

**Text, Textuality and Digital Media**  
**Professor: Arjun Ghosh**  
**Department of Humanities and Social Sciences,**  
**Indian Institute of Technology Delhi.**  
**Lecture 10**  
**John Dryden: MacFlecknoe**

After having looked at the effects of print within Europe within Western Europe, today we are going to study a particular text which will show us how the effects of prints show up on specific pieces of literature. How, of course as you understand that offers authors have the world to refer to and the world around them is undergoing a flux, undergoing a change than those changes will get reflected get embedded get recorded in literary work.

I must point that it is not always conscious embedding that authors, poets, novelists, playwrights undertake because there is a dialogic relationship between the literary work and the world out there that some of the features of the real world do though also get embedded in the literary world and similarly what is there in the literary world helps people, helps the rleader frame the real world as well, so it's a dialogical relationship. As we go along wthey will understand what kind of relationship we are going to do.

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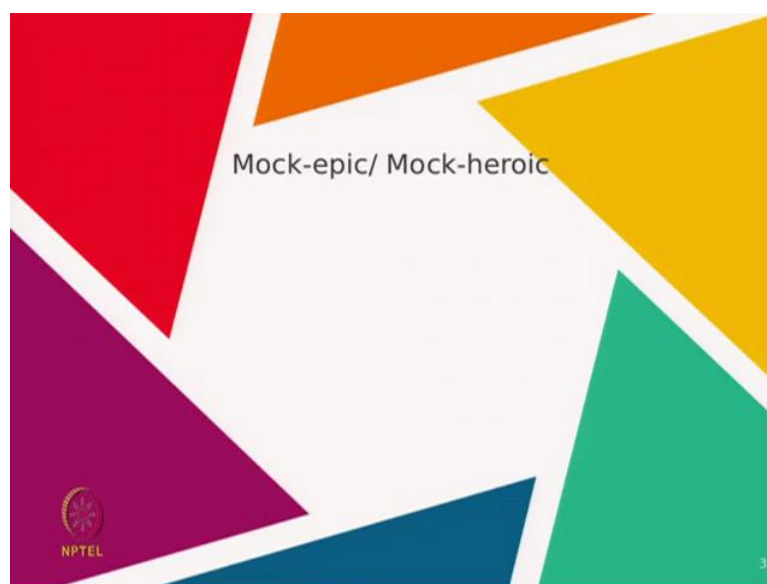


Today we are going to read this poem by John Dryden Mac Flacknoe, it is written in 1678 and published in 1682, I am not going to read the entire poem with you. Our purpose of today's lecture is precisely to sort of point out the specific areas the specific aspects of the text which are important as far as this our understanding of this course is concerned there are

total of about 220 lines in the poem and we are just going to read 20 lines of the poem from in between and we will come to the specific extract.

You would do well to actually study the entire poem in the light of the discussion that we have undertaken as part of this lecture on your own and you would find it is an extremely hilarious sort of poem if you follow all the references, some of the references of course are archaic but once you understand them you will find it extremely amusing, this kind of poem, it is a satire in a fight between 2 poets between John Dryden and Thomas Shadwell and Dryden is trying to mock at Shadwell.

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So the genre of this particular poem is a mock epic or it is called the mock heroic either of the 2 terms. When you say mock epic means it takes on the epic form but inverts it. It inverts it in order to sort of have a satirical representation of its hero. Now what we need to understand is, before we move into understanding the mock epic, it's important for us to understand what are the features of an epic before we understand how it is a mock epic.

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What are the features of an epic poem? I mean the epic as you understand is an oral form and it derives really from oral narratives which actually has embedded features of epics as you will understand very interestingly this particular poem is well and truly into 1682 is when it gets printed. Well and truly some 200 years into the coming of print and with the exponential growth of print we can understand 200 years is a lot of time even at that point of time.

So there is squaring quite an advancement of print but we still find that the features that certain aspects characteristics of the oral continue to seep into this particular arena. So the lesson that we learn and we have talked about this earlier as well that emergent forms of technology continue to have remnants of the old though the old remains primarily at a symbolic derivational level but they continue the two forms to coexist for a long period of time some times and really it comes together as a vestige as we can see in this particular poem the epic form really does not fit into the kind of social milieu that we are dealing with in this particular poem.

But it offers us a symbolic value, a value of inversion, of meaning and therefore the epic form sort of continues into this period in this particular podium as vestigial sort of a remnant of the oral universe.

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So the features of an epic as you understand that oral narratives we have talked about this, oral narratives would primarily be collective ~~sort of~~, would be enjoyed collectively, -would be narrated in a collective maybe by a single poet but there would be several listeners seated before the poet, before the narrator and therefore the features of the epic are organized in a way to ensure that they are able to grab the audience's attention and also very importantly they are as we all noted in our lectures on oral narrative, very importantly to work with structures of memory with which the poets could work in the absence of writing.

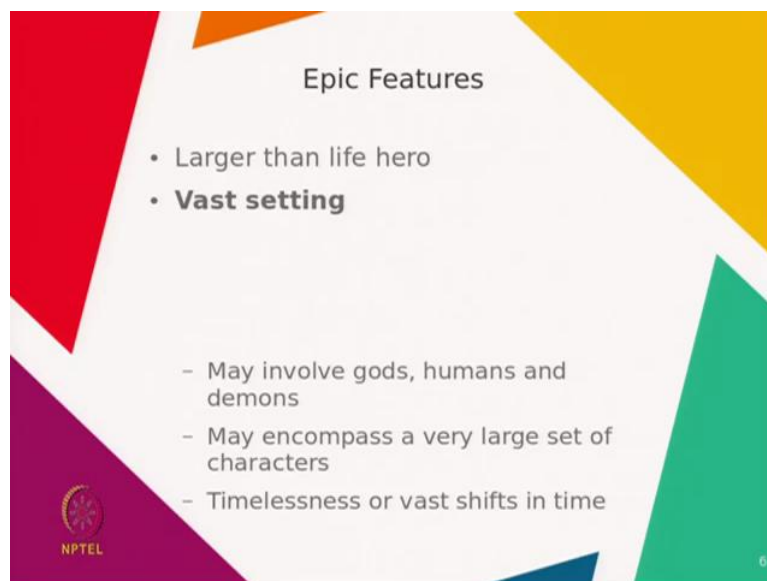
Because they had to remember memory becomes very important, so from that aspect we have to understand the features of the epic. The features of the epic are not some kind of a rule book, if these are utilitarian these features come about because the epic can only work with these features. So typically in an epic there would be a larger-than-life hero. A larger-than-life hero, someone who is bigger and better than the rest, so some of the examples are there on your screen.

Achilles in Iliad who is a great fighter or Ram in Ramayan he was a super hero, a kind of a demigod and later on worshipped as a god. Certainly he is an avatar, so he is obviously not human, he is superhuman. So Achilles is however more secular, Achilles derives his heroism from his powers, he has special powers, he is invincible other than his heal, so he is a larger-than-life hero capable of acts which normal human beings are not able to fathom or be able to match and you must understand that one of the important reasons why there would be a larger-than-life hero is because that is what would interest the audience.

To grab the audience's attention, a larger-than-life hero would be doing things which are extraordinary and therefore would help keep the interest of the audience going. So through the narrative thereat would be instances where the larger-than-life hero would be performing actions which are of great interest to this audience and very importantly the epic actually belongs not to a democratic world where everybody is equal.

Epic certainly belongs to an extremely hierarchizedst world where people have certain privileges by birth, their status and power in society is by birth and their worth is by birth. So when you say there is a larger-than-life hero someone who is better than the rest, you also invariablyye talk about characters who are highly placed within society in the social ranks. So within a higher hierarchizedst world characters also have certain hierarchy within them and therefore within that the epic hero is certainly much bigger than the other characters kind of outhadowider the other characters.

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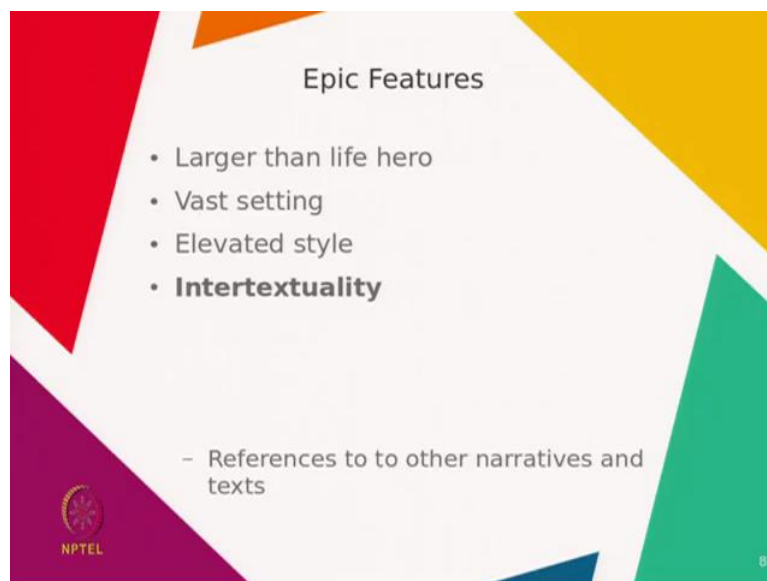


Another feature the epic typically has a very vast setting it may involve people from different worlds. It could involve the gods, humans and dDemons, all of them together Typically that is would happen in an epic-,-interplay of gods and humans- and they may encompass a very large set of characters, a huge number of characters this is not a poem with a single character or 2 characters or a few characters many-many characters, typically an epic tries to tell the story of a community of people. It is not the story of an individual or a particular small set of people.

And the timelessness there are tremendous vast shifts in time I mean to understand the shifts in time you must understand that the significance of the epic when the story is told, it is told as if the significance of the story is timeless is beyond time. The particular story may have happened at a certain point of time though you must understand within an epic there is no sense of clock time or calendar, so they would not be saying on such and such date this happened, it will be timeless.

Of course you understand that the calendar, the clock these are modern features an epic is a non-modern sort of form, so clearly the way the epic deals with time or passage of time is very different from that of other modern forms. The other issue about timelessness also is that there would be a lot of digressions, a lot of intertextuality and a lot of reference to various other stories, other characters or events which may switch across time, while telling of the story that is something that would come into it, little bit more about that a little later.

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The epic certainly has an elevated style the language is higher than ordinary everyday spoken language which is uses very special kind of language. What is important here is to understand that some of these features have got to do with the fact that it is an oral narrative and therefore that the metrical disciplines is something that we have seen the rhyme and the rhythm helps maintain memory, helps retain the stories.

So therefore the metrical disciplines more to do with the importance of the form and the rhetorical devices, the epithets that are used are also a very important features they are very-very glorious kind of or very symbolic usages of references that are used within the epic.

Intertextuality is a very important feature within the epic. Within the epic as I said there are constantly digressions and this as we have understood is a feature of the oral form where live audience speakers would not come with a ready text. So when I am telling a story I can very easily break this story go into a branch story come back or digress even further, so therefore intertextuality is a very important feature which is derived from oral narratives and their references to text and it also adds to the scale of the poem the setting that I talked about.

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In fact that the timelessness of the poem is added to it by referring to narratives across times, many a times contemporary references even though the epic is talking clearly about a time that is long gone past.

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And the digressions need not always be inter-textual digressions that means they need not refer to other available texts they could just be giving descriptions, you know law there could be long descriptive passages and one thing that I had referred to when talking about oral narratives is that these descriptions are almost templatedtemplated. The better poet would be one who would have more descriptive templates for specific things and would be able to refer to those particular descriptions at the drop of the hat.

Of course in this particular poem or in modern day returnwritten epics the writer is actually writing which is a solipsistic operation whereas in an oral narrator they would have to produce statthat, produce the description on the spot and as I have explained rarely are these descriptions spontaneous. In fact in the written there could be greater degree of

spontaneity than in the oral because in the oral these descriptive passages are some kind of a bag of tricks that the poet has and that is something that they are able to pull out at will whenever ~~is never~~ is necessary.

And another final feature of the epic is the Invocation. The invocation is that where the poet seeks s permission or seeks the blessing of a Muse, of some superhuman, some god, to be able to tell thise story because the overall understanding is that I am telling the story of gods. In my story thecreat will be gods and I am just a mere human and I will probably be able to tell the story very well, so it is important that you bless me so that I will be able to have enough talent ined me to be able to tell the story.

Certainly the another thing that the invocation does as we have seen when we were looking at the Dastangoi is that it gives a sense to the audience that the story is about to begin, so please settle down, alright. So it's a signal to the--

In a written book of coursefers you open the first page and you know, Yeah, okay after the content's page the story is going to begin so that is how a book prepares the audience for the story whereas in the case of the oral narrative it is really kind of a verbal cue that usedis to be given to the audience.

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Epic	Mock-epic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Larger than life hero</li><li>• Vast setting</li><li>• Elevated style</li><li>• Intertextuality</li><li>• Digressions</li><li>• Long descriptive passages</li><li>• Invocation</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hero is ridiculous</li><li>• Specific setting</li><li>• Mock elevation in style</li><li>• Intertextuality highlights the ridiculous</li><li>• Digressions are satirical</li><li>• Descriptions of inferior subjects</li><li>• <b>Invocation of a mock-muse</b></li></ul>

But now let us see how the epic features are modified are inverted in the form of a mock epic. So if in the epic the hero is larger-than-life, in the mock epic the hero is ridiculous but important to know that the hero though ridiculous is presented as larger-than-life, so it's an inversion he is the best of the worst I mean this is very oxymoronic but that is exactly what a



mock epic is, says ~~that is that~~ he is very bad, he is ~~great~~ the greatest in badness in negativity. So that is the kind of language that is used within a mock epic, the ridiculousness is highlighted, it's an inversion, a satire on a particular chosen subject, who is being mocked at, made fun is ~~balked~~poked at this particular character.

The setting of a mock epic is very very specific, ~~suppose it is of course~~ a modern setting it is based on modern experience I mean very contemporary, very topical kind of a context in which the story is told, so the setting of the mock epic is extremely specific, and of course usually a mock epic is written for an audience which is very much aware of the particular issue. It is usually written, ~~you know~~ any kind of satire even ~~you know~~ political satire or social satire is written for the moment, is written to comment on a specific set of things events that haves happened.

And so one can expect that the readers or the listeners of the mock epic would be people who would be aware of the event. So the setting is very specific and the references would be extremely contemporary to specific events contemporary events which you can expect that the readers of the poem the intended readers of the poem, remember no poem specifically I mean McFlecknoe is being written for us to study it, is being written to entertain people, to make people laugh, p:

People who are contemporaries of the poet,;

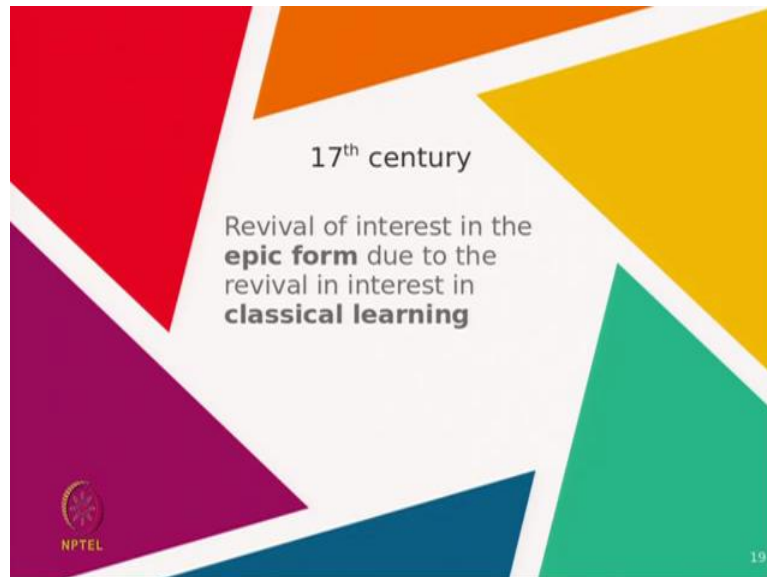
Sso within that purpose intended readers of the poem would all be aware of the references which are there. Now the style ~~re~~continues to be elevated but in inversion according to the first step the hero is ridiculous similarly the style also though it is elevated it is a mock elevation, it adds to the ridiculousness of the hero, it adds to the satire.

And the intertextuality highlights the ridiculous, so since we are dealing with the ridiculous subject and the references, if there are 2 other epics or epic situations they would point out the height the difference between the 2 and thereby heightened the intertextuality or the references could be something extremely based, extremely stupid and that would highlight the ridiculousness. So either by association or by inversion the intertextuality highlights the ridiculous.

The digressions are satirical, they would help move away from the narrative in order to poke further fun at the subject of ridicule the mock epic hero. The descriptions are primarily descriptions of inferior subjects they could be scatological descriptions as ~~they would say~~we

would see in McFlecknoe and the invocation is of a mock Muse, the muse is not really a heavenly character ~~orn to~~ some kind of super human being but some earthly person, some earthly being who has made the subject of invocation, alright. So these are the ways in which the epic features are sort of inverted in a mock epic, alright.

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So by the seventeenth century and we are talking about this text in the 17<sup>th</sup>—century, 1678 when it was written. We know that in this internal period between the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> century there has been a revival of classical learning and this has led Europe for a revival of interest in the epic form and that is what explains the revival of interest in the epic form, the presence of the epic form is because we have moved away well into the geographic chirographic age and into the print era and why is the epic form important at this point?

It is because of the revival in classical learning, a lot of the literature which is being has been translated from the Greek has brought to the interest, to the attention of the Western Europeans the epic features.

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The slide is titled "Historical Context" and features a table with the following entries:

1642	First Civil War
1649	Charles I beheaded

Below the table is an engraving of a public execution scene. The caption below the engraving reads: "Printed in the year Year, of the Hang-mans down-fall, 1649." At the bottom of the slide, there is a small text block: "By Unknown - <https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/the-confession-of-richard-brandon>, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=77036654>" and the number "20". The NPTEL logo is visible in the bottom left corner.

A few things about the historical context we have touched upon this in the previous lecture as well. So we know that the 17<sup>th</sup> century was a period of intense turmoil within Europe and please refer to the previous lectures that I have tried to analyze these historical changes that are happening and how print is linked to that I would not go into the details in this particular lecture but just to refer to the important events, we know that there was a tussle between parliamentary politics and the monarchy in England in the 17<sup>th</sup> century across from the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century till the end.


And it is difficult to say that it is a fight between the monarchy and the Republicans or the monarchy and the Parliamentarians because there were other things that were going on also. There was a fight between the Protestants and the Catholics, so you have an England there you have the Anglican Church, the king is the head of the Anglican Church and you have the Catholics.

That is also a fulcrum of conflict that occurs within England at that point of time very interestingly because you could have Catholic monarchs as well but depends on what the specific rules and regulations and what are the administrative steps that have been taken by the monarch, whether they are favouring the Anglicans or whether they are favouring the Catholics, so there were these various flash points within which the political conflict of the 17<sup>th</sup> century England is really framed. So in 1642 you have the first civil war and by 1649 the monarch Charles the first, he is beheaded he is removed from power.

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### Historical Context

1642	First Civil War
1649	Charles I beheaded
1649-60	<b>Interregnum</b>



Coat of Arms of the Commonwealth of England from 1653 to 1659 during the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell  
By SofacanThis W3C-unspecified vector image was created with Inkscape. - Own work.  
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And kind of the Republican takeover for the entire interrum period up to 1660.

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### Historical Context

1642	First Civil War
1649	Charles I beheaded
1649-60	Interregnum
1660	<b>Monarchy restored</b>
1668	<b>Dryden appointed as poet laureate</b>



By Virgil, John Dryden - Private Collection of S. Whitehead. Public Domain.  
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Then there is the restoration of the monarchy in 1660 and in 1668 John Dryden you can see his picture right there, he is appointed as the poet Laureate. The poet Laureate is someone who is appointed by the Crown as the official poet of the land who is supposed to, it's a recognition as well as you understand within a structure of patronage when we talked about structures of patronage earlier.

Within a structure of patronage this falls well into the feudal mode of patronage and because we are moving into print this is important because we have moved into print these structures of patronage are being shadowed by other upcoming structures of support to writers and

authors which is in the form of profit sharing and royalties and that is going to be very interesting as far as reading MacFlecknoe is concerned.

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The slide is titled "Historical Context" and features a table of events from 1642 to 1688. Below the table is a painting depicting the coronation of William and Mary in 1689. The slide also includes an NPTEL logo and a URL.

Year	Event
1642	First Civil War
1649	Charles I beheaded
1649-60	Interregnum
1660	Monarchy restored
1668	Dryden appointed as poet laureate
1678	Mac Flecknoe written
1678-81	Popish plot: Catholic conspiracy to assassinate Charles II
1681	Charles II dissolves Parliament
1685	Charles II dies; succeeded by James II
1688	Glorious Revolution: Parliament anoints Mary and William as rulers

William of Orange and Mary crowned as King and Queen of England in 1689

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In 1678 Mac Flacknoe is written and then you have a series of very fast changing political events. England did not see a bloody revolution exactly the way the French revolution took place, it did have its bloody bit wars and all in the form of the civil war in the 1650s and 1640s but ultimately when a major part of the power moves into the hands of the Parliament the monarchy gives off power it is called the Glorious Revolution or the Bloodless Revolution.

So in 1678 to 81 there is the attempt by the Catholics to try to assassinate Charles the second and it leads to a series of factions in which 1681 ~~shall~~ Charles the second dissolve parliament and then he dies in 85 and he is succeeded by James the second important story about James the second he was a Catholic but when he tried to inverse some of the anti-Catholic laws which are functioning within England at that point of time the Parliament disapproved of the changes, so he could not bring in the changes.

So James the second ~~against~~ dissolves the parliament but ultimately the various members of the Parliament they sort of put together a plan and replaced James the second with William and Mary as the rulers of England. You can read what about these events by yourself they are important for us for any student of English literature but we are not going to go into details right here.

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### Historical Context

1642	First Civil War
1649	Charles I beheaded
1649-60	Interregnum
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1688	Glorious Revolution: Parliament anoints Mary and William as rulers
1689	<b>Dryden removed as Poet Laureate; replaced by Thomas Shadwell</b>



Thomas Shadwell (1642-1692)

Par Unidentified painter -- retrieved 24 July 2005 from <http://www.cai.cam.ac.uk/img/famous/shadwell.jpg>. Domaine public. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=238358>

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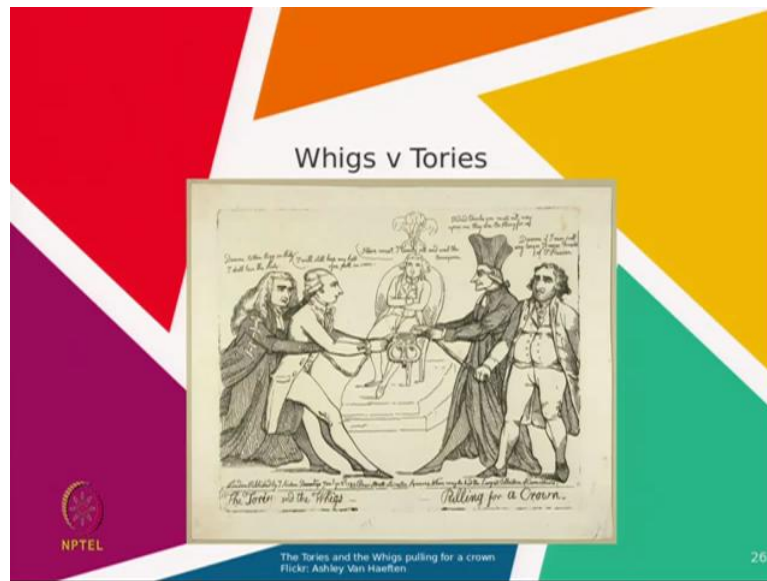
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What is important for us to note here is that, this is a period of extreme political turmoil, alright and there were various people particularly the political parties which are divided into Whigs and Stories and that is the Liberals and the Conservatives, the Liberals wanted more power to the Parliament whereas the Conservatives were slightly more conservative they wanted more powerful for the parliament but still wanted to retain greater powers for the monarchy than the Liberals it was a difference of degree and there were very heated sort of, very polarized kind of environment within the polity at that point of time.

And you see by 1689 Dryden is removed just the year after the Glorious Revolution, in fact that was the year in which Marie and Williams were annppointed as rulers. Dryden was removed as poet Laureate and replaced by Thomas Shadwell. So while reading *McFlecknoe* we can find that Shadwell is a very bad poet that is what Dryden says, he is a ridiculous poet, he can not keep his (+)(-)(31:00)metres correct, he writes in a very bad rhythm, the sound patterns of his poetry are extremely ridiculous they are pedantic and unintelligible kind of poetry but reallyfreely speaking I am in Shadwell he became the poet Laureate right after Dryden, so obviously there was a certain kind of rivalry involved between the two come.

It is not to say that Shadwell was an inferior poet, of course historically we can say that we know more within the canonised English literature Dryden has a far greater presence than Thomas Shadwell but in contemporary times Shadwell yielded as much pressed each prestige as Dryden would have maybe from a different camp but he did.

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So this was a period in which as I said there was a tremendous amount of tussle between the Whigs and the Tories over the Crown, over what kind of sort of power the monarch should hold and what should be the relationship between monarchy and the Parliament.

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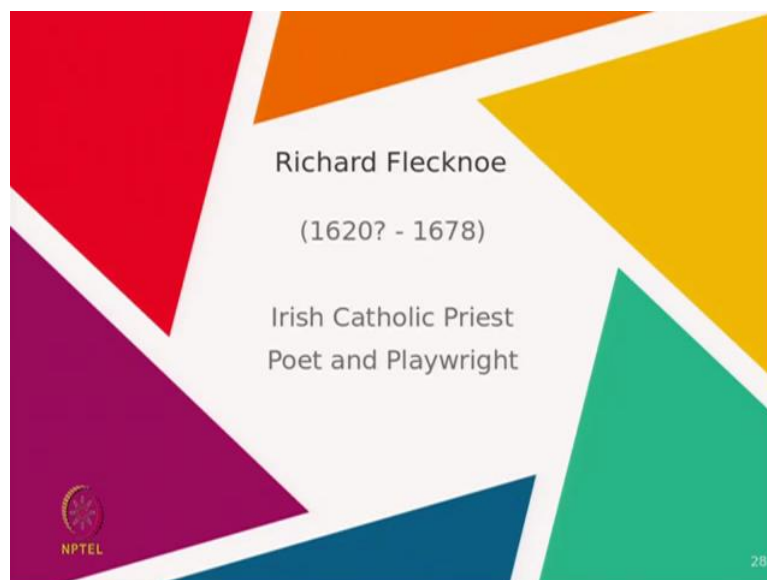


And a large part of this debate this tussle were carried out in public as I had mentioned earlier because of the coming of print because a large part of the pamphleteering and essaying was taking place and remember print as a form thrives on the act of writing, so authors and writers become very important and rarely would you find a writer and/or an author who is not sort of leaning either to the Whigs or to the Tories or there would really rarely be any writers or

authors who do not take any specific position on the issue of the relationship between monarchy ~~in~~and Parliament and even the Civil War.

And what we see in the picture there, is an example of the coffee house, this is an image of the coffee house which is a public place within London, London were dotted with coffee houses which were ~~the~~ public houses at ~~that~~ that point of time and people would sit around and luminaries of the times would debate among themselves they would almost be fighting with each other mostly verbally and these pamphlets were circulated in these, ~~a~~ large pieces of writing, important pieces of writing would be circulated, pieces of writing like McFlecknoe would be circulated within this kind of a m Milieu.

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What is important for us to note is that within the play, within the poem the various characters which are there, you know there is a reference to Richard Flecknoe. Now Richard Flecknoe was an Irish Catholic priest, a poet and playwright.



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And Dryden treats him as a bad poet.

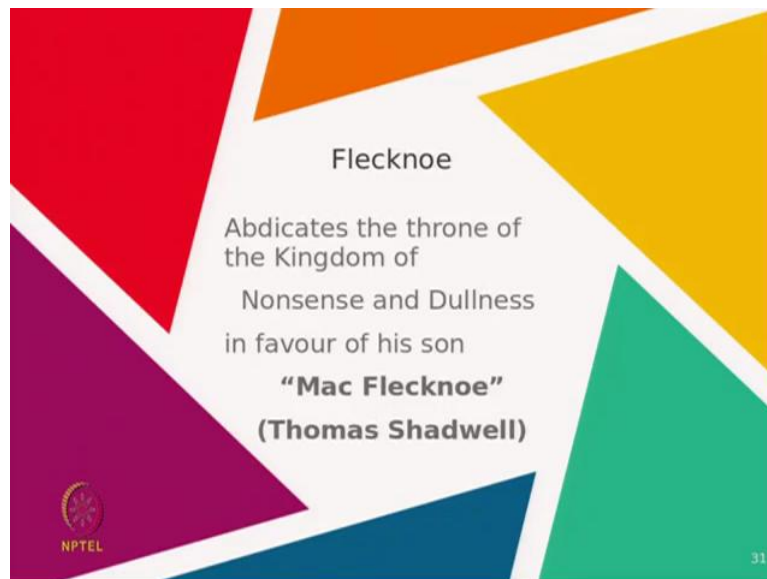
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Now according to the story here it is kind of imaginative recreation, Richard Flecknoe is presented as a king of nonsense scandalous and dullness and shown to be fat and physically unattractive. Important to note that Richard Flecknoe is an Irish Catholic priest, that is an important linkage, we know Catholicism was a matter of contention, religious identities were a matter of contention but Irishness that is very important also to note because Ireland is often referred to as the first colony of England.

The Irish were ~~proseuted~~persecuted by the English rulers, the Irish land even today ~~N~~northern ~~Ire~~island is within the grips of England, it is part of Britain ~~\_and\_~~ it is not independent, so ~~in~~ the first case which England tries to colonize sort of was Ireland and therefore the English looked down upon Ireland treated the Irish as inferiors to themselves, so therefore an Irish figure being presented as one of the important characters within the poem is significant for us.

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Now what we have and Flecknoe is treated as the king of the \_s\_-realm of nonsense and dullness, this is ~~an~~ imaginative sort of space and the poem begins at that point of time when he ~~degrades~~abdicates the throne to his greater son Mac Flecknoe. Mac Flecknoe ~~being~~ the Irish, if you understand Irish names Mac Flecknoe means the son of Flecknoe and who is he? He is Thomas Shadwell.

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*Mac Flecknoe* lines (38-52)

Flecknoe is introducing his son and describing his "superior qualities"

When thou on silver Thames did'st cut thy way,  
With well tim'd oars before the royal barge,  
Swell'd with the pride of thy celestial charge;  
And big with hymn, commander of an host,  
The like was ne'er in Epsom blankets toss'd.



By Ivan Bandura - Gloriana 4/4, CC BY 2.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=41561061>

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So we will look at these particular lines where he is referring to, he is describing the superior qualities of his son. Please refer to the lines, lines 38 to 52 is the first extract that we look at.

When thou won silver Thames did'st cut thyby way. Thames is the river along the banks of which London is situated.

With well tim'd oars before the royal barge. Well tim'd oars means the oars are being pulled the time therevery timely and this is important, time is important to the extent that keeping time is referring to poetry, because the rhythm sort of keeps time. Marks the time that is what, in music also the various notations they mark the time, each meter marks time. So with well timed oars before the royal barge.

So here you are, the royal barge as you see, the piteherpicture of the royal barge which is floating, which is travelling on the Thames and he says that the ship, the vessel that Shadwell is travelling in that is Mac Flecknoe is travelling overtakes the royal barge his boat is far superior to mine, this is the king, the father is-saying, the ridiculous Fflecknoe saying. Swell'd with the pride of thy celestial charge. That you are sort of, you are superhuman, you are proud and the reference also is to the size, the girth, swelling, you know the fact that he is big.

Swelled with the pride of thy celestial charge and big with hymn. So he is, it's almost a pejorative kind of a metaphor, he is supposed to be pregnant, big with hymn I mean women are big with child and here Mac Flecknoe is big with hymn, it is a reference to his stoutness. He is a commander of an host. The like was never in Epsom blankets tossed. This Epsom


blankets is a reference to one of Shadwell's writings, his authorship and you know he wrote the plays called Epsom wealth's in 1673 and those are -specific references to specific scenes within the play itself, -very contemporary references,

So you can expect that those who are reading this poem or sometimes these will be read aloud in the coffee houses or any particular gathering from the manuscript and people would have a laugh because they would remember the particular scene from that play or they would have heard descriptions from others if they have not seen the play at had all.

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*Mac Flecknoe* lines (38-52)

Methinks I see the new Arion sail,  
The lute still trembling underneath thy nail.  
At thy well sharpen'd thumb from shore to shore  
The treble squeaks for fear, the basses roar:  
Echoes from Pissing-Alley, Shadwell call,  
And Shadwell they resound from Aston Hall.  
About thy boat the little fishes throng,  
As at the morning toast, that floats along.  
Sometimes as prince of thy harmonious band  
Thou wield'st thy papers in thy threshing hand.



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Lute Player on the Thames, 1747  
by Cassiano, Web Gallery of Art. Image Info about artwork, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=663842>

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And the lines go. Methinks I see the new Arion sail. Again this kind of, a reference to the Greek musician who jumped overboard to escape the jealousy of his fellow sailors and was saved from drowning by dDolphins, who were charmed by his music and he is saying that this is a mythological kind of a larger reference which is calling attention to the next part of the poem that whereas for Arion the dDolphins came to his rescue because of the quality of his music, in this particular case w:-

We see the lute still trembling underneath thy nail, he is trying to make music with the flute. Mac Flecknoe Shadwell, but it is bad music. At thy well sharpened thumb from shore to shore -and this poor music very bad music it is making everybody tremble from shore to shore and the treble squeaks for fear, that's the (()) (41:57) cress in the (()) (41:59) and the trough, the sharper sounds and the base, the bases is raw they are not well tempered sounds that his poetry is not very well formed, they do not sound very well.

This is a negative boat look at the way it has been talked about here. It has been talked about as if a great positive. Echoes from Shadwell call and this goes sound and where does the sound of the poem comeback? Shadwell's music comeback from? Where does it echo? From Pissing Alley not from any important Lane in London, ~~but along the~~ along the dirtiest and these are the scatological references that are beginning.

And as Shadwell gives the call, the Echo comes back to him and it comes back from Shadwell because his music is fit for that particular lane, ~~for~~ some terrible kind of music and Shadwell they resound from Aston Hall. Now Aston Hall is also similar kind of a reference, So what happens in Aston? About thy boat ~~the~~ little fishes throng. So for Arion it would have been Dolphins which came across through the power of his music, enchanted by his lovely music to save him ~~them~~.


But for Mac Flecknoe what? About thy boat the little fishes throng but what are these little fishes actually? Not Dolphins but they are little fishes but there is a coma at the end of the sentence and end of the line and the real sort of climax comes right at the end and you can expect that after reading that line the reader ~~the~~ ~~or~~ listeners of the poetry sort of burst out laughing.

It says about thy boat the little fishes throng as at the morning toast, that floats along. So the morning toast, what is the morning toast? The morning toast is a reference to the human excreta which is floating about his ship. So if Arion's music can enchant Dolphins, Shadwell's poetry can only enchant human excreta floating about on the Thames, alright. So that is the kind of reference that is being made. This is a kind of rivalry that is there which is bringing about this kind of extreme satire poking fun at a fellow poet but a rival poet.

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*Mac Flecknoe* lines (94-105)

Now Empress Fame had publisht the renown,  
Of Shadwell's coronation through the town.  
Rous'd by report of fame, the nations meet,  
From near Bun-Hill, and distant Watling-street.  
No Persian carpets spread th'imperial way,  
But scatter'd limbs of mangled poets lay:  
From dusty shops neglected authors come,  
Martyrs of pies, and reliques of the bum.  
Much Heywood, Shirley, Ogleby there lay,  
But loads of Shadwell almost chok'd the way.  
Bilk'd stationers for yeoman stood prepar'd,  
And Herringman was Captain of the Guard.



19th-century Grub Street  
Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=238409>

We ~~are going~~will go into our second extract without much ~~adg~~o and this lines 94 to 105, if any of you would like to refer to the poem itself. So this is a particular description of the scene of the coronation. Mac Flecknoe is going to be ~~annpp~~ointed King and this is a reference to this is a description of that particular ~~is-seen~~scene. Now Empress Ffame had ~~publish~~ted the renown. Of Shadwell's coronation through the town.

The fFame of Shadwell is through the town. What kind of Fame is it? ~~Is the infame~~It's infamy-, -he is in-famous, he is bad, he is terrible everybody knows he is terrible therefore he is famous, really what he is saying, he is in-famous. Rousedd by report of Fame the nations meet. From near Bun-Hill and distant Watling Street. This is a particular district of London which is not, these are kind of framed as pejorative references because these are district streets of London which are not those of the elite, not the aristocrats of the society.

The Who's Who of society reside or you know frequent, these are places which are run down places belonging to the lower ~~str~~Stata of society, ~~alright~~ and that is where the coronation is organized. No Persian carpets spread they imperial way. As he goes up to the throne to be ~~annpp~~ointed King there are no Persian carpets, what is it that lead the way but scattered limbs of mangled poets lay.

Shadwell is looking up to the throne where he is, the way ~~it'she-is~~ decorated with the scattered limbs of mangled poets. Why scattered limbs of mangled poets? From dusty shops neglected authors come because there are along this lane, which is this lane? This is Grub

Street, this is the print straightstreet of London this is where the printing shops were. So therefore this is where authors get printed.

So from dusty shops neglected authors come, why are they neglected authors who come to the dusty shops or come from the dusty shops? Because these are authors whom nobody reads, they are the poorest authors the most nonsensical dullest of authors, who do not find any place within aristocratic society, so therefore they take refuge in print, they try to make, they do not find patronage.

Dryden is the poet Laureate, they do not find patronage they therefore in order to make a living go to these the prints, to the print shops to make money. So what Dryden is poking fun at is the profit oriented the commercial nature of print, writing for money, writing for profit is been looked down upon, this is commercial literature, and it is also the literature which is written for the general public, for everybody.

Not for the Who's Who, not for the elite but for the ordinary public ~~(())~~ (48:55) mind you Dryden's poetry is also getting printed but what Dryden is trying to emphasize is that his primary motive for writing is not for print, he also prints but he writes within a certain patronage structure, he writes for the Who's Who of the society, he does not write for the riffraff. Let us look at the further descriptions.

Martyrs of pies and relics of the bum. So these are like toilet paper. The paper that is produced on which these works of these authors are written are as good as toilet paper-is. Martyrs of pies and relics of the bum. Much Hayward, Shirley, Ogleby there lay. Again he is making references to contemporary writers. But loads of Shadwell almost choked away. This is what thea carpeting is done by, all theise.

So when you say scattered limbs of mangled poets lay that is torn out papers these are not even sold. Let alone the fact that this is the commercial printing hub of London but even there this poetry even though it have been printed have not been sold, so they are so bad. Built td stationers for yeoman and look at the reference tofer stationers, stationers are the ones who are engaged in the bookmaking, printing, binding, book\_selling. So built td stationers for yeoman stood prepared and herringman was the captain of the guard. Again a contemporary reference.

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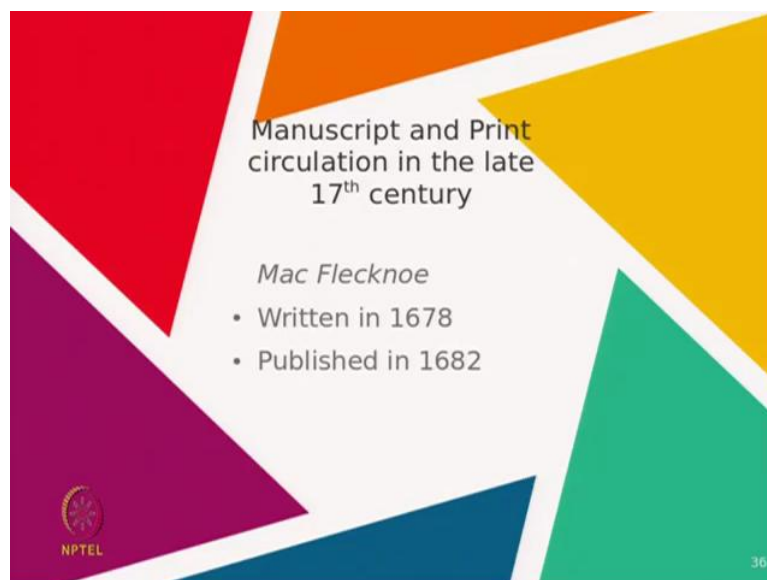
Literary Patronage in the late 17<sup>th</sup> Century

- Dryden: Poet Laureate
- Shadwell: also Poet Laureate – but rival, opposing political views
- Dryden satirises Shadwell's poetry by pejoratively terming it "commercial"

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So the point really is that this is the kind of negative association that Dryden gives to into the kind of, into his ridicule of satire against Shadwell that the association of print with negativity, with the-lessdullness, with poor literature but we have already seen that both were poet laureates whatbut they were rivals with opposing political view.

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Manuscript and Print circulation in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century

*Mac Flecknoe*

- Written in 1678
- Published in 1682

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And another final point before I leave, it is important to know that though *Mac Flecknoe* was written in 1678 it was published in 1682, so what happens in these 4 years. So clearly *Mac Flecknoe* is not written primarily for print, it is only when it manages to gather some degree of audience that it gets printed.



Point to be noted is that this poem was written primarily for circulation, manuscript circulation it was passed around by hand. So this was a very important facet of the times. It was not only that people were reading only printed material, no. A lot of the literature that was produced at that point of time was produced through manuscripts and they would be copied and passed around within the circle of friends.

If I like a poem I will make a copy of it, so many a times people weould write the poems in the form of letters and send it to friends. So manuscript circulation of literature was very important at this point of time. A large part of the literature was first circulated through manuscripts and then entered print, But these were not of course the illuminated manuscripts that we are talking about.

These were manuscripts which were written on wWhite pPaper by poets and authors and then passed around good friends they were not finished books, they were not bound volumes. It is for circulation among friends and acquaintances, so this coexistence of manuscript and print circulation was continued till about the 18<sup>th</sup>-century alright. We will continue on that theme in our future lectures, thank you.