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# ABSTRACT

This research analyses the processes of dissemination of news in the context of the mid-Seventeenth Century revolutionary crisis, by highlighting the role played by political information in the spread of political and cultural ideas. This research concerns a revolutionary event (i.e the Neapolitan revolution of 1647-48, which for nine long months had its impact on the Early Modern 'Mezzogiorno') and its spatial and temporal diffusion from the viewpoint of media representation. This study scrutinizes the European media landscape within which the revolutionary event was embedded, as well as the new media environment which it eventually generated. It focuses on a wide range of archival and unpublished sources, largely underplayed by traditional historiography, and consisting of manuscript and printed newssheets, diplomatic letters, pamphlets, and other informational material, produced and widely circulated during the Neapolitan revolution. Using this new approach, it is possible not only to trace the fragmentary remnants of that event, but also the historical climate of which they were part. On this basis, our purpose is to analyse the dissemination of revolutionary news about, and to evaluate the long-lasting repercussions for, European political culture. Such a scholarly endeavour allows us to single out, through the lens of particular events, the emergence and function of an Early Modern information society, characterized by the criss-crossing of different regimes of communication (oral, written and printed). The aim is to understand the making of the news, itself often the result of a heterogeneous combination of handwritten news, printed gazettes, and diplomatic correspondence, as well as to explore the interaction between the secret, private, and public spheres of information.

By focusing on the communicative practices inherent to and constitutive of the revolutionary process, the research draws attention to the formation of a new political identity forged in the midst of conflict, whose dissemination through information networks is fundamental to an understanding of the impact that the revolutionary event had on contemporaneous political upheavals. It also illustrates the movement of both *medium* and *message* of the Neapolitan revolution within the European public space, and follows the path undertaken by the revolutionary news and its subsequent reception in other linguistic and cultural contexts. Ultimately, the message of the Neapolitan revolution would acquire a ubiquitous significance and a whole range of polysemic meanings, before once again being reabsorbed within the reassuring boundaries of traditional discourse. This research attempts to problematize important, fundamental questions arising from the 'paradigm of modernization', by focusing on historical phenomena generally considered as minor and peripheral from the point of view of the central thrust of Western political and cultural development.