



DisComPoSE - Disasters, Communication and Politics in Southwestern Europe

Report of the DisComPoSE Cycle of Seminars *Editoria, cultura e informazione in età moderna: prospettive di ricerca su Italia e Spagna* (*Publishing, culture and information in the Modern Age: perspectives of research on Italy and Spain*)

31st May, 3rd and 4th June 2019

Department of Human Studies of the University of Naples Federico II

May 31st – 10,00 a.m.

Stampa, editoria e informazione a Napoli in età moderna
(Press, publishing and information in Naples in the Modern Age)

Flavia LUISE Università di Napoli Federico II

Giovanni LOMBARDI Istituto di Studi sulle Società del Mediterraneo – CNR
Room 711, via Nuova Marina 33

On May 31st 2019, in the framework of the ERC-funded project Discompose (Disasters, Communication and Politics in Southwestern Europe. The Making of Emergency Response Policies in the Early Modern Age), chaired by Domenico Cecere (Università di Napoli Federico II), took place the first of three series of seminars *Editoria, cultura e informazione in età moderna: prospettive di ricerca su Italia e Spagna* (*Publishing, culture and information in the modern age: research perspectives on Italy and Spain*), with the participation of Flavia Luise (Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II) and Giovanni Lombardi (Istituto di Studi sulle Società del Mediterraneo – CNR) as speakers on the topic *Stampa, editoria e informazione a Napoli in età moderna* (*Press, publishing and information in Naples in the modern age*). The talk focused on the theme on the history of publishing, with particular attention to aspects related to control and censure, as well as to spatial production and the economic management of neapolitan publishing in the modern age.

In her report Flavia Luise analyzed the study related to the history of the book with particular attention to the moments of production, reception and information. Before presenting the investigations concerning the study of each of these three phases of the history of the book in Southern Italy, the speaker has retraced the history of French



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publishing starting from the studies of the *Annales* which in the '60s developed a quantitative approach to production book in France between the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries (a method criticized above all by Robert Darton) up to a local approach proposed by Chartier. At the opposite in the Southern Italy the first researches on the history of the book were started from the '90s thanks to a research group coordinated by Prof. Anna Maria Rao (*Editoria e cultura a Napoli nel XVIII secolo*, 1998) which helped to relaunch the image of Neapolitan publishing condemned by the previous studies of Lorenzo Giustiniani and Giuseppe Maria Galanti. In fact, if the latter had underlined how the use of bad characters, the presence of illiterate printers and especially the lack of a corporation had been the decisive factors to slow down the development of the Neapolitan publishing, the most recent studies of the research group of Prof. Rao, on the other hand, they demonstrated how, for example, the lack of a corporate structure did not constitute a real problem, since in the Neapolitan it was replaced by a confraternity. The same studies then underlined how especially during the Austrian and then Bourbon viceroyalty the issuing of a series of Pragmatists had guaranteed a control by the State in the press, in order to avoid the proliferation of illegal prints.

Flavia Luise then continues focusing on the report on information, paying attention to the different ways of transmitting communication through the analysis of three different types of texts: leaflets, index of books and texts on political topic. In relation to the first, the speaker introduces the reference to the volume by Alberto Natale, *Gli specchi della paura* (2008) in which the author analyses leaflets, pamphlets and printed notices that are often of a bad typographic quality, aimed at a popular public whose production was very broad in the modern age and above all not subject to the control of censorship by the Church which indeed found useful the dissemination of this often frightening news as a warning to men not to fall into sin. About the index of books, this is the privileged object of a text by Maria Gioia Tavoni, *Circumnavigare il testo* (2009), in which the author highlights how often the summary in the modern age was used as an instrument of implicit communication (through the *camouflage* method) in order to avoid censorship control (this is the case, for example, with the *Encyclopédie* index). Finally to political communication Flavia Luise reports the text *La Congiura di Macchia: cultura e conflitto politico a Napoli nel primo Settecento* (2018) by Francesca Fausta Gallo, where the author, starting from a historical fact, emphasizes the use of political parody (in particular through the use of specific adjectives) as a tool to inform the population.

The second part of the seminar was conducted by Giovanni Lombardi, who highlighted aspects related to the spatial and documentary production of Neapolitan publishing in the modern age. Within a perspective aimed at highlighting the connective and social tissues of the urban community, the speaker underlined how, about book production, the city of Naples presented a complex internal polycentricity: in fact, there were a large number of confraternities distributed throughout the city. The main one of these poles was constituted by San Biagio dei Librai, whose name (still persisting today) is due precisely to the Corporation of booksellers born in the sixteenth century when the Hospital of the Annunziata (one of the oldest and most famous ancient institutions in Europe, founded with the aim of giving assistance to children abandoned after birth) granted this urban space for the meeting of the members of the association of booksellers



(at the time called "mastery" to evoke the very presence of booksellers and printers). In addition to this main space, there were also numerous spaces linked to the press (which extends to the city limits) united by the development of an association designed as a system of assistance and protection of social and professional categories.

The speaker also focuses on the complex payment management system developed during the modern age in relation to Neapolitan publishing. Therefore, the seminar continued in the Historical Archive of the Banco di Napoli (located in Via dei Tribunali, in the Palazzo Ricca) where it was possible to see the rich and detailed heritage contained in the documentary registers. In fact, since the second half of the 16th century, the Archive has kept the current "reason for payment", the daily recording of credit by the banking institution, the movements on different accounts and customer lists. A boundless documentation that allows us to reconstruct the economic communication of the city and in the same time the social history of many characters.

May 31st –2.30. p.m.

Study visit to the Historical Archives of the Bank of Naples

3rd June - 3,00 p.m.

Canali d'informazione nella Spagna moderna: il caso delle relaciones de sucesos (Information channels in modern Spain: the case of relaciones de sucesos)

Fernando J. BOUZA ÁLVAREZ Universidad Complutense de Madrid

Pedro M. CÁTEDRA Universidad de Salamanca

Room DSU 4, Via Porta di Massa 1

On June 3th 2019, the second day of study, it took place *Editoria, cultura e informazione in età moderna: prospettive di ricerca su Italia e Spagna (Publishing, culture and information in the modern age: research perspectives on Italy and Spain)* that saw the participation of Fernando J. Bouza Álvarez (Universidad Complutense de Madrid) as speaker on the topic *Canali di informazione della stampa moderna: il caso delle relaciones de sucesos (Information channels in modern Spain: the case of relaciones de sucesos)*, developing some questions related to the main aspects of the project Discompose, in particular those concerning communication and information.

The seminar focused on the *relaciones de sucesos* as an information tool favored by the Spanish monarchy in the modern age with an informative and above all propagandistic purpose. In particular and in conformity with the themes of the Discompose project, Bouza Álvarez highlighted how many *relaciones de sucesos*, by their nature of miscellaneous character (religious, political, wars, victories of the Monarchy against enemies, travels etc.) also concerned "extraordinary" subjects such as the natural disasters that occurred in the various geographical areas subject to the Monarchy with the aim of communicating and, therefore, of making known the existence of this event also in other parts of the Empire.



Bouza has thus underlined the existence of a transactional market aimed at the diffusion and circulation of news and the reception of the latter to a wide audience of readers or simple news listeners.

Starting from these assumptions, the speaker consequently presented the Spanish Monarchy in the early modern age – especially in the period that saw the unification of the Crowns of Spain and Portugal (1580-1640) – as an example of a model not only to study the diffusion and circulation of news, but also to investigate how public space was constructed through the press.

The rapid propagation of information in parts of the world so distant from each other (American and Asian colonies) has in fact allowed an immediate access to the information itself, so as to make the different areas of the Hispanic Empire not only interconnected but also very close to each other: in the words of Bouza himself “written culture makes the world small”.

Bouza then goes on to analyze the main circuits from which information starts and branches off: the news market circuit (especially thanks to mercantile relations) and the wide and more complex circuit of the Crown, consisting of a series of Court officials (soldiers, rulers, diplomats, writers) who contribute to the circulation of news. There are other less extensive channels, but not secondary that allow to widen the field relative to the actors involved in the rapid diffusion of news: ecclesiastical channel (above all the one related to religious orders); messianic and prophetic channel and finally that of the noble factions.

Finally, he emphasizes Bouza as these networks of informants and information starting from the *relaciones de sucesos*, which have been fundamental communication tools for the Hispanic Monarchy to spread news and the same time to transmit and outline their image in the world: an Empire to speak of José de Pellicer «de tinta, una corona de papel, y unos vasallos de humo».

4th June - 10,00 a.m.

Testi, tipografie e letteratura di ampia diffusione nella Spagna moderna
(Widespread texts, typographies and literature in modern Spain)

Fernando J. BOUZA ÁLVAREZ Universidad Complutense de Madrid

Pedro M. CÁTEDRA Universidad de Salamanca

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On June 4th 2019, the cycle of seminars *Editoria, cultura e informazione in età moderna: prospettive di ricerca su Italia e Spagna* (Publishing, culture and information in the modern age ended: research perspectives on Italy and Spain) was held in Naples at the Department of Humanities in the framework project Discompose, hosting Pedro M. Cátedra (Universidad de Salamanca) on the theme *Testi, tipografie e letteratura di ampia diffusione nella Spagna moderna* (Widespread texts, typographies and literature in modern Spain) who discussed important issues concerning the dissemination and reception of



print production (especially the one concerning the *relaciones de sucesos*) in the Spain of the early modern age.

In particular, Pedro Cátedra opened his speech providing a historical picture of the origin of the *relaciones de sucesos*, emphasizing how the latter had a substantial production and circulation in manuscript form in the Spain of the early modern age, especially on the occasion of the Granada War (1492), when it became more urgent for Catholic kings to justify and communicate their political actions. In this perspective, the speaker, in the wake of Fernando Bouza's report of the previous day, highlighted how the birth and development of *relaciones de sucesos* in Spain was mainly linked to a propaganda purpose, aimed at spreading in European countries the image of monarchy destined for the realization of a great imperial project.

Cátedra therefore dwells on the wide proliferation of *relaciones* in manuscript form and the same time in print intended for institutional framework and having as main objective to obtain benefits, as in the case of the communication of the Crown of Castile to the Vatican of the victorious transatlantic enterprises carried out by Christopher Columbus.

The speaker dedicates more space to the vast circulation that this same information had at a popular level: in fact their rapid diffusion favoured the immediate knowledge of news managing to involve even the most humble social classes thanks to the readings realized often during the sermons and aimed precisely at a greater diffusion of information. This helped to make *relaciones* in the modern age a genre of extensive consumption, widespread and translated into the main European languages.

Cátedra goes on to analyze some *relaciones de sucesos* circulating as leaflet and collected in a single volume in the seventeenth century. These are heterogeneous relationships (political events, travel relationships, natural catastrophes), but in any case, for the most part they often responded to a spiritual and above all pedagogical purpose (as in the case of the *exemplum* or *relación enmarcada*) used by political and religious institutions as the main communication and warning strategy.

In conclusion, as claimed by Bouza, Cátedra insists on the control exercised by the Spanish Monarchy over the dissemination of print communications, underlining how the Crown was careful to spread a precise image of itself, conveying precise political messages and above all careful so that nothing was spread in terms of provisions, as well as communications, without his consent.