attacked Lucca despite the fact that Paolo had done nothing to offend him.¹⁸

After Braccio had begun his land devastations in Lucchese territory, an embassy led by Jacobus de Vivianis and Leonardus de Massa was sent to Florence by Paolo; upon arriving, however, the Lucchese agents found that the Council of Two Hundred had been discussing what to do concerning Lucca and Paolo Guinigi. Leonardus was not optimistic; he claimed in an early letter back to Lucca that nothing had been decided as of yet, but that if it were not for the restraint of some good men, things would proceed badly for Lucca. His letter implies also there were definite relations with the Florentines and Braccio.¹⁹

On 9 July, Leonardus wrote to Paolo in Lucca that every day in Florence there were displeasing words to hear about you, even though the meetings of the Council of Two Hundred

¹⁸Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 236-39.

¹⁹*Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi*, regesto n. 1238, p. 411, "In tanto che, se non fusse il freno de' buoni, le cose procederanno male. Et li cancellieri et li altri amici di B[raccio], che sono qui in nostro danno, sollecitano loro amici. Preterea, questa sera a le xxiiij hore, ebbi da uno de' vostri che quell' ora si era vinto, che ambasciatori si mandasseno a B[raccio]."

were being held in secret. The fact that he wrote another letter to Paolo on the same day reveals the urgency of the situation, and the desire of Lucca to have the latest information from their agents; in the second letter, Paolo was informed that the members of the Two Hundred were not allowed to speak under penalty of death, and as a result it was difficult to get reliable information about Florentine intentions concerning Lucca. Moreover, Leonardus informed Paolo, all those Lucchese citizens now in Florence were being looked at with "great suspicion."²⁰

Hard feelings continued throughout the summer of 1418. Paolo received various warnings from around Tuscany of the suddenly militant aims of the Florentines toward Lucca. In August, the Lucchese vicar in Collodi informed Paolo that the Florentine Priors were commanding troops in the Valdinievole near Lucca, and that some believed they were doing so in order that they could attach onto the larger Florentine army in the Garfagnana; the vicar advised Paolo

²⁰Ibid., regesto n. 1245, p. 413, "*Per altra questa mattina vi scripsi, ora per questo vi significo che il Consiglio de .cc. con più di .c. richiesti entrò questa mattina in Consiglio alle xii hore et stettevi in sino a circa xviii. Di loro consigliare et deliberare da persona nulla si può avere nè sentire, excusandosi tucti che è pena la testa. Per la qual cagione noi tucti lucchesi, che siamo qui ne viviamo in gran suspecto et malinconia.*"

to remove himself along with his children to a safer place as this would call for a march through Lucchese territory.²¹ In this same month, Jacopo da Carrara wrote to Guido Manfredi from Florence that all the citizens there were displeased with Paolo. Giovanni Turchi, another Lucchese representative dispatched to Florence in the days after the invasion of Braccio, sent back news to Lucca that the Florentine governors were very suspicious of Paolo, and that they say that it is necessary for him to choose sides, or else lose his state.²²

The reason that the Braccio affair was so significant for the future of Lucca was that it exposed Paolo's long-time secretary Guido Manfredi as guilty of treason. Since Paolo was at Pietrasanta when the brigades of Braccio arrived in Lucca, Guido had been left in control of the city. Guido had long ties with Florence, dating to his friendship with Coluccio Salutati; he had been sent to Florence as head of several embassies, both during the late years of the republic and in the reign of Paolo. His crime

²¹Ibid., regesto n. 1287, p. 422.

²²*Carteggio di Guido Manfredi, Cancelliere della Repubblica di Lucca, Segretario della Signoria di Paolo Guinigi*, in *Regesti del R. Archivio di Stato di Lucca*, ed. Luigi Fumi, Vol. III, pt. ii (Pescia: Benedetti, 1933), regesto n. 165, p. 30-31.

was in having knowledge of the imminent raid by Braccio through Lucchese territory, but not revealing it to Paolo. There has been no satisfactory explanation given as to why Guido would have taken such action, other than it being possibly a financial decision.²³

The crime was not detected at first, and in fact Guido remained in place as the beloved secretary of the *Signore* for more than two years afterward. Toward the end of 1420, however, Paolo had at last become suspicious of Guido's past acts, and apparently Guido noticed Paolo's suspicion because he departed suddenly for Florence without informing anyone in November 1420. His flight, of course, only served to heighten suspicion of his earlier compliance with the Florentines. This led Paolo to sentence his secretary and friend to eternal exile at Foligno, a town that Paolo had close ties with through a recent marriage alliance. The bond of friendship was highly regarded in Lucca, as may be seen from almost every page of Sercambi's *Chronicle*, but even friendship had to be subordinated to the welfare of the state in Renaissance Lucca.

²³Franca Ragone has suggested that Guido was upset over the "*scarsa remuneratività della collaborazione prestata al signore...*" see her "Paolo Guinigi, i suoi collaboratori, i suoi nemici: l' emergere di nuovi ruoli politici in una corte toscana del Quattrocento," *Momus* 1 (1994), 21-22.

After the plague spread to Foligno, Guido was allowed to have his sentence moved to Siena; it was at Siena where he began to derive his devious plan to lead an actual military attack on Lucca and oust Paolo from power.²⁴ At Siena, Guido began to plan Paolo's downfall with Forese Sacchetti and another Lucchese citizen residing inside Lucca, Giovanni Turchi.²⁵ Guido broke the terms of his exile soon after this by departing Siena for Florence without permission, which resulted in Paolo's order for the confiscation of his possessions.

After the summer of turmoil of 1418, relations with the Florentines actually improved for the next several months.²⁶ In 1419, several attempts were made on the part of

²⁴Ibid., 20.

²⁵Paolo later said the crime of Turchi, because it was carried out from the inside (of Lucca) was worse than that of Guido's, see *Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi*, regesto n. 636, p. 116-17; Turchi was also sentenced by Paolo to exile, and all of his goods in Lucca were confiscated.

²⁶It should be pointed out that no matter what Paolo's relations were with the government of Florence at any particular time, he always maintained a small number of friendships with private citizens; Niccolò da Uzzano and Baccio Valori were especially close to Paolo in the latter years of his regime, as both were ex-*gonfalonieri* in Lucca. Also, the Guinigi had cordial relations with various members of the Strozzi family, Palla Strozzi, for example, was invited to the baptism of Paolo's daughter Filippa, who was born in April 1420. Paolo was also on friendly terms with Matteo Castellani and Rinaldo Gianfigliuzzi.

Florentine leaders to build better relations with Lucca; they requested, for example, that Paolo send his son Ladislao and his secretary Guido Manfredi as distinguished guests to Florence for the festival of S. Giovanni.²⁷ In September 1419, there was even an invitation made to Paolo to come to Florence and receive an honorary Florentine citizenship.²⁸ What is interesting is that there was no apparent cause for the change of heart in Florence. No agreement had been reached, nor had any event occurred which should have induced them to feel more brotherly toward their neighbor Lucca.

Much of what appears to be improved relations in this case can be dismissed as rhetoric, or statesmanship. In reality, the Florentines became more cordial toward Lucca after 1418 only because it was precisely at that time that Filippo Maria Visconti was beginning to appear to have an interest in returning to Tuscany to take up where his father had left off. Florence became more friendly to Lucca in 1419 so that the Lucchese in desperation would not decide to

²⁷Sercambi, *Le Cronache*, 3: 242-43, states that Guido and Lazzaro stayed nine days in Florence, went to the festival, saw Pope Martin V and the Florentine Priors, and received honors and gifts.

²⁸*Carteggio di Guido Manfredi*, regesto n. 618, p. 114-15.

throw their support to Filippo Maria. It did not, however, work out as planned for the Florentines in this case.

The Lucchese had actually begun to attempt to establish cordial relations with Filippo Maria soon after King Ladislas' death in 1414, sending letters to Milan filled with "*verbosa retorica*" about how glad they were to see him coming to power.²⁹ In a letter of September 1414, Paolo congratulated Filippo Maria for his taking of the city of Laudensis.³⁰ Similar letters were sent from Lucca to Filippo over the course of the next months as the Milanese lord captured various Lombard towns. The letters as a whole can be characterized as expressions of happiness that the *Signore* of Milan was regaining many of those lands and powers that his father once had.³¹

²⁹Giuliano Lucarelli, *I Visconti di Milano e Lucca* (Lucca: Maria Pacini Fazzi, 1984), 123-24. For Filippo's consolidation of power in Milan, see Nino Valeri, *L' Italia nell' Età dei Principati: dal 1343-1516* (Verona: Arnaldo Mondadori, 1949), 375-403.

³⁰A.S.L., *Governo di Paolo Guinigi*, n. 6, c. 86, p. 171, "*Illustrissime princeps et magnifico domine, protector homine. Receptis litteris excellentie vestre super recuperatione Civitatis Laudensis gratias ingentes habeo Celsitudini prelibate quod tam paterne tam dulciter dignata sit devotioni mee successus suos et felicitate votivam suis litteris intimare.*"

³¹See, for example, A.S.L., *Governo di Paolo Guinigi*, n. 6, c. 93v., p. 186; n.6, c. 125v., p. 252; n. 6, c. 132, p. 266.

A serious problem arose for Lucca, however, with the peace established between Florence and Milan in 1420, for the agreement called for the two superpowers to abide by the terms of a previous treaty in which both parties were involved, the Treaty of Sarzana of 1353. What this treaty stipulated was that, in essence, Florence was not to become involved in the affairs of Lombardy, while Milan was not to interfere in Tuscan affairs. This policy of non-intervention in the region of the other superpower, moreover, was reaffirmed in the 1428 Treaty of Ferrara. These treaties have been seen by some scholars as the reason Paolo's regime eventually collapsed; without the protection of the lord of Milan, it was only going to be a matter of time before the Florentines *did* see a suitable time to lay siege on Lucca.

Into this situation the Lucchese were thus thrust during the last decade of Paolo's rule. By 1422, Lucca entered a league headed by Florence and Venice which was designed above all else to oppose the Visconti, although Paolo entered the league very reluctantly, and under pressure from the other parties. It might be assumed that since Paolo was not afforded the luxury of the protection in the figure of the Duke of Milan that he would have been happy to receive it from elsewhere, but that was not the case; this shows his true fear of Florence. Involvement in a

league, especially in a league with Florence, could be burdensome, as the Lucchese knew from experience. Paolo knew membership in the league would likely draw the eventual ire of the Duke of Milan, and he knew that leagues often required soldiers or money for military efforts out of one's own homeland, a luxury he could not afford.

During the period of the alliance with Florence and Venice, the *Signore* of Lucca often reverted to the use of delay-tactics when asked by another member of the league for assistance; on other occasions, Paolo refused altogether to abide by the terms of the league to provide mutual support to one another. In September 1423, for instance, Lucca was asked by fellow league-members Florence and Siena to supply troops for a certain military effort, but Paolo refused, claiming that he had not a sufficient number of forces to contribute, although he did say he would be willing to pay for a number of soldiers (for a short period of time).³² In August 1425, Paolo refused again to send requested help to the Florentines, despite it being part of their responsibility to do so, according to the terms of the league; this time, the tone of Paolo's letter in response to the Florentine request bordered on being belligerent. He

³²Sercambi, *Le Croniche*, 3: 372-73.

claimed that they should not be surprised he is not consenting to their request for troops since he was busy gathering troops at that very time for the defense of his own state.³³

It is apparent from the documents that despite having enacted a five-year league with Florence in 1422, and despite thus being theoretically at war against Milan in this period, the Lucchese in reality still favored an alliance with Milan to that of Florence. Though Florence and Milan had agreed to peace in 1420, it was not long before their settlement began to be questioned,³⁴ and indeed not long before war between the two resumed, this time to last from 1422-1427. It was also not long once the war resumed before Paolo Guinigi started trying to secretly rebuild the ancient Lucchese tie to the Visconti.

The End of the Regime

It is often claimed in Lucchese historiography that another factor in Paolo Guinigi's increasingly tenuous hold on power in Lucca during the last decade of the *Signoria* was that most of that older generation of individuals who had helped him attain power in 1400 were now gone. The loss of

³³*Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi*, n. 6, c. 193v., p. 388.

³⁴When Milan seized Genoa in 1421, this led many in Tuscany to believe that further expansion would soon be attempted

his prestigious secretary Guido Manfredi to exile in 1422, and the death of the state propagandist Sercambi in 1424, for example, are held as part of the reason that Paolo's control in Lucca gradually slipped away from him toward the end of the regime. It may be, however, that the ambitions of the generation behind Paolo did as much or more to bring about his fall from power as did the disappearance of the generation in front of him.

In 1425, Paolo's oldest son Ladislas, now twenty-one years old, had taken it upon himself to set out and make his own fortune. He determined that at that stage of his life the best thing for him to do was to give himself over to military pursuits. Despite Paolo having given Ladislas a humanistic education, he decided to take up a life of fighting, from which his father was unable to make him withdraw. This, at least, was Paolo's story to Florence and Venice.

What happened in actuality was that earlier that year (1425), either Filippo Maria requested from Paolo that he send his son to Milan in order to head a band of Visconti knights and Paolo bowed to his wishes, or Paolo sent his son willingly into the service of the Duke. The former scenario is the more likely, because it would have been out of

Paolo's character to risk opposition in this manner, especially opposition in Florence and Venice. However it came about, Ladislás did enter the service of the Duke of Milan in 1425, and Florence and Venice as a result were visibly upset over the matter. The five-year league Lucca had signed with Florence in 1422 was still intact -- at least until now; Florence and Venice now felt strongly that Paolo had betrayed the league.

On 27 October 1425, the *Balia* of Ten in Florence sent a letter to Paolo informing him they were aware he had sent his son to serve Milan, and they hoped that he would be able to deny such news.³⁵ The Venetians complained to Paolo as well over the same matter.³⁶ While the war between Milan and Florence continued, the Lucchese would be relatively safe, as they would again benefit from Florentine attention being held elsewhere. But the last Florentine-Visconti struggle was to end in 1427, at which point the Florentines, now

³⁵*Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi*, regesto n. 1514, p. 463.

³⁶*Ibid.*, regesto n. 788, p. 140-41; in responding to these criticisms, Paolo tried to disassociate himself from the actions of his son, claiming that he could not persuade to him withdraw: "...omnia iura clamant quod pater pro filio non teneatur, et licet naturaliter unum et idem iure sanguinis pater et filius reputentur...Ipse enim Ladizlaus, etatis perfecte, disposuit rei militari operam dare a qua cum retrahere non valui;" See A.S.L., *Governo di Paolo Guinigi*, n. 6, c. 203v., p. 408; also see n. 6, c. 200v., p. 402.

freed from the burden of foreign wars, began to plot how to remove Paolo once and for all; they wanted, according to George Holmes, to teach Lucca a lesson for the latest betrayal.³⁷ In the end, the Florentines wanted to oust Paolo because he brought a measure of stability to Lucca because of his wealth and his family's alliances -- not because they believed that he was repressive of the liberties of the Lucchese people (what they claimed). The Lucchese people were the least of their concerns. Paolo was able, at least until the end, to defend Lucca and its territories; this was the real basis for the Florentine disdain of the Lucchese *Signore*.

But in 1427, Paolo began to lose this ability to hold on to Lucchese lands; throughout 1427-28 Florence seized most of the towns in the eastern part of Lucchese territory. By 1429, the war-mongers again prevailed in Florentine councils, and Lucca itself came under direct attack, as sieges were put on both Lucca and its subject town of Montecarlo, led by the Florentine *condottiere* Fortebraccio.³⁸ Paolo at this point had no choice but to

³⁷Holmes, *The Florentine Enlightenment, 1400-1450* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 70-71.

³⁸Michael E. Bratchel, *Lucca 1430-1494: The Reconstruction of an Italian City-Republic* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 212.

openly appeal for help; not only did he ask for assistance from Filippo Maria, but also from Siena, Bologna, and other powers. When Paolo wrote to the Duke of Milan to ask for aid, he wanted to be given the services of the *condottiere* Piccinino, whose military skills he highly regarded; Piccinino, however, did not want to take part in the Lucchese affair, and was able to convince the Duke to not send him and his army to Lucca. Instead, Filippo Maria dispatched to Lucca another of his hired mercenaries, Francesco Sforza, with whom Paolo was *not* on good terms.

Paolo also was able to convince the Sienese during 1429 that if they did not soon supply assistance, then it was more than likely that their city would be the next to fall to Florentine aggression. The Sienese gave the assignment of raising an army to Antonio Petrucci, who travelled to Rome and enlisted several Captains. Petrucci then led the Captains and their armies to Lucca by sea. When they arrived in February 1430 they found Lucca under siege, and they were able to provide needed, temporary relief in helping defend the city. Petrucci, seeing his forces were still not going to be sufficient to fully lift the siege that Fortebraccio had placed on Lucca, then proceeded to Milan to ask for

additional help from Filippo Maria.³⁹ In April 1430, Paolo objected to one of the Captain's that Petrucci had hired from Rome, and even began to refuse to pay him.⁴⁰ To the end, the *Signore* of Lucca was concerned not only that he remain in power, but he defiantly continued to insist on some control over *how* he stayed in power.

Meanwhile, the troops of Francesco Sforza arrived in Lucca, and by July 1430, he was able to remove the siege placed on the city by Fortebraccio; not only was he able to quickly throw back the invaders, but soon had installed military fortifications in the fields against them (which had been constructed by the Florentines, but discarded in their flight from Lucca when Sforza arrived).⁴¹ As a result of his quick successes, however, Sforza began to demand that Paolo get his money ready.⁴² It is also likely that Sforza

³⁹G. Pardi, "Notizie e documenti sulle relazioni tra Lucca e Siena." *Bullettino Senese di Storia Patria* 5 (1973): 375-77.

⁴⁰On 21 April 1430, Petrucci wrote from Pietrasanta to Paolo's son Ladislas that the refusal to pay for the services of the *conestabile* Sbardellato will bring shame and damage to the state of Lucca, Paolo, and Ladislas himself; *Carteggio di Paolo Guinigi*, regesto n. 1527, p. 470-71.

⁴¹C.C. Bayley, *War and Society in Renaissance Florence: The 'De Militia' of Leonardo Bruni* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961), 102-03.

⁴²Giovanni Cavalcanti, *Istorie Fiorentine*, ed. Guido di Pino (Milan: Aldo Martello, 1944), 189-91.

had become offended that Paolo earlier had preferred another man of war than himself. The Lucchese people in these last days began to question for the first time if Paolo, regardless of his intentions, still had the means to protect them from losing their independence. Clearly he was not as powerful as the *condottiere* Sforza had just proven himself to be; it may be argued that the Lucchese, again in total fear of losing their independence to Florentine aggression, simply reverted to what they perceived as giving them their best chance to retain self-rule in the long run.

Who the driving agents were behind the ouster of Paolo still remain vague, however. Michael Bratchel has provided three possible scenarios in trying to make sense of the last days of Paolo's government: either Sforza bullied the Lucchese people to join with him and remove Paolo from power, he was under the hire of the Lucchese people who had suddenly turned against Paolo because he no longer seemed able to protect them, or that both parties were acting together and thus, both wanted the Lucchese *Signore* removed from power.⁴³

In the end, Paolo was removed from power as the leading men of Lucca approached him at his palace in 1430, had him placed under arrest, and removed from the city to Milan,

where he was imprisoned until his death in 1432. It should be no surprise that the end of the regime came about as it did: Paolo was particular about how (and by whom) he wanted his city-state defended (and governed), and on this occasion he happened to offend the wrong person at precisely the time when other of his resources were running out, chiefly the support of the Lucchese people.

⁴³Bratchel, *Lucca 1430-1494*, 19.

CONCLUSION

When Paolo Guinigi came to power in Lucca in November 1400, he was a twenty-eight year old without much experience in public life in any area, much less in the governance of a city-state. Faced with a state of extreme emergency in Lucca at this time, Paolo was thrust into the office of *Signore* of Lucca by a group of conspiring, yet patriotic city fathers who believed that he offered them their best chance of remaining independent because of his wealth and his family's previous ties. Not all Lucchese citizens were confident at the beginning that Paolo would be able to provide the city with capable leadership; many, in fact, were quite skeptical about it. It was something that he would have to prove to them over time, that his interests truly were the interests of Lucca, and that every effort would be made to preserve the *status quo*.

Certainly fate has hardly ever changed the course of one person's life in such a short period as it did for Paolo Guinigi. At the beginning of the year 1400, Paolo was merely the fourth son of the "*pater patriae*" of Lucca, Francesco Guinigi, and was probably looking forward to at least a moderately successful political career (being a Guinigi) for

the Republic of Lucca; by the end of that same year he had suffered the deaths of his three older brothers and several other important family members, undergone a bout with the plague during the summer, survived a plot on his own life, been named as Captain and Defender of the People of Lucca, and subsequently as absolute *Signore* of Lucca. Paolo's coming to power thus may be considered partly due to chance, but his hold on power for thirty years had nothing much at all to do with fate.

The *Signoria* of Paolo Guinigi must be considered as one of the highlights of Lucchese history if an era may be measured for what its leaders set out to do at the beginning. It was the ultimate goal of the Lucchese during this time to preserve their independence, and this was readily accomplished -- in an era, moreover, that was one of the most violent in modern history. During the last Florentine war with Milan under Giangaleazzo, Lucca did not, like Pisa, Perugia, Siena, Bologna, and many other cities, fall to Milan. Even more remarkably perhaps, Lucca was able to resist Florentine control during the entire reign of Paolo Guinigi.

Paolo Guinigi also should be considered a capable ruler in that he ruled Lucca at this time in its history in the only way that I believe a ruler *could* have ruled -- and

survived. On the one hand, he kept an eye on the interests of the people as a whole, not only of Lucca, but also those of the Lucchese *contado*. He was careful not to upset certain communal institutions and traditions, he went to pains to make sure the food supply was in order, and he gave tax breaks to newcomers and to communes that were in distress. Without doing these types of things, Paolo's rule in Lucca would have been resisted from the beginning; his power rested on mutual consent, not on the sword.

On the other hand, he ruled in the only way possible that a Lucchese leader could have ruled at this time in terms of foreign policy. The days of expansion were long over for Lucca by the beginning of the fifteenth century; Paolo's objective was merely to hold onto to that territory that was presently held. Much of Lucca's foreign policy in the Guinigi period has in the past been wholly explained by its rivalry with Florence, but as we have seen, not all of it can be; there were occasions in which Paolo briefly took on alliances with Florence (1401-02, 1422-25).

Lucca's foreign policy has been characterized as isolationist in this paper, that is, an attempt to do everything possible to stay out of entangling alliances. This was not possible, of course, during the first thirty years of the fifteenth century; Lucca's frequent alliances

with Milan are a reflection of the constant fear of Florentine aggression. Yet, when forced into alliances, the Lucchese were very reluctant to fulfill their part of any agreement. Paolo often appealed to the weakness of Lucca, or the lack of necessary money or men in order to extricate himself from such responsibilities. Looked at from this perspective, the policies undertaken by the Guinigi *Signoria* appear not in the end to look like timid policies, but rather practical ones, and the only ones that were going to allow for an extended stay in power.

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