"Ye Tories round the nation": An Analysis of Markers of Interactive-involved Discourse in Seventeenth Century Political Broadside Ballads

Elisabetta Cecconi, University of Florence

Abstract

The period of the English Civil War saw an exponential increase in the number of political broadsides. In a time when the printed word acted as a powerful weapon in the hands of the opposing forces, the balladeer constructed his propaganda exploiting the involving potential of the written-spoken genre. In this paper I shall investigate markers of interactive-involved discourse in Royalist broadsides and highlight their strategic function as builders and bearers of ideological consensus within a heterogeneous cross-section of English society. I shall also consider the direct reporting of other characters' speeches, showing how the authorial authenticity of their idiom reinforced the validity of the author's political claim. The analysis will show that some of the propagandistic principles of modern journalism were already at work in the ideologically-oriented discourse of seventeenth-century cheap-print.

1. Introduction

In the mid-seventeenth century the broadside ballad was an important source of political news and social comment. In a time when the printed word acted as a powerful weapon in the hands of Roundheads and Cavaliers, the ballad-author was primarily interested in charging his news discourse with a clear ideological message. This was possible thanks to the personal voice of the I-narrator, who relied upon an oral mode of discourse and on the reporting of characters' speeches in order to inform, persuade and entertain his audience/readership.[1]

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[1] The presence of a personal, narrative voice in ballads may be traced back to the XV and XVI century, when the late medieval minstrels filled their songs with professional tricks and ear-catching patterns (i.e. the personalization of the message through the explicit reference to the speaker's communicative function, forms of address, requests for attention, colloquialism) (see Bold 1979: 26,

The aim of my paper is to examine features of orality—in Biber's terms markers of *interactive-involved* discourse (1988)—in mid-seventeenth century Royalist broadsides and show how they are deliberately exploited as means for constructing an ideology of consensus. As Fowler argues, commenting on the relationship between ideology and media-work, "only an interpersonal mode of discourse can create that illusion of familiarity and friendliness with the audience which is crucial to the construction of ideological agreement around a set of institutional values" (1991:57). Bearing this in mind, I shall investigate *to what extent* and *how* the proto-editorial style of ballads is placed at the service of the propagandistic purposes of the Royalist author.

On account of the embedded structure of broadsides, a distinction will be drawn between the functional use of orality at the I-narrator—audience discourse level and that at the character—character discourse level. Indeed, even the author's habit of giving voice to particular personages responds to a precise socio-political and argumentative design. In the second part of my inquiry I shall consider why only certain characters are authorized to speak and how the authorial authenticity inherent in the direct report of their spoken idiom reinforces the validity of the author's political claim. Attention will also be given to the way in which the spoken discourse of political figures provides an insight into their moral rectitude, thus prompting people's sense of membership with them and eventually biasing their ideological interpretation of the events.

The samples of ballads selected for analysis are taken from the *Bodleian Allegro Catalogue* and are dated from 1640 to 1660.[2] The two decades cover a very dramatic period in the history of the English

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Würzbach 1990). A case in point are XV and XVI century Robin Hood ballads, which, according to Fowler, determined a stylistic precedent for the development of the XVII and XVIII century popular broadsides (Fowler 1968: 65).

[2] The *Bodleian Allegro Catalogue* went on line in 2004. The collection contains over 30,000 ballads ranging from the 16th to the 20th century. The catalogue can be consulted at the following website: http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/ballads/ballads.htm

monarchy, from Charles I's campaign against Scotland (1639-1640) to the Civil War (1642), from the Constitution of the Rump Parliament (1649) to the Restoration of the monarchy (1660). The present qualitative study focuses on 10 out of 32 samples of political broadsides recorded in the *Allegro Catalogue* for the period 1640-1660. Altogether the corpus formed by these 10 texts comprises about 6975 words.[3]

2. Ballads: an oral tradition

As popular songs intended to be sung in domestic and public environments, ballads boast a long tradition of oral delivery. They were sung/told at homes when the family sat around the fireplace or in ale-houses and taverns where people enjoyed intoning merry tunes. The high degree of colloquialism and structural convention characterising the genre facilitated its spoken delivery as well as its mnemonic retention. Though crucial, however, transmission by word of mouth would not have been sufficient to ensure the development of the genre without it being combined with the powerful impact of the printed word. It was in fact thanks to the wide, written circulation of broadside ballads from the 16th century onwards that print managed "to reinvigorate a spoken genre which was in danger of disappearing" (Fox, 2000:9).

Broadside ballads were songs printed on one side of a single sheet of paper and sold for about a penny in Britain between the sixteenth and seventeenth century (see Capp, 1985; Würzbach, 1990; Watt, 1991; Fox, 2000; McKean, 2003; Green and Bennett, 2004). Ballads were stuck up on the walls in alehouses and private homes so that passers-by could stop

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[3] The Royalist sponsorship of ballads, together with the resurgence of popular support for Charles after the end of the first civil war in 1646 explain why most of the surviving broadsides are Royalist in stance. It is worth pointing out, however, that, because of the strict censorship against any form of Royalist propaganda in the period of the Cromwellian Republic, Royalist broadsides are not homogeneously distributed throughout the decades. The majority of samples occur in the years following Cromwell's death in 1658, when censorship ceased and the ballad production flourished again with renewed vigour (Würzbach 1990: 25).

and take a look at them. Though illiteracy was still widespread throughout the country, the seventeenth century registered an increase in the number of people who could read. Furthermore, even non-readers were used to buying broadsides and other forms of cheap print in the expectation of finding a skilled person who could read them out for them. Finally, everyone, children included, had access to broadside ballads al least in their oral form when they were sung aloud in squares and market-places (see Watt, 1991: 1-8 *passim*).

Vital importance in the distribution of broadsides was ascribed to the ballad-singer and seller. Capp (1985:200) reports that in 1641 there were said to be almost three hundred ballad-sellers working in the English capital, standing at streets and corners, market places, on benches and barrels to attract passers-by. The fact that they did sing confirms that the ballad was primarily a performance and not merely a printed text to be sold and read detached from its tune. Oral-delivery thus remained an indispensable part of the ballad-man's trade, necessary for attracting the customers and getting them hooked by the story. Fox (2000) notices how many printed ballads began with an opening refrain which demonstrated their purpose of being read or sung aloud: "Now for your credit list to me" (*Britaines Honour,* 1640); "If none be offended with the Sent…Ile be content to sing of the Rump of a Parliament" (*Resurrection of the Rump, or, Rebellion and Tyranny revived,* 1659). The ballad author was deeply aware of the context of performance and sale at the time of writing. Since he was paid once, in a lump sum, "it was in his interests, if he wanted further commissions from the printer, to ensure sales by bolstering up the function of the singer as a salesman and producing a performer-friendly text" (Würzbach, 1990: 27).
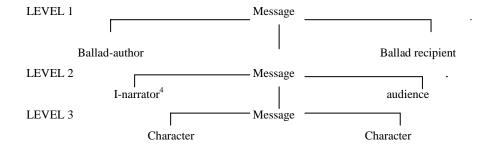
As a form of popular literature, broadside ballads generally dealt with popular themes such as love, cuckolded husbands, betrayal, legendary heroes and natural wonders. This however does not mean that more socially-committed topics were excluded. My research in the *Allegro Catalogue* provides evidence of the extent to which the enormous diffusion of cheap print turned broadsides into an effective vehicle for religious and political propaganda too.

On account of censorship and of the ordinary reader's lack of awareness of the higher levels of political governance, committed-ballads usually avoided complex issues in order to focus on the personal drama of common people disappointed with contemporary

misgovernment, important political personages or key-figures in a battle. The balladeer reported the characters' direct speech in order to highlight the dramatic impact and foster the audience's emotional involvement in the story narrated.

The period of the Civil War and the Interregnum gave greater scope for political and polemical ballads. The Restoration of the Rump Parliament and its misgovernment in 1659-1660 contributed to the diffusion of a high number of satirical political ballads imbued with vulgar humour.

3. Discourse levels and structure in seventeenth century political broadsides

My analysis of spoken discourse—intended in its broadest meaning of words uttered by someone in speech—articulates along the multiple discourse levels of broadsides. The diagram below attempts to capture the embedded structure of printed ballads:

LEVEL 1   Message

Ballad-author   Ballad recipient

LEVEL 2   Message

      I-narrator[4]   audience

LEVEL 3   Message

            Character   Character

At level 1, the ballad-author is the empirical person who writes the broadside as a text supposed to be read across time. At level 2, the entire body of the ballad is considered as a communicative act in its own right

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[4] Würzbach (1990) uses the term "presenter" to refer to the speaking voice in the ballad text.

performed by the I-narrator and addressed to the audience who shares the *hic et nunc* of the telling.[5] Finally level 3 regards the characters' speech as it is embedded in the narrator's discourse.

On account of the multiple levels involved in ballads, I have identified three main types of discourse structure, running from a minimum to a maximum of narratorial presence. The 10 texts selected for analysis will be distributed along the categories and illustrated in the remainder of the paper.

A) *Minimum or No Narratorial Intervention*—broadsides where the characters' imaginary dialogue is almost entirely dramatized. Examples of this kind are found in the political ballads *The Cavaleers Complaint* (1660) and *A Dialogue Betwixt Tom and Dick* (1660). In the former text stanzas are distributed along two columns, one reporting the Cavaleer's complaint, the other reporting his friend's answer. In the latter, each stanza presents an unmediated alternation of Tom's and Dick's speech contributions.

B) *Narratorial Intervention*—broadsides where the characters' speech is embedded in the narrative. Two famous broadsides belong to this category. One is *Britaines Honour* (1640) where the I-narrator relates the fictional story of two Welshmen who fought against fifteen thousand Scots, zooming in on the two characters' direct speech. The other one is the ballad about King Charles's execution (*'he Manner of the Kings Tryal at Westminister…* 1649-1680) where the I-narrator introduces, reports and comments on the monarch's speech during the trial.

C) *Maximum of Narratorial Presence*—broadsides presenting the I-narrator's long speech to the audience with minimum or no reporting of other characters' speech. The category comprises a conspicuous number of satirical ballads against the Rump Parliament (*Rumpatur,* 1659; *The Resurrection of the Rump,* 1659; *Rump Roughly yet Righteously handled,* 1660; *A Pack of Hell-hounds,* 1660), as well as enthusiastic broadsides celebrating the victories of the Royal army (*Good Newes from the North,* 1640) or welcoming the Restoration of the king (*King Charles the Seconds Restoration,* 1660).

Before proceeding to an in-depth analysis of specific broadside samples for each category, I intend to provide an overview of the orality markers

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[5] Levels 1 and 2 are often conflated.

in 17th century political broadsides, focusing on their discourse distribution and ideological function.[6]

3.1. Discourse framing in seventeenth century political ballads

Most of the broadsides present a set of rather conventional lines introducing and concluding the main body of the text. In each ballad the opening frame is intended to establish a communicative, interpersonal contact with the audience. The narrator attempts to catch the hearers'/readers' attention through a set of linguistic devices which Douglas Biber associates with the interactive-involved discourse common to spoken language. In his pioneering work of 1988, *Variation across Speech and Writing,* Biber accounts for the two modes of discourse applying a set of 'dimensions', which represent the communicative process. One of the six dimensions discussed by the linguist is the 'informational versus involved production' which enables us to determine to what extent the communicator's main purpose is informational or interactive and involved. The general idea is that a text that presents a high percentage of informational linguistic features will be closer to writing, while a text which presents a majority of interactive-involved elements will approximate the oral style. The point is particularly relevant to an analysis of seventeenth century broadsides.[7] As written songs deeply bound to the situation of oral delivery, ballads share many features of the oral discourse and as such they provide an interesting example of the seventeenth century infusion of written word

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[6] In the present study I have concentrated on a qualitative analysis in that, given the limited size of my corpus, a quantitative analysis could not be considered sufficiently representative.

[7] Biber's model for the analysis of written/spoken language has been extremely influential in the field of historical pragmatics and has fostered a set of excellent studies (see Atkinson 1992, Biber & Finegan 1992, Meurman-Solin 1993, Taavitsainen 1993, 1997, Suhr 2002, Brownlees 2005). The present paper places itself within the emerging literature on historical spoken/written texts and shows how Biber's model (1988) can be equally relevant to an analysis of seventeenth century broadsides.

and spoken idiom. In Royalist ballads, markers of interactive-involved discourse include: address terms ('Sir', 'Christian people', 'My friends'), especially the 2nd person pronouns ('you', and the seventeenth century variations 'ye', 'thou', 'thee') combined with the narrator's own self-referential pronominal usage *I/my*, temporal and spatial deixis ('now', 'today', 'then'; 'here', 'there'), the imperative construction, WH-questions, exclamations ('Oh', 'Alas', 'Hail', 'Ah'), abbreviations (the seventeenth century ''twas', ''twere', 'I'le', 'ne're') and the use of the inclusive *we/us* so as to create a sense of ideological bonding with the audience.[8]

> **All you**[9] who wish prosperity,
> to **our** King and Country
> and their confusion which false hearted be,
> **Here** is some news (to chear **your** hearts)
> lately from the Northern parts
> of brave exployts perform'd with courage free (*Good Newes from the North,* 1640)
>
> **Ye Tories** round the nation
> Of every birth and station,
> The glorious day is coming on
> King Charles's Restoration... (King Charles the Seconds Restoration, 1660)
>
> **You that are opprest**
> With the Viperous Nest
> Of Hell-hounds near WARRINGTON
> **Do but listen a while**
> And with all their guile,
> **I'le** discover them everyone (*A Pack of Hell Hounds,* 1660)

The occurrence of this sort of *quasi-conversational style* in the opening frame enables the I-narrator to construct an illusion of familiarity and friendliness with an audience sympathetic to the king. His oral mode of discourse, in fact, acts as a strategic device through which he manages to

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[8] For studies on orality in Early Modern England see Biber and Finegan (1992), Taavitsainen (1995), Kryk-Kastovsky (2000), Culpeper and Kytö (2000a), Culpeper and Kytö (2000b), Brownlees (2005).
[9] In this and other quotations the bold type is my own and not found in the original document.

create *consensus* around a set of shared values which sanction the Supreme authority of the monarchy.[10]

Consensus is a key term in critical linguistics as it is documented in the work of the influential linguist Roger Fowler (1991). The critic argues that in modern media institutionalised concepts are subliminally conveyed through an oral style which assumes solidarity, friendliness and common ground between writer and reader. The writer skilfully exploits the illusion of cooperation and agreement with his readership in order to shape reality on the basis of institutional values which are presented as commonly accepted and taken for granted. On articulating the ideology of consensus, the Press guarantees ideological affinity between government and individual readers. The transposition of the notion of consensus in the context of seventeenth century political broadsides helps our understanding of the way in which the spoken mode assumes reciprocity between producer and reader thus fostering agreement on a range of consumer-oriented values. This function of orality is crucial in the politically volatile climate before and after the Civil War. Royalist ballad-authors—especially in the years preceding the Restoration—feel the need to establish a consensus which "assumes, even *affirms* that within their group there is no difference or disunity [in the interests and values of the nation]" (Fowler, 1991: 50).

In a similar fashion, the oral style of the closing formula is intended to re-establish the narrator-hearer interpersonal relationship and to re-state their commonly held view of the world:

> And thus **I'le** conclude
> With this impious brood,
> OF CERBERUS that cursed Tyke:
> **Doe but set** the Rump aside
> And if HELL were tryde,
> **I** think **you** can scarce find the like (*A Pack of Hell Hounds,* 1660)

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[10] In the ballad, the form of address ("All you who wish prosperity to our King and Country") is topic-related in the sense that it establishes a direct link between the political topic and the royalist section of the public which the ballad is meant to affect. Other ballads have similar address formula: "Ye Tories round the nation" (*King Charles the Seconds Restoration* 1660); "You that are opprest with the Viperous Nest" (*A Pack of Hell-hounds* 1660).

> **Now churchmen of each station**
> **Pray** that **this** British nation,
> By canters ne'er be overcome,
> The love of feuds and factions (*King Charles the Seconds Restoration,* 1660)

In some political ballads one finds the narrator not only addressing the audience but also establishing a dialogic relationship with them. This exchange is generally achieved through 'procatalepsis': a rhetorical strategy which consisted of the speaker anticipating and answering the hearers' possible objections to his claims. This form of animadversion was particularly frequent in political pamphlets as its powerful rhetorical effects helped the author make his argumentation more convincing in the readers' eyes (see Brownlees, 2006: 23). Though less articulated than in pamphlets, the occurrence of procatalepsis in political broadsides suggests that the dialectical, argumentative strategy was generally recognized as an effective means to convince and persuade common people. The presentation of ideas through dialogic interaction had in fact the merit of satisfying the audience's preference for dramatization and of facilitating their understanding of the political message. Let us consider a couple of examples.

In a satirical ballad against the Rump, the narrator ironically praises the qualities of Parliament by roughly playing with the double meaning of the word *rump*.

> There's scarce a Lady to be found
> that loves either Pear or Plum
> One halfe so well, if she be found,
> as tabering at her B---,
> It may be, **you'l say**, I'm wide of the Case,
> Since that Musick's made in a distant place:
> **I answer**, the bredth of your Thum (*Rumpatur,* 1659)

The term 'rump' commonly denotes the back end of an animal, though here the narrator plays with the association between 'rump' and a lady's *bum* (as can be inferred from the initial of the omitted word which should rhyme with 'plum'). In the stanza procatalepsis enables the narrator to articulate his humorous joke, by allowing him the last turn thereby completing the mockery. The opponent's view is introduced by the

reporting tag 'you'l say' while the I-narrator's rebuttal is overtly signalled by the predicate 'I answer'.

In another political ballad praising the courage of two Welshmen during Charles I's campaign against Scotland, the I-narrator reports—in the indirect/distancing mode—dissonant voices in an attempt to deny their value and finally re-state his original ideological claim. The speaking voice condemns the English people's general reluctance to support their king during the war (Coward, 1994:180) and celebrates the military heroism of the Welshmen as an example of loyalty that should be followed.

> **Now some may say** (I doe confess it)
> That all such desperate attempts
> Spring only from foole hardinesse; yet
> Who ever this rare deed exempts,
> From valour true,
> (if him I knew)
> **I would tell him** (and 'twere but due)
> Such men our Soveraigne hath too few (*Britaines Honour,* 1640)

What cannot have escaped notice is the frequency of orality features present in the quoted ballads: apart from the *I/you* pronouns, consider the use of abbreviations ('perform'd', ''twere', 'ne're', 'I'le', 'you'l') and the parenthetic comment. Parenthesis is recognised as characteristic of oral discourse in that "its paratactic possibilities suit the spontaneous nature of spoken language where speakers tend to add on ideas to whatever they happen to be saying at that particular moment" (Brownlees, 2005:74). Moreover, the parenthetic construction fits the ballad's metrical constraints as it allows the writer to put less structured information into brackets, instead of adding more lines which would subvert the musical and metrical pattern of the song.

4. Spoken discourse in 17th century political ballads

Now I intend to focus on the forms and functions of spoken discourse in a specific set of broadsides belonging to category A, B and C (see 3.). The analysis will show how the three categories rely on a stock of orality features, including proverbs, catch-words, idioms and colloquial

expressions, in order to give voice to people's mood and create public consensus.

4.1. Category A: broadsides with no narratorial intervention

I have selected for analysis the ballad *A Dialogue Betwixt Tom and Dick* (1660) which is explicative of the persuasive import of dramatization in propagandistic discourse. The structural organization of the text presents an alternation of Tom's and Dick's voice followed by a chorus. Unlike what happens in other Cavalier broadsides (e.g. *The Cavaleers Complaint* 1660), in the text the characters are not identified as belonging to a specific political party but as representatives of the two main sections of society: respectively, countrymen and citizens. This social, rather than political characterisation is interesting from an ideological point of view, as it assumes that by 1660 people's scorn of the Rump was not just a matter of political orientation but a common, revolutionary feeling shared by the nation.[11]

In order to assume and construct public consensus around the Restoration of the king, the balladeer makes a conspicuous use of spoken idiom which makes people—both countrymen and citizens—feel as one. Although orality markers are a predictable feature of the ballad genre, polemical broadsides of category A and C often emphasise non-standard features of the oral style as a strategic means to enhance the sociolinguistic and ideological bond between ballad author and ballad recipient.[12] Below is an example of the way in which spoken idiom contributes to the audience's acceptance of the political message embedded in the two characters' complaints.

 Tom. ____Why *Richard*, 'tis a *Devilish thing*,

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[11] It is worth pointing out that, although the broadside *A Dialogue Betwixt Tom and Dick* seeks to establish a sense of community which goes beyond political alignment, Restoration England remained ideologically and politically divided (see Jenner 2002:110).

[12] In the present study the term non-standard refers to forms that are socially or emotionally marked (see Culpeper and Kytö 1999).

We're not left worth a groate.
My *Doll* has *sold* her *wedding-ring*,
And *Su* has *pawnd* her *Goate*
The **Sniv'ling Rogues** abus'd our *Squire*,
And calld our *Mistris* **Whore**.
Dick. Yet—*If GEORGE don't what we desire, }* chorus
Ne're trust Good-fellow more.

Tom.---By this good day; I did but *speak;*
They tooke my Py-Bali'd Mare,
And put the Carrion Wench to th' Squeak:
(Things goe against the Hair)
Our Prick-ear'd Cor'nel looks as bigg
Still as he did before
Dick. And ***yet if GEORGE dont bumme his Gigg***, *}* chorus
Ne're trust Good fellow more

The exemplary stories of Tom and Dick—Tom was robbed of his mare, his wife had to sell her wedding ring—mirror the miserable condition in which people live under the republican government. Their direct speech is characterised by colloquial idiom (e.g. 'put the Carrion Wench to th' Squeak', 'things goe against the Hair', 'if George don't bumme his Gigg, 'damned', 'snivling rogues' 'whore') and a number of concrete words related to people's every-day life ('Doll', Mistris, 'Py-bali'd Mare', 'Goate', 'Gigg' 'Squire') which create common ground with the audience. The use of the first name to refer to George Monck is also worthy of consideration.[13] By assuming a mock-intimacy between the political figure and the characters, the ballad-author engineers a humanizing/familiarising process by which Monck is conceptualised as an old acquaintance capable of meeting people's expectations.

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[13] General George Monck engineered the king's restoration in 1660. He was often represented as a hero in the guise of St. George rescuing England from the cruel Republican dragon.

4.2 Category B: broadsides with narratorial intervention

Following a chronological order, I shall start with a closer examination of the broadside *Britaines Honour in the two Valiant Welchmen who fought against fifteenthousand Scots* (1640).[14] Despite the union of the English and Scottish crowns in 1603, the Scots repeatedly showed their intolerance of the Caroline government. Accused of being traitors of the king, they soon became one of the main targets of Royalist vexation in broadsides. The English campaign against the Scots in 1639-1640 represented one of the most significant mistakes in the history of Charles's personal rule. His attempt to impose uniformity of worship on Scotland—a country with a very different religious situation—led to a war against the Scots which, as the ballad suggests, did not find great support in England. Welshmen, on the other hand, backed up Charles's politics and the Royalist authors celebrated them for their loyalty.

Since the broadside presents *narratorial intervention,* in my analysis of the spoken mode I shall distinguish between I-narrator-audience and character-character discourse level. As usual the opening frame is dedicated to the I-narrator's appeal to the audience:

> *I-narrator – audience discourse level*
> **You noble Brittaines bold and hardy,**
> That [sic] are **deriv'd** from Brute,
> Who were in battell **ne're** found [sic] dy,
> But still will fight for **your** repute:
> **'gainst** any **hee**,
> What **e'r a'be**
> **Now** for **your** credit **list to me**
> Two Welchmens valour **you** shall see (*Britaines Honour,* 1640)

The I-narrator's *conversational style* attempts to arouse the public's interest in the ballad by inviting the audience to identify with the courageous and heroic characters of the text. Operating on an

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[14] The ballad was written by the prolific composer Martin Parker who issued several songs exhorting listeners to take up arms against the invading Scots, such as *A True Subjetcs Wish for the happy Successe of our Royal Army* (1640) or *News from New-castle* (1640).

emotional/attitudinal basis, this advertising technique for promoting sales anticipates persuasive features of modern journalism and advertising.[15] The initial complex nominal address form "You noble Brittaines bold and hardy" acts as a sort of *captatio benevolentiae* aimed at reminding people of their honourable reputation as restless fighters. The foregrounding of the 'Britaines'' historical valour establishes a sense of national identity and comradeship, which continues in the next lines. Here, abbreviations ('deriv'd', 'ne're', ''gainst', 'e'r', 'a'be'), 2nd person pronouns ('you', 'your') and the imperative construction ('list to me') contribute to the reader/hearer's emotional and patriotic involvement in the event which is going to be told.

During the telling, the narrator reports the two Welshmen's speech so as to promote their psychological foregrounding. His choice of giving voice to the 'Britaines', whereas the Scots are represented as lacking an individual voice of their own is purely ideological. Through the dramatization of their discourse the two characters are, in fact, perceived as living *persona*e. Their spoken word assumes a communicative potential which has the effect of shaking English people out of their torpor and urging them to courageous action for the Royal cause. What is more, the direct reporting of the characters' voice highlights their rectitude and valour in a way that neither 3rd person narration, nor indirect speech can do. The ballad construction reveals to what extent the narrator relies on the popular appreciation of the dramatic mode in order to foster the audience's ideological closeness to the Welshmen.

Character—character discourse level

> [...] one to another thus did say,
> Report hereafter shall not shame us,
> **Let Welchmen scorne to runne away;**
> **Now** for **our** king
> **Lets doe a thing**
> Whereof the word shall loudly ring
> Unto the grace of **our** offspring

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[15] For an analysis of the persuasive function of the emotional/attitudinal dimension in modern news discourse, see van Dijk (1988).

> The vaunting Scot shall know what valour,
> Doth in a Britains brest reside:
> They shall not bring **us** any doleur,
> But first **wee'll** tame some of their pride. (*Britaines Honour,* 1640)

Apart from instances of the exhortative construction with *let* suggesting comradeship between the two heroes, it is interesting to notice the repetition of the in-group markers *us/our* as opposed to *they* (Scots). At the character-character discourse level, the *we*-pronouns refer to the Welshmen but in the economy of the whole ballad—intended as the I-narrator's message to the audience—the same pronouns may be said to stimulate the English identification with the Welshmen as Britaines and to enhance their hostility against the rebels.

In a moment of strong political and religious tension even the Scots' silence becomes meaningful from an ideological point of view. Being deprived of their voice and thus of their individuality, the Scots are objectified and labelled as opposing, aberrant *others* (*they-their*) representing "the antitype of the English nation" (Porter, 1999:362). This confirms to what extent the author's choice of reporting or *non*-reporting the characters' speech responds to a precise political and ideological design.

It is not easy to assess how Stuart people reacted to the improbable report of the fight between two Welshmen and fifteen thousand Scots but, judging on what contemporaries said, the seventeenth century audience appeared to be highly receptive towards whatever was presented as news: 'little books widely disseminated are like bait for the masses. The average person being attracted to whatever is new, takes them so much to heart that it is therefore impossible to eredicate the impression they make" (Soman, 1976:442).

The next ballad I wish to examine is *'he Manner of the Kings Tryal at Westminister-Hall* (1649-1680). The broadside narrates the trial and execution of king Charles in January 1649. The strong opposition existing between royal and parliamentary authority after 1640—along with the people's growing dissatisfaction with the king's policy—led to the outbreak of the Civil War in 1642. The results of the war were uncertain until Cromwell's leadership prevails and king Charles was defeated and executed after a hasty and unjust trial.

As seen in *Britaines Honour,* the characters' direct speech is embedded in the narrator's telling. This kind of discourse structure

enables the author to construct his ideological argumentation exploiting the assumption of authorial authenticity inherent in the direct reporting of the king's, the solicitor's and the President's speech during the trial. In the first part of the ballad the narrator aims at denouncing the illegitimate authority of the Court of Justice and at disguising its cunning stratagems to incriminate the monarch. In the second part, Charles I's loyalty to his country emerges through the direct report of his last moving speech to his subjects and to God.

First, I shall analyse features of orality at the I-narrator-audience discourse level. Although the narrator's first stanzas are quite informative, as they are intended to provide the contextual framework to the reported speech of the jury and of the king, they still preserve markers of spoken discourse in the forms of exclamatory items, contractions and alternation of *I/you/we* pronouns.

> *I-narrator-audience discourse level*
> King Charles was once a Prince of a greate State
> But yet he dy'd a death unfortunate
> **Oh**, he is gone, and now hath left **us** here
> And **God doth knows** what courses **we** shall steer
>
> Now **my** sad story to **you I'le** relate [...] (*'he Manner of the Kings Tryal,* 1649-1680)

The exclamation 'Oh' and the idiomatic expression 'God doth knows' reveal the narrator's strong, emotional involvement in the king's tragic destiny. While the *my/you* pronouns contribute to the construction of the communicative, interpersonal contact with the audience, the repetition of the inclusive *we/us* denounces its closeness. The narrator assumes common ground with his addressees, implying that they both share the same feeling of desperation after the loss of their king. The use of the in-group marker *we* creates an ideological consensus around the political figure of Charles I, which aims at invalidating the value and authority of any anti-royalist positioning.

What follows is a verbal reporting of the Court's and of the king's speech. The spoken discourse of each character is overtly signalled by subtitles: The Kings Charge—The Kings Answer to the Charge—The Kings Speech upon the Scaffold and by additional reporting tags. Again one needs to point out that since the context is highly formal, and both the king and the solicitor Cook are two figures of authority, their voices generally reflect the conventions of standard written English. Even so,

instances of the spoken mode are found in the use of address terms, parenthesis and a few colloquialisms.

I shall start with an analysis of address terms. The Court addresses the monarch through an alternation of *you* and the contextually improper *thou* pronoun, which, in the seventeenth century is either used for addressing lower social ranks or for expressing temporary feelings of either distance or proximity.[16]

> *Character-character discourse level*
> Then by the Clerk his Sentence there was read
> Saying **Charles Stuart thou** shalt loose **thy** head
> For murther, treason, and for tyranny,
> And to the Land a publique enemy (*'he Manner of the Kings Tryal,* 1649-1680)

The *thou* selection may be interpreted either as indicative of the prosecution's strategic denial of the King's superior authority or as a marker of strong contempt of his conduct.

In the trial proceedings published in 1650 and entitled *King Charls His Tryal at the High Court of Justice Sitting in Westminster Hall* (the Second edition, Much Enlarged, and Faithfully Corrected) the king is addressed by the un-marked *you* pronoun and never through *thou.*[17] All the same, several similarities between the ballad's rendering of the trial and the published record suggest that the ballad-author has in all probability read the original account. This being the case, we may ask why he has attributed to the court the marked *thou* pronoun selection without there being evidence of it in the real trial. It may be claimed that part of his intention is to exaggerate the Court's improper address behaviour towards the king in order to denounce the solicitor's vile deligitimization of the monarchy.

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[16] For studies on the use of *you/thou* pronouns, see Bruti (2000), Kryk-Kastovsky (2000), Mazzon (2002) and, more recently, the book by T. Walker (2007), Thou *and* You *in Early Modern English Dialogues: Trials, Depositions and Drama Comedy*.

[17] *King Charls His Tryal at the High Court of Justice* (The Second Edition, Much Enlarged and Faithfully Corrected. London, printed by J. M. For Peter Cole, Francis Tyton, and John Playford, 1650) is taken from *EEBO* (*Early English Books Online, 1473-1700*): http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home.

In the ballad the lines "Charles Stuart thou shall lose thy head/For murther, treason, and for tyranny/and to the Land a publique enemy/" appear as a transposition of the original sentence read to the king and reported in the proceedings: "For all which Treasons and Crimes this Court doth adjudge, That the said Charls Stuart, as a Tyrant, Traytor , Murtherer and a publike Enemy; shall be put to death…" (*King Charls His Tryal at the High Court of Justice,* 1650: 47). Interestingly, however, while in the record Charles is referred to in the third person, in the ballad the author deliberately rephrases the sentence in the direct I/you mode so as to dramatize the moment and enhance its emotional impact on the audience. Both the record and the ballad rendition show that at the end of the trial the king is totally deprived of his title and Royal status. His process of deligitimization however began much earlier when—at the onset of the trial—the Court addressed him as "Sir".[18] Compare the occurrence of the improper honorific in the broadside with that in the proceedings:

I do desire to me you would unfold	*Lord President*: *Sir*, you have now heard your Charge
/by whose Commission you this Court do hold/	read, containing such matter as it appears in it
To whom the President did straight reply/	*The King:* I would know by what power I am called
Sir you shall know by whose Authority	hither…
(*'he Manner of the Kings Tryal*, 1649-1680)	(*King Charls His Tryal at the High Court of Justice*, 1650:5)

In the ballad, Charles relies on improper colloquialism in order to pay back in its own coin the Court's irreverence. His rebuttal of the charge is in fact expressed through the irreverent idiomatic form "As for your charge *a rush I do not care*". In the original account the king conveyed the same meaning but in a slightly more formal way: "For the Charge, *I value it not a Rush*". The I-narrator's choice of rephrasing the king's rebuttal can be read as a means of drawing the person of Charles I nearer to common people. The monarch's *echo* of the spoken idiom establishes in fact a sense of solidarity between the sovereign and the ballad-consumers, which seems to be aimed at increasing the latter's sympathy towards him. If at the content level, the reporting of Charles's speech

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[18] The term 'sir' at the time was mostly confined to upper social levels below that of nobility.

functions as a means to downgrade and deny the authority of the Court of Justice, at a stylistic level its higher degree of informality serves to narrow the socio-linguistic gap existing between the king and his subjects.

In the second part of the ballad, the narrator gives free rein to the monarch's voice, thus enabling him to declare his innocence to his people and to God. In order to foreground Charles's trustworthiness and Christianity the narrative voice withdraws from the text and lets the king's words touch people's hearts:

> [...]   **I'le** little say
> for in this World I have not long to stay
> It is my duty first with God to clear
> By conscience free, next to my Country dear
> [...]
> The greatest enemies that sought my death
> I do forgive before I loose my breath
> I wish the Kingdoms peace and Churches bliss
> For now Religion out of order is
> [...] (*'he Manner of the Kings Tryal*, 1649-1680)

4.3. Category C: broadsides with maximum of narratorial presence

The last category of political broadsides which I wish to analyse are satirical ballads against the Rump Parliament. In the period of the Interregnum, the Rump had a rather turbulent history. Established in 1649, after the king's execution, its primary task was that of carrying out the Parliament's godly reformation. Reforms, however, did not come as soon as expected and in 1653 the Rump was dissolved. After Cromwell's death a second Rump Parliament was restored in 1659 but again it proved completely incapable of meeting people's expectations.

In this period the proliferation of political-satirical ballads against Parliament became reflective of England's growing dissatisfaction with its forms of misgovernment and of the stricter censorship measures which the ballad trade was particularly skilful in evading. In the ballads instances of abbreviations, idiomatic lexis, rough language and double meanings enable us to reconstruct the flavour of popular discourse and to highlight its function as a vehicle of political propaganda.

As already mentioned, the I-narrator generally creates humour by playing with the double meaning of the word 'Rump' as 'buttock', 'tail' and 'bum' with obvious sexual allusions. The scurrilous metaphors are inserted in a festive context of drinking and eating which represents the triumph of the bodily pleasures over the days of fasting and humiliation established by the Puritans (see Jenner 2002).

> And when you are dallying with a young Maid,
> Would you not her **buttocks** bethump?
> And I have been often well apaid
> With a Goose both fat and plump
> The body being eaten we strive for the **tail**
> Each man with his **kan'kin** of nappy brown Ale
> Doth box it about for the **Rump** (*Rumpatur,* 1659)

Proverbs―as markers of popular wisdom and idiom―are also reported and ironically applied to the Parliament:

> There is a saying belongs to the Rump[...]
> **That on the Buttocks I'le give you a Thump**
> Ther's a Proverb in which the Rump claims a past [...]
> **that for all you can do I care not a fart**
> Ther's another Proverb gives the Rump for his Crest [...]
> **That of all kind of Lucks, shitten Luck is the best** (*The Resurrection of the Rump,* 1659)

As happens in broadsides of category A, colloquial elements are aimed at gaining popular favour by echoing those elements of spoken discourse which were presumably common among the vulgar.[19] As Wűrzbach notices "familiarity with the style register […] indirectly helps to boost the recipient's ego and steer his attention positively in the [spatial and

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[19] Jenner suggests that the coarse language of Rump ballads was closer to the mode of communication of the vulgar, as opposed to the decorum advocated by "those with pretensions of civility" (2007: 280). McShane, on the other hand, argues that "the more scurrilous the piece, the higher up the social scale one needs to look both for author and audience" (2007:265). The two different viewpoints highlight the ubiquity of the broadside, as a genre which had the potential to accommodate the taste of the vulgar and the élite (see Watt 1991).

ideological] direction of the presenter" (1990:75). In the satirical ballads the pervasive usage of different forms of orality—in particular popular sayings—also confirms to what extent the rendering of spoken idiom constitutes an effective means of downgrading and ridiculing the authority of the institution. Quite interestingly, the repetition of words connected to defecation, and the gross materiality of the body suggests a parallelism between the ballad style and the popular festival of irreverent voices characterising the Bakhtinian carnivalesque.[20]

References are also made to political figures of the time, *in primis* Cromwell and his attempt to rule the Rump:

> Yet **stammell[21] nos'd Oliver** smell out a way
> with Pistol and Mosquet he brought the Beast under
> and aw'd it so much [...]
> that tamely he dock't it (*Rump Roughly yet Righteously handled*, 1660)

It is not the first time that political personages are referred to by means of the first name only (see 4.1.). In the example above, it is interesting to notice how the downgrading and mocking reference to Cromwell—combined with abbreviations and metaphorical language—creates a tension between the authority of the political personage and the roughness of the narrator's discourse. Still more interestingly, on account of Schegloff's claim that "the selection of a

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[20] In *Rabelais and His World* Bakhtin analyses the grotesque realism as a typical aspect of folk humour. Grotesque realism is based on the degradation principle by which all that is institutional, respectful and high is debased and transferred to the material bodily level. In political broadsides the use of the words "rump", "bum", "tail" and "buttocks" to refer to the Rump Parliament appears as an interesting instance of the downward movement characterising the bawdy humour of the carnivalesque, though it did not originate from the festivities of the streets. For a very interesting study on the influence of Bakhtin's carnivalesque on Rump ballads see Jenner (2002).

[21] First appearing in 1530, the term refers to a coarse woollen cloth, or linsey-woolsey usually dyed red. In attributive position it generally denotes the colour, i.e. the shade of red in which the cloth was commonly dyed (*OED*). In the context of the ballad I interpret the word as indicating the 'vaguely red' colour of Cromwell's nose.

nominal reference requires of a speaker an analysis of his own social and psychological location and of the location of his co-conversationalists [in this case the ballad-consumers]" (1972:105), the narrator's improper naming of Cromwell ('stammel nos'd Oliver') assumes agreement with the audience's ideological conceptualisation of the referent, and thus contributes to the creation of political consensus around his mockery.

Interestingly enough, in the same ballad, there is only one political personage who is authorized to speak and that is general George Monck. In the text only 13 words out of 1.200 are attributed to the political personage but the dramatization of his discourse is extremely effective from an ideological point of view. Below is one of Monck's epigrammatic utterances representing his rejection of the Rumps's intriguing proposals.

> Yet he's wise enough to resist and disdain 'em
> And cry, *Get behind me, then Bob-tail of Satan* (*Rump Roughly yet Righteously handled*, 1660)

Monck's speech is orally-marked as can be seen in the use of the imperative, the discourse marker 'then' and the overtly insulting address term 'Bob-tail of Satan', which dramatizes his scorn of the Rump and personalises people's discontent with its misgovernment. The narrator-author exploits the *authority* of the character's speech in order to legitimate and foreground his own anti-Cromwellian ideology. Interestingly, Monck's degrading term 'Bob-tail of Satan' for addressing the Rump echoes the I-narrator's use of the words 'fart', 'shit', bum' and tail' for referring to the Parliament. This inner dialogism between the two voices reinforces the denigrating import of the political ballad through the combination of two popular tropes: the excremental and the devil. Furthermore, by adhering to the carnal language of folk humour, the I-narrator's and the character's speech facilitate the comprehension of the political message fostering its reception through amusement and fun.

5. Conclusion

The qualitative analysis of the broadsides selected suggests that mid-seventeenth century political broadsides appeal to spoken idiom as an effective means to sensitise people towards the controversial issues of the

time. While the representation of orality in ballads was generally quite conventional as it had to ensure ordinary people's general comprehension, the functional motivations determining its markedness in the text have proved worthy of attention from an ideological point of view.

At the I-narrator-audience discourse level, orality features have been adopted to establish a familiar, interpersonal relationship with the audience. This was, in fact, crucial to the creation of consensus around a set of values sanctioning the supreme authority of the king and fostering the debasement of the parliamentary institution.

At the character-character discourse level, on the other hand, the spoken idiom of common people and political personages was basically aimed at 1) establishing authorial authenticity, 2) providing insight into the character and moral value of the speaker and 3) giving dramatic voice. Each of these three functions were skilfully exploited by the ballad-author so as to construct his political propaganda. The way in which the authorial authenticity of the character's discourse interacted with the narrator's framing argumentation reinforced the validity of his political claim. The insight into the moral rectitude of characters prompted people's sense of membership with them. Finally, the creation of individual voices met with people's preference for dramatization and facilitated their comprehension of the political message.

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