PREFACE

After five days of bitter fighting between March 18 and March 23, 1848, the Habsburg troops under the command of Field Marshal Joseph Wenzel Radetzky were forced to withdraw from Milan to the fortresses of the Quadrilateral. On March 22 Venetian liberals occupied the arsenal without encountering any resistance. From Milan and Venice the revolt spread throughout Lombardy and Venetia. Although the revolution collapsed in Lombardy when Radetzky's troops re-entered Milan on August 8, the flames of rebellion were not extinguished in Venice before August 25, 1849.

As elsewhere in Europe, the 1848–1849 revolutionary movement in Lombardy and Venetia had a strong nationalist and liberal coloration. The revolutionists were ardently pro-Italian and violently anti-Austrian. They fought for a constitutional government with the usual guarantees of individual rights demanded by the liberals of that time.

The spread of the revolutionary movement to Lombardy and Venetia made it clear that the prevailing European nationalist and liberal ideologies had by then made a deep imprint on the politically conscious intelligentsia and bourgeoisie as well as on other groups in the two provinces. It also became obvious that by 1848 a large number of Lombards and Venetians were permeated by a deep distrust, intense dislike, and even bitter hatred of their Austrian governors. Why? Was it that the forces of nationalism and liberalism had become so irrepressible that an alien monarch who had not allowed his powers to be limited by a "liberal" constitution, no matter how just, benevolent, or enlightened his rule, could contain them only with naked military force? Or was it that the policies and practices of the Austrians were so arbitrary, shortsighted, and oppressive that they drove to revolt a populace which had during the Napoleonic era looked back with fond remembrances to the benign regime of Maria Theresa? Or was it a combination of both these factors that explains

the ever increasing alienation of the political elite from the Habsburg government?

Some of the answers to such questions can be found, at least in part, by a detailed analysis of the shifts of public opinion and the political, administrative, economic, and cultural policies and practices pursued in Lombardy-Venetia by the Austrians during the first two years of their occupation—a period when the permanent political, administrative, and economic system which was later to be adopted in the area was still in the process of formation. Many of the basic principles which were later to serve as guidelines for Habsburg policies and practices until 1848, or even 1859, were formulated during the first two years of provisional administration. Moreover, many of the attitudes adopted by the newly re-acquired Italian subjects of the monarchy towards their Austrian rulers were based on what they saw or thought they saw of Austrian rule during the first two critical years following the return of the Habsburgs to the area.

In evaluating Habsburg rule in Italy between 1813 and 1815, as well as later, one must make a sharp distinction between Lombardy and Venetia, for both the political opinions of the inhabitants and the practices of the Austrians were very different in the two areas, especially during the period covered by this study. Such a differentiation has heretofore not been adequately taken into account. All too frequently writers have led readers to believe that the attitude of the Venetians towards the Habsburgs was basically the same as that of the Lombard middle class.

In the past too much stress has been put on political history, the "liberal" and "patriotic" views of anti-Austrian Lombard intellectuals and bourgeoisie, and the machinations of the secret societies. Moreover, at least a few of the conjectures of the past half century about the widespread discontent with Habsburg rule in 1814–1815 and the role played by secret societies in various liberal plots have been based at least partly on evidence that is open to question. Then, too, with the notable exception of some of the works of such men as Alessandro Luzio and Domenico Spadoni, much that has been written by the older generation of Italian historians has been colored by their strong liberal and nationalist predilections. Furthermore, thus far very little attention has been paid to economic conditions or to Austrian economic policies and practices, which played a significant role in determining the initial reaction of many elements of the population to the newly restored Habsburg administration.

Preface ix

Essential as a study of the Austrian provisional regime in Lombardy-Venetia is to an understanding of Austro-Italian relations during the first half of the nineteenth century, nothing has been written that presents the reader with a comprehensive view of the whole subject since Joseph Alexander von Helfert published his Ausgang der französischen Herrschaft in Ober-Italien und Brescia-Miländer Militär-Verschwörung in 1890 and his Kaiser Franz I. von Österreich und die Stiftung des Lombardo-Venetianischen Königreichs in 1901. Helfert wrote little about economic matters and devoted the major part of his account to Lombardy. In his La restaurazione austriaca a Milano nel 1814 Francesco Lemmi concentrated his attention almost exclusively on Lombardy and wrote little about most aspects of the subject discussed in the present volume. Augusto Sandonà's classic Il Regno Lombardo Veneto 1814-1859 (1912) is mainly concerned with Habsburg administrative affairs during a later period. Domenico Spadoni's monumental three-volume Milano e la congiura militare nel 1814 per l'indipendenza italiana (1936-1937) deals exclusively with the liberal movement in Lombardy, the Brescian-Milanese conspiracy, and the trial of its ringleaders. Such twentieth century scholars as Alessandro Luzio, Angelo Ottolini, Oreste Dito, Pietro Pedrotti, Ilario Rinieri, Renato Soriga, Armando Saitta, and Carlo Francovich for the most part have written about the liberal and nationalist movement and secret societies.

The present writer has attempted to deal with all facets of Lombard and Venetian history between October, 1813, when Habsburg troops first set foot on Italian soil, and the spring of 1815, when Joachim Murat's efforts to establish an independent Italy under his domination ended in failure and when the outlines of the permanent government which the Austrians intended to establish in Lombardy-Venetia were clearly spelled out in the imperial patent of April 7, 1815. Much of his study is based on archival materials in Vienna, Milan, and Venice. Some of the most important documents dealing with the Austrian administration in Lombardy-Venetia were either totally ruined or else seriously damaged when the Austrian ministry of justice palace was set on fire during the July 15, 1927, riots. Fortunately, summaries of many pertinent records stored in this building could be found in the Staats-Rath Akten and the Conferenz Akten, both of which were housed in the Haus-, Hof-, und Staatsarchiv. Unfortunately the part of both of these collections that deals with the first half of the nineteenth century, which was transported to what

was believed to be a safe hiding place in Upper Austria, was entirely destroyed during the last days of fighting between German and United States troops in the spring of 1945. While he was in Vienna as a pre-doctoral Social Science Research Council Fellow shortly before the second World War broke out, the present writer managed to take detailed notes on all documents in both collections pertaining to Lombardy-Venetia during the period discussed in this book.

The writer was not so fortunate with valuable documents in the Archivio di Stato of Milan destroyed during the last war. He managed to take only fragmentary notes for 1814 from just part of them. Among the invaluable collections that were ruined were the Commissione Plenipotenziaria presieduta dal Conte di Bellegarde and the trial records of the Brescian-Milanese conspirators, which Domenico Spadoni found after many years of careful search. Some of the documents that survived the ravages of World War II, especially those designated as "Atti secreti" or "Atti secretissimi," need to be scrutinized with great care, for they consist of reports of secret informers or agents who were often highly inaccurate in the information which they supplied to their superior officials. Be that as it may, the Atti secreti of the Presidenza di governo, which are very significant for this study, are intact, as are the papers in the Uffici e Tribunali Regi collection. Of equal importance for this study, thirty years ago Spadoni published detailed and careful summaries of all the protocols of the trial of the Brescian-Milanese conspirators. Then, too, the rich documentary collections dealing with the period that are in the Archivio di Stato in Venice are wholly intact. In this archive are many documents that apply to Lombardy, if only indirectly, as well as to Venetia.

The writer is deeply indebted to numerous persons and institutions for the assistance which they so kindly gave him in pursuing his study. In the first place, he wishes to thank the directors of the Haus-, Hof-, und Staatsarchiv, the Kriegs-Archiv, the Hofkammer Archiv, and the Verwaltungsarchiv, in Vienna; the Archivio di Stato of Milan; and the Archivio di Stato of Venice for their help in providing him with the appropriate documents in their custody. He also wishes to express his appreciation to the directors of the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek; the Biblioteca di San Marco and the Museo del Risorgimento italiano, of Venice; the Biblioteca Ambrosiana, the Biblioteca Braidense, and the Museo del Risorgimento, of Milan; the Widener Library, of Harvard University; and The University of

Preface xi

Texas Library for the helpful manner in which their personnel put material at his disposal.

As has already been mentioned, a pre-doctoral Social Science Research Council Fellowship made it possible for the author to examine the documents used in this study that were later destroyed during World War II. All the archival sources and other manuscripts as well as many books examined since the war were studied by him while he was a Guggenheim Fellow in Italy. This writer wishes to express his deep appreciation to the Guggenheim Memorial Foundation for making it possible for him to devote his attention for most of a year to Austrian policies and practices in Lombardy-Venetia between 1814 and 1821. He also wishes to thank The University of Texas Committee on Research and Creative Writing for a grant allowing him to devote a semester to research on this topic. In addition, he wants to acknowledge his debt to Rice University for a substantial grant for the publication of this book.

The manuscript was typed by Kathlyn Knobloch, formerly of the editorial staff of the Austrian History Yearbook. The index was prepared by Mrs. Stephanie Lowe. The maps were drawn by Clifford Woerner, of The University of Texas. The author's wife spent countless hours in proofreading and other assistance. He wishes to thank her for invaluable advice and encouragement that were so valuable for the completion of the work.

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