



DisComPoSE - Disasters, Communication and Politics in Southwestern Europe

Report of the DisComPoSE seminar *Opuscoli e fogli volanti nel Cinquecento italiano: tradizioni discorsive e registri linguistici* (Brochures and leaflets in the Italian Cinquecento: discursive traditions and linguistic registers)

Raymund Wilhelm (Alpen-Adria-Universität Klagenfurt)

Naples, November 23rd 2018

Organized by Chiara De Caprio and Francesco Montuori

The seminar of prof. Raymund Wilhelm (Alpen-Adria-Universität Klagenfurt), organized by Chiara De Caprio and Francesco Montuori, inaugurated the series of seminar meetings, planned under the DISCOMPOSE project.

Professor Wilhelm, one of the first scholars to pay great attention to the lexicon, the linguistic register, the contents and the format of printed pamphlets and leaflets in Italy of the early modern age, has first of all recalled the main acquisitions of research in this field of survey, which has experienced increasing interest in the last twenty years. He has focused therefore on the different possible definitions of these texts, recalling both the proposals of different historians, and the vocabulary used by contemporaries (*nove, avisi, istorie...*).

He then outlined some essential characteristics of this type of publications, which spread enormously in the early modern age thanks to the rapid expansion of the printed book and the strengthening of a European information circuit: texts with an agile format, dedicated to recent events (war and peace, discoveries, parties, sovereigns entering the cities, sensational or prodigious events). The vocabulary used is often that of the sermons, able to appeal to a generally broad public, and effective in the public reading of these texts, which often reached a high number of listeners thanks to the mediation of the storytellers.

Wilhelm then dedicated the second part of his report to the space that natural disasters had in this type of publications, focusing in particular on the analysis of two texts on floods that struck Rome between the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. The possibility of producing a large number of texts quickly, compared to previous centuries, allowed men and women of the early modern age to go to the discovery of a nature with amazing, unheard and sometimes deadly manifestations.



The debate followed by the report of prof. Wilhelm highlighted the fruitfulness of collaboration and the crossing of different disciplinary perspectives (social history, history of publishing, textual criticism, history of language) in the analysis of this literature.

