The ‘Trouble of Naples’ in the Political Information Arena of the English Revolution

*Davide Boerio**

... Let Kings beware how they provoke
 Their Subjects with too hard a Yoke,
 For when all's done, it will not doe,
 You see they breake the Yoke in two:
 Let Subjects no rebellion move
 On such pretences least it prove,
 As sad a thing, (which God forbid)
 And fatall as to us it did.
 Much blood split, great battails won,
 Our treasure spent, and nothing done ...¹

This passage is taken from the epilogue of the tragicomedy *The Rebellion of Naples or the Tragedy of Masaniello*, written by the anonymous author T.B. The plot follows the life events of the young Neapolitan Tommaso Aniello d'Amalfi, better known as Masaniello, who became the leader of a popular revolt which broke out on 7 July 1647 in the Piazza Mercato in Naples. Naples was, in the mid-seventeenth century, the second or third most populous city in modern Europe.² The trigger for the uprising was the imposition of a new tax on fruit introduced by the Spanish viceroy, the Duke of Arcos, to cope with the

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- 1 T.B., *The Rebellion of Naples or the Tragedy of Masaniello commonly so called: but rightly Tomaso Aniello di Malfa Generall of the Neapolitans. Written by a Gentlemen who was an eye-witnes where it was really acted upon the bloody Stage, the streets of Naples, Anno Domini 1647* (London, 1649), p. 76.
- 2 Cesare De Seta, *Storia della città di Napoli. Dalle origini al Settecento* (Rome and Bari: Laterza, 1973).

incessant demands for men and equipment to be sent to the Court of Madrid, which was fighting in various campaigns of the Thirty Years War.³ Masaniello's epic story ends after just ten days, on 16 July 1647, when he was assassinated by gunmen in the Chiesa del Carmine in Naples. After his death, the figure of the barefoot fishmonger became legendary, and his history was used as raw material for the construction of his myth, refashioned periodically into constantly varying shapes, under the incessant action of the historical process.⁴

This tragedy was the first English literary work to have Masaniello's revolt as its central theme.⁵ The historical material essentially sets the stage for a fictional satirical drama, although the title page of the pamphlet explicitly states: "written by a Gentleman who was an eye-witnes where this was really acted upone the bloody Stage the streets of Naples" and the author qualifies the tragedy as "true, and reall". The work was published in London in mid-July 1649, gaining its own momentum and popularity in the political atmosphere that followed the beheading of Charles I at the Banqueting House in Whitehall at the end of January 1649, the abolition of the monarchy and the House of Lords three months later, and the proclamation of the Commonwealth the following May.

The *Tragedy of Masaniello* became a potent propaganda tool in loyalist hands and, together with another drama released a few months earlier, *The Famous Tragedy of King Charles I*, it clearly represents a strong warning against rebellion.⁶ Its author did not hesitate, in fact, to use the Neapolitan events among his allusions to the English political situation, as indicated by the introductory note to readers placed at the beginning of the text: "I warrant you this man drives at notable and remarkable passages of State, if we could understand him. And though Naples be the Scene, yet he plasters his will upon the walls and gates of London". The figure of Masaniello was used from very early on as a symbol of the rebel *par excellence*. As a result, his image was compared with that of Oliver Cromwell, as evidenced by the circulation of some medals minted in the Netherlands in the mid-seventeenth century.⁷

3 Geoffrey Parker, *The Thirty Years' War* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984).

4 Aurelio Musi, 'La rivolta di Masaniello tra mito, ideologia e scienza storica', *Prospettive Settanta*, 2–3 (1983), pp. 271–5; Vittorio Dini, *Masaniello: l'eroe e il mito* (Rome: Newton Compton, 1995); Silvana D'Alessio, *Masaniello: la sua vita e il mito in Europa* (Rome: Salerno, 2007).

5 Roberto De Simone et al., eds., *Masaniello nella drammaturgia europea e nella iconografia del suo secolo* (Naples: G. Macchiaroli 1998).

6 Silvana D'Alessio, *Contagi. La Rivolta napoletana del 1647–48: linguaggio e potere politico* (Florence: Centro editoriale toscano, 2003), pp. 116–31.

7 Edmund Hawkins, *Medallic Illustrations of the History of Great Britain and Ireland to the Death of George II* (London: British Museum, 1885), p. 432; Henry W. Henfrey, *Numismata Cromwelliana: or, The Medallic History of Oliver Cromwell Illustrated by his Coins, Medals and Seals* (London: J.R. Smith, 1877), pp. 158–9.

Masaniello's ten days were taken out of their historical context, telling only a small part of an extraordinary experience in the lives of the people of southern Italy. In fact, the rule of the Spanish monarchy over one of its most important and vital kingdoms was jeopardised for nine long months by the extraordinary resistance of the Neapolitan people against the local nobility and the Spaniards. This struggle led to an unprecedented event in the history of the kingdom of Naples: secession from Madrid and the subsequent establishment of a Republic in October 1647. This lasted until 6 April 1648 when the commander of the Fleet, Don John of Austria, a natural son of King Philip IV, together with the new viceroy, the Count of Oñate, former ambassador for the Monarchy of Spain to the Holy See, entered Naples and retook control, first of the capital, and then of the kingdom.⁸

With the return to order came a ruthless Spanish repression. Executions and imprisonments of the rioters accompanied the systematic destruction of Republican pamphlets, documents and other archival papers.⁹ The subsequent lack of this documentation helped to cement, in the long run, the *topos* of a plebeian tumult "without rhyme or reason" and devoid of any political content, as a cultural and historiographical commonplace.¹⁰ This negative judgement has long endured and has left a profound mark on the understanding of Southern Italian history. Born in the wake of a revisionist campaign orchestrated by Spanish governmental authorities after the restoration of Spanish rule, this contention has overshadowed all other events, focusing all responsibility on the figure of Masaniello, who would henceforth become an emblem for the negative traits of an entire people.¹¹

Much time passed before the entire event was considered in all its complexity, towards the end of the second decade of the twentieth century.¹² A complete shift of perspective, however, was not achieved until the end of the Second World War, when the so-called 'Debate without End' on the crisis of the

8 *A true Relation of the reducing of the City of Naples to the obedience of the King of Spain, which happened on the 5 of April 1648* (London, 1648).

9 Archivo General de Simancas (AGS), *Secreteria provinciales, Napoles*, Legajo 218, fo. 2, Gracias y Capítulos al Pueblo de Napoles el S.re D. Juan de Austria como Plenipotenciario de su Mag.d 11 Avril 1648.

10 Benedetto Croce, *Storia del Regno di Napoli* (Rome and Bari: Laterza, 1944), p. 36. See Benedetto Croce's criticism of Giuseppe Galasso, 'Prefazione', in Aurelio Musi, *La rivolta di Masaniello nella scena politica barocca* (Naples: Guida Editori, 2003), p. 5.

11 Giuseppe Galasso, 'Lo stereotipo del napoletano e le sue variazioni regionali', in *L'altra Europa: per un'antropologia storica del Mezzogiorno d'Italia* (Milan: Mondadori, 1982), pp. 143–90.

12 Michelangelo Schipa, *La così detta rivoluzione di Masaniello: da memorie contemporanee inedite* (Naples: Piero 1918), and *Masaniello* (Rome and Bari: Laterza 1925).

seventeenth century triggered a renewed focus on the revolutions that took place in the middle of this century.¹³

A general reassessment of the Neapolitan revolution developed within this new scholarly climate. Rosario Villari's work, for instance, continues to serve as a milestone for all scholars of these events.¹⁴ Thanks to his research, it is finally possible to insert the Neapolitan revolution into the overall pattern of European history, thereby restoring the vital forces present in that extraordinary series of events:

against the threat of marginalization and of involution, which became very serious in the seventeenth century, the south of Italy responded by engaging live and original resources, developing ideas and aspirations not dissimilar to, although less clear and intense than, those that were developing in the propulsive centres of European life ...¹⁵

A few years earlier Christopher Hill wrote in his work dedicated to the intellectual origins of the English Revolution that "England's intellectual crisis is a part of a wider European movement of thought, which itself bears some relation to an economic and social crisis".¹⁶ The argument of this paper is the outcome of my reflections on these two historians' important work on the ideal and political framing of revolutions in the early modern period.¹⁷

The revolutionary crisis of the mid-seventeenth century was epoch-making, which did not escape the attention of observers at that time.¹⁸ They were

- 13 J.H. Elliot, 'The General Crisis in Retrospect: A Debate Without End', in *Early Modern Europe: From Crisis to Stability*, ed. Phillip Benedict and Myron P. Gutmann (Newark, DE: University of Delaware Press, 2005), pp. 31–51. For a summary of the debate see Francesco Benigno, *Specchi della rivoluzione. Conflitto e identità politica nell'Europa Moderna* (Rome: Donzelli, 1999); trans. *Mirrors of Revolution: Conflict and Political Identity in Early Modern Europe* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010).
- 14 Rosario Villari, *The Revolt of Naples* (Cambridge: Polity, 1993). See also Villari *Un sogno di libertà: Napoli nel declino di un Impero, 1585–1648* (Milan: Mondadori, 2012).
- 15 Rosario Villari, *Ribelli e riformatori dal XVI al XVIII secolo* (Rome: Editori Riuniti, 1983), p. 9.
- 16 Christopher Hill, *Intellectual Origins of the English Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 4.
- 17 Christopher Hill, 'The English Revolution and the Brotherhood of Man', *Science & Society*, 18.4 (1954), pp. 289–309, also in *Puritanism and Revolution* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1958), pp. 123–52; Rosario Villari, 'Corrispondenze ideali e politiche tra le rivoluzioni del Seicento: Napoli e l'Europa', in *Elogio della dissimulazione. La lotta politica nel seicento* (Rome and Bari: Laterza, 2003), pp. 49–78.
- 18 José Maravall, *Culture of the Baroque: Analysis of a Historical Structure*, trans. Terry Cochran (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986); Geoffrey Parker, *Global Crisis:*

conscious that they lived in an exceptional period, as demonstrated by a letter from the Welsh intellectual James Howell, writing in 1648 from the Fleet prison, where he was incarcerated because of his open loyalist sympathies:¹⁹

For foreign News ... The commotions in *Sicily* are quash'd, but those of *Naples* increase; and 'tis like to be a more raging and voracious fire than *Vesuvius*, or any of the sulphureous Mountains about her did ever belch out. The *Catalan* and *Portugez* bait the *Spaniard* on both sides, but the first hath shrewder teeth than the other; and the *French* and *Hollander* find him work in *Flanders*. And now, my Lord, to take all Nations in a lump, I think God Almighty hath a quarrel lately with all Mankind, and given the reins to the ill Spirit to compass the whole earth; for within these twelve years there have the strangest Revolutions and horriddest Things happen'd not only in *Europe*, but all the World over, that have befallen mankind, I dare boldly say, since *Adam* fell, in so short a revolution of time. There is a kind of popular Planet reigns everywhere.

In a later passage from the letter, Howell wrote "that it seems the whole Earth is off the hinges: And (which is the more wonderful) all these prodigious passages have fallen out in less than the compass of twelve years".²⁰

Despite his imprisonment, this intellectual seemed to be well informed about European affairs. He relied on a certain degree of freedom, which allowed him to receive and translate, while in prison, Alessandro Giraffi's chronicle manuscript, *Le rivoluzioni di Napoli* (Venice, 1648). This work had appeared just three months after the outbreak of the Neapolitan uprising and was quickly disseminated in numerous editions throughout various parts of Italy between 1647 and 1648, as well as in two English editions by 1650.²¹

It is likely that the opportunity to translate this work was offered to Howell by the English adventurer Sir Kenelm Digby, who was present in Rome at the

War, Climate Change and Catastrophe in the Seventeenth Century (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013).

- 19 D.R. Woolf, 'Howell, James (1594?–1666)', *ODNB*, <www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/13974> [11/09/14]; Woolf, 'Conscience, Constancy and Ambition in the Career and Writings of James Howell', in *Public Duty and Private Conscience in Seventeenth-Century England*, ed. John Morrill, Paul Slack, and Daniel Woolf (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), pp. 243–78.
- 20 James Howell, *Epistolae Ho-Eliae: the Familiar Letters of James Howell*, ed. Joseph Jacob (London: D. Nutt, 1892), pp. 512, 513.
- 21 *An Exact Historie of the Late Revolutions in Naples; and of Their monstrous Successes, not to be parallel'd by Any Ancient or Modern History. Published by the Lord Alexander Giraffi in Italian and (for the rarenesse of the subject) rendered to English by J.H. Esq.* (London, 1650).

time of the Neapolitan revolt and who had an active part in organising the Duke of Guise's trip to Naples in November 1647.²² Howell, however, had contacts with British merchants in the Italian territories who would quench his thirst for information regarding the Neapolitan revolution.²³ This is apparent in a letter to the merchant Samuel Bonnell, residing between Livorno and Genoa, in which Howell thanked him for having sent "the *Italian* Manuscripts ... of the late Revolutions in Naples, which will infinitely advantage me in exposing to the World that Stupendous piece of Story".²⁴

In 1652, two years after the translation of the Naples chronicle and his release from imprisonment, Howell resumed his work on the subject, publishing the first and most original analysis of the Neapolitan events of 1647–48 written outside of Italy.²⁵ As in the previous paper, he dedicated his work to the Levant Company, offering a specific reason for the gesture: "Gentlemen, there are none so capable to judge of the truth of this *Neapolitan* Story as your selves, who have so frequent Intelligence from that *Countray* where it was acted". The writer did not conceal the sources from which he drew information: "I receiv'd from some worthy Members of that Society, who favour'd me with sight of divers of their Letters from time to time, and furnish me with other *advantages* towards the compiling of this *Piece*".²⁶

The popularity of the Neapolitan revolution in English public debate was not due only to a simple curiosity on the part of the readers about those extraordinary events. The interest was rooted in the great mass of political information circulating in Europe during the 1640s. The principal means through which this process was manifested and popularised was the European gazettes. In this period they represented the most effective vehicle exploiting the interaction between two information networks which continued to develop in Europe during the second half of the sixteenth and the first half of

22 Edward Chaney, *The Grand Tour and the Great Rebellion: Richard Lassels and the 'Voyage of Italy' in the Seventeenth Century* (Geneva: Slatkine, 1985), p. 327.

23 H.G. Koenigsberger, 'English Merchants in Naples and Sicily in the Seventeenth Century', *The English Historical Review*, 62 [244] (1947), pp. 304–26; Gigliola Pagano De Divitis, *English Merchants in Seventeenth-Century Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

24 Howell, *Epistolae Ho-Elanae*, pp. 637–8. On Samuel Bonnell see Robert Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution: Commercial Change, Political Conflict and London's Overseas Traders, 1550–1653* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 170–1, 174.

25 Vittorio Conti, 'Introduzione', in James Howell, *A History of the Late Revolutions in the Kingdom of Naples* (Florence: Centro editoriale toscano, 1987), pp. i–xxv.

26 James Howell, *The Second Part of Masaniello, His Body taken out of the Town-Ditch, and solemnly buried* (London, 1652), 'Dedicatory', unpag.

the seventeenth century. On the one hand, there was the production and dissemination of *avvisi* drawn up in the major European capitals; and on the other, the appearance of the first printed newspapers, roughly contemporary with the outbreak of the Thirty Years War.²⁷ The French *Gazette*, for example, released news about Catalonia, England and Naples almost simultaneously with the unfolding of events.²⁸ In 1648 alone, in addition to this incessant flow of news, more than thirty special issues were printed, all dedicated to occurrences across the Channel.²⁹

It appears, therefore, very difficult to assess the effects produced by the spread of news to a popular audience. An interesting view of the matter was offered by Cardinal Jules Mazarin's librarian, Gabriel Naudé, who voiced his complaints about this matter to the editor of the French *Gazette*, Théophraste Renaudot:³⁰

It [*the Gazette*] makes people too aware of their conditions, of their business, and this awareness also applies to the affairs of neighbouring peoples ... it seems to me, however, that the common people do not know much about these new novelties, and it serves no purpose to inform them minutely about the revolts of Naples, the sedition of Turkey and the horrific attack in England.³¹

Yet the following pages tell an unpublished story, which may permanently change the hasty judgement passed on the reciprocal influences and ideal exchanges between the Neapolitan and the English revolutions, according to

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- 27 Mario Infelise, *Prima dei giornali. Alle origini della pubblica informazione (secoli XVI e XVII)* (Rome and Bari: Laterza, 2002); Brendan Dooley and Sabina A. Baron, eds. *The Politics of Information in Early Modern Europe* (London: Routledge, 2001); Brendan Dooley, ed. *The Dissemination of News and the Emergence of Contemporaneity in Early Modern Europe* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010).
 - 28 Roger B. Merriman, *Six Contemporaneous Revolutions* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1938), p. 97.
 - 29 Philip A. Knachel, *England and the Fronde: The Impact of the English Civil War and Revolution on France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967), pp. 50–75.
 - 30 Howard M. Solomon, *Public Welfare, Science and Propaganda in Seventeenth Century France. The innovations of Théophraste Renaudot* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972).
 - 31 Gabriel Naudé, *De tout ce qui a esté imprimé contre le cardinal Mazarin, depuis le sixième janvier jusques à la declaration du 1^{er} avril 1650, dit le Mascarat*, p. 380, cited Hubert Carrier, *Le labyrinthe de l'État. Essai sur le débat politique en France au temps de la Fronde (1648–1653)* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2004), p. 156.

which “geographically and psychologically speaking, [were] the most remote from themselves”.³²

During the summer of 1647, the news of the Neapolitan revolution reached London in one of its moments of greatest excitement due to the entry into the city, on 7/17 August, of the New Model Army commanded by General Thomas Fairfax, whose aim was to restore the order threatened by the Presbyterian counter-revolutionaries.³³ It was in this turbulent context that news of Naples appeared in the English public sphere, thanks to *The Moderate Intelligencer*, a newsbook written by the tailor-journalist John Dillingham.³⁴ This newsbook, published in the British Isles, told the story of the Neapolitan revolution week by week until its conclusion. The ‘Troubles of Naples’ was inserted into the ongoing struggle between the army, parliament, and the king, which resulted in an unprecedented acceleration of the English revolutionary process, lasting from the summer of 1647 until the Putney Debates the next autumn. Matters settled down with the outbreak of a second civil war in the spring of 1648 and, finally, reached a new pitch with the proceedings for high treason against Charles I, and his execution in January 1649.³⁵

This political radicalisation represented the culmination of a process that began with the Army Revolt of 1647.³⁶ In the spring of that year the infantry and

32 Merriman, *Six Contemporaneous Revolutions*, p. 98.

33 Valerie Pearl, ‘London’s Counter-Revolution’, in *The Interregnum. The Quest for Settlement: 1646–1660*, ed. G.E. Aylmer (London: Macmillan, 1972), pp. 29–36; Jason Eldred, ‘An Army so Provoked? Popular Print and the Language of Radicalization in the New Model Army, 1647’, in *Essays in History* (2011) <www.essaysinhistory.com/articles/2011/8/08/04/13>.

34 The copies of *Moderate Intelligencer* are preserved in the collection of Thomason Tracts at the British Library of London: *Catalogue of the Pamphlets, Books, Newspapers, and Manuscripts Relating to the Civil War, the Commonwealth, and Restoration, Collected by George Thomason, 1640–1661*, 2 vols., ed. G.K. Fortescue, R.F. Sharp, R.A. Streatfield, and W.A. Marsden (London, 1908). See also Carolyn Nelson and Matthew Seccombe, *British Newspapers and Periodicals, 1641–1700: A Short-Title Catalogue of Serials Printed in England, Scotland, Ireland, and British America* (New York: MLA, 1987). References to 1640s London newsbooks in this essay include the Nelson and Seccombe number followed by the BL Thomason collection shelfmark.

35 Mark A. Kishlansky, ‘The Army and the Levellers: The Roads to Putney’, *The Historical Journal*, 22.4 (1979), pp. 795–824.

36 Charles H. Firth, *Cromwell’s Army: A History of the English Soldier During the Civil Wars, the Commonwealth and the Protectorate* (London: Methuen, 1902), 349–85; John Morrill, ‘The Army Revolt of 1647’, in *Britain and the Netherlands*, vol. 4: *Metropolis, Dominion and Province. Papers delivered to the fourth Anglo-Dutch Historical Conference*, ed. John Selwyn and Ernst Heinrich (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1971), pp. 54–78.

cavalry openly challenged their officers and the heads of parliament. They decided to elect their own representatives (the Agitators), who in addition to advancing corporate claims such as the payment of withheld wages and maintaining their opposition to the disbandment of troops and the deployment of those remaining in Ireland, came together with other, more politicised sectors of the civilian population (the Levellers) as the protagonists of a tough political struggle.³⁷

The analysis of information regarding the Neapolitan revolution published by the *Moderate Intelligencer* not only allows us to evaluate the level of integration reached by the European information network in the mid-seventeenth century, but also to read the Neapolitan events in the context of one of the most important revolutionary conjunctures of the early modern age. Its enduring presence in the public arena of the English civil wars, and Dillingham's engagements in the discussions and clashes of English political debate make his newsbook an interesting case study for the circulation and use of political information during the revolutionary crisis of the mid-seventeenth century.

Before continuing the history of the Neapolitan revolution as recounted in the *Moderate Intelligencer*, it is useful to briefly consider the biography and journalistic career of its author, John Dillingham, whose name occupies a prominent position "in the history of English journalism during the seventeenth century".³⁸ Born at the beginning of the seventeenth century from a family with well-established connections with the Montague household, Dillingham began his training as an apprentice of the Drapers' Company, where he learned the fundamentals of a tailor's profession. By 1624 he was running a steady business in the London suburb of Whitefriars.³⁹ Throughout his working life Dillingham enjoyed a measure of success in his trade; he employed thirteen apprentices, five of them during the period between 1625 and 1638.⁴⁰

In 1638, for political reasons, Dillingham fled to Paris, where he took his first steps into the publishing arena, writing newsletters to his patron, Lord Edward Montague.⁴¹ After returning home, he supplemented his old job with his new

37 Henry N. Brailsford, *The Levellers and the English Revolution* (London: Cresset Press, 1961), pp. 166–227; Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas During the English Revolution* (London: Penguin, 1991), pp. 57–72.

38 G.E. Manwaring, 'Journalism in the Days of the Commonwealth', *Edinburgh Review*, 244, 497 (1926), p. 105.

39 A.N.B. Cotton, 'John Dillingham, Journalist of the Middle Group', *The English Historical Review*, 93 [369] (1978), p. 818.

40 A.H. Johnson, *The History of Worshipful Company of the Drapers of London*, vol. 4 (Oxford, 1915), p. 142.

41 *Historical Manuscripts Commission: Report on the Manuscripts of Lord Montagu of Beaulieu* (London: HMSO, 1900), pp. 120–1, 125–6.

activities as an informant, describing the evolution of the English Civil War and the last phase of the Thirty Years War in a series of newsletters.⁴²

During his stay in Paris, Dillingham established useful contacts for his future career as a journalist and gained some familiarity with the French publishing market. His plan to collaborate on *Mercure Anglois* with Nicolas Bourne, one of the major players in the newsheet market in the 1620s, the printer Robert White, and the translator John Cotgrave, probably came from this experience. It was the first newsbook written in a foreign language, in this case French, to be published in England.⁴³

His journalistic debut, however, came with the publication of the *Parliament Scout* in June 1643.⁴⁴ The newsbook devoted much space to military news, relying on information from the internal ranks of the army: “our Scout assures us”, “you shall have the most punctuall Relations that our Scout can make” are typical formulations.⁴⁵ The extraordinary ability to read and, at times, to anticipate the developments of warfare was a distinguishing feature of all Dillingham’s journalistic activity, one which probably derived from his personal relations with senior military officials.⁴⁶

From the pages of the *Parliament Scout*, the author engaged in a political battle in favour of the establishment of the New Model Army.⁴⁷ He was, in fact, politically close to the beliefs of Oliver St. John and the Middle Group, and strongly opposed to a peace agreement with the sovereign.⁴⁸ In February 1645, these positions led to his arrest along with the printer Robert White and the consequent suppression of the newsbook.⁴⁹

After about a month of detention and just five days after their release, Dillingham and White were back in business, publishing another weekly: *The Moderate Intelligencer*.⁵⁰ Unlike the *Parliament Scout*, the editorial line of the new newsbook was carefully attentive to the consequences that could arise from commenting on current domestic politics. Hereafter a less risky

42 *Report on the Manuscripts of Lord Montagu*, pp. 139–41, 152–4.

43 Joseph Frank, *The Beginnings of the English Newspaper, 1620–1660* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1961), p. 70.

44 Frank, *Beginnings*, pp. 45–7.

45 *Parliament Scout*, no. 3 (6–13 July 1643), p. 19, 485.03/E.60(8).

46 Cotton, ‘John Dillingham’, p. 821.

47 *Parliament Scout*, no. 7 (3–10 August 1643), pp. 45–9, 485.07/E.64(13); *Parliament Scout*, no. 18 (20–27 October 1643), p. 157, 485.18/E.73(8).

48 Valerie Pearl, ‘Oliver St. John and the “Middle Group” in the Long Parliament: August 1643–May 1644’, *English Historical Review*, 81 [320] (1966), p. 506.

49 *Lords Journals*, vol. 7, p. 164, cited in G.E. Manwaring, ‘Journalism in the Days of the Commonwealth’, p. 110.

50 Cotton, ‘John Dillingham’, p. 825.

presentation of international news, which became the hallmark of his weekly, was preferred.⁵¹ *The Moderate Intelligencer* was, in fact, the only publication in the vast mid-seventeenth century English journalistic landscape to follow closely the negotiations leading to the Peace of Westphalia.⁵²

The attention of English readers was more understandable when seen in the light of a more general involvement of the European public at the conclusion of a thirty-year conflict, which had crippled the forces of the Continent. It has been rightly noted that "at the time of the Peace of Westphalia a broad public interest in political affairs certainly existed, as a printed campaign accompanied the peace negotiations. The text of the peace treaty has been assessed as having from 28,000 to 42,000 copies".⁵³

The journalist had obtained the continental news through French and Dutch postal circuits.⁵⁴ However, due to adverse weather conditions, the links across the English Channel were not always reliable: "The newes from Beyond Seas this weeke, is not so certaine as other weeks, because the windes, and waters did not permit letters from all parts".⁵⁵ From Dutch sources, Dillingham received information regarding Northern Europe: "the Letters from *Amsterdam*, which usually give us the state of *Germany* and parts Northerly, speak thus much"; "We had from the *Hague* concerning the affairs beyond seas, and chiefly *Germany*, as followeth".⁵⁶

The French sources which played a leading role in disseminating information on the Neapolitan revolution across the Channel deserve separate consideration. The *Moderate Intelligencer*, printed on 1/11 July 1647, published a report from Naples, dated 10/20 May 1647, concerning the outbreak of the revolt in

51 Joad Raymond, *The Invention of the Newspaper: English Newsbooks, 1641–1649* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 144–8.

52 Jayne E.E. Boys, *London's News Press and the Thirty Years War* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2011), p. 9.

53 Wolfgang Reinhard, *Storia del potere politico in Europa* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2001), p. 477.

54 *Moderate Intelligencer*, no. 62 (7–14 May 1646), pp. 435–6, 419.062/E.337(18); *Moderate Intelligencer*, no. 63 (14–21 May 1646), p. 448, 419.063/E.337(32); *Moderate Intelligencer*, no. 64 (21–28 May 1646), p. 458, 419.064/E.339(3); *Moderate Intelligencer*, no. 68 (18–25 June 1646), p. 508, 419.068/E.341(16); *Moderate Intelligencer*, no. 71 (9–16 July 1646), p. 540, 419.071/E.344(23); *Moderate Intelligencer*, no. 73 (23–30 July 1646), p. 565, 419.073/E.346(7). On the information network between England and the European continent, see: Paul Arblaster, 'Post, Newsletters, Newspapers: England in a European system of communication', *Media History*, 11.1–2 (2005), pp. 21–36.

55 *Moderate Intelligencer*, no. 3 (13–20 March 1645), p. 21, 419.003/E.274(9).

56 *Moderate Intelligencer*, no. 59 (16–23 April 1646), p. 397, 419.059/E.334(2); *Moderate Intelligencer*, no. 67 (11–18 June 1646), p. 495, 419.067/E.340(32).

Palermo.⁵⁷ The report described the long-term causes that had sparked the uprising, especially the mandatory conscription of men sent to fight on the various fronts in which the Spanish monarchy was engaged. A comparison of this report with the public account published by the *Nouvelle Extraordinaires* on 18/28 June 1647, *Le soulèvement n'aguères arrivé en Sicilie contre le Roy d'Espagne*, demonstrates, as shown below, that the two articles were identical:

Moderate Intelligencer:

The evill entertainment generally given by the Spaniards unto such people as are subject unto them; and particularly the violence they have used for certaine years by-past in taking away by force out of every place fifth man in each familie, whom they constrain, under the seizure and sale of all their Goods, to present themselves to be inchained, as they are, for divers dayes, and shut upon within the Arsenalls of his Catholicke Majesty: these rude courses, and many others most insupportable ones, as well against their persons as their Estates, have a long while much provoked the most part of this people, and from private murmurings have at the length burst out into publicke Risings, almost throughout all this Island.⁵⁸

Nouvelle Extraordinaires:

Les mauvais traitemens que reçoivent tous les Espagnols, & particulièrement la violence qu'on apporte depuis quelques années à enlever par force la cinquième homme de chacun lieu, que l'on entraine de sa famille éplorée, laquelle on contraint par la saïfie & vent de tout les biens à le faire trouver lors qu'il s'absente, sur l'appréhension d'estre enchainé, comme ils sont par plusieurs jours de Sa Majesté Catholique: ces rudes procédz, & plusieurs autres non moins insupportables sur leurs personnes & sur leurs bien, avoyaient des longs temps irrité la plupart de ses people: Mais ces mécontentemens qui ne produisoient que des murmures sourds, ont en fin éclaté en un soulèvement presque general dans la Sicilie.⁵⁹

The case cited is just one of many available examples. Dillingham's French sources mostly drew upon the information sheets prepared by Théophraste

57 H.G. Koenigsberger, 'The Revolt of Palermo in 1647', *Cambridge Historical Journal*, 8.3 (1946), pp. 129–41; L.A. Ribot Garcia, 'Las Revueltas de Napoles y Sicilia', *Cuadernos de Historia Moderna*, 11 (1991), pp. 121–30.

58 *Moderate Intelligencer*, no. 120 (24 June–1 July 1647), p. 1144, 419.120/E.395(5).

59 'Nouvelles Extraordinaires', no. 67 (28 Juin 1647), in Théophraste Renaudot, *Recueil des Gazettes, Nouvelles ordinaire et extraordinaires. Relation et autre recits des choses avenues toute l'année mil six cens quatante-sept* (Paris, Bureau d'Adresse, 1648), pp. 481–2 <gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k6375748n/f487.image.r=1647.langEN> [1/5/13].

Renaudot—the *Nouvelles Ordinaires* the *Nouvelles Extraordinaires* and the *Gazette*—which were principally used with regard to the news coming from the Mediterranean area.⁶⁰ These semi-official news publications probably pushed Dillingham to rely completely on their contents which, thanks to John Cotgrave's collaboration, were translated directly from French to English. This opens a window for understanding the editorial line pursued by the journalist and his collaborator. Whenever space was available, the *Moderate Intelligencer* published Cotgrave's translated reports in their entirety. On the other hand, whenever space was limited, Dillingham (as editor) selected only those sections that he considered most interesting for English readers.

Throughout July 1647, the *Moderate Intelligencer* reported the developments of the revolt in Palermo and the extent of the tumults in the kingdom of Sicily.⁶¹ In the meantime the political situation in England deteriorated. At the beginning of August, the newsbook, after two years of continuous presence on the English journalistic scene, skipped an issue for the first and last time, probably for fear of the chaos that might result from the entrance of the New Model Army into the English capital and the likelihood of subsequent clashes with the pro-Presbyterian London militia. This lacuna did not pass unobserved, to the point where an anonymous reader from the American colonies—which moreover demonstrates the breadth of the *Moderate Intelligencer's* diffusion—annotated on a copy: 'Noe more wr[it]ten till Aug. 5'.⁶²

The news of the Neapolitan revolt was published in England on 19/29 August 1647, about forty days after the outbreak of the uprising.⁶³ The report summarised the events of the first five days of the revolt, and it introduced the readers to the main characters: Masaniello and the Neapolitan people.

The great Insurrection begun in this town by ... *Massiniello* ... and continued ever since the other inhabitants, to the number of 60000 which are still in armes, is risen to such an height, as can see but little hope of

60 Stéphane Haffmayer, *L'information dans la France du XVII^e siècle : La Gazette de Renaudot de 1647 à 1663* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2002).

61 *Moderate Intelligencer*, no. 121 (1–8 July 1647), p. 1156, 419.121/E.397(12); *Moderate Intelligencer*, no. 123 (15–22 July 1647), p. 1181, 419.121/E.399(28); *Moderate Intelligencer*, no. 124 (22–29 July 1647), pp. 1190–1, 419.124/E.400(19). On the extension of the revolt of Palermo to the entire kingdom of Sicily, see: Daniele Palermo, *Sicilia 1647. Voci, esempi, modelli di rivolta* (Palermo: Associazione no profit Mediterranea, 2009).

62 New York Public Library, *Moderate Intelligencer*, 124, cited in Joad Raymond, *Invention of the Newspaper*, p. 266.

63 For travel times of information between Naples and London see: S. Haffmayer, 'Les gazettes de l'Ancien Régime: Approche quantitative pour l'analyse d'un "espace de l'information"', *Histoire & Mesure*, 12. 1–2 (1997), p. 74.

attonement; the people holding the Viceroy still besieged within *Castel Novo* whereunto he is fled with the royal Visitor, his family and the greatest part of the Ministers and Officers of Spain ...

The report then extended its gaze onto other characters and expanded, in particular, the story of Giulio Genoino, considered responsible for the riots:

'Tis said that the principall Author of this Commotion is a man of 80 years of age, heretofore a favorite and principall Confident, of the Duke of *Ossun*; and, who for that cause, and in hatred unto that Duke had been by the Spaniards condemned unto death. But the Conde *d'Olivares* understanding that he was of a great spirit, stayed his execution, and causing him to be brought into Spain, did only bannish him unto *Orani* in *Affrick*; where having stayed some 20 years: his fraile age having procured him leave to return unto this town, he had requited the Spaniards ill entertainment of him, in raising and fomenting the said Commotion of the townsmen ...

The article then described the actions carried out by the insurgent rebels, including the assault on prisons and fortresses where weapons were stored, and the fires set to the palaces of the nobility and tax contractors. The report then gave the account of the repression orchestrated by the Duke of Maddaloni and his brother Giuseppe Carafa, who "had come privately into this town with 700 Bandits". The plan failed and the people's reaction was swift. Giuseppe Carafa was captured and executed by the rebels "who suddenly condemned him, and within three hours after caused his head to be, in the market place, chopt off". Revenge also extended to their minions: "any Banditi coming into this town, are to be forthwith put to death". The account ended with the intervention of the Archbishop of Naples, Ascanio Filomarino: "This mischief continually increases, though that the Card[inal]. *Filomarini* our Archbishop do shew himself many times with a Crucifix in his hand, to try if he can procure any respect from these men, his own Diocesans".⁶⁴

Another report from Naples appeared in the same issue, in which an initial assessment of the revolutionary period was attempted, offering a vivid description of the absolute power attained by the Neapolitan fishmonger:

64 *Moderate Intelligencer*, no. 126 (12–19 August 1647), p. 1216, 419.126/E.402(26).

During the 10 days that our Citizens stood out in Arms against their Vice-roy, there have been divers Treaties of Accomodation on Foot, but have not been able to appease this great tumult, wherein everyone is compelled for his more security, to make one, and submit himself unto the commands of *Thomaso Aniello*, who they commonly stile *Massaniello*, the Elect of the people, who have ordained him the Major General of all their Militia. And he to make men stand in the more awe of him, hath caused Gibbets and Wheels to be set up in all the Markets, and other publick places, about the Town, and severely chastises all those that transgress his Orders. The Nobility likewise, and all the Gentry are forced to follow him, and take protections of him, ever since the burning of 36. of their principal houses, with all the Moveables which were of most value within them; all the ashes whereof have been thrown in the Sea; the fury of the people having arisen to that excess, that not content to have exposed, for six days together the head of D. *Giosepho Caraffa* upon a long pole in the Market place, they did after that, set it up over the door of the Church of St. *Genaro* our Patron, with an Inscription purporting, that he was a Rebel to the King of Spain, and a Traitour to his Country. (p. 1219)

Finally, a report from Rome disclosed the brutal murder of Masaniello and his majestic funeral, organised the following day by the people of Naples:

we are assured that the Major General *Massaniello* hath been lately massacred by the Neapolitans for his cruelty and other deportments which procured him many enemies; and that his body was dragged all along the streets; after which the people being come again unto themselves, and much ashamed at such a murdering of their General, had yeilded unto his dead body all the honour they could devise, there being about 1000 Torches at the Buriall of it, attended on by all their Soldatesca, with Trumpets dolefully sounding and Drums in like manner beating, and many other Funerall Magnificences. (p. 1220)

On 19/29 August 1647, a new weekly appeared in the streets of London: *The Moderne Intelligencer*. Published by a printer, George Lindsay, whose life is still shrouded in mystery, the new publication helped to spread news of the Neapolitan revolution in the English public sphere. However, the news-book appeared in only seven issues and, after September 1647, ceased publication.

This weekly echoed *The Moderate Intelligencer* in its title, probably intending to take advantage of the growing demand for international news from a market completely dominated by the figure of Dillingham. *The Moderne Intelligencer* reported the immediate spread of the revolution to the other provinces of the kingdom of Naples, where it took a decidedly anti-feudal turn:

We are advised that the 23 instant [July] there happened a new commotion or rising in *Cosenza* a Town in *Calabria*, where one of the Nobility was murdered, together with 40 of the inhabitants that were suspected to favour the *Spanish* party, made prisoners and carries to Naples the Townes of *Salerno* and *Bari* have done the same having burned down in the first 25 houses, and in the second have chosen a chiefe Commander, who makes himselfe to be feared by the often execution which he causeth to be made of severall persons ...⁶⁵

The geographical expansion of the Neapolitan revolution accompanied an enlargement of its social base. The first September issue of the *Moderne Intelligencer* published the account of the tumult of the university students that took place in early August of 1647.⁶⁶ A week later, Dillingham's newsbook reported the protests of the weavers.⁶⁷ The news of the Neapolitan revolution, published in England in September and October 1647, told of a situation that was substantially favourable to the Neapolitan people.

The arrival of the Spanish fleet in the Bay of Naples, commanded by Don John of Austria, however, marked the beginning of a new phase of events. The *Moderate Intelligencer* published the news for 4/14 November 1647: "The first of this moneth [October] the Spanish Fleet, composed of 44 great ships, appearing within view of this Town".⁶⁸ Meanwhile, the beginning of the Putney Debate was reported on the front page: "A great Assembly this day at Puteney Church, where was debated matters of high concernment, viz.... all protest to aym at nothing but the publique good".⁶⁹

Both the quality and the volume of Dillingham's news underwent a transformation in the following week's issue, in which a long account dated "From *Naples* October 8" appeared. The report occupied approximately four pages of

65 *Moderne Intelligencer*, no. 2 (19–26 August 1647), p. 12, 431.2/E.404(28).

66 *Moderne Intelligencer*, no. 4 (2–9 September 1647), p. 30, 431.4/E.406(11).

67 *Moderate Intelligencer*, no. 130 (9–16 September 1647), p. 1263, 419.130/E.407(12).

68 *Moderate Intelligencer*, no. 137 (28 October–4 November 1647), p. 1346, 419.137/E.412(25).

69 *Moderate Intelligencer*, no. 137 (28 October–4 November 1647), p. 1345.

the newsbook's total of twelve, and recounted with a certain degree of detail the battle between the Spanish and Neapolitan forces. After the refusal of the Neapolitan people to lay down their arms "who cried out they had rather dye with their weapons in their hands, then expect for their reward, Wheels, Gibets and other Engines of punishment which was all they could hope for from their enemies, the Spaniards", Don John of Austria decided on forceful action: "by his order all the Gallies, Gallions and Fortresses shot incessantly ... against the Town, and particularly against the Market-place, *Conchiaria*, *Lavinaro*, and *Porta-Nolana*, and yet to small purpose, so little mischief was done thereby". However, the most eloquent aspect of the report was its account of the courageous and tenacious resistance of the Neapolitan people: "this people shewed it self so full of rage, that when as any of them was observed to be less passionate then others in their Cause (which they tearmed common) they presently killed him, as if he had been a Traitor". The report ended:

In Brief, things are here come to that extremity, that there is no more hope left of any Agreement between these two Parties; these divisions being in the number of those that seldome admit of a closure, and such swords being seldom unsheathed without burning of the scabberds, *viz.* being not often, if at all, are put up unto their scabberds again.⁷⁰

The bombardment of Naples marked a final rupture in the covenant of loyalty between the "Most Faithful People of Naples" and the Spanish Crown, and, at the end of October 1647, opened the way for the proclamation of a Republic. A news item published in the 18/28 November 1647 issue read as follows:

Although the gates of the Town of *Naples* be so close shut, that we understand not all the particulars that pass therein, yet we are told, that the people is still in Armes, and hath recovered the most part of the Posts, which had been gotten from them by the Spaniards; against whom they express so unplaceable a hatred, that some of them have eatend bread dipt in their blood after thay had slain them. And to shew their resolution the more, they have newly stuck up in their several Quarters, red and black standards; and taken all the silver they can get, even out of Holy shrines, thereof to make money, stamped on the one side with the Image of our La: of the *Carmelites*, and on the other with that of Liberty, represented

70 *Moderate Intelligencer*, no. 138 (4–11 November 1647), p. 1359, the rest unpaginated, 419.138/E.414(1).

by a horse broken loose; having defaced the Armes of the King of *Spain* in every part of their Town, where they formerly stood ...

Another report from Paris confirmed the successful establishment of a republic and conveyed the iconoclastic fury of the people against the old symbols of power:

Letters are come this day, which say the Napolitans have overcome all the Spaniards in the City of Naples, and with great slaughter ... they have since brake all the Effigies of the Kings of Spain, and put themselves into a Common-wealth ... The presence is oppression, and insolencies of the Spaniard, and that makes wise men mad: let those that have power in other Kingdoms, be warned by this example.⁷¹

Meanwhile in England the political climate reached a new pitch of intensity. A few days after the conclusion of the Putney Debate, an intense propaganda campaign in favour of the Levellers' position spread through the streets of London, where numerous pamphlets were issued, inciting the population to rise up against tyranny: "there were Papers passed up in many Churches, and upon severall Gates and Ports throughout the City, inciting the People to rise as one Man, and free themselves from the Tyranny of their Taske-Master at *Westminster*".⁷²

Several assemblies were organised in taverns in the capital, as in the Mouth near Aldersgate and the Windmill near Coleman Street, places traditionally used by the Levellers as venues for their movement. A newsbook noted one of these meetings: "Thobias Box, (one of the Agitators of the army) going from the *Mouth* at *Alders-gate*, (where they had a meeting) at an unreasonable houre".⁷³ Leveller propaganda, however, had an especially strong hold among the ranks of London craftsmen. About 150 weavers gathered in the Mouth tavern at Aldersgate on 13/23 November 1647, as reported by William Haslope: "for it seems many speechs were made by some Persons of Quality to the Multitude ... but some were upon such Strains and Terms that in the Conclusion theis ensuing Persons deserted the Multitude". The letter reported the names, workplaces and professions of those present, even if the most significant account came from the words of an anonymous speaker in the assembly:

⁷¹ *Moderate Intelligencer*, no. 139 (11–18 November 1647), p. 1372 and unpaginated, 419.139/E.416(8).

⁷² *Mercurius Elencticus*, no. 3 (12–19 November 1647), p. 20, 312.03/E.416(13).

⁷³ *Perfect Weekly Account*, no. 46 (10–17 November 1647), unpag., 671.446/E.416(2).

"Gentlemen, The same Business we are upon is perfected in *Naples*; for if any Persons stand up for *Monarchie* there, he is immediately hanged at his Doore".⁷⁴ The revolution in Naples thus became an important element in the broader ideological battle that characterised the English Revolution, and an important example in the 'pamphlet wars' fought by the Levellers.⁷⁵

The physical proximity between the haunts of the English radicals and the *Moderate Intelligencer's* sites of production and sale can be better understood from a 1667 map (Figure 34.1). We may remark that the meeting place of the English Radicals (A) was located a short distance from St. Paul's Churchyard and the Royal Exchange (B), which were the country's main centres of production and dissemination of political information.⁷⁶ It was also very close to the workshop of the printer Robert White in Addle Hill (C), where the weekly was likely to have been printed and distributed.⁷⁷

Dillingham, by contrast, lived and worked in the Whitefriars district (D), outside the walls of the City.⁷⁸ Analysis of this data shows, therefore, an area of high information density, strongly characterised by multiple modes of communication.⁷⁹ It involved not only potential readers of the newsbook, who could buy a copy at a relatively low cost, but also those who listened to the news without spending a penny, as would have been the case of the participants in the meeting at Aldersgate.⁸⁰ This communication process therefore amplified

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- 74 The letter was published by Zachary Grey, *An Impartial Examination of the Fourth Volume of Mr. Daniel Neal's History of the Puritans* (London, 1739), Appendix, p. 130, cited in Hill, *Puritanism and Revolution*, p. 135.
- 75 Joseph Frank, *The Levellers. A History of the Writings of Three Seventeenth-Century Social Democrats: John Lilliburne, Richard Overton, William Walwyn* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1955); Howard Shaw, *The Levellers* (London: Prentice Hall Press, 1968); Rachel Foxley, *The Levellers: Radical Political Thought in the English Revolution* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013).
- 76 Walter Thornbury, ed. *Old and New London: A Narrative of its History, its People and its Places*, vol. 1 (London, Paris, New York: Cassell, Petter & Galpin, 1873), pp. 494–503; Peter W.M. Blayney, *The Bookshops in Paul's Cross Churchyard* (London: Bibliographical Society, 1990).
- 77 *Man in the Moon*, no. 26 (17–24 October 1649), p. 218, 248.26/E.575(32).
- 78 See the vivid description of the suburb by Thomas Babington Macaulay, *The History of England: From the Accession of James the Second*, ed. C.H. Firth, vol. 1 (London, 1913), pp. 355–6; Mary Bly, 'Playing the Tourist in Early Modern London: Selling the Liberties Onstage', *PMLA*, 122.1 (2007), pp. 61–71.
- 79 Robert Darnton, 'An Early Information Society: News and the Media in Eighteenth-Century Paris', *American Historical Review*, 105.1 (2000), pp. 1–35.
- 80 Adam Fox, *Oral and Literate Culture in England, 1500–1700* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 335–405.

FIGURE 34.1 *An Exact Surveye of the Street Lanes and Churches Contained within the Ruines of the City of London First Described in Six Plats by John Leake, Johne Lennings, William Marr, Will. Leyburn, Thomas Streete & Richard Shortgrove in December A^o 1666. By Order of the Lord Mayor Aldermen and Common Councell of the Said City PUBLISHED BY THE LONDON TOPOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY, LONDON, 1908–9. PLAN OF LONDON AFTER THE FIRE ENGRAVED BY WENCESLAS HOLLAR, 1667. MAPS COLLECTION UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER.*

the radius of reception for information regarding the Neapolitan revolution in the English public sphere.⁸¹

This type of analysis could also be applied to the study of the pictorial representation of the Neapolitan revolution.⁸² Commissioned by the

81 Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); Peter Lake and Steven Pincus, eds., *The Politics of the Public Sphere in Early Modern England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007). See also Massimo Rospocher, ed., *Beyond the Public Sphere: Opinions, Public, Spaces in Early Modern Europe* (Bologna, Berlin: Il Mulino / Duncker, 2011).

82 W.W. Roworth, 'The Evolution of History Painting: Masaniello's Revolt and Other Disasters in Seventeenth-Century Naples', *The Art Bulletin*, 75.2 (1993), pp. 219–34; C.R. Marshall, 'Cause di Stravaganze: Order and Anarchy in Domenico Gargiulo's Revolt of Masaniello', *The Art Bulletin*, 80.3 (1998), pp. 478–97.

FIGURE 34.2 *Micco Spadaro, Piazza del Mercato during the Revolt of Masaniello, Naples, Museum of San Martino*

PHOTO COURTESY OF SUPERINTENDENCY OF ARTISTIC AND HISTORICAL HERITAGE, NAPLES.

political leaders of the revolution,⁸³ Micco Spadaro's cityscapes underscore how the public space was rapidly occupied by the upsurging crowd (see Figure 34.2).

In another canvas (Figure 34.3), the artist focused on the beheading of Don Giuseppe Carafa. This murder had an extraordinary symbolic value, because it sanctioned a definitive division between the people and the nobility. Popular justice thus appropriated a ritual language that was borrowed from the executions that had always been a favoured means of repression by the nobility.⁸⁴ In addition to the ritual degradation of the body of the "traitor to the People", the painting reflects usefully on the communication process during the Neapolitan revolution. In fact, noticeable in the background is the figure of a man—one who may be identified *with*, if not actually *as* Masaniello—in the act of haranguing the crowd from a stage. The presence of this pulpit within a

83 Villari, *Elogio della dissimulazione*, p. 94.

84 Peter Burke, 'The Virgin of the Carmine and the Revolt of Masaniello', *Past and Present*, 99 (1983), p. 15.

FIGURE 34.3 Micco Spadaro, *Beheading of Don Giuseppe Carafa*. Naples, Museum of S. Martino

PHOTO COURTESY OF SUPERINTENDENCY OF ARTISTIC AND HISTORICAL HERITAGE-NAPLES.

square crowded with people prompts us to consider the orator's critical role in a society of the old regime, composed essentially of an illiterate population.⁸⁵

In particular moments of social disorder—for example, in the course of revolutionary uprising—the gap between the literate, semi-literate and illiterate narrowed. At the same time, this widespread political participation was not a merely momentary phenomenon; the collective political lessons learned in times of crisis were potentially permanent, as crowds were made aware for the first time of information previously accessible only to the political elite. The inability to read and write did not *a priori* exclude the masses from direct political interaction. Through the analysis of a number of chronicles, a recent study has, in fact, highlighted the widespread use of slogans that sometimes preceded the outbreak of insurgencies.⁸⁶

85 Christopher Hill, 'Censorship and English Literature', in *The Collected Essays of Christopher Hill*, vol. 1 (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1984), pp. 32–71.

86 Alain Hugon, *Naples insurgée, 1647–48. De l'événement à la mémoire* (Rennes: PU Rennes, 2011), pp. 124–8. For slogans see *Moderate Intelligencer*, no. 154 (24 February–2 March

The difficulty of establishing rigid barriers of communication between the different social strata was also demonstrated by another event: the posting of political placards inciting the people to rise up.⁸⁷ Their proliferation became so damaging to the maintenance of public order that two different *bandi* (ordinances) published in mid-September 1647—the first printed with the popular mark and signed by the 'Eletto del Popolo' (the people's elected representatives), Francesco Antonio Arpaia, and the second promulgated by the viceregal government and signed by the Viceroy the Duke of Arcos—prescribed severe penalties for the placard-posters and their accomplices.⁸⁸ The placards were the result of a broad propaganda campaign put in place by the different political factions inside the Neapolitan revolutionary front, such as the French party, whose centre of operations was the French Embassy in Rome; and the Roman party, gathered around the figure of Cardinal Filomarino.⁸⁹

Along with the expansion of the public sphere—which was by this time reaching socially marginalised sectors traditionally excluded from political debate—the revolution also produced a transformation in political language: witness a pamphlet, the *Cittadino Fedele* (the 'Faithful Citizen'), which argued for loyalty towards the country rather than the monarchy.⁹⁰

It may be useful to extend the concept of the 'short-term public sphere' on the basis of these considerations.⁹¹ This term has been employed in recent scholarship to describe the development of the mechanisms of communication taking place in Northern European countries, and which established early forms of constitutional government and durable "public spheres", what has recently been labelled an "open access order".⁹² In contrast, some scholars

1648), p. 1187, 419.154/E.430(11); *Moderate Intelligencer*, no. 156 (9–16 March 1648), p. 1211, 419.156/E.432(17).

87 Giraffi, *Le Rivoluzioni di Napoli*, p. 8. Most accounts refer to the placards.

88 *Cose appartenenti alla città di Napoli*, BL, C55.1.3, 4–5. For ordinances, see Vittoria Conti, *Le leggi di una rivoluzione. I bandi della Repubblica napoletana dall'ottobre 1647 all'aprile 1648* (Napoli: Jovene, 1983).

89 Michèle Benaïeau, 'Potere politico e informazione nel Seicento. Lineamenti di una ricerca', in *Filosofia storiografia letteratura. Studi in onore di Mario Agrimi*, ed. Bernardino Razzotti (Lanciano: Editrice Itinerari, 2001), pp. 575–98; Rosario Villari, 'Il cardinale, la rivoluzione e la fortuna di Machiavelli', in *Politica barocca: inquietudini, mutamento e prudenza* (Rome and Bari: Laterza, 2010), pp. 186–201.

90 Rosario Villari, *Per il Re o per la patria: la fedeltà nel Seicento, con "Il Cittadino Fedele" ed altri scritti politici* (Rome, Bari: Laterza, 1994).

91 Asa Briggs and Peter Burke, *A Social History of the Media: From Gutenberg to the Internet* (Cambridge: Polity, 2002).

92 See Jan De Vries's commentary in 'The Crisis of the Seventeenth Century: Interdisciplinary Perspectives', special issue of *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 40.2 (2009), pp. 300–1.

have extended this concept to the post-Counter-Reformation Mediterranean societies, traditionally characterised by a systematic repression of all forms of dissent through a widespread secular and ecclesiastical censorship.⁹³

During the Neapolitan revolution, there was an expansion of public debate, distinguishable by its intensity and urgency, which could be defined as a sort of 'emergency public sphere'. It was not dominated by instincts or fear, but fed on historical traditions, idealist aspirations and deep passions, leading to the construction of a new political identity, forged through collective participation in public debate.⁹⁴ Even in the kingdom of Naples, then, there was "an expansion of communication, towards a more rapid circulation of alternative cultural models, and, to the extent permitted by censorship, or through clandestine and unauthorised literature, the diffusion of critical ideas about the political system and social organisation".⁹⁵ Accounts of the Neapolitan revolution in the *Moderate Intelligencer* indirectly testify to the galvanisation of this communication process. From the last issue of December 1647 (no. 144) to the first in May 1648 (no. 163), which reported the surrender of Naples to Spanish forces, a dense flow of news flooded the pages of the *Moderate Intelligencer*.⁹⁶ Considering the nineteen issues published during this period, news of the Neapolitan revolution occupied an average of four pages per copy, in other

93 Ottavia Niccoli, *Rinascimento anticlericale: infamia, propaganda e satira in Italia tra Quattrocento e Cinquecento* (Rome and Bari: Laterza, 2006); Fernando Bouza, *Papeles y opinion. Políticas de publicación en el Siglo de Oro* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2008); James Amelang and Antonio Castillo Gomez, eds., *Opinión pública y espacio urbano en la Edad Moderna* (Gijón: Treo, 2010).

94 Vittorio Conti, *La rivoluzione repubblicana a Napoli e le strutture rappresentative, 1647–48* (Florence: Centro editoriale toscano, 1984); Salvo Mastellone, 'I repubblicani del Seicento e il modello politico olandese', *Il pensiero politico*, 28 (1985), pp. 145–63; P. Luigi Rovito, *Respublica dei Togati. Giuristi e società nella Napoli del Seicento* (Napoli: Jovene, 1982); Rovito, 'La rivoluzione costituzionale di Napoli (1647–48)', *Rivista Storica Italiana*, 98 (1986), pp. 367–462; Vittor Ivo Comparato, 'La repubblica napoletana del 1647/48: Partiti, idee, modelli politici', *Il pensiero politico*, 21 (1998), pp. 205–38; Comparato, 'From the Crisis of Civil Culture to the Neapolitan Republic of 1647: Republicanism in Italy between the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', in *Republicanism and Constitutionalism in Early Modern Europe*, vol. 1: *Republicanism: A Shared European Heritage*, ed. Quentin Skinner and Martin Van Gelderen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 169–93.

95 Benigno, *Specchi della rivoluzione*, p. 101.

96 Daniel Woolf, 'News, History and the Construction of Mid-Seventeenth-Century England', in *Politics of Information*, ed. Dooley and Baron, p. 83.

words almost a third of the entire publication. The Neapolitan people effectively became the protagonist of Dillingham's paper.⁹⁷

The difficulty in finding reliable information about Neapolitan events can be gathered from a report entitled *A Continuation of the Troubles of Naples*:

The juditious and Gentle Reader, will I presume vouchsafe us his pardon, if in this Relation he meet with somewhat he hath seen before, because it is now rectified, or enlarged more than before, upon a more certain Report then hath been hitherto made us, by a Person of good quality and credit, who was an Exact observer, and eye-witness thereof.⁹⁸

The same uncertainty expressed by the anonymous writer, derived from a series of conflicting reports, was apparent in a letter written by the agent of the British parliament in Paris, René Augier: "We had nothing from Naples this week, though our Gazett doth mention severall circumstances hitherto unknown to us".⁹⁹ In this case, the information obtained from Augier did not come from a direct informant, but was obtained from gazettes—probably the same French publications from which Dillingham drew liberally for the compilation of his weekly.

The conclusion of the Neapolitan revolution coincided with the beginning of the Second Civil War in England and the Fronde in France. In June 1648 John Dillingham broke with his printer Robert White, who produced a new weekly with the complicity of the licenser Gilbert Mabbott: the *Moderate*, the house organ of the Leveller movement.¹⁰⁰ The clash between the author and his former printer, for the rights to the title *Moderate Intelligencer* perhaps testifies to White and Mabbott's desire to take control of a publication that had in previous months been the principal instrument circulating the story of the Neapolitan revolution in the British Isles.¹⁰¹ Most likely they aimed at using the news of European revolutions alongside English radical propaganda, thus creating a "circulation of the experience of insurrection and suggesting a unity of

97 *Moderate Intelligencer*, no. 147 (6–13 January 1648), p. 1104, 419.147/E.422(30).

98 *Moderate Intelligencer*, no. 153 (17–24 February 1648), p. 1174, 419.153/E.429(1).

99 Loïc Bienassis, 'The Diplomatic Career of Rene Augier', *Proceedings of the Huguenot Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 28.2 (2004), pp. 199–211; BL, Add MS 4200, fo. 63r. Rene Augier to Giles Green, Paris, 12/22 January 1647/8.

100 Brailsford, *Levellers and the English Revolution*, pp. 401–16; Roger Howell Jr. and David E. Brewster, 'Reconsidering the Levellers: The Evidence of the *Moderate*', *Past and Present*, 46 (1970), pp. 68–86.

101 Manwaring, 'Journalism in the Days of the Commonwealth', pp. 114–16.

class conflicts in a diversity of locations”.¹⁰² In conclusion, the revolutionary crisis of the mid-seventeenth century testified to “a process of expansion and interconnection of national public spheres linked to processes of ideological radicalisation together with the rejection of a certain way of governing through absolute power”.¹⁰³

102 Peter Linebaugh and Markus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (London: Verso, 2000), p. 215.

103 Benigno, *Specchi della rivoluzione*, pp. 289–90.