

In 1820 constitutionalist uprisings challenged absolute monarchies in Spain, Portugal, and Naples, and in Sardinia–Piedmont as well. The European wave of revolutions of the 1820s played a significant role in the origin of modern world. In the Two Sicilies, the National Parliament of 1820-21 became a central institution of the nation's public life, by activating processes of politicization, public discussion and public opinion formation. Hundreds of petitions, written by citizens and local institutions from every remote corner of the kingdom, were addressed to the Parliament, recognized as a most important agent of political power.

Petitions represent a privileged point of view to reconstruct the concepts and practices of political participation, identity and expectations of several thousand citizens. The purpose of this research is to focus on the processes of modernization, mechanisms of popular participation and citizenship, diffusion of liberal democratic values that took place early in Southern Italy during the revolution of 1820-21.