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978-0-521-46296-9 - Numbers and Nationhood: Writing Statistics in Nineteenth-century Italy

Silvana Patriarca

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Numbers and nationhood explores the Italian inflection of a Europe-wide phenomenon in the nineteenth century: the rise of statistics as a mode of representation of modern society. Silvana Patriarca examines the ideologies which informed the copious statistical literature produced between the 1820s, when statistical publications began to proliferate in the Italian states, and the 1870s, when a unified Italy entered a fully positivistic era. Her innovative study illuminates the meanings that the science of statistics had for its mostly liberal promoters and explores the uses of statistics in the process of nation-building. She shows how statistics helped to generate a long-lasting image of Italy that accentuates its internal territorial divisions. By examining the power of numerical representations, *Numbers and nationhood* provides a fresh approach to the history of Risorgimento Italy and of positivism, bringing to the fore issues of science, politics, and representation.

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WRITING STATISTICS IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY ITALY

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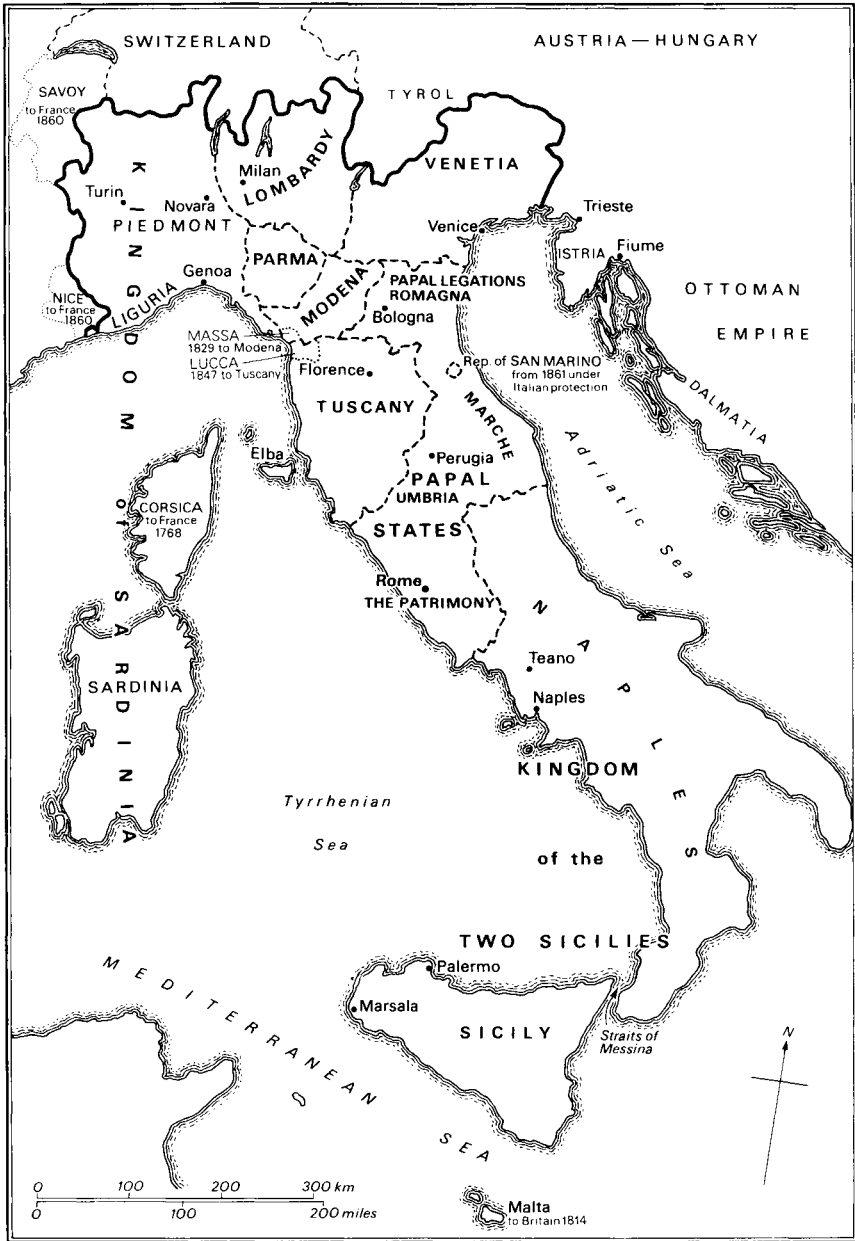
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Map 1 Italy during the process of unification.