

Texts, publics, and networks of the Neapolitan Revolution of 1647-1648

In May 1648, the Archbishop of Amalfi, Angelo Pichi, presented His Holiness Innocent x with an official report on the state of affairs of his diocese following the conclusion of the Neapolitan revolution of 1647-48¹. Looking back at those extraordinary and astonishing occurrences, the archbishop was not able to find words to describe one of the most traumatic experiences of his whole life. For him, the full sense of this terrible event could only be conveyed by the classical image of Babylon².

More than nine months had passed since the start of the first general uprising in the market-place of Naples on 7th July of 1647. That had broken out on a hot Sunday morning, when the lower classes rose up against the imposition of a hated tax on fruits and other staples. They were led by a poor young Neapolitan, Tommaso Aniello d'Amalfi (nicknamed Masaniello) who was the protagonist of the first phase of the uprising up until the day of the Feast of *Madonna del Carmine*, on 16th July 1647, when he was murdered by certain reactionary elements in league with the viceroy. After the assassination, the revolution developed through various stages, the effect of which was the political mobilization of different social strata, which had hitherto been excluded from the political arena as well as from any kind of political representation. From the capital, the revolution spread throughout the twelve provinces of the Kingdom of Naples, absorbing more radical sentiments emanating from the countryside, which were marked by strong anti-feudal resentment. A turning point in the revolutionary process was reached on 5th October 1647, when the three

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² Andrew P. SCHEIL, *Babylon under western eyes: a study of allusion and myth*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2016.

city fortresses and the Spanish fleet began to bombard the city. From that moment, there followed a fight to the death which culminated on 17th October with the publication of the Manifesto of the People of Naples (*Manifesto del Popolo di Napoli*) which proclaimed the secession of the kingdom from the House of Habsburg. A few days later (23rd October), the establishment of the Neapolitan Republic under French protection was announced. The entrance, in mid-November, of Henri II of Lorraine, Duke of Guise, onto the stage of the revolution – he had been specifically invited by the Neapolitan People to act as «stadtholder» in the same way as William of Orange in the United Provinces – led to the final events of the revolution. Eventually, the geo-political situation (characterized by the final acts of the Thirty Years War, culminating in the peace agreement of 13th January 1648, between the Catholic Monarchy and the United Provinces, which ended the 80-year long conflict) as well as the fatigue of the Neapolitan people with the civil war paved the way for the restoration of Spanish rule. Therefore, on 6th April 1648, Easter Monday, Spanish troops commanded by Don Juan Josè of Austria (the young natural son of King Philip IV) and the count of Oñate, (former Spanish ambassador to the Holy See, now serving as the new Vice Roy of the kingdom) retook control of the popular areas. The end of the revolution was reached thanks to a backroom deal with certain discontented factions of the popular front, which granted to the insurgents their principal demands, as well as a general pardon for their actions³.

The revolutionary events created a new regime of unbridled freedom, which Yves-Marie Bercé has placed in relation to other revolutionary ruptures: «in Paris in 1648 (during the Fronde) or again in 1790 (during the first months of Revolution), in 1647 a strange social phenomenon emerged in Naples. Historians have called it an explosion of political expression, a sudden, unusual, mad and chaotic freedom of speech⁴». This freedom generated an «excess of words», which unleashed an enormous amount of textual representations, imbuing the reality with their performative features. One of the main features of

³ Rosario VILLARI, *Un sogno di libertà : Napoli nel declino di un Impero, 1585-1648*, Milan, Mondadori 2012. See also his classic work: *La rivolta antispagnola a Napoli. Le origini (1585-1647)*, Rome ; Bari, Laterza, 1967 (English version: *The revolt of Naples*, trans. by James Newell with the assistance of John A. Marino, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1993); Alain HUGON, *Naples insurgée. 1647-1648. De l'événement à la mémoire*, Rennes, Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2011; Giuseppe GALASSO, *Storia del Regno di Napoli*, vol. III, *Il Mezzogiorno spagnolo e austriaco, 1622-1734*, Turin, UTET, 2005-2006, p. 285-551; FRANCESCO BENIGNO, *Specchi della rivoluzione : conflitto e identità politica nell'Europa moderna*, Rome, Donzelli, 1999, p. 7-63; Aurelio MUSI, *La rivolta di Masaniello sulla scena politica barocca*, Naples, Guida, 1989; Pier Luigi ROVITO, «La rivoluzione costituzionale di Napoli (1647-1648)», *Rivista Storica Italiana*, 98-2, 1986, p. 367-462.

⁴ Yves-Marie BERCÉ, «Political vacuum and interregnum in early modern unrest», in *From mutual observation to propaganda war, premodern revolts in their transnational representations*, éd. Malte Griesse, Bielefeld, Transcript Verlag, 2014, p. 83.

the Neapolitan revolution lies in its media nature. New media appeared, while old ones were transformed by the revolutionary event. Yet the dialectic relation between the Neapolitan revolution and its media has for a long time remained on the fringes of historiographical discourse, eventually causing a distortion of its overall significance. As has been rightly pointed out:

The publication of Italian political texts favorable to the revolutions is practically unknown. Unlike France, England, and Holland where greater freedom of the press allowed the publication of a large number of pamphlets and political booklets, in Italy, most texts favorable to the revolution circulated in manuscript copies. They were not a mere complement of the documents (posters, leaflets, pamphlets, and books) printed in Naples in 1647-48, or of French propaganda material, but were the most important contribution to the political debate which developed in Italy at this time, expressing, as they did the orientations and trends of thought that took shape throughout the country. An uncritical reading of the narratives and reports sent from Naples to all parts of Europe, the lack of a detailed examination of the Spanish sources, the facile acceptance of commonplaces and accounts that are intentionally mystificatory, and the failure to make use of what remains of the manuscript political texts are all factors that have limited and distorted historical judgment of the Neapolitan revolution and of the attitude of Italian political thinkers towards the contemporaneous revolutionary movements⁵.

In recent decades, scholars have begun to draw attention to these aspects. Nonetheless they have mostly studied some features of these texts such as the political languages, their ideological underpinnings as well as on their literary features⁶. However, much work still remains to be done in order to place these materials within the media ecology of the mid-seventeenth century.

This paper will analyze the form and content of these texts (handwritten and printed newsheets, letters, books and *ephemera*), by assessing their context of production, and their reception. Furthermore, we will attempt to gauge the widening both of the newly emergent publics as well as of the political debate during the Neapolitan revolution, using the information

⁵ Rosario VILLARI, « Naples and the Contemporaneous Revolutions. Some point of Convergence », in Rosario VILLARI, *The revolt of Naples...*, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

⁶ Silvana D'ALESSIO, *Contagi: la rivolta napoletana del 1647-48: linguaggio e potere politico*, Florence, Centro Editoriale Toscano, 2003; *Mondo antico in rivolta (Napoli 1647-1648)*, éd. Aurelio Musi et Saverio Di Franco, Manduria; Bari; Rome, Pietro Lacaita, 2006; Vittorio Ivo COMPARATO, « From the Crisis of Civil Culture to the Neapolitan Republic of 1647. Republicanism in Italy between the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries », in *Republicanism: a shared European Heritage*, vol. 1, *Republicanism and Constitutionalism in Early Modern Europe*, dir. Martin Van Gelderen et Quentin Skinner, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002, p. 169-193; Rosario VILLARI, *Per il Re o per la patria. La fedeltà nel Seicento con « Il Cittadino Fedele » e altri scritti politici* Rosario Villari, Rome; Bari, Laterza, 1994; Vittorio CONTI, *La rivoluzione repubblicana a Napoli e le strutture rappresentative (1647-1648)*, Florence, Centro Editoriale Toscano, 1984.

produced during the event itself. This analysis will show the creation of a multimedia landscape (characterized by the intersection of orality, writing and printing) vis-à-vis the insurrectional deeds of the common people. In the final section, we will deal with the media ecology in which the message of the Neapolitan revolution was inserted. This approach will allow us to follow the thread back and recover the traces of the revolutionary event, showing the excess of words and actions it generated, the connections it established with other European revolutionary experiences, and the negative outcomes which ultimately impeded an appreciation of its significance within the larger picture of European political culture.

After the presentation of the *Relationes ad limina* to the Pope in May 1648, the Archbishop of Amalfi, Angelo Pichi, had prolonged his stay in Rome for the whole summer in order to arrange the last details of the move to his new diocese, San Miniato in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. Writing to the Medici secretary, Giovan Battista Gondi, at the end of September 1648, he announced the shipping by courier of a gift for His Highness Ferdinand IIS, a book titled «Masaniello about the Revolutions of Naples which, although it deals with past events – he wrote – is well worth reading due to the richness of the details it contains⁷ ». In all likelihood, the book was Alessandro Giraffi's *Le rivoluzioni di Napoli* which centered on the figure of Masaniello, which was completed just three months after the outbreak of the revolution and published in 1648⁸. This letter was written almost six months after the conclusion of the Neapolitan revolution, testifying to the thirst for information about the Neapolitan events which was widespread in particular in a city like Rome. The holy city had followed the unfolding of the Neapolitan events with a great deal of apprehension mixed with curiosity. It was a good vantage point from which to observe the ebb and flow of the revolution. Rome was just two to four days journey from Naples, and was one of the most important gateways through which news about the Neapolitan revolution spread throughout early modern Europe. It got first-hand reports about the Neapolitan events thanks to a dense network of correspondents scattered around the kingdom: 20 archbishoprics and 107 bishoprics⁹. Rome was also a clearinghouse for information, since the reports were received and passed through several types of network (cultural, diplomatic, economic, personal, religious and scientific), and

⁷ Archivio di Stato di Firenze (ASF), Mediceo del Principato (MdP) 1486, Inserto 2, not folied: Angelo Pichi to Gian Battista Gondi, Rome, 26th September 1648.

⁸ Alessandro GIRAFFI, *Le rivoluzioni di Napoli*, Venice, Baba, 1648. See Silvana D'ALESSIO, «Un esemplare cronologia: "Le rivoluzioni di Napoli di Alessandro Giraffi (1647)"», *Annali dell'istituto italiano per gli studi storici*, 15, 1998, p. 287-340.

⁹ Archivio Doria Pamphilij, Rome, (ADP), Archiviolo 100, f. 303r.

were then retransmitted through a myriad of media formats¹⁰. For instance, the news from Naples reached Paris not only through official diplomatic channels such as the French Ambassador to the Holy See¹¹, but also through personal networks like that of the Dupuy brothers, Pierre and Jacques – librarians of Louis XIV, and leading patrons of one of the most vibrant cultural circles of Paris, the « Cabinet Dupuy » – who most likely passed on the news to the editor-in-chief of the French Gazette, Théophraste Renaudot¹². The Dupuys received updated information by their brother in Rome, Christophe, who was the general procurator of the Carthusian order, and who was in touch with the flower of intellectual high society in the Holy City. In a letter written at the end of July, Christophe Dupuy wrote to his brothers in Paris:

Vous avez sceu par mes precedentes les grandes revolutions de Naples lasquelles continuent tousjours avec des furies inouyes. Je vous envoye quelques articles accordez entre le viceroi et le peuple, suivant lesquels ils se sont maintenus jusques à present¹³.

Christophe received first hand reports from his network of correspondents in the kingdom of Naples.

One of them was the Dutch intellectual Nicolas Heinsius who forwarded to him some materials relating to the Neapolitan occurrences¹⁴. Arriving in Naples some months previously on a scholarly visit, Heinsius was taken by surprise by the outbreak of the revolution¹⁵. In a letter written at beginning of August to his brothers in Paris, Christophe Dupuy was concerned about the safety of his Neapolitan correspondent since he had not received any further words. The lack of information from his friend did not prevent Dupuy from receiving information from other sources. In particular, he could rely on firsthand information provided to him by his brethren at the *Certosa di Padula*, who updated him with news regarding the insurrection in the provinces

¹⁰ Peter BURKE, « Rome as center of information and communication for the catholic world, 1550-1650 » dans *From Rome to eternity: Catholicism and arts in Italy, ca. 1550-1650*, éd. Pamela M. Jones et Thomas Worcester, Leyde, Brill, 2002, p. 253-269.

¹¹ Michèle BENAITEAU, « Potere politico e informazione nel Seicento. Lineamenti di una ricerca », dans *Filosofia storiografia letteratura. Studi in onore di Mario Agrimi*, dir. Bernardo Razzitti, Lanciano, Editrice Itinerari, 2001, p. 575-598.

¹² Stéphane HAFEMAYER, *L'information dans la France du XVII^e siècle: La Gazette de Renaudot, de 1647 à 1663*, Paris, H. Champion, 2002.

¹³ « Letter of Christophe Dupuy, Rome, 29th July 1647 », in *Humanisme et politique: lettres romaines de Christophe Dupuy à ses frères (1646-1659)*, éd. Kathryn Willis WOLFE et Philip J. WOLFE, Tübingen, G. Narr, 1997, t. II, p. 96.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Frans Felix BLOK, *Nicolaas Heinsius in Napels: april-juli 1647*, Amsterdam, Noord-Hollandsche Uitgevers Maatschappij, 1984.

of the Kingdom of Naples¹⁶. Not only did Christophe send information on the Neapolitan revolution, but in turn he received news on the Neapolitan events from Paris thanks to the copies of the French *Gazette* which were sent to him along with other types of correspondence. Therefore, he found himself in the best position to analyze both incoming and outgoing information flows. In a letter written on 24th August 1647, Christophe comments on the poor quality of the information in an issue of the French *Gazette*, while advancing an interesting explanation:

Vostre gazetier nous a donné une fort maigre relation de la sedition de Naples et fort impertinente. Je croi que l'on lui aura deffendu de l'estendre tout au long, affin que le peuple de France ne soit pas informé de ce qui a porté celui de Naples à se soulever¹⁷.

It was through a variety of exchanges of information such as this, that the news of the Neapolitan revolution spread throughout Europe. By the end of July 1647, for instance, the Italian intellectual and member of the Lincean Academy in Rome, Cassiano dal Pozzo, received a letter from his Neapolitan correspondent Giuseppe Donzelli, a renowned Neapolitan physician who would have fully supported the revolutionary movement and in particular its new Republican course¹⁸. In this letter, Donzelli mentioned the sending of a « detailed report about the insurrection of Naples under the form of a long and continuous narration in order to write the “pure truth”¹⁹ ». On 10th August, he wrote another letter in which he apologized for not having any reports on the events in Naples, reassuring dal Pozzo that he would receive something in just a few days. In addition, Donzelli explained he had not been able to procure a drawing of Masaniello because the viceroy had not allowed its circulation; however, he was quite confident that he could satisfy his patron's requests as soon as the drawing was available²⁰. The astonishing story of Masaniello had piqued the curiosity of many contemporaries. By writing from Munster to Cassiano dal Pozzo in Rome on 9th August, the Cardinal Fabio Chigi (the future Pope Alexander VII) wrote that the story of the barefoot Neapolitan leader resembled the plot of a comedy, and he was surprised that the gazettes, which he had just received, did not carry any

¹⁶ « Letter of Christophe Dupuy, Rome, 6th August 1647 », in *Humanisme et politique...*, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

¹⁷ « Letter of Christophe Dupuy, Rome 24th August 1647 », in *Humanisme et politique...*, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

¹⁸ Pietro MESSINA, « Giuseppe Donzelli e la rivoluzione napoletana del 1647-1648 », *Studi Storici*, 28-1, 1987, p. 183-202.

¹⁹ Biblioteca dell'Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei e Corsiniana, Rome (BANLC), Archivio dal Pozzo, ms. 5, f. 341r: Giuseppe Donzelli to Cassiano dal Pozzo, Naples, 26th July 1647.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, f. 343r.

drawing of Masaniello²¹. Probably, the request of dal Pozzo to Donzelli for such drawings was made in order to satisfy the curiosity of this, as well as of many other, illustrious correspondents; as shown by a dispatch written on 20th August by the Florentine agent to the Medici court in the Kingdom of Naples. Vincenzo De' Medici communicated that he had got his hands on two wax drawings of the Neapolitan leader, and would dispatch them via a courier to Florence²². These examples show the circulation of a whole range of media formats which were available about the Neapolitan revolution. Letters, books, reports, drawing, handwritten and printed newsheets composed a large spectrum of media through which information was conveyed, and was in turn channeled and disseminated along various networks. Ultimately, it is the reticular nature of information which makes this flow of news unstoppable.

Despite great efforts by the newly resurgent authorities, including the destruction of a great deal of material, it was not possible to fully control these exchanges of information. For instance, shortly after the restoration of order in Naples, Giuseppe Donzelli's *Partenope Liberata* – the official history of the popular movement published in February 1648 and dedicated to the Duke of Guise – was withdrawn from circulation²³. In a letter written to Cassiano dal Pozzo on 18th April 1648, Donzelli wrote that he had been forced to hand over all copies of his work to the Spanish authorities in order to be granted a pardon. However, he added that he would do everything possible to procure a copy of the book in good time. But in the meanwhile, he was just thinking of getting himself out of Naples and of moving to Rome, until such time as things calmed down²⁴. After the restoration of order by the Spanish, many people opted to leave the city. In a letter written by Christophe Dupuy on 11th May 1648, he refers to a meeting in Rome with Camillo Tutini, a Neapolitan intellectual, a member of the popular movement, and author of one of the most famous and popular chronicle of the Neapolitan revolution, and a primary historiographical source²⁵.

²¹ *Ibid.*, ms. 30, f. 202r: Fabio Chigi to Cassiano dal Pozzo, Munster, 9th August 1647.

²² ASF, MdP 4113, not foliated.: Vincenzo de' Medici to Giovan Battista Gondi, Naples, 20th August 1647.

²³ Giuseppe DONZELLI, *Partenope liberata o vero racconto dell'heroica risoluzione fatta dal popolo di Napoli per sottrarsi con tutto il regno dall'insopportabil gioco delli spagnuoli*, Naples, Ottavio Beltrano 1647(8). See also Rosario VILLARI, «Il cardinale, la rivoluzione, e la fortuna di Machiavelli» dans *Politica barocca: inquietudini, mutamento e prudenza*, éd., Rosario Villari, Rome; Bari, Laterza, 2011, p. 189.

²⁴ BANLC, Archivio dal Pozzo, ms. 5, f. 351r: Giuseppe Donzelli to Cassiano dal Pozzo, Naples, 18th April 1648.

²⁵ Giuseppe GALASSO, «Una ipotesi di blocco storico oligarchico-borghese nella Napoli del'600: i "Seggi" di Camillo Tutini fra politica e storiografia», *Rivista Storica Italiana*, 90-3, 1978, p. 507-529; Camillo TUTINI, and Marino VERDE, *Racconto della sollevazione di Napoli accaduta*

Ce Camillo Tuttino qui a fait imprimer quelque chose de ces Histoires de Naples est icy depuis quelques jours, qui a eschappé la furie des Espagnols. Il m'a dit qu'il a fait un journal de tout ce qui s'est passé durant ces revolutions. Monsieur de Guise se servit de lui au commencement, mais ayant esté appellé avec quelques aultres docteurs pour dire son sentiment sur l'establissement de la Republique de Naples, en quoi il ne se porta pas comme quelques autres selon les instructions de Son Altesse, il fut contraint de penser à sa seureté pour ne tomber dans le malheur de ceux qui furent de son avis lesquels fuerent emprisonnés et mal traittez. Il fait estat de s'establiir ici si les affaires des Espagnols prosperent à Naples, car il tient pour chose certaine que ils ne pardonneront à personne si ils demeurent les maistres. Il fait venir tous ses papiers²⁶.

Donzelli and Tutini were forced to flee from their homeland along with other tens of thousands of others, in order to escape Spanish retaliation²⁷. In contrast to Giuseppe Donzelli, the author of the *Partenope Liberata*, who saw his book confiscated by the Spanish authorities ; Christophe Dupuy managed to procure a copy for his brothers in Paris along with another text concerning the revolution in Palermo :

mon neveu vous envoieira cette *Partenope Liberata del dottore Donzelli* in 4^o, à laquelle je joindrai un livre de mesme estoffe intitulé *Delle Rivolutioni della Città di Palermo avvenute l'anno 1647* Racconto d'Andrea Pocili Verona per Franco Rossi 1648 4^o. Le volume est de 40 feilles, il vient jusques à l'arrivée du Cardinal Trivulci en Sicile²⁸.

In this letter written on 25th May 1648, Christophe wrote that he had been able to obtain these books thanks to his large network of correspondents distributed throughout the Italian peninsula, and to a profound knowledge of the book market. At the end of June 1648, Christophe wrote that Camillo Tutini :

a tiré de Naples tous ses escrits, et quand il sera en repos il se resoudra de faire imprimer quelques bonnes pieces, à ce qu'il dit. Mais à present il est tellement agité pour l'apprehension que l'on lui a donnée que les Espagnols le vouloient faire arrester icy qui se tient caché comme il peut²⁹.

nell'anno MDCXLVII, éd. Pietro Messina, Rome, Istituto storico italiano per l'età moderna e contemporanea, 1997.

²⁶ « Letter of Christophe Dupuy, Rome, 11th May 1648 », in *Humanisme et politique...*, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

²⁷ Biblioteca Nazionale di Napoli (BNN), ms. xv.F.5, p. 5-20.

²⁸ « Letter of Christophe Dupuy, Rome, 25th May 1648 », in *Humanisme et politique...*, *op. cit.*, p. 158.

²⁹ « Letter of Christophe Dupuy, Rome, 29th June 1648 », in *Humanisme et politique...*, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

For the moment, Tutini desisted from writing a work on the Neapolitan revolution due to concerns about Spanish vengeance. Nonetheless, he had been able to recover his papers from Naples which he would utilize a few years later.

Very few papers of the popular movement survived. The seizure and destruction of materials regarding the Neapolitan revolution began immediately after the assassination of Masaniello on 16th July 1647, in the Chiesa del Carmine. More than 700 memoirs and petitions were confiscated by the Spanish authorities in Masaniello's residence in the Piazza del Mercato of Naples after his death³⁰. Another large cache of material, including the papers of the Duke of Guise, was confiscated when the French aristocrat was arrested on his way to Capua in April 1648, in an effort to escape capture by Spanish troops³¹. If on the one hand, the destruction of material served to obliterate the memory of past events, on the other it was followed by a dual attempt by Spanish authorities : first of all, to gather all manner of material concerning the revolution in order to institute trials of rebels; second, to use these documents to articulate a revisionist campaign to mould the memory of the occurrences³².

After all, it was a common practice for the rulers to hire skilled writers in order to promote their image and that of their governments³³. However, during the post-revolutionary period, the primary task became not only the recovery of the reputation of monarchies, but also the justification of the position of several actors who had been involved in the revolutionary process³⁴. Therefore, in August 1648, Philip IV ordered his representatives on the Italian peninsula to hand over to the Genovese historian, Raffaele della Torre, all documents which could be used in the writing of an history of the Neapolitan revolution from the official viewpoint³⁵.

The destruction of the Neapolitan revolutionary material was carried out alongside the sentences of death meted out to many rebels ; it was the hallmark of the new governmental policy of the Viceroy the Count of Oñate³⁶. This period was also characterized by a strict censorship of the printing press, carried out both by lay and ecclesiastical authorities, eventually leading

³⁰ Rosario VILLARI, *Un sogno di libertà...*, *op. cit.*, p. 329.

³¹ Pier Luigi ROVITO, « La rivoluzione costituzionale di Napoli... », *art. cit.*, [note 4], p. 369.

³² *Ibid.*, 368-369.

³³ Richard L. KAGAN, *Clio & the crown: the politics of history in medieval and early modern Spain*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009.

³⁴ Francesco BENIGNO, *Specchi della rivoluzione...*, *op. cit.*, p. 283-84.

³⁵ Pier Luigi ROVITO, « La rivoluzione costituzionale di Napoli... », *art. cit.* [note 5], p. 369; Raphaele DE TURRI, *Dissidentis desciscantis receptaeque Neapolis libri VI*, Insulis, 1651.

³⁶ Ana MINGUITO PALOMARES, *Nápoles y el Virrey Conde de Oñate: la estrategia del poder y el resurgir del reino (1648-1653)*, Madrid, Sílex, 2011.

to some jurisdictional friction³⁷. In 1650, for instance, a petition drafted by several Neapolitan printers was addressed to the *Delegazione della Real Giurisdizione* (a lay court in charge of monitoring the interference of the ecclesiastical jurisdiction in civil matters), in which the printers complained of the harsh censorship promoted by the Archbishop of Naples Cardinal Ascanio Filomarino, who played a chief role during the Neapolitan revolution³⁸. In September 1650, the Regent secretary of the *Real Giurisdizione* summoned the Neapolitan printer Agostino Mollo in order to hold an inquiry into a book printed by him, *Battalla Peregrina*, whose author was the Sardinian jurist Giovanni Battista Buragna³⁹. The book was one of the first works printed in Naples to put forward a derogatory interpretation of the revolutionary events, characterized as a plebeian tumult defined by the inconstancy and ferocity of the lower strata of the populace⁴⁰. Probably, it was in response to Buragna's book that the manuscript *Il racconto della Sollevazione di Napoli dell'anno 1647* was written by Camillo Tutini and Marino Verde during the year 1652⁴¹. Although unpublished, this work rather than being the authors' isolated rethinking of the revolutionary events, shows the existence of a lively public debate which continued well beyond the end of the revolution, despite all efforts to crush it. Ultimately, it was kept alive not only by the oral memory of the protagonists and eyewitnesses but also by the excess of printed and handwritten materials; and which, in one way or another, had managed to escape an inexorable destruction thanks to the willingness of people to preserve those materials from oblivion⁴². One of the main features of this work, as well as of others written in the aftermath of the revolution, is the mixture of personal viewpoints with a network of texts collected during the wildest days of the revolution, and then reformulated in a more coherent narrative. In a certain manner, the fabric of their narrative shows the interaction between orality, writing and printed media as one of the distinctive traits of the revolution⁴³. This overlap is even more striking if we take into account the great number of miscellaneous volumes,

³⁷ Donato COSIMATO, « Clero e regia giurisdizione dopo Masaniello nel carteggio diplomatico di Simancas », *Rassegna Storica Salernitana*, 10-19, 1993, p. 55-76.

³⁸ Archivio di Stato di Napoli (ASN), Delegazione della Real Giurisdizione, Processi, Prima Serie 215, fascicolo 43. See also Giuseppe GALASSO, *Napoli spagnola dopo Masaniello: politica, cultura, società*, Florence, Sansoni Editore, 1982, p. 90-93.

³⁹ The book is: Giovanni Battista BURAGNA, *Batalla peregrina entre amore y fidelidad con portentoso triumpho de las armas de España, exemplar obediencia de la ciudad y pueblo de Napoles y gloria de d. Juan de Austria y Conte de Oñate*, Naples, Agostino Mollo 1650.

⁴⁰ Francesco BENIGNO, « Trasformazioni discorsive e identità sociali: il caso dei lazzari », *Storica*, 11-31, 2005, p. 7-44.

⁴¹ Camillo TUTINI, and Marino VERDE, *Racconto della sollevazione di Napoli accaduta nell'anno MDCXLVII, ...*, *op. cit.*, p. XXXIV.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 1.

⁴³ Alain HUGON, *Naples insurgée, 1647-1648...*, *op. cit.*, p. 124-28.

scattered around many Italian and European collections, which bring together a whole range of information material⁴⁴. Although the natural dispersion of this material alerts us to complicated history of each of these collections in their passage from one generation to the next; nonetheless, these ensembles of texts showcase the media ecology which surrounded the revolution and which it imbued with its message⁴⁵. It is not surprising, therefore, that the titles of these volumes, as recorded in the catalogues of libraries and archives, testify to the whole range of informational genres produced by the revolutionary events: « News about the revolution of Naples of 1648-48...⁴⁶ »; « Public and private manuscripts newsheets of the Neapolitan insurrection led by Masaniello...⁴⁷ »; « Letters of news, and others writings containing the insurrection of Naples...⁴⁸ »; « Avvisi of the Revolution of Naples of 1647⁴⁹ ». These are just a few examples of the vast amount of textual representations unleashed by the revolutionary events, as if the revolution itself might not be understood as distinct from its media features.

In the next pages, we will outline some communicative aspects of the Neapolitan revolution, trying to get as close as possible to the events themselves. In order to do so, we will take into account the informational materials which synchronically circulated during the event. These texts survived thanks to the information-gathering skills of various diplomatic agents and officials present in Naples during the revolution. Although their narratives focus on the most public acts of the revolution, such as the convulsions in the Piazza del Mercato, the burning of the toll houses, the storming of the Vice-regal palace, the assaults on prisons and so on, which constituted a sort of script upon which the insurgents relied; the numerous incongruities between different reports allow us to recover certain overlooked aspects. These contradictions depend on the sudden acceleration in the pace of events which, by their coalescent nature, transformed the very manner of representing reality and

⁴⁴ For manuscript collections in Naples see: Saverio DI FRANCO, « Le rivolte del Regno di Napoli del 1647-1648 nei manoscritti napoletani », *Archivio storico per le province napoletane*, 125, 2007, p. 327-457.

⁴⁵ On the collections of news see Noah MILLSTONE, « Designed for Collection », *Media History*, 23-2, 2017, p. 177-198.

⁴⁶ BAV, Barb. Lat. ms. 5253: « Notizie circa la rivoluzione di Napoli negli anni 1647 e 1648, cioè bandi e lettere diverse con un discorso e alcune poesie in fine... ».

⁴⁷ BAV, Barb. Lat. 7608, « Avvisi pubblici e privati della sollevazione fatta in Napoli da Masaniello, tra i quali avvisi alcune lettere di Gio. Francesco Marciano; dal di 8 luglio 1647 al 7 aprile 1648, con effigie in acquarello del detto sollevatore in principio ».

⁴⁸ British Library, Add ms. 8669, « Lettere de Avvisi, et altre scritture continente la sollevazione de Napoli, che seguì li 7 luglio 1647 ».

⁴⁹ ASF, MdP 4146, fasc. 5, « Avvisi della Rivoluzione di Napoli del 1647 ».

simultaneously structured several chronologies, resulting in different narrative rhythms. However, much depends also on the position of the observer in respect of the revolutionary event itself. In fact, it is not easy to determine if someone is inside or outside the event. For instance, a handwritten newsheet, which appears to be the transposition of a letter, shows the writer's information-gathering process:

In any case, I will inform you about everything I am able to hear from my own room, albeit I am in the midst of these troubles (*rumori*)⁵⁰.

This example shows that the anonymous author probably wrote the letter to his correspondent, while sitting at his desk in front of a window facing the streets. However, the content of his letter reporting the first three days of the insurrection leaves no doubts about the fact that he needed to rely upon sources of information besides what he was able to see from his room. Perhaps his sources were oral communications or other writings which, in one manner or another, landed on his table. It is as if, in order to describe the revolution, he needed to rely on all sorts of information. Thus, it is as if « first-, second-, and thirdhand accounts [are] all bundled together⁵¹ ». Against this background, let us turn our attention to the facts which were reported.

The majority of these sources agree in reporting the same principal events of the revolution. This is due to the fact that the revolution is the public act par excellence. The first actions of the insurgents are directed in fact against the most recognizable symbols of existing power. The storming of the Vice Regal Palace by the insurgents in a way demonstrated this process. Once they had entered, the insurgents throw everything they encountered out of the windows, even the secret state papers⁵². As been correctly noted

one characteristic of revolutionary crises is that they force into the public sphere ... a great deal of discourse that would be normally be conducted behind close doors⁵³.

Forced to flee from the palace, the viceroy found himself in the midst of a furious mob demanding the abolition of the gabelles ; some even threatened him physically and verbally. In order to appease them, and seeing that traditional

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, f. 240r: Avvisi from Naples 9th July 1647.

⁵¹ Robin WAGNER-PACIFICI, *What is an event?*, Chicago, Chicago University Press, 2017, p. 19.

⁵² Brendan DOOLEY, « Keep this secret! Renaissance Knowledge between freedom and restraint », dans *Renaissance Now! The Value of the Renaissance Past in Contemporary Culture*, éd. Brendan Dooley, Oxford, Peter Lang, 2014, p. 221. On the topic of secrecy see the classic work: Georg SIMMEL, « The Sociology of Secrecy and of Secret Societies », *American Journal of Sociology*, 11-4, 1906, p. 441-498.

⁵³ Jeremy D. POPKIN, « Media and Revolutionary Crises » dans *Media and revolution: comparative perspectives*, éd., J. D. Popkin, Lexington, Kentucky University Press, 1995, p. 16.

measures, such as the tossing of gold coins to the crowd, did not work, he agreed to all the demands made by the insurgents, and suggested taking an oath on the Gospels in the Church of St Francis nearby, to ensure that he would fulfil his promise⁵⁴. Thanks to this ploy, he managed to escape the mob and to sequester himself in the church. This was only the first of a long series of deceptions, whose effect was to fuel and exacerbate the conflict, as well as to irremediably undermine the credibility of his authority. Only the intervention of the Archbishop Filomarino served to calm things temporarily, but then the insurgents demanded that the abolition of gabelles must be inscribed on a parchment with golden letters, and also that it be inscribed on marble pillars erected in several parts of the city⁵⁵.

Another episode that shows the very public character of the revolution is the burning of the palaces of those officials and nobles who had been held responsible for the implementation of the hated fiscal policy. Notwithstanding that these acts have been interpreted by many scholars in terms of blind violence, the protocol put in place by the insurgents shows the political character of such actions. They could be instead interpreted as the immediate execution of popular justice⁵⁶. Many observers draw attention to the discipline and dedication of the incendiaries who, despite their extreme poverty, burnt everything on the public streets without stealing anything. The Venetian resident was among the first to recognize their political aim⁵⁷. More explicitly, an anonymous letter written by someone close to the viceroy asserts that these actions were carried out

with the political intention to make manifest to everyone the purity [*limpieza*] of what they did, without taking advantage of this opportunity to commit robberies⁵⁸.

The political message needed to be as clear as possible, since it was aimed at publicly dispelling the traditional idea of plebeian violence, as a thing without any political rationale. The message of the revolution was not only conveyed by resorting to direct action, but was also nurtured by a vivid political debate, which publicly involved large sections of Neapolitan society. Having carried out all the major actions of the first phase of the insurrection, the insurgents gathered in Piazza del Mercato to attend the public reading of the text of

⁵⁴ ASF, MdP 4146, fasc. 5, f. 348r: Letter from Naples, 9th July 1647.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, f. 349r.

⁵⁶ William BEIK, *Urban protest in seventeenth-century France: the culture of retribution*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1997.

⁵⁷ Archivio di Stato di Venezia (ASVe), Senato, Dispacci degli Ambasciatori e Residenti, Napoli 66, f. 227v-228r: Andrea Rosso to the Senate, Naples, 9th July 1647.

⁵⁸ Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid (BNE), ms. 2378, f. 295v. See also Rosario VILLARI, *Un sogno di libertà... , op. cit.*, p. 319-320.

agreement which, in the meanwhile, had been prepared by certain popular cadres. A letter written by an eyewitness reports that more than 4 000 people gathered, showing their approval of the popular demands⁵⁹. Then the crowd moved into the Chiesa del Carmine, in order to take an oath affirming the agreement, administered by Archbishop Filomarino. Meanwhile, the Cardinal's brother, the capuchin Francesco Maria Filomarino was instructed to make a public announcement about the discovery of the « Privilege of Charles v » in the city archives. The acknowledgment of the concessions in this document was one of the primary demands of the insurgents, since it conceded the exemption of the city of Naples from the payment of the gabelles. The capuchin climbed into the pulpit, but was then forced to stop due to the noise made by the great confluence of people. As a result, it was decided that only a select number of people were to move to the Carmelite convent garden in order to formally read aloud the texts. Here, it was agreed that copies of the privilege and agreement would be made and were to be posted in every district (*ottina*) of the city, so that everyone could add further requests to the texts⁶⁰. These episodes demonstrate the public participation of large sections of Neapolitan society in matters of the utmost political importance. Eventually, the agreement was solemnly approved on the 13th July in the cathedral in the presence of the all ecclesiastical and lay authorities and it was decided to erect in the middle of the Piazza del Mercato a marble monument with the text of agreement for public reference. A manuscript newsheet from Rome dated 3rd August 1647 – issued eighteen days after Masaniello's brutal murder and his majestic funeral, which took place the following day (17th July) – describes the expansion of the revolutionary process, despite the hope of the viceroy that the elimination of the leader would weaken the insurrection. Specifically, it reports that the commission for construction of the monument was awarded to the famous architect and sculptor Cosimo Fanzago. However, as we learn from this sheet of *avvisi*, while the work was in progress, the people realized that some words were missing from the inscription, which completely changed the meaning of the agreement. Popular reaction and rage were swift and directed against the architect and the workers, who barely managed to escape with their lives ; the monument was destroyed. Only the intervention of the viceroy restored public order for a while. In fact, the viceroy ordered that the text of the agreement be reprinted, thereby satisfying the demands of the people, and that copies of the text be posted on the city walls. However, this measure did not satisfy the people. After reading the new text of the agreement and realizing that its meaning was distorted, the people tore the posters to pieces and rose up once again. At this point the viceroy, after changing the agreement for a third time, ordered that it be printed

⁵⁹ ASF, MdP 4146, fasc. 5, f. 297r.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, f. 298r.

on canvas and then publicly hung in Piazza del Mercato for eight days, before being carved in marble⁶¹. This episode is also recalled by another sheet of *avvisi* from Rome which reported the event in a slightly different manner, stating that the popular discontent was due to the fact that the agreement was written in Latin instead of the vernacular⁶². Such examples bore witness to the emergence of the voices of the lower classes which, thanks to the revolutionary process, expressed themselves through new media and communication practices⁶³.

The correspondence between the Bishop of Nocera Ippolito Francone and *the Sacra Congregazione della Fabbrica di San Pietro* in Rome shows this process perfectly⁶⁴. As a fief of the Holy See, the kingdom of Naples was also subject to ecclesiastical taxation, which added another heavy burden on the shoulders of its subjects⁶⁵. Of course, the revolution affected this double taxation system, scrapping the gabelles on which many ecclesiastical institutions depended. To make matters worse, many people asked that a demand for the dismantling of the *Fabbrica di San Pietro* be inserted into the text of the agreement⁶⁶. In a letter, Ippolito Francone, deputy of the congregation, reported the efforts he made to impede that demand⁶⁷. At the end of July, Francone reported that the topic continued to be a matter of discussion, promising that he would do everything possible to stop its implementation⁶⁸. On the 17th August, he reported his successful efforts to side-line a petition demanding the abolition of the Fabbrica, which had been signed by more than 1000 people⁶⁹.

A few days later, Fabrizio Cennamo, an official whose palace had been burnt to the ground, drafted a petition which triggered a new cycle of unrest beginning on 21st August 1647. The petition delegitimized the idea that the burning of

⁶¹ BAV, Urb. Lat. 1111, f. 236v-237v: *Avvisi* from Rome 3rd August 1647.

⁶² BAV, Ott. Lat. 2449, part. 3, f. 599v: *Avvisi* from Rome 3rd August 1647.

⁶³ Mikhail BAKHTINE, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1984, p. 202.

⁶⁴ I would like to thank Professor Massimo Carlo Giannini who draw my attention to this correspondence. On the Fabbrica di San Pietro see: *L'Archivio della Fabbrica di San Pietro come fonte per la storia di Roma*, éd. Gaetano Sabatini et Simona Turriziani, Rome, Palombi, 2015; Renata SEBENE, *La fabbrica di San Pietro in Vaticano: dinamiche internazionali e dimensione locale*, Rome, Gangemi, 2012.

⁶⁵ Massimo Carlo GIANNINI, *L'oro e la tiara. La costruzione dello spazio fiscale italiano della Santa Sede (1560-1620)*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2003.

⁶⁶ ID., « "Ad Conservandam Ecclesiasticam Immunitatem"? L'esonazione del Clero della Città di Napoli tra Finanze Cittadine e Fiscalità Papale (1535-1618) », *Studia Historica. Historia Moderna*, 34, 2012, p. 181-214.

⁶⁷ Archivio Storico della Fabbrica di San Pietro, Rome (AFSP), Arm, 55, E 318, f. 206r-207v: Ippolito Francone to Marcello Lante, Naples, 23rd July 1647.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, f. 208r-209r: Ippolito Francone to Marcello Lante, Naples, 27th July 1647.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, f. 270r-271r: Ippolito Francone to Marcello Lante, Naples, 17th August 1647.

the palaces was an act with political significance⁷⁰. It was therefore in defence of this sort of radical action that the second general insurrection broke out⁷¹. At the end of August, the Bishop of Nocera communicated that, after a week of intense clashes which saw the city fortress opening fire on the population, a truce was reached in order to draw up a new text of the agreement. His letter states that new demands «were raised by an entire people in the public space of the Church of St. Augustine⁷²». This church was where the Seat of the People gathered by tradition. However, the letter highlights the widening of political participation which transformed the political space : it was not any longer limited only to elected representatives, but open to everyone. Moreover, Francone reports that some of his men intervened in the meeting in order to prevent the approval of the article regarding the elimination of the Fabbrica⁷³. Nevertheless, the article was inserted on a second occasion during the revision of the draft made by a committee of ten people. Once it was completed, not only was it posted on the walls of the city⁷⁴ but was also printed and publicly sold for 1 carlino, a relatively low and affordable price⁷⁵. These examples are testimony to the enlargement of political publics to include social groupings hitherto excluded from the decision-making process. It was the weight of their physical presence in the public space that determined this «new way of government⁷⁶». The common space became, therefore, the place of production of new publics, essentially composed of popular strata⁷⁷. This process is also shown by the large quantity of printed edicts which were published during the revolution. These edicts were posted in the most populated areas of the city and read out by a town crier. Traditionally, the issuing of official orders made public the voice of authority, which was necessary for laws to be effective⁷⁸. The edicts published during the revolution, however, bore witness not only to attempts to regulate the exceptional states of affairs unleashed by events ; rather, they testified to changes in the balance of power in the public sphere, which became an open arena where competing voices contended. Their great importance lies in the fact that they illustrate the process of the construction of

⁷⁰ Rosario VILLARI, *Un sogno di libertà...*, *op. cit.*, p. 431-434.

⁷¹ Archivio di Stato di Modena (ASMo), Avvisi e Notizie dall'Estero 38, not foliated : Avvisi from Naples 21st August 1647.

⁷² Archivio della Fabbrica di San Pietro, Rome, Cité du Vatican, (AFSP), Arm, 55, E 318, f. 296r: Ippolito Francone to Marcello Lante, Naples, 31st August 1647.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, f. 296r-297r.

⁷⁴ ASF, MdP 4146, f. 360r: Avvisi from Naples 10th September 1647.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, f. 373v: Printed text of the second agreement composed of 52 articles (September 1647).

⁷⁶ BNE, ms. 9268, f. 180v: Avvisi from Naples 12th July 1647.

⁷⁷ Henri LEFEBVRE, *La Production de l'espace*, Paris, Éditions Anthropos, 1974.

⁷⁸ Armando PETRUCCI, «Potere, spazi urbani, scritture esposte : proposte ed esempi », dans *Culture et idéologie dans la genèse de l'État moderne*. Actes de la table ronde de Rome, 15-17 octobre 1984, Rome, École Française de Rome, 1985, p. 85-97.

the revolution. A large quantity of these proclamations were issued during the revolution. Between October 1647 and April 1648, for instance, 258 printed ordinances were published in Naples⁷⁹. They were published by a group of printers which put its presses at the disposal of the revolutionary cause. Apart from Secondino Roncaglio, Egidio Longo and Lorenzo Graffaro, who were the printers of the popular government, the Spanish viceroy and the duke of Guise respectively⁸⁰; more than fifty printers, booksellers and editors were active during the revolution⁸¹. However, it is difficult to recover exact figures for print output, or for topics and media formats produced by the print workshops. The change in circumstances probably affected their daily production in the same way as it did all other commercial activities.

The revolution brought about the relaxation of mechanisms of censorship and, therefore, increased the likelihood that contentious publications could evade any control. This situation allowed a certain degree of freedom in which contrasting viewpoints could fight it out in print. The climax of this process was reached with the proclamation of the Neapolitan Republic at the end of October 1647, when a flood of pamphlets was produced either in support of or in opposition to the proclamation.

Alongside these propaganda-style productions, other low-cost informational ephemera continued to be manufactured in the city, as shown by a notarized document concerning a business printing « *Avisi from Rome and other parts of the world*⁸² ». That business was set up in 1642 by the actor Giovan Domenico Favella, upon whose death it was continued by his wife, the actress Solomea Antinazzoni, Emilio Saccano, and Favella's son-in-law Gian Domenico Scarano. On 27th September 1647, right in the middle of the revolutionary events, the three partners made a new revenue-sharing agreement.

⁷⁹ Vittorio CONTI, *Le leggi di una rivoluzione. I bandi della Repubblica napoletana dall'ottobre 1647 all'aprile 1648*, Naples, Jovene, 1983.

⁸⁰ Alain HUGON, *Naples insurgée ...*, *op. cit.*, p. 132-133.

⁸¹ Giovanni LOMBARDI, « Tipografia e commercio cartolibrario a Napoli nel Seicento », *Studi Storici*, 39-1, 1998, p. 137-159.

⁸² ASN, Fondo Notarile, *Notaio Marcello Gaudioso 1647*, f. 149. The document is transcribed by Ulisse PROTA GIURLEO, *I teatri di Napoli nel '600: la commedia e le maschere*, Naples, Fausto Fiorentino, 1962, p. 255-6. From a recent check carried out in the State Archive of Naples, it seems that the original document no longer exists. The serie concerning the activities of the notary Marcello Gaudioso cover the period from 1601 to 1626 (ASN, Notai del XVII secolo, scheda 14). We have also checked the serie concerning Onofrio Gaudioso, probably a relative of Marcello, which range from 1640 to 1649 (scheda 1001) obtaining no result. Probably, the document reported by Prota Giurleo was destroyed during the fire of villa Montesano at San Paolo Belsito in 1943, where perished, along with the most precious documents of the Kingdom of Naples, more than 3263 volumes about the Notai Antichi.

Antinazzoni had decided to leave Naples, probably due to the uncertainties of the period. Before her departure, she ensured that she would continue to receive her share of profits. This story shows that the business of *avvisi* flourished even amid the convulsions caused by the revolution.

It cannot be excluded that the revolution could even have boosted sales, given that the need to stay informed about the geopolitical situation was a matter of the utmost importance for the success of the revolutionary process. If on the one hand, the revolution lent its message to a variegated media landscape, on the other, it did so through specific circumstances and in conformity with the structural determinants of that landscape. For instance, the notarized document highlights the consistency of publication in both handwritten and printed forms (*Avisi stampandi et manuscribendi*).

Yet, unlike contemporary experiences such as the Fronde and the English civil war, the Neapolitan revolution did not deploy a systematic approach toward the printing press due to its short time frame. Instead, it resorted to a whole set of *ad hoc* communicative and informational devices.

The medium of the revolution was its message, which spread throughout the European continent. The massive production of information about the Neapolitan events was channeled within and received by a transnational multimedia ecology. The news of the Neapolitan revolution was published in printed and manuscript texts from the 7th of July 1647 to the 6th April 1648. Apart from letters and private newssheets which circulated within the inner circle of trusted correspondents, news of the revolution immediately appeared in the pages of public handwritten and printed newssheets. Sheets of *avvisi* from Rome and Venice devoted a large amount of space to reporting news from Naples⁸³. From these formats, news migrated to the printed gazettes; either in an abridged form or even in its entirety depending on several factors, such as the importance of the piece of information, the availability of space, as well as the editorial policy of the publication. This was the case of the printed sheet of *avvisi* published in Florence which essentially reproduced the content of the handwritten newssheets from Rome reporting the Neapolitan events⁸⁴. From the correspondence of the Papal Nuncio to Florence, Annibale Bentivoglio, we obtain more detail about the exchange of news between manuscript newssheets and printed formats. The publication of a piece of news about the Pope's nephew in the Florence-based printed newssheet issued on 2nd March 1647 came in for a lot of criticism. The story concerned a monetary gift from Pope Innocent X to his nephew, Don Camillo Pamphili, upon his marriage⁸⁵. This

⁸³ BAV, Urb. Lat. 1111 and 1112; and Ott. Lat. 2449, pt. 3.

⁸⁴ ASV, Segr. Stato, Florence 28, and 29.

⁸⁵ ASV, Segr. Stato, Florence 28, f. 106r: Printed newssheet « Di Roma li 2 Marzo 1647 ».

news produced a quarrel between Rome and Florence which went on for some considerable time. At stake was the reputation of the Pope, accused of having used public money to benefit his relatives. Accordingly, the Secretary of State, Giovan Giacomo Panziroli, asked his ambassador in Florence to intervene with Grand Duke Ferdinand II on behalf of the Pope to stop the spread of fake news⁸⁶. These complaints produced an immediate effect in that the story was soon rectified⁸⁷. To avoid such an incident arising in the future, the Nuncio recommended strict monitoring of news about Rome⁸⁸. Also, he pointed out that the Florentine printers were using as a template for the printed newssheet the handwritten sheet of *avvisi* from Rome, which had not been officially checked⁸⁹. For this reason, he suggested using as sources the manuscript newssheets compiled by the Roman newswriter Timoleone Mozzi⁹⁰. It was through the greatly increased dissemination of the material in the handwritten newssheets by way of printed texts that the message of the Neapolitan revolution was made known to a wider public, going well beyond the geographical boundaries of the Italian Peninsula.

The message of the Neapolitan revolution was not confined only to publications in the Italian peninsula, but lent itself to being continuously re-elaborated in different political and social contexts. This is testified to by Théophraste Renaudot's *Gazette* in France, which dedicated more than twelve special issues to the Neapolitan event⁹¹; and John Dillingham's English newsbook, the *Moderate Intelligencer*, which followed the Neapolitan revolution throughout the second half of 1647 and the first half of 1648⁹². The translation of news from Naples into several European languages contaminated other

⁸⁶ ASV, Segr. Stato, Florence 196, f. 47v: Giovan Giacomo Panziroli to Annibale Bentivoglio, Rome, 16th March 1647.

⁸⁷ ASV, Segr. Stato, Florence 28, f. 126r: Printed newssheet « Di Roma li 16 Marzo 1647 ».

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, f. 124rv: Annibale Bentivoglio to Giovan Giacomo Panziroli, Florence, 23rd March 1647.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, f. 248rv: Annibale Bentivoglio to Giovan Giacomo Panziroli, Florence, 15th June 1647.

⁹⁰ Brendan DOOLEY, *The Social History of Skepticism: experience and Doubt in Early Modern Culture*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999, p. 36. For the Roman *avvisi* see Mario INFELISE, « Roman *avvisi*: Information and Politics in the seventeenth Century », dans *Court and Politics in Papal Rome 1492-1700*, éd., Gian Vittorio Signorotto et Maria Antonietta Visceglia, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002, p. 212-228.

⁹¹ Théophraste RENAUDOT, *Recueil des Gazettes, Nouvelles ordinaires et extraordinaires. Relation et autre recits des choses avenues toute l'année mil six cens quatante-sept*, Paris, Bureau d'Adresse, 1648 ; *id.*, *Recueil des Gazettes, Nouvelles ordinaires et extraordinaires. Relation et autre recits des choses avenues toute l'année mil six cens quarante-huit*, Paris, Bureau d'Adresse, 1649.

⁹² John DILLINGHAM, *The moderate Intelligencer. Impartially communicating martial affairs*, London, (Mar. 1645-Oct. 1649); Bib. name / number: Nelson and Seccombe / 419; Thomason / E.271[15], etc.; See Davide BOERIO « "The Trouble of Naples" in the Political Information Arena of English Revolution », dans *News Networks in Early Modern Europe*, éd. Joad Raymond et Noah Moxham, Leyde, Brill, 2016, p. 779-804.

contemporaneous political discourses. Old ideas and new concepts met a degree of publicity which was hitherto unknown⁹³. They reached the common people, thanks to the public debate which was fueled by the spread of information during various political conflicts. Ultimately, the effects of this simultaneous outburst of revolutionary news produced common ground on which, through the example of other revolutionary experiences, new political actors constructed their own ideas in dialogue with their « imaginary fellows » who were pursuing the same aims⁹⁴.

⁹³ David R. COMO « God's Revolutions: England, Europe, and the Concept of Revolution in the mid-Seventeenth Century » dans *Scripting revolution: a historical approach to the comparative study of revolutions*, éd. Keith M. Baker and Dan Edelstein, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2015, p. 41-56.

⁹⁴ Geoffrey PARKER, *Global Crisis. War, Climate Change and Catastrophe in the Seventeenth Century*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2013.