

Poster English tour

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Poster for an English ballad entitled “The World Turn’d Up-fide-Down, A new song”.

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Date 1760 c

Medium and Support ink, paper

Measurements 37,6 x 12,1 cm



Historical context

The poster craze spread to English-speaking countries between the 16th and 19th centuries. Printed on one side of a sheet of coarse paper, these broadsides contributed to the popularity of traditional ballads in England, Ireland and the English colonies of North America.

This poster was printed in England around 1760, according to the British Library catalog. In it, a simple man expresses his unhappiness at seeing the gentlemen, farmers, bakers and millers of his day cheat to enrich themselves at the expense of their fellow citizens. They are but slaves to Beelzebub, Prince of the Underworld. He laments that the world has really turned upside down, hence the title of his lament, *The World Turn'd Upside-Down, A New Song*, and the illustration at the top.

Another ballad published in the mid-1640s uses the same title. It denounces the policies of the English Parliament, which eliminated the festivities surrounding Christmas and made it a sober, strictly religious holiday. The texts of the two ballads bear no resemblance to each other.