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We Can Rule You Wholesale

Mentioned in *Moving Pictures*, this song is *Ankh-Morpork's* "national" (civic) anthem. It was written by a widely travelled vampire who noticed that in every country, all patriots know only the first verse of the national anthem and then mumble along and sing the bits they do remember very loudly to give the illusion they know it all. Thus inspired he decided to cut out the middleman, as it were, and write the version that would be sung by patriots regardless of the officially sanctioned version. During the revolution of the *Glorious 25th of May* (documented in *Night Watch*), the singing of this anthem by *Reg Shoe* was considered evidence of rebel activity. In *Unseen Academicals* the anthem was sung, as is traditional, before the start of the *Foot-the-Ball* match at *The Hippo*. It was also recorded in the book *A Blink of the Screen*, along with some information about it.

Lyrics

*"When dragons belch and hippos flee
My thoughts, Ankh-Morpork, are of thee
Let others boast of martial dash
For we have boldly fought with cash
We own all your helmets, we own all your shoes
We own all your generals - touch us and you'll lose.*

*Morporkia! Morporkia!
Morporkia owns the day!
We can rule you wholesale
Touch us and you'll pay.*

*We bankrupt all invaders, we sell them souvenirs
We ner ner ner ner ner, hner ner hner by the ears
Er hner we ner ner ner ner ner
Ner ner her ner ner ner hner the ner
Er ner ner hner ner, nher hner ner ner (etc.)
Ner hner ner, your gleaming swords
We mortgaged to the hilt*

*Morporkia! Morporkia!
Hner ner ner ner ner ner
We can rule you wholesale
Credit where it's due."*

Annotations

- In Roundworld, the anthem was written for the BBC Radio 3 programme *The Music Machine* by Pratchett (words) and Carl Davis (music), and performed by Clare Rutter, a soprano, with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra. It was also performed at that year's Proms by the Prommers' Orchestra and Chorus.

- The song title might be a reference to the Philip K Dick short story "[We Can Remember It For You Wholesale](#)", best remembered now as the basis for the film *Total Recall*.
- It might possibly be approximately sung to the Roundworld tunes *O Tannenbaum*, *O Christmas Tree*, or *The Red Flag*. Note that these are, in fact, all sung to the *same* tune. (As a minor note: *The Red Flag* was originally intended to be sung to something completely different.)

External link

- [YouTube clip](#) of the original performance

Category: [Discworld culture](#)

This page was last edited on 3 October 2023, at 05:50.

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