



HISTORY OF MANTOVA



MANTOVA IS ORIGINATED IN SETTLEMENTS OF THE ETRUSCANS AND LATER OF THE GALLIC CENOMANI. ROMAN COLONIZATION BEGAN ABOUT 220 BC. IN THE 11TH CENTURY, MANTUA BECAME A FIEF OF BONIFACE OF CANOSSA, MARQUIS OF TUSCANY. THE BONACOLSI FAMILY GAINED CONTROL OF MANTUA IN 1276. IN 1328 THE BONACOLSI WERE DRIVEN OUT BY THE GONZAGAS, UNDER WHOM THE CITY ENJOYED A LONG PERIOD OF POLITICAL PRESTIGE AND CULTURAL SPLENDOUR THAT ENDURED UNTIL THE 17TH CENTURY. THE GONZAGAS' RULE OF MANTUA ENDED IN 1707, WHEN THE CITY BECAME A FIEF OF THE AUSTRIAN HABSBURGS' EMPIRE AND WAS HEAVILY FORTIFIED AS THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF THE IMPERIAL "QUADRILATERAL." NAPOLEON TOOK THE CITY AFTER A LONG SIEGE IN 1797, AND MANTUA WAS DOMINATED BY THE FRENCH UNTIL IT WAS RETURNED TO AUSTRIA IN 1814. MANTUA CONTRIBUTED TO THE CAUSE OF THE RISORGIMENTO (MOVEMENT FOR NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE) AND WAS JOINED TO THE KINGDOM OF ITALY IN 1866.

