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**“Into the Valley of Death”: A Textual and Musical
Analysis of Metal Music’s Adaptation,
Appropriation, and Quotation of Poetry in English**

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. ON METAL MUSIC AND METAL STUDIES

Formerly known as *heavy metal*, metal music has been around the popular culture scene since, at least, 1970 (Walser 1993: 10). A source of controversy since its very inception, its loudness, the unorthodox image of its performers, and its allegedly aggressive lyrics have triggered legions of both followers and detractors: “a recent marketing survey found that ten million people in the United States ‘like or strongly like’ heavy metal—and that nineteen million strongly dislike it” (1993: xi).¹ Beyond being disliked, throughout the years the genre has suffered several attempts at discrediting it as a legitimate vehicle for cultural expression. Considered by some only a 1980s trend without continuity and by others a dangerous means of entertainment because of its supposed allegiance to Satanism, concerns about the negative influence of metal music lyrics on the youth led to its ban in China and certain Islamic countries (Levine 2009: 7; Weinstein 2000: 282; Ferrarese 2015: 217), as well as to a vocal parent-led resistance in the USA which reached its peak in 1985, when the PMRC (Parents Music Resource Center) “pressured record companies into placing warning stickers on recordings with ‘adult’ lyrics and [...] underwr[ote] partially successful campaigns to persuade state legislatures to censor certain types of music, chiefly rap and heavy metal” (Walser 1993: 138), leading to a series of senate hearings where metal musicians were accused of perverting the youth (Weinstein 2000: 43; Walser 1993: 138; Christe 2010: ch. 7; Wiederhorn and Turman 2013: 125; Phillipov 2012: ch. 6). However, metal music has still retained a strong following throughout the decades (Guibert and Guibert 2016), and the number of metal bands has increased considerably since the genre reached its highest level of popularity in the 1980s (Brown *et al.* 2016). Because fans who were young decades ago still follow the music (Kahn-Harris 2007: 70), its intended audience today is not exclusively comprised of youngsters, and not only are the majority of metal fans no longer working-class, but their academic qualifications are far above those associated with 1980s metalheads (Kahn-Harris 2007: 70; Brown 2016: 191-93; Guibert and Guibert 2016: 172-74). As for the reported Satanic views, they are diluted in a sea of differing points of view on religion and other matters –as will be addressed in chapter 4–, thus establishing a kaleidoscopic amalgam of views and opinions about a wide array of topics. As for the lyrics’ perceived rebelliousness, Walser’s statement that “there is no

¹ See also Bryson 1996: 893; Guibert and Guibert 2016: 174.

inherent link between subversive textual practices and subversive politics” (1993: 131) applies here, as detailed textual analyses will prove later.

Metal is not only music, but a social and political phenomenon surrounded by controversy. Its relevance as a cultural practice has raised attention from the cultural studies field, which Simon During defined as “the engaged analysis of contemporary cultures” –*engaged* standing for “political, critical”– and which aims at celebrating cultural experiences as a part of everyday life (2005: 1):

it rarely makes much sense to ask of TV shows how oppositional they are. But cultural studies has consistently posed that question of popular music, partly because rock’n’roll has connoted rebellion from its very beginnings. In fact cultural studies’ claim to a politics of resistance has been deeply inflected by rock’s rebellion. (2005: 124)

Stemming from rock music, metal’s prominence in the cultural sphere of the last decades ignited the interest of several scholars, paving the way for foundational works about the genre like Will Straw’s “Characterizing Rock Music Cultures: The Case of Heavy Metal” (1984), Deena Weinstein’s *Heavy Metal: The Music and Its Culture* (2000[1991]), Robert Walser’s *Running with the Devil: Power, Gender and Madness in Heavy Metal Music* (1993), Harris Berger’s *Metal, Rock, and Jazz: Perception and the Phenomenology of Musical Experience* (1999B), Ian Christie’s *Sound of the Beast: The Complete Headbanging History of Heavy Metal* (2010[2004]), Natalie Purcell’s *Death Metal Music: The Passion and Politics of a Subculture* (2003), Keith Kahn-Harris’s *Extreme Metal: Music and Culture on the Edge* (2007), Gerd Bayer’s *Heavy Metal Music in Britain* (2009), or Michelle Phillipov’s *Death Metal and Music Criticism* (2012). These works led to the eruption of the independent academic discipline known as *metal studies* in the late 2000s (Kahn-Harris 2011: 251). According to Weinstein, who stretches During’s approach, “[m]etal studies is situated within cultural studies and cultural theory. Both of those tendencies were subversive to academic tradition, and metal studies is exemplary of all of these subversive tendencies” (2011: 23). She explains the birth of the current in the following fashion:

Metal studies is a latecomer to the proliferation of specialized “studies” of social and cultural groups that began four decades ago – when heavy metal did – as an outgrowth of the partially failed liberation movements of the 1960s – black (Africana) studies, women’s studies, gender studies, etc., all of which were based on affinities and bids for inclusion in the university, and not on strict definitions of scope and method, or on paradigms. Like its predecessors, metal studies represents the interests of scholars whose concerns have been socially, politically and culturally marginalized by established academic institutions and by the society at large. (2001: 244-5)

Besides counting with numerous scholars, the metal studies current is represented by the International Society for Metal Music Studies (<https://www.metalstudies.org/>), which holds a biannual international conference since 2008 (Spracklen *et al.* 2011: 209). 2015 saw the publication of the first issue of the peer reviewed journal *Metal Music Studies* (<https://www.intellectbooks.com/metal-music-studies>), and new books on the discipline are printed every year. The field's concern with interdisciplinarity has led song lyrics to being a topic addressed recurrently, generally with the focus on original lyrics (Farley 2009; Kneer *et al.* 2011; Frelik 2013; Lind 2013; Acosta and Pires-Santos 2015; Radovanović 2016; Barnett 2017; Fejes 2017; Elliott 2018; Mussies 2019; Kopanski 2020; Pieper 2020; Valijärvi *et al.* 2021). However, a large number of metal songs draw inspiration from previous cultural products, including literature and, more specifically, poetry. In this regard, metal music follows the steps of a vast number of folk songs inspired by poems², blurring the already unstable distinction between high and popular culture.³ Ingham considers poetry the most obvious source “for intersemiotic transformation where song is concerned” (2017: 334), going as far as to state that

the poem-to-song transfer is probably the most complete form of intermedial adaptation [...] since it is a practice that is predominantly holistic rather than fragmentary. Great poetry can provide the touchstone for creative independence from the source text, generating a definitive artistic response to source material in the process of transformation. (2017: 335)

Metal music is no alien to this strategy. Hundreds of metal songs are inspired on or refer to poetry and, since metal music fans usually learn the lyrics to the songs (Weinstein 2000: 123), the genre must be understood as a powerful catalyst to make poetry known to a wider audience: “It is not surprising [...] that many of [British metal band] Iron Maiden’s fans study the band’s sources, actually buy and read the books referred to in the song lyrics” (Walser 1993: 160); when Finnish symphonic metal band Nightwish released the track “Song of Myself”, based on Walt Whitman’s homonymous poem, “[m]any Nightwish fans purchased the book” (Holopainen 2013: n.p.). Juras goes as far as to state that “[w]here schools and parents may have failed, Iron Maiden made up for and

² For a sample list of popular songs inspired by poems, see “Songs Inspired by Poems” (n.d.).

³ Following Strinati’s discussion (2005: 34-45), it is arguable whether some extreme metal subgenres aimed towards a very reduced audience (death metal, doom metal) can be considered *popular culture* (Allett 2011); it is also unclear whether some poems transformed into metal songs adapt to definitions of *high culture* (e.g., Charles Manson’s, Aleister Crowley’s). For this reason, I will skip the use of these notions in order to avoid excessive generalisation.

expanded” (2020B). Metal music based on poetry falls in the category of influential adaptations, appropriations, citations and allusions that, for most fans of the genre, “define [their] first experiences or encounters with their precursor work of art” (Sanders 2006: 158). Because some “stories [...] are worth knowing but will not necessarily speak to a new audience without creative ‘reanimation’” (Galloway, qtd. in Hutcheon 2013: 8), on most occasions the original text is not simply sung or recited: a vast array of mechanisms come into play in order to make the poem relevant for today’s listeners. These transformative processes are sanctioned by Phillip Pullman’s “worthiness argument”, which he proposed in regard to theatre adaptations of classic literature for children: “it’s OK to adapt [...] It’s educational”. In terms of making classic poetry known to metal fans, the songs would not be, then, “a destination, but a road-sign” (2004: n.p.). However, the worth of the final cultural product does not depend exclusively on the inherent value of either the poem or the song, but also on the circumstances in which listeners access the music, that is, in the context of what Shuker labelled *consumption* (2001: 139) and Hutcheon *reception* (2013: 149). Thus, metal fans access poetry as song in a determined historical era and under a specific socio-political reality that varies depending on each listener’s circumstances.

As to why addressing this and not other music genres, an initial reason is that metal followers are more loyal than fans of other music styles (Van Buskirk 2015: n.p.), for which reason their scrutiny of the music is thorough and leads to a stronger embracement of its sources. Their experience is enhanced by the aesthetics associated with the genre – shocking album covers, unusual performers’ clothing, elaborate stage design in live concerts–, and by two central elements of the metal scene: its tendency towards transgression –understood as “the practice of boundary crossing, symbolically and/or practically, the practice of questioning and breaking taboos, the practice of questioning established values” (Hjelm *et al.* 2012: 14)–, and by its counterculture status:

A genre that incessantly explores the dark side of humanity will always already be provocative to some sections of society, particularly in more conservative religious cultures. Whether scene members like it or not, metal will frequently become positioned as counterculture simply by existing. (2012: 15)

Walser connects the exploration of the dark side of life with the fans’ “dissatisfaction with dominant identities and institutions and an intense yearning for reconciliation with something more credible” (1993: xvii). Metal can be thought of, then, as a mode of escapism, in our particular case aided by poetry:

Leaping beyond what they might see as the boring reverence of their school curriculum and the shallow expediency of the working world, metal musicians and fans draw on the power of centuries' worth of imaginative writing to make sense of their own social experiences and to imagine other possibilities. (1993: 160)

Moreover, adapting poetry to such a socially and culturally loaded genre involves recontextualising the original words into new, contemporary, and sometimes politically loaded realms, as will be exemplified later.

Not many scholars have focused either on the textual relation between literature and metal music, nor on the music as a channelling force to transmit preceding cultural products. Within the realm of metal studies, this relation –affecting both prose and poetry in English– has been discussed by Lusty (2013), Meller –focusing on Iron Maiden (2012, 2013A, 2013B)–, Juras (2020A) –regarding Iron Maiden's Poe-inspired “Murders in the Rue Morgue”–, Roberts (2017) and Juras (2020B) –who analyse Iron Maiden's seminal “Rime of the Ancient Mariner”–, Heilman (2018) –focusing on the parallelisms between the portrayal of the female in Romantic poetry and on the lyrics of British doom-death metal band My Dying Bride– and Bolay –who studies Symphony X's concept album *Paradise Lost* (2019). Regarding metal and poetry in languages other than English, Bolea has worked with 19th-century Romanian nihilist poetry (2018), Abbott and Ardrey (2018), and Ardrey (2021) with metal adaptations of Charles Baudelaire, and Botero Camacho and Picón del Campo with Dante's *Divine Comedy* (2017). Fejes (2017) and D'Amico (2010) have studied mythology in metal lyrics, and Fletcher and Umurhan (2020) the presence of classical antiquity in metal music. The literary side of academia does not seem to have engaged much with music, be it metal or any other genre: “the intrinsically protean, iterative quality of song has caused it to be rather neglected in the context of adaptation studies discourse” (Ingham 2017: 324).

Understanding why and how the transit from poem to metal song occurs will help draw to metal music the attention it deserves as cultural expression –or, should I say, as a culture–, removing its past stigmas and calling into attention the potential power of non-mainstream popular culture as culture-perpetuating media. The present study aims toward filling this gap and takes a step forward from previous efforts, widening the scope by analysing a larger corpus, combining textual with musical analysis, commenting on the topics addressed by the songs, the featured poets, the geographical origin and metal subgenre of the bands, and proposing a taxonomy of transformation categories. It is my contention that metal music is an appropriate and overlooked channel for the dissemination

and perpetuation of poetry because of its focus on performance –theatricality, solemnity, enhanced visual image–, appeal to the young audience –as opposed to secondary education’s institutionally-prescribed literature– and common topics and concerns shared with poets of the past. To prove this statement, I will analyse the appropriateness of metal music as an adequate media to transmit poetry to present day audiences, studying the mechanisms –both textual and musical– used in the corresponding transformative processes (adaptation, appropriation, recontextualisation, citation, allusion). To describe this process, I will catalogue a large corpus of metal songs into five transformation categories according to the degree of similarity of their main traits, while also paying attention to the uniqueness of each composition.

I have identified a total of 384 metal songs by 224 bands with intertextual ties to 146 poems by fifty-one different poets. Among them, I analyse in depth seventy-two songs referencing thirty-seven poems written by twenty-four different authors. For each one of them, I scrutinise different facts such as the choice of the source poem, the degree of loyalty to the original words, the significance of the poem’s new context, and also the musical resources used to convey the verses (choice of key, meter, timbre, and form, among others), when relevant. The scope of this thesis is circumscribed to poetry and lyrics in English. The main theoretical frameworks used are those of adaptation and appropriation theory, narrative theory, poetic theory, metal studies and musicology. The songs that comprise the working corpus are performed by sixty-one bands that cover a broad stylistic scope ranging from classic heavy metal to extreme subgenres like doom or brutal death. The unusually large size of this corpus will also allow for a quantitative analysis in order to find patterns related to poets, eras, and the bands’ subgenres and countries of origin. In finding information about poetry adaptations in metal music beyond the scope of my own knowledge, two websites have proved enormously helpful: the massive metal music database *Encyclopaedia Metallum: The Metal Archives* (<https://www.metal-archives.com/>), and the metal music lyrics database *Dark Lyrics* (<http://www.darklyrics.com/>). Four paradigmatic transformations are analysed per category. Because of their enormous popularity among metal musicians, specific poems, poets or groups of poets are scrutinised in separate chapters: Edgar Allan Poe’s poetry, John Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, and the War Poets. Prior to scrutinising the cultural products at hand, I will provide a contextual framework to the reader by explaining basic notions on

the relation between poetry and music, the themes and audience of metal music, and the subgenres of metal music.

1.2. ON POETRY AND (METAL) MUSIC

Music is a natural media for conveying words arranged according to a pattern: “Our best evidence about primitive song suggests that melodies and rhythms precede words, that the first step toward poetry was the fitting of words to pre-existent musical patterns” (Winn 1993: 803). In fact, it seems that the distinction between music and poetry is a modern concern: “The Greeks used the same word, *mousikē*, to describe dance, music, poetry, and elementary education” (1993: 804). Furthermore, poetry is “language sung, chanted, spoken, or written according to some pattern of recurrence that emphasizes the relationships between words on the basis of sound as well as sense” (Baldick 2001: 198). The written form being at the end of the list reminds us that poetry was initially transmitted in oral form, and the mention of the words-sound pattern invites us to reinforce the idea of music as a convenient host for poetic instances: “Poetry began as song and continues as song; it is usually best appreciated when spoken or sung by a human voice” (Ferguson *et al.* 2005: lix).⁴ English poetry is a particularly good fit for music, since the usual organisation of English verse in two-syllable feet naturally matches the binary meter in which most contemporary western popular music is written: the 4/4 time, in which every bar or measure has room for four beats, each of them allotting a quarter note (Harnum 2001: 103). Following is a scansion of the first verse of William Shakespeare’s “Sonnet CXXX” (2008[1609]: 1990), written in the most popular meter in English poetry: iambic pentameter (five iambic feet, each one of them featuring an unaccented syllable followed by an accented one):⁵

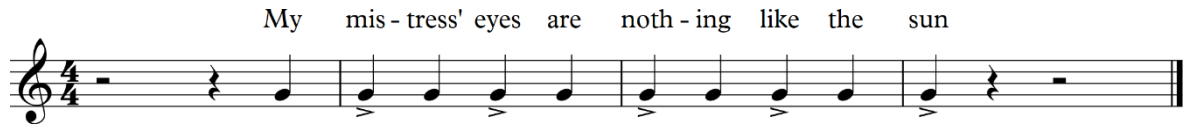
x / x / x / x / x /
My mis | tress’ eyes | are noth | ing like | the sun

Likewise, the first and third beats in a musical 4/4 measure are strong (i.e., accented), while the second and fourth are weak (i.e., unaccented). These strong beats are also called

⁴ For a precise account of the organic relations existing between music and poetry, see Cook (1961).

⁵ Following standard notation, accented syllables are marked with a slash and nonaccented ones with a cross. Light accents bear a backslash, and extra-metrical syllables are represented with a cross between parentheses. Since verse scansion is simply a convention to analyse poetic prosody (Adams 2003[1997]: 12), it will be used throughout this thesis only when it is convenient to explain the transformation process from verse to song.

downbeats, as opposed to beats two and four, which are named *upbeats*. Example 1 shows how iambic pentameter naturally adapts to a 4/4 rhythm. Strong beats are marked with an accent below.⁶

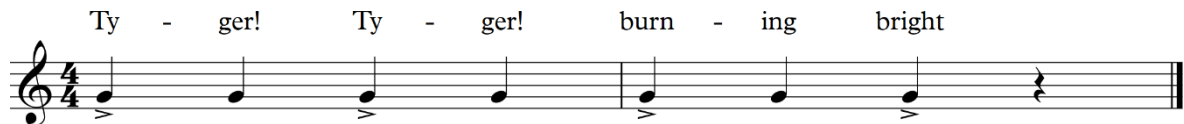


Example 1. Proposed adaptation of an iambic pentameter to 4/4 musical meter.

Another popular meter in English poetry is trochaic meter, where the accent falls on the first syllable of each foot. It is found almost exclusively in lyric poetry (Adams 2003[1997]: 55). Here is a scansion of the first verse in William Blake’s “The Tyger”, in trochaic tetrameter:

/ x / x / x / (x)
 Ty - ger! | Ty - ger! | burn - ing | bright

Like iambic pentameter, it also fits a 4/4 musical meter naturally, as seen in Example 2. However, the resulting melody is more monotonous and lacks the playfulness resulting from having the first musical note at the end of a bar.⁷



Example 2. Proposed adaptation of a trochaic tetrameter to 4/4 musical meter.

Regarding the poetic content, there are two particular elements that make metal music especially appropriate for communicating poetry. The first one is its openness of form, “a disregard for the temporal limits of the pop song” (Straw 1984: 107) that welcomes almost any kind of written material:

Heavy metal’s primary distinguishing characteristic is that it embraces a literary structure more than most popular music; “while rock is notorious for its verse-chorus-verse structure and jazz emphasizes a looser version of the same allowing unfettered improvisation, metal

⁶ All musical transcriptions are mine.

⁷ For a more detailed account of rhythm and metre, see chapter seven in Leech (1969).

emphasizes a motivic, melodic narrative structure in the same way that classical and baroque music do. Each piece may utilize other techniques, but what holds it together is a melodic progression between ideas that do not fit into simple verse-chorus descriptors”. (Lusty 2013: 103-4)⁸

The second relevant element is metal’s wide dramatic range, exemplified in resources such as guitar distortion, frenetic rhythmic activity, loud volume –sometimes contrasted with abrupt silence–, high register vocals –or low guttural voices in the most radical subgenres–, and extended guitar solos. Bogue tells us that

[t]he basic sound is aptly named “heavy metal”, for both words convey something essential about the music. It is heavy in that it is emphatically percussive, “thick” in texture, and highly amplified in the lower registers. It is metal in that its sound is dominated by a particular gamut of high distortion, low frequency “grinding”, and “crunching” timbres produced by amplified solid-body electric guitars. (2004: 100)

These technical devices are usually combined with an elaborate visual imagery in album design and live performance. Hutcheon claims that “[i]n operas and musicals, the unrealistic conventions of singing act to distance us, but the music counters that by provoking identification and a strong affective response” (2013: 134). However, that is not the case for metal music, where a “major requirement is the explicit display of emotionality”, the “range of emotions [...] including pain, defiance, anger and excitement” and excluding “softness, irony, and subtlety” (Weinstein 2000: 26). Regarding instrumental musical elements, most metal music –and, certainly, the majority of the present corpus– is written in 4/4 meter and in minor keys (Kahn-Harris 2007: 31; Arnett 1996: 46), which –although counterexamples abound– are supposed to trigger sadness and melancholy in the listener (Harnum 2001: 249), as opposed to the major modes prevalent in cheerful pop songs. Regarding minor modes, Walser remarks that, while most metal music is in the natural minor mode (aeolian) or in its close neighbour (dorian), speed metal –and, by extension, I may add, all extreme metal subgenres– feature the most enigmatic phrygian and locrian modes (Walser 1993: 46), which include notable interval alterations – a flat second and a flat fifth, respectively– that suggest uneasiness and lack of resolution or, as Walser puts it, “seem claustrophobic and unstable” (1993: 46).

The use of guitar distortion and power chords are also defining elements of the genre (Walser 1993: 2). A power chord is a two-note pseudo-chord that only comprises the root

⁸ The quote embedded in Lusty’s citation belongs to the webpage *The History of Heavy Metal Music* – accessed by Lusty at anus.com on 25 January 2014–, which was not accessible at the time this thesis was written (April 2021). Nevertheless, I found the webpage’s content at mformetal.weebly.com/history-2.html.

and fifth notes of its corresponding chord, omitting the third, which is the note that establishes the chord's mode (major or minor). For example, C, E and G form a C major chord (C), while C, E flat and G form a C minor chord (Cm); however, a C power chord (C5) only features C and G,⁹ for which reason it is not possible to figure out whether it is major or minor unless it bears a harmonic functional relation with the chords surrounding it. When this is the case, power chord sequences delineate harmony without making it explicit. In order to clarify certain musical explanations, I will term the underlying sequence of chords a *covert harmony*, and I will indicate it between parenthesis in some musical transcriptions (e.g., when submitted to harmonic analysis, the power chord sequence D5 G5 C5 will usually outline the covert harmony Dm G7 C). In order not to oversimplify, two distinctive elements of the genre require further explanation. On the one hand, many metal songs do not obey the rules of Euro classical harmony (Lilja 2019: 367), for which reason they defy harmonic analysis. On the other hand, the sequence of harmonics (the frequencies that constitute a wave, in this case a sound wave) generated by a distorted power chord imply a major third (unlike the resulting harmonics of the equivalent power chord played without distortion), therefore being perceived by the human ear as major (2019: 357), even if their harmonic function is that of a minor chord (2019: 373). This feature introduces a harmonic ambiguity that is inherent to metal music, as opposed to folk, pop, and, to a lesser extent, rock, all of them styles whose songs are usually based on traditional harmonic rules. This ambiguity contributes to the edgy sound of metal music and, in certain situations, to an increase in dramatism that matches the lyrical intention of the adapted poetic verses.¹⁰ Walser elaborates further on the effects the distortion-power chord dyad has on the music:

Distortion also results in a timbral change toward brightness, toward a more complex waveform, since distorting a signal increases the energy of its higher harmonics. Power chords, on the other hand, produce powerful signals below the actual pitches being sent to the amplifier. Thus, the distorted guitar signal is expanded in both directions: the higher harmonics produced by distortion add brilliance and edge (and what guitarists sometimes call "presence") to the sound, and the resultant tones produced by the interval combinations of power chords create additional low frequencies, adding weight to the sound. (1993: 43)

Focusing on the blue-collar fans who established metal music's original following, Berger identifies metal's harmonic fragmentation as a way of expressing frustration about "limited job opportunities, a collapsing industrial base and ever-shrinking representation in

⁹ On chord notation, see Nettles and Graf (1997: 22-24).

¹⁰ For a technical discussion on guitar distortion, see Herbst (2017A: 26).

the workplace and the government” (1999A: 171-72). Musicological analysis will provide a multidisciplinary approach to this thesis. However, since this is a philological work, I will point out the particular musical resources used by each song only when they are relevant to their analysis as transformations of poetry.

1.3. ON METAL MUSIC’S AUDIENCE AND THEMES

The previously mentioned importance of the context of reception for any kind of adaptation (Hutcheon 2013: 142-43) can be applied not only to metal as music, but to metal as a culture. Without venturing too much into sociological territory, a basic understanding of who listens to metal songs and which are their motivations and topics of interest is necessary to fathom the reach of poetry into metal music, so that not only the resulting musical product, but also the reasons behind the transformative process are scrutinised. Metal music took form in 1970’s industrial British cities (Walser 1993: x), emerging as a blue-collar youth subculture whose practitioners “were little different from their fans” (Weinstein 2000: 74). Due to their humble origins, metal followers were considered uneducated and tasteless by a general opinion that rejected the music’s loudness and shocking aesthetics. In 1985, and in order to debase metal and limit its significance, the aforementioned PMRC relied on the following appraisal of metal themes by music professor Joe Stuessy: “extreme rebellion, extreme violence, substance abuse, sexual promiscuity/perversion (including homosexuality, bisexuality, sadomasochism, necrophilia, etc.), Satanism” (qtd. in Walser 1993: 139). The mention of homosexuality and bisexuality as perversions is preposterous enough to reject Stuessy’s assessment altogether. Moreover, the inclusion of sexual practices and substance abuse as major metal topics is simply false. Using factual data, Walser alerts as to the results of a contemporaneous study addressing the lyrical topics of eighty-eight metal songs in *Hit Parader’s Top 100 Metal Albums* (1989) and *Hit Parader’s Metal of the 80s* (1990), and which contradicts Stuessy’s claims:

Assertion of or longing for intensity: 27
Lust: 17
Loneliness, victimization, self-pity: 17
Love: 14 (affirmation, 8; regret or longing, 6)
Anger, rebellion, madness: 8
Didactic or critical (antidrug, anti-Devil, anti-TV evangelism,
critique of the subversion of justice by wealth): 5
(Walser 1993: 139)

Metal's take on Satanism is varied and complex, with most bands using it only as a metaphor through which to challenge the western religious establishment, and only a tiny fraction embracing it with conviction. As aforesaid, this topic will be addressed in detail in chapter 4. Regarding violence, Bogue appeals to metal lyrics' "mimetic" quality that allows them to reflect the existing violence instead of promoting it, as "[t]here is no inherent evil, violent, or even aggressive music (loud, yes, assertive, perhaps, but not inherently aggressive)" (2004: 108). In a 1995 study, psychologist Jeffrey Arnett analysed 115 metal songs released between 1988 and 1992 by some of the most popular bands of the genre. He identified violence, angst and protest as the most recurrent lyrical themes (1996: 46), and claimed metal music to be

inherently well suited to expressions of violence; the rough, distorted guitar sound, the rumbling bass guitar, and the pounding drums would not be effective in conveying gentleness or compassion but are exceptionally effective in portraying chaos, death, war, destruction, and other violent themes. (1996: 47)

Arnett's study also identifies the mood of each song analysed. The idea of isolation and alienation is reinforced by his findings: 85% of his working corpus expresses feelings of anger, sadness, and fear, common in young fans (1996: 46). Walser explained this correlation by stating that most metal fans back then were young, since "much of metal deals with experiences of powerlessness that may be, to some extent, overcome" (1993: 110). More recently, Rowe admits metal globalisation to have expanded the profile of the average metal fan. She acknowledges, however, that the young are still majority (2017: 114). Based on questionnaires filled by a total of over 14,000 metal followers of over seventy different nationalities, Chaker (2010), Varas-Díaz *et al.* (2015), Guibert and Guibert (2016), and Ury-Petes (2016) find out that twenty-first century metal fans are well-educated members of the middle and upper middle classes, only a small minority of whom are unemployed, and most of whom identify as male. Due to the globalisation of metal music,¹¹ early studies mostly focused on Britain and the USA are no longer valid to describe metal music today, half a century after its inception. Arnett's findings must, then, be taken with caution. Not only are they partial (Hoffin 2020: 33), but also over a quarter of a century old. Fortunately, the disciplines of psychology and metal studies have expanded the scope of analysis since then, backing Bogue's claim against metal being inherently aggressive and concluding that, as much as metal music can instil a sensation of violence to non-fans, the music and the lyrics help fans cope with their own feelings of

¹¹ For the globalisation of metal music, see Brown *et al.* (2016).

loneliness and powerlessness, as well as reduce their tendency to violence and aggression, and also their levels of anxiety and stress (Recours *et al.* 2009; Baker and Brown 2014; Sharman and Dingle 2015; Kneer 2016: 70; Barnett 2017: 86; Rowe and Guerin 2017; Thompson *et al.* 2018). Besides, metal music provides a safe area for its followers to experiment oppression and release since, as Berger comments: “[i]nside the performative frame, we are free to experience and appreciate rage or depression, because we need not worry about the consequences” (1999B: 272). As for lyrical themes, Weinstein initially identified two different, even contradicting approaches:

Dionysian and Chaotic. Dionysian experience celebrates the vital forces of life through various forms of ecstasy. It is embodied in the unholy trinity of sex, drugs, and rock and roll. The Dionysian is juxtaposed to a strong emotional involvement in all that challenges the order and hegemony of everyday life: monsters, the underworld and hell, the grotesque and horrifying, disasters, mayhem, carnage, injustice, death, and rebellion. (2000: 35)

Dionysian themes being associated with commercial metal subgenres that saw their better days in the 1980s, it is safe to assume that most metal today falls within the Chaotic category. According to Weinstein, “[r]espectable society tries to repress chaos. Heavy metal brings its images to the forefront”. Metal’s “insistence on bringing chaos to awareness is a complex affirmation of power, of the power of the forces of disorder, of the power to confront those forces in the imagination, and of the power to transcend those forces in art” (2000: 38). What she calls metal music’s “discourse on chaos [...] includes interest in disorder, conflict, opposition, and contradiction”, and “speaks of injustice and of resistance, rebellion, and death” (2000: 39). Since these topics are heavily featured in poetry –more specifically in the three poetic realms that deserve a separate chapter in this thesis–, it is logical to assume that a relevant number of metal bands may be tempted to use poems as a source of inspiration for their lyrics. In fact, Weinstein confirms that “heavy metal did not invent the discourse of chaos. Indeed, it has borrowed liberally from those cultural forms that already incorporated it” (2000: 39). Walser broadens this idea by highlighting metal authors’ commitment to intertextual exploration:

heavy metal musicians explore images of horror and madness in order to comprehend and critique the world as they see it. Although they are continually stereotyped and dismissed as apathetic nihilists, metal fans and musicians build on the sedimented content of musical forms and cultural icons to create for themselves a social world of greater depth and intensity. They appropriate materials for their music and lyrics from the myriad sources made available to them by mass mediation, selecting those they can fuse into a cultural alloy that is strong and conductive. (1993: 170)

More specifically, Weinstein identifies religion as metal's preferred topic in order to address chaos, mentioning both the Judeo-Christian tradition and the pagan religions of Northern Europe (2000: 39), while Purcell highlights the aesthetic appeal of religious imagery and its efficiency at exploring binary moral conflicts (2003: ch. 17). The former identifies lyrics dealing with mental illness as an expression of chaos "located inside ourselves" (2000: 41). Chaos is also represented in songs about war and death. Other common thematic sources for metal music are the fantastic, the otherworldly, the grotesque, and the occult (Weinstein 2000: 39; Purcell 2003: ch. 17; Bogue 2004: 113; Kahn-Harris 2007: 3). All listed themes welcome an imagery of night and darkness (Weinstein 2000: 42-43). Since a large amount of metal lyrics address oppressive topics, and due to powerlessness being a major feeling fans cope with through the music, it is only logical that many metal lyrics revolve around the idea of power:

A substantial amount of metal songs seems to concentrate on the concept of power. There are songs that discuss occult power, tracks that mention the power struggle between parents and teens, medieval power fantasies and a variety of other topics. However, the key element in the majority of heavy metal songs is the concept of power. (Gross 1990: 124)

Wielding power within the realm of song listening allows metal fans to exert control over chaos as they involve in a cathartic experience led by both music and lyrics. As well as power and control are exemplified not only thematically, but also musically, they are not only experienced by the fans, but also by the musicians. The distorted feedback of an electric guitar requires taming, and "guitar solos typically take the form of rhetorical outbursts, characterized by fast licks and soaring, amazing virtuosity that can create a sense of perfect freedom and omnipotence; they model escape from social constraints" (Walser 1993: 53). This continuous struggle between tension and release validates Berger's dichotomous assertion that "[m]etal is about action and action denied" (1999B: 291). The following section will delve deeper into specific themes and musical elements per subgenre.

1.4. ON METAL MUSIC AND ITS SUBGENRES

As usual with any art form, pinpointing an exact date for the inception of metal music, or establishing a fixed genealogy of subgenres, is not only a very complicated task, but a source of enormous controversy among scholars, journalists, fans and musicians. Regarding the origin of the genre, while it is widely agreed that its roots are in 1960s hard

rock, commentators have entertained different views: some claim that certain bands from the era –Led Zeppelin, Deep Purple, Steppenwolf, Blue Cheer– should be considered early instances of metal music bands (Walser 1993: 9); others consider these groups to be the main influence of the actual metal bands who gave form to the genre in post-industrial British cities in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Weinstein 2000: 14), and among which are Black Sabbath, Judas Priest and Uriah Heep. Some are so adventurous as to establish a foundational date: February 13th, 1970, the day Black Sabbath released their first, eponymous album (Christe 2010: n.p.; Trunk, qtd. in Wiederhorn and Turman 2013: n.p.). Weinstein states that

[h]eavy metal [...] has a code, or set of rules, that allows one to objectively determine whether a song, an album, a band, or a performance should be classified as belonging to the category “heavy metal.” That code is not systematic, but it is sufficiently coherent to demarcate a core of music that is undeniably heavy metal. (2000: 6)

The fundamental elements Weinstein suggests are guitar distortion, pervasive use of power chords, avoidance of blues harmonies and heavy drumming. The use of guitar riffs –repetitive figures that introduce or define song sections– is another common element. High-register vocals were a distinctive trademark of early heavy metal, although nowadays it is far from being the only vocal approach in the genre. In order to limit the scope of a potentially enormous working corpus, and coinciding with Tsatsishvili (2011: 18-19), I will take Weinstein’s approach and I will focus on bands whose music is unarguably metal, thus excluding borderline or proto examples of the genre.

As for subdivisions within metal music, different combinations of subgenres both among them and with other styles of music have given way to a massive genealogical tree. As in most genre taxonomies, boundaries are difficult to describe with precision, and certain subcategories are sometimes elusive due to the extreme level of specificity of their characterising details. As Poole has it, “heavy metal history might be explored as a complex, multilayered model [...] rather than a linear, orderly, and sequential map” (2014: 299). Nevertheless, for the purpose of the present work it is important to identify the defining characteristics of the main metal music subgenres, since bands belonging to some of them might be more likely to inspire their songs on poetry than others; and even within those which are more prone to relying on literature, certain topics or settings might be better welcomed than others. The most valiant efforts towards establishing a metal music genealogy so far have been Tsatsishvili’s subgenre classification (2011: 16-29) and Dunn’s “Heavy Metal Family Tree” (2012). Based on both works and on my own knowledge as a

former metal musician, I have created a simplified diagram of metal music subgenres (Figure 1). I have focused on the main subgenres, incurring in generalisations to avoid an excessive stylistic dispersion that would make the reading of this thesis gratuitously complicated.

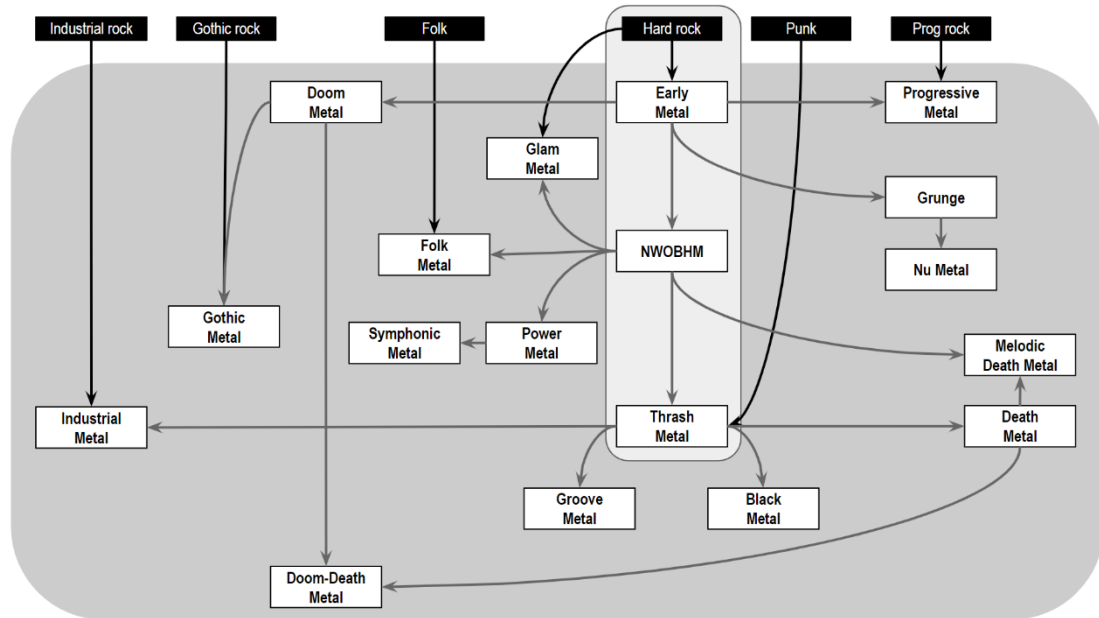


Figure 1. Main subgenres of metal music.

The diagram features three separate areas: music genres that influenced metal music are indicated in the black boxes at the top. The box sequence in the section with a lighter background encompasses the most prominent and influential subgenres stemming from hard rock in top-down chronological order: early metal, NWOBHM, and thrash metal. The remaining white boxes stand for other subsequent metal music subgenres. Directional arrows indicate which subgenres influenced others. In order to improve readability, a second diagram () includes the names of paradigmatic bands for each one of the subgenres identified.

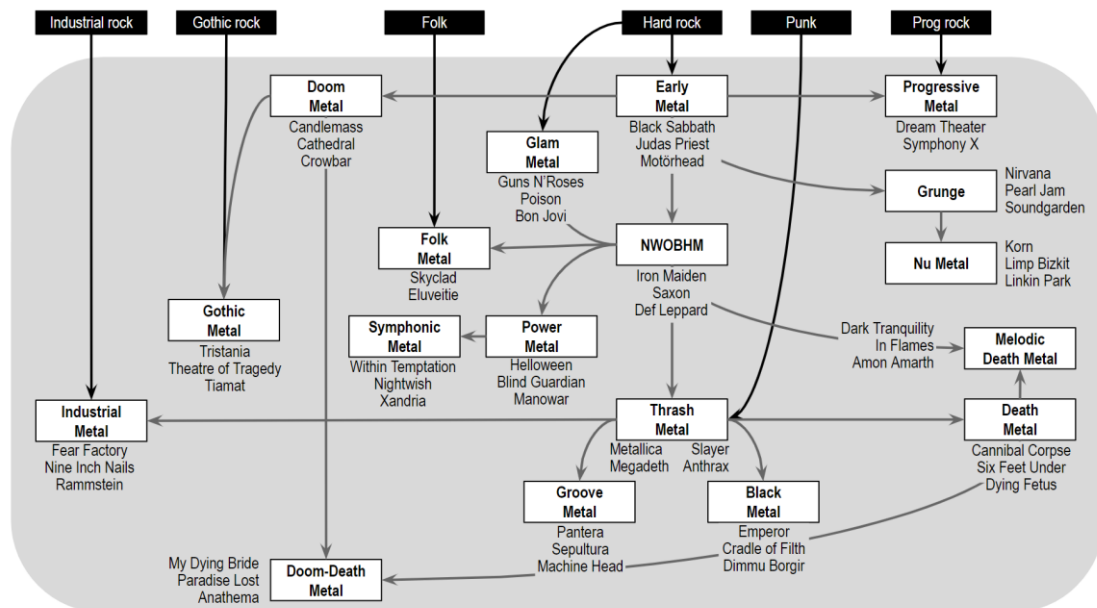


Figure 2. Examples of paradigmatic bands for the main subgenres of metal music.

The category identified as *early metal* encompasses the foundational bands from the first half of the 1970s that embraced the defining elements of the genre. Judas Priest helped enrich the sonic palette of metal music through their use of what has been described as *twin lead guitars* (Christe 2010: ch. 1): instead of having a lead guitarist play melody on top of the chords executed by the rhythm guitarist, both guitars shared lead and rhythmic roles, sometimes exchanging and intertwining melodic lines in counterpoint fashion. The second half of the decade saw the emergence of a number of British bands whose music strengthened those defining elements, increased the level of virtuosity, and abandoned the blues-based sound of 1960s hard rock in favour of modal harmonies (Tsatsishvili 2011: 19; Hjelm *et al.* 2012: 6). The current was named the New Wave of British Heavy Metal, or NWOBHM, and included bands like Raven, Saxon, Tygers of Pan Tang, Def Leppard and, most notoriously, Iron Maiden (Christe 2010: ch. 2), who took Judas Priest’s twin guitar concept a step forward by adding to the mix elaborate bass lines crafted and executed by their leader Steve Harris. Since the bands from these two periods established the defining elements of metal music before the emergence of its multiple subgenres, sometimes their styles are generically called *classic heavy metal* or, simply, *classic metal* (Weinstein 2000: 8). The lyric content of these foundational bands addressed a varied array of subject matters appealing to young listeners: isolation, unfulfilled love, escape to fantasy worlds, or despair in the face of war and injustice.

Metal started to fragment in the early 1980s, initially through the emergence of two movements difficult to reconcile. On the one side, a number of bands went mainstream by sharpening the shocking aesthetics of metal and sweetening the music for its mass consumption. The current has received many names: glam metal, lite metal, pop metal, or even hair metal (due to the flamboyant hairdos of the subgenre's musicians). While they featured electric guitars and high register vocals, and their public image revelled on provocation, their music was not as rhythmically intense as that of their predecessors, their song forms adapted to pop music clichés, and their lyrics embraced festive moods. Tsatsishvili goes so far as to deny glam metal any musical interest, rather considering it a subculture devoid of defining musical elements (2011: 19). On the other side, some American NWOBHM-influenced bands incorporated elements of punk into their music, creating a style identified by screamed vocals, fast staccato riffs, alternating tempos, chromaticism combined with modal harmonies, and serious lyrics focused on “death, destruction, and evil” (Purcell 2003: n.p.; Tsatsishvili 2011: 21). The current, known as thrash metal, and defined by the bands known as “the Big Four” (Metallica, Megadeth, Slayer, and Anthrax), is considered as the first extreme metal subgenre (Kahn-Harris 2007: 3-5). Unlike glam metal, the personal image of its practitioners is not ornate, favouring long hair, t-shirts, and denim, and its original audience was not mainstream, but of blue-collar origin, thus establishing a fan-base continuity with the pioneering metal bands. Glam metal and thrash metal exemplify Weinstein's binary opposition between the Dionysian and the Chaotic. Regarding thrash metal's lyrical approach,

thrash bends the discourse on chaos into specific images and cultivates an explicit rather than allusive lyrical style. It eschews the mystery, the nonspecific ominousness, that characterizes many heavy metal songs. Instead, lyrics focus on the bleak but concrete horrors of the real or possibly real world: the isolation and alienation of individuals, the corruption of those in power, and the horrors done by people to one another and to the environment. (2000: 50)

While glam metal did not spring further subgenres, and its popularity decreased dramatically in the 1990s, thrash metal gave rise to a fruitful offspring that kept evolving ever after, as explained below.

A precise diagram traversal is in order. Although doom metal is not a particularly aggressive or provocative subgenre, it is considered a form of extreme metal due to its main feature being the extreme slowness of its performances, as opposed to the speed inherent to the metal genre at large. Emerging from Black Sabbath's eponymous song, it coined different subgenres of its own, like sludge metal, drone metal, stoner metal (which

includes elements from stoner rock) and doom-death, which will be discussed later. Doom metal's songs tend to be long and formally elaborated, featuring minor harmonic keys almost exclusively, and their lyrics are usually negative, focusing on feelings of despair and melancholy more than on themes of rebellion. Combined with the aesthetic and thematic elements of gothic rock, in the 1990s it gave way to gothic metal, which features faster, medium-tempo songs, and adds a romantic tinge to the sorrowful lyrical content of doom metal. Progressive metal stems from early metal's incorporation of elements from 1970s progressive rock. It is a very technical style that features long, complex forms and involves constant harmonic, metric and rhythmic shifts. Its lyrics most often take the listener to fantasy realms. The early 1990s saw the emergence of grunge, a new subgenre characterised by crudeness and rawness that stripped metal of musical or visual elaboration. Mostly steered by the Seattle-based band Nirvana, the current was associated with the demographic known as Generation X, identified at the time with emotional disregard and disinterest in life. Coincidentally, grunge lyrics focus on isolation and despair. In the second half of the decade, grunge blended with hip hop and dance music, giving birth to the current known as nu metal, whose lyrics revolved around feelings of pain and alienation (Kahn-Harris 2007: 1).

Based on the NWOBHM, a group of 1980s bands decided to focus on the epic and the fantastic, extending the formal range of their compositions and shrouding their performances in elaborate theatricality. The subgenre, labelled power metal, was undertaken by several bands both in the USA and Europe (especially Germany). It features fast tempos, high register quasi-operatic vocals, melodic riffs, and a prominent use of double bass drums (Tsatsishvili 2011: 20). The lyrics describe fantasy worlds and usually reference other forms of popular culture. As some power metal bands decided to take further compositional and timbre-related steps forward –by the incorporation of keyboards, choirs and, occasionally, symphonic orchestras–, the subgenre evolved towards what is known as symphonic metal, a current that features fast tempos and anthem-like songs (Tsatsishvili 2011: 21). Another subgenre emerging directly from the NWOBHM is folk metal, which fuses metal with folk music elements through incorporating to the metal musical setting a host of traditional folk melodies and instruments like whistles, violin, bagpipes, or hurdy-gurdy.

Despite its disregard for glam metal and its consideration as an extreme metal form, thrash metal enjoyed some mainstream popularity that paved the way for the emergence of

two associated styles in the 1990s: groove metal, which focused on rhythm and employed slower tempos; and industrial metal, which incorporated elements from industrial music and welcomed an experimental approach to timbre, form, and production. The three other thrash-based subgenres that originated in the late 1980s –death metal, doom-death metal, and black metal– are considered extreme metal. Although they are hardly mainstream, they have enjoyed good health in terms of number of bands and audience loyalty up to the present day. In his seminal *Extreme Metal: Music and Culture on the Edge* (2007), Keith-Kahn Harris identifies these subgenres as “more obscure”, and claims that they represent “the most diverse, the most artistically vibrant, the most dynamic and also the most problematic aspects of metal culture” (2007: 2). In Figure 3, they are identified in black-background boxes within the metal subgenres area. Because of their relevance for the present thesis, presenting clear musical differences among them, and being associated with different scenes (2007: 99), their defining elements must be described with a certain level of detail.

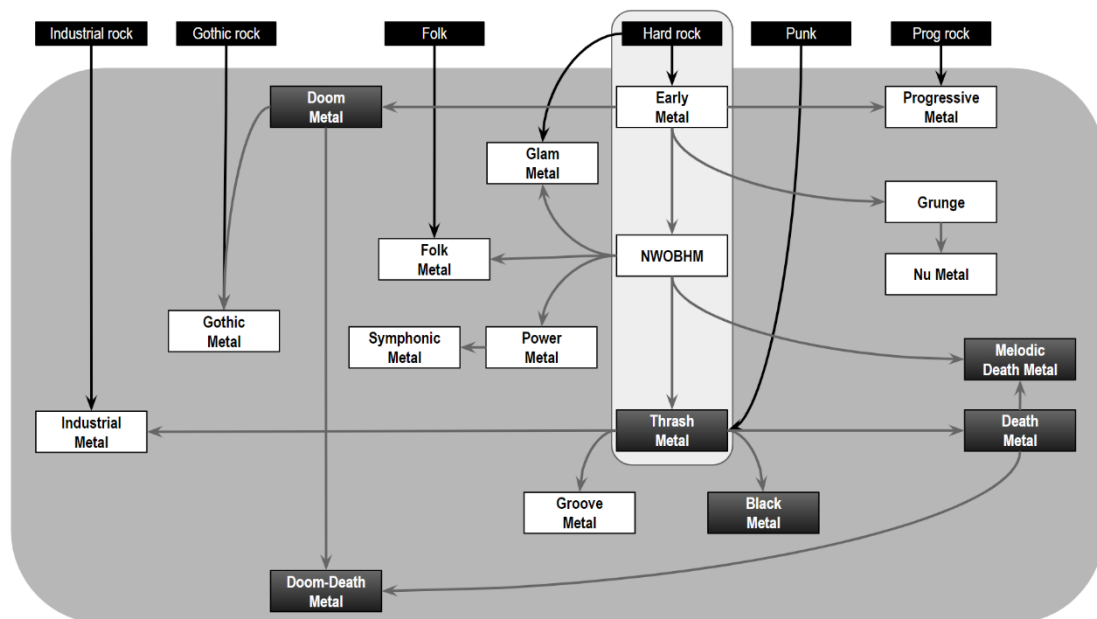


Figure 3. Extreme metal subgenres.

If thrash metal favours the rhythmic over the melodic, death metal removes the melodic component almost completely, focusing on fast, aggressive tremolo guitar riffs, heavy drumming aided by the use of double bass drums, and continuous rhythmic shifts that allow for songs with very complex structures outlined by a sequence of many loosely

related sections. Chromaticism is generally preferred over modal harmony, guitars and bass are usually tuned down several semitones, and guitar solos are almost absent. This extreme quality may have its origin in a conscious will for competition: “Death Metal was the product of Thrash bands attempting to outdo one another in terms of speed, technicality, and overall extremity” (Purcell 2003: n.p.). The vocals are sung percussively, usually growled in pitchless grunts. In most cases, the words are impossible to understand without a lyric sheet. The lyrics deal with “horror, violence, Satanism, occultism, anti-Christianity, apocalypse, war, rebellion, and social themes” (Phillipov 2012: ch. 6). On some occasions, these issues are addressed in an overt, almost comic way, with explicit references to blood, gore and mutilation that have invited some scholars to compare the subgenre to horror movies (Weinstein 2000: 51; Purcell 2003: ch. 3; Kahn-Harris 2007: 43; Christe 2010: ch. 14). As the 1990s progressed, death metal experienced two contrary movements: one of further radicalisation, which gave birth to brutal death metal; and another of return to the roots, where melodic elements of classic heavy metal were combined with the steady rhythmic pulse of death metal. This subgenre came to be known as melodic death metal.

The 1990s were also witness to the blending of two theoretically opposite styles in the doom-death metal subgenre. Originated in England, it combined the timbre roughness and guttural vocals of death metal with the slow tempos of doom metal and the concern for melody and clean vocals of classic heavy metal, thus proposing a music that feasts on contrast. As well as doom metal was a precursor to gothic metal, the most influential doom-death bands also incorporated gothic elements to their music. Doom-death is characterised by gloomy, melancholy musical atmospheres, the blend of electric and symphonic instruments, minor harmonies, epic song forms, and elaborate lyrics that represent feelings of pain, sorrow, loneliness, despair, and epistemological uncertainty. A radical subgenre of doom-death metal with languid tempos is called funeral doom metal. Primarily based in the Scandinavian countries, black metal is possibly the most controversial of all metal subgenres. Originally an anti-Christian metal faction that embraced Satanism and whose music was “characterized by screamed, high-pitched vocals, extremely rapid tempos, ‘tremolo’ riffs, a ‘trebly’ guitar sound, and simple production values” (Kahn-Harris 2007: 4-5), the fascination of its practitioners for the occult and the rural, pure, unspoiled pagan past of their homelands led some of them to appropriate Nazi symbology and to support fascism, racism, and eugenics (2007: 38-41) to

the point of being linked to real-world events: “Norwegian black metal became notorious for a spate of murders, suicides and church burnings linked to its main protagonists” (2007: 4). This particular political agenda does not apply, though, to the vast majority of bands in the subgenre.

2. CLASSIFICATION OF METAL MUSIC SONGS BASED ON POETRY

2.1 TAXONOMICAL DEFINITION

Since the working corpus of this thesis is inspired by or references previous texts, adaptation theory will aid the analysis. However, it would be a mistake to assess the songs under scrutiny based exclusively on their subordinate relation to the poems they gather inspiration from, since, as Hutcheon has it, “to be second is not to be secondary or inferior; likewise, to be first is not to be originary or authoritative”. Moreover, the already mentioned fact that many metal fans discover poems through their metal adaptations validates Hutcheon’s claim that “[m]ultiple versions exist laterally, not vertically” (2013: xv). Metal songs will be scrutinised, then, as both transformations of previous texts and also as autonomous cultural products: as “derivation[s] that [are] not derivative” (2013: 9). Adaptations to a different medium are “intersemiotic transpositions from one sign system [...] to another” (2013:17). Since songs are comprised of two different sign systems (text and music), the adaptation process is not completely intersemiotic, but part intramedial and part intermedial. On the one hand, there is a purely textual adaptation process where song lyrics are taken, extracted, or modified from the source poem; on the other hand, music adds a new semiotic layer either to the source poem (if the song does not modify the original verses) or to the song lyrics (if they alter their source text). I will study the musical resources used as long as they aid the transformation process. However, since this is a philological work, the study of textual discrepancies (or lack thereof) between source and target texts will be the main driving force behind the proposed transformation taxonomy.

The full working corpus of this thesis has been divided into five different transformation categories depending on the textual resources used to convey the source poetic verses in song lyric form. Following Rabinowitz’s claim that the old terminology for adaptation and appropriation processes –or, as he calls them, “loot[ing] earlier sources” (1980: 241)– is insufficient, since it does not “discriminate among the ways the models are used, and thus tell us little about the effects they produce” (1980: 242), I have expanded previous taxonomies to model my categories. As early as 1975, Geoffrey Wagner proposed three adaptive modes to classify film adaptations of novels: *transposition* –“a novel is directly given on the screen, with the minimum of apparent interference” (1975: 222)–, *commentary* –“an original is taken and either purposely or inadvertently altered in some respect”, including intentional modification “rather than an infidelity or outright violation”

(1975: 223-24)–, and *analogy* –“a fairly considerable departure for the sake of making another work of art” (1975: 227). For our present business, Wagner’s *transposition* could apply to metal songs whose lyrics are a full poem, with no ultimate modification, *commentary* would include lyrics heavily based on the source verses, and *analogy* would incorporate songs that recontextualise the original poem in some way. The two latter categories are broad, and the distinction between them not clear enough. Wagner’s proposal also suffers from the outdated evaluation of adaptations based solely on their loyalty to the original, so further refinement is in order. In her acclaimed *Adaptation and Appropriation* (2006), Julie Sanders established the difference between an adaptation, which “signals a relationship with an informing sourcetext or original”, and an appropriation, which

frequently affects a more decisive journey away from the informing source into a wholly new cultural product and domain. This may or may not involve a generic shift, and it may still require the intellectual juxtaposition of (at least) one text against another that we have suggested is central to the reading and spectating experience of adaptations. But the appropriated text or texts are not always as clearly signalled or acknowledged as in the adaptive process. They may occur in a far less straightforward context than is evident in making a film version of a canonical play. (2006: 26)

Sanders discusses *West Side Story* (Laurents, Bernstein and Sondheim 1957) as an appropriation of Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* (2008[1597]: 905-72). Despite plot similarities, the narrative experiments shifts in geographic and temporal settings, characters and motivations that entail “a wholesale rethinking of the terms of the original” (2006: 28). Sanders’s *appropriation* seems to overlap with Wagner’s *analogy*. His *transposition* and *commentary* would be, then, instances of *adaptation*. There is yet another category. It is common for metal bands (or in any other song genre) to include short quotations of or allusions to poetry. Since these citations are embedded in the context of the original song lyrics, these songs do not adjust to any of Wagner’s categories, thus lying beyond the scope of adaptation and appropriation. Hutcheon backs my claim by stating that “short intertextual allusions” should not be considered instances of adaptation (2013: 170). So does Sanders: “citation is different [...] to adaptation” (2006: 4). If we bring these concepts together, we would have roughly the following classification:

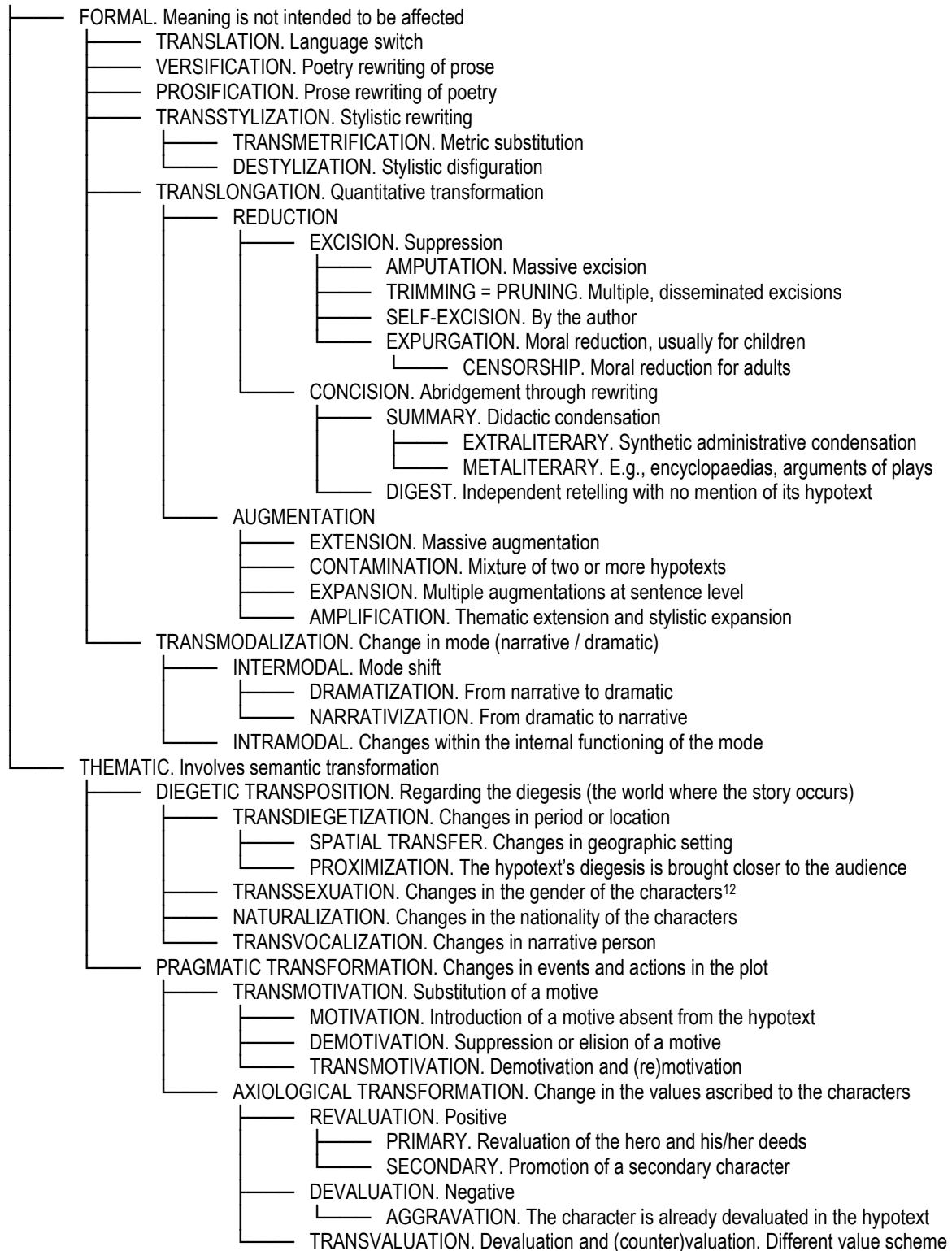
ADAPTATION
├── TRANSPOSITION
└── COMMENTARY
APPROPRIATION = ANALOGY
CITATION

The result is still insufficient for present purposes. For once, adaptation theory has usually been mostly circumscribed to film adaptations; poem transformations to song have different needs. Secondly, Wagner's definition of *commentary* is too vague, therefore little useful. Finally, neither Hutcheon nor Sanders draw a clear line between adaptation and appropriation (Leitch 2012: 87-89). Throughout this work, I will study how musical mechanisms aid the adaptation/appropriation process, but, as stated earlier, the assessment of metal songs *as adaptations* will be solely based on the textual comparison between source and target texts (poems and song lyrics, respectively). If the main focus is on text, it is time to resort to narrative theory. In his seminal *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree* (1997[1982]), Gérard Genette claims that "the subject of poetics is *transtextuality*, or the textual transcendence of the text, which I have already defined roughly as 'all that sets the text in a relationship, whether obvious or concealed, with other texts.'" (1997[1982]: 1). Of his categorisation of transtextual relationships, two are of special relevance here. One of them, based on Kristeva, is *intertextuality*, defined as

the actual presence of one text within another. In its most explicit and literal form, it is the traditional practice of *quoting* (with quotation marks, with or without specific references). In another less explicit and canonical form, it is the practice of *plagiarism* [...], which is an undeclared but still literal borrowing. Again, in less explicit and less literal guise, it is the practice of *allusion*: that is, an enunciation whose full meaning presupposes the perception of a relationship between it and another text, to which it necessarily refers by some inflections that would otherwise remain unintelligible. (1997[1982]: 1-2)

Genette's *intertextuality* matches the category so far identified as *citation*. However, his main concern is with what he names *hypertextuality*: "any relationship uniting a text B (which I shall call the *hypertext*) to an earlier text A (I shall, of course, call it the *hypotext*), upon which it is grafted in a manner that is not that of commentary" (1997[1982]: 5). Genette identifies two types of hypertextuality: *imitation*, which constitutes a stylistic, indirect alteration of the source text, and *transformation*, which is a simple, direct, content-based distortion of the said hypotext (1997[1982]: 7). He then subdivides *transformation* further into *parody* –a playful, non-satirical, minimal semantic alteration–, *travesty* –a satirical, stylistic trivialisation– and the main category of *transposition*, which constitutes a serious modification of the hypotext and which he describes in detail (1997[1982]: 26-28). Genette identifies a series of transpositional practices, some of which will be of great help for the present work. They are divided into two categories (formal and thematic), as represented in Figure 4.

TRANSPPOSITIONAL PRACTICES



Although they are described somewhere else in *Palimpsests* (1997[1982]: 213), I have included *spatial transfer* and *transvocalization* in the part of the diagram I have deemed more appropriate. I consider transvocalization a subtype of diegetic transposition, since a change in point of view alters the perception of the text's diegesis.

Figure 4. Gérard Genette's transpositional practices as described in *Palimpsests*.

¹² Defined by Genette as "a change of sex" (1997[1982]: 298). Maybe it could be renamed as *transgendering*.

Because of the French theorist's little concern with the cinema, Leitch claims that "[a]daptation theorists looking to Genette for an authoritative system of classification that can distinguish adaptation from other modes of intertextuality – or, as Genette would say, transtextuality – are building on a shaky foundation" (2012: 96). I beg to differ. First, Leitch contradicts here his previous criticism that early adaptation studies focused exclusively on the transition from prose literature to film (2012: 89-90); second, my approach to categorising metal music transformations of poetry based on their textual elements alone validates the choice of Genette's transtextuality as the main point of departure for the present taxonomical effort. A relevant element to consider is the flexibility of a model where categories are allowed to overlap and occur simultaneously since, more than categories, they are "aspects of textuality" (Genette 1997[1982]: 8).

At this stage, our taxonomy includes four categories: two of adaptation (*transposition* and *commentary*), one of appropriation (*analogy*) and an independent one (*citation*). In order to define an umbrella term that encompasses all possibilities, and even at the risk of extending Genette's intended meaning of the term a bit too far, I will refer to either adaptations, appropriations or citations as *transformations* (actually, I have already done so almost from the start of this thesis). *Transposition* stands for songs whose lyrics do not alter the original poem. The term is confusing, since Genette uses it for a different purpose (1997[1982]: 27-28). Considering the performative nature of song, I will rename it as *reproduction*. The definition of *commentary* lacking precision, I will reshape it into a category of my own. Since it is a common song practice to retell the story of a narrative poem altering the form and using different words, but without affecting thematic elements of the hypotext –namely diegesis, character motivation and values–, transformations that adapt to this pattern will belong to the category *retelling*. In most cases, those transformations undergo a number of what Genette calls *formal transpositions* (changes in form, volume or mode), but I will also include instances of *transdiegetization* as long as no further thematic alterations transform the semantics of the source text. This way I will reserve the appropriation category so far called *analogy* for transformations whose lyrics are the result of strong thematic transpositions from the hypotext, to the point of manipulating it in order to craft a totally different, even contradictory meaning. Since the scope of this category will be broader and its semantic effect farther reaching than that of its source class, I will rename it as *reelaboration*. Because of the special attention the

phenomenon has elicited from narrative theorists, hypertexts narrated from a different narrative point of view from that of their hypotexts deserve special attention. Consequentially, I will coin a new category born out of *reelaboration* that matches Genette’s *transvocalization*. Following the existence of the similar category Douglas Lanier uses to describe transmedial adaptations of Shakespeare (2002: 83), I will name it *reorientation*. Finally, the category *citation* corresponds to Sanders’s *quotation* and *citation* (the latter being more deferential) and to Genette’s *quoting*, *plagiarism* and *allusion* (subsumed under the transtextual concept of *hypertextuality*). It involves the inclusion of a brief poetry extract into the lyrics of a metal song, so that semantically the poem verses are embedded in the song, and not the other way around. It may also refer to the presence of ample extracts of long poems, so that, even if the lyrics of the song are taken from a poem in their entirety, the quote represents only a minimal part of the hypotext, therefore retaining the meaning of the original poem only partially. The final taxonomy is represented in Table 1:

Category	Relationship with previous taxonomies
REPRODUCTION	Adaptation (Hutcheon), transposition (Wagner)
RETELLING	Hypertextual transformation: formal transposition (Genette)
REELABORATION	Appropriation (Sanders), analogy (Wagner)
└ REORIENTATION	Reoriented narrative (Lanier), transvocalization (Genette)
CITATION	Quotation and citation (Sanders), intertextual transformation (Genette)

Table 1. Taxonomy of metal music transformations of poetry.

In the sections that follow, each category is explained and illustrated thanks to the analysis of four paradigmatic transformations per category.

2.2 POETRY AND METAL MUSIC: TRANSFORMATION CATEGORIES

2.2.1 REPRODUCTION

The *reproduction* category consists in setting a poem to music, with little or no further textual elaboration. Thus, the words of the poem become the lyrics of the song. The reproduction can be total –if the whole poem is used for the lyrics– or partial, if only part of the poem is reproduced (usual in the case of long poems), as long as verse extraction does not imply new, altered or abridged meanings. This type of transformation implies the creation of a strong correspondence between verse and sound, so that the musical

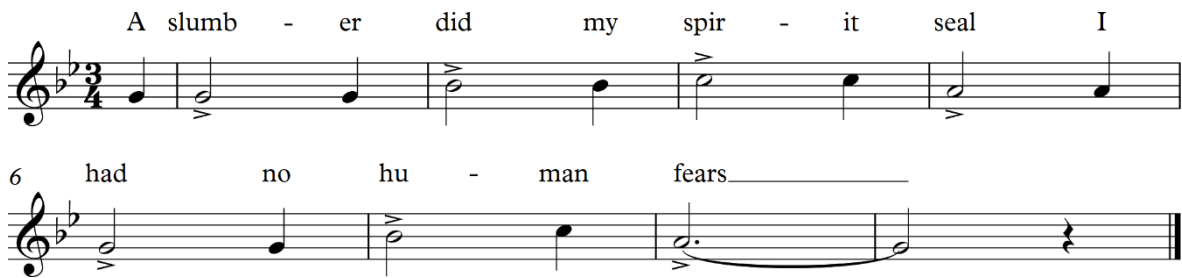
landscape reflects the feelings the poem is made to evoke. It is relevant to notice whether the lyrics are recited (i.e., spoken) or sung and, in the latter case, whether the accents in the poem's scansion match the downbeats in the song.

2.2.1.1 "A SLUMBER DID MY SPIRIT SEAL" (WILLIAM WORDSWORTH, 1800) AND "A SLUMBER DID MY SPIRIT SEAL" (DRACONIAN, 2003)

The Swedish doom-death metal band Draconian adapted William Wordsworth's "A Slumber Did My Spirit Seal" (2010[1800]: 103) in their song of the same name (2003). Conveniently enough for their subgenre, this is one of Wordsworth's "Lucy" poems, which evoke feelings of longing and melancholy (Woof 1999). Its addressing the emotions triggered by the death of a beloved one reinforces the poem as an appropriate choice for a doom-death metal song in terms of atmosphere and textual content. "A Slumber Did My Spirit Seal" only consists of two four-line stanzas. The opening one finds the first-person lyrical voice in a state of disbelief, speaking of a woman who is still alive in the speaker's imagination, while the second confirms that her death is real and focuses on the lack of motion of the dead body (Thompson 1995: 10). Draconian's adaptation is consistent with this interpretation. In the song, the clear female voice of Lisa Johansson sings the whole text, both stanzas being connected by a violin melody. However, Anders Jacobsson's male grunting guttural voice joins in unison for the second stanza, adding an eerie effect to the overall mix. After an instrumental interlude led by a guitar solo, the poem is sung again. On this occasion Johansson only sings the first stanza; guitar distortion and the guttural voice take over the last four death-centred verses. In the final instrumental part, the violin is replaced by synthesizers playing high pitch notes on top of distorted guitars, so that the harmonic closure of the piece suggests unease. The overt contrast of both stanzas appears to be a conscious decision by the band.

As for musical devices, the song features a slow 3/4 waltz metre. Since the poem is written in ballad metre, mostly featuring iambic feet, its accentual pattern fits the musical design shown in Example 1, where accented syllables match the strong beats of the bar. However, as a 3/4 bar only has three beats (one strong followed by two weak ones), the band increase the length of the accented notes, as shown in Example 3. The choice of this waltz rhythm contributes to creating a dreamy effect and allows the singers to increase

dramatism by articulating the words with notes whose varying length contrasts with the highly systematic scheme of a regular 4/4 meter.



Example 3. Melody of “A Slumber Did My Spirit Seal”, by Draconian.

The adaptation is especially successful at recreating the only rhythmic variation of the poem: a spondee (a foot with both syllables accented) in the third verse of the second stanza:

/ / x / x / x /
 Rolled round | in earth's | di-ur- | nal course

The two accented syllables in the first foot are uttered by both singers with extra emphasis in a performance that blends the resources of music with those of poetry reciting. The aforementioned contrast between both stanzas is rhythmically reinforced the second time the poem is sung by abruptly switching the song metre from 3/4 to 4/4 before the second stanza begins. The dreamy atmosphere is over, the rhythmic pattern of the vocals adapts to the standard one shown in Example 1, and the systematic regularity of the binary rhythm contributes to increasing the levels of timbrical and harmonic sombreness until the end of the song.

2.2.1.2 “I FELT A FUNERAL” (EMILY DICKINSON, 1861) AND “I FELT A FUNERAL” (MALNÀTT, 2008)

Porz is the singer of the Italian melodic black metal band Malnàtt. When asked why all lyrics in their 2008 album were taken from poetry, he answered:

All lyrics are by dead poets, because the words are over. I really got nothing more to say. Now is the time of the dead (who said everything before us, better than us) to speak through my mouth. For me every word spoken since the last 50 years is useful. [*sic*] (2008: n.p.)

It is for this reason that they named their album *La Voce dei Morti* (“The Voice of the Dead” in Italian). All lyrics in the CD are by Italian poets, with the exception of the second track, “I Felt a Funeral”, by Emily Dickinson (1960[1861]: 128-29). Her choice seems appropriate for a metal music context, since her pioneering experimentation with poetic form and her rejection of the religious establishment of her time (Baym 2012: 90-91) pairs her rebellious spirit with that of metal musicians. Furthermore, this specific poem deals with several topics usually addressed by metal music, like death, pain, mental unease, and isolation. Divided into five stanzas, it stages a funeral in the speaker’s mind, using a vivid imagery of death –the funeral, mourners, the service, the coffin (“a Box”), a bell tolling– and madness: “Sense was breaking through”, “My mind was going numb”, “creak across my Soul”, “a Plank in Reason, broke, / And I dropped down”. Auditory diction describes sounds that, by existing within the speaker’s brain, become disturbing noise: “treading” “in my Brain”, “A Service, like a Drum – / Kept beating”. This conceit is taken to the extreme by hyperbolically identifying “all the Heavens” with both “a Bell” and “an Ear”, thus suggesting unsufferable aural pain. The last stanza beholds the break of “a Plank in Reason”, which leads the speaker to drop down and discover a cryptic revelation: “And Finished knowing – then –”. Whether the final epiphany is granted through death or through madness is still today a matter of discussion, since scholars have not yet agreed on a canonical critical interpretation (Leiter 2007: 97). Brantley calls it a “poem of aftermath”, but also poses the following question: “Does Dickinson thus write ‘finis’ to her alternately, nay, her at once, experiential and postexperiential art of knowledge, as though her infinite yearning were at long last satisfied and the rest were silence?” (2013: 147). Anderson claims that it “is not necessarily about dying but about the breaking of a ‘Plank in Reason’” (2008: 37). Smith and Kapusta remark isolation as a central topic: “A funeral, which represents the death of her mind, serves as a background to illustrate alienation between people. The mourners are anonymous and faceless and again no words are spoken or tears shed” (2011: 75). Erkkila takes this idea further by highlighting that the poetic speaker falls down because of feeling unsupported by the surrounding society: “The collapse of religious, political, and epistemological order is ‘felt’ and mourned internally as a ‘Funeral’ in the ‘Brain’” (2004: 155). Whichever the correct critical approach is (if any), all topics addressed are relevant for metal music.

The way Malnàtt addresses their adaptation is very original. The poem is written in quatrains that alternate iambic tetrameter with iambic trimeter, thus making their rhythmic

adaptation to musical form simple, as attested by Example 1. However, they do not only fit the words to the rhythmic context. Since, as usual in their subgenre, vocals are screamed, thus not allowing for a wide intervallic range, the band creates a counterpoint between the rhythmic vocal performance and a melodic guitar line. Example 4 illustrates the movement of both voices, with the sung part expressed in percussion notation. The resulting effect is that, although the screamed voice conveys the words to the poem and correctly assigns verse accents to musical downbeats, it is the guitar melody that carries the emotional weight of the verses. In the first eight bars, while the guitar plays mostly quarter notes that lead to long whole notes, all of them matching the strong parts of the bar, the voice uses syncopation (see bars 2, 3, and 6), therefore creating an unsettling rhythmic anticipation of the guitar's harmonic resolution. This effect contrasts with the interplay between both musical lines in the last eight bars, where the rhythmic accents of both voice and guitar reinforce each other. Especially remarkable is the way the band approaches Dickinson's repetition of the word "treading" (bar 10). Instead of distributing the four syllables in all four beats of the bar, as quarter notes, Porz utters each repetition in eighth notes, thus pronouncing each word fast and rhythmically, as if mirroring a drum kit. This rhythmic approach, which the band later repeats with the word "beating", calls the listener's attention to a part of the poem where the poetic persona is narrating the pain derived by a group of people –the mourners– stepping within the speaker's brain. The verses reinforce realistic imagery through the use of alliteration and repetition; by varying the length and disposition of the notes, the song adds a purely musical device that strengthens the feelings of pain and mental unrest evoked by the original text.

♩ = 154

I felt a Fu - ner - al in my Brain__

5 And Mourn - ers to and fro__

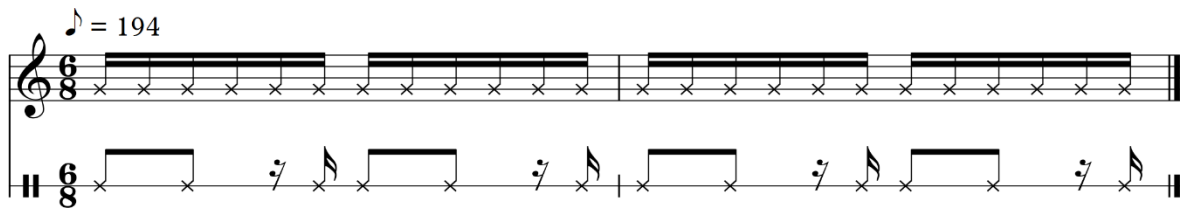
9 Kept tread - ing tread - ing till it seemed

13 That Sense was break - ing through

Example 4. Melodic counterpoint in “I Felt a Funeral”, by Malnätt.

Leiter identifies a turning point in the poem between the first three and the last two stanzas. Up to that moment, Dickinson uses her description of the funeral as an extended metaphor, but in the last two stanzas “the funeral metaphor breaks down and the poem tumbles into vaster, even less definable realms of absolute essences: Space, Being, Silence” (2007: 98). This interpretation is also exemplified in Malnätt’s adaptation. The band uses less than half the duration of the song (two minutes and four seconds) to address the first three stanzas in a rapid succession of aggressive riffs starting in the dark minor mode of A phrygian (Lilja 2019: 358), as shown in Example 5. At two minutes and seventeen seconds they stop the fast rhythm and switch to a slower tempo, calmly building up until the end of the song, but never reaching the level of volume, speed or rhythmic activity of the first half. It is over this slower part on A aeolian –also minor, but not as dark as the phrygian mode (2019: 358)– that the last two stanzas of the poem are screamed, now using longer notes and avoiding syncopation. The surreal picture of the funeral is over; the speaker is now shrouded in isolation –in “Silence”, “Wrecked, solitary”– and ready to finally gain knowledge. The song acknowledges the situation and traces an emotional contour that runs parallel to that evoked by the verses.

world of Britain and its empire”. However, he does not appraise the gods as selfless liberators: “despite these potentially attractive connotations, it is clear that one has to die to join the Sidhe: [...] they urge the speaker to ‘Empty [his] heart of its mortal dream’” (2006: 30).



Example 6. Melodic and percussion rhythms of “Hosting of the Sidhe”, by Primordial.

Primordial call themselves an “Irish metal band”. The typography in their logo, which in their website is accompanied by their location –“Dublin”–, reminisces of Ireland, the surnames of the five band members are in Gaelic, and their motto, which evokes the history of Irish politics, is “No compromise, not then, not now, not ever” (Primordial n.d.: n.p.). Furthermore, they usually incorporate elements of traditional Irish music into their black metal musical frame, like 6/8 and 11/8 meters (Nemtheanga 2019). Twenty-first century messengers of Irish culture, as Yeats once was, “The Hosting of the Sidhe” is a perfect match for the band. Their adaptation “Hosting of the Sidhe” (2002) starts with the whispered voices of the Sidhe creating an eerie prelude to a distorted guitar rhythm in 6/8, which is then joined by the drums’ floor tom playing the part of a bodhrán –a percussion instrument prominent in Irish folk music. Since the poem presents a “hammering rhythm” (Watson 2006: 53), the choice of a traditional Irish-inspired musical rhythm, as shown in Example 6, seems adequate to convey its sixteen verses. The lines are not sung, but spoken, and the recitation pays detailed attention to the poem’s meter, also incorporating certain pauses that play the part of caesuras. Here is the scansion of the poem’s first four verses according to singer Alan Averill Nemtheanga’s recitation (pauses are identified by double vertical lines):

x / x / x x / x /
 The host | is rid | ing || from Knock | na | rea
 x / x / x / x /
 And over | the grave || of Clooth | na-Bare;
 / x / x x / x /
 Caoilte | tossing | his burn | ing hair,
 x / / x x / / x /

And Niamh | calling || Away, || come | away

Once the poem is recited in full, the folk-inspired combination of guitar and percussion outlines a strummed riff –the “hammering rhythm” of the verses lives now in the music– that extends the song almost three extra minutes and suggests that the sidhe are now leaving toward their magical realm. The key of choice is E minor, which is easy to play on a guitar with standard tuning, since it mostly consists of open strings. Coincidentally, much Irish music benefits from alternative tunings that involve open strings. “Hosting of the Sidhe” is not only the adaptation of a poem, but a statement on Irish culture and mythology that allows the poet’s goal to endure.

2.2.1.4 “EYES THAT LAST I SAW IN TEARS” (T. S. ELIOT, 1936) AND “EYES THAT LAST I SAW IN TEARS” (DELIGHT, 2000)

When T. S. Eliot published his collected poems in 1936, he decided to label a series of independent verses as “minor poems” (Murphy 2007: 309), to the dismay of certain critics who remark the fact that some of these scattered texts were evaluated by the poet as candidates to integrate his major work *The Waste Land* (Chinitz 2009). One of these poems, “Eyes That Last I Saw in Tears” (Eliot 1936: 143), was adapted in 2000 by the Polish gothic metal band Delight. Its fifteen verses counter the realm of the dead –“death’s dream kingdom”– with that of the living –“death’s other kingdom”–, and use the eyes as a symbolic source of visual imagery that finds the first-person speaker lamenting over a past which is now lost. The image is powerful due to its mirror approach: the poetic voice has lost sight of the eyes it is longing for, therefore its own eyes are now blinded. Were the eyes to “outlast a little while”, they would “hold us in derision”. Murphy considers that these “bitter abstractions” are “threatening because vague”, and that the poem is “artfully intended not to sit well” (2007: 310). Humphries considers that certain verses “seem like scraps left over from their use in ‘The Hollow Men’ or ‘The Waste Land’” (2004[1936]: 369), therefore granting them relevance and depth, but also inconclusiveness.

In adapting the poem to musical form, Delight crafts a performance whose formal, harmonic, and timbral aspects are consistent with their own catalogue and, by extension, with that of gothic metal: lyrics evoking darkness, melancholy, romance and death, female vocals, accessible guitar riffs, and certain formal complexity. Two elements are, however, worth remarking: on the one hand, the band decided to repeat certain verses and include

instrumental interludes that break the text at points different from those indicated by the stanzaic division of the poem. The first four verses are sung in isolation from the two following lines, and then repeated at the end of the song. This allows them to start and finish with references to two highly allusive images: “death’s dream kingdom” and the reappearance of “[t]he golden vision”. In the central part of the song, they repeat the verses that indulge in the pain of the poetic persona: “I see the eyes but not the tears / This is my affliction”. This way, the lyrics reinforce the suffering of the first-person speaker and remark on the imagery of death, thus bringing the original text closer to the lyrical aspirations of their musical subgenre.

The other element worth commenting on is the adaptation of the melodic vocal pattern to the rhythmic framework of the song. As usual in most modernist poetry, “Eyes That Last I Saw in Tears” is in free verse. The syllabic count changes from line to line, and the position of accents vary, although there is a certain tendency towards trochaic meter. This is the scansion of accents in the first two verses, where I have willingly avoided foot divisions due to their lack of importance in a free verse context:

/ x / x / x /
 Eyes that last I saw in tears
 x x / x
 Through division

In adapting the metric variability of the poem to the constant regularity of the song’s 4/4 rhythm, singer Paulina Maślanka fits every verse in the first stanza, regardless of its length, to a group of four bars, resulting in the combination of long and short notes, and in the inclusion of silences. As seen in Example 7, she sings all the accented syllables in strong parts of the bar. The second verse is especially fastidious to adapt, since it starts with two unaccented syllables, the first one belonging to the preposition “through”. Delight’s solution consists in giving that word a melodic contour that involves seven notes, covers most of the four-bar section, and builds tension to be resolved by the entrance of the final word, “division”. Part of that tension-building has to do with the fact that, unlike any other word in the present passage, “through” starts to be uttered after a quarter-note silence, therefore in the weak part of the bar. By employing this mechanism, the band adapt the particularities of the original verses to the reality of their musical context, something worth recognition due to the prosodic intricacies inherent to this type of poetry.

♩ = 135

Eyes that last I saw in tears

5 through di - vi - sion

Example 7. Melody and accentuation in “Eyes That Last I Saw in Tears”, by Delight.

2.2.1.5 FURTHER INSTANCES

Table 2 lists thirty-four further examples of *reproduction*.

Poem	Songs
“Virelai” (Geoffrey Chaucer, 1400)*	“Alone Walkyng” (Hades, 1997)
“Sonnet CIV” (William Shakespeare, 1609)	“Mirkwood Sonnet” (Thy Catafalque, 2001)
“Sonnet CXLVI” (William Shakespeare, 1609)	“Sonnet No. 146” (Colour Trip, 1993)
“Sonnet XXIX” (William Shakespeare, 1609)	“Sonnet XXIX” (D. Throne, 1999)
“A Pilgrime’s Solace – The Fourth Book of Songs” (John Dowland, 1612)	“Stay” (Aesma Daeva, 2000)
“The Hag” (Robert Herrick, 1648)	“The Hag” (Cerebrium, 2015)
“Gwin, King of Norway” (William Blake, 1777)	“Gwin, King of Norway” (Goresleeps, 1995)
“The Tyger” (William Blake, 1794)	“Tyger” (Mad Duck, 2017)
“Darkness” (Lord Byron, 1816)	“Darkness” (Dødsengel, 2012)
“When the Moon Is on the Wave (from Manfred)” (Lord Byron, 1817)	“When the Moon Is on the Wave” (Solefald, 1997)
“Ozymandias” (Percy Bysshe Shelley, 1818)	“Ozymandias” (The Black League, 2000)
“Time” (Percy Bysshe Shelley, 1821)	“Time” (Even Song, 2001)
“When I Have Fears That I May Cease to Be” (John Keats, 1848)	“When I Have Fears That I May Cease to Be” (Aesma Daeva, 2000)
“I Felt a Funeral in My Brain” (Emily Dickinson, 1862)	“I Felt a Funeral in My Brain” (Wräth, 2019)
“When I Am Dead, My Dearest” (Christina Rossetti, 1862)	“Song [When I Am Dead]” (Cerebrium, 2015)
“The Camp of Souls” (Isabella V. Crawford, 1882)	“The Camp of Souls” (Aesma Daeva, 2007)
“The Sorrow of Love” (William Butler Yeats, 1891)	“A Poem by Yeats” (Agalloch, 2001)
“In Tenebris” (Thomas Hardy, 1896)	“In Tenebris” (Cerebrium, 2015)
“The City of Darkness” (Madison Julius Cawein, 1896)	“City of Darkness” (Mad Duck, 2017)
“At the Sign of the Skull” (Madison Julius Cawein, 1901)	“At the Sign of the Skull” (Mad Duck, 2017)
“To Life” (Thomas Hardy, 1901)	“To Life” (Cerebrium, 2015)
“To Pan” (H. P. Lovecraft, 1902)	“To Pan” (The Old Ones, 2004)
“The Dead Man Walking” (Thomas Hardy, 1906)	“The Dead Man Walking” (Cerebrium, 2015)

Poem	Songs
“Sleeping Out: Full Moon” (Rupert Brooke, 1908)	“Sleeping Out: Full Moon” (The Sundial, 2008)
“These Are the Clouds” (William Butler Yeats, 1911)	“These Are the Clouds” (Thy Catafalque, 2001)
“Hymn to Pan” (Aleister Crowley, 1913)	“Hymn to Pan” (Dødsengel, 2012)
“The Supreme Ritual” (Aleister Crowley, 1913)	“The Supreme Ritual” (Dødsengel, 2012)
“Κεφαληα: Sabbath of the Goat” (Aleister Crowley, 1913)	“Κεφαληα: Sabbath of the Goat” (Dødsengel, 2012)
“Satan Speaks” (C. S. Lewis, 1919)	“Satan Speaks” (A Hill to Die Upon, 2014)
“The Cats” (H. P. Lovecraft, 1925)	“The Cats” (Sorg Uten Tårer, 2012)
“The Wood” (H. P. Lovecraft, 1929)	“The Wood” (The Sundial, 2008)
“Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night” (Dylan Thomas, 1952)	“Hopeless” (Advent Sorrow, 2015)
“Three Rings for the Elven Kings” (J. R. R. Tolkien, 1954)	“The Lord of the Rings” (Crown of Thorns, 1995)
“A Poem about an Old Prison Man” (Charles Manson, 1984)	“A Poem about an Old Prison Man” (Decapitated, 2006)

Table 2. Further instances of the *reproduction* category.

* The poet’s death. Exact date of composition unknown.

2.2.2 RETELLING

The kind of adaptation in which a song rephrases the original words of a poem (usually of the narrative kind) I have named *retelling*. In crafting the lyrics, the poem’s diction can be preserved or replaced by usually less poetic language –what Genette calls *destylization* (1997[1982]: 227). This technique allows for modifying the focus of the narration, since the song lyrics can condense, expand, add or elide certain parts of the original verses – *translongation* (1997[1982]: 228)–, at the musicians’ will. The most paradigmatic example of this category, one of the earliest metal music songs based on poetry, and also the main inspiration for this thesis is Iron Maiden’s 1984 adaptation of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, by Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

2.2.2.1 “THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER” (SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE, 1817) AND “RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER” (IRON MAIDEN, 1984)

Iron Maiden are, probably, the most revered of all metal bands. Their emergence in the late 1970s contributed enormously to the success of the influential NWOBHM, and their “dazzling compositional approach elevated the musicianship of heavy metal for decades” (Christe 2010: 70). Cope remarks the novelty caused by their blend of dark atmospheres

inspired by early heavy metal with a musical refinement expressed in their two-guitar and bass counterpoint lines, as well as their conscious deviation from blues and rock and roll devices (2010: 118). A highly influential band in musical terms, their relevance in contemporary popular culture has also benefited from the visually charged display of their album covers and live shows, and, more importantly, by their lyrics. Some of the elements they are known for are their references to Satanism –as their 1982 release *The Number of the Beast* attests– and their political critique: artwork depicting the assassination of Margaret Thatcher, who became Britain’s Prime Minister the same year the band was founded, led to official censure by the British government (Christe 2010: 71). However, bassist and leader Steve Harris being thoroughly interested in literature, and singer and front man Bruce Dickinson holding a degree in History, more than a significant part of their production is inspired by literary fiction and historical events. Throughout their discography, Iron Maiden have made room for classical mythology, both World Wars, the Crusades, the lives of Genghis Khan and Alexander the Great, and also for contemporary events like the Gulf War or the Iraq War. Transtextually voracious, they have based songs in films by Brian G. Hutton, Jean-Jacques Annaud, Francis Ford Coppola, Joel Schumacher, Mel Gibson, Robin Hardy, Fred M. Wilcox, and Ingmar Bergman; and in the literary realm, they have adapted prose by the likes of Gaston Leroux, Frank Herbert, Yukio Mishima, Ramsey Campbell, Alistair MacLean, Alan Sillitoe, Orson Scott Card, Aleister Crowley, William Golding, Joseph Conrad, Umberto Eco, Aldous Huxley, Rudyard Kipling and Edgar Allan Poe; and poetry by Lord Tennyson, Gilbert Keith Chesterton, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Andrew Marvell and, again, Poe, for which reason they will be prominently featured in this thesis. Beyond the merely anecdotal, Iron Maiden’s concern with cultural intertextuality fulfils the larger purpose of introducing other art forms to young people. According to Steve Harris, in the USA “about 90% of the fans know the words to every song [by the band]” (qtd. in Walser 1993:18). And, as mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, Iron Maiden’s fans are known to buy and read the literary works the band’s songs are based on.

A major exponent of Romantic poetry, Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* is a long narrative poem whose interpretation has been open to diverse speculation ever since its inception (Fry 1999: vii-viii). Addressing issues such as the discovery of unknown lands, survivor’s guilt, or the power of the supernatural, its complexity, epic aura, and openness of meaning make it potentially fit for a metal

adaptation, except for one major problem: the 629 verses of its 1817 edition are excessive for the average five to six minute length of metal songs. Steve Harris did not hesitate in stretching his adaptation “Rime of the Ancient Mariner” up to thirteen minutes and forty-five seconds. He only preserved two stanzas from the poem, condensing the rest of the story in newly written lyrics that summarised the events while strongly relying on Coleridge’s diction. To this end, he used a number of formal transpositional practices affecting the length of the text, thus falling within Genette’s category *translongation* (1997[1982]: 228). Save for disposing of the mariner’s first-person framed narration and for directly addressing the audience at the start of the song –“Hear the rime of the Ancient Mariner”–, thus having the listeners play the part of the wedding guest in Coleridge’s poem, Harris barely deviated from the spirit of the original design, nor were his deletions significant.

“Rime of the Ancient Mariner” is a complex, elaborate composition that comprises up to nine different vocal sections, each one with a melodic pattern of its own. Along with their corresponding repetitions, they make up twenty-four different song stanzas. The song’s constant 4/4 meter in a covert harmony of E minor contrasts with a drumless 3/4 interlude in A minor featuring a succession of augmented chords –including a sharpened fifth that adds harmonic instability– where a spoken voice narrates the death of the crew members over a prominent bass line supported by background sound effects resembling the creaking wood of a ship. The overall atmosphere suggests a dreamy, intriguing, nightmarish landscape that demands musical and narrative resolution.

Poem	Song		
Part	No. of Stanzas	No. of Verses	Vocal Sections
I	4	17	#1, #2 From “Hear the rime of the Ancient Mariner”
II	5	17	#3, #4, #5 From “His shipmates cry against what he’s done”
III	5	23	#6, #7, #8 From “There, calls the Mariner”
IV	3	11	#9 From “The curse it lives on in their eyes”
V	2	7	#1, #2 From “Then down in falls comes the rain”
VI	2	10	#3 From “Cast into a trance and the nightmare carries on”
VII	3	8	#2, #3, #4 From “And the ship it sinks like lead into the sea”

Table 3. Structure of the lyrics in “Rime of the Ancient Mariner”, by Iron Maiden.

Regarding the recrafting of the narrative into the song lyrics, Harris rewrote the original seven parts of the poem as shown in Table 3, where I have numbered the different vocal sections from one to nine. This segmentation shows that the composer allocated the

largest number of stanzas and vocal sections to parts two and three of the poem, which narrate the vengeance of the albatross and the appearance of the “skeleton-ship” governed by Death and Life in Death (Coleridge 1999[1817]: 41), as well as the execution of the crew (1999[1817]: 45). The scary setting, fantastic environment, and dark hue of the story make it coherent with the corpus of original metal lyrics. As indebted as the song may be to the poem, Harris made a strong effort to create lyrics that stood on their own. Among the different devices he used, a pervasive one consisted in summarising large parts of the poem in a limited number of verses –the transpositional practice known as *concision* (Genette 1997[1982]: 235). The following song stanza synthesises up to twenty-six lines of poetry –from verse 266 to verse 291 (1999[1817]: 49-51):

And by the light of the moon
 He prays for their beauty not doom
 With heart he blesses them
 God’s creatures all of them too.

Another formal resource is alteration in the order of events, as shown in Table 4, where the first two lines of the song stanza refer to events appearing in the poem after those told in the two lines that follow.

Poem	Song
An orphan’s curse would drag to Hell A spirit from on high; But oh! more horrible than that Is the curse in a dead man’s eye! Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse, And yet I could not die. (1999[1817]: 49)	The curse it lives on in their eyes The Mariner he wished he’d die
And a thousand thousand slimy things Lived on; and so did I. (1999[1817]: 47)	Along with the sea creatures But they lived on, so did he.

Table 4. Order alteration in “Rime of the Ancient Mariner”, by Iron Maiden.

Harris also uses elision at different levels. On the one hand, he constantly omits details unnecessary to the understanding of the narrative, thus performing *trimming* (Genette 1997[1982]: 230); on the other hand, he makes use of *amputation* (1997[1982]: 229), as he removes a large part of the hypotext at the end of part five, where the song lacks mentions to “[t]he Polar Spirit’s fellow-dæmons” (Coleridge 1999[1817]: 59). However, Roberts interestingly identifies the two guitar solos between parts V and VI as a conversation between these spirits, who “discuss [...] the Mariner and his fate” at the start

of part VI (2017: 74-75). Representing these incorporeal figures in purely musical form –as opposed to describing tangible characters in words– supports Hutcheon’s claim that “music can supplement or replace what is lost when fiction’s introspection and reflection are transposed into a performance medium” (2013: 75).

In other sections the bassist adds to the text –*expansion* (Genette 1997[1982]: 260)– either to give a more detailed explanation of the narrated events, or for pure embellishment. The following verses do not have a straight counterpart in Coleridge’s text: “And the ship sails on, back to the North / Through the fog and ice and the albatross follows on”. Especially remarkable is the insertion of two stanzas of the original poem preceded in both cases by new verses explaining and, again, embellishing the storytelling. These extracts from the original text do not blend organically with the rest of the lyrics, nor is this what they are intended to do. They are asides hinting to the source. Their function resembles that of the marginal glosses in the 1817 version of the poem, whose content is also integrated into Harris’ lyrics with the effect of creating “a new, hybrid version of the tale” (Roberts 2017: 63).

2.2.2.2 “SONG OF MYSELF” (WALT WHITMAN, 1892) AND “SONG OF MYSELF” (NIGHTWISH, 2011)

Initially published in 1855 and later revised up to five times until its final 1892 edition, Walt Whitman’s assortment of poetry *Leaves of Grass* revolutionised American poetry. His simple diction, use of free verse and unusual choice of subject matter were devices rarely employed until his time. Especially outstanding within the collection is “Song of Myself” (1902[1892]: 33-109), a long poem in fifty-two sections where Whitman’s impassioned first-person poetic persona celebrates his own existence while traversing the cycle of life and, by empathising with every citizen around him, celebrates his own view of the American democracy. The grass the title of the collection alludes to is used by Whitman as a symbol of life, death and rebirth (Aspiz 2004: 37). Except for a few sections addressing war events in recent history, the overall tone is positive and open, embracing all kinds of American peoples, which are described in what Greenspan calls *catalogs* (1995: 182). In section fifteen he describes different individuals based on their professional or personal traits:

The pure contralto sings in the organ loft,

The carpenter dresses his plank, the tongue of his foreplane whistles its wild ascending lisp,
The married and unmarried children ride home to their Thanksgiving dinner,
The pilot seizes the king-pin, he heaves down with a strong arm,
The mate stands braced in the whale-boat, lance and harpoon are ready,
The duck-shooter walks by silent and cautious stretches,
The deacons are ordain'd with cross'd hands at the altar (Whitman 1902[1892]: 48)

His vision of the American nation is inclusive. In a bold move for his time, section ten adds to the picture two socially outcast groups: the First Nations –“the bride was a red girl, / Her father and his friends sat near cross-legged and dumbly smoking” (1902[1892]: 43)– and former slaves: “The runaway slave came to my house and stopt outside, / I [...] brought water and fill'd a tub for his sweated body and bruis'd feet” (1902[1892]: 44). To make evident that absolutely everybody has a place in Whitman's America, section nineteen adds criminals to the picture:

I will not have a single person slighted or left away,
The kept-woman, sponger, thief, are hereby invited,
The heavy-lipp'd slave is invited, the venerealee is invited;
There shall be no difference between them and the rest. (1902[1892]: 55)

“Song of Myself” is highly influenced by the contemporaneous philosophical movement known as *transcendentalism* (Killingsworth 2007: 23), whose main tenets were a defence of the power and inherent goodness of the individual, a celebration of nature, and a distrust of organised society and its institutions. These elements are all present in a poem that relies on nature symbolism and constitutes an ode to the individual and to cohabitation with others. Whitman's embrace, however, reaches further than people. Sections forty-one and forty-three add spirituality to the equation, and celebrate the inclusion of a vast tapestry of religious influences, past and present, in the poet's persona:

Magnifying and applying come I,
[...]
Taking myself the exact dimensions of Jehovah,
Lithographing Kronos, Zeus his son, and Hercules his grandson,
Buying drafts of Osiris, Isis, Belus, Brahma, Buddha,
In my portfolio placing Manito loose, Allah on a leaf, the crucifix engraved,
With Odin and the hideous-faced Mexitli and every idol and image (1902[1892]: 91)

Nevertheless, in Whitman's world the individual exceeds the deity: “nothing, not God, is greater to one than one's self is” (1902[1892]: 105). In “Song of Myself” the speaker is his own god. He witnesses everything happening in the American nation, describes, assesses and celebrates it. He understands death as a necessary part of life – “And as to you Death, and you bitter hug of mortality, it is idle to try to alarm me”

(1902[1892]: 106)– and believes in rebirth: “I bequeath myself to the dirt to grow from the grass I love, / If you want me again look for me under your boot-soles” (1902[1892]: 109). This hyperbolic representation of the self, along with the structural linearity in the speaker’s poetic journey and the tension-release patterns found in the fifty-two sections as a combination of elevated outbursts with more contemplative passages, were influenced by Whitman’s love of Italian opera (Rugoff 2006: 260). His explicit allusion to the art form occurring exactly in the very middle of the poem (section twenty-six out of fifty-two) is no coincidence:

Now I will do nothing but listen,
To accrue what I hear into this song, to let sounds contribute toward it.
[...]
I hear the chorus, it is a grand opera,
Ah this indeed is music—this suits me. (Whitman 1902[1892]: 66-67)

It seems appropriate, then, that the metal band that decided to undertake an adaptation of Whitman’s “grand opera” belongs to the subgenre known as *symphonic metal*. Tuomas Holopainen, keyboard player, composer and mastermind of the Finnish band Nightwish, admitted having undergone an epiphany after first reading *Leaves of Grass* in the late 2000s:

He really nailed the essence of existence, life, love and beauty like no one ever before. It was like it was written for me personally, and I wish people all over the world would share the feeling that I had. [...] Maybe the biggest curse throughout my life has been really bad self-esteem, and then when I read “Song of Myself” – it’s all about celebrating yourself as who you are, no discrimination, nothing. [...] Everything is beautiful, all the people are beautiful as they are. (2013: n.p.)

For the band’s 2011 album *Imaginaerum*, Holopainen wrote his own “Song of Myself”, a thirteen-minute piece divided into four sections where he tried to imitate Whitman’s verses “without it being a rip-off, [...] I just wanted to observe the world my way as Whitman clearly did in his poem, just write down the thoughts as I see the world” (2013: n.p.). In doing so, the song lyrics reuse many of the formal and rhetoric elements in the poem, like phrase and word repetition, anaphora, alliteration, assonance and the crafting of an almost continuous first-person description in the present tense. Similarities in style are obvious in the following stanzas from poem and song:

The wild gander leads his flock through the cool night,
Ya-honk he says, and sounds it down to me like an invitation,
The pert may suppose it meaningless, but I listening close,
Find its purpose and place up there toward the wintry sky. (Whitman 1902[1892]: 47)

The nightingale is still locked in the cage
The deep breath I took still poisons my lungs
An old oak sheltering me from the blue
Sun bathing on its dead frozen leaves (Nightwish 2011)

If Whitman starts the poem in euphoric self-rejoice –“I CELEBRATE myself, and sing myself” (1902[1892]: 33)– and, as aforementioned, claims midway its becoming a grand opera, Holopainen internalises the idea and takes it to his own artistic territory: “A song of me, a song in need / Of a courageous symphony”. The chorus of the song’s second section, whose steady 4/4 rhythm contrasts with the compound 7/4 of the verse, focuses on the cycle of life, as it warns about death and encourages to live intensely: “All that great heart lying still and slowly dying / All that great heart lying still on an angel wing”. As it occurs in Whitman’s text, the Finnish musician amply uses alliteration –“In silent suffering”, “Sung in silence”, “A begging bowl”, “Nothing noble”–, assonance –“Bathing in places”, “city kill”– or combinations of both, also including anaphora:

A *midnight flight* into Covington Woods
A princess and a panther by my side

The fourth section of the song –“Love”– finds some group members and close relatives and friends reciting stanzas written à la Whitman that tell personal Holopainen experiences. With a continuous orchestral accompaniment that switches from the prevalent key of D minor to E minor, it spans throughout more than six minutes, and it follows the grammatical pattern of sections eight, twelve, thirteen, fourteen and, especially, fifteen in the poem. Holopainen’s view of the world is as inclusive as Whitman’s. He speaks of a beggar, a convict, a prostitute –“A city that worships flesh”–, but always contrasting the gravity of their situation with a spark of hope based on a deep belief in the kindness of nature and humanity: the prisoner receives the visit of his mother, who has “never loved him more”; as the “obese girl” is “going to dinner, alone”, that “makes her even more beautiful”; when a dog tries to bite him, he “wish[es he] had [his] leg to spare”. If, identifying with everyone else, Whitman said “And of these one and all I weave the song of myself” (1902[1892]: 52), Holopainen claims: “Who am I to judge a priest, a beggar, / Whore, politician, wrongdoer? / I am, you are, all of them already”. In line with the poem, the lyrics reinforce trust in the individual and respect for others:

Stop saying “I know how you feel”
How could anyone know how another feels?
[...]

Dear child, stop working, go play
Forget every rule
There's no fear in a dream

An often-commented part of Whitman's "Song of Myself" is the one comprised by sections twenty-eight and twenty-nine, where he narrates an individual sexual experience that some critic has assessed as a "successful masturbation" (Bloom 2006: 6), while other has compared "the exploration of touch" with "a hallucinogen or an emotional trauma" ultimately leading to a "loss of self-control" (Aspiz 2004: 50):

I merely stir, press, feel with my fingers, and am happy,
To touch my person to some one else's is about as much as I can stand.
[...]
Is this then a touch ? quivering me to a new identity,
Flames and ether making a rush for my veins,
Traacherous tip of me reaching and crowding to help them,
My flesh and blood playing out lightning to strike what is hardly different from myself,
[...]
You villain touch ! what are you doing ? my breath is tight in its throat,
Unclench your floodgates, you are too much for me.
[...]
Parting track'd by arriving, perpetual payment of perpetual loan,
Rich showering rain, and recompense richer afterward.
Sprouts take and accumulate, stand by the curb prolific and vital,
Landscapes projected masculine, full-sized and golden. (Whitman 1902[1892]: 68-70)

The sexual experience depicted by Holopainen is not celebratory. His actor is shrouded in loneliness and his masculine fluids mix with tears. The main sentiments explored are neither lust nor powerlessness, but guilt and vulnerability:

An old man gets naked and kisses a model-doll in his attic
It's half-light and he's in tears.
When he finally comes his eyes are cascading.

The new lyrics share the transcendentalist view of the source verses. There is an overt praise of nature –"The heavenly black of sky and sea", "the gilded beaches", "the surf – beauty's finest robe"– that makes the speaker question the advantages of modern society:

I want to travel where life travels,
following its permanent lead
Where the air tastes like snow music
Where grass smells like fresh-born Eden
[...]
Love, goodness and simplicity
(While violated and imprisoned by technology)

This love of nature and the individual triggers a distrust in organised society and a harsh criticism of religion, since nature is “[a] sight to silence the heavens” and religious fanatics are “bible-black fools living over nightmare ground”:

Nothing noble in dying for your religion
For your country
For ideology, for faith
For another man,
Yes

The song dialogues with the poem and extends Whitman’s cycle of life, death and rebirth further. As the poetic persona embraced his death and told the reader to find him turned to grass (1902[1892]: 109), Holopainen takes over, expressly acknowledging his own personal rebirth at the time he discovered *Leaves of Grass* and accepting the challenge of spreading Whitman’s message further:

The first thing I ever heard,
was a wandering man telling his story
It was you, the grass under my bare feet

Following Genette’s terminology, this adaptation follows two transpositional practices: *concision* (formal reduction) and *proximization* (thematic diegetic transposition), as evidenced by the mention of an elevator. The song ends in cautious acknowledgement of the difficulties implied in implementing the proposed world view. The speaker “wonder[s] / If man will ever change”, and realises that he “wish[es] to be a decent man-boy but all I am / Is smoke and mirrors”. The last line is a musical meta-comment that matches the final mood: “And there forever remains the change from G to E-Minor”. Both chords share a triad: three of their notes in a succession of thirds (G, B and D). This makes E minor the relative minor mode of G major. As already discussed, G is a major chord which is supposed to suggest happiness and E minor a minor chord which allegedly triggers sadness in the listener. This final musical hint contributes a little uneasiness to an otherwise celebratory song.

2.2.2.3 “YOU LEFT ME” (EMILY DICKINSON, 1861) AND “ELDERBERRY AND LAVENDER” (LYRIEL, 2011)

Around 1861 Emily Dickinson wrote a short poem identified by its first clause as “You Left Me” (2016: 348). The verses appraise a past sentimental relation by having a first-

person speaker address an old lover: “You left me – Sire – two Legacies”.¹³ The first stanza, which focuses on the “Legacy of Love”, abruptly contrasts with the second, where the poetic voice claims: “You left me Boundaries of Pain”. In hyperbolic fashion, she claims that the legacy of love is so extraordinary that “A Heavenly Father would suffice¹⁴ / Had He the offer of –”. In assessing the bad consequences of the love experience, Dickinson opposes the concrete to the abstract, since the “Boundaries of Pain” are “Capacious as the Sea”. Her hyperbolic approach is taken even further by suggesting that her pain lives “Between Eternity and Time – / Your Consciousness – and me –”. Time is introduced as both infinite –regarding her lover’s consciousness– and measurable –when it amounts to herself. She is not blaming her lover, since she does not allude to his “conscience”, but to his “consciousness”. She is rather remarking how the lover’s awareness of their relation clashes with who she is. As a consequence, she is now experiencing a legacy of pain.

The poem in its entirety is part of the lyrics for “Elderberry and Lavender” (2010), by the German symphonic metal band Lyriel. The song also addresses a past love relation. When the lovers first met, both types of flower were “yet in full bloom”, and there was “a blossom” in the lover’s eyes. Symbolism is relevant here: lavender, used in beauty treatments, is supposed to purify the skin (Nordqvist 2019); according to popular folklore, elderberry is supposed to put the devil away (Diacono 2013). But in the song chorus the blossoming eyes are now withered, and memories – “[s]epia-coloured”, like an old photograph– are “nailed / like butterflies” –since the relationship is now dead– “[a]nd yet preserved for the sweet day / When I hear them crying / Help me! Free me!”: the memories will not go away, haunting the speaker and making evident the love story’s lack of closure. It is at this point when a keyboard-and-drums-led interlude with no guitars welcomes the recitation of Dickinson’s poem. The abrupt change of musical context and the strong echo of Jessica Thierjung’s voice allow the poetic words to comment on the song lyrics, whose metaphors are taken to another level due to Dickinson’s hyperboles. However, unlike the poem, Lyriel’s song explicitly blames the lover: “love and sorrow / like a laurel crown on your head”. Herbal symbolism refers now to the laurel wreath, a symbol of triumph that

¹³ As it occurs with many poems by Emily Dickinson (Miller 2016: 1-22), there are two versions in circulation, varying in word choice due to different interpretations of Dickinson’s annotations. According to Miller, Dickinson’s preferred diction uses “Sire” instead of “sweet” (Dickinson 2016: 348). Lyriel used the author’s allegedly less-preferred version of the poem.

¹⁴ Following the previous footnote, Dickinson’s allegedly less-preferred version uses “content” instead of “suffice”.

leaves the speaker in a victim position, unable to move on: a “photograph on the wall [...] detains the sunset”. After a subsequent chorus, the poem reappears with some elisions, now in sung form and finding two voices intertwining in call-and-response fashion. The main voice focuses on the pain left by the relationship, while the second one responds with references to the legacy of love. Once the poem is finished, the band return to the chorus. By expanding the original poem, Lyriel perform a process of *amplification* (Genette 1997[1982]: 262). The adaptation’s lyrical focus is an example not only of how a nineteenth-century poem can remain relevant nowadays, but also of how it can reinforce its message by strengthening the modern text that surrounds it.

2.2.2.4 “FLOW MY TEARS” (JOHN DOWLAND, 1596) AND “DOWNVAIN” AND “DARKNESS” (AESMA DAEVA, 1999)

In a borderline instance of this category, American symphonic metal band Aesma Daeva retell the lyrics of John Dowland’s song “Flow My Tears” (1997[1596]: 60),¹⁵ not by rewriting the source text, but by shuffling, repeating and eliding certain verses. In doing so, they alter the tone and focus of the original words without adding any verse of their own, for which reason their adaptation could initially be considered an instance of *reproduction*. However, although the result is semantically faithful to the hypotext, the effect achieved allows their lyrics to alter meaning by departing formally from the source verses. This mechanism is explored through the formal Genettian mechanisms of *trimming* and *concision* (Genette 1997[1982]: 230, 235) in three songs from their 1999 album *Here Lies One Whose Name Was Written in Water*: “Downvain”, “Darkness” and the latter’s remix “Darkness (Stromkern)”. The five stanzas of “Flow My Tears” explore the aftermath of a finished love relationship, for whose failure the first-person speaker blames himself. The verses focus on grief and self-pity, deem the speaker as devastated and forebode a tragic future for him. Imagery of light and darkness is contrasted. Light, which is now useless, no longer shines on his beloved –“Down vain lights shine you no more”–, but now illumines his shame: “Light doth but shame disclose”. The speaker begs to live in darkness –“let me mourn / Where night’s black bird her sad infamy sings”–, even if that is no punishment enough for someone who threw away the treasure of love: “No nights are dark enough for

¹⁵ Although the verses to Dowland’s song are credited as anonymous in the album sleeve, Crawford (2014) attributes them to Dowland himself.

those / That in despair their last fortunes deplore”. Finally, he encourages the “shadows that in darkness dwell” to “[l]earn to contemn light”.

“Downvain” blurs references to love and strengthens dark imagery. Of all twenty verses in Dowland’s text, the eight ones referring to feelings of pity and grief are ignored. The song looks closer at the dire consequences of the finished love relationship through three mechanisms: First, it repeats some of the darker verses, making “My fortune is thrown” its chorus. Second, where Dowland’s speaker wants to “live forlorn” mourning “[w]here night’s black bird her sad infamy sings”, Aesma Daeva’s begs to live there not “forlorn”, but “forever”, thus revelling in eternal penance. Third, Dowland’s “last fortunes” are now “lost fortunes”, thus irrecoverable. Moreover, in a hyperbolic reordering of the source verses, the song speaker pleads to dwell eternally in such dark nights that they are non-existent:

No nights are dark enough for those
That in despair their lost fortunes deplore.
There let me live forever.

Another alteration worth commenting on lies in the title. In the original text, lights are now unnecessary in times of darkness, so they must be extinguished: “Down vain lights”. The song title, however, is a pun on another meaning of “vain”: egotistical, superficial. The expression “Downvain” suggests that a banal, frivolous character is “going down”, which is exactly what the lyrics express. Regarding musical resources, the band’s symphonic approach can be perceived in the presence of an operatic female voice, rhythmic displacements over 4/4 in the introductory instrumental parts, and a combination of timbres that favours synthesizers over guitars. Nevertheless, at the end of the song the meter changes to 3/4 and introduces a distorted guitar riff. This contrast suggests uneasiness and matches the mood that the lyrics have previously described.

In “Darkness”, the band take an even bolder step in terms of textual restructuring, since they only use seven of Dowland’s verses. Love is absent and the main focus, as the song title attests, lies again on the consequences (exile, isolation, darkness) without scrutinising the causes. To draw such a pessimistic picture, the song combines imagery of darkness with negative diction: “Down”, “no more”, “never”. The reordering of the source verses is so drastic that, even if only seven of them are used, due to repetition the lyrics move between different stanzas a total of fourteen times, in the following succession (Roman numerals refer to stanzas in Dowland’s text): I-V-I-II-V-I-III-V-I-II-V-I-V-I-V.

Elision, repetition and reordering are not the only resources employed. Two of the new lines combine different verses from Dowland: “There let me live forlorn, never may my woes be relieved” (from stanzas I and III) and “There let me live in shadows that in darkness dwell” (from stanzas I and V). In both verses, through his will to embrace darkness, the speaker accepts destiny.

2.2.2.5 FURTHER INSTANCES

Other bands have resorted to the *retelling* category when crafting songs based on poems. Ten extra instances are listed in Table 5.

Poem	Songs
“O Death, Rock Me Asleep” (attributed to Anne Boleyn, 1536)	“O Death (Rock Me Asleep)” (Aesma Daeva, 2000)
“Darkness” (Lord Byron, 1816)	“Once Atrocitie Has Hacked Upon Daylight’s Throat” (In Tha Umbra, 2005)
“Kubla Khan” (Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 1816)	“Xanadu (A Vision in a Dream)” (Stormlord, 2001)
“Meg Merrilies” (John Keats, 1818)	“The Queen of the Moors” (Skyclad, 2017)
“The Reaper and the Flowers” (Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, 1839)	“The Last Farewell” (Devilish Impressions, 2012)
“Hymn to Proserpine” (Algernon Charles Swinburne, 1866)	“Proserpina” (Tersivel, 2017)
“Dead Men’s Love” (Rupert Brooke, 1911)	“Dead Men’s Love” (The Sundial, 2008)
“A Garden” (H. P. Lovecraft, 1917)	“The Garden” (Mandibulla, 2018)
“Despair” (H. P. Lovecraft, 1919)	“Damn Demons of Despair” (Mandibulla, 2018)
“All That Is Gold Shall Not Glitter” (J. R. R. Tolkien, 1954)	“Phoenix Rise” (Sun of the Sleepless, 2017)

Table 5. Further instances of the *retelling* category.

2.2.3 REELABORATION

There are musical appropriations that borrow extensively from pieces of poetry, recreating their imagery, diction, or pace to some extent, but diverting in some way from the original poem’s diegesis in order to illustrate a story of their own. This type of appropriation signals a departure from the *retelling* category, bearing little or no loyalty to the original text, even to the point of contradicting it on certain occasions. For these reasons, I have termed the category *reelaboration*. All instances of this category involve a process of *transstylization* (Genette 1997[1982]: 226) from the original to the new verses. It is

relevant for the study of these transformations to analyse thematic alterations from the hypotext.

2.2.3.1 “THE BALLAD OF READING GAOL” (OSCAR WILDE, 1898) AND “HANDS OF GOLD” (DELAIN, 2016)

The song “Hands of Gold” (2016), by the Dutch symphonic metal band Delain, is based on Oscar Wilde’s “The Ballad of Reading Gaol” (1927[1898]: 273-303). The last of Wilde’s major works, the poem narrates the execution of royal guard trooper Charles Thomas Wooldrige at Reading Gaol, where the poet was imprisoned in 1895 on account of “indecent” due to the public unveiling of his homosexual relation to Lord Alfred Douglas. Wooldrige had been sentenced to death by hanging after murdering his wife by slitting her throat (Alkalay-Gut 1997: 350; Raby 1997: xxi). In the poem, Wilde traces a parallel between the consequences of the trooper’s deed and those of his own homosexuality in the eyes of contemporaneous society:

Yet each man kills the thing he loves,
By each let this be heard,
Some do it with a bitter look,
Some with a flattering word,
The coward does it with a kiss,
The brave man with a sword ! (1927[1898]: 274)

Although, according to the present taxonomy, Delain’s “Hands of Gold” constitutes an appropriation, adaptation theory is convenient here. In telling the story of a dangerous love relation, the song supports Hutcheon’s statement that “the creative transposition of an adapted work’s story and its heterocosm is subject not only to genre and medium demands, [...] but also to the temperament and talent of the adapter—and his or her individual intertexts through which are filtered the materials being adapted” (2013: 84). In line with Hutcheon’s assertion, singer and composer Charlotte Wessels explains that the song “[i]s a collage of all the books and movies I’ve been watching and reading lately. [...] [Wilde’s poem] fits so perfectly within the lyrics that I adapted it to the song’s phrasing” (Gallier 2016). In fact, the imagery of “The Ballad of Reading Gaol” encloses Wessel’s text, since both song verses start alluding to Wilde’s images of blood, red, and wine, as shown in Table 6.

riffs that find Wilde's guttural citation functioning as an interlude prior to a final recapitulation of the song chorus. This combination of unexpected elements within an otherwise conventional form adds to the dramatism of the performance, making it coherent with the content of the lyrics.

2.2.3.2 "O GOD OF EARTH AND ALTAR" (G. K. CHESTERTON, 1906) AND "REVELATIONS" (IRON MAIDEN, 1983)

Iron Maiden's vocalist Bruce Dickinson admitted having sung the hymn "O God of Earth and Altar" at school (1983; n.p.). Written by Gilbert Keith Chesterton, it was included in *The English Hymnal's* 1906 edition. Its words fit the traditional English melody "King's Lynn" (Chesterton 1906: 726), and its humbling verses express an "implicitly medieval vision of an integrated society" (Milbank 2007: 15). Chesterton's contemporary Patrick Braybrooke is more explicit:

The hymn that Mr. Chesterton has written, called "O God of Earth and Altar," is unfortunately so good and so entirely sensible that the clergy on the whole have not used it much; rather they prefer to sing of heaven with a golden floor and a gate of pearl, ignoring a really fine hymn that pictures God as a sensible Being and not a Lord Chief Justice either of sickly sentimentality or of the type of a Judge Jeffreys. (1922: 75)

For his composition "Revelations" (1983), Dickinson used the traditional melody and the first verses of Chesterton's text as a point of departure:

O God of earth and altar,
Bow down and hear our cry,
Our earthly rulers falter,
Our people drift and die;
The walls of gold entomb us,
The swords of scorn divide,
Take not thy thunder from us,
But take away our pride. (Chesterton 1906: 727)

The singer considers the hymn to be "visionary", as it foretold the state of his contemporary western society:

A lot of money goes around in our society, and the more money you have, the more miserable you are, in fact. The last verse, "Take away our pride", is the centre of the whole mystical universe. The main obstacle to communication and fulfilment is selfishness and a misplaced self-esteem, and these things divide the men. (Dickinson 1983: n.p.)

However, the novelty of the adaptation consisted in developing extended lyrics that drew on Chesterton's stanza only to depart abruptly from its Christian background. In a three-part structure, Dickinson cryptically explores Hindu philosophy, Yogi mythology, and the work of atheist philosopher Aleister Crowley. The song was ironically named after the Book of Revelation in the Bible. As the singer explains:

the universe [...] is dual, binary, and any notion only exists through its opposite. In other words, there isn't any Manichean separation like in the Christian way of thinking, where good and evil are dissociated while trying to eliminate evil, only the Christian system of values is monolithic. All the other great philosophies encompass this duality of notions, like the Ying and the Yang in China, or the Jewish Caballah. (1983; n.p.)

In his extended study of the song, Juras finds further evidence of Dickinson's intentions to revert the Christian system of thought and identify all religions as different sides of the same coin: "In my strange, clumsy way I was tryin' to say: look it's all the same stuff" (Dickinson, qtd in Juras 2018: 87). From a narratological point of view, the transpositional practice performed here is that of *transmotivation* (Genette 1997[1982]: 325), involving a demotivation of the hypotext's Christian message and a remotivation in holistic spiritual terms. As for the music, "Revelations" is in 4/4 and A minor. The minor mode establishes a sombre mood for the mystical portrait painted by the lyrics. Juras remarks that, although in the original 1983 recording the melody for the final song lines differs from that of "King's Lynn" –allegedly at the producer's suggestion–, the traditional melody has been used for these final verses in live performance since 1999 (2018: 92), thus framing a metal song that becomes enclosed into a tune with Christian connotations while at the same time denying Christian moral authority.

2.2.3.3 "THE CHALLENGE OF THOR" (HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW, 1863) AND "STORMGOD" (IMPERIAL TRIUMPHANT, 2010)

If the appropriation previously analysed challenges the message of its source, the next one takes a poem's content out of context to express the very opposite notion. As part of his *Tales of a Wayside Inn* (1863), where several characters gathered together in an inn to exchange tales in *Canterbury Tales* fashion (Kennedy 1882: 90), American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow had a Norwegian musician tell the story of King Olaf, who converted Scandinavia to Christianity (Longfellow 1863: 6). *The Saga of King Olaf* is a narrative poem in twenty-two parts. In order to provide some context before explaining the

imposition of Christianity in the north of Europe, the poet decided to use a ten-year old poem of his, “The Challenge of Thor” (1863: 56-57), as a prelude (1863: 6). Longfellow, who had studied Scandinavian literature in Sweden (1863: 5), introduces Thor as the “War God” who reigns “forever”, renders physical strength as the path to success, and challenges Jesus Christ and his Gospels to open combat in the poem’s last stanza:

Thou art a God too,
O Galilean !
And thus single-handed
Unto the combat,
Gauntlet or Gospel,
Here I defy thee !

Longfellow’s intention is not to praise the superiority of the Nordic god, but to set up a challenge of faith that, thanks to King Olaf’s doings, will be ultimately won by the Christian god. At the end of the poem –part XXII: “The Nun of Didaros”–, Saint John accepts the challenge, “But not with the weapons / Of war that thou wieldest !” He remarks that “Stronger than steel / Is the sword of the Spirit ; [...] Greater than anger / Is love, and subdueth”, and closes the work by claiming that “God is still God, and / His faith shall not fail us ; / Christ is eternal !” (1863: 114-16).

American black metal band Imperial Triumphant transformed “The Challenge of Thor” into their own “Stormgod” (2010), but embraced a very different semantic approach. In an interview given a few months after the release of the song, singer, guitarist and founder Ilya manifested the band’s “devotion to the war against Christianity, as well as the futility of resistance” (Imperial Triumphant 2011: n.p.). Extracted and decontextualised from *The Saga of King Olaf*, “The Challenge of Thor” is an ode of praise and admiration for the Scandinavian god. In order to reshape it as an attack on Christianity, the band used three mechanisms: first, they reshuffled verses from the original and repeated “Meekness is weakness / Strength is triumphant” as a motto; second, they elided certain references to Thor in order to turn the god vs. god approach of the poem into a faith vs. faith narration – mentions of Thor’s “gauntlet”, “girdle”, “red beard”, and Jove being his brother are removed from the final lyrics, so that it is Christianity, and not Christ, that is defied–; finally, as confirmed by bassist Naargryl Fjellkrieger, they included a Gregorian chant-like interlude where they sang a Latin medieval “prayer that Christian monks would use to protect themselves from Norse invasions” as “a mockery of holy music while simultaneously drawing from it” (2011: n.p.):

Dimeter is uncommon in English poetry. Maybe Longfellow was trying to mimic the meter of Medieval Norse verse, which was predominantly trochaic (Ross 2005: 23). To speculate further, trochaic meter is the usual choice for “subjects having to do with the supernatural” (Adams 2003[1997]: 55). Whichever were the poet’s motivations, from a purely syllabic point of view the verses present a ternary cadence that would perfectly fit a 3/4 musical meter in terms of rhythm and accentuation, as seen in Example 9:

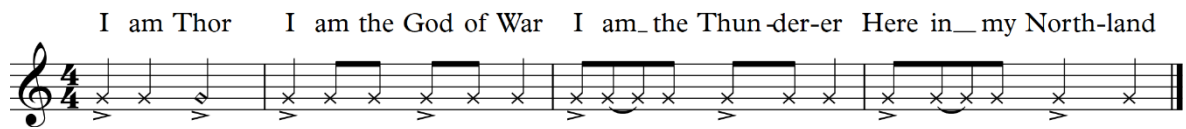


Example 9. Proposed musical meter for “The Challenge of Thor”, by H. W. Longfellow.

Imperial Triumphant, however, decided to use a 4/4 binary meter. In order to match accented syllables with downbeats, they crafted an ingenious combination of note lengths between accented notes that not only solved the problem of adjusting the intricacies of the poem’s meter to the pentagram, but also contributed to the performance by introducing contrast between verses and by adding a sense of propulsion to the overall utterance. Example 10 shows the first four bars, which correspond to the first four verses in the poem. As usual in black metal, the lines are sung in fast, continuous motion. The first bar only features three notes, since the original “I AM the God Thor” has been shortened to “I am Thor”. This allows Ilya to make a sharp opening statement where he introduces the Scandinavian deity concisely: only a quarter note stands between the two accented syllables. The second bar sees Longfellow’s “I am the War God” turned into “I am the God of War”. By adding a sixth syllable, the band finds a syllabic symmetry that the poem verse lacks. This symmetry is translated to the musical bar, which features two quarter notes plus four eighth notes. Nevertheless, the symmetry is altered by the accents: by starting with a quarter note, they place emphasis on “I”, but by turning that quarter note into two eighth notes in the second downbeat of the bar (matching the syllables “God of”), they increase melodic speed, so that the raw conciseness of the first bar turns into a fastest performance at the end of the second. The third and four bars contain a new mechanism: syncopation. The first two syllables in each bar (“I am” and “Here in”) are sung in an eighth note rhythm, so that the second syllable is anticipated. Since these third and fourth verses vary their syllabic count –six and five syllables, respectively–, no two bars present

the same rhythmic design. This playful approach contrasts with the martial outline of the first two bars, adds variation to the performance and renews the listener’s interest in the text being sung.

♩ = 210



Example 10. Melody rhythm of “Stormgod”, by Imperial Triumphant.

2.2.3.4 “AH THE SHEPHERD’S MOURNFUL FATE” (WILLIAM HAMILTON, 1724) AND “BLACK GOD” (MY DYING BRIDE, 1993)

English doom-death band My Dying Bride has been said to “refine” the doom metal subgenre in the 1990s (Kahn-Harris 2007: 4). The closing song of their 1993 CD *Turn Loose the Swans* is “Black God”, a slow, mournful piece where piano, synthesizers and a female voice create a repetitive sonic cushion for the male voice of singer Aaron Stainthorpe. The absence of guitar, bass and drums allows the song to provide closure to the album as it diminishes the unbridled energy of previous tracks. My Dying Bride are known, among other things, for their elaborate lyrics and their singer’s love of poetry, especially from the Romantic era (Stainthorpe 2020B: n.p.). On this occasion, inspiration came from “Ah the Shepherd’s Mournful Fate”, by Scottish eighteenth-century poet William Hamilton (1850[1724]: 4), which in its own time had already been set to the music of the air “Galashiels” (Anonymous 1822A: 144). This way the band provide a double transformation: textual and musical. The poem is a first-person lament of unfulfilled love written in three stanzas. The poetic persona is a despairing shepherd –“doom’d to live, and doom’d to languish”– who introduces his unease due to being estranged from his beloved. The second stanza describes her with words of praise –“that form so heavenly fair, / Those languid eyes so sweetly smiling”–, while the final verses have the shepherd profess his everlasting devotion to his loved one:

Thy every look and every grace,
 So charm where’er I view thee;
 Till death o’ertake me in the chase,
 Still will my hopes pursue thee;

Then when my tedious hours are past,
 Be this last blessing given,
 Low at thy feet to breathe my last,
 And die in sight of heaven.

In “Black God”, Stainthorpe appropriates this last stanza, which constitutes the lyrics of the song. Taken out of their original context, these verses must not necessarily refer to the figure of a loved one. The song’s title aids further speculation: maybe it is a criticism of religious liturgy –Christian devotion leading to a god that is dark in essence–, maybe it is a pledge to Satan –the dark god. Stainthorpe himself explains his intended meaning and why the title can be misleading:

Perhaps a better title for this song would have been “Black Heaven”.
 When I wrote this song I imagined Heaven not to be the bright and beautiful place many consider, and hope, it to be but rather a dark and black place.
 But saying this, I don’t mean this to be in the negative - I mean it to reflect the peace and quiet and restfulness of Heaven.
 A place of great reflection and soulful relaxation. A place to look forward to when the time comes. (2017: n.p.)

This interpretation channels the shepherd’s anxiety into peace and purpose, and contributes a sense of calmness and inevitability to an otherwise uncertain future. By altering the aim of the speaker, the hypotext undergoes a process of *transmotivation* (Genette 1997[1982]: 324-25). Stainthorpe’s recitation, where he emphasises the personal pronoun “I”, thus turning the song into an intimate projection of inner feelings, takes place over a slow 4/4 rhythm in the key of C minor.

2.2.3.5 FURTHER INSTANCES

Thirteen other instances of *reelaboration* are listed in Table 7.

Poem	Songs
“Sonnet CXXX” (William Shakespeare, 1609)	“If Shakespeare Had a Myspace Profile” (His Statue Falls, 2010)
“To His Coy Mistress” (Andrew Marvell, 1681)	“Bring Your Daughter to the Slaughter” (Iron Maiden, 1990)
“Night” (William Blake, 1789)	“The Scream of the Lambs” (Devilish Impressions, 2012)
“The Book of Thel” (William Blake, 1789)	“The Secrets of the Earth” (Stormlord, 2001)
“Auguries of Innocence” (William Blake, 1794)	“Expiration” (Soulfallen, 2007)
“London” (William Blake, 1794)	“Labyrinth of London (Horror pt. IV)” (Swallow the Sun, 2012)
“Jerusalem – To the Jews” (William Blake, 1804)	“Babylon” (Judas Iscariot, 1996)

“A Spirit Passed Before Me” (Lord Byron, 1813)	“Spiritual Blackout” (Devilish Impressions, 2012)
“Jerusalem” (William Blake, 1820)	“Jerusalem” (Bruce Dickinson, 1998)
“A Song of Joys” (Walt Whitman, 1855)	“Élan” (Nightwish, 2014)
“Tristitia” (Oscar Wilde, 1876)	“Deja-Vu Ain’t What It Used to Be” (Skyclad, 2000)
“Panthea” (Oscar Wilde, 1881)	“Lilith” (Devilish Impressions, 2012)
“Requiem” (David Park Barnitz, 1901)	“A Funeral Request” (Cathedral, 1991)
“Sombre Sonnet” (David Park Barnitz, 1901)	

Table 7. Further instances of the *reelaboration* category.

2.2.4 REORIENTATION

As an offspring of *reelaboration*, this category mostly refers to appropriations of narrative poems. Its name comes from Douglas Lanier’s definition of the type of Shakespeare fan fiction appropriation he calls *reoriented narrative* as that “in which the narrative is told from a different point of view” (2002: 83). Instead of using the traditional concept of point of view, I will analyse reoriented transformations based on Genette’s more elaborate idea of *voice*, for which reason some terminology must be briefly explained. In *Narrative Discourse* (1983[1972]), Genette explains three main elements affecting voice: first, he establishes four types of narrating from the point of view of the temporal position: *subsequent*, for past tense narrations (the most common type); *prior*, in a usually predictive future tense; *simultaneous*, in a present tense contemporaneous with the action narrated; and *interpolated*, occurring between the moments of the action (1983[1972]: 217). I will identify changes of narrating type from the hypotext to the hypertext. Second, Genette identifies three narrative levels: the *extradiegetic* level as that which belongs to the narration, the *intradiegetic* level as that placed within the universe of the narration (i.e., the *diegesis*), and the *metadiegetic* level as that belonging to the universe of a second-level narrative uttered by a character (1983[1972]: 227-31). The latter level, which can be recursive –a character telling a narrative within the narrative of a character would engage in a *meta-metadiegetic* level, and so on–, is uncommon in song and short poetry, due to space limitations. Third, when Genette addresses the concept of *person*, he defines two main types of narrators: *heterodiegetic* –absent from the story s/he tells– and *homodiegetic* –present in the story. If a homodiegetic narrator is the hero of the story, s/he becomes *autodiegetic* (1983[1972]: 243-45). Furthermore, Genette addresses point of view –or, as he calls it, *perspective*– under what he terms *mood* (1983[1972]: 162). Mieke Bal would refine his idea by establishing a clear difference between the narrator and the *focalizer*, that

is, the actor “who selects the actions and chooses the angle from which to present them” (2007[2004]: 273). In my borrowing of Lanier’s concept for its application to metal music transformations of poems, I have expanded it to include appropriations where not only the narrative voice, but the addressed person or object –the *focalised*, according to Bal (2007[2004]: 273-74)–, may differ significantly from the original source. Therefore, my definition of *reorientation* broadens the narrative concept of focalisation in mirror fashion, since it may refer to the perspective of the focalizer –s/he who focuses on something or someone– or to the entity which is being focused upon. Because of the presence of new verses, and as it occurred with the *reelaboration* category, all reorientations undergo a transpositional movement of *transstylization* (Genette 1997[1982]: 226).

2.2.4.1 “THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE” (ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON, 1854) AND “THE TROOPER” (IRON MAIDEN, 1983)

Lord Tennyson’s poem “The Charge of the Light Brigade” (2014[1854]: 508-11) describes in an emotionally involved third person the infamous British military campaign against Russia in the Battle of Balaclava. The poem resembles a metal lyric because of its aggressive, military, manly diction, and its imagery of war, hell, and “Death” (notice capitalisation). In fact, this thesis does not take its title from a metal music lyric, but from a verse in Tennyson’s poem. The British soldiers find themselves “[v]olley’d and thunder’d; / Storm’d at with shot and shell”, they enter “[i]nto the jaws of Death, / Into the mouth of hell”, and end surrounded and defeated by the foreign army and glorified by the poet. The events are told in the third person by an omniscient extradiegetic-heterodiegetic narrator that uses the British soldiers –the “[n]oble six hundred”– as focalizer. In “The Trooper” (1983), Iron Maiden’s bassist Steve Harris recrafts the story from an alternative perspective: that of a British soldier narrating the events in the first person, thus becoming an intradiegetic-autodiegetic speaker, narrowing the focalizer from “the six hundred” to a single soldier, and turning the narrating from subsequent to simultaneous. These changes in narrative voice allow the listener to position him/herself in the soldier’s place instead of detachedly hearing a story of the past told by a neutral narrator. In this regard, the lyrics make sure that the audience engages with the narrative by describing an experience of death with little narratorial mediation. The combatant directly addresses a Russian counterpart –“You’ll take my life but I’ll take yours too”–, assumes the tragic end of the

fight –“As I plunge on into certain death”–, and finally dies in the battlefield: “And as I lay there gazing at the sky / My body’s numb and my throat is dry”. The lyrics are fully Harris’s. Nothing but isolated words remain from Tennyson’s verses. Music-wise, Steve Harris’s bass lines are usually characterised by a “galloping” quality, as their rhythmic pattern resembles that of the hooves of a horse while galloping, as seen in Example 11. This effect is especially appropriate for this song, as it “dialogues with the song’s lyrics, which depict a battle that was in fact fought on horseback” (Meller 2013B: 199).



the Cold War still juxtaposed many Western countries (including Margaret Thatcher's Britain) with the USSR. Moreover, the song was also written during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (1979-1989), as if to create a direct connection between old and new forms of imperialism and expansionist policies of extending military, political and economic influence. (2010: 15)

If Tennyson's poem allegedly cheered up soldiers in the Crimean War (Lovelace 2003: 85), Iron Maiden's song also aimed at raising the national spirit. Furthermore, the band opened the shows of their 1984 world tour with the famous "We Shall Fight on the Beaches" speech with which Winston Churchill raised the hopes of the British nation during the Second World War. As attested by the band's live album *Live After Death*, right after the Prime Minister's voice stated an energetic "we will never surrender!", the band started playing "Aces High", a song where a British RAF pilot describes his experiences during the Battle of Britain, which started a bit over a month after Churchill's speech. In the official DVD of the tour, a large British flag hanging opposite the stage is framed in camera even before the band members appear. This appropriation exemplifies how, through recontextualisation, century-old verses can be a source of inspiration to strengthen contemporary political messages.

2.2.4.2 "THE LADY OF SHALOTT" (ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON, 1842) AND "LADY OF SHALOTT" (A DREAM OF POE, 2010)

Also by Tennyson, "The Lady of Shalott" (2006[1842]: 18-27) is a poem that has triggered a substantial amount of critical debate. Again narrated in an omniscient extradiegetic-heterodiegetic third-person voice –albeit one identified as male by some critics (Goodman 1996: 27-29)–, it introduces the Lady incessantly weaving in a tower where she lives isolated from the rest of the world. A curse prevents her from leaving her abode. The lively nature surrounding the tower, the river and the path to neighbouring Camelot, along with the diverse groups of people who conduct their activities in the area, are only perceived by the Lady as a reflection on her mirror. As she notices the image of Sir Lancelot riding towards Camelot, she suddenly decides to abandon the tower, causing the mirror to break. Aware that she is suffering the consequences of her curse, she still decides to travel to Camelot by boat. Upon her death when entering the town, Sir Lancelot manifests his sorrow for her passing. The initial critical consensus on the poem spoke about the conflict between art and life: as an artist, the Lady must isolate herself from the rest of humanity in

order to weave successful works of art; joining the real world will eventually murder her art and the artist in her (Stockstill 2012: 13). However, gender theory has popularised a different account of the poem which focuses on the Lady being objectified and confined to her private space because of her gender, while male Sir Lancelot, potentially a secondary character in the story, is described as “bold” and quoted in the poem, thus representing the public sphere (Plasa 1992: 249-50). When the Lady tries to embrace the public scope, death denies her passage. Furthermore, the Lady is described as passive and does not even have a name. Even the surrounding nature, which wields action verbs, is more active than her: “Willows whiten, aspens quiver, / Little breezes dusk and shiver” (Goodman 1996: 28).

A transformation of the poem that provides the Lady with a voice seems in order, then. However, Portuguese doom metal band A Dream of Poe decided to perform a *secondary revaluation* (Genette 1997[1982]: 344), reorienting Tennyson’s narrative from the point of view of Sir Lancelot, now turned focalizer. As already seen with Draconian’s transformation, addressing the emotions triggered by the death of a woman is an appropriate choice for a doom metal song in terms of atmosphere and textual content –let’s not forget that the name of the most popular band in the doom-death subgenre is My Dying Bride–, but in this case it strengthens the male point of view by switching focus from the Lady to Sir Lancelot’s pain, thus reinforcing the claims of gendered critical approaches to the source poem. The lyrics in “Lady of Shalott” (2010) start by elaborating on the art vs. reality concept. The initial lines –“Weave the thread / Blind of flesh from your beloved Camelot”– paradoxically indicate how the Lady weaves her destiny –her thread of life– by actually stopping her weaving, and uncovers her detachment from reality by highlighting her incapacity to see real, tangible flesh. Soon the lyrics give the word to Lancelot by reproducing one of his direct addresses in the poem: “God in his mercy lend her grace”. The clean voice of singer João Melo is reinforced by grunting vocals as the song’s reorientation focuses on Sir Lancelot’s feelings of pain. The Arthurian knight identifies with the plight of his beloved, with whom he manifests sharing her evil spell: “When the curse falls down upon us / We will burn together / Under rain, the wickiest of weather”. The latter line finds a counterpart in the poem: “Heavily the low sky raining”. Lancelot, now embodied in a first-person speaker, is so devastated that foresees himself “[d]ead by the side of the Lady of Shalott”. The tragedy is no longer the Lady’s, but Lancelot’s, and her actions are the cause: “Silent & broken I’ve become / From the weaving of my pain”.

The final section of the song is spoken rather than sung. If, in Tennyson's poem, the male "narrator is at great pains to describe the visual impact of the Lady in her fine white robes flowing in the breeze" (Goodman 1996: 29), the song focuses on her image of purity: "the finest of all ladies / A dying angel from above". The original verses introduced a Sir Lancelot whose only appraisal of the Lady was: "She has a lovely face"; the new lyrics show a devastated knight who laments his own uselessness –"My hands will not heal her"– and drowns in despair –"sorrow is all I got"–, ending his utterance with a heartfelt cry. As it occurred with "The Trooper", the use of an intradiegetic-autodiegetic first-person speaker brings the action closer to the audience. In this case this effect is reinforced by moving the narrating from a subsequent to an interpolated temporal position: in the course of six stanzas the poetic voice in the song lyrics recounts the past –"the boat came empty of love"–, speaks from a present of despair –"sorrow is all I got"– and predicts a doomed future: "I'll crawl to the sun". The transformation is also a digest of its hypotext, which transstylises by turning into free verse the iambic tetrameter of Tennyson's poem. In musical terms, "Lady of Shalott" is consistent with the output of the doom metal subgenre. Minor harmonies outlined by power chords in 4/4 time are the foundations of a very slow performance –76 bpm– that spans beyond the eight-minute mark.

2.2.4.3 "THE NIGHT HAS A THOUSAND EYES" (FRANCIS WILLIAM BOURDILLON, 1899) AND "DRAWN TO BLACK" (INSOMNIUM, 2007)

According to their guitarist Ville Friman, the members of Insomnium, a melodic death metal band from Finland, take their lyrics seriously: "We try to write the lyrics in a form of poems so that they would work out alone even without the music. The lyrics have to go in hand in hand with the music so that the both music and lyrics feed of each other" [*sic*] (2007). Besides crafting poetic lyrics, they used Francis William Bourdillon's "The Night Has a Thousand Eyes" (1899: 13) as the chorus of their song "Drawn to Black" (2006). Spoken by a third-person voice, this short two-stanza poem pairs the stars –night's "thousand eyes"– with the coldness intellectualism of the mind as opposed to the light of love emanated by the sun, that corresponds to the heart. On a sorrowful note, the final verses warn about the dire consequences of ending a love relationship: "Yet the light of a whole life dies / When love is done". A lyrical poem, since it expresses a thought without

addressing any specific actor or narrating any action, it eludes temporal classification, thus defying Genette’s remark that

I can very well tell a story without specifying the place where it happens, and whether this place is more or less distant from the place where I am telling it; nevertheless, it is almost impossible for me not to locate the story in time with respect to my narrating act, since I must necessarily tell the story in a present, past, or future tense. (1983[1972]: 215)

Singer, bassist, and song author Niilo Sevänen expanded Bourdillon’s metaphor further by shrouding the poet’s text in new verses where a first-person speaker narrates a personal experience of loss of love, thus turning the poem’s diegesis into the song’s metadiegesis. The corresponding movements of augmentation and diegetic transposition result in a process of *amplification* (Genette 1997[1982]: 262). As to the narrator, it turns from heterodiegetic to autodiegetic. Perspective is elusive, since there is no action or object to focalise on. The lyrics start using envelopment-related diction, as if mirroring the position of the poem in regard to the rest of the text: “Wreathed in silence [...] Swathed in regrets”. In making the experience more personal and reinforcing the suffering of the poetic voice, Sevänen uses a Biblical metaphor where the lover is compared to Eve – “Fateful her kisses, where a serpent hides”– and the speaker is “left in the dark for the demons to share”. The series of parallel binary oppositions found in the poem –heart/mind, day/night, stars/sun– find their counterpart in the final section of the song, where icy intellectualism remains as the speaker’s only companion: “Only the stars see, only the moon hears...”. Although the lyrics are written in the present tense, they share with the poem a lack of concern for time or action. Neither the speaker nor his lover are active, action verbs being reserved for the stars, the moon, the waterlilies, the weed and, ultimately, silence.

Poem and lyrics are complementary, but they also contrast in their use of poetic meter. Bourdillon’s verses combine iambic and anapaestic flavours, with a combination of trimeter and dimeter:

x / x x / x /
THE night has a thousand eyes,
x x / x /
And the day but one;
x x / x x / x /
Yet the light of the bright world dies
x x / x /
With the dying sun.

However, the song verses –according to their vocal performance and taking silent beats into account– are written in dactylic tetrameter, thus transstyling their hypotext:

/ x x / x (x) / x x / (x) (x)
 Wreathèd in silence, laid down in shades
 / x x / x x / x x / (x) (x)
 Swathèd in regrets, deluded astray
 x / x x / x (x) / x x / (x) (x)
 Forgotten in half-light, drawn in despair
 / x x / x x / x x / (x) (x)
 Soothèd in slumber so dreadful and fair

Although metric approaches are different, the presence of three-syllable feet in both poem and song favours the integration of both texts in their musical environment. For that purpose, the vocal melody of the song verse uses a Latin-tinged rhythm in 4/4 meter that naturally adapts three notes –matching three syllables of text– into a bar, as shown in Example 12. This scheme emphasises the accent in the first beat of the bar, skipping it in the third beat and displaying each textual foot along one bar. Since each line ends in a single accented syllable, that syllable occupies a whole bar –“shades”, “stray”–, thus gaining musical closure.

♩ = 160

Wreath - ed___ in si - lence___ laid down in shades

(caesura) (rest)

5 Swath - ed___ in re - grets___ de - lud - ed___ a - stray

(rest)

Example 12. Verse melody rhythm of “Drawn to Black”, by Insomnium.

The song chorus, which hosts Bourdillon’s verses, presents a different structure. The melodic rhythm is faster and uses shorter notes. Each group of four bars corresponds to two verses of the poem, so that each verse should occupy two bars. Nevertheless, since the first of these two verses is a trimeter and the second a dimeter, the trimeter is allocated an extra half bar –the first half of the third bar in each group of four–, which is taken away from the dimeter verse. This way the accents in the poem scansion –three and two, respectively– match the accents in the musical performance. This is shown in Example 13,

where the accented notes correspond to the syllables “night”, “thou”, “eyes” (first trimeter), “day”, “one” (first dimeter), “light”, “bright”, “dies” (second trimeter) and “dy”, “sun” (second dimeter). Use of syncopation in most accents mirrors the anticipation in the second note of the song verse’s Latin-flavoured figure, thus contributing to rhythmic coherence between verse and chorus.

♩ = 160

The night_ has a thou- sand eyes And the day__ but_ one

5 Yet the light_ of the bright_ world dies With the dy - ing_ sun

Example 13. Chorus melody rhythm of “Drawn to Black”, by Insomnium.

The lyrics reflect the poem further. At the end of the song, the despaired speaker sings “For all is gone”, a line that not only matches the last verse of the poem –“When love is done”– in content, but also in meter: both verses are iambic dimeters. Furthermore, as the final bars echo the refrain “Only the stars see, only the moon hears”, the very last spoken words are “Only the moon”, another dimeter that, although combining a trochee with an iamb, echoes the end of the poem due to its similarities in both meter and content. The sun of love is now extinct, only the moon of the mind remains.

2.2.4.4 “THE RAVEN” (EDGAR ALLAN POE, 1845) AND “RAVENHEART” (XANDRIA, 2004)

“Ravenheart”, by German symphonic metal band Xandria, is inspired by Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Raven” (1890[1845]; 155-61), a first-person account of mental unease caused by the passing of a beloved woman and triggered by the insistent presence of an inquisitive raven. Although both Poe and the poem will be featured in a separate chapter, the present transformation deserves its place in the present section because of being paradigmatic of the *reorientation* category. The song is the title track of the band’s 2004 CD, whose whole atmosphere, according to singer Lisa Schaphaus, was inspired by Poe (2004: n.p.). Besides abridging its hypotext’s narrative, thus engaging in the transpositional practice of *digest* (Genette 1997[1982]: 241), it reconfigures “The Raven” by resorting to *transsexuation*

(Genette 1997[1982]: 298), that is, a change in the gender of the human participants. If we are to match the gender of the narrator with that of the singer, the hypertext's poetic persona is a woman. This interpretation preserves the heterosexual context of the hypotext, since the lyrics expressly address a male lover who takes the place of the late Lenore. What is not so evident is whether the lover is dead; the hypertext could simply refer to a broken love relationship. This appropriation also involves a change in attitude: instead of fearing the raven and embracing introversion, the woman defiantly addresses the bird, which is identified with her own heart:

Come to me, Ravenheart
Messenger of evil
Come to me. What's the news?
Here I'm still left lonely

More analytical than her male counterpart, the song's speaker finds herself longing for her beloved, accusing her raven heart of forcing her to face reality –“You come to take away / My hope on your black wings”– and acknowledging her present feelings: “Once loving him, now hating love / I've made mistakes, my Ravenheart”. This psychological approach, and the fact that the speaker is female, takes the song away from the nineteenth-century Romanticism-imbued tone of Poe's verses, updating the original text for present day concerns. Nevertheless, in the end the outcome remains unchanged as the song reuses the poem's diction: “Will I get back who I adore? / Thus spoke the raven: nevermore”. The transition from hypertext to hypotext presents no changes in voice or perspective. Albeit the speaker in the song is more concerned with the present and the persona of “The Raven” focuses mostly on the past, both narratives are interpolated. In regard to the music, the key of choice is G minor and the meter is a steady 4/4. Although the guitars mostly play power chords, the tonality is made evident by the notes in the vocal melody, as Example 14 attests.

♩ = 105

Come to me__ Rav-en- heart_ Mes-sen- ger__ of e - vil

5 Come to me__ What's the news_ Here I'm still_ left__ lone_____ ly

Example 14. Chorus of “Ravenheart”, by Xandria.

2.2.4.5 FURTHER INSTANCES

Not many bands engage in reorienting the narratives of the hypotexts they base their songs on. Table 8 shows two extra instances of *reorientation*.

Poem	Songs
“The Book of Thel” (William Blake, 1789)	“Book of Thel” (Bruce Dickinson, 1998)
“The Lady of Shalott” (Alfred, Lord Tennyson, 1833)	“Lady of Shalot” (Symphonia, 2015)

Table 8. Further instances of the *reorientation* category.

2.2.5 CITATION

The *citation* transformation category consists in inserting a brief extract of a poem into the lyrics of a song, regardless of the relation (or lack thereof) between the content of both cultural products. It may also include longer extracts as long as the meaning of the hypotext is not preserved in the hypertext. Neither an instance of adaptation nor one of transformation, due to the independence between both texts, Genette’s transpositional practices are not applicable. It is the easiest and most common type of transformation, as attested by the high number of bands that resort to this textual mechanism (see Table 9).

2.2.5.1 VENUS AND ADONIS (WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, 1593) AND “FOR MY FALLEN ANGEL” (MY DYING BRIDE, 1996)

As the closure for their 1996 album *Like Gods of the Sun*, English doom-death metal band My Dying Bride wrote the slow, calm, melancholy “For My Fallen Angel”. Again with no drums or guitars of any kind, as already happened with “Black God”, a synthesizer background supports both the melody of a violin and Aaron Stainthorpe’s male voice speaking about the death of a loved one: “The cold and visceral knowledge that the one you wanted to spend the rest of your life with is about to be removed from your life – and theirs – forever” (Stainthorpe 2020A: n.p.). Coincidentally with the band’s name, the dying lover in the song lyrics is a woman: “On my weak body / Lays her dying hand”. The song ends with the following verses:

Loves golden arrow
At her should have fled,
And not Deaths ebon dart
To strike her dead.

These lines are taken from William Shakespeare’s narrative poem *Venus and Adonis* (2008[1593]: 635-62), but the personal pronouns have switched gender to fit the song’s narration, since in the Bard’s text it is female Venus who laments the death of male Adonis:

Love’s golden arrow at him should have fled,
And not death’s ebon dart to strike him dead. (2008[1593]: 656)

By scrutinising both excerpts in the context of their surrounding texts, Heilman identifies a contrasting attitude between Stainthorpe’s resignation and Shakespeare’s condemnation (2018: 221). According to Genette’s subtypes of intertextuality, this example constitutes an instance of *plagiarism* (1997[1982]: 2).

2.2.5.2 “TO THE VIRGINS, TO MAKE MUCH OF TIME” (ROBERT HERRICK, 1648) AND “A CHANGE OF SEASONS” (DREAM THEATER, 1995)

In 1995, American progressive metal band Dream Theater released *A Change of Seasons*, whose ambitious title track is divided into seven sections and spans throughout twenty-three minutes. According to its lyricist, drummer Mike Portnoy, it is “about the cycle of life” (n.d.: n.p.). After the instrumental “The Crimson Sunrise” and “Innocence”, its third part, aptly titled “Carpe Diem”, is an encouragement to live and take chances: “Cherish

your life / While you're still around". Its middle part includes a recitation of the first stanza of Robert Herrick's "To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time" (1915[1648]: 84):

Gather ye Rose-buds while ye may,
Old Time is still a-flying :
And this same flower that smiles to day,
To morrow will be dying.

Another instance of *plagiarism*, the inclusion of Herrick's citation is more than appropriate, since the teaching transmitted by these four verses in isolation is consistent with their new textual context: while Portnoy suggests to "seize the day", the poet warns about the passage of time. However, when taken wholly and separately, both cultural products present different, even opposing, messages. The song is a reflection about the most remarkable moments in the course of a lifetime, but the poem is a reminder of marriage for 17th-century young women: "use your time ; / And while ye may, goe marry : / For having lost but once your prime, / You may for ever tarry". While the song is a chant to freedom, the poem calls for restraint. As the music progresses, the lyrics address the loss of loved ones –"She looked me in the eye / I said, 'I Love You... / Good-bye'"– , the difficulties of progressing in life –"Lose a step / And never get up"–, unrealistic expectations –"Utopia high in the sky / A dream that only drowned me"–, and hope for the future: "Seasons change and so can I". It is in its final section, "The Crimson Sunset", where the speaker, now an old man, tries to transmit his wisdom to his son. When reflecting about his life, the song lyrics echo Herrick's verses, sung by a background voice:

I've lived my life, but now must move on
(Gather ye rosebuds while ye may)

Because of its support of the song lyrics, this citation of the poem is as successful as the previous one, and it also serves to give textual cohesion to such a long piece of music by acting as a deferred refrain. Poem and song are further referenced in the album's paratexts: regarding the song, the front cover depicts a child with an innocent look, while the back cover shows an old man next to the passing sheets of a calendar. Together, both pictures symbolise the cycle of life. As for the poem, both child and elder are close to a rose: the first one is in full bloom, while the second has withered. Both flowers constitute a visual representation of Herrick's verse: "Gather ye Rose-buds while ye may".

2.2.5.3 *THE WASTE LAND* (T. S. ELIOT, 1936) AND “THE LIGHT AT THE EDGE OF THE WORLD” (DARKEST HOUR, 2007)

Besides marketing a collection of songs as a CD, there are metal bands that carefully weave together pieces written around a particular topic into a concept album. Without reaching that far, for their 2007 *Deliver Us* American death metal band Darkest Hour gave prominence to apocalyptic songs commenting on the decline of contemporary civilisation, and specifically, as told by singer John Henry, on how the society of his time was at the edge of the abyss leading to the end of the world (2007: n.p.). Appropriately enough, the lyrics for the song “The Light at the Edge of the World” are taken from T. S. Eliot’s bleak take on the modern world *The Waste Land* (1936[1922]: 59-84). However, my considering this adaptation as an instance of the *citation* category is not a direct consequence of the relation between verses and song, but the result of the function Eliot’s words play in the larger scheme of the whole album. *Deliver Us* can be understood as a journey of desperation that starts with a warning about society’s dire situation –the opening track, “Doomsayer (The Beginning of the End)” is a call to individuals with some hope for change– and finishes painting a dark future and asking for mercy in its last two tracks (“Full Imperial Collapse” and “Deliver Us”). Eliot’s verses are taken from the beginning of *The Waste Land*’s part V –“What the Thunder Said”–, which references the betrayal and arrest of Jesus Christ. According to Christian mythology, Christ’s subsequent death at the hands of men represents humanity’s failure, as attested in these verses: “He who was living is now dead / We who were living are now dying” (Eliot 1936: 74). The following stanza depicts the waste land people live in as a result: “Here is no water but only rock / [...] If there were water we should stop and drink” (1936: 74).¹⁸ “The Light at the Edge of the World” is in the middle section of the CD. It is an atmospheric track where the poem excerpt is recited in the background while the band plays a mid-tempo rhythm. It serves as an interlude that connects its surrounding songs: on the one hand, its title references the edge of the abyss Henry mentions, but it also takes over from the last lines of the previous song, “A Paradox with Flies”: “So rest your head and close your eyes / Just one more step till we’re over the edge”. On the other hand, the calm atmosphere of the song allows it to work as an introduction to “Stand and Receive Your Judgment”, a furious cry of blame

¹⁸ Nevertheless, singer John Henry has expressly manifested not being religious, and using Christian references only metaphorically (2007: n.p.).

dedicated to the American President at the time, George W. Bush: “All their reign falls to the earth just the same / [...] You’ll still go down in history” (Henry 2007: n.p.).

The concept of the edge of the world extends further throughout the album, as imagery of boundaries and liminal spaces appear in “Tunguska” –“On the threshold of life as we know / In a chasm cascading to the core”– and “Fire in the Skies” –“So show me what it takes / To fall asleep on the eve of destruction”. *The Waste Land* is also a persisting presence in lines like “The earth shakes beneath my feet” –from “Sanctuary”– or these more explicit verses from “Fire in the Skies”:

We keep drifting on and on
Across this barren wasteland
Seared earth laid waste
On another plane of existence

This transformation constitutes a borderline example of *citation*, as it exemplifies how the influence of a poem can impregnate its surrounding environment beyond the mere reinterpretation of its embedded verses. In “The Light at the Edge of the World”, *The Waste Land* is used as an extended reference, raising the interest of the listening experience by interconnecting different songs in the album and almost playing the part of a conceit.

2.2.5.4 “DO NOT GO GENTLE INTO THAT GOOD NIGHT” (DYLAN THOMAS, 1959) AND “RESONANCE” (WITHIN THE FALL, 2015)

Poetry of death is especially well-suited for metal music adaptations, especially in the most extreme subgenres. In his popular “Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night” (1959[1947]: 116), Welsh poet Dylan Thomas addressed the almost inevitable death of his father, diagnosed with throat cancer (Ackerman 1991: 132). The poetic voice invokes the addressee to fight, using as a refrain the poem’s title alternated with the following call to resistance: “Rage, rage against the dying of the light”. “Resonance” (2015), by Swedish doom-death metal band Within the Fall, is a chant to hope where appreciating the relevance of one’s life will ultimately defeat apathy and depression. The song, sung in low growls, finds a first-person speaker claiming to have been “[b]orn into a world of loss” where “[d]eath always smiles my way”, but expresses a strong will to avoid pessimism and value life and positive hope for the future, as explicitly stated in the song chorus:

The Blossom of sorrow

Long have you been our herald
 The Idol of regret and pain
 I cast you down
 For I still hear the resonance of my dreams

After this first chorus, the drums and distorted guitars, prominent from the beginning of the song, take a background position. The growled vocals rest and a clean guitar takes over, introducing the first tercet in Thomas’s poem, which works as a reminder of fierce resistance against negative emotions:

Do not go gentle into that good night,
 Old age should burn and rave at close of day;
 Rage, rage against the dying of the light

Unlike the song’s original lines, where the poetic voice looks inward and speaks about its own experience, the citation uses the imperative. Apparently, this causes Thomas’s words to address the listener, thus not integrating organically into the rest of the lyrics due to the resulting change of tense. However, this explanation is denied credit by the musical context. The aforesaid clean guitar establishes a mood that stands apart from the rest of the song and, unlike in all the other vocal sections, which are sung in prominent grunts, Thomas’s verses are recited in whispering, as if spoken by a second voice that is not addressing the listener, but the singer, thus corresponding to Genette’s intertextual process of *quoting* (1997[1982]: 2). Once the recitation is finished, the band returns to the previous musical landscape, repeating the chorus and making explicit use of growled singing, guitar distortion, and heavy drumming. The poem excerpt works as an aside that engages in conversation with the band’s own lyrics and reinforces the overall message.

2.2.5.5 FURTHER INSTANCES

As aforesaid, many bands quote poetry in their songs. Thirty-nine extra transformations are listed in Table 9.

Poem	Songs
“Change Thy Mind Since She Doth Change” (Robert Devereux, 1597)	“Thou Art Free” (Saturnus, 2000)
“The Sunn Is Set” (Robert Sidney, 1597)	“Lost My Way” (Saturnus, 2000)
“Comus” (John Milton, 1634)	“Through Lycanthropie’s Trod Communion” (In Tha Umbra, 2005)
“Lycidas” (John Milton, 1638)	“Shadow, Caressing Shadow” (In Tha Umbra, 2000)

Poem	Songs
“To His Coy Mistress” (Andrew Marvell, 1681)	“A Winter’s Dream” (Dark at Dawn, 2001)
“The Tyger” (William Blake, 1794)	
“An Essay on Man” (Alexander Pope, 1734)	“Rime (Jerub-Ba’al)” (A Hill to Die Upon, 2014)
“Spring” (William Blake, 1789)	“Lunatic Asylum” (Theatres des Vampires, 2001)
“Visions of the Daughters of Albion” (William Blake, 1793)	
“Infant Sorrow” (William Blake, 1794)	
“A Song of Liberty” (William Blake, 1792)	“Pale Religious Letchery” (Theatres des Vampires, 2001)
“Visions of the Daughters of Albion” (William Blake, 1793)	“Oath of Supremacy” (Theatres des Vampires, 2001)
	“Une Saison en Enfer” (Theatres des Vampires, 2001)
“Auguries of Innocence” (William Blake, 1794)	“.44” (De Lirium’s Order, 2012)
“Earth’s Answer” (William Blake, 1794)	“Dead World Assembly” (Draconian, 2011)
“The Book of Urizen” (William Blake, 1794)	“Preludium” (Theatres des Vampires, 1999)
“The Human Abstract” (William Blake, 1794)	“Psychogrotesque X” (Aborym, 2010)
“The Tyger” (William Blake, 1794)	“The Mercenary” (Iron Maiden, 2000)
“Never Pain to Tell Thy Love” (William Blake, 1796)	“Stream of Unconsciousness” (Drastic, 1998)
“Ode: Intimations of Immortality” (William Wordsworth, 1807)	“Possession (Lord of Shadow Pt. I)” (Dark Mirror ov Tragedy, 2005)
“Vala – Night the Fourth” (William Blake, 1807)	“The Spring Breathes Horrors” (In Tha Umbra, 2000)
“English Bards and Scotch Reviewers” (Lord Byron, 1809)	“...By Untrodden Paths” (Drastic, 1998)
“The Corsair” (Lord Byron, 1814)	“A Corsair’s Name” (Arbiter, 2010)
“Kubla Khan” (Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 1816)	“Blue Light Prisoners” (Drastic, 1998)
“After Dark Vapours Have Oppres’d Our Plains” (John Keats, 1817)	“After Dark Vapours Have Oppres’d Our Plains” (Paragon of Beauty, 2000)
“Hyperion” (John Keats, 1819)	“Prometheus Rebound” (A Hill to Die Upon, 2009)
“Peter Bell the Third” (Percy Bysshe Shelley, 1819)	“Reprisal – Malis Avibus” (Hollenthon, 1999)
“Ode on a Grecian Urn” (John Keats, 1820)	“Sringjail” (Drastic, 1998)
“Ode to a Nightingale” (John Keats, 1820)	“Elysian Night” (Draconian, 2011)
“Ulysses” (Alfred, Lord Tennyson, 1833)	“A Jester Arrayed in Burning Gold” (A Hill to Die Upon, 2014)
“Because I Could Not Stop for Death” (Emily Dickinson, 1862)	“Slippers in the Snow” (Tiles, 2004)
“Hertha” (Algernon Charles Swinburne, 1869)	“Unearthly” (Drastic, 1998)
“The Law for the Wolves” (Rudyard Kipling, 1894)	“Season of the Starved Wolf” (A Hill to Die Upon, 2009)
“Unforgotten” (Laurence Hope, 1901)	“The Death of Hours” (Draconian, 2011)
“The Titanic” (Aleister Crowley, 1920)	“The Chant of Mighty Offspring” (A Hill to Die Upon, 2011)
“The Waste Land” (T. S. Eliot, 1922)	“Wasteland (Vechnost)” (Silent Planet, 2014)
“Do Not Stand by My Grave and Weep” (Mary Elizabeth Frye, 1932)	“Another Time” (Lyriel, 2010)
“Four Quartets – Burnt Norton” (T. S. Eliot, 1943)	“Plenitude Is a Perfect Vacancy” (Delight, 2000)
“Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night” (Dylan Thomas, 1952)	“Rage, Rage Against the Dying of The Light” (Anaal Nathrakh, 2004)
	“Against the Dying of the Light” (Sorrowful Angels, 2015)

Poem	Songs
	“Inherit the Earth” (Silent Planet, 2016)
“Dinosauria, We” (Charles Bukowski, 1991)	“The Laws...” (Scythian, 2015)

Table 9. Further instances of the *citation* category.

3. “SPIRITS OF THE DEAD”: METAL MUSIC AND THE POETRY OF EDGAR ALLAN POE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

During his lifetime, Edgar Allan Poe’s work received a mixed response from both audience and critics. Over a century and a half later he has become a readers’ favourite, while critical controversy still covers the whole range from full appreciation to total disdain: “his work, and in particular the poetry, is at once unremittingly vulgar and theoretically advanced, even pretentious. Fastidious spirits like Emerson, James, and Eliot have had great difficulty managing that fundamental contradiction” (McGann 2004: 2). Whether Poe’s oeuvre might be understood as conceptually contradictory or if he truly was the great artist generations of readers have claimed, what is undeniable is his enormous influence on the latter based on the writer’s prominent position as a popular culture icon. Milestones like his works having been adapted to music and film, and his image having appeared in a US Post Office stamp, on the cover of a Beatles’ album, and in diverse consumption objects such as pens, coffee mugs or mouse pads, have helped keep his memory alive for modern audiences (Neimeyer 2004: 205).

Throughout the last decades, a number of scholars have busied themselves trying to explain why Poe occupies such an exalted position in the podium of popular culture. Kennedy traces the causes back to the writer’s era:

Writing at the advent of the so-called post-Christian epoch, at the historical moment when public education and a secular, capitalistic mass culture had begun to supplant organized religion as the principal influences on private thought and belief, Poe gave memorable literary form to the conflicted imaginary of the modern consciousness. (2001: 14)

Elaborating from Kennedy, Peeples enumerates some concerns of this modern consciousness: “dislocation from history, spiritual uncertainty and death anxiety, and a fascination with science, exploration, and information” (2004: 151). In a comprehensive attempt, Neimeyer identifies six reasons for Poe’s success within popular culture: i) His assimilation of contemporary popular culture and desire to be regarded as a popular writer himself; ii) his tragic biography and the myths emerging from it; iii) childhood associations, since audiences usually read him at an early age; iv) the visual and cinematic qualities of his stories; v) his output being located somewhere between high culture and popular culture; vi) the mix in his works of the familiar and the extraordinary –known as

the *uncanny* or, as Freud defined it, the *Unheimliche* (2004: 222).¹⁹ Scholarly considerations aside, today Poe is a synonym for darkness, beauty, and terror. His image is recognisable even to those who have not read his works, but are only acquainted with his adaptations, appropriations, and commercial brand condition. “[I]f Poe is alive and well in the ether of postmodern meta-popular culture, it is because his image, his life, and his words are so firmly anchored in the many dimensions of popular culture” (Neimeyer 2004: 207). Metal music is, of course, one of these dimensions.

The fact that Poe’s poetry has oftentimes been adapted to popular music may come as no surprise, since “[s]ound is crucial in [his] poems” (Fisher 2008: 32). His stern allegiance to formal conventions of rhyme, meter, and stanzaic form, along with the aural effects resulting from his use of rhetorical devices like alliteration and assonance make his poetic work flow easily, especially when read aloud. The poet’s desire was to “suit at once the popular and the critical taste” (Poe 1984[1846]: 163). Whether he fulfilled the latter has been a source of controversy among critics, ranging from those who remark the acoustic power of his verses (McGann 2014: 130) or highlight how his “poem-songs work, literally and figuratively, to enchant, i.e. to sing (persuade) readers into the world in a given poem” (Fisher 2008: 35) to others who claim that “Poe’s verse (I will not call it poetry) is indefensible” (Bloom 2008A: xi), even to the point of contemptuously naming him “jingle man”, as Poe’s contemporary Ralph Waldo Emerson did (Fisher 2008: 32). External criticism aside, judging by his own essays, Poe seemed to be well aware of his musical intentions: “there can be little doubt that in the union of Poetry with Music in its popular sense, we shall find the widest field for the Poetic development”. Although he had defined *poetry* as the “Rhythmical Creation of Beauty” (1984[1850]: 78), his concerns resided beyond rhythm alone:

The arrangement is moreover said to be for the purpose of producing “harmony by the regular alternation,” &c. But harmony is not the sole aim—not even the principal one. In the construction of verse, melody should never be left out of view; yet this is a point which all our Prosodies have most unaccountably forborne to touch. Reasoned rules on this topic should form a portion of all systems of rhythm. (1984[1846]: 29)

Anticipating by decades Walter Pater’s take on music as the condition towards which all art aspires due to its blurring of boundaries between matter and form (1901: 135), Poe associated “poetry with *indefinite* sensations, to whose end music is an *essential*, since the

¹⁹ For a discussion on the term, see Freud *et al.* (1976).

comprehension of sweet sound is our most indefinite conception” (1984[1836]: 11). He further remarked that “[m]usic, when combined with a pleasurable idea, is poetry; music without the idea is simply music; the idea without the music is prose from its very definitiveness” (1984[1836]: 11), thus establishing a conception of poetry as inseparable from music. His defining verse as “an inferior or less capable Music” (1984[1846]: 34) explicitly demanded a musical approach to his own poems.

Beyond the purely musical, Poe’s poetic oeuvre includes many features that might be of interest to the popular audience and, specifically, to the metal music audience. The feeling of archaism and permanence that surrounds his words might imply certain universality, as Fisher notices by highlighting Poe’s use of anonymous speakers (2008: 31) and narrative time indefiniteness (2008: 4). His works address some of metal music’s main lyrical concerns: isolation, psychological terror, the inner darkness of the mind, or dream-places where to escape are among the main themes in poems like “Alone”, “The Conqueror Worm”, or “The City in the Sea”. Halliburton identifies the following as the author’s main concerns. Notice their similarity to those of metal music:

an interest in power and powerlessness; in states of being; in one-to-one relationships and confrontations, especially with mysterious presences; in memory and mourning; in victimization; in dehumanization and its cure; in the relation of body to soul; and, above all, in the need for transcendence and affirmation. (1973: 41)

When explaining his own poetic aesthetics, Poe established the excitement and elevation of the soul as a poem’s main objective (1984[1850]: 71). This appeal to the human senses is expressed in his own poetry through a dreamy, evasive quality that allows the reader to move from a mundane situation to “a fantastic world, a geography of the imagination” (Fisher 2008: 35). His poems speak of loneliness and melancholy (Rodríguez Guerrero-Strachan 2010: 103), of reality and illusion, of mortality and loss: abstract concepts whose treatment appeals to the unschooled reader thanks to the author’s use of a highly allusive imagery supported by the previously mentioned rhetorical elements. As Fisher notices, the poet’s romantic concern with the human mind, along with his relying on the gothic tradition, led him to explore the brain’s darkest alleys, creating “terror that was rooted in the soul” (Fisher 2008: 24). In fact, Kennedy finds

similarities between Poe’s phantasms and the gruesome themes explored by hard rock and “heavy,” “black,” or “death metal” groups [...] Without hyperbole, we may speak of a postmodern cult of death that revels in fantasies of sadism, masochism, and annihilation; in place of a loving God, it reveres a hypostatized figure of universal destruction. (2001: 12)

The introspective sentiment of alienation, also relevant in metal music lyrics, is present in the “claustrophobia” and the “turning inward” of the protagonists in Poe’s poems, leading to “isolation, anxieties and terror” (Fisher 2008: 30); and in a will to “establishing or commanding power” (2008: 33) which can be found in poems like “Eldorado”. Taking into account the above similarities between the feelings expressed in both metal music and Poe’s poetry, the author’s significant presence in the genre might not be surprising. Nevertheless, when he expressed that “[t]he Poetic Sentiment, of course, may develop itself in various modes [...] especially in Music” (1984[1850]: 77), he could have never imagined what music genre would convey his words a century and a half later. Following Neimeyer’s assumption that readers encounter Poe’s material at an early age –at least in western countries–, and Rowe’s statement that most metal fans are young (2017: 114), it is relevant to assess the impact of Poe’s poetry in present day young metal listeners, establishing analogies between the anxieties of twenty-first century youth and those of the poems’ speakers.

The relation of Poe with popular culture has been previously addressed by Ronald L. Smith in *Poe in the Media: Screen, Songs, and Spoken Word Recordings* (1990), John E. Reilly in “Poe in Literature and Popular Culture” (1996), Burton R. Pollin in “Poe in Art, Music, Opera, and Dance” (1996), Don G. Smith in *The Poe Cinema: A Critical Filmography of Theatrical Releases Based on the Works of Edgar Allan Poe* (1999), Scott Peebles in *The Afterlife of Edgar Allan Poe* (2004), and Mark Neimeyer in “Poe and Popular Culture” (2004). This chapter starts addressing twenty-one metal songs by sixteen different bands based on or referencing nine poems: “Alone”, “Annabel Lee”, “The City in the Sea”, “The Conqueror Worm”, “A Dream Within a Dream”, “Dreamland”, “Eldorado”, “Evening Star”, and “Imitation”. Due to its enormous popularity among metal musicians, transformations of “The Raven” will be analysed in a separate section below.

3.2 POE AND METAL MUSIC: TRANSFORMATION CATEGORIES

3.2.1 REPRODUCTION

Written as early as 1829, “Alone” (Poe 1890: 255-56) went unnamed until its posthumous publication in 1875 (Sova 2007: 20). A suitable vehicle for transmitting the metal music theme of alienation, it features a first-person speaker that expresses a deep feeling of loneliness which verges on isolation in its opening verses: “From childhood’s hour I have

not been / As others were—I have not seen / As others saw”. By revealing that “I could not bring / My passions from a common spring”, the poetic persona detaches himself from the rest of the world, since his emotions are deemed as unique; by suggesting that these emotions do not stem from the bright season of spring, he also enshrouds the experience in sadness. These strong feelings of sorrow and individuality are reinforced in the following verses: “From the same source I have not taken / My sorrow”. Although the poem is not divided into stanzas, there are two differentiated parts, both starting with references to infancy: “From childhood’s hour” and “Then—in my childhood”. The first part ends with a verse that thoroughly strengthens the sentiment of isolation: “And all I lov’d, I lov’d alone”. In these words, the poet conveys a rich amalgamation of feelings via introversion: loneliness, despair, shyness, fear of rejection.

The second part of the poem confronts past and present, scrutinising the origin of the speaker’s pity in a childhood where it “was drawn— / From ev’ry depth of good and ill / The mystery which binds me still”. Recalling a visually charged setting filled with images of threatening nature –torrent, lightning, thunder, and storm–, he transmits fear of the strange, dangerous, and unknowable world that surrounds him: “From the sun that ‘round me roll’d / In its autumn tint of gold–”. It is worth noticing this mention of autumn –the fall, the twilight of life, the path to cold winter– as compared to the early reference to a spring where passions did not originate. In striking fashion, the poem’s denouement locates the past seed of the speaker’s troubles in “the cloud that took the form / (When the rest of Heaven was blue) / Of a demon in my view”. Rodríguez Guerrero-Strachan comments on the poem’s personal and intimate depiction of feelings: “The word demon highlights the artificial nature of human senses, as they are mediated by the imaginative powers of the mind, and these may sometimes be influenced by melancholy” (2010: 103). As further evidence of the poem’s subjectivity and its appeal to an alienated young audience, the speaker’s gaze is situated between the “I” of the opening verses and the “eye” that finishes beholding the demon-shaped cloud.

In metric terms, the first twelve verses of the poem are in iambic tetrameter, and the last eight in iambic trimeter, each verse starting with an anapaest. The remaining middle couplet (verses thirteen and fourteen) defies scansion, since in isolation it adapts to a trochaic tetrameter pattern, but within the context of the poem, it is more logical to assimilate it to the upcoming iambic trimeter. To fit this scheme, the last syllable should be considered extra-metrical:

Verses 13 and 14 as trochaic tetrameter:

\backslash x / x \backslash x / x
 From the | tor-rent, | or the | foun-tain–
 \backslash x / / \backslash x / x
 From the | red cliff | of the | moun-tain–

Verses 13 and 14 as iambic trimeter (preferred), followed by verses 15 and 16:

x x / x \backslash x / (x)
 From the tor-| rent, or | the foun-tain–
 x x / x \backslash x / (x)
 From the red | cliff of | the moun-tain–
 x x / x / x /
 From the sun | that ‘round | me roll’d
 x x / x / x /
 In its au-| tumn tint | of gold

This metric ambiguity is deliberate, since it poses a change of pattern from the calm representation of the speaker’s sorrow in the first twelve verses to the final unveiling of the mystery. The change from tetrameter to trimeter rids each verse of an accent, thus making room for a rest in the poem’s recitation; nevertheless, this is compensated by the inclusion of the initial anapaests, which propel each line rhythmically thanks to their three-syllable scheme anticipating the first verse accent by two syllables. This awareness of poetry’s rhythmic implications strengthens the aforementioned holistic concern of Poe with music and poetry.

3.2.1.1 “ALONE” (1829) AND “ALONE” (GREEN CARNATION, 2006)

Two Norwegian metal bands have adapted this poem to the genre, taking very different decisions in the process. Throughout their career, Norwegians Green Carnation have blended gothic and doom metal with folk music flavours. Because of its melancholic hue, “Alone” seems a natural choice for these metal subgenres. For their CD *The Acoustic Verses* (2006) Green Carnation took an unusual path for a metal band: recording a fully acoustic album, with no distorted guitars. Although they kept the sombre ambience typical of their earlier recordings, the timbrical softness of the acoustic guitars freed them from the limitations of the power chord, allowing them to enrich their harmonies. Their rendition of “Alone” is a Celtic-tinted composition in the key of D minor. To adapt the poem to the song structure, bassist and composer Terje Vik Schei –nicknamed Tchort– divided its

twenty-two verses –originally lacking any stanzaic division– into three stanzas, the first two including eight verses, and the last one featuring the remaining six verses, the last two of them –“(When the rest of Heaven was blue) / Of a demon in my view”– being repeated. Violin interludes connect the three parts.

The most remarkable trait of the song is its waltz-like 3/4 meter, theoretically not the most natural choice to convey a poem whose initial iambic meter adequately fits a binary 4/4 pattern, as seen in Example 1. To adapt the words to the musical measures, Tchort extended the length of each quarter-note by a half so that two of them could fill a whole 3/4 bar, as shown in Example 15. This way, accented syllables fall on the first beat of each bar –the downbeat–, so that textual accents match musical strong beats.

♩ = 176

From child - hood's hour I have not been As

5
oth - ers were I have not seen

Example 15. Melody of “Alone”, by Tchort (poem verses 1 and 2).

Each verse is made to fit four bars, sometimes making the caesuras explicit, as in the second verse (notice the rest in the sixth bar). In order to highlight the poem’s rhyme –a succession of eleven rhyming couplets– its constant enjambments are avoided. Although this verse separation could make the text sound mechanical, Tchort compensates by carefully arranging the musical device known as anacrusis, which consists in displaying “[o]ne or more notes preceding the first metrically strong beat of a phrase” (Randel 2003: 42). Example 15 has the first syllable of the second verse –“As”– appearing in the last of the four bars where the previous verse belongs, so that the second four bar sequence starts with the second syllable of the verse: “oth”. The same effect occurs in the starting verse, where “From” is placed in the last beat of the bar previous to the four bars occupied by the rest of the first verse. The composer varies this pattern throughout the song in order to instil surprise on the listener through the avoidance of excessive rhythmic repetition, and also forced by Poe’s accentual variations, as it occurs in the fifth and sixth verses:

x x / / x / x / (x)
 From the | same source | I have | not tak-en
 x / x / x / x / (x)
 My sorr | ow I | could not | a-wak-en

Both verses feature an unstressed, extra-metrical syllable. The fifth verse includes a stress substitution, since it starts with a pyrrhic foot followed by a spondee (two unstressed syllables followed by two stressed ones). This forces the composer to expand the line's anacrusis to make it span two notes, as seen in Example 16:

♩ = 176
 From the same source I've not tak - en My
 21
 sor - row could not a - wak - en

Example 16. Melody of “Alone”, by Tchort (poem verses 5 and 6).

Although the word “source”, which bears an accent in the poem, falls on a weak beat of the bar, it benefits from the rhythmic instability caused by the first inclusion in the song of syncopation: “same” is anticipated an eighth note before the start of its corresponding bar, thus adding rhythmic variety and raising the listener’s attention on both music and words. The remaining part of the verse and the following one in full follow a similar pattern, but without syncopation. In dealing with the extra-metrical syllables, the poem’s syllabic structure is modified: “I have” is shortened to “I’ve” and the “I” in “I could” is almost inaudible. This allows the singer to pronounce a total of eight syllables per verse, therefore adapting the lyrics to the rhythmic pattern of the song. The remaining two verses of this stanza feature the melodic motif of Example 15, thus returning the song to its opening pattern.

The second stanza starts with a trochee (the first syllable, and not the second, is accented): “Then–in”. The song reflects this accentual variation by avoiding the anacrusis and making the first word fall on the first beat of the bar, an effect which is repeated in the following verse, although in this case for the sake of symmetry, since musical accentuation is inconsistent with the poem’s accents –this verse starts with a pyrrhic followed by a

spondee: “Of a | most storm”. As previously explained, from the thirteenth verse on the meter turns from tetrameter to trimeter with an initial anapaest. Tchort solves this theoretical problem –seven syllables will have to fit the space previously allotted to eight– by combining anacrusis and downbeat accentuation with the inclusion of another rhythmic device: starting after the downbeat, as bar 61 in Example 17 attests:

♩ = 176

From the sun that round me roll'd

61

In its au - tumn tint of gold

Example 17. Melody of “Alone”, by Tchort (poem verses 15 and 16).

After the second violin interval, the third song stanza starts with lower dynamics: the vocal line comes close to a whisper, and the bass only plays on the downbeat of the first bar of each four-bar group. An almost mute guitar plucking is enough to maintain tension intact. Dynamics rise again right after the words finish. The violin leads the song to its final closure. This adaptation reveals that variation is of the essence. Tchort overcomes monotony by taking advantage of the rhythmic resources of the poem and the vocal inflection of the song. Rhythmic displacement plays a crucial part in maximising the interest of a song built on otherwise simple musical materials.

3.2.1.2 “ALONE” (1829) AND “ALONE” (ARCTURUS, 1997)

Usually associated with experimental efforts, the band Arcturus is stylistically difficult to classify. Kahn-Harris labels them “post-black metal” (2007: 115), but specifies that they “have incorporated classical music, ‘trip hop’, sampling, operatic singing, and drum and bass into their music” (2007: 133). Their 1997 album *La Masquerade Infernale* – considered by Christe a head case of what he calls “avant-garde metal” (2010: 514) and listed within Weinstein’s “100 Definitive Metal Albums” (2000: 295)– includes an adaptation of “Alone” which differs considerably from that of Green Carnation. Far from

his compatriots' work on the rhythmic accentuation of the vocal line, singer Kristoffer Rygg unfolds the lyrics patiently over an initial 4/4 meter, with long notes and close intervals almost resembling the quality of spoken voice. The value of this adaptation lies in its concern with the feelings expressed by the poem, which is treated as a source of emotional content rather than as an assortment of poetic verses. In fact, the poem's meter is almost imperceptible during its first twelve verses, since Rygg highlights the enjambments to the extent of dispensing with verse separations. In the following transcription of the full lyrics of the song, each verse as performed occupies one line; verse numbers in the original poem are enclosed in brackets:

[Instrumental introduction based on riff #1 – fast 4/4]

[Part 1 – Tetrameter] [1] From childhood's hour I have not been / [2] As others were–
I have not seen / [3] As others saw–
I could not bring / [4] My passions from a common spring.
[5] From the same source I have not taken

[Instrumental interlude based on riff #1 – fast 4/4]

[Part 2 – Tetrameter] [6] My sorrow;
I could not awaken / [7] My heart to joy
at the same tone; / [8] And all I lov'd, I lov'd alone.

[Instrumental interlude based on riff #2 – slow 4/4]

[Part 3 – Tetrameter] [9] Then—in my childhood—in the dawn
[10] Of a most stormy life was drawn–
[11] From ev'ry depth of good and ill
[12] The mystery which binds me still:

[Instrumental interlude based on riff #3 – 3/4]

[Part 4 – Trimeter] [13] From the torrent, or the fountain,
[14] From the red cliff of the mountain,
[15] From the sun that 'round me roll'd
[16] In its autumn tint of gold–
[17] From the lightning in the sky
[18] As it pass'd me flying by–

[Instrumental interlude based on riff #3 – 3/4]

[Part 5 – Trimeter] [19] From the thunder and the storm,
[20] And the cloud that took the form
[21] (When the rest of Heaven
was blue)

[A cappella] [22] Of a demon in my view
[22 reduplicated] Of a demon in my view.

The band's concern with the emotions triggered by the poem is reflected in the text's careful separation into five parts which reflect a logical stanzaic division. The three initial sections after the introductory riff cover the first twelve tetrameter verses performed over a 4/4 rhythm; the final two parts, in 3/4 meter and with a higher emphasis on rhythmic vocal articulation, feature the trimeter verses. While the divisions between the first and second parts, and between the fourth and fifth parts, have the purpose of counteracting musical monotony, the separation between the second and third parts reflects the natural two-part poem division I identified earlier in the chapter –references to childhood in verses one and nine–, and which is strengthened by the appearance of a new riff.

The song meter switch from binary to ternary coincides with the change in poem meter from tetrameter to trimeter right in the emotional turning point of the poem, between verses twelve and thirteen. It is no coincidence that the words “the mystery that binds me still”, with which the twelfth verse ends, are reinforced in the song via their doubling by a second voice. The choice of a ternary meter seems appropriate: although the trimeter section is still iambic, the initial anapaest in every verse suggests a three-note motion. The trimeter parts feature a higher level of rhythmic activity founded on a third riff introduced by the bass and keyboards in an instrumental interlude. This interlude forebodes the gloomy description of threatening nature that will follow. The song finishes with no instrumental background, the singer repeating the last verse unaccompanied. The rhythmic and accentual mechanisms used to convey the vocal line over the 3/4 meter are similar to those employed in Green Carnation's adaptation of the poem, but Arcturus' emotional intensity is higher. The gothic band's accentual approach made it possible to keep the poem's metric patterns almost intact, while Arcturus's disregard of the poem as verse allowed them the freedom to focus on the sensations triggered by the words. This analysis shows that strongly differing approaches to adaptation may lead to plausible results, even when addressing the same source text within the framework of the same transformation category.

3.2.1.3 “EVENING STAR” (1827) AND “EVENING STAR” (AHAB, 2012)

German doom metal band Ahab based their concept album *The Giant* (2012) in Poe's novel *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket* (1838), including an illustration of the writer in the CD sleeve. For the vinyl and digipack editions of the record they

included an adaptation of Poe’s “Evening Star” (1917[1827]: 25). As well as “Alone”, “Evening Star” is an early effort, in this case featuring twenty-three verses with no stanzaic division. Its speaker expresses the joy that the “distant fire” of the “Proud Evening Star” brings to his heart in contrast with the coldness of the moon. Kilburn interprets the poem as “a standard classical construct in which the poet expresses his preference for love (Venus) over chastity (Diana)” (1970: 143). The initial verses are written in dimeters combining an iamb with an anapaest, which suggests a musical adaptation in 3/4 meter. However, Ahab focused almost exclusively on the poem’s mood and had their singer Daniel Droste reciting the verses in a soft whisper. Behind his voice, a clean guitar riff fills the juxtaposition of a 5/4 bar with a 7/4 bar. The imposition of such an unusual rhythmic pattern, perceived by the human ear as unstable because of its drastic departure from the typical 4/4 and 3/4 meters, over a very slow time –around 72 bpm–, allows the interpretation to project tediousness and lack of energy, mirroring the “noontide of summer” and the coldness of the moon. The flatness, dullness, and absence of dynamics in a vocal part that lasts over four minutes and where recitation does not deviate significantly from the poem’s intended accentuation reflects the contemplative, absorbed state of the poem’s speaker. Guitar distortion is only present before and after the lyrics are completely read, playing the part of a framing device. The choice of key is C minor.

3.2.1.4 FURTHER TRANSFORMATIONS

Table 10 shows other *reproductions* of Poe’s poems.

Poem	Songs
“Spirits of the Dead” (1826)	“Spirits of the Dead” (Aeons ov Frost, 2005)
	“Spirits of the Dead” (Shadowthrone, 2007)
	“Spirits of the Dead” (The Sundial, 2008)
	“Spirits of the Dead” (Mourning Crimson, 2009)
	“Spirits of the Dead” (The Grottesquery, 2010)
	“Spirits of the Dead” (Sinister Moon, 2010)
	“Spirits of the Dead” (Tremor, 2011)
	“Spirits of the Dead” (Nimphaion, 2018)
	“Spirits of the Dead” (Wachenfeldt, 2018)
	“Spirits of the Dead” (A Dream of Poe, 2019)
“The Spirits of the Dead” (Hornwood Fell, 2020)	
“A Dream” (1827)	“A Dream” (The Sundial, 2008)
“Dreams” (1827)	“Of Paradise and Love” (The Sundial, 2008)
“Evening Star” (1827)	“Evening Star” (Legacy of Emptiness, 2017)
“Imitation” (1827)	“Imitation” (Aeons ov Frost, 2005)
“Stanzas. 4” (1827)	“Stanza #4” (Akin, 2001)
“Tamerlane” (1827)	“Tamerlane” (Shadowthrone, 2007)
“The Lake. To —” (1827)	“The Lake. To —” (Shadowthrone, 2007)

Poem	Songs
	“The Lake” (Hornwood Fell, 2020)
“Alone” (1829)	“Alone” (Sorg Uten Tårer, 2012)
	“Alone” (Mourning Crimson, 2013)
“Fairy-Land” (1829)	“Fairyland” (Shadowthrone, 2007)
“Lenore” (1830)	“Lenore” (Shadowthrone, 2007)
	“Lenore” (Tremor, 2011)
“The Sleeper” (1831)	“The Sleeper” (Fountain of Tears, 1999)
	“The Sleeper” (Mourning Crimson, 2009)
“The Valley of Unrest” (1831)	“Valley of Unrest” (Legacy of Emptiness, 2011)
“Serenade” (1833)	“Night Serenade” (Mourning Crimson, 2013)
“The Haunted Palace” (1839)	“The Haunted Palace” (Lunatic Invasion, 1995)
	“The Haunted Palace” (Shadowthrone, 2007)
	“The Haunted Palace” (Minotaurus, 2016)
“The Conqueror Worm” (1843)	“The Conqueror Worm” (Adversam, 2008)
	“The Conqueror Worm” (Guilthee, 2009)
	“The Conqueror Worm” (Dantesco, 2013)
	“The Conqueror Worm” (C.I.A. Hippie Mind Control, 2019)
“Dream-Land” (1844)	“Dreamland” (The Sundial, 2008)
	“Dreamland” (Pandora 101, 2011)
“The City in the Sea” (1845)	“The City in the Sea” (Shadowthrone, 2007)
	“The City in the Sea” (Mourning Crimson, 2010)
	“City in the Sea” (Fer de Lance, 2020)
“The Divine Right of Kings” (1845)	“The Divine Right of Kings” (Hornwood Fell, 2020)
“A Dream within a Dream” (1849)	“Dream within a Dream” (The Sundial, 2008)
	“A Dream within a Dream” (Sorg Uten Tårer, 2012)
	“A Dream within a Dream” (Moonsun, 2013)
	“Dream within a Dream” (Enjoy Sarma, 2014)
	“A Dream within a Dream” (Nimphaion, 2018)
“Annabel Lee” (1849)	“Annabel Lee” (Shadowthrone, 2007)
	“Annabel Lee” (Nimphaion, 2018)
“Eldorado” (1849)	“Eldorado” (A Hero for the World, 2016)
	“Eldorado” (Mad Duck, 2017)

Table 10. Further instances of *reproduction* based on poems by Edgar Allan Poe.

3.2.2 RETELLING

3.2.2.1 “THE CONQUEROR WORM” (1843) AND “THE CONQUEROR WORM” (ODES OF ECSTASY, 2000)

The next two adaptations retell the poem upon which they rely by reordering its verses, thus affecting the perception of the reader-listener. While one of the bands creates a coherent cultural product based on the reorganisation of the hypotext, the other fails at keeping the integrity of certain elements of the poem. The latter adaptation is a recrafting of “The Conqueror Worm” (Poe 1890[1843]: 181-2) by the Greeks Odes of Ecstasy, recorded for their CD *Deceitful Melody* (2000). The band’s allegiance to the expressiveness and romanticism of gothic metal at this stage in their career, along with

their blend of guttural male vocals with a clean female voice –or “brutal vocals” and “melodic vocals”, as they called them in the CD sleeve–, allowed them to surround their music with a quasi-operatic aura. These qualities prove convenient for a poem like “The Conqueror Worm”, a tragic account of human mortality whose action is staged in a theatre. Its division in five stanzas has been said to mirror the five acts of a play (Lubbers 1967: 375). The first one establishes the physical setting –“a gala night” where angels “[s]it in a theatre, to see / A play of hopes and fears”. The second stanza introduces God-shaped mimes that, like “[m]ere puppets”, obey “vast formless things”. The reader is advised in the third stanza not to forget the horror-driven drama, this horror materialising in the fourth stanza, where a “crawling shape” enters the scene and eats the mimes. The fifth stanza discloses “[t]hat the play is the tragedy, ‘Man,’ / And its hero the Conqueror Worm”, thus exemplifying the inevitability of death. This final stanza had already highlighted the insignificance of human life through a reference to *Macbeth*’s famous soliloquy (Shakespeare 2008: 2628): “Out–out are the lights–out all!” Fisher calls the poem a “delineation of mental collapse”. He comments on its “literary Gothicism with a vengeance, emphasized by a lurid ‘lights-out’ conclusion that mimes techniques of theater performance” (2008: 41). Lubbers highlights how the new order suggested by the poem challenges the Great Chain of Being,²⁰ by re-establishing the hierarchy as follows: “the Conqueror Worm, ‘vast formless things,’ mimes. The angels, as witnesses, are outside the tragedy’s action” (1967: 378).

In logical fashion, Odes of Ecstasy translate the iambic verse of the poem into a binary 4/4 meter. Through the use of *translongation* (Genette 1997[1982]: 228), they disrupt the five-part structure by using the second stanza as a chorus to be sung between musical verses, as seen in Table 11.

Song part	Poem part
Instrumental introduction	
Verse	Stanza #1
Chorus	Stanza #2
Verse	Stanza #3
Chorus	Stanza #2
Instrumental interlude	
Verse	Stanza #4
Chorus	Stanza #2
Instrumental interlude	
Chorus	Stanza #5

²⁰ For a detailed account of the Great Chain of Being, see Lovejoy (1936).

Table 11. Structural comparison between “The Conqueror Worm” (Odes of Ecstasy) and “The Conqueror Worm” (Edgar Allan Poe).

This is not the only alteration implemented. In order to make the poem verses fit the song structure and the singers’ prosody, determined words are erased from the source. In some instances, the removal affects the syntactic structure of the poem and even, unwillingly, its meaning. The exclamation “Invisible Woe!”, which is preceded in the poetic text by the verse “Flapping from out their Condor wings”, is turned into a nonsensical “Flapping the Invisible Woe”; the verses “Mimes, in the form of God on high, / Mutter and mumble low, / And hither and thither fly—” are adapted in such an incongruous juxtaposition that it constitutes an involuntary zeugma: “Mutter and hither and thither fly”; the elision of the preposition “through” obscures the meaning of the following verses:

With its Phantom chased for evermore,
By a crowd that seize it not,
Through a circle that ever returneth in
To the self-same spot. (Poe 1890[1843]: 181)

The inadequacy of this adaptation is further strengthened by the mispronunciation of the words *latter*, *mutter*, *rout*, and *writhes*, which are uttered as *later*, *mother*, *root*, and *wreathes*, respectively, thus culminating a failed attempt at reproduction that ended up becoming an involuntary retelling.

3.2.2.2 “THE CITY IN THE SEA” (1845) AND “THE CITY IN THE SEA” (THE OCEAN, 2005)

The failure of the previous transformation contrasts with the recrafting of “The City in the Sea” (1890[1845]: 184-86) by German brutal death band The Ocean in their 2005 CD *Aeolian*. A source of much critical attention, Poe’s “The City in the Sea” describes a “strange city” presided by “Death” that stands upon the waters which illumine it. A sumptuous urban cemetery “[w]here the good and the bad and the worst and the best / Have gone to their eternal rest”, the inevitability of death is, again, present in a beautiful, quiet, still environment only disturbed in the final stanza, where “Hell, rising from a thousand thrones” appears to drag the city down to its own depths. Basler understands “the city as a composite symbol of beauty and sin, pleasure and pain” (1946: 63). Leonard

explains the contrast between the aura of death and the expression of beauty surrounding the poem in the following fashion:

Apparently, Poe could be of several minds about beauty: it is strange, yet glorious; melancholic, yet blissful; destructive, yet immortal. Poe could live with these contradictions even when the result was to obscure both meaning and imagery, as in “The City in the Sea.” Obscurity is, of course, to the detriment of Poe the philosopher. One finds a strange obscurity though, for Poe, the poet, apropos. (1984: 32)

Obscurity seemed to be of no importance to Poe, who originally named the poem “The Doomed City”, later changed it to “The City of Sin”, and finally gave it its definitive, less explanatory, title (Pound 1934: 22). This has led scholars to consider it “a dream image” (Basler 1946: 63) where the city stands for a state of mind (Thorpe 1979: 395). The poem presents two contrasts: the first one between the positive imagery of its second stanza –light comes from the sea “[g]leam[ing] up the pinnacles far and free” and “many and many a marvellous shrine”– and the constant negations in the third –“not the riches”, “[n]ot the gaily-jewelled dead”, “no ripples curl”, “[n]o swellings” and “[n]o heavings”– implying that the winds may blow in faraway seas, but not here. The second contrast occurs between the second stanza, which includes seven instances of the word *up*, and the three final verses of the poem, which specify that hell will settle “[d]own, down that town”. In reorganising the structure of the poem into musical lyrics, The Ocean favour the negative diction, to the point of repeating these last three verses four times, two of them as a recognisable musical chorus. This way the surprising effect at the end of the poem is lost in the song, which continually indulges in dark imagery. The choice seems consistent with the brutal death metal subgenre the band belongs to. In this regard, it is worth noticing how, in performing a translongation resulting in lyrics that are longer than the poem, they have omitted the most romantic and archaic parts of the original text:

Around, by lifting winds forgot,
[...]
Up fanes—up Babylon-like walls—
Up shadowy long-forgotten bowers
Of sculptured ivy and stone flowers—
Up many and many a marvelous shrine
Whose wreathed friezes intertwine
The viol, the violet, and the vine.
[...]
For no ripples curl, alas!
Along that wilderness of glass—
[...]
As if their tops had feebly given
A void within the filmy Heaven. (Poe 1890[1843]: 184-6)

An element that contributes enormously to making this performance a successful adaptation is the excellent vocal articulation of singers Meta and Nico Webers, their precise timing and accentuation perfectly matching the prosody of the English language. In creating this “remix” of Poe’s poem, *The Ocean* do not only achieve the transmission of poetry through recontextualisation; they also create an organic blend where both music and verse benefit mutually.

3.2.2.3 “ELDORADO” (1849) AND “ELDORADO” (ARMAGEDDON, 2012)

Veteran Serbian band Armageddon, whose proposal posits a symphonic approach to classic heavy metal, adapted Poe’s “Eldorado” (1890[1849]: 193) and “The City in the Sea” (1890[1845]: 184-86) in their 2012 EP *Eldorado*. The former is a four-stanza poem where a knight seeks the mythical South American city entirely made of gold. Years later, having failed at the enterprise, a “pilgrim shadow” tells him to ride “Over the Mountains / Of the Moon, / Down the Valley of the Shadow”.²¹ This legend provides the concept for the album, its cover depicting a golden pre-Columbian pyramid. In fact, Poe’s verses are not present in one, but in two songs, since the first track, “In Search of Eldorado”, works as an introduction. After a low male voice hums a tribal melody, the poem is recited in full. The words “Land of gold, land of hope” cue the song “Eldorado”, where Poe’s verses undergo translongation practices as they are shortened, rearranged, and set to music. The form of the song is typical of late twentieth century popular music: a succession of two stanza-chorus sections is followed by a guitar solo and, again, the chorus is repeated twice. Despite small textual *expansions* (Genette 1997[1982]: 260) –“In the sunshine and in the shadow” instead of “In sunshine and in shadow”–, the first song stanza mirrors that of the poem, and the second one mixes elements of the second and third stanzas in Poe’s text. Although the elided verses, where the knight is said not to find his desired destination, are not necessary for the correct understanding of the story, the adaptation suffers from the choice of the fourth poem stanza as the chorus of the song, since in the lyrics the pilgrim shadow first speaks to the knight –in the first chorus– before having been introduced –

²¹ For more information on the myth of El Dorado, see Zahm (1917), who, in cyclical fashion, includes three verses from Poe’s poem in his book’s title page.

which occurs in the second song stanza, as seen in the excerpt of the song lyrics present in Table 13.

Poem		Song
Stanza #4	Over the mountains of the Moon, Down to the Valley of the Shadow, Ride, boldly ride, shadow replied If you seek for Eldorado!	1 st chorus
Stanza #2	But he grew old– This knight so bold–	2 nd stanza
Stanza #3	At the end, he met a Pilgrim Shadow– “Shadow,” said he, “Where can it be– This land of Eldorado?”	

Table 13. Structural comparison between “Eldorado” (Edgar Allan Poe) and “Eldorado” (Armageddon).

The accentual vocal patterns match those of the poem over a straight 4/4 rhythm, as attested by Example 18. Although the city of El Dorado was supposed to be somewhere in the south of the continent, the band decided to portray the traveller as North American, for which reason the melodic inflexion and the male bass voices in the chorus echo Western American music as present in films of the Western genre. This stylistic decision, along with the choice of a minor key (F sharp minor), contributes to the epic tone of the adaptation.

♩ = 100

5

Example 18. Chorus of “Eldorado”, by Armageddon.

3.2.2.4 “THE CITY IN THE SEA” (1845) AND “CITY IN THE SEA” (ARMAGEDDON, 2012)

The second adaptation in *Eldorado* is based on “The City in the Sea” (1890[1845]: 184-86), whose content is drastically *pruned* (Genette 1997[1982]: 230): only twenty out of fifty-three verses survive. The song is effective in preserving the original depiction of the corpse-populated city established over water and governed by “Death”, since the trimming process mostly erased the lines with a higher rhetoric charge, as the previously commented *up* section and the verses featuring negation. However, the poem’s denouement is somewhat absent from the song. Hell settling “down that town” is mentioned, but its dragging the city to its depths is not clearly stated, as the comparison between the poem’s last stanza and the corresponding song part shows in Table 14:

Poem	Song
<p>But lo, a stir is in the air! The wave—there is a movement there! As if the towers had thrust aside, In slightly sinking, the dull tide— As if their tops had feebly given A void within the filmy Heaven. The waves have now a redder glow— The hours are breathing faint and low— And when, amid no earthly moans, Down, down that town shall settle hence, Hell, rising from a thousand thrones, Shall do it reverence.</p>	<p>Waves have now a redder glow — hours breathing faint and low — Down that town shall settle hence, Hell, Shall do it reverence.</p>

Table 14. Last stanza comparison between “The City in the Sea” (Edgar Allan Poe) and “City in the Sea” (Armageddon).

As it happened in Odes of Ecstasy’s performance, some words are mispronounced by the Serbian band’s singer Miloš Krsmanović. *Fanes* is uttered as *fence*, and *breathing* as *bretting*. The start of the original verses “There open fanes and gaping graves / Yawn level with the luminous waves” are made syntactically faulty, since they are sung as “There’s an open fanes”. A faster performance than the previously analysed composition, “City in the Sea” also features a 4/4 binary rhythm and a minor key, in this case A minor.

3.2.2.5 FURTHER EXAMPLES

More bands performing *retellings* of Poe’s poems are listed in Table 15.

Poem	Songs
"Spirits of the Dead" (1826)	"S.O.D." (End Zone, 1995)
	"Spirits of the Dead" (Toxic, 2002)
"Evening Star" (1827)	"Evening Star" (Akin, 2001)
"Alone" (1829)	"Alone" (The Old Ones, 2004)
	"Alone" (Mandibulla, 2018)
"Lenore" (1830)	"Lenore" (Akin, 2001)
	"Funeral Song" (The Old Ones, 2004)
	"Lenore" (Nimphaion, 2018)
"The Sleeper" (1831)	"The Sleeper" (Hornwood Fell, 2020)
"The Valley of Unrest" (1831)	"The Valley of Unrest" (Akin, 2001)
	"Valley of Unrest" (Fireign, 2002)
	"The Valley of Unrest" (Hornwood Fell, 2020)
"To One in Paradise" (1834)	"To One in Paradise" (Akin, 2001)
"The Conqueror Worm" (1843)	"The Conqueror Worm" (Pale Divine, 2007)
"Dream-Land" (1844)	"Dreamland" (Akin, 2001)
	"Dreamland" (Et Cetera, 2014)
	"Dream-Land" (Hornwood Fell, 2020)
"Eulalie" (1845)	"Eulalie" (The Old Ones, 2004)
"The City in the Sea" (1845)	"The City in the Sea" (Akin, 2003)
	"City in the Sea" (Atten Ash, 2015)
	"Underwater Grave" (Mandibulla, 2018)
"Ulalume" (1847)	"Ulalume – A Ballad" (Mourning Crimson, 2009)
"A Dream within a Dream" (1849)	"A Dream within a Dream" (Farmer Boys, 1997)
	"A Dream within a Dream" (Danse Macabre, 1998)
	"A Dream within a Dream" (Akin, 2001)
	"Dream in a Dream" (Aeternitas, 2018)
"Annabel Lee" (1849)	"Annabel Lee" (Wastefall, 2003)
	"Annabel Lee" (Döxa, 2017)
	"Annabel Lee" (Aeternitas, 2018)
"Eldorado" (1849)	"Eldorado" (Aeternitas, 2018)
"The Bells" (1849)	"Bells Pt.4" (Aeons ov Frost, 2005)
	"The Bells" (Darkage, 2016)
	"The Bells" (Aeternitas, 2018)

Table 15. Further instances of *retelling* based on poems by Edgar Allan Poe.

3.2.3 REELABORATION

3.2.3.1 "A DREAM WITHIN A DREAM" (1849) AND "DREAM WITHIN A DREAM" (LYRIEL, 2014)

"A Dream Within a Dream" (Poe 1890[1849]: 189) is a poem in two stanzas that speculates about the difference between reality and dream, questions existence, and reflects on the intangibility of life. Sova has compared it to Plato's allegory of the cave, where one's own shadow is perceived as more real than actual reality (2007: 59). The final verses of its first stanza affirm that "[a]ll that we see or dream / Is but a dream within a dream",

while the second stanza turns the assertion into a question: “Is all that we see or seem / But a dream within a dream?”

Germans Lyriel cemented their own “Dream within a Dream” (2014) on Poe’s poem. However, they recrafted Poe’s conceit into a love song that uses the idea of dreaming as a metaphor for fantasising about the loved one, thus engaging in *transmotivation* (Genette 1997[1982]: 324-25). The lyrics explore the feelings of the poetic speaker and appraise love as real and tangible, but conclude by acknowledging the impossibility of attaining it. Parallelisms between poem and song are constant. While the initial verse in Poe’s poem is “Take this kiss upon the brow!”, suggesting friendship, the song lyrics start with a “Take this kiss upon the lip”, hence pointing towards a love relationship. Poe’s speaker casts doubts about his own existence and realises his insignificance –“You are not wrong, who deem / That my days have been a dream”–, while Lyriel’s persona embraces reality in a positive, celebratory tone: “let me see a smile / Your image is the golden drip / That guides me for a while”. As if contesting the poem, the Germans profess an active enjoyment of a reality that fulfils their expectations –“My days are a dream”– and despise the uncontrollable constructs of the mind that take place while actually dreaming: “My nights are a lie”. The lover is real, physical, tangible, and it constitutes a perfect companion (a dream made true) for the speaker: “You are what I seek to hold / In the cold of the times”.

The second stanza in the poem starts with a depiction of a threatening beach: “I stand amid the roar / Of a surf-tormented shore”. The speaker falls into desperation when noticing that grains of sand are so small and numerous that he cannot hold them in his fingers: “O God! can I not grasp / Them with a tighter clasp?” Even something as tangible as sand is elusive in the speaker’s mind. Lyriel’s beach, on the other hand, is not only glorious –“I wait up on a golden shore”–, but their speaker can hold the intangible –“With sunshine in my hands”– and, more than accepting it, delights in the vast and infinite: “While listening to the endless roar / I hope for farthest lands”. Until that moment, the song seems to expressly contradict the message of the poem. However, in an unexpected final turn, the lyrics embrace Poe’s message not in regard to reality, but to a love which is impossible, thus a dream:

Can I not hold you in my arms so tight?
Can I not save you from the cold of bitter times?
In a smile or in a pitiless embrace
We are not supposed to be

The musical design of the song, in C minor and 4/4 meter, is tiered. A piano introduction leads to the first verse and chorus, interpreted by the voice of Jessica Thierjung. Orchestral strings join in for an interlude that precedes the entrance of bass and drums. It is not after the second verse and chorus that the band plays at full power, with higher dynamics and introducing distorted guitar. The climax of the song coincides with the final turn of events where the speaker manifests love’s impossibility. The chorus is based on the last couplet in Poe’s first stanza –“All that we see or seem / Is but a dream within a dream”–, which combines trimeter with tetrameter. In implementing the necessary transmetrification to adapt the couplet to the song’s musical landscape, the band took three decisions: first they substituted the trimeter with a tetrameter –by turning “seem” into “seem to be”–, so that it would span naturally across a group of four bars; then they turned the tetrameter into a hexameter –by adding a new level of recursion through which the dream is within a dream which is itself into another dream–, thus using both downbeats in two bars to give room to all six accents; and finally they made both lines overtly iambic, thus swapping the accentuation of the syllables in the trochaic feet at the start of each verse: “All that” and “Is but”. All these devices are shown in Example 19.

♩ = 110

All that we see or seem to be

5 Is but a dream with - in a dream with-in a dream

9 All that we see or seem to be

13 Is but a dream with - in a dream

Example 19. Chorus melody of “Dream Within a Dream”, by Lyriel.

3.2.3.2 “ANNABEL LEE” (1849) AND “A GOTHIC ROMANCE (RED ROSES FOR THE DEVIL’S WHORE)” (CRADLE OF FILTH, 1996)

In his essay “The Philosophy of Composition”, Poe stated that “the death [...] of a beautiful woman is, unquestionably, the most poetical topic in the world and equally is it beyond doubt that the lips best suited for such topic are those of a bereaved lover” (1984[1846]: 19). First published as part of the poet’s obituary (Sova 2007: 26), “Annabel Lee” (Poe 1890[1849]: 177-78) fulfilled his premise by having an impassioned first-person voice narrating his eternal love to a title character whose only thought was “to love and be loved by [the speaker]”. As she dies, the poetic persona speculates that the angels may have killed her out of envy, for their “love that was more than love”. In a dark final note, the speaker confesses to sleeping at night with the corpse of his beloved: “all the night-tide, I lie down by the side / Of my darling [...] In the sepulcher [...] In her tomb”. Regarding the figure of Annabel Lee, her voice is denied in the poem. She is “a child” whose only purpose in life is to be loved and, once she falls ill, she is taken care of by “her highborn kinsman”. According to Weekes, Annabel Lee’s submission forms part of Poe’s feminine ideal (2004: 152), which is that of a passive, vulnerable blonde woman who “poses no sexual or intellectual threat”. Moreover, her death “serves the poetic purpose of enhancing the male’s experience of melancholy” (2004: 160), thus leaving her under total male control.

British black metal band Cradle of Filth has said to add diversity to the genre due to the inclusion of keyboards and sung –not only screamed– vocals (Kahn-Harris 2007: 5). Dani Filth, the band’s singer and lyricist, acknowledges having grown up reading nineteenth century literature (1998: n.p.). In fact, the band’s “A Gothic Romance (Red Roses for the Devil’s Whore)” transpires echoes of Edgar Allan Poe and explores his vision of femininity. The song lyrics start with a direct reference to “Annabel Lee”: If the narration in Poe’s verses occurred “[i]n a kingdom by the sea”, the song takes place “in a castle by the sea”. The description of the loved woman incurs in more parallelisms: Annabel Lee was high-born, and Filth’s woman is “the Dead Countess”; the love Poe’s speaker and his lover feel for each other is such that it was envied by “the winged seraphs of heaven”, and Filth’s woman is “[t]he sublimest creature the Gods, full of fire / Would marvel at making her Queen”. However, the song introduces a radical change of events. While the poem ends with the poetic persona sleeping with his dead lover “[i]n the sepulcher there by the sea”, the song’s speaker “tore free of [his] sleep – sepulchre / On the

sea misted lawn where stone figures, forlorn / Lamented the spectre of Her". Filth's lover is not dead, but a "debauched seductress in black" who emerges from the dead. Provocation is a central element in black metal's lyrics, and this song achieves it through the suggestion of a necrophiliac relationship. The song speaker, who was "at once endeavoured to see Her again", finds himself "[s]tirring from midnight's inertia", "[o]n a thin precipice over carnal abyss" and "[d]runk on red wine, her dead lips on mine". The enchantress, described as the "[g]oddess of the graveyard", undergoes a double process of pragmatic transformation as her character and system of values changes: a *transmotivation* (Genette 1997[1982]: 325) and a *transvaluation* (1997[1982]: 367).

In her study on Poe's feminine ideal, Weekes contrasted the passive, delicate Annabel Lee with "the sexualized, intellectually overpowering Ligeia", who is "the quintessential 'Dark Lady'" (2004: 158-60). In the homonymous short story by Poe, Ligeia comes back from the dead to meet with her husband by overtaking the dead body of his second wife (Poe 1884[1838]: 98-121). In an explicit reference to Poe's story, Filth claims the female lover to be "like Ligeia reborn". Mid-song, a female voice addresses the singer:

Dost thou not want to worship me
 With crimson sacrifice
 So my cunt may twitch against thy kiss
 And weep with new-found life?

As in "Annabel Lee", the beautiful female died and was mourned by her lover; but she came from the dead transformed in a Ligeia-like woman to engage in sexual activity with the male speaker, who is no longer a paragon of melancholy, but a vicious lover confused and overpowered by the situation and by his "Enchantress", the "[m]istress of the dark": "Did not the Queen of Heaven come as Devil to me?" The music runs parallel to the narrative content the lyrics unveil, as an initial mid-tempo 3/4 waltz meter morphs into a sequence of increasing 4/4 tempos as the speaker's unrest grows. Sova remarks the fact that the poem explores some recurrent topics in Poe's poetry: love after death, reminiscence, dealing with the death of loved ones, and the destruction of innocence (2007: 25). The song addresses the same topics, albeit in radically different ways. Both source and adaptation depict stereotypical images of women, yet totally opposed ones. As a result, Poe's verses elicit feelings of longing and sorrow in the poetic voice; on the contrary, Filth's lyrics find a speaker submerged in disorientation and morbidity.

3.2.3.3 “ANNABEL LEE” (1849) AND “ANNABEL LEE” (LUCYFIRE, 2001)

In “Annabel Lee”, the description of the love that binds the couple together is so hyperbolic that, when she passes away, her lover –the poetic speaker– becomes utterly desolated. The poem, which is narrated in a present of grief and despair, begins describing a glorious past of unlimited love severed by her death. In “Annabel Lee” (2001), Johan Edlund, singer and composer for the German gothic metal band Lucyfire, creates a poetic voice that speaks from an even more distant past, as he still has not found a romantic ideal comparable to Annabel Lee. He manifests unhappiness and displeasure with his romantic life: “It feels like a rubber maid / When everything I need is first aid”. The song chorus states:

Who will be my Annabel Lee
Be my Annabel Lee
Be the one loved by me

The reference to Poe’s character has several connotations. The speaker would like to experiment the immense love his counterpart experiences at the beginning of the poem, as opposed to how he feels at present. The first line finds him wondering who will be the right woman for him; in the second, he displays desperation by begging his lover to become someone with whom to live as elevated an affection as that of the lovers in the original verses; the third line expressly dialogues with the poem: Poe’s maiden “lived with no other thought / Than to love and be loved by [the speaker]”; Edlund’s persona longs for a woman who matches the same profile. Did she exist, his troubles would be over, even at the cost of having her adapt to Poe’s feminine ideal as described by Weekes (see discussion in the previous song analysis). By idealising Annabel Lee, the speaker in the song is validating a passive, docile female ideal, thus expressing his will to dominate her. The proposed solution to his love troubles does not stem from his will to adapt, but from the taming of his lover. The main transpositional practice implemented is *transmotivation*, since the speaker’s motivation turns from mourning to self-pity.

3.2.3.4 FURTHER EXAMPLES

Table 16 lists more transformations belonging to the *reelaboration* category.

Poem	Songs
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Poem	Songs
“Alone” (1829)	“Alone” (Hornwood Fell, 2020)
“The Sleeper” (1831)	“The Sleeper” (Nimphaion, 2018)
“The Haunted Palace” (1839)	“Haunted Palace” (Grave Digger, 2001)
	“The Haunted Palace” (Aeternitas, 2016)
“The Conqueror Worm” (1843)	“The Conqueror Worm” (Nimphaion, 2018)
“A Dream within a Dream” (1849)	“A Dream within a Dream” (Dawn of Winter, 2018)
	“A Dream within a Dream” (Mandibulla, 2018)

Table 16. Further instances of *reelaboration* based on poems by Edgar Allan Poe.

3.2.4 REORIENTATION

3.2.4.1 “ELDORADO” (1849) AND “EL DORADO” (IRON MAIDEN, 2010)

For their 2010 “El Dorado”, Iron Maiden found inspiration (Juras 2020: 90) in Poe’s “Eldorado” (1890[1849]: 193). Their approach differs considerably from the previously analysed transformation by Armageddon, for which reason an analysis of the verses is necessary here: after unsuccessfully spending his whole life on the quest, in the fourth and last stanzas the “gallant knight” meets “a pilgrim shadow” that points him

“Over the Mountains
Of the Moon,
Down the Valley of the Shadow,
Ride, boldly ride,”
The shade replied,
“If you seek for Eldorado!” (Poe 1890: 193)

Fisher understands the poem “as a realistic journey through life” (2008: 47). Both he and McGann (2014: 129) identify Eldorado as a state of mind instead of an actual place, and Sova interprets the text as an affirmation of the spiritual over the material (2007: 61). Regarding the fourth stanza, Sanderlin deems it as ironic, since the shadow is pointing the knight towards impossible locations (1956: 191). I agree with this interpretation, as both the moon and the projection of a shadow are not only unreachable, but in constant motion. Sanderlin also links “the Valley of the Shadow” with the biblical reference to the Valley of the Shadow of Death (1956: 190). From this appreciation it can be inferred that the shadow is foretelling the knight’s death before he finds his dreamed-of Eldorado. Because of the poem’s year of publication, Coad (1944: 60) and Mabbott relate it to the California Gold Rush, the latter considering the text as an advice for unwary gold seekers (1945: 312). This interpretation is consistent with the identification of the “pilgrim shadow” with the figure

of the Native American trickster.²² In fact, the trickster is the speaker of Iron Maiden's "El Dorado", where the process of reorientation involves a change from the poem's third person omniscient extradiegetic-heterodiegetic speaker to a first person intradiegetic-autodiegetic voice that directly addresses the listener, thus turning the latter into the focalised gold-seeking knight. The transpositional practices involved are *transmotivation* as the trickster is now warning instead of tricking, and a consequent *reevaluation* of the character (Genette 1997[1982]: 226, 324-25, 343). Updating the story to present times heavily affected by 2008's world economic crisis, co-composer Steve Harris claimed the song to be "about greed and drawing people in basically – imploring them to do whatever and giving them the once-over afterwards" (qtd. in Brown 2011), as confirmed by the pre-chorus stanza:

I'm the Jester with no tears
and I'm playing on your fears
I'm a trickster smiling underneath
this mask of love and death
The eternal lie I've told about
the pyramids of gold
I've got you hooked at every turn
your money's left to burn

The song's contextualisation in its contemporaneous times is later asserted by the trickster himself –"I'm a clever banker's face"– and by the reference to dubious commercial practices –"El Dorado streets of gold / see my ship is oversold". Continuing with the metaphor of the ship, the last song stanza warns credulous investors about the dangers of contemporary economy:

This ship of fools is sinking
As the cracks begin to grow
There is no easy way
For an honest man today
Which is something you should
think on as my life boat sails away

The hypertext's narrator is temporally ubiquitous, thus turning the narrating from subsequent to interpolated. The trickster addresses its present actions –"I'm the Jester with no tears / And I'm playing on your fears"–, warns about the future –"You'll be wanting a contract / You'll be waiting a while"– and temporally summarises his telling: "So now my tale is told". Although the lyrics do not borrow directly from the poem, both cultural

²² For a detailed account on the Native American trickster, see Radin (1956).

products share rhythmic concerns: “The poem is a four-stanza ballad with each stanza containing six staccato lines perfectly accenting a journey on horseback” (Frank and Magistrale 1997: 113). In fact, several four-syllable verses replicate the effect of horse hooves galloping due to the enclosure of two unaccented syllables within two accented ones:

/ x x /
 Gaily bedight,
 [...]
 / x x /
 Had journeyed long,
 / x x /
 Singing a song,
 [...]
 / x x /
 Fell as he found
 / x x /
 No spot of ground
 [...]
 \ x x /
 And, as his strength
 / x x /
 Failed him at length,
 [...]
 / x x /
 “Shadow,” said he,
 / x x /
 “Where can it be—

This accentual effect is clearly reflected in the song, since Steve Harris’s signature bass line is characterised by this same “galloping” quality, as shown in Example 11 in regard to Iron Maiden’s “The Trooper”. The continuous repetition of the motif adds aggressiveness to the journey on horseback.

♩ = 164

Voice

El Do ra do come and play El Do - ra do step this way
 El Do ra do streets of gold See my ship is o - ver sold

Electric guitar

G⁵ B^{b5} F⁵ C⁵ D⁵ E^{b5}
 (Gm Bb F7 Cm Dm Eb)

5

— Take a tick - et for the ride
 — You've got one last chance to try

B^{b5} C⁵
 Bb Cm)

Example 20. Chorus of “El Dorado”, by Iron Maiden.

The song “El Dorado” –winner of the 2010 Grammy award for Best Metal Performance– is an obvious example of classic heavy metal. An insistent 4/4 rhythm supports three different sections with changing harmonies supported by power chords. The first section, where most of the lyrics are interpreted, features an E note on the bass which, in regular tuning, is the lowest note a guitar or bass can produce, therefore adding to the sombre, dark tone of the song. The chorus finds Bruce Dickinson’s voice in the high register, singing over a G minor covert harmony which is entirely played in power chords, as shown in Example 20.

3.2.4.2 “ALONE” (1829) AND “FROM CHILDHOOD’S HOUR” (CIRCUS MAXIMUS, 2007)

Although usually labelled as a progressive metal band, Norwegians Circus Maximus define their music as “the usual mixture of very heavy moments intertwined with extremely accessible melodies” (Circus Maximus 2016: n.p.). Their balanced combination of guitar and keyboards guarantees this mixture, their lyrical vocal lines finding support in distorted power chords as well as in synthesizer-woven overt harmonies. For their 2007 CD *Isolate* they reoriented the intradiegetic-homodiegetic first person speaker of Poe’s “Alone” (1890:

255-56) into an omniscient extradiegetic-heterodiegetic third person speaker who delves into the man's inner feelings, thus turning the narrative subject into an object of scrutiny. This change in grammatical person does not involve an alteration in focalizer –which is still the afflicted man– or in type of narrating, which remains interpolated –past tense predominates, but at some point both narrators speak from the present when referring to “The mystery which binds me still” in the hypotext and “The mystery... it binds him still” in the hypertext. Although the title of the song –“From Childhood's Hour”– relates to the origins of the man's loneliness, the lyrics expand narrative time further than the poem – “From childhood's hour he's been his only friend / Endless solitude until the end”. Combining the original verses with new lines, the band moves away from the uniqueness of the protagonist, or from his mystery which, as aforesaid, “binds him still”. They rather focus on his loneliness, which they identify as sentimental:

As a man he still dwelt alone
Wandering around a world of moan
Thinking will he ever get his bride?
Or is his life a stagnant tide?
Into a self made Hell he was thrown
All that he loved, he loved alone

The privileged narrative position of the omniscient speaker allows for a deeper interpretation of the protagonist's worries. By performing a movement of *motivation* (Genette 1997[1982]: 324-25), the hypotext unveils that the afflicted man's torment does not stem from social isolation, but from his inability to love a woman. Since the text is more analytical than that of the poem –psychic diagnosis supersedes the depiction of inner feelings–, references to nature are omitted. The song finds the man negatively appraising his life, as he laments his not having been able to cope with the situation when he could, as the first chorus illustrates:

Leaving him behind the others could not see
“Show me hope, if I'd ever to last”
The dark haunts his present and his past
The melody of his heart chimed the wrong tone

The musical analysis of the song validates the band's definition of their own music. Although the distorted guitar and intense drumming highlight their allegiance to the metal genre, the performance projects a pop music flavour that supports accessibility. The vocals are clean, the melodic line easily hummable, and the preference for single line guitar melody over power chords allows them to craft an overt harmony in the key of E minor.

Their classification as a progressive metal band is exemplified by their combination of different meters, as shown in Example 21.

Example 21. Harmony and lead guitar line of “From Childhood’s Hour”, by Circus Maximus.

3.2.4.3 “ANNABEL LEE” (1849) AND “ANNABEL LEE” (AKIN, 2001)

Akin is a French progressive metal band so influenced by Poe that their whole album *Verse* (2001) and three songs from their EP *Forecast* (2003) are transformations of poems by the American author: “Dreamland”, “To One in Paradise”, “Evening Star”, “Stanza #4”, “Lenore”, “A Dream Within a Dream”, “Annabel Lee”, “The Valley of Unrest”, and “The City of the Sea”. All of them except one are retellings where the original verses have switched order and certain words have been either elided or substituted. The exception is their rendition of “Annabel Lee”, a reoriented narrative which relies on several textual resources worth commenting.

The lyrics use a framing device through which an apparently omniscient third person narrator tells the story of Annabel Lee and quotes her male lover, to uncover by the end of the first stanza that the narrator is the lover himself, thus turning the apparent extradiegetic-heterodiegetic narrator into intradiegetic-homodiegetic. However, the song is concealing the narrator’s real identity further. Its first verse paraphrases the first poem stanza, but introduces two novelties: the male lover is a mariner, and she does not love him out of predestination, but due to her own free will, as Table 17 shows.

Poem	Song
It was many and many a year ago, In a kingdom by the sea,	It was many years ago, by the sounding sea]

Poem	Song
That a maiden there lived whom you may know By the name of Annabel Lee; And this maiden she lived with no other thought Than to love and be loved by me.	There lived a maiden known as Annabel Lee] And she fell in love with the mariner]

Table 17. First stanza comparison between “Annabel Lee” (Edgar Allan Poe) and “Annabel Lee” (Akin).

The song chorus, where the musical key turns from D minor into a bright A major, finds her echoing the mariner’s love words as written in the last stanza of the poem:

For the moon never beams without bringing me dreams
Of the beautiful, beautiful Annabel Lee
And the stars never rise, but I feel the bright eyes
Of the beautiful, beautiful Annabel Lee

However, the song does not revolve around male melancholy. Its second verse, which has no parallel in the poem, reinforces her willingly falling in love with him by calling him “the Chosen One” –loving him was, thus, her choice–, accounts for the mariner’s departure –“Leaving behind his Darling Annabel Lee”–, and grants an identity to the poetic voice. It is Annabel’s:

Every night I sing his words before the sea
For I am what is left from Annabel
Annabel Lee

As in the poem, the narrator is intradiegetic-homodiegetic and uses the first person, albeit it is a different character. Unlike the woman in the poem, which Weekes associates with Poe’s feminine ideal,²³ the Annabel Lee of the song is an active woman who makes herself accountable for her romantic choices and comes from the dead not to haunt her lover, as Ligeia did, but to break the silence the poem imposes upon her. She undergoes a process of *motivation* (Genette 1997[1982]: 324-25). The last song verse bears resemblance with the two final couplets in the poem, but the personal pronoun “I” now refers to her, not him, as seen in Table 18.

Poem	Song
And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side] Of my darling—my darling— my life and my bride]	And so all the night tide I lie down by the sea, where my Darling, my Darling] set my soul aside]

²³ See the previous discussion on the poem in section 3.2.3.2.

Poem	Song
In the sepulcher there by the sea, In her tomb by the sounding sea.	In my sepulchre there by the sea In my tomb by the sounding sea

Table 18. Last stanza comparison between “Annabel Lee” (Edgar Allan Poe) and “Annabel Lee” (Akin).

The narrating in both instances is interpolated, as they switch from the past to the present. In an interesting turn of events, it is now the male lover, and not “her highborn kinsman”, who took care of the funeral arrangements: “by the sea, where my Darling [...] set my soul aside”. Her relative does not exist, and the only reminder of the mariner is some love-related words that are conveniently framed in her narration. Men are either absent or removed from the picture. Annabel rises from the dead to gain narrative control of the story and express her own female suffering. In the end, there is no male presence and she calmly lies in her tomb: the power reversal is complete.

3.2.4.4 FURTHER EXAMPLES

A special case of *reelaboration, reorientation* is the most elusive transformation category. I have only found one further instance based on Poe’s poems: Nimphaion’s “Valley of Unrest” (2018), which draws inspiration from the poet’s “The Valley of Unrest” (1831).

3.2.5 CITATION

3.2.5.1 “A DREAM WITHIN A DREAM” (1849) AND “THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS” (SYMPHONY X, 1998)

Two American groups whose music is labelled as progressive metal, albeit their styles differ considerably, have relied on Poe’s “dream within a dream” concept to illustrate lyrics of their own. The term *progressive* implying an increase in rhythmic, harmonic and formal complexity when applied to music, New Jersey-based band Symphony X approach the concept from a symphonic standpoint –hence their name–, mixing different sections in successions that favour abrupt harmonic and rhythmic shifts. The intricacy of their suite-like compositions demands a high level of interpretive virtuosity, and their combination of lead guitar and keyboards involves a contrasting combination of power chords with overt

harmonies. The aura suggested by their music is mostly positive, welcoming more than usual major keys in which to express grandiose feelings usually related to the description of mythic settings and the telling of fantastic stories. In fact, the song under scrutiny – “Through the Looking Glass”, from *Twilight in Olympus* (1998)– retells the story of Alice in Lewis Carroll’s novel of the same name. In over thirteen minutes, and dividing the song into three parts, the clean vocals of singer Russell Allen highlight the relevance of dreaming in a novel where the word *dream* is referenced up to twenty-six times. Instead of replicating the book’s last line –“*Life, what is it but a dream?*” (Carroll 1917[1817]: 169), the song lyrics rely on Poe’s poem:

Is it as it seems?
Or just a dream within a dream
(dream within, dream within a dream)

Halfway through the ecstasy of key changes and additive rhythms that mark the song’s development, the idea of recursive dreaming is reinforced in Part II:

And there she stood, in mystery
Searching for the final ring
Within a dream within a dream

The pervasive presence of dreams within dreams constitutes an *allusion* (Genette 1997[1982]: 2) to Poe’s poem. Through the employment of embedded literary references, Symphony X weaves a recursive thread of intertextuality that makes patent the wide range of transformative possibilities.

3.2.5.2 “A DREAM WITHIN A DREAM” (1849) AND “SWEAT” (TOOL, 1992)

Californians Tool offer a very different approach to progressive metal. Unlike their East Coast counterparts, their guitar sound is rough and voluntarily unpolished, their continuous metric shifts describe broken rhythms intended to disrupt the expected rhythmic flow, and their harmonic activity is not based on key changes; it rather eludes a tonal centre due to the constant use of chromaticism. As Tom Morello, guitarist for Rage Against the Machine, comments, they are “artistically forward-looking, combining elements of arena rock with artistry and punk” (qtd. in Wiederhorn and Turman 2013: 915). This underground tinge makes them sound closer to grunge bands like Nirvana or Pearl Jam than to the romantic, precious approach of Symphony X. Their song “Sweat” opened their

1992 debut EP *Opiate*. Its simple, direct lyrics find a first-person speaker uttering his personal feelings in an unmediated way. Juvenile disorientation supersedes the evocation of romantic sentiments or the depiction of idealised distant pasts:

I'm sweating,
And breathing
And staring and thinking
And sinking
Deeper.
It's almost like I'm swimming.

The dreamy state of confusion represented benefits from the intertextual allusion to Poe's poem at the end of the chorus:

Seems like I've been here before.
Seems so familiar.
Seems like I'm slipping
Into a dream within a dream.

The harshness of the musical context is strengthened by the band's downtuning their stringed instruments one whole tone. This low tuning, along with the frenetic succession of additive rhythms and the lack of functional harmony, contributes to the overall harsh, edgy, nonconformist musical environment.

3.2.5.3 "IMITATION" (1827) AND "SPIRIT" (GHOST, 2014)

Ghost is a classic heavy metal band from Sweden. Their song "Spirit" (*Meliora*, 2014) puns on two different meanings of the word *spirit*: the non-carnal projection of a human being –which is also present in the name of the band– and an alcoholic drink. The latter acceptance is the one present in the lyrics as printed in the album sleeve, where the chorus is spelled as "Spirit, absinthe", and as expressed by the first-person speaker admitting to "save wormwood", which is the plant from where absinthe is prepared. The use of this beverage has been associated with creativity, as it was popularised by nineteenth-century impressionist painters but, because of its potentially neurotoxic content, it was banned from most western countries a few years later (Prance and Nesbitt 2005: 180). The song is an invitation to experiment –freeing the spirit through the use of spirits– away from social restraint: "Throw yourself / Into the vessel of possibilities". However, singer Papa Emeritus III pronounces "absinthe" as "absent", turning the song chorus into "Spirit, absent" and pointing towards a total loss of control: "There is no return / From this

excursion of possibilities”. This apparently conscious mispronunciation, along with allusions to “[d]evilish creatures” and the mention of being “catapult[ed] into the jaws of death”, can be read as a warning more than an encouragement. This interpretation is reinforced by a final quote from Poe’s “Imitation” (1917[1827]: 26-27), a poem whose speaker regrets a broken friendship and calls for oblivion: “Let none of earth inherit / That vision on my spirit”. Ghost slightly varies the couplet: “And none of this earth inherit / The expression of my spirit”. Again, the last line can refer to how the spirit –the alcoholic drink– makes its way through the uncontrolled speaker, or to how the speaker’s spirit –the intangible self– loses control. The message is identical in both cases: the paths trodden without self-control are dangerous and can lead to undesired consequences. The citation thus reinforces the lyrics. The existence of an independent melody for Poe’s verses and their being printed between quotation marks in the CD’s sleeve turns this process of transformation into what Genette calls *quoting* (1997[1982]: 2).

3.2.5.4 “DREAMLAND” (1844) AND *THROUGH CHASM, CAVES AND TITAN WOODS* (CARPATHIAN FOREST, 1995)

The interest of this final citation lies in its being embedded not only in a song, but throughout a whole recording, thus becoming an extended allusion. Norwegian black metal band Carpathian Forest named their 1995 EP *Through Chasm, Caves and Titan Woods*. The concept is taken from “Dreamland” (1844), a poem where Poe fantasises about the existence of a peaceful location whose access is partially forbidden. Throughout fifty-six verses, the speaker describes the landscape of his travel “[b]y a route obscure and lonely / Haunted by ill angels only”:

Bottomless vales and boundless floods,
 And chasms, and caves, and Titan woods,
 [...]
 Mountains toppling evermore
 Into seas without a shore;
 Seas that restlessly aspire.
 Surging, unto skies of fire;
 Lakes that endlessly outspread
 Their lone waters—lone and dead,—
 Their still waters—still and chilly
 With the snows of the lolling lily. (1890[1844]: 189-91)

Once the traveller reaches his destination, he discovers the impossibility of “openly view[ing] it”, since “[n]ever its mysteries are exposed / To the weak human eye unclosed”. The only way to behold the place is “through darkened glasses”. Sova interprets that the place is only reachable in dreams (2007: 59); for Frank and Magistrale, the poem is “about the final moment of perception of a world on the edge of collapse” (1997: 106). Carpathian Forest rely on the poem’s imagery as a conducting thread for an EP with constant references to dreams, travels and far away places. A dead woman is portrayed in the opening “Carpathian Forest”. Speaking from a present that “was once her dream”, the song describes a “[c]old white towering mountain, / The passage to the land of the phantoms, / Deep forlorned woods”. In “The Pale Mist Hovers Towards the Nightly Shores” the band reference boulders, the sea, the land, the ocean, and the “yellow sand”.²⁴ “When Thousand Moon Have Circled” [*sic*] traces parallels to Poe’s poem:

The vast windswept wastelands,
Cold horizons opens.
Many traveller has set their course from here,
Few of them have returned.

The utter darkness,
Bleak visions of emptiness,
And the veil to this portal,
Lies in your own belief....
[...]
The time has ceased,
Now my dreams are true....

Finally, “Journey Through the Cold Moors of Svartjærn” describes a trip “[a]mong the trees”, where “the nightly mist approaches / through the forlorned marshes” and hunting ravens fly “over the moors and mountains”. The EP is concerned with travelling in nature’s fantastic, dreamy places and looking for answers to existential worries, thus matching the tone of Poe’s poem.

3.2.5.5 FURTHER EXAMPLES

Other bands have cited Poe’s verses. Their transformations are listed in Table 19.

²⁴ Although such a list of natural elements may suggest an idyllic description, the final verses validate Kahn-Harris’s previously cited remark on the presence of racist ideology in some Norwegian black metal bands: “Acknowledge the supreme Northern (racial) purity, / That runs in the blood of my veins”.

Poem	Songs
"Spirits of the Dead" (1826)	"Spirits of the Dead" (Grave Digger, 2001)
	"Dances with Satan" (Theatre des Vampires, 2006)
	"Spirits of the Dead" (The Vision Bleak, 2016)
	"The Ghost Possessed" (Vlad, 2016)
"Al Aaraaf" (1827)	"Aaraaf" (David Brewster, 2011)
"Tamerlane" (1827)	"Tamerlane" (David Brewster, 2011)
"Romance" (1831)	"Reptilian Shudders" (Blinded by Faith, 2001)
"The Sleeper" (1831)	"The Sleeper" (David Brewster, 2011)
"The Coliseum" (1832)	"Vi Veri Vniversum Vivus Vici" (Devilish Impressions, 2012)
"Dream-Land" (1844)	"Thule" (Theatres des Vampires, 1999)
"The City in the Sea" (1845)	"Throne of Dark Immortals" (Theatres des Vampires, 1999)*
	"City in the Sea" (David Brewster, 2011)
"The Bells" (1849)	"The Bells" (David Brewster, 2011)
"A Dream within a Dream" (1849)	"A Dream within a Dream" (Cadaverous Condition, 2001)
	"Within a Dream" (David Brewster, 2011)

Table 19. Further instances of *citation* based on poems by Edgar Allan Poe.

* This transformation also cites William Blake's "Visions of the Daughters of Albion" (1906B[1793]: 297-310) and "The Book of Urizen" (1906B[1794]: 341-58).

3.3 "THE RAVEN" AND POPULAR (METAL) CULTURE

First published in 1845, "The Raven" is Poe's most famous work and the one more prominently featured in popular culture, to the extent that many pictorial representations of the author include a raven perched on his shoulder. Told by a first-person male speaker afflicted by the death of his beloved Lenore in the solitude of his chamber, the poem describes his uneasiness at the sight of a raven which enters the room and replies the man's every question with the refrain "nevermore", consequently increasing his feeling of despair. By situating a bird of ill omen²⁵ in opposition to the speaker's fragile mind, the poem explores the unknown, the supernatural, and dark thoughts emerging from the human subconscious. Fisher's interpretation has the raven representing the non-rational world and the chamber standing for the speaker's mind, "his reluctance to open the door and window to his chambers" possibly reflecting his inability "to look outside himself" (2008: 43-4).

Besides the poem's psychological appeal, one of its most attractive traits is its strong musicality: through its eighteen stanzas, a constant rhythm supported by a trochaic octameter benefits from a continuous *abcbbb* rhyme and an able use of alliteration and internal rhyme. "The Raven" being the work that granted its author most of his recognition in life, these traits did not go unnoticed by contemporary critics. Shortly after having been published, it was said of the poem that "[i]t will stick to the memory of everybody who

²⁵ Varnado quotes Dalyell's 1834 appraisal of the raven as an "ominous bird [that] forbodes either death or disappointment" (1968: 35). Fisher notes that some folklore "links ravens to the devil" (2008: 43).

reads it” (Willis 1986[1845]: 140); that “[i]t is a perfect original, and will live longer than its author” (Hine 1986[1846]: 247); and that “[t]o all who have a strong perception of tune, there is a music in it which haunts the ear long after reading” (Daniel 1986[1849]: 147). If the success of a “poem-to-song adaptation depends on the poem’s pre-existing musicality: its prosody and phonological features, its structural features, natural rhythms, rhymes and half-rhymes, and thematic content” (Ingham 2017: 336), “The Raven” fulfils expectations to a very high extent. This combination of form and content –“an alluring mix of accessibility and mystery” (Kopley and Hayes 2004: 191)– has allowed the poem a rich afterlife both as a literary work and as a popular culture product: to name a few instances where the poem was referenced, it appeared in the movie *The Crow* (1994), in the episode “Treehouse of Horror” in *The Simpsons’* TV show (1990), it has named the Raven Gallery in Charlottesville (Virginia, USA), the beer brand Raven, and Baltimore’s professional football team (Neimeyer 2004: 205).

As a lyric tool for metal music, “The Raven” portrays feelings of isolation and a deep concern for the darkest workings of the mind, sentiments that are consistent with the scope of regular metal lyrics. Had it been originally conceived as a metal song, within Arnett’s classification of lyrical themes it would belong to the category *angst*, which “includes songs portraying loneliness, existential struggles for meaning, and mental distress and disintegration” (1996: 50). Jones calls it “a poem about an Anonymous Young Man. [...] a standard nineteenth-century hero [who] suffers a great deal” (1955: 133). This reading invites to think of the poem’s speaker as a precursor of late twentieth and early twenty-first century young, alienated metal music followers. In fact, in line with Arnett’s statistics, which depict young metal fans as reckless (1996: 78), sensation-seeking (1996: 68), and not on good terms with their families (1996: 104), Jones defines the Anonymous Young Man as “sensitive, morbid, and accursed. He likes to prowl around at night. He likes to experiment with drugs, hypnotism, music” (1955: 133-4). Contrary to my initial assumption that in most cases metal fans learn about poems by hearing them in metal form first, it has been common for young western students during past decades to become acquainted with this poem during their secondary education years. This scheme is consistent with Hutcheon’s claim that part of the joy of adaptation “comes simply from repetition with variation, from the comfort of ritual combined with the piquancy of surprise” (2013: 4). This particular case highlights intertextuality, since the listener perceives the “adaptation *as adaptation*” (2013: 21). It is no coincidence, then, that dozens

of metal bands have drawn inspiration from “The Raven”, as it is not coincidental that the poem’s famous refrain has given its name to an American metal band: Nevermore.

3.4 “THE RAVEN” AND METAL MUSIC: TRANSFORMATION CATEGORIES

3.4.1 REPRODUCTION

3.4.1.1 “THE RAVEN: A THRASH METAL OPERA” (CHRIS VIOLENCE, 2016)

It would seem unlikely, a priori, to find an example of the *reproduction* category linked to such a long poem as “The Raven” (108 verses). However, Californian singer Chris Violence relied on all of Poe’s text in a situation as unusual as worth describing, as he explains in his Bandcamp website (Violence 2016: n.p.). In early 2015, his collaborator Jon Du Bose had written and recorded rhythm guitar and bass for an epic twenty-three-minute thrash metal piece in five parts that was supposed to be released as a concept EP. Concerned about finding “a subject big enough and worthy enough to be added to such a piece of music”, Violence found the answer he was looking for while listening to actor Christopher Walken’s recitation of “The Raven” on YouTube (2006). Pleasantly surprised at how naturally the words fit in Du Bose’s 4/4 performance, it took him six months to record the lyrics. His description of the recording development is a living documentation of the adaptation process:

At times I was forced to stop and google words I had never even heard before. Words that are very much out of the lexicon of 21st century man. I needed to learn not only their pronunciation but their meaning. I wanted to know what the hell I was saying and meaning in order to give the proper expression to the words in their delivery. (Violence 2016: n.p.)

Thanks to the addition of three further musicians and to the work of sound technician Matheus Manente, the one-song EP was released in May 2016 under the name *Edgar Allan Poe’s The Raven: A Thrash Metal Opera*. The piece starts with an introduction by foley artist Danilo Battistini which Violence has described as “beautiful” and “haunting, on the edge of terrifying” (2016: n.p.). It creates a mood for the song that matches that evoked by the poem. Footsteps, the falling rain, a creaking door and a raven croaking anticipate a male voice asking for “Lenore”, then exclaiming a deep “No!” as her absence from life is noticed. The five parts of the song are identified by changes in tempo, the melodic rhythm of the voice adapting accordingly, as shown in Example 22. The initial

section, starting with the first stanza (Example 22.a), accommodates each octameter in four bars, so that the eight verse accents match the eight available downbeats without long rests between verses. Nevertheless, there are two musical elements that take the performance away from the martial regularity of the typical adaptation of trochaic poetry to a 4/4 musical meter as described in Example 2: first, the use of syncopation anticipates by an eighth note the accented notes in the third beat of the bar, therefore creating a floating sensation as the voice seems to be slightly ahead of the rhythm section; second, there is a tendency to utter the first two syllables of each verse, and also right in the middle of the verse –the fifth trochaic foot–, as two eighth notes, instead of as a longer quarter note, thus providing a sense of propulsion every two bars (“while I” in bar three, “Over” in bar five, “volume” in bar seven). These devices provide a contrast between the vocal and the instrumental part that avoids monotony and contributes liveliness to the performance.

Starting with the tenth stanza, the tempo is faster and the vocal performance takes a more rhythmic approach in the odd bars, the even ones being consistent with the previous melodic rhythm (Example 22.b). By skipping the first beat in the odd bars, the first accented syllable lacks rhythmic accentuation. This causes the singing of these verses to project an iambic, instead of a trochaic, feeling:

(x) x / x / x / (x)
 But the Rav | en still | be-guil-ing,
 (x) x / x / x / (x)
 all my fan | cy in | to smil-ing

The following section, beginning with stanza fourteen, is the fastest in the song, and sees the most abrupt rhythmic change in the vocal melody, as it avoids syncopation and makes continuous use of quarter-notes and long rests (Example 22.c). It is the part of the piece that most resembles the standard regularity of Example 2, but its being featured for the first time almost fifteen minutes into the song makes it sounds fresh. The refrain “Quoth the Raven: ‘Nevermore’” includes a playful rhythmic figure that displaces the second and fourth verse accents –“Rav” and “more”– by an anticipated quarter note; however, the tempo is so fast (238 bpm), that they still seem to bear an accent. Finally, before the song’s fast ending, there is a slow doom metal-like section whose vocal interpretation of the last stanza in the poem is a compendium of all previously used techniques: downbeats and syncopations, “propulsive” pairs of eighth notes, and quarter note rests (Example 22.d). Of guitarist Jon Du Bose’s recording, Chris Violence said that

“[t]he pieces congealed at the end br[ought] all the pieces back together again” (2016: n.p.). His rendition of stanza eighteen achieves the same purpose in the vocal department.

This adaptation is a good example of how the openness of form inherent to metal music, as described in section 1.2, allows for deep levels of intertextuality. In this particular performance, and validating Sanders’ claim that “a useful way of beginning to think about adaptation is as a form of collaboration across time” (2006: 47), the connection of the musicians with the poet was so strong that, in the end, they considered him as part of the team: “So now, after almost two years of work, by six different people from all over the globe, one of which has been dead for over 149 years this project is ready for release” (Violence 2016: n.p.).

♩ = 196 a) Stanza #1

Once up on a mid - night drear-y while I pon dered weak and wea-ry



5 O ver man-y a quaint and cu - ri-ous vol ume of for - got - ten lore



♩ = 218 b) Stanza #10

9 But the Rav-en still be - guil - ing all my fan-cy in - to smil - ing



13 Straight I wheeled a cush - ioned seat in front of bird and bust and door



♩ = 238 c) Stanza #14

17 Res-pite res - pite and ne-pen-the from thy mem-o-ries of Le-nore



26 Quaff oh quaff this kind nepenthe and for-get this lost Le-nore

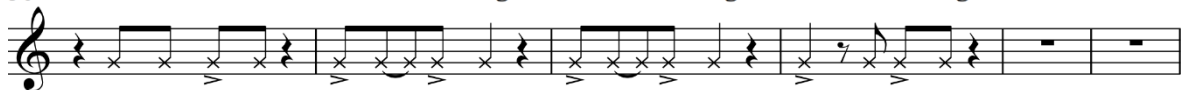


34 Quoth the Rav - en Nev - er - more



♩ = 100 d) Stanza #18

38 And the Rav-en nev-er flit-ting still is sit-ting still is sit-ting



44 On the pal-lid bust of Pal-las just a-bove my cham-ber door



Example 22. Melody rhythm of “The Raven”, by Chris Violence.

3.4.1.2 “RAVEN” (NIMPHAION, 2018)

Russian symphonic black metal band Nimphaion did not go as far as Chris Violence, but their twelve-minute adaptation “Raven” (2018) successfully reads seventeen of the eighteen stanzas in the poem. Although some other verses are elided –mostly those which repeat narrative content– and certain words are substituted, it is fair to consider such a committed effort a partial reproduction, rather than a retelling. The main challenge in singing the text of “The Raven” lies in its almost martial regularity. The continuous trochaic octameter presents little variation, and its bearing the accents in the first syllable of each foot suggests a rough, simple melodic adaptation where each verse fits four bars, each syllable matching a quarter-note, as seen in Example 2. Throughout the length of their performance, Nimphaion overcomes potential monotony by introducing changes in key, meter, tempo, riffs and, especially, melodic rhythm. Examples Example 23 and Example 24 show the most relevant variations, which will now be described. The song starts in E minor with organ, synthesizers, and a spoken voice that recites the poem’s first stanza in a 3/4 meter (Example 23.a). Each foot fills one bar. In order to adapt each two-syllable foot to a ternary meter, the first syllable is longer than the second. Since that first syllable is the one bearing the accent, and it matches the downbeat of the bar, its utterance contrasts with that of the second, unaccented, syllable. This pattern is repeated throughout the second stanza, which is sung in screams and grunts, and with the presence of distorted guitar sounds that will shape the rest of the song’s progression as it switches to D minor. Between the second and third stanzas (Example 23.b), the band introduces two extra trochaic tetrameters: “This is all and nothing more / Quoth the Raven ‘Nevermore’”. Their function is to act as a refrain and to vary the melodic pattern, for which reason the word “Nevermore” is screamed in three long notes filling a whole bar each. The third stanza (Example 23.c) introduces a metric alteration: a 2/4 bar substituting the last bar in each group of four. This effect, which could alternately be represented as one single 1 1/4 bar, produces rhythmic instability and allows the song to keep the listener’s attention while not deviating too significantly from the established musical landscape. However, around the 3’10” mark, the raven makes its appearance and the song changes drastically: the fifth stanza is left unfinished, the sixth is not sung at all and, as stanza eight frames stanza seven, the tempo is altered, the meter changes to 4/4, and the singing pattern adapts to its expected melodic contour as described in Example 2 (Example 23.d). All stanzas in “The Raven” are sestets in octameters, save for the final verse in each stanza, which is a

tetrameter. The song addresses this textual variation when reproducing the seventh stanza, where the caesura between “Perched and sat” and “and nothing more” is made explicit in the form of a rest (Example 23.e); since the final four syllables, taken in isolation, conform to an iambic pattern, the song displaces the notes accordingly so that the musical accents match those of the original verses. The variation in this line presents a notable contrast with the previous steady sequence of quarter-notes.

Example 24 starts by showing an expansion of the previously mentioned alteration. The part of the eighth stanza which is sung after the seventh, and which finds the speaker growing impatient with the raven’s attitude, breaks the octameter down into two tetrameters (Example 24.f); again, the second tetrameter is sung as iambic, thus displacing notes and creating a prosodic contrast that keeps the song’s interest intact. This section finishes with the refrain “Quoth the Raven: Nevermore”. The final word is, again, emphasised, in this occasion due to a rhythmic displacement that causes the final accent to fall on the first downbeat of a bar, thus spanning two whole bars. Once the refrain is repeated, the meter switches from 4/4 to 3/4 in a subtle way, since the change in meter does not imply any variation in the drum pattern. The performance of the ninth stanza follows a similar melodic contour than that at the start of the song, thus contributing formal cohesion (Example 24.g). The new 3/4 section is short-lived, the return to 4/4 introducing further variations: the tenth stanza sees the lyrics sung with triplets lacking the middle note, imposing a ternary melodic rhythm on top of a binary musical meter, and contributing a shuffle feeling that resembles none of the preceding sections (Example 24.h). The most frenetic melody section occurs in the twelfth stanza (Example 24.i), whose syllables are sung in a fast succession of eighth notes as the speaker manifests his repulsion of the bird. From stanza thirteen onwards, the song returns gradually to previous patterns, but rhythmic intensity increases, mostly due to the persistence of a double bass drum figure. The final stanza finds guitar and keyboards backing up the end of the narration, which proclaims the victory of the raven’s daunting presence over the lucidity of the poetic voice. As a conclusion to the song, the band adds a spoken stanza of admiration for the poet in iambic tetrameter:

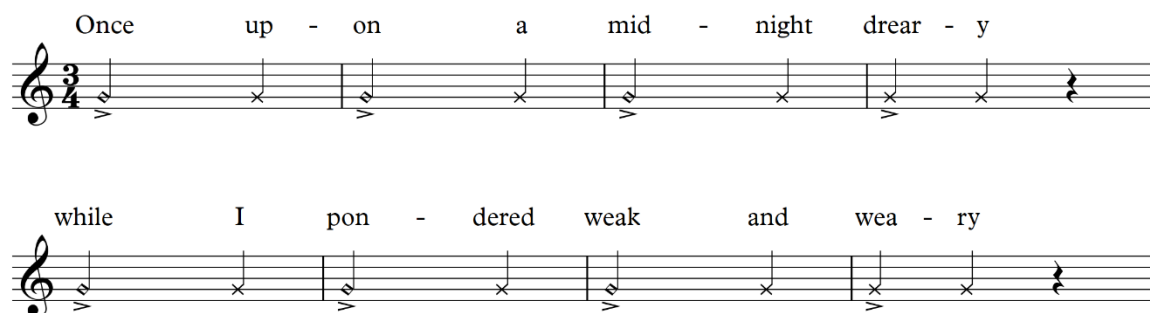
I dreamed to see someday the poet,
Whose heart is ruby, awful-woed
This piece of wisdom – his soul’s roar
My hat is off to Mr. Poe!

“Raven” belongs to the CD *Quoth the Raven*, eight of whose songs are inspired by poems by Edgar Allan Poe (the remaining tune is based on his short story “The Fall of the House of Usher”). They have also expressed their passion for the poet in two singles dedicated to “The Conqueror Worm”: *The Conqueror Worm* (2017) and *Червь-победитель* (2019), in Russian translation.

♩ = 208

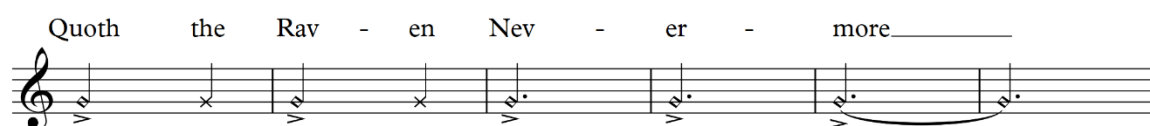
a) Stanza #1

Once up - on a mid - night drear - y
while I pon - dered weak and wea - ry



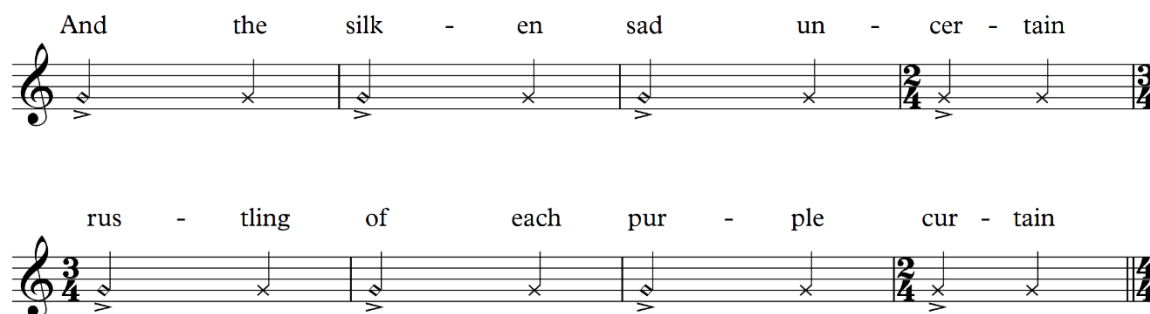
b) Between stanzas #2 and #3

Quoth the Rav - en Nev - er - more



c) Stanza #3

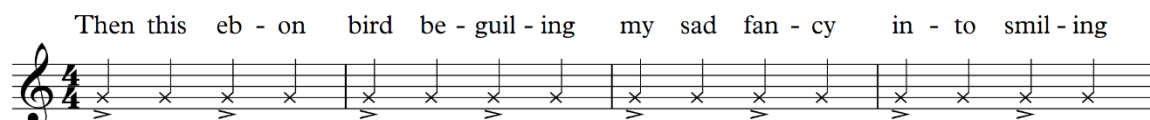
And the silk - en sad un - cer - tain
rus - tling of each pur - ple cur - tain



♩ = 194

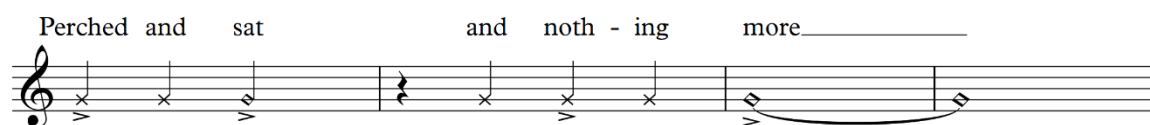
d) Stanza #8

Then this eb - on bird be - guil - ing my sad fan - cy in - to smil - ing



e) Stanza #7

Perched and sat and noth - ing more



Example 23. Melody rhythm of "Raven", by Nimphaion.

♩ = 194

f) Stanza #8

Tell me what thy lord - ly name _____ is

on the Night's Plu - to - nian shore _____

Quoth the Rav - en Nev - er - more

g) Stanza #9

bird up - on his cham - ber door

h) Stanza #10

But the Rav - en sit - ting lone - ly on the plac - id bust spoke on - ly

i) Stanza #12

Then up-on the vel-vet sink-ing I be-took my self to link- ing _____

Fan - cy un - to fan - cy think-ing what this ee - rie bird of yore _____

Example 24. Melody rhythm of "Raven", by Nimphaion.

3.4.2 RETELLING

Because of the poem's length being considerably longer than that of all transformations of the *retelling*, *reelaboration* and *reorientation* categories, said transformations experience the transpositional practice of *trimming* (Genette 1997[1982]: 230).

3.4.2.1 "NEVERMORE" (CONDUCTING FROM THE GRAVE, 2006)

American band Conducting from the Grave perform melodic brutal death metal. For their 2005 CD *Revenants*, the band decided to rewrite "The Raven" naming the resulting song with the poem's refrain "Nevermore". In transforming Poe's text, they mostly focused on the darkness emerging from the speaker's mind and on the sombre figure of the raven, the melancholic remembrance for the dead lover appearing only marginally. Although slightly relying on the poem's diction and occasionally ending verses with the word *forevermore*, the lyrics bear little resemblance with their source in sentence structure, meter and rhyme. However, the hypertext possesses an intrinsic poetic potential of its own. The poem's structure is only resembled at the beginning of the song: "The Raven"'s first stanza is echoed in the two first verses –"Lowly do I sit, the night lay dormant as I muse the thoughts / Of lives passed, and reason with forgotten lore"–; the two following verses introduce the speaker's dead beloved, here unnamed, thus mirroring the second stanza of the poem: "Remembering within these halls, the curves around your face / Beauty lost; apparition haunting me, dancing in the pale moonlight". From that point on, the lyrics follow a structural path of their own. It is the presence of the raven, the speaker's increasing distress, and the dark mood projected that connects them to their source. However, an element deserves special attention: the treatment of time. In his criticism of the poem, Jones remarked how it transcends time in its representation of the speaker's unfulfilled will to escape from the prison inside his mind:

In "The Raven" time stands still. We have but one indication of temporality – "a midnight dreary," but all the actions of the Anonymous Young Man occur in a region beyond time. The sense of escaping temporal limitations begins with the frustration of the second stanza, where tomorrow never comes; passes into the fantastic heartbeats of the following unit, curiously echoed in the meter; transforms itself into the endless moment of staring into darkness; and then, so to speak, disappears with the entrance of the Raven, the fantastic dialog, and the final frozen instant when the Anonymous Young Man, instead of banishing the bird as he had hoped, finds it [...] translated out of ornithology into eternity. (1955: 137)

Conducting from the Grave show a similar concern with time. The speaker in the lyrics finds himself in a quiet present of remembrance –"Lowly do I sit"– that only lasts

five verses, “[u]ntil a ravens cry shatters repose” [*sic*]. Instead of occurring “upon a midnight dreary”, his action spans in time “[i]n the cold of winter nights”. The chorus shows that torment haunts him continually: “As I count the days and nights / Watching shadows pass before my eyes / Years begin to crawl”. A look ahead forebodes a darkest future devised by the raven: “And I shall hear your voice cry forevermore”. Time ultimately collapses when the lyrics reach their eerie climax: “And in halls / I shall remain in darkness forevermore / Confined in abysmal time”. The song is not relegated to the events of a night; it rather explores the long-term consequences of the mental distress that afflicts the speaker throughout an unenclosed span of time, therefore incurring in temporal *transdiegetization* (Genette 1997[1982]: 296).

The lyrics feature further elements worth mentioning. The speaker is not, as in the poem, “weak and weary”, but boldly desperate –“my hands are splintered from the beating / Of my fists upon the bloodied floors”. Contrary movements and binary oppositions contribute to an effect of disturbance. Silence is “deafening to ears”, and movement and stillness imageries oppose each other: “As I sit and stare the pounding palpitates the pulse of blood that’s frozen / Through my veins like lifeless corpse in rest”. This final triple assertion of immobility confirms the triumph of despair. Finally, the raven is deemed as a messenger of death, or even its embodiment. The narration foretells this association right before the first chorus: “what’s this pounding on my chamber door? / As if striking a hammer to bones / Is this the tone of my taker”. Once the speaker is aware of the raven’s presence –“this beast that dares to perch and mock my woes”– he personifies it and grants him powers over his own life: “Is he the one that will take me away / To lay among the worms”. As it occurs in the poem, the raven reigns in the final scene: “But there he rides on the winds of this gloom / And there he howls”. His is the ultimate word.



Example 25. Melodic guitar line of “Nevermore”, by Conducting from the Grave.

Music-wise, the death metal riffs jump frenetically from note to note favouring long intervals over a fast 3/4 time that suggests anxiety and longing for resolution. The constant

string hammering of the style contrasts with the melodic guitar line appearing in the chorus –which delineates the song’s tonal centre of F minor, as shown in Example 25– and with scattered meter changes to 4/4 that allow the frenetic rhythm to rest for a few bars. These combinations keep the listener’s attention intact in a song that groups a total of fifty-one vocal verses in little more than four minutes, even allotting space for a guitar solo. As is usual in extreme metal subgenres, the band tunes their guitars and bass one tone down –the lower string is tuned to D instead of E–, with the goal of creating a darker timbral atmosphere through the use of low distorted sounds. Throughout the song, singer Mikey Powell combines his low guttural vocals with a high-pitched screaming voice typical of the black metal subgenre, thus contributing variation to the performance. At the start of the song, Powell starts certain verses in his high-pitched voice, switching to guttural vocals in the middle of the line, or vice versa. This way, he plays with listener expectations and crafts a surprising effect:

[High-pitched] Lowly do I sit, the night lay dormant as I [Guttural] muse the thoughts
Of lives passed, and reason with forgotten lore
[High-pitched] Remembering within these halls, the curves [Guttural] around your face
Beauty lost; apparition haunting me, [High-pitched] dancing in the pale moonlight.

In this regard, it must be noted that, in order to keep the contrast, the high-pitched vocals are never used when the melodic guitar riff is being played, since the combination of high single-line guitar scales and guttural vocals offer a balance that would be disrupted if two high-pitched sounds were to occur simultaneously. In the second part of the chorus, with which the song ends, the high-pitched shrieks intensify the horrible prospects exclaimed by the guttural voice:

[Guttural] Confined in abysmal time
[High-pitched] Showing no signs of release
[Guttural] Detained in horrific eyes
[High-pitched] Piercing with a gaze of remorse
[Guttural] But there he rides on the winds of this gloom
 And there he howls

This adaptation defies preconceptions. On the one hand, it is a paradigmatic example of the melodic death subgenre, which combines two apparently irreconcilable musical styles; on the other hand, it shows how such an extreme metal subgenre usually associated with rough, infantile lyrics can function as a poetic vessel not only to transmit old verses, but to recraft them under a new, contemporary light.

3.4.2.2 “THE RAVEN” (AETERNITAS, 2018)

Aeternitas is a German symphonic metal band whose 2018 album, *Tales of the Grotesque*, is inspired by the oeuvre of Edgar Allan Poe. Seven of the songs stem from short stories, five from poems. As he compares “A Dream within a Dream” with the film *The Matrix* (1999), leader and guitarist Alexander Hunzinger considers Poe’s work so universal and timeless that it is current still today (2018). His adaptation of “The Raven” summarises the poem in less than thirty lines. Although the lyrics are new, he relies on the diction of the original verses and respects the trochaic approach, albeit performing a transmetrification from octameter to pentameter:

/ x \ x / x \ x / x
 Once up | on a | mid-night | in De|cember
 / x / x / x \ x / (x)
 Shad-ows | fell like | ghosts upon the | floor

In adapting the trochaic lines to the steady 4/4 meter of the song, the melodic rhythm fits the standard pattern proposed in Example 2. Accented syllables match bar downbeats and, since the pentameter only requires ten notes, the final metric foot outlines a different rhythm for the sake of variation. Example 26 shows how the last foot of the first line finishes with two half notes, while the final one-syllable foot of the second line is displaced to the second beat of the bar.

♩ = 248

Once up - on a mid-night in De - cem - ber_____

5 Shad - ows fell like ghosts up - on the floor_____

Example 26. Verse melody of “The Raven”, by Aeternitas.

The rhythmic stability of the vocal melody in the song verses contrasts with the chorus, whose lyrics revolve around the dire destiny suggested by the raven’s stubborn reply. Repeated three times throughout the performance, it combines iambic, trochaic, and dactylic feet, and it shortens the length of the lines, so that they are sung with longer notes

and the accented ones do not match every downbeat in every bar, leaving more space between sentences. Example 27 accounts for the relevance of the word “nevermore”, whose final syllable spans through two full bars and leaves an extra bar with a full rest.

♩ = 248

Oh nev-er more no nev-er more

6 more This is your

10 dest - ti - ny you can't de - ny it Oh nev-er more

14 more no nev - er more

18 more Will be the

22 fi - nal an-swer of the rav - en And noth- ing more!

Example 27. Chorus melody of “The Raven”, by Aeternitas.

The performance, in Eb minor, alternates the female vocals of Julia Marou with the male voice of Oliver Bandmann. As typical in the style, a synthesizer background blends in with the distorted guitars. The tempo is very fast and the drumming highly dynamic, including an intensive use of the double bass drum. This frenetic rhythmic activity highlights the mental oppression the protagonist of “The Raven” is subjected to.

3.4.3 REELABORATION

Works by two German bands will be analysed in this section. One elaborates on the emptiness of human existence and the inadequacy of religion, while the other turns the speaker's pity and stillness into an unstoppable ecstasy of destruction led by the dark bird.

3.4.3.1 "LES POSÉDES" (AGATHODAIMON, 1999)

Agathodaimon is a German black metal band founded in the mid 1990s. "Les Posédes" – "The Possessed", wrongly titled in French, since the correct spelling would be "Les Possédés"– belongs to their 1999 CD *Higher Art of Rebellion*. An explicit attack on religion, it borrows the fifth stanza of "The Raven", only to alter its outcome and depart from the original context. It is not the speaker who whispers the name "Lenore", but darkness personified that whispers the Latin word *veritas*, which stands for truth, nature, reality. The remaining three vocal parts of the song elaborate on the concept. The second section, spoken rather than sung, contrasts the uselessness of religion –"Fools and faith conspire / Questions of desire / That they never owned before"– with a harsh reality that highlights the insignificance of human life: "Kings without their armour / Men without their honour / We all slip in oblivion". This feeling of spiritual void is further reinforced in the chorus, which is repeated:

We are the dark inside the night
The ghosts about which the poets write
And the dreams that night's embrace
That slowly leave without a trace...

Paralleling the speaker in "The Raven", the song's poetic persona is desperate, albeit not for the same reason. As despair for the lost lover turns into anxiety about mortality, the song experiments a process of *transmotivation* (Genette 1997[1982]: 325). Singer Vlad Dracul being Romanian –his real name is Rusu Andrei–, the last song stanza is written in his mother tongue. The speaker becomes desperate in his will to believe that eternal salvation exists, only to realise the futility of his effort. The invocations to Christian heaven and human soul lead to a disgusting scene of hopelessness:

O, soul, break away from your tiny cage
And shake off your body of clay
I want to cling on to you rushing towards heavens
As maggots cling on to a dead body, creeping!²⁶

²⁶ O, suflet sparge-odata, ingusta-ti inchisoare / Si scutura-te-odata de-acest lut pamintesc! / Vreau sa m-agat de tine, spre cer navala dind / Cum viermii de-un cadavru s-agata misunind! (English translation provided in the album sleeve).

The musical analysis of the song verifies its allegiance to the black metal genre. The performance is crudely recorded, and a constant 4/4 binary rhythm features a flow of power chords that delineate a D minor covert harmony, as shown in Example 28. Dracul's voice conveys the lyrics through screams and eerie whispers, finishing his performance with a creepy laugh.

♩ = 142

D⁵ E⁵ F⁵ D⁵ B^{b5} C⁵

(Dm) Em F Dm B^b C)

Example 28. Main motive of “Les Posédes”, by Agathodaimon.

3.4.3.2 “RAVEN” (GRAVE DIGGER, 2001)

Formed in the early 1980s, Grave Digger exemplify the main characteristics of classic heavy metal: fast rhythms, melodic riffs, long guitar solos, and epic vocals. In order to support a dark imagery, they based their 2001 album *The Grave Digger* in Poe's works, even including a reference to the author in the inner sleeve –“In Memory Edgar Allen Poe” [*sic*]. As singer and lyricist Chris Boltendahl commented: “The lyrics are back to our old roots, more to the evil side of life, the dark side of human beings. For inspiration I took from Edgar Allen Poe, and also my fantasies. His stories with my eyes and my view” (2001: n.p.). Initially, their “Raven” is heavily based on Poe's poem, save for minor details –Lenore is renamed “Leonore” to fulfil the transmetrical need to add an extra syllable in the corresponding verse. The first stanza of the song borrows from different parts of the poem, as Table 20 shows.

Poem	Song
Stanza #1	Once upon a midnight dreary while I pondered weak and weary
Stanza #2	lost my wife named Leonore an angel now for evermore
Stanza #7	Thunder, lighting crushed the sky A raven stood before my eye flew into the chambers door
Stanza #9	Wich such name as Nevermore [<i>sic</i>]

Table 20. Comparison between “The Raven” (Edgar Allan Poe) and the first stanza of “Raven” (Grave Digger).

However, once the performance reaches the chorus, they depart significantly from the original narrative. As Conducting from the Grave did, Grave Digger deem the raven as an actual messenger of death, in this case an emblem of destruction that drags the speaker along to fulfil its terrible deeds: “Fly with the raven seek and destroy”. The meaning complicates further, since the raven’s disposition toward evil illuminates it, as the second stanza makes evident: “The raven fades away my sadness / Made me smile but made me restless”. This explains why the chorus represents the bird as a luminous star: “Raise your face to the midnight sun / don’t touch the angel, don’t hide and run”. The raven wakes the speaker from his lethargy and encourages him to enjoy his existence, but only through the execution of violent deeds. Although he is reluctant, pity is no longer an option:

Prophet said I, thing of evil
Haunted horror, priest of devil
Let me stay there with my pain
Sorrow crawls through my veins

As both the speaker and the raven engage in violence, they both suffer an *axiological transformation*: a *devaluation* in the case of the former, an *aggravation* for the latter (Genette 1997[1982]: 343, 354-55). The music of “Raven” is direct and concise. In 4/4 rhythm, an E5 riff leads into the chorus’s diatonic chord sequence that suggests a D minor covert harmony, as shown in Example 29. The frenetic rhythmic activity is strengthened by the continuous use of the double bass drum, and the epic aura of the song benefits from the celebratory tinge of the choral approach caused by the accumulation of background vocals in the chorus.

♩ = 168

D⁵ A⁵ D⁵ B^{b5}

Raise your face to the mid - night sun

5 D⁵ A⁵ D⁵ C⁵

Don't touch the an - gel, don't hide and run

9 D⁵ A⁵ D⁵ B^{b5}

Look in - to the eye of this e - vil toy

13 D⁵ A⁵ D⁵ C⁵

Fly with the rav - en seek and de - stroy

Example 29. Chorus of “Raven”, by Grave Digger.

3.4.4 REORIENTATION

3.4.4.1 “QUOTH THE RAVEN” (ELUVEITIE, 2010)

Eluveitie is a Swiss folk metal band that blend folk melodies and instrumentation with death metal. Although their lyrics are mostly based on Celtic texts, for their 2010 CD *Everything Remains As It Never Was* they decided to recraft Poe’s “The Raven” through a process of reorientation: the speaker would be the raven itself. The hypertext retains the first person of the hypotext, but both the narrator and the focalizer switch from the disconsolate man to the raven. As their counterparts in *Conducting from the Grave* and *Grave Digger* did, Eluveitie deem the raven as an emblem of death, thus incurring in *aggravation* (Genette 1997[1982]: 355). In “Quoth the Raven” the bird refers to itself as “the bringer of the moonless night”, and addresses the man –now turned to listener– with a defiant guttural voice. The chorus, where guttural and female vocals meld, is foretelling of the evil the animal brings:

I haunt your fears

Though you don't know of my duty
 To lead your path
 Because I'll take you home to rest
 In my black wings enfolding you

If “The Raven” presents an interpolated narrating with predominance of the past tense, the song’s narrating is mostly prior, using exclusively present and future tenses. In foretelling fashion, the raven warns about the dark end of human life and the inevitable path to nonexistence. Its message, conveyed by a spoken female voice after the second chorus, is an aggressive reminder of mortality: “It is not before my arrival / That you will be led to feel / The natural serenity of leaving this world...”. The song is written in a continuous 4/4 meter. It is worth noticing, as a distinctive characteristic of this style, how the melodic lines interpreted by traditional instruments make overt the covert harmony suggested by guitar power chords. The gentle timbre of the hurdy-gurdy and its forefront position in the sound mix allows it to play notes from the full Eb natural minor scale, while the guitar only strums the root and fifth, as shown in Example 30.

♩ = 112

Hurdy-gurdy

Electric guitar

5

Chords: Ebm, Db, Cb, Db, Bb

Example 30. Main melodic and harmonic lines of “Quoth the Raven”, by Eluveitie.

3.4.4.2 “MY LOST LENORE” (TRISTANIA, 1998)

Months after releasing his critically acclaimed “The Raven”, Poe published his essay “The Philosophy of Composition” (1984[1846]), where he allegedly explained the creative

process which led him to craft his most famous poem.²⁷ In the article, Poe explains that he wanted his verses to appeal to “the popular and the critical taste” (1984[1846]: 163); that they should be “*universally* appreciable”; that “Beauty” was to become “the province of the poem”, melancholy its tone (1984[1846]: 164) and, as aforementioned, since death is the most melancholic of all topics, in attempting to address death poetically, the verses would elaborate on “the most poetical topic in the world”: the death of a beautiful woman (1984[1846]: 165). “The Raven” focuses on the confrontation between the black bird and the afflicted speaker; the latter’s affliction stems from the death of his beloved Lenore. Remembrance of the dead lover is where the focus lies in “My Lost Lenore”, the adaptation performed by Norwegian gothic metal band Tristania in their debut album *Widow’s Weeds* (1998). The speaker in their lyrics is still the afflicted man, and there is no change in focalizer or narrator status. However, the focalised is no longer the raven –which is completely absent–, but the late Lenore. For this reason, this song represents an instance of my second approach to the *reorientation* category.

A defining band of the gothic metal genre, Tristania –whose name derives from the Norwegian word for *sad*– creates sonic atmospheres that evoke sentiments of melancholy and sorrow. To build their music they favour minor harmonies and abrupt contrasts between lyricism and roughness via their combination of guttural and clean vocals, and their blend of distorted guitars and heavy drumming with the presence of symphonic instruments like the piano and the violin. Guitarist Anders H. Hidle states that

The basic idea behind adding female vocals and symphonic arrangements to the traditional death metal is to create “brutal music” with melody. The thing that attracts me to these elements is the contrast that you get between the heavy/brutal ingredients and the calm/melodic parts. When a beautiful melancholic melody line is being set up in anticipation of a heavy part, this melody line becomes even more beautiful. (1999: n.p.)

These elements are constitutive of a composition that abandons the poem’s psychological terror to indulge in an exploration of sorrow and mourning for the deceased lover. The narrating is now simultaneous, with predominance of a present tense that works as a snapshot of the speaker’s current mental state. Initially whispered by soprano Vebeke Stene, the lyrics establish a relation between mourning and beauty reinforced by a continuous binary opposition between light and darkness, as shown in the first stanza:

²⁷ Whether the essay describes the creation of “The Raven”, or if Poe delivered it as an invention on the actual process, remains a source of critical controversy (Richard 2005: 215).

For thy promise bewailed
by her raveneyes
by her beauty and a scarlet sunrise
May thy river bury her silvertears
A fallen angel... enshrined in moonlit seas

The darkness of the raven is only referenced to describe the beauty of Lenore's eyes; her tears are buried, but they conceal the brightness of silver; her death is that of an angel that still gleams thanks to the moon's reflection upon water. This heartfelt description of a mournful state discloses a deep concern with romanticism which is strengthened by the tenderness of Stene's voice. The effect starkly contrasts with the chorus's lyrics, interpreted by Morten Veland's guttural vocals:

Winternight
conceal thy precious angellore
I secrete my soul
under thy wings of sorrow
Dark I embrace thy eyes
wander lost on life's narrow path
I reveal my heart
to this beauty dressed in dark

The male singer reflects displeasure and resignation almost turned rage; however, the tone is still sorrowful. A reference to the poem subverts the original meaning, since the speaker does not rely upon "forgotten lore", but invokes the night's "angellore". The following stanza, sung by Stene's clean voice, takes the oppositional approach further. Lenore "[f]alls asleep with the sunrise", and the speaker contradictorily comments that "[t]hough I leave... I await thee". After the succeeding chorus, guttural and clean vocals meld in a reaffirmation of the previously evoked feelings. The final stanza finds the grunting man taking the oppositions to the extreme –lost beyond the dawn, mourning yet welcoming life:

Dark I embrace thy heart
Wanderer lost beyond veils of dawn
I conceal thy loss
enthralled in life yet still I mourn
My lost Lenore...

Tristania's approach is consistent with that of gothic metal's canon, where "[l]ove is a sort of a personal death (I die while worshipping the other) and at the same time death has a kind of mysterious purity (while life is generally trivial) that unites it with love" (Bolea 2018: 13). The speaker focusing on grief instead of madness implies some kind of

pragmatic transformation, although none of those proposed by Genette is fitting here. In musical terms, it is worth noting the foreground presence of the piano. Its role in weaving the conducting thread of the song and its carrying the leading melody throughout the instrumental parts, along with its privileged position in the mix, with distorted guitars in the background, allow for a chordal context richer than usual in metal music. Besides the covert structures suggested by power chords, keyboardist Einar Moen displays an E minor harmony that adds to the overall melancholic tone of the song, as seen in Example 31. A fast 3/4 meter propels the performance rhythmically and incorporates a folk flavour that suits the atemporal setting.

♩ = 220

Em / / / D Am C B

9 Em / / / D Am C B

Example 31. Piano riff of “My Lost Lenore”, by Tristania.

3.4.5 CITATION

3.4.5.1 “THIS GODLESS ENDEAVOR” (NEVERMORE, 2005)

Nevermore is a progressive metal band from Seattle, Washington. Their name already implying a connection with Poe’s most famous verses, the title track of their 2005 CD *This Godless Endeavor* includes a citation from the poem whose loose integration into the lyrics constitutes an example of what Genette defines as *allusion* (1997[1982]: 2). The song discloses the thoughts of a first-person speaker who elaborates on life’s absence of meaning through his open critique of religion. After expressing his helplessness and loneliness, the refrain “Godless are we” is followed by the following stanza:

Sitting here sideways on a cold stone floor
 My guitar gently bleeding and wanting more
 When I heard a sound come rapping,
 Tapping on my door

The two final lines directly allude to part of the first stanza in “The Raven”: “While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping, / As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door”. In Poe’s poem the sound is caused by the raven; in Nevermore’s song it is the religious message, one to be vehemently discarded by a speaker that, dwelling in the pessimistic side of life, feels unable to find any relief in religion: “We fly through this godless endeavor / We try to explain the black forever”. The approach of the spiritual message is as harmful to him as the raven is to the speaker of Poe’s poem.

3.4.5.2 “THE ECLIPSE/THE RAVEN” (CARPATHIAN FOREST, 1995)

Carpathian Forest’s five-song EP *Through Chasm, Caves and Titan Woods* (1995) was already discussed as an example of an extended allusion from Poe’s “Dreamland”. There are further references to the poet, since the lyrics for the third song “The Eclipse/The Raven” are the first two stanzas of “The Raven”. The citation in this case is longer than usual, but these twelve verses only cover a ninth part of the poem –which is eclipsed, as the title would have it–, and neither the raven nor the speaker’s psychological downfall are even mentioned. “The Eclipse/The Raven” is a short simple interlude in the middle of an aggressive black metal performance. A throat-torn whispering and a slow acoustic guitar arpeggio in the key of A minor substitute the screaming vocals and fast distorted sound present in the rest of the tracks.

3.4.5.3 FURTHER EXAMPLES

More metal bands draw inspiration from “The Raven”. Table 21 provides a further list of categorised examples.

Category	Songs
Reproduction	“Raven” (Distorted Force, 2018)
	“The Raven Nevermore” (RavenSkül, 2018)
Retelling	“The Raven” (Metropolis, 1986)
	“The Raven Pt.1” (Odium, 2000)
	“The Raven” (The Old Ones, 2004)
	“Raven” (Aethara, 2012)
	“The Raven” (Sighisoara, 2012)
	“Nameless Here for Evermore” (Mortis Mutilati, 2013)
	“Quoth the Raven, Nevermore” (Mortis Mutilati, 2013)

Category	Songs
	“The Raven” (Cosmivore, 2014)
	“The Raven” (Crystal Crow, 2014)
	“The Raven” (My Refuge, 2015)
	“The Raven” (Killin’ Kind, 2016)
	“The Raven” (Souls of Rage, 2017)
Reelaboration	“The Raven Song” (Virgin Steele, 1994)
	“Nevermore” (Dark Moor, 2002)
	“The Raven” (Shantak, 2016)
	“The Raven” (Rotting Christ, 2019)
Reorientation	“Raven” (Greedy Invalid, 2005)
	“Lenore” (Bet the Devil, 2011)
	“Lenore” (Ever Circling Wolves, 2017)
Citation	“The Raven” (Turbo, 1990)
	“At the Night’s Plutonian Shore” (Dark at Dawn, 1999)
	“Quoth the Raven” (Ilium, 2003)
	“Deep into That Darkness Peering” (Pathfinder, 2010)
	“Midnight Dreary” (Bet the Devil, 2011)
	“The Raven” (David Brewster, 2011)
	“Depths II” (Silent Planet, 2014)

Table 21. Further transformations based on Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Raven”.

3.5 DISCUSSION

The presence of continuous references to the works of Edgar Allan Poe in recent popular culture not only shows that his status as a cult figure has not decayed in the twenty-first century, but that his legacy is finding a fresh path in new types of media. His poetry’s concern with deep, dark human feelings reinforces its appeal for a young, rebel audience; and the lack of concrete spatio-temporal references covers his poems in a shroud of timelessness and archaism that favours the transition into new cultural contexts. For these reasons Poe’s poetry finds a natural afterlife in metal music, which contributes its own devices to the original words: rhythmic and timbral intensity; formal freedom that allows for the creation of ad hoc structural frameworks; a range of vocal approaches whose combinations favour meticulously crafted interpretations of the poems’ verses; the use of minor keys to highlight feelings of mental oppression; and the careful selection of concrete poems that fit the stylistic needs of each metal subgenre. Especially remarkable is “The Raven”’s presence in metal music, mirroring its privileged position in the poet’s oeuvre. Its treatment of death, the occult, fear, loneliness, lost love, anxiety, and the dark workings of the mind appeals to bands from very different quarters of the metal building. The fact that nineteenth-century poems function so organically in a modern cultural means of expression mostly aimed at late twentieth and early twenty-first century youth indicates that adolescent anxieties have not varied considerably in more than a century and a half.

Present day youngsters still feel identified with what Jones, referring to the speaker in “The Raven”, called the “Anonymous Young Man” (1955: 133), and the loyalty of young metal fans to the cultural products they consume turn the latter into powerful communication devices.

The analysed corpus represents Poe’s presence in the metal music genre only partially, 134 further transformations being listed in additional tables throughout the chapter. Some efforts deserve special mention: besides including the name of the poet in their own, Portuguese doom metallers A Dream of Poe have released albums referencing “The Raven” in their title (*For a Glance of the Lost Lenore* 2008; *Sorrow for the Lost Lenore* 2009); progressive metal guitarist David Brewster released the instrumental album *The Raven* (2011), with seven compositions bearing titles of Poe’s poems; German gothic metal band Shadowthron named an album *Quoth the Raven Nevermore* (2007); their compatriots Aeternitas released *House of Usher* (2016) and *Tales of the Grotesque* (2018); Norwegian black metallers Tremor called their 2011 CD *The Poe Sessions – and Random Pieces of Black Metal*; black metal duo Hornwood Fell dedicated their *Cursed Thoughts – Part II* (2020) to Poe’s oeuvre (*Cursed Thoughts – Part I*, released the same year, was devoted to Charles Baudelaire); there is an American doom metal band called *Conqueror Worm*; besides quoting a number of poems, American thrash metal band Exhorder’s “The Tragic Period” (1990) narrates Poe’s life; their compatriots Bet the Devil named a song after the day of his decease: “October 7, 1849” (2011).

The songs under scrutiny do not only show metal musicians’ interest in Poe’s poetry, but they also cover a broad range of adaptation, appropriation and citation techniques ranging from the musicalisation of the original verses to clever rewritings that include especial cases of narrative reorientation. As hypothesized, the topics of madness, introspection and escape from reality addressed by the poet are of significance to the metal audience. In the case of alienation, introspection and power/powerlessness, this interest is especially appealing to young listeners. In musical terms, the scrutinised bands usually favour 4/4 meters and minor keys, as usual in the genre. However, one element demands attention: the duration of the featured songs. Even if metal songs tend to be longer than the average three to five minute length of pop songs (McKinney 2015), ten of the twenty-seven analysed songs are longer than six minutes, four of them exceeding the ten minute mark: Ahab’s “Evening Star” (11’34”), Symphony X’s “Through the Looking Glass” (13’06”), Nimphaion’s “Raven” (12’32”), and Chris Violence’s “The Raven: A Thrash

Metal Opera” (23’30”). This signals a high level of commitment on the side of the bands towards the work of the poet.

Country	Bands
<i>USA</i>	Atten Ash, Bet the Devil, C.I.A. Hippie Mind Control, Chris Violence, Conducting from the Grave, Cosmivore, Fer de Lance, Fountain of Tears, Metropolis, Nevermore, Pale Divine, Silent Planet, Symphony X, Tool, Virgin Steele, Vlad
Germany	Aeternitas, Agathodaimon, Ahab, Crystal Crow, Dark at Dawn, Dawn of Winter, Farmer Boys, Grave Digger, Lucyfire, Lunatic Invasion, Lyriel, Minotaurus, Moonsun, The Ocean, Shadowthrone, The Vision Bleak
Italy	Adversam, Darkage, Hornwood Fell, Killin’ Kind, Mad Duck, My Refuge, Shantak, Theatres des Vampires
Norway	Arcturus, Carpathian Forest, Circus Maximus, Green Carnation, Legacy of Emptiness, Tremor, Tristania
Greece	Distorted Force, Odes of Ecstasy, Rotting Christ, Wastefall
Poland	Devilish Impressions, Odium, Pathfinder, Turbo
Russia	Aeons ov Frost, End Zone, Nimphaion, The Sundial
Brazil	Mandibulla, Pandora 101, Souls of Rage
Spain	Dark Moor, Döxa, RavenSkül
Sweden	Ghost, The Grottesquery, Wachenfeldt
<i>United Kingdom</i>	Aethara, Cradle of Filth, Iron Maiden
<i>Canada</i>	Blinded by Faith, Fireign
Czech Republic	Greedy Invalid, The Old Ones
France	Akin, Mortis Mutilati
Serbia	Armageddon, Enjoy Sarma
Slovakia	Et Cetera, Sighisoara
<i>Australia</i>	Ilium
Austria	Cadaverous Condition
Belarus	Mourning Crimson
Belgium	Danse Macabre
Colombia	Toxic
Finland	Ever Circling Wolves
Hungary	Guilthee
<i>Philippines</i>	A Hero for the World
Portugal	A Dream of Poe
<i>Puerto Rico</i>	Dantesco
Switzerland	Eluveitie
Turkey	Sorg Uten Tårer
Uruguay	Sinister Moon

Table 22. Metal bands that perform transformations of Edgar Allan Poe’s poems by country. Native English-speaking countries are italicised.

The size of the present sample allows for a quantitative analysis of the data. Table 22 shows that the bands come from twenty-nine different countries, only six of which are English-speaking. That makes for seventy non-English-speaking bands versus only twenty-five coming from English-speaking USA, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico. The fact that almost three quarters of the listed bands come from non-English-speaking countries speaks not only for the broad appeal of Edgar Allan Poe’s poetry, but also for poetry in English in general. I will, nonetheless, not claim

universality, since all but eight bands are European or North American, thus acquainted with Poe’s oeuvre due to his vast presence in popular culture and the school curriculum.

Subgenre	Bands
<i>Black</i>	Adversam, Aeons ov Frost, Agathodaimon, Arcturus, Blinded by Faith, Carpathian Forest, Cradle of Filth, Devilish Impressions, Et Cetera, Hornwood Fell, Legacy of Emptiness, Mortis Mutilati, Rotting Christ, Sinister Moon, Sorg Uten Tårer, Tremor
Gothic	Crystal Crow, Danse Macabre, Döxa, Farmer Boys, Fountain of Tears, Greedy Invalid, Green Carnation, Lucyfire, Mourning Crimson, Odes of Ecstasy, Shadowthrone, Sighisoara, Theatres des Vampires, Tristania, The Vision Bleak
<i>Doom</i>	A Dream of Poe, Ahab, Atten Ash, C.I.A. Hippie Mind Control, Cosmivore, Dantesco, Dawn of Winter, Ever Circling Wolves, Fer de Lance, Lunatic Invasion, Mandibulla, Pale Divine, The Sundial
Heavy	Armageddon, Darkage, Ghost, Grave Digger, Iron Maiden, Killin’ Kind, Mad Duck, Metropolis, My Refuge, The Old Ones, Virgin Steele
<i>Death</i>	Aethara, Cadaverous Condition, Conducting from the Grave, Guilthee, The Grottesquery, The Ocean, Shantak, Vlad, Wachenfeldt
Progressive	Akin, Circus Maximus, Distorted Force, Nevermore, Pandora 101, Symphony X, Tool, Wastefall
<i>Thrash</i>	Bet the Devil, Chris Violence, End Zone, Enjoy Sarma, Fireign, Odium, RavenSkül, Toxic, Turbo
Power	A Hero for the World, Dark at Dawn, Dark Moor, Ilium, Pathfinder
Symphonic	Aeternitas, Lyriel, Moonsun, Nimphaion
Folk	Eluveitie, Minotaurus
Groove	Souls of Rage
Metalcore	Silent Planet

Table 23. Metal bands that perform transformations of Edgar Allan Poe’s poems by subgenre. Extreme metal subgenres are italicised.

As for stylistic distinctions, all ninety-five bands are divided in Table 23 into roughly twelve different metal subgenres. In order to make this analysis useful, band subgenres have been simplified, since some of the groups claim belonging to hybrid styles (e.g., doom/death, black/death, power/thrash). Almost half of the bands belong to extreme metal subgenres, especially black metal. Both these bands and those of the most featured styles not belonging to the extreme metal classification are mostly concerned with prominent topics in Poe’s poetry. It is relevant to note the absence from the list of bands belonging to more commercial subgenres like glam metal or grunge. In order to make a more rigorous statement, I have compared the listed bands against those in Loudwire’s “Top 50 Metal Bands of All Time” (Loudwire Staff 2016) and in the following readers’ polls: Rolling Stone’s top ten bands (Greene 2011), Louder Sound’s top fifty bands, including over 110,000 votes (Alderslade *et al.* 2020), and Ranker’s top 116 bands (Ranker Community 2020). Only two of the bands mentioned in this chapter –Iron Maiden and Tool– make it to those listings –actually to all four of them. The conclusion here is that the specialisation of

the more underground metal styles is also reflected in the special care musicians put into crafting their lyrics, while one of the elements that make commercial metal popular is a lyrical simplification that can reach wider audiences by not requiring extra intellectual efforts in the audience's disentangling of song lyrics. This assumption will be reviewed in the conclusions of this thesis.

4. “MYSELF AM HELL”: *PARADISE LOST* AND METAL MUSIC

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Around four decades before publishing the first edition of *Paradise Lost*, John Milton had already manifested his will to write an epic based on the models of Homer, Ovid, Virgil, Dante and Spenser. His early idea of crafting a work on the history of England was abandoned in favour of a biblical theme, specifically the story of the Fall (Lewalski 2007: xv; Concha Muñoz and Cerezo Moreno 2010: 406; Reisner 2011: 25). Published in ten books in 1667, and later revised into twelve books in 1674²⁸, *Paradise Lost* draws on Christian mythology as narrated in the Bible’s books of Genesis and Revelations to expand on several events: the battle of the angels in heaven, the fall of the demons to hell, Satan’s rise to power, his plotting and executing the corruption of God’s latest creation –Adam and Eve–, the latter’s expulsion from Paradise, Christ’s offer to help them, and the foretelling of humankind’s path to redemption. An ambitious narrative poem, *Paradise Lost* “is the epic to end all epics [...]. Milton gives us the first and greatest of all wars (between God and Satan) and the first and greatest of love affairs (between Adam and Eve)” (Greenblatt 2012: 1830). The story is not told in linear fashion. It starts *in medias res* and makes ample use of analepsis and prolepsis, following this structure:

1. Books I–II – hell and Satan
2. Books III–VI – heaven, God and paradise before the Fall
3. Books VII–VIII – digression about the creation of the world
4. Books IX–XII – the Fall, punishment and prophetic visions of the future (Reisner 2011: 25)

The work is written in blank verse –unrhymed iambic pentameter–, and its solemnity, elevated diction, and use of Latinisms has been coined as Milton’s “grand style” (Concha Muñoz and Cerezo Moreno 2010: 406, 412; Lewalski 2007: xxvi). A scholar has remarked Milton’s mastery at crafting a text that flows as free as prose:

The lines contain any number of stresses from three to eight, and these may differ markedly in degree and in position. The caesura or natural pause in the line falls most often of course in the middle section but is continually varied, and it may come even after the first syllable. (Bush 2005[1967]: 480)

²⁸ Throughout this chapter I will refer to Gordon Teskey’s Norton 2005 edition, based on 1674’s revised edition of the poem.

Since *Paradise Lost* will be scrutinised here in comparison to contemporary musical transformations, it is relevant to note that scholars have widely commented on the poem's musicality (Eliot 1961[1943]: 179; Lewalski 2007: xxvi). Conveniently enough, Milton sang and played the organ and the viola da gamba, and his epic is ripe with musical references (Teskey 2005: xvi).

In order to address an even minimal assessment of *Paradise Lost*, it is inevitable to behold the work in the light of the political events surrounding its inception and directly affecting its author. As England was fighting its civil war, Milton took sides with the Puritan and Presbyterian revolutionaries against the authoritarian excesses of Catholic-leaning King Charles I. The king was executed in 1649, the same year Milton started working for the new government as secretary of foreign tongues to the Council of State. It was no coincidence that the poet began work on *Paradise Lost* around the time when the new ruling elite, commandeered by Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell, was showing similar signs of authoritarianism as their royal predecessors. Cromwell died in 1658 and, as royal rule was restored two years later, his collaborator Milton spent some weeks in prison. The Protectorate the poet had defended so sternly had not been able to satisfy his longing for individual freedom in English society, and the choice of mankind's Fall as his epic's central topic has been likened to the English Revolution's lost opportunity at fostering freedom and peace (Teskey 2005: xix-xxv). However, critical interpretations have never agreed on what the different characters and elements in *Paradise Lost* represent compared to their counterparts in the poet's contemporaneous politics. God and the angels in heaven may represent the peace and harmony that the Revolution was supposed to install, while Satan and the devils could stand for the king and his cohort of royalist followers; or God could symbolise the king and Satan stand for Cromwell, thus turning the poem into an acknowledgement of the Protectorate's democratic shortcomings and the need to return to royal stability, in which case motives could be varied: "Was Milton then voicing royalist ideas in an effort to appease his many enemies after the Restoration? Or was he perhaps attempting to register his own personal disgust with the republican revolutionaries who lost their way?" (Reisner 2011: 59). The main reason behind this lack of critical agreement lies behind the most controversial character in the poem: Satan.

Milton's Satan is one of the most magnificent characters in the history of English literature. His elaborate speeches inspire as much respect and authority as his cunning and ingenuity. He is modelled on larger-than-life heroes and antagonists from the classical and

Renaissance eras including Achilles, Odysseus, Aeneas, Prometheus, Turnus, and Shakespeare's Hamlet, King Lear, Macbeth, Iago and Richard III. Most importantly, he is the focalizer in the poem's two opening books, therefore allowing the reader to behold the Biblical events from his perspective (Lewalski 2007: xix; Woodhouse 2005[1972]: 496; Reisner 2011: 55; Gross 2005[1988]: 422; Forsyth 2014: 18). Unlike medieval devils, his impressive physical image is far from grotesque (Lewalski 2007: xix; Teskey 2005: xxiii), and he is able to raise the reader's sympathy due to his ability to feel love, pain, or remorse (Forsyth 2014: 17, 22). Satan the character is so wonderfully crafted that he contrasts abruptly with God the character, as Reisner remarks:

God is meant to be inscrutable, mysterious and certainly not human, so that the process of literary presentation necessarily diminishes God; by presenting God as a being who acts in time and expresses himself in linear syntax and causal logic Milton's God becomes, by definition, a finite being. (2011: 60)

Whatever the explanation, Milton's depiction of Satan and his overarching voice in books I and II of *Paradise Lost* are at the centre of critical controversy, to the point of giving birth to two opposing schools of thought: Satanists and anti-Satanists. The former, started by Romantic poets like William Blake, Samuel Taylor Coleridge or Percy Bysshe Shelley, stands for Milton's allegiance to the demon. Blake claimed that "[t]he reason Milton wrote in fetters when he wrote of Angels and God, and at liberty when of Devils and Hell, is because he was a true poet, and of the Devil's party without knowing it" (1906A[1793]: 10); Coleridge remarked the character's "singularity of daring, a grandeur of sufferance, and a ruined splendour, which constitute the very height of poetic sublimity" (2005[1819]: 391), and Shelley went as far as to affirm that "[i]t is a mistake to suppose that [Satan] could ever have been intended for the popular personification of evil", since "Milton's Devil as a moral being is as far superior to his God as one who perseveres in some purpose which he has conceived to be excellent in spite of adversity and torture" (1904[1840]: 394). Twentieth-century authors like A. J. A. Waldock and Phillip Pullman have subscribed the Satanist view. On the contrary, essayists like Joseph Addison, Samuel Johnson or, more recently, Charles Williams and William Empson have defended the anti-Satanist approach which depicts God as the rightful voice of reason that prevails even against such a formidable opponent as Milton's Satan. C. S. Lewis has been the most vocal advocate of this perspective:

Many of those who say they dislike Milton's God only mean that they dislike God : infinite sovereignty *de jure*, combined with infinite power *de facto*, and love which, by its very nature, includes wrath also—it is not only in poetry that these things offend. (1969: 130)

Other scholars take neither position, as they consider Satan's glorious character as Milton's strategy to have his contemporary readers face the moral dilemma of whether identifying with the demon or staying true to their Christian roots: "Although a 'satanic' reading of the poem might conclude that Milton puts God on trial, what is in fact on trial throughout the poem is the reader's culpability and ongoing complicity in the Fall" (Reisner 2011: 31, 85).

4.2 *PARADISE LOST* AND POPULAR (METAL) CULTURE

Because of touching upon the spiritual centre of western civilisation, constituting a canonised literary work, and fuelling critical controversy, *Paradise Lost* has found a privileged place in twentieth and twenty-first century popular culture. It has given name to countless cultural products, including novels, operas, theatre plays, films, video games, albums, songs, and television series episodes, specifically regarding series associated with science fiction and the future –*Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* (1996), *Stargate SG-1* (2003), *Marvel's Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.* (2016)–, thus facing scenarios where to recreate possibilities of finding –and losing– paradise. *Milton in Popular Culture* (Knoppers and Semenza 2006) delves deeper into this topic. In the case of metal music, *Paradise Lost* is widely referenced, the reasons being many and varied. According to Weinstein, at the heart of the culture lies a concern with the Judeo-Christian tradition that allows metal musicians to shape metal's "imagery and rhetoric of chaos" (2000: 39):

Religious terminology is replete in heavy metal, from band names such as Grim Reaper, Armored Saint, Black Sabbath, and Judas Priest, to albums with such titles as *Sacred Heart* (Dio), *Sin After Sin* (Judas Priest), *Heaven and Hell* (Black Sabbath), and *The Number of the Beast* (Iron Maiden). The lyrics make ample use of this religious-based terminology. The battle on earth between the forces of good and evil is a paradigm for the lyrical treatment of chaos in heavy metal. The songwriter is sometimes on one side, sometimes on the other, and sometimes just describing the excitement, profundity, or tragedy of the struggle. (2000: 39-40)

Purcell remarks on the aesthetic appeal of religious imagery, its escapist nature because of being a fantasy world, and how this translates creatively in the mind of metal musicians, regardless of whether their stance is pro- or anti-Christian (2003: ch. 17). Walser goes as far as to call heavy metal "a religious phenomenon", because of the music's attempt at explaining life, faith, power, and failure, and because of its providing a

comforting communal experience (1993: 154), and Scott refines this thought further by claiming black metal's function as liturgy (2014). While Satanism has been linked to metal music on several occasions, metal's allegiance to Satan has been mostly metaphorical: "The devil is frequently mentioned in heavy metal lyrics because he serves as shorthand for the forces of disorder" (Weinstein 2000: 41); "[t]he vast majority of heavy metal fans don't worship Satan" (Walser 1993: 151). Purcell insists on the parallelism between religion and fantasy:

But why choose dark, sacrilegious themes just to attain entry into the fantastic realm? Ironically, one might suggest that perhaps this is a more accepted or reputable form of fantasy. Dragons and unicorns are quite evidently fictitious; not so with heaven and hell. While children can ponder the existence of fairies and trolls, adults cannot. They can, however, indulge in fantasies about angels and demons without the stigma attached. It is immature or perhaps insane to be seriously enthralled by the fantastic, unless the fantastic is a brand of supernatural which contemporary adult society has stamped with approval. Religion is precisely this brand of the supernatural. For this reason, it is possible to make the case that Death Metal fans enjoy lyrics with sacrilegious themes and archetypal religious images because they provide an ostensibly "adult" trip into the realm of fantasy. (2003: ch. 17)

But *Paradise Lost's* appeal to metal musicians and fans is not only grounded on being the greatest Christian epic ever written. The critical controversy between Satanists and anti-Satanists finds continuation in the metal realm, as Christian metal bands draw on the poem to warn their listeners about the consequences of sin –Adam and Eve's Original Sin and the Fall–, while non-Christian bands extol Milton's Satan as the ultimate image of rebellion against the established order –represented in the poem by a God perceived as a tyrant. The latter is the most usual approach. Since loneliness is a common theme in metal music (Arnett 1996: 50), the communal experience of heavy metal provides the fan with a sense of group belonging. That communal experience finds a parallel in *Paradise Lost's* parliament of demons in hell, thus having fans identify with the group of rebel angels. Their gathering place evokes the inner mental universe of many metal followers: "Milton's hell is a vacuous non-place within the 'boundless' deep, a 'universe of death' (II. 622), extrinsic to God and therefore antonymic to life and being itself" (Reisner 2011: 53). However, it is also the place where "political ideas and forms of discourse [...] thrive" (2011: 93), thus sheltering hope for self-expression and focusing on two of the most prominent topics in metal music: power and powerlessness (Gross 1990: 124; Walser 1993: 110). Contrasting abruptly with the apparent freedom of Milton's hell, his heaven looks like a bureaucratic institution, "a grand political establishment, with a monarch,

assemblies, ranks of angels performing ‘ministeries due and solemn rites’ (VII. 149), a standing army, and even an ‘armoury’ (VI. 321)” (Reisner 2011: 93). William Blake said that “Good is the passive that obeys reason; Evil is the active springing from Energy. Good is heaven. Evil is hell” (1906A[1793]: 7). According to these words, hell seems a better match for a large part of the metal audience. Again, it is all metaphorical:

Heavy metal’s embrace of devilry is not a religious statement. It is a criticism of the phoney heaven of respectable society where no one boogies and everyone goes to ice cream socials. It is not a countertheology. Metal lyrics do not attack God and certainly do not malign Jesus. They just appeal to the devil as a principle of chaos. (Weinstein 2000: 41)

If, in *Paradise Lost*’s universe, many metal followers’ home is hell and their fallen allies are other fans, their vocal inspiration is Satan. Countering the metal fan’s common feelings of isolation and introspection, “[t]he character of Satan is pride and sensual indulgence, finding in self the sole motive of action. It is the character so often seen in little on the political stage” (Coleridge 2005[1819]: 391); he shows “fortitude in adversity, enormous endurance, a certain splendid recklessness, remarkable powers of rising to an occasion, extraordinary qualities of leadership (shown not least in his salutary taunts), and striking intelligence in meeting difficulties that are novel and could seem overwhelming” (Waldock 2005[1947]: 414); “he remains an inescapable object of [...] troubled admiration—whether we admire the character or the force that calls him into being. I might call him a modernist hero, a hero of the fallen imagination” (Gross 2005[1988]: 420). If power is one of metal’s main topics, *Paradise Lost*’s Satan is an embodiment of power. It does not matter that he ultimately does not succeed. It does not matter that the poem only transmits “the illusion of equality” (Rajan 2005[1947]: 409). Because of his confronting the establishment and because of his resourcefulness in doing so, Milton’s Satan is what many metal fans aspire to be in their lives, thus becoming their role model: “Satan’s grandeur [...] comes from his iconoclasm, from his desire for liberty” (Flesch 1992: 239). He is not perceived as evil, but as a personification of freedom and rebellion against socio-political constraints: “he chooses evil in order to be different, because, or rather *if*, God is good” (Forsyth 2014: 25), or, as Satan himself states, “Evil, be thou my good” (4.110).

The presence of *Paradise Lost* in metal is pervasive. One of the leading British doom-death metal groups bears its name. At least seven bands have released albums under the poem’s title (Cirith Ungol 1991; David Valdes 1991; Symphony of Sorrow 1999; Paradise Lost 2005; Symphony X 2007; Salem’s Child 2016; Timeless Necrotears 2016), and at least fifty-one have named songs based on Milton’s grand work. Others do not

transform the poem, but include allusions to Satan's most famous verse: "Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven!" (1.263). Even Deena Weinstein opened her seminal *Heavy Metal: The Music and Its Culture* with a quote from the poem (2000: 1). Applying the present categorisation of poetry-based metal music transformations to *Paradise Lost* presents some challenges. The first one is the actual impossibility of finding instances of *reproduction*, since the poem's over ten thousand verses cannot fit the usual length of a metal song, or of any song, for that matter (*Paradise Lost* audiobooks are usually between nine and eleven hours long). A direct implication of this issue is that the vast majority of transformations are partial. The main reason is not only the inherent difficulty of condensing all twelve books into a five-minute song, but the fact that several transformations exclusively address Satan, hell and the fallen angels as countercultural, anti-establishment symbols, thus focusing mostly on books I and II. Since Satan and the falling angels are the focalizers in most of these transformations, and an exclusive focus on the demons' side contradicts the Christian message of the poem, the dilemma is whether considering them partial *retellings* or *reelaborations* of the whole work. C. S. Lewis defines *Paradise Lost* as "a poem depicting the objective pattern of things, the attempted destruction of that pattern by rebellious self love, and the triumphant absorption of that rebellion into a yet more complex pattern" (1969: 132). Metal musicians crafting these types of transformations are not interested in the absorption of their rebellious self love, but in their attempt at challenging –destroying might be too strong a word in this cultural context– a pattern of things that they may not deem as objective. Their perception and appreciation of *Paradise Lost* is partial; thus, I will slightly bend my taxonomy in order to consider their transformations based on specific books of the poem *partial retellings*. This approach solves another problematic issue: how to categorise the many transformations where either Satan or the fallen angels are not only the focalizers, but also the *transvocalizers* (Genette 1997[1982]: 213), that is, the narrative is no longer framed by an omniscient third-person narrator, but directly uttered by a singular or communal character. Following the previous train of thought, these instances will adapt naturally to the *reorientation* category. I will avoid assessing whether there is some kind of axiological transformation in the present transformations, since songs extolling Satan could be considered *revaluations* (Genette 1997[1982]: 343) only from the anti-Satanist approach to the poem (if the demon is initially deemed as a negative character). In general, semantic transformations will only be considered regarding the section of the poem each song

focuses on. Finally, due to *Paradise Lost* being based on the Bible, another challenge is understanding how much inspiration metal bands are drawing from the scriptures, how much from Milton's work and how much from their own Christian experiences, if any. Besides analysing a number of transformations per category, I will commit a whole section to two albums fully or mostly inspired by *Paradise Lost*: Cradle of Filth's *Damnation and a Day* (2003) and Symphony X's *Paradise Lost* (2007).

4.3 *PARADISE LOST* AND METAL MUSIC: TRANSFORMATION CATEGORIES

4.3.1 RETELLING

4.3.1.1 "WAR IN HEAVEN" (WARLORD, 2002)

William J. Tsamis, leader and guitarist of American band Warlord, claims that "[i]f I have a guitar and a Bible, that's all I need" (2002: n.p.). His is an epic power metal group associated with the current known as Christian metal, which includes bands from different subgenres with a Christian approach to their lyrical content. Their partial retelling of *Paradise Lost* focuses on book VI, where Raphael narrates to Adam and Eve the battle in heaven between the fallen angels and their God-obeying counterparts. "War in Heaven" (2002) is a typical epic power metal performance, starting with a clean guitar arpeggio followed by a drum call to a steady 4/4 rhythm in E minor that introduces Joacim Cans' high-pitched vocals adorned with vibrato and long notes. The song is structured in four parts. The first verse describes the uprising of "the Seraphic Legions". The band evidence their Christian orientation by directly addressing God in the second person: "In the name of the Archangel Lucifer / The Legions hath come, to divide and to conquer / Thy kingdom, Thy power, Thy throne". The second verse introduces "[t]he celestial armies of heaven" led by "Michael with sword in hand" who, "[i]n the name of the Almighty Father" will "cast out the Legions / Forever, to the infernal realm". The third section comprises a series of guitar solos and a clean guitar strumming interlude which leads to the climax in the final verse, where the triumphant angels "smite their foe". Here the band take a hyperbolic approach to the events narrated in *Paradise Lost* since, unlike in the poem, "the hounds and the carrion of hell feast on [the fallen angels'] corpse". The last four lines are dedicated to the folly of

Archangel Lucifer,
Who thought in his mind, he could rise to Empyrean dominion
'Til fate was his foe,
The will of God his woe

Although diction differs, the song's lyrics share with their hypotext a preference for archaic language. Dramatism is enhanced by the constant use of the present tense –“the angels smite their foe / And the Seraph they fall to destruction”–, thus engaging the listener in radio serial fashion as if s/he were learning of the battle first-hand, and also tracing a parallel to folk oral storytelling.

4.3.1.2 “FUMES SHE HOLDETH” AND “CRESCENT” (IN THA UMBRA, 2000)

Portuguese black metal band In Tha Umbra depart not only from the previous transformation's narrative approach, but also from the poem's. Two songs from their 2000 album *Midnight in the Garden of Hell* engage in vivid descriptions of static snapshots from *Paradise Lost*. “Fumes She Holdeth” focuses on the demons' descent to hell as they bid “[f]arewell happy fields... where joy forever dwells” to greet their new landscape: “Hail horrors, Hail” (Milton 1.249-50). The new environment is minutely described as an “[i]nferral world” with “dusky Air” and “flames / In billows”. The disorientation of the fallen angels is expressed with a quote from the poem: “Groving and prostrate on yon lake of fire / As we erewhile, astounded and amazed– / No wonder, fall'n such a pernicious height!” (1.280-82). The lyrics use the formal transpositional practice that Genette identifies as *contamination*, that is, mixing two hypotexts (1997[1982]: 258), the second one being the Bible and its references to Ashtoreth, the goddess worshipped by some Israelites that the scripture calls “the abomination of the Zidonians” as her moral integrity is questioned (Barton 1891: 73-74). In the song, Ashtoreth “hold[s] the sulphuric fumes / Chain'd on the burning lake”, to later “[w]ith expanded wings steer the flight [...] / Thence conceiving fire”. That fire is the fumes she holds in the song's title. The choice of Ashtoreth as the guide who shows the fallen angels the path to hell is consistent with the anti-Christian stance of the band: energetical and independent, she has been associated with the matriarchal state, for which reason she cannot answer to a lord –in this case God (Skipwith 1906: 717, 721). Her ritual was deemed by the Israelites as morally impure (Barton 1891: 89), thus the values she represents are at the opposite end of those held by God-worshipping Christians. By including further elements in the hypertext such as the

presence of Ashtoreth or mentions to Erebus –Greek god of darkness– or Ceridwen – Welsh goddess of rebirth–, In *Tha Umbra operate on Paradise Lost* the same technique that Milton performed in the book of Genesis: expanding the lore by adding details to the story, or, as Genette would have it, using *amplification* (1997[1982]: 262). This way they involve themselves in a contrary movement of textual condensation and expansion. As the song advances, the lyrics praise the “[m]ighty chivalry” of hell, for which purpose another quote from the poem is used:

With gems and golden luster rich emblazed,
Seraphic arms and trophies [...]
Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds
At which the universal host upsent
A shout that tore Hell’s concave and beyond
Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night. (1.538-43)

The image depicted is an appreciation of the fallen angels’ military might. “A forest huge of spears” is displayed “through the gloom”, while “serried shields [are] in thick array / Of depth immeasurable”, moving “[i]n perfect Phalanx”. The demons are appraised as heroes with “stature as of Gods”. The song finishes by remarking Ashtoreth’s powers: “Sulphurlike moors of blazing fire / On the palms of her hands”. The lyrics being more descriptive than narrative, they mostly lack active verbs, substituted by past participles, thus contributing to the overall static picture and the resulting sense of claustrophobia and oppression.

The same concept is taken further in “Crescent”, from the same album, and whose title refers to the darkness of eternal night that increases as the fallen angels proceed to their new home. The image is even more static than that of “Fumes She Holdeth”, as the song is merely a description of hell –“Black fire and horror shot with equal rage”– as the demons will find it: “Shall hear Infernal thunder”. The lyrics rely on three quotes from book II of *Paradise Lost* where Milton provides a vivid picture of the demons’ abode:

from whence deep thunders roar,
Must’ring their rage, and Heav’n resembles Hell? (2.267-68)
[...]
Of four infernal rivers that disgorge
Into the burning lake their baleful streams:
Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate,
Sad Acheron of sorrow black and deep,
Cocytus, named of lamentation loud
Heard on the rueful stream, fierce Phlegethon
Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage. (2.575-81)
[...]

Where all life dies, death lives, and nature breeds
Perverse all monstrous, all prodigious things,
Abominable, inutt'able, and worse
Than fables yet have feigned or fear conceived:
Gorgons and hydras and chimeras dire. (2.624-28)

The landscape represented in both songs corresponds to the demons' descent to hell narrated in book VI of Milton's poem. As for musical resources, nothing particular stands out. Both performances contain all common elements in the black metal genre: screamed vocals, "trebly" guitar riffs, and limited production values.

4.3.1.3 "TENEBRARUM" (FORSAKEN, 2009)

Since the Maltese band Forsaken play epic doom metal and have an outright Christian orientation –their CD *Pentateuch* (2017), as its name suggests, is inspired by the first five books of the Bible (Forsaken 2017: n.p.)–, their transformation of *Paradise Lost* could be initially expected to cover a large expanse of time and involve lengthy lyrics. Nevertheless, they only rely on a three-line quote from Milton's work for the two-minute introduction to their 2009 CD *After the Fall*, whose title refers to the aftermath of the poem. The introduction –named "Tenebrarum"– is not even a song, but a succession of human laments suggesting fear and turmoil. On top of such a disquieting aural landscape, the floor tom pounds solemnly and the following verses from the start of *Paradise Lost*'s book I are spoken aloud:

Th' infernal Serpent. He it was whose guile
Stirred up with envy and revenge deceived
The mother of mankind (1.34-36)

The quotation is accurate, since it summarises in only a few words events that are explored at length in Milton's poem. Satan's transformation into a snake and his leading Eve –the mother of mankind– to eat the forbidden fruit is told in book IX, but she had already dreamt of the event in book V. As for the fallen angel's envy and revenge, it is fuelled in book I –the conclave of demons–, planned in book II –the fallen angels' agreement in corrupting mankind– and worked on in books III –Satan finds Adam and Eve– and IV –Satan confronts the angels. Once the verses are fully recited, grunting sounds resembling an angry hound join in as a personification of the evil humankind encountered once Eve ate from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil (9.780-84). The

track ends with the floor tom culminating the introduction and leaving a resounding echo that suggests uncertainty, resulting in a frugal performance that establishes an expectation framework for the rest of the album.

4.3.2 REELABORATION

4.3.2.1 “PARADISE LOST” (BURNT CHURCH, 2012)

If Forsaken’s “Tenebrarum” was short, Burnt Church’s “Paradise Lost” (2012) is even briefer. Spanning throughout a minute and thirty seconds, this straight-ahead performance by the Canadian death metal band reverses the overall Miltonian concept to imagine an existence without religion, which they turn into their own lost paradise:

Dream of a world free from religion
Free from spiritual oppression
Paradise Lost

By employing this reconceptualisation of Milton’s terms, the band engage in a movement of *transmotivation* (Genette 1997[1982]: 324-25), since they substitute the poem’s main motive –learning from the loss of paradise by humankind– by an even more holistic one: removing the overall religious and spiritual approach from the picture. This appropriation represents a departure from the previously analysed transformations, which rely on the content of their hypotext even to contradict its message. In this case the whole universe of thought of *Paradise Lost* is denied existence.

4.3.2.2 “PARADISE LOST” (NIGHT SCREAMER, 2019)

London-based classic heavy metal band Night Screamer do also take an anti-religious stance, albeit an elaborate one where both heaven and hell are unmasked as fictitious constructs that do not answer properly to actual earthly problems. Their “Paradise Lost” (2019) embraces a pragmatic view where all humans are fallen angels by default: “the sons of Belial”, the demon of shameless and sexual violence introduced in book I of *Paradise Lost* (1.490-505). Of the fallen angels, the lyrics remark their “unconquerable will [...] and the courage never to submit, never to yield”. The two first verses of the song contrast the spiritual knowledge fed on the first-person speaker when he was a child with his later

appraisal of religious values as an adult. As a boy he was bound to find Paradise, “[a] place with no conditions / And free from binds that tie”. However, his experienced self finds a world of inevitable violence caused by the false promise of religion:

I’ve seen what this world holds
The blood that boils inside
The lavish taste for hatred
A thirst that can’t be quenched
We build on subjugation
No good can come of this lie

Blaming all of us for this deceitful spiritual framework –“We built a lie”–, the speaker accuses humankind of pursuing an impossible due to its flawed nature: “You praise God and yet you follow Satan”. It is here where the band appropriates the most famous quote of *Paradise Lost* –“Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven!” (1.263)– to fulfil their pragmatic view:

It is better to reign the earth
Than take your chance in heaven
It is you who wrote this song of chaos and eternal night
You lead us into darkness and swear it’s light

The strength of the lyrics does not lie in simple negation of the religious dogma, but on contrasting its spirituality with the material, and on blaming humankind for constructing a creed based on unachievable opposites of light and darkness, good and evil. By bringing the diegesis closer to our present-day material world, Night Screamer perform a movement of *proximization* (Genette 1997[1982]: 304). In musical terms, the song contains typical elements of classic heavy metal, with riffing distorted guitars and clean vocals.

4.3.2.3 “PARADISE LOST AS HARMONY BREAKS” (ABANDONED BY LIGHT, 2016)

Abandoned by Light is a black metal one-man band from Sheffield, UK. For his 2016 CD *The Angel Experiment*, singer and multi-instrumentalist Karhmul decided to craft a story that resonates to a great extent with the band’s name:

This is a concept album about an angelic creature who escapes from the prison it was born and lived in to discover that the world has gone through a recent apocalypse. The angel then travels the world seeking for any other life forms, struggling with loneliness and depression and the loss of the world it has pictured throughout its existence. (Abandoned by Light 2016: n.p.)

Unlike in the two previously analysed transformations, the purpose here is not to oppose Christian-based religions or their practical application, but to claim their failure by crafting an extension of their mythology in sequel fashion. Not only has the angel been born and raised without the support of the divine presence, but it is now wandering the world aimlessly as its angelic counterparts do not establish contact. Maybe they forgot about it, maybe they do no longer exist, since the apocalypse may have also affected heaven. Both scenarios imply a loss of the angel's promised paradise, as the album's closing song reflects. "Paradise Lost as Harmony Breaks" finds the creature embracing death as an exit to its dismal situation: "No longer content to live this life of pain / I will find my dead man's sleep today". The angel denounces abandonment –"Never given a chance to live my life"– and radically contradicts Christian doctrine by looking forward to committing suicide: "I will take my fate back into my own hands". The Miltonic reference in the song's title is further developed, as the expected paradise is nothing but destruction and decay: "My hopes of paradise lost as harmony breaks". Furthermore, by welcoming death the creature denies its very angelic existence –"I am but flesh and bone, nothing eternal"– and sees through to the conclusion of its life plan, and also to that of the album: "Tonight the angel experiment will die / Paradise lost as harmony breaks". The performance, which amounts to almost seven and a half minutes, features most elements of the black metal genre, in this case with especially poor production values and an unintelligible voice that demands the use of the lyrics sheet to understand the sung text.

4.3.3 REORIENTATION

4.3.3.1 "PARADISE LOST" (MORGANA LEFAY, 1993)

For their 1993 album *The Secret Doctrine* Swedish power-metallers Morgana Lefay turned the story of Satan into a first-person call to action where the fallen angel tries to recruit the listener to his cause, thus performing transpositional movements of *transvocalization*, *motivation* and *proximization* (Genette 1997[1982]: 213, 324-25, 304). Transvocalization occurs because the lyrics are narrated by Satan himself, who becomes the autodiegetic narrator of the song –"I am the lord of the fallen / The ultimate rebel from paradise". The process of motivation refers to the demon's introduction of a new motive: instead of

manifesting his will to rule hell and to destabilise heaven by corrupting Adam and Eve, Satan expresses his desire to conquer the garden of Eden:

Here we shall rule
Even though it isn't hell
I will retake
My lost paradise

The lyrics are here consistent with the poem, and also appealing to the metal audience in bringing together the communal and the personal. Satan's persuasiveness convinces the fallen angels of erecting him as their leader and following his plan, thus his use of the plural personal pronoun in order to promise his followers a rise to power –“Here we shall rule”–; however, all is ultimately about himself and his personal quarrel with God, as the immediate use of the singular “I” evidences. This pattern is reinforced by his uttering the possessive pronoun in singular: it is not “our” paradise that “we” will retake, but “I will retake / My lost paradise”. It is worth noticing that the lyrics' approach introduces a contrast with the hypotext's title, since it is not humankind that loses paradise, but Satan himself. This alteration comes as a result of the movement of transvocalization that establishes the demon as the whole narrative's focalizer. The third transpositional practice is one of proximization. Satan offers the forbidden fruit to a second-person actor:

As a serpent I come to tempt
I offer you to taste the fruit
From the tree of knowledge
I make you a demigod

These verses remind of Satan's speech to Eve in book IX of *Paradise Lost*, where he explains what eating from the tree can do to a human –“[...] the fruit? It gives you life / To knowledge” (9.686-87)– and why God forbade her and her male counterpart to eat from it:

[...] He knows that in the day
Ye eat thereof your eyes, that seem so clear
Yet are but dim, shall perfectly be then
Opened and cleared and ye shall be as gods
Knowing both good and evil as they know. (9.705-709)

Therefore, if the hypertext is analysed only as text, “you” refers to Eve. But thanks to the performative dimension of music, Morgana Lefay's singer Charles Rytönen is directly addressing the listener, thus bringing the diegesis closer to the band's audience in a movement of proximization and turning the said listener into the object of Satan's

aspirations of corruption. The song mirrors “Milton’s epic [being] pre-eminently a poem about knowing and choosing – for the Miltonic Bard, for his characters, and for the reader” (Lewalski 2007: xvii). Morgana Lefay is here the Bard, while the listener becomes a character. The music is written in 4/4 and D minor.

4.3.3.2 “WHITE LOGIC” (4TH DIMENSION, 2014)

4th Dimension is an Italian power metal band that belongs to the Christian metal movement. In “Angel’s Call”, from their first album *The White Path to Rebirth* (2011), they already covered the clash between the angels in heaven and “Lucifer’s armies”. For their second CD *Dispelling the Veil of Illusions* (2014) they turned the heaven vs. hell battle into a first-person dialogue between God and Satan, thus crafting a double reorientation with two instances of *transvocalization* that brings the effect that their lyrics produce close to that of a theatre play. This approach mirrors the poem’s “emphasis [...] on carefully constructed points of view, almost like in a modern film where the same story is told from the different perspectives of individual characters remembering past events or experiencing present ones in real time”, and which brings to the fore “the relative perspective of individual consciousness acting within the unfolding story” (Reisner 2011: 28). The resulting song, “White Logic”, adorns both God’s and Satan’s interventions with quotes from *Paradise Lost*. Singer Andrea Bicego speaks about their second CD as a concept album based on the concept of illusion being

from one side a negative filter that prevents human beings to contemplate the divine and what is truest and purest in life, thus bounding us to materiality. In the lyrics, anyway, I tried to be a bit less “obvious” so the illusion is often portrayed as something that is almost necessary or good, because it allows us to have dreams and to fight for our ideals. Without the illusion, we probably would miss the energy to even try. So [...] the basic question could be “Is dispelling these illusions, removing this veil, really necessary? In addition, if we remove the veil, will we really obtain a paradisiac vision of life?” (2014B: n.p.)

The song’s main interest lies, then, in assessing Satan’s approach to his illusion of freedom as compared to God’s “white path”. It is God who starts the conversation by remarking Satan’s bright origins –“Bringer of my light, begot of that same light”– and blaming the demon for his unrestrained ambition:

Aware of your beauty,
Yet envious of Heaven’s Grace
You longed for more

All-consuming hunger raped your soul...

The verse ends with Bicego quoting God's speech in *Paradise Lost's* book III in spoken form: "He had of Me / All he could have. I made him just and right, / Sufficient to have stood though free to fall" (3.97-99). This reference to freedom of choice, a major theme in Milton's poem, is consistent with the singer's appraisal of the consequences of pursuing illusions. When dispelling the veil, unexpected results may arise, as Satan attests in his reply to his former master: "Endless love wrought malice, dealt woe to my life / Blinding logic white". The rest of the verse adopts the form of a confession, even showing repentance, but with no intention of returning to heaven's fold:

I should have stood and praised Him, basked in his light
But my dreams were set too high
No place for repentance, no pardon I'll find
Blessed be eternal night
Crowned in pride I fell, in torment I'd rise
All hope's lost, and thus Grace Divine...

Now, in reference to Adam and Eve, God remarks the consequences of the demon's acts –"You sowed hearts with your black seeds / Tainting the weakest flowers"–, to what Satan replies justifying his motives with a celebrated quote from *Paradise Lost*: "The mind is its own place and in itself / Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven" (1.254-55). The final verses are Satan's. He revels in his new powers by alluding to another famous verse from the poem –"Better to reign in Hell, forsaken by Light / Than to serve God's Heaven's might"– and confirms having no intentions of changing his course –"I'll yield not, I shall not bow / Won't I bend my will"– as he is "[s]worn to pervert goodness". While the use of a dialogue seems a neutral choice to give an equal voice to both counterparts, thus allowing Satan to express himself on a par with God, the band makes evident their Christian approach through their use of personal pronouns. First, God addresses Satan directly in the second person –"Aware of your beauty, / You lived like a silent wraith"–, while the demon refers to his antagonist in the third –"I should have stood and praised Him"; second, God mostly speaks about Satan, while the fallen angel mostly speaks about himself. These rhetorical resources paint the demon as selfish and dangerous, and project an image of God as loving and compassionate, thus resulting in a contrary axiological transformation of *primary revaluation* in the case of God and *aggravation* in the case of Satan (Genette 1997[1982]: 350, 355). The performance uses the common musical

resources of the power metal subgenre, with a pervasive presence of keyboard sounds. The meter is 4/4 and the key of choice G sharp minor.

4.3.3.3 “THE APOSTASY CANTICLE” (DRACONIAN, 2005)

If Morgana Lefay’s transformation focuses on power and 4th Dimension make evident their Christian orientation, Swedish doom-death metal band Draconian have expressed a stern anti-religious ideology throughout all their career. In 1999 they devoted their demo *The Closed Eyes of Paradise* to Lucifer and the fallen angels, a concept that they resumed in their 2005 CD *Arcane Rain Fell*. Singer and lyric writer Anders Jacobsson has acknowledged the impact Milton has had in his appreciation of the demons’ story:

The myth about Lucifer and the fallen angels has been something that has intoxicated me for many years... left me in a mystified haze. I feel so much inside when I read and write about it. I guess it’s all thanks to John Milton and Elend’s interpretation of the tale. Lucifer is the perfect role-model, a true hero. (2006: n.p.)

Jacobsson’s appraisal of Satan is consistent with Woodhouse’s remarks that “it is because Satan is pitted against Christ, not because he is pitted against Adam, that Milton is obliged to bestow upon him marks of the heroic” (2005[1972]: 497). The album’s liner notes are ripe with anti-Christian quotes taken from its songs. They claim angels’ wings to be “stained bloodred with guilt and shame... for the love of God, for the love of nothing”, they have Christ say that “[t]hey shall raise me a saviour – and crown thee a liar!”, and they use God’s various Hebrew names to explicitly withdraw their allegiance to the Christian deity: “Adonai, Elohim, El-Shaddai... Thou hast become the father of lies and I serve thee henceforth... no more!” The song “The Apostasy Canticle” explores the concept from the point of view of a collective first-person speaker. Sometimes it is Satan who narrates, but framed in a communal voice which, although seems to be that of the demons, represents all of humankind. The reason for this unexpected narrative turn is the band’s belief that, following the story of Genesis, all of us were stripped of our liberty as soon as God created the universe: “he waved his sceptre, and cosmos was formed / Too late we knew our freedom was lost”. Christian rituals are thus deemed as bondage: “He blinded us; polluted our minds and forced us to drink his blood”. This approach reflects Jacobsson’s appraisal of the album being about “depression and bitterness. Rising up against the oppressor and lose” (2005: n.p.). If *Paradise Lost* is a Christian epic poem, “The Apostasy

Canticle” is an anti-Christian epic doom metal song carefully elaborated throughout a running time of almost ten minutes in the key of G minor over a slow, hypnotic 3/4 meter. The second verse sees an increase in tempo as Satan’s voice takes over and Jacobsson’s grunted vocals increase volume. Milton’s continuation to his major work, *Paradise Regained*, sees Christ resist temptation, thus reversing humanity’s loss in its predecessor poem. Jacobsson has the demon claiming such achievement for himself, thus appropriating Milton’s discourse –“I’ve deceived his world, but regained paradise in the fire of my soul”– and undergoing a *transvaluation* process (Genette 1997[1982]: 367). The collective voice –“the voice of the dark souls”– resumes praising Lucifer and tracing his lineage back to a pre-Christian deity: “thou art our true father; the wine of Venus, the essence of our hope”. Since Roman goddess Venus represents values such as love, beauty or sex, the communal speaker is claiming not only that humankind lacks freedom under God’s rule, but also that the celestial being’s promise of love has not been fulfilled.

As the middle section progresses, the collective voice asks death to end God’s legacy and manifests experiencing an insufferable feeling of isolation. A brief switch to 4/4 meter precedes the song’s return to its original tempo and meter to have a lengthy quote from *Paradise Lost* spoken, not sung, by Satan:

Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,
 [...] this the seat
 That we must change for Heav’n, this mournful gloom
 For that celestial light? Be it so, since He
 Who now is Sov’reign can dispose and bid
 What shall be right. Farthest from Him is best
 Whom reason hath equaled, force hath made supreme
 Above His equals. Farewell happy fields
 Where joy forever dwells! Hail horrors, hail
 Infernal world! And thou, profoundest Hell,
 Receive thy new possessor, one who brings
 A mind not to be changed by place or time! (1.242-53)

This speech serves as an extended version of the “Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven!” quote (1.263). In the context of the song, it evidences humankind’s acknowledgement that we are condemned to live in our own hell of sadness, isolation and unfulfilled promises. The last verse embraces the freedom gained away from God’s world and suggests fighting against him: “In this abyss we shall be free / Here we shall celebrate the coming war”. If one of the driving forces of *Paradise Lost* is believing in free will (Lewalski 2007: xxiv) as expressed by Eve’s eating from the forbidden tree, Draconian

take the concept a step further by renouncing God and their Christian upbringing as an exercise of their own free will.

4.3.4 CITATION

4.3.4.1 “WISH” (FOREST OF SHADOWS, 2001)

As many other doom-death metal practitioners, Swedish band Forest of Shadows chose the death of a woman as the main theme for their song “Wish” (2001). As a first-person male speaker addresses her dead beloved in a mixture of grunted and clean vocals, his growing pain and her faded beauty compete for attention. Throughout over eight minutes, the band crafts an atmosphere of decay that takes place in autumn –“this dying season”. The male voice confesses to his dead counterpart to be “withering away”, since “[w]ithout thee I am lost”. Such is his pain that he even blames the sun for inspiring hope:

Oh sun I hate thy beams
Leave me here to sleep and dream
In the midst of falling leaves
In a garden of endless grief

Living in such intense pain and being unable to forget his loved one –“Enshrouded am I in thy mist of endless gloom”–, the speaker yearns for his own death: “How I welcome thee eternal sleep”. It is now, when he describes his surroundings as “a garden of endless grief”, that the lyrics characterise the mental effects of inhabiting such a place with a citation from *Paradise Lost*: “where peace / And rest can never dwell, hope never comes” (1.65-66). Of course, the verses refer to hell, thus matching the demons’ exile to the speaker’s grieving state of mind. The only solution to such pain is death, the wish the song title refers to, and which is embraced in its ending lines: “A life of shattered dreams I can no longer bear / I enter thee eternal sleep...”.

4.3.4.2 “LANDSCAPE” (ADVENT, 2003)

Italian black metal band Advent explore the intricacies of the human mind in “Landscape” (2003). A first-person speaker reflects on the power of mental creation: “My mind has been building worlds / Where as a king I reign or lay in slavery”. Such a landscape is tied

to imagination: “Lost in my dreams / I wander in my Realms”. The band use the citation mechanism twice. On the one hand, the song’s chorus –which is sung in clean vocals contrasting with the screamed voice that covers all the song verses– resorts to William Blake’s “Auguries of Innocence”:

To see a world in a grain of sand,
And a heaven in a wild flower,
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand,
And eternity in an hour. (1906B[1794]: 138)

On the other hand, one of the most celebrated quotes from *Paradise Lost* finds its place as a complement to the song’s approach:

The mind is its own place and in itself
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven. (1.254-55)

As these words helped Milton’s Satan to establish his supremacy on hell, they may also provide aid to the song’s speaker in coping with his mental unease, so that he can make the right choice between two contrasting possibilities: “I’ll take the sand of Gods / Or lay in slavery”.

4.3.4.3 “FIRST MOTHER (LILITH)” (SILENT PLANET, 2014)

American metalcore band Silent Planet is another example of a Christian metal group that has resorted to *Paradise Lost* for inspiration. Their songs are ripe with quotes from the Bible and several historical and literary sources. Singer and bandleader Garrett Russell, who holds a master’s degree in Psychology, remarks the educational function of his lyrics and, in doing so, embraces one of the postulates of the present thesis: “I don’t think I could ever write something even a quarter as good as Edgar Allan Poe. So I want to point people toward him” (2015: n.p.). Metalcore is a metal subgenre that combines elements of thrash metal and hardcore punk with distorted guitars and yelled vocals. Silent Planet’s approach to the style brings some progressive metal elements to the mix, and “First Mother (Lilith)” (2014) is no alien to them, also sharing a short playing time (around two minutes and a half) with the rest of the tracks in the album.

The song explores gender issues through the story of Lilith, Adam’s first wife expelled from Paradise because of refusing subjugation to her male counterpart, according to Hebrew mythology (Schwartz 2004: 216), and who would later be shaped into a men-

seducing demon by medieval mythmaking. According to Russell, Lilith “goes to show the foil that women are placed in in our imaginations, [...] women are either this ideal object of a submitting woman or they’re [...] evil in sexual deviance” (Silent Planet 2015: n.p.). In order to explore this figure, the singer decided to write an imaginary dialogue between her, Eve and Adam. At first, she addresses her “sister”, questioning the latter’s submission to her husband: “When every man will take your voice, every God will fate your end”. Later Adam tries to recapture Eve’s loyalty: “Now bring me a love that will live and die by my every word I speak. Won’t you lie in this bed that we have made?” Russell explores “the issue that I think humanity has been dealing with for so long of violence and gender and sexual orientation [...]. The way that we were created [...]. Should that dictate our function or value?” (Silent Planet 2015: n.p.). His question is echoed in his lyrics: “I must become something more than this. / Should I sleep or should I die alone?” Since meaning is open, the singer acknowledges that the song has “definitely raised more questions than answers, I think, for me” (Silent Planet 2015: n.p.). *Paradise Lost*’s citation occurs at the very beginning of the lyrics, as Lilith is trying to raise Eve’s consciousness on her subaltern condition: “Awake, awake your eyes – or forever fallen”. This is a variation on Satan’s speech to his fellow demons: “Awake! Arise, of be for ever fall’n!” (1.330). Although Russell claims that his Lilith is that of the Talmud, not of medieval mythology (Silent Planet 2015: n.p.), her speaking Satan’s words sets her on a par with the fallen angels, thus airing the singer’s Christian bias in favour of Biblical dogma.

4.4 FULL ALBUM TRANSFORMATIONS OF *PARADISE LOST*

4.4.1 *DAMNATION AND A DAY* (CRADLE OF FILTH, 2003)

Cradle of Filth has probably been the most popular black metal band in history. With a career spanning three decades and including the release of twelve albums, the English sextet’s combination of core black metal concepts with gothic elements and their tendency to shock audiences via elaborate visuals and provocative lyrics has gained them a privileged position at the forefront of the subgenre. Their official website lays claim to their fame:

Cradle Of Filth have assumed the role of dark metal diarists, exploring the amorphous horrors that lurk in humanity’s shadows and revelling in the opulence of mortal sin across centuries powered by bleak romance and a lust for the sensually grotesque. (Cradle of Filth 2017: n.p.)

As the band signed for major label Sony Music, they used their new funding possibilities to create an ambitious concept album that, unlike common in their subgenre, embraced high quality production values to the point of including an orchestra and choir. Revolving around the Fall of mankind, their 2003 CD *Damnation and a Day* –subtitled “From Genesis to Nemesis...”– has seventeen songs divided in four different sections, the second one bearing the title “Paradise Lost”. Although the album’s focalizer resembles Satan, vocalist and lyric writer Dani Filth denies this point: “The concept is like a modern evaluation of the fallen angel myth” (2002: n.p.). “He’s pretty much like Lucifer. He could be called Lucifer, but it’s never linked to his title” (2003: n.p.). The first two quarters of the album, which are narrated by an omniscient third-person voice, revolve around the angel’s falling from God’s grace and his rejection from Paradise. Part I is called “Fantasia Down”. The initial song, “A Bruise Upon the Silent Moon”, is instrumental, but includes a spoken recitation of a quote from the Bible’s book of Genesis: “And the Earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep...”. By linking the Christian creation of Earth with the idea of surrounding darkness, the band establish a context for the story of binary opposites –creation/destruction, light/darkness, heaven/hell– that will follow. “The Promise of Fever” also relies on Genesis, in this case to introduce some of the verses with the prepositional phrase “[i]n the beginning”. The song describes heaven and explains how the angel Feriluce –an almost exact anagram of “Lucifer”– estranges himself from God out of pride. In “Hurt and Virtue” he rallies allies to his cause and declares war on the remaining angels. “An Enemy Led the Tempest”, which quotes Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Raven”, finds him facing the wrath of God and concludes part I of the CD.

Part II –“Paradise Lost”– comprises four songs and opens with the instrumental “Damned in Any Language (A Plague on Words)”, which represents the battle of the angels in heaven and includes the following spoken quote from the Bible’s book of Revelations:

And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. (12.7-9)

“Better to Reign in Hell” owes its name to the famous quote by Milton’s Satan (1.263), and deals with the rebel angels falling down to hell as the soon-to-become demon foresees his future –“He closed his eyes / Sunken to dream there / Of [...] a great white

empty throne”–, embraces “the rising of the revenant dark” and justifies his new power as he celebrates his definitive estrangement from heaven: “Freewill made me better to reign in hell”. For the fallen angel, it is clear that whatever he will encounter is not worse than the disagreement he leaves behind:

Drowning in the past
That downfall seemed like yesterday
Though blurred moons passed
As enemies in high places laughed

The lyrics now reference book II of *Paradise Lost* as they introduce Satan’s daughter, concubine and ally: “Her name was Sin / A warming spurt of Mantras [...] / That whispered sweet revenge”, and relies on the demon’s “new wings” to plot “[t]he seduction of both woman and man / For a bastard masterplan”. Unlike *Paradise Lost*, whose narrative starts *in medias res*, Cradle of Filth’s story is sequential. “Damned in Any Language” echoes events told in book VI of Milton’s work, while “Better to Reign in Hell” addresses books I and II. The subsequent “Serpent Tongue” introduces Adam and Eve and focuses on the original sin. Divided in two parts, the first one incorporates the character of Lilith, Adam’s first wife according to Hebrew mythology and not present in *Paradise Lost*. As Lilith tries to seduce “bland Adam”, the lyrics use explicit references to sexual practices in line with the band’s usual attempts at shocking their audience. He is “foul to Sin”, but ends up dismissing her out of fear: “He slit / Her throat from ear to where She fled / With tail and blood between Her legsss...” The second part of the song has the demon convincing Eve to eat from the “[g]reat sacred tree”, thus addressing the events narrated in book IX of *Paradise Lost* where Satan, clad as a serpent, has Eve eating from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. A contrast is presented between Adam’s resistance to Lilith’s sexual offering –“no seed passed those fruitful lips”– and Eve’s fall to temptation:

And when seeds passed those fruitful lips
And Mankind basked in vast eclipse
A Devil shot of thin disguise
Surmised to better paradise

Part II of the album ends with “Carrion”, which has a “vagrant angel” banishing Adam and Eve from the Garden of Paradise, thus mirroring book XI of Milton’s poem. Filth traces a parallel between mankind’s exile and the demons’ expulsion: “Another fall from grace”. God’s speech to the couple in the book of Genesis is quoted:

cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. (3.17-19)

All that is left for Adam, Eve and their progeny is praying, as the song attests: “as creation reeled / Bewitched oration filled / The hearts of all / Who came to crawl / Upon these earthen fields”. The end of part II marks the beginning of the album’s second half, which, “whereas the first half is past tense with lots of biblical references, Jewish mythology, Genesis, the second half is from [the fallen angel’s] perspective” (Filtth 2003: n.p.). This change in point of view is reinforced by a process of *transvocalization* (Genette 1997[1982]: 213) where the third-person omniscient narrator cedes ground to a first-person lyrical voice attached to the demon. However, an interesting turn of events has the CD depart from its hypotext:

Mankind has kind of fallen under his rule. [...] It basically weaves its way in a cadence to the period in time in which we are now which is known as Armageddon, End of Days, Day of Judgment, or Day of Reckoning. (Filtth 2003: n.p.)

“Presents from the Poison-Hearted”, from part III –“Sewer Side Up”– finds the demon “rul[ing] this fool creation fallen ‘neath me now” in a state of unruliness as “the fire / Spread hell throughout my soul / And higher the wire / The more I sought control”. The angels now serve his purpose and, according to him, they are glad about their present situation:

Angels in raiments
As pure as coal
Taking their payments
In tortured mortal souls
A bold direction
The abyss edge
But on cold reflection
One they warmed to nonetheless

Finally, chaos leaves way to measured power in the fallen angel’s perception: “And higher the fire / The more I held control”. The following two songs –“Doberman Pharaoh” and “Babalon A.D.”– divert from the main topic of the album. However, the first of them referencing ancient Egypt relates to book XII of *Paradise Lost*, where the angel Michael tells Adam about the Hebrews’ departure to Egypt; and the second one mentioning Sodom and Babylon keeps it close to the overall Biblical theme. The fourth part of the album – “The Scented Garden”– departs completely both from *Paradise Lost* and from the

Christian scripture, as it finds the demon reflecting on his new position. However, the final “End of Daze” closes the circle of Filth’s narration by including one of the first verses in Genesis as the culmination to his story of reversal: “And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep” (1.2). God’s creation is now formless, darkness has taken over and the fallen angel has finally succeeded. However, the CD must not be perceived as a Satanic or anti-Christian effort to legitimise the forces of evil, as Filth states:

I also read quite a few books from Evangelists who basically just made up this story to fit their ideas about the fall of Lucifer and the way he’s making mankind sin and turning mankind away from God. [...] it was nice to read it from another person’s viewpoint. I think that’s the impression you get from reading the lyrics or living through the record, neither side is good or evil. There’s a character you can relate to. It’s not pro-evil. It’s not pro-good. (2003: n.p.)

In regard to the transformation taxonomy, the album as a whole is an instance of *reelaboration*, but the first half is a partial *retelling* with a diegetic transposition regarding the central character. In musical terms, Cradle of Filth adheres to the conventions of their own gothic-tinged take on black metal. What stands out from other productions by the band and by other bands of the subgenre is the substitution of synthesizers by the Budapest Film Orchestra and Budapest Film Choir, which bring an aura of pomp and grandiosity to the performance.

4.4.2 *PARADISE LOST* (SYMPHONY X, 2007)

Literary sources are no alien to American progressive metal band Symphony X. Before releasing the album under scrutiny, they had already dedicated suites to Homer’s *Odyssey* (2002) and Lewis Carroll’s *Through the Looking Glass* (1998), which includes quotes from Edgar Allan Poe’s “A Dream within a Dream” that have already been analysed in this thesis. *The Divine Wings of Tragedy* (1997) had already incorporated references to both the poem under scrutiny and to its continuation, *Paradise Regained*, but their 2007 release *Paradise Lost* had Milton’s great work as its conducting thread. The album’s connection to its hypotext has been studied in detail by Bolay, who considers the CD to be a “concept album [that] retells Milton’s *Paradise Lost* and complicates the narrative through its use of voice and creative extrapolation” (2019: 5). However, singer Russell Allen and guitarist Michael Romeo –both of whom wrote all the song lyrics– deny that point repeatedly (Allen

2007A: n.p.; 2007B: n.p., 2007C: n.p.; Romeo *et al.* 2007: n.p.; Romeo 2007A: n.p.; 2007B: n.p.). The vocalist is clear about his writing aspirations:

Well, it seems a little too pretentious for me to sit there and try to re-work Milton's book [...] This is a literary masterpiece on one thing and ...no one needs to re-write "Paradise Lost" or a re-telling of it! This wasn't what we were going for. What we tried to do was just get the essence of what he was talking about and the relevance of it between what it meant to him and what it means to us now!

Creation is the oldest story around and in essence it was like he re-wrote it from the bible and he put his own thing on it. [...] he wrote it in that grand sort of Epic style and it's very hard to even try to come close on re-creating that. We just wanted to draw themes from the book, like personal experiences that matches what happens with the characters, being Satan, God and all those things and the theme of it all fitted our theme: good/evil, light/dark, heavy/light and the struggle of us in between these two forces. So, it's more like a philosophical thing for us and the whole album is more or less sort of like an expression of that – we never intended for it to be exactly the same in literal terms. (2007B: n.p.)

Romeo expands on Milton's poem fulfilling a practical, more than a conceptual, function:

[W]e were looking for some ideas or inspiration just for like lyrical content and maybe even the music when Milton's *Paradise Lost* came up. [...] [T]hat really kind of became the glue [...] that brought everything together. [...] [T]here definitely were some changes and once the Milton thing came along as kind of a guideline inspiration, all the music [...] had a focus and [...] some direction. [...] [T]he ideals of *Paradise Lost* we thought were cool in just dealing with betrayal [...] and revenge and lust and power and greed and [...] all these things. So we just said let's just use those ideas and within the lyrics from time to time there is some pretty direct references to Milton and the whole heaven and hell thing but [...] we try to keep it kind of vague and just use it as a kind of underlying theme in the background. [...] It kind of all fits the lyrics and it fits the whole theme, but it's not a concept record. (2007A: n.p.)

I concur with the musicians that the CD is not a concept album. Bolay's appraisal of Symphony X's work as a complication of *Paradise Lost*'s narrative might be a consequence of the fact that Milton's poem only provides connecting references to the album's different, original overall narrative. A song-by-song analysis will clarify my point. The opening "Oculus Ex Inferni" is a short instrumental track that, in line with the band's style, relies on classical music elements, including a choir. Its use of dominant harmonic structures suggests unease and increases listening expectations, making it fulfil the function of prelude to the overall lyrical story. According to Allen, "[t]he first three songs are from the first person's perspective, if you will, of what goes around the mind of a person who is the tempter, or the one who is manipulating other people" (2007B: n.p.). Romeo comments that they are "lyrically about betrayal, revenge and corruption with some reference to Milton's poem" (Romeo *et al.* 2007: n.p.). The poetic voice of "Set the World

on Fire (The Lie of Lies)” corresponds to Allen’s description, and also to Milton’s Satan’s. He has “God-like perfection”, is “the Master of Illusion / Minister of Sin / Two-faced snake – wicked – shedding skin” and instils the listener to “[f]ly with me – forever higher / And with these wings, / We’ll Set the World on Fire”. However, the underlying story is closer to the singer’s life experiences than to Milton’s grand epic:

“Set The World On Fire” is actually a betrayal thing, and for me I had a couple of guys that I knew for a long time – lots of years working together and they fu*ked me over, so it was really easy for me to write those words with Michael [...] and come up with this stuff and then pull from Milton’s work all those things that match which happened to me. (2007B: n.p.)

The tempter calls allies to his cause in “Domination”, which also bears resemblance to Satan’s speech to the rest of the fallen angels in books I and II of *Paradise Lost*. In the song, the discourse is one of hatred and resentment. He asks the “legions of lost” to “[t]urn the waters red with rage / burn all the earth shore to shore”, in order to “hail and sanctify / ...my Domination”. “Serpent’s Kiss” –described by Allen as “the plotting of anyone who wants to take revenge on somebody” (2007B: n.p.)– uses snake-disguised Satan as a metaphor for deception. The speaker understands that revenge fuels hate and has him cross into destructive territory: “I’m corruption / I’m destruction, through and through”. He also acknowledges that, in order for his scheme to succeed, he must put at work his powers of persuasion: “Trust in me... for I will set you free / with a Serpent’s Kiss”. However, as well as Cradle of Filth, Symphony X are not taking sides. It was the band’s intention to “leav[e] you with a question in your mind ‘Is this album good or evil?’” (2007B: n.p.). If the first three songs delve into the bitter side of revenge, the title track shows “the light side of things [...] with sacrifice and love” (2007B: n.p.). Its first-person speaker shows pain and remorse from his past actions and their dire consequences: “Silent crystalline tears I cry / For all must say their last goodbye – / to Paradise”. Driven by repentance, he reflects on the “foolish pride” that led him to “this faithful night”. Unlike in the previous songs, the lyrics display a positive diction of light and goodness, where “gleaming rays awake the dawn” and “[l]ove conquers all”. Resembling a classic heavy metal ballad, the music is consistent with the lyrical content, as piano and acoustic guitar arpeggios and a light ride cymbal take over from the distorted guitar strumming and heavy drumming of the preceding tracks. Although Bolay identifies the speaker as Satan (2019: 12), the positive and reflexive vibe of the lyrics has no parallel in its hypotext. The band’s

guitarist offers an even simpler explanation on the tune: “We wanted a few softer songs to offset the heavy stuff” (Romeo *et al.* 2007: n.p.).

Halfway through the album, “Eve of Seduction” speaks “about temptation and lust” (Romeo *et al.* 2007: n.p.). Its poetic voice falls prey to someone’s enchantment, “slowly losing control”, realises that “[p]leasure’s pain”, and threatens to cause damage to his object of desire were his demands not met:

Why can’t you see – I’m Burning for You
There’s no disguising my desires – what can I do?
All you will know – give me your heart
give me your soul
I’ll tear it apart, so long as you’ll never let me go.

The song does not present any likeness to *Paradise Lost*, and only a passing allusion to the Christian scriptures, as the speaker identifies lust being satisfied with “becoming kin with the / Sons of Cain”. In reference to Biblical Eve, Bolay finds “a bad pun” in the title (2019: 12). “The Walls of Babylon” is the album’s “war song” (Romeo *et al.* 2007: n.p.), where “Hell Riders [...] Consumed by this lust” come “into battle / staring down the Eyes of Death”. Since the Judeo-Christian tradition appraises the city of Babylon as a symbol of evil, by declaring war on it the song lies on the light side of the good/evil opposition. It also relates to the Bible’s book of Revelation, which describes the fall of Babylon (Bolay 2019: 13). “Seven” does also stray away from Milton’s poem, focusing instead on feelings of deceit and betrayal. The binary oppositions permeating the album are made explicit here: “Fire and Ice”, “Shadows and Sin”, “Virtue or vice”. “The Sacrifice” is a love ballad whose speaker faces the consequences of “[f]orbidden desire”, thus establishing a potential parallel with Adam and Eve’s ordeal. Finally, “Revelation (Divus Pennae Ex Tragoedia)” closes the album but does not provide closure to its poetic voice, who has not yet figured out how to overcome his pain:

Lost in the night wandering alone
Try as I might to escape the fight
It never lets me go – I’ve got to find a way
A way to Rise above it All

His not being satisfied by vengeance – “Wounds of hate have pierced so deep / they never die – my revenge is bittersweet” – echoes Satan’s soliloquy on hate when reaching Eden in book IV of *Paradise Lost*, as Bolay remarks (2019: 13): “(For never can true reconciliation grow / Where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep)” (4.98-99).

Throughout the whole album, the first-person speaker voices a narrative of heartfelt betrayal and unfulfilling revenge that may resemble the path of Milton's Satan but, as we know, is grounded in personal experiences by Symphony X's members. Again, singer Russell Allen supports this claim: "We did use a piece of classical literature to help us express but none of the songs are related to any particular storyline or something about the book" (2007A: n.p.). I disagree, consequentially, with Bolay's claim that the band complicate Milton's narrative, or that they "encourag[e] new readings of the relationships between [the characters]" (2019: 9). A more plausible explanation –and one supported by the writers themselves– is that they incorporated elements of *Paradise Lost* to illustrate stories of their own, so that the poem envelops their own narrative due to its powerful allegorical imagery and its strong connection to values that permeate well-known western spirituality. The album as a whole is not, then, a retelling. It constitutes an extended instance of the *reelaboration* category as Allen and Romeo appropriate Milton's material to enhance their own. Regarding the lyrics, the singer manifests a conscious will to simplify diction as they "totally reverse the epic poetic style and sing it more in relation to [...] something that's more familiar to people nowadays [...] You can't go out using lyrics like 'thou art...'" (Allen 2007B: n.p.). Despite the vocalist's certainty, the resulting movement of *destylization* (Genette 1997[1982]: 227) does not hold exclusivity in metal transformations of *Paradise Lost*, as some of the instances analysed here attest (Warlord's "War in Heaven", In Tha Umbra's "Fumes She Holdeth" and "Crescent"). The music is intricate, with continuous contrasts in meter, tempo and timbre. Although these elements favour the musical representation of an epic theme, they are common for the band and the progressive metal subgenre, therefore not contributing a specific novelty from the band's previous output.

4.5 DISCUSSION

John Milton's *Paradise Lost* holds a privileged place as a source of inspiration for metal musicians. Besides the seventeen songs and two whole albums scrutinised, there are several other transformations of the epic poem to metal music, amounting to at least seventy-one different bands, as illustrated in the following tables. Three particular elements affecting the majority of transformations are worth commenting. First, a pervasive use of *transvocalization* exemplified in the existence of a relevant number of first-person narratives whose lyrical voice corresponds either to Satan or to the whole

group of fallen angels, as seen in Table 24. Isolation and escape from an establishment perceived as unjust –common themes in metal music– are imbued in Milton’s Satan, a figure many metal musicians and fans may identify with due not only to his rebellious nature, but also to the internal conflict within him:

the intensification in Milton’s language may increase our sympathy for a being in such stifled pain. The heroic public persona becomes a troubled private self. The sudden glimpse of that personal, intimate interior increases the closeness of the reader to Satan. (Forsyth 2014: 22)

By starting his epic narrative in hell and first presenting the Biblical story from Satan’s point of view, Milton provides a voice to those who feel oppressed, thus triggering the immediate sympathy of the metal community: “This is a story about devils. It’s not a story about God. The fallen angels and their leader are our protagonists, and the unfallen angels, and God the Father and the Son, and Adam and Eve, are all supporting players” (Pullman 2005: 5). Milton’s Satan is also an emblem of leadership, intelligence and cunning ultimately leading to power and control:

Satan is Milton’s picture of what thinking looks like, an image of the mind, of subjectivity, of self-consciousness, a representation of the awkward pressures we put on ourselves to interpret our own situation within the mind’s shifting circle of freedom and compulsion. [...] Satan is an image of the mind in its dividedness from both itself and others, in its illusions of inwardness and power. (Gross 2005[1988]: 422)

Power and powerlessness also being two main topics in metal music, *Paradise Lost* seems a tailor-made text for the aspirations of metal music lyricists.

Songs
“Paradise Lost” (Advent, 2003)
“Linger Venom” (In Tha Umbra, 2005)
“Control the Divine” (Blind Guardian, 2010)
“Pandæmonium” (Atrocity, 2013)
“Paradise Lost” (Theory of Chaos, 2015)
“Rebel’s Lament” (Carnal Agony, 2015)
“Rebellion” (Carnal Agony, 2015)
“Paradise Lost” (Necronomicon, 2019)

Table 24. Further examples of first-person *reorientation* transformations of *Paradise Lost*.

The second element worthy of attention, and one that contrasts abruptly with most of the transformations studied in the rest of this thesis, is the absence of particular musical elements that contribute to the enhancement of the lyrics beyond those regularly used by the bands and common in their specific subgenre. *Paradise Lost*-based transformations are

not longer than usual, nor do they present alterations to song structures or use of different timbres, with the only exception of the symphonic orchestra and choir in Cradle of Filth’s *Damnation and a Day*. This may be because the poem’s lyric content matches to a great extent some usual themes in the subgenres scrutinised here (more on this below), thus having the hypotext find a natural home in its new musical context. Another possible cause may be found in the third noticeable element: almost no band musicalizes original verses from Milton’s poem. In many cases they are paraphrased. When cited they are usually spoken, but rarely set to music. A number of reasons can explain this tendency: on the one hand, as Symphony X’s singer Russell Allen points out, some bands may think that Milton’s language is too archaic to be reproduced verbatim; on the other, when the original verses are reproduced unchanged, they are usually recited instead of sung, possibly to increase solemnity when including a piece of such a revered cultural product in a metal song. A third reason can lie in the difficulty of setting the poet’s flexible blank verse to the regularity of musical metre. T. S. Eliot commented on Milton’s “ability to work in larger musical units than any other poet” (1961[1943]: 179), and that ability may become problematic when trying to adapt the words to actual time-dependent music. The lack of specific musical elements to portray Milton’s epic and the absence of musicalized verses from the poem are the reason why this chapter does not include scansion analyses or musical examples.

Transformation category	Songs
Partial retelling	“Paradise Lost” (Cirith Ungol, 1991)
	“Paradise Lost” (Division, 1996)
	“Paradise Lost” (James D. Gilmore, 2003)
	“Thunderchaos Pentagrama” (In Tha Umbra, 2005)
	“Paradise Lost” (Symphonia, 2015)
Reelaboration	“Serpents in Paradise” (Avantasia, 2001)
Citation	“Ad Infinitum” (Epoch of Unlight, 1998)
	“Architecture of a Genocidal Nature” (Dimmu Borgir, 2001)

Table 25. Examples of further transformations of *Paradise Lost*.

The number of instances of the *citation* category is particularly high, especially in regard to probably the most celebrated quote from Milton’s epic –“Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven!” (1.363)–, as seen in Table 26. Also among citations are a large number of songs that share their title with the poem, albeit they craft different stories (see Table 27). A further curiosity is the existence of instrumental metal songs bearing the title

of Milton’s epic, as attested by Table 28, and one that confirms the power of the poem’s imagery –in this case to evoke musical scenarios– beyond its words alone.

Songs
“Judas” (Yngwie J. Malmsteen, 1990)
“Kingdom” (Kickback, 1997)
“Modern Nemesis Syndicate” (Uhrilehto, 2004)
“A World in Darkness” (Grave, 2008)
“Salvation Through Sin” (Sanhedrin, 2010)
“Mourning Star” (Means End, 2013)
“Misery Hymn” (The Red Shore, 2014)
“The Frozen Throne” (Carnal Agony, 2015)

Table 26. Examples of further citations of and allusions to the quote “Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven!” (1.263).

Songs
“Paradise Lost” (Dante, 1991)
“Paradise Lost” (Wicked Angel, 1995)
“Paradise Lost” (Kelly Simonz’s Blind Faith, 1999)
“Paradise Lost” (Symphony of Sorrow, 1999)
“Paradise Lost” (Sinister Creed, 2000)
“Paradise Lost” (Methuselah, 2004)
“Paradise Lost” (Black Aurora, 2007)
“Paradise Lost” (Sudden Access, 2008)
“Paradise Lost” (Sacred Oath, 2009)
“Paradise Lost” (Broken Existence, 2010)
“Paradise Lost” (Curse Your Name, 2011)
“Paradise Lost” (Supremacy, 2011)
“Paradise Lost” (Aragons, 2012)
“Paradise Lost (Weltschmerz)” (Lilla Veneda, 2012)
“Paradise Lost” (Altar of Dagon, 2013)
“Paradise Lost (Re-Registered)” (Last Rites, 2013)
“Paradise Lost” (Crafting the Conspiracy, 2015)
“Paradise Lost” (Mourned by Flies, 2015)
“Paradise Lost” (Diablo, 2016)
“Paradise Lost” (Salem’s Childe, 2016)
“Paradise Lost” (Timeless Necrotears, 2016)
“Paradise Lost” (Nigrae Lunam, 2017)
“Paradise Lost” (Black Valar, 2018)
“Paradise Lost” (Garage Days, 2018)
“Paradise Lost” (Valkyrja, 2018)
“Paradise Lost?” (Geoda, 2019)
“Paradise Lost” (Scorn Them, 2019)
“Paradise Lost” (Re-Machined, 2020)

Table 27. Further examples of songs bearing the title “Paradise Lost”.

Songs
“Paradise Lost” (David Valdes, 2002)
“Paradise Lost: Chapter 1” (Odin’s Court, 2003)
“Paradise Lost” (刹那, 2007)

Songs
“Paradise Lost” (In Hell, 2009)
“Paradise Lost” (Wolfuneral, 2010)
“Paradise Lost” (The Pagan Dead, 2013)
“Paradise Lost” (Gaia’s Revenge, 2016)
“Paradise Lost” (Nightcap, 2017)

Table 28. Examples of instrumental songs bearing the title “Paradise Lost”.

The listed corpus confirms the international appeal of poetry in English, since the seventy-one bands come from twenty-two different countries, only four of which are English-speaking. However, twenty bands amounting to over a quarter of the total are American. Why *Paradise Lost* has left such a mark in American popular culture – especially as opposed to Milton’s United Kingdom, which is represented by only six bands– may be explained by Simon’s remark that “Milton’s Lucifer can be read as a kind of modern, American antihero, invented before such a concept really existed”, since the demon’s “self-reliance, the rugged individualism, and even manifest destiny—are regarded as quintessentially American in the cultural imagination” (2017: n.p.). Table 29 shows all the bands arranged by country.

Country	Bands
<i>USA</i>	Altar of Dagon, Black Valar, Broken Existence, Crafting the Conspiracy, Curse Your Name, Cirith Ungol, Division, Epoch of Unlight, Gaia’s Revenge, James D. Gilmore, Mourned by Flies, Odin’s Court, The Pagan Dead, Sacred Oath, Salem’s Childe, Silent Planet, Sinister Creed, Symphony X, Warlord, Wicked Angel
Sweden	Carnal Agony, Draconian, Forest of Shadows, Grave, Means End, Morgana Lefay, Symphony of Sorrow, Valkyrja, Yngwie J. Malmsteen
Italy	4th Dimension, Advent, Last Rites, Nightcap, Supremacy, Symphonia, Theory of Chaos, Wolfuneral
<i>United Kingdom</i>	Abandoned by Light, Cradle of Filth, Methuselah, Night Screamer, Sanhedrin, Scorn Them
Germany	Atrocity, Avantasia, Blind Guardian, Re-Machined
<i>Canada</i>	Black Aurora, Burnt Church, Necronomicon
Japan	Dante, Kelly Simonz’s Blind Faith, 刹那
<i>Australia</i>	Chaos Theory, The Red Shore
Poland	CETI, Lilla Veneda
Spain	David Valdes, Timeless Necrotears
Argentina	Geoda
Austria	Garage Days
Brazil	Nigrae Lunam
Finland	Uhrilehto
France	Kickback
Indonesia	Aragons
<i>Malta</i>	Forsaken
Mexico	In Hell
Netherlands	Sudden Access
Norway	Dimmu Borgir
Portugal	In Tha Umbra

Country	Bands
South Korea	Diablo

Table 29. Metal bands that perform musical transformations of *Paradise Lost* by country. Native English-speaking countries are italicised.

As for musical subgenres, *Paradise Lost*'s concern with the Christian religion, the battle between good and evil and the enhancement of the satanic figure presages a vast presence of extreme metal bands. Table 30 provides confirmation: more than half of the bands featured come from some extreme metal subgenre (thirty-seven out of seventy-one), black metal –usually associated with Satanism– being the most distinguished one. Other prominently featured styles are power metal, classic heavy metal and progressive metal, all of them prone to epic themes and theatricality. As it happened for Edgar Allan Poe-inspired transformations, subgenre simplifications have been made for certain bands whose musical proposal lies at the intersection between two or more subgenres. Of all bands listed, only Swedish guitarist Yngwie J. Malmsteen appears in one of the four band popularity lists mentioned in section 3.5, thus confirming poetry's lack of appeal for metal music's more commercial subgenres.

Subgenre	Bands
<i>Black metal</i>	Abandoned by Light, Advent, Black Valar, Cradle of Filth, Dimmu Borgir, Epoch of Unlight, In Hell, In Tha Umbra, Lilla Veneda, Nightcap, The Pagan Dead, Supremacy, Timeless Necrotears, Uhrilehto, Valkyrja, Wolfuneral
<i>Death metal</i>	Atrocity, Broken Existence, Burnt Church, Crafting the Conspiracy, Gaia's Revenge, Geoda, Grave, Mourned by Flies, Necronomicon, The Red Shore, Sanhedrin, Scorn Them, Sinister Creed
Heavy metal	Black Aurora, Cirith Ungol, Dante, David Valdes, Garage Days, Kelly Simonz's Blind Faith, Night Screamer, Re-Machined, Salem's Childe, Wicked Angel, Yngwie J. Malmsteen
Power metal	4th Dimension, Altar of Dagon, Avantasia, Blind Guardian, Carnal Agony, CETI, Chaos Theory, Division, Morgana Lefay, Warlord
<i>Doom metal</i>	Draconian, Forest of Shadows, Forsaken, Methuselah, Nigrae Lunam
Progressive metal	Aragons, James D. Gilmore, Means End, Odin's Court, Symphony X
Groove metal	Diablo, Kickback, Symphony of Sorrow, Theory of Chaos
<i>Thrash metal</i>	Last Rites, Sacred Oath, Sudden Access
Metalcore	Curse Your Name, Silent Planet
Gothic metal	刹那
Symphonic metal	Symphonia

Table 30. Metal bands that perform musical transformations of *Paradise Lost* by subgenre. Extreme metal subgenres are italicised.

Judging by this chapter's analysis, *Paradise Lost* appears before us as a timely work capable of impregnating posterior cultural products of its perceived long-lasting

spiritual and moral values. However, a final word is necessary here about the dangers of universalisation. Of the seventy-one bands mentioned, the vast majority come from countries whose citizens have been mostly educated in the Judeo-Christian tradition (exceptions are Aragon from Indonesia, Diablo from South Korea, and Dante, Kelly Simonz's Blind Faith, and 刹那, all three from Japan). Whether they rely on *Paradise Lost* to confirm their spiritual beliefs –as is the case for Christian metal bands– or to revert these values that they perceive as oppressive, all these groups begin their appraisal of Milton's poem using a specific religious framework as their starting point. The inherent value of both the hypertexts, the hypotext and the system of beliefs they stem from is, consequentially, relative, if at all existing.

5. “WE ARE THE DEAD”: METAL MUSIC AND THE WAR POETS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

As mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, war is a common theme in metal music lyrics (Arnett 1996: 47; Purcell 2003: Epilogue; Kahn-Harris 2007: 3). It encompasses several topics that are central to the genre, like violence, rebellion, power and powerlessness, and which are addressed through the lens of armed conflicts. Although most bands have elaborated lyrics that criticise the cruelty and nonsense of the war machine –“War Pigs” (Black Sabbath 1970), “Disposable Heroes” (Metallica 1985), “B.Y.O.B.” (System of a Down 2005)–, others have crafted romanticised descriptions that revel on the excitement of battle engagement: “The Pursuit of Vikings” (Amon Amarth 2004), “Aces High” (Iron Maiden 1984), “Tailgunner” (Iron Maiden 1990). Addressing the idea of war can help metal followers channel their feelings of rage, anger, anguish and rebellion by consciously focusing on such a destructive event. It can help them deal with powerlessness by minimising their own problems in comparison to the massive extent of an armed conflict, and it can also make them feel shielded by the metal community by sharing the experience with other fans.

From a historical point of view, the First World War signified a turning point from the romanticised view of man-to-man combat prevalent until the late nineteenth century to a mechanised approach which led to the systematic annihilation of nine million soldiers (Storey 2010: 1). In Britain, during the initial months of the war, feelings of patriotism led men to volunteer for the army (Zamorano and García Lorenzo 2011: 125), but the sentiment would change as time went on and the war continued taking a massive number of casualties. The Great War was “one of the first wars in which so many soldiers—both officers and enlisted men alike—were fairly well educated and thus able to produce so many literate, potentially publishable reactions to their service” (Evans 2014: 172). This led to a continued production of poetry about the war not written by detached observers, but by actual soldiers: first-person accounts that reflect the change in sentiment and attitude towards the armed conflict from early patriotic verses tied to pastoral conventions to late poems which not only expressed opposition to the continued national involvement in the war, but also relied on realistic description and unusual choices of subject matter, thus embracing modernist literary values.

The symbolic significance of the Great War has not gone unnoticed for metal bands. Some have addressed either the war –Motorhead’s “1916” (1991), Warbringer’s “Shellfire” (2017), Sabaton’s concept album *The Great War* (2019)– or certain specific events –Iron Maiden’s “Paschendale” (2003), Decaying’s “Battle of the Somme” (2012)–, but others have based songs of their own on the poetry that stemmed from the war. As the centenary of the conflict approached, the number of metal works inspired by World War I has increased dramatically since the turn of the century, almost reaching 300 by 2015 (Grant 2017: 70-71). The members of the generation of poet-soldiers known as the War Poets share common traits with metal musicians. Living around a century apart, both generations have reported their stances on war and commented on their contemporary politics, sharing a stern will to channel their ideas through artistic means. However, it is unlikely for metal musicians to have participated in war (Puri 2010: 61). Therein lies the intrinsic value of the poets’ work for today’s metal musicians: its being grounded on direct historical observation by actual men who engaged in battle and witnessed the horrors of war without further mediation. The resulting metal adaptations are not inspired by the abstract idea of war, but by first-person accounts with historical significance, “not so much acts of the imagination as testimonies” (Hynes qtd. in Walter 2006: n.p.). This allows both metal musicians and listeners to experience the chaos of war without actually suffering it: “Inside the performative frame [...] we need not worry about the consequences” (Berger 1999B: 272). The war becomes, thus, musically represented by today’s metal musicians with the poets acting as mediators. Mentioning the War Poets, but with no specific focus on them, the impact of the Great War in metal music has been previously addressed by Grant (2017: 155-75).

Since the poets’ stance toward the war evolved with time, I have organized First World War poems in three chronological phases corresponding to three major appraisals of the conflict, regardless of the taxonomical classification of each musical transformation. The structure of this chapter will reflect this compartmentalization. Poems from the initial period (1914-1915) spoke of bravery and freedom, and were imbued with a patriotic feeling that reflected the poets’ institutional reliance and deemed the soldiers’ sacrifice as inevitable. Among them are the works of Laurence Binyon, John McCrae and Rupert Brooke, whose “The Soldier” (1918[1914]: 9) exemplifies the lofty national sentiment common during the first months of the war, and shows stylistic adherence to the pastoral conventions in vogue at the time. Coinciding with the middle of the war, the second phase

(1916-1917) transmits an increasing concern with violence, technological terror and fear of death, as the pastoral leaves way to realistic descriptions of life in the trenches and battle engagement –an unusual choice of subject matter back then. An example of this transitional period is Gilbert Frankau’s poetry collection *The Guns* (1916). Finally, certain poems from the third phase (1917-1918) focus on the pity of the soldiers, lament their deaths and doubt the purpose of the military campaign to the point of manifesting distrust in the political and religious establishment. Paradigmatic of this period, which changed war poetry forever, are Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon, whose aggressive irony can be perceived in ““They”” (1919: 47).

5.2 THE WAR POETS AND METAL MUSIC: TRANSFORMATIONS

5.2.1 PHASE I (1914-1915)

5.2.1.1 “FOR THE FALLEN” (LAURENCE BINYON, 1914) AND “...FOR VICTORY” (BOLT THROWER, 1994)

When the war erupted in July 1914, few expected the conflict to span over four years and cost the lives of over nine million soldiers. The common thought in Britain that “it will all be over by Christmas” led some to even welcome the war (Zamorano and García Lorenzo 2011: 124-25), and these enthusiastic feelings were reflected in contemporaneous poetry, which focused on patriotism and sacrifice. Although he never engaged in battle, Laurence Binyon’s “For the Fallen” (1922[1914]: 77-8) is one of the most influential poems of The Great War. Written only a few weeks after the conflict started (Steel 2014: n.p.), it praises the soldiers’ sacrifice as they die “in the cause of the free”. Binyon adopts a patriotic stance where England is a proud mother that mourns her dead children, glorifies the latter’s “august and royal” death, which he surrounds in musical imagery, and immortalises the combatants by remembering them “as the stars that shall be bright when we are dust”. The fourth stanza of the poem, known as the “Ode of Remembrance” or, simply, “The Ode”, is still nowadays recited at Remembrance Day services (Moffett 2007: 235).

“The Ode” is quoted in full in “...For Victory” (1994), from the album of the same name by the English death metal band Bolt Thrower. However, their adaptation belongs neither to the *reproduction* nor to the *citation* categories. It is an instance of *reorientation* since, while the poem addresses the plight of the soldiers from the detached position of an external observer, the song expresses the feelings of a war participant in the first person,

thus engaging in movements of *transvocalization* and *proximization* (Genette 1997[1982]: 213, 304). As “they” becomes “we”, the song turns the poem’s metaphoric abstractions – “There is music in the midst of desolation”– into a realistic narration of experiences: “Begin to feel the pain / Alone now stagger on”. The song lyrics are darker than their source, as evident in the way both texts address the imagery of light and vision. Binyon’s verses speak about “a glory that shines upon our tears”, characterise the soldiers as “true of eye, steady and aglow” and compares them to “the stars that are starry in the time of our darkness”. By contrast, Bolt Thrower’s lyrics start using light as a symbol of hope –“As daylight returns / The fires of hope still burn”– to suddenly reverse its positive symbolism: “Crawl through darkened light / Sickened by the mournful sight / Tears fall from eyes”. Albeit being an English band, they do not mention their country, since their take on war is not about patriotism, but about its inevitability. If Binyon’s soldiers were “[f]allen in the cause of the free”, for those in the song it was “[n]ow time to die / ...For Victory”. In fact, the song contradicts the poem’s vision of pride and glory with a pessimistic claim: “All is lost, none have won”, thus introducing an instance of *motivation* (Genette 1997[1982]: 324-25). The sung performance of these words at the end of the first verse is followed by an aggressive riff where a low repetitive guitar melody is backed by a double bass drum and an insistent eighth note hi-hat pattern playing double time over a 165 bpm tempo. The fast, rattling combination of these three elements resembles machine gunfire. At the end of the song, “The Ode” is recited in full. While singer Karl Willetts –whose grandfather fought in the Great War (Grant 2017: 163-64)– repeats its last verse in remembrance of the soldiers –“We will remember them”–, the music fades out, mirroring the lives of the combatants.

5.2.1.2 “IN FLANDERS FIELDS” (JOHN MCCRAE, 1915) AND “IN FLANDERS FIELDS” (SABATON, 2019)

As well as “The Ode”, “In Flanders Fields” is another popular war poem with a strong symbolic relevance, since its main symbol, the red poppy, is still today the emblem of Remembrance Day. The author, John McCrae, was a Canadian doctor, university professor, and poet who had already provided his medical services in the Boer war (1899-1902). An advocate of the British Empire, he faced the Great War with enthusiasm, and wrote the poem after several days of continued surgery in his Western Front destination

near Ypres (Zamorano and García Lorenzo 2011: 125; Patterson *et al.* 1994: 1307; Cook 2015: 21). A poem in three stanzas of iambic tetrameter, its first-person speaker is collective, as it comprises the voices of dead soldiers who, from their own graves, beg their comrades to continue the fight in order to honour their deaths. The first stanza relies on nature symbolism, describing a landscape where poppies blow over the soldiers' tombs and birds sing "bravely" despite the atrocities being committed in the underlying battlefield:

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below. (McCrae 1919[1915]: 3)

Once the setting is described, the speakers introduce themselves harshly at the beginning of the second stanza: "We are the Dead". Finally, in the third stanza they invite (or command) the reader to "[t]ake up our quarrel with the foe" and hold high the torch they are passing; if their effort has been in vain, they "shall not sleep". Although the poem is a call to arms and, as such, its belligerent message would be challenged by subsequent anti-war poems, its lasting popular success is due to its also being a hymn to the dead (Cook 2015: 21). Ever since its decade of composition, "In Flanders Fields" has been widely adapted to musical form (Ward 2014: 96). Two metal bands have drawn inspiration from the poem as a source for their lyrics. Since their very first album, the Swedish power metal band Sabaton has used war history as their main topic, having featured the First World War in "Angels Calling" (2006), "The Price of a Mile" (2008), "Last Dying Breath", "Diary of an Unknown Soldier" and "The Lost Battalion" (2016). In 2019 they released *The Great War*, a concept album fully dedicated to the dispute under scrutiny. In contrast with the CD's previous ten songs, which prominently feature the technical elements usually associated with the power metal genre –fast tempos, high register vocals, melodic riffs, use of double bass drums (Tsatsishvili 2011: 20)–, the closing "In Flanders Fields" is a hymn-like composition where a choir sings the poem verses unchanged with no further accompaniment. This way the band extend a tradition of choral compositions based on McCrae's poem (Chatman 1998; Jacobson and Emerson 1998; Aitken 1999; Hamilton 2013), thus crafting a double adaptation: textual and musical. An instance of the *reproduction* category, the choice of a poem that glorifies the war dead and invites to "[t]ake up our quarrel with the foe" is consistent with the band's lyrical approach, focused on "dazzling acts of bravery, [...] magnificent victories and touching personal struggles"

(Sabaton 2019: n.p.). In fact, unlike most of the metal music canon, the song is written in a major key (D major): instead of lamenting the death of the soldiers, their personal sacrifice is celebrated, as evidenced by the choir's melodic line sung by a female section in the first stanza being later reinforced in triumphal fashion by deep male choral harmony when the words "[w]e are the dead" are uttered at the start of the second stanza.

5.2.1.3 "IN FLANDERS FIELDS" (JOHN MCCRAE, 1915) AND "IN FLANDERS FIELDS" AND "WE ARE THE DEAD" (CRIMSON FALLS, 2006)

Since some of the most gruesome events in World War I occurred in Belgium, and McCrae's poem specifically refers to the territory of Flanders, it is no surprise that a Belgian metal band incorporated it to their conceptual arsenal. In their 2006 album *The True Face of Human Nature*, death metallers Crimson Falls paid a double homage to the poem by performing its *reproduction* in "In Flanders Fields", which serves as an introduction to their *reorientation* of the poem in the consecutive "We Are the Dead". Away from Sabaton's sumptuous musical approach, Crimson Falls' "In Flanders Fields" accompanies the spoken text with a sad clean arpeggiated guitar and floor tom drumming, suggesting sorrow and unease. After the poem is recited in full, a guitar riff in F sharp minor is introduced. Distorted guitars come in and, with no interruption between songs, "We Are the Dead" resumes the riff with distortion, abandoning the melancholic picture painted by the previous song and embracing the fast, aggressive drumming typical in the death metal subgenre. The song combines a whispered voice in the introduction and the chorus with screams and grunts in the verses. After presenting some facts and explicitly referencing a war monument –"100.000 men with no known grave / 50.000 names honoured / By remembrance crosses / At the Menin gate"–, the lyrics focus on the sacrifice of the soldiers who gave their life in battle. The poem is openly referenced –"In Flanders fields, poppies growing / Among the graves"– and Binyon's "Ode to Remembrance" is quoted: "We will remember them". As in the poem, the speaker still uses the third person plural, but the focalizer changes, as the poetic persona is no longer the dead, but the living addressing the dead from the dead's future, thus altering the diegesis of the poem in a movement of *proximization* (Genette 1997[1982]: 304), and turning the hypotext's interpolated narrating into subsequent. More than an effort to glorify war or a call of attention to the dangers of armed conflicts, "We Are the Dead" is a song of praise for the

soldiers: Its initial verse is “[a] salute to the fallen”, it explains that the combatants were “[c]arried by courage and devotion”, that they died “[f]or freedom...for their independence”, and it finishes its chorus by stating: “[a] sacrifice made, the outcome we cherish”. This approach embraces early war poetry’s vision that “a soldier’s death (what might be called a ‘good death’) is to be embraced, not feared, for it presumes the existence of a condition beyond suffering and fear, beyond time, even” (Reisman 2012: 80). The song, in 4/4 meter and minor key, ends with an abrupt rhythmic figure resembling a machine gun, as seen in Example 32.



Example 32. Ending of “We Are the Dead”, by Crimson Falls (drum score).

5.2.2 PHASE II (1916-1917)

5.2.2.1 “THE VOICE OF THE GUNS” (GILBERT FRANKAU, 1916) / “PRELUDE: THE TROOPS” (SIEGFRIED SASSOON, 1919) AND “WHEN THE GUNS FELL SILENT” (WARBRINGER, 2017)

The unexpected progress of the conflict led certain poets to abandoning patriotic stances and replacing pre-war pastoral conventions with realistic observation, turning the subject matter from abstract feelings of victory and sacrifice to concrete descriptions of landscape, soldiers and war equipment. Written in 1917 (Bloom 2003: 44), Siegfried Sassoon’s “Prelude: The Troops” (1919[1917]: 12) focuses on the plight of the soldiers, whom he addresses as a mass of undifferentiated “[d]isconsolate men”, his “brave brown companions” whose “souls / Flock silently away”. The final couplet portrays both the survivors and the dead: “The unreturning army that was youth; / The legions who have suffered and are dust”. Unlike earlier war poems, the verses lack mentions to honour, posterity, or the inevitability of the situation. Gilbert Frankau’s “The Voice of the Guns” (1916: 33-35) personifies the weapons as a collective speaker that enslaves the soldiers – “We are the guns, and your masters!”– and describes how technological warfare leads to mass destruction: “Husbands or sons, / Fathers or lovers, we break them! We are the guns!” Although the poet still believes in the necessity of the war effort –in “The Voice of

the Slaves”, from the same collection, Frankau claims that “[w]e are slaves to our masters the guns . . . / But their slaves are the masters of kings!” (1916: 4)–, the tone and diction of these mid-war verses depart considerably from those of earlier poems.

Exactly one century after Sassoon wrote the first poem under scrutiny, singer and lyricist John Kevill, from the American thrash metal band Warbringer, decided to dedicate a song to the final moments of the Great War, using for that purpose elements of both “Prelude: The Troops” and “The Voice of the Guns”, therefore engaging in a movement of *contamination* (Genette 1997[1982]: 258). Kevill conceived “When the Guns Fell Silent” (2017) as a warning concerning his own contemporary political landscape:

As [the First World War] passes out of living memory it completely becomes more and more relevant to our current political situation. [...] [Y]ou have the gallantry of the soldiers who charge fearlessly into gunfire versus the callous politicians and generals who squander the lives of these brave men by the thousands and then do it again the next day, and how that can go on for so long. (Kevill 2017: n.p.)

The song, an epic piece in five parts, implements a *reelaboration* based on both of its hypotexts. It starts with Kevill reciting the third and final stanza of “Prelude: The Troops” over mechanical sounds and an eerie synthesizer background. Once the rhythm section takes over, a focalising shift takes place as the lyrical speaker becomes a surviving soldier who describes and assesses the witnessed events. The second part (“Attrition”) is a mid-tempo section in regular 4/4 meter with a repetitive distorted guitar riff and rasped vocals that focuses on the desolation and eventual death of the soldiers. Its final lines – “Unreturning, the legions / Who suffered and are dust”– are extracted from Sassoon’s poem. A clean guitar arpeggio leads the way to “Voi Sacree (The Sacred Way)”, the third part of the song, where a dramatic minor chord progression in 3/4 meter (see Example 33) presents the following paradox: “The war will be won, and God’s on our side / But my brave companions, why must you all die?”

The image shows two staves of musical notation in treble clef with a key signature of four sharps (F#, C#, G#, D#) and a 3/4 time signature. The first staff begins with a double bar line and a repeat sign. Above the staff, the chord G#m is written above the first measure and E above the second measure. The staff contains eight measures, each with a whole rest. The second staff begins with a measure rest (9) and a double bar line. Above the staff, the chord C#m is written above the first measure and D#m above the second measure. The staff contains eight measures, each with a whole rest, ending with a double bar line and repeat sign.

Example 33. Chord sequence in section III of “When the Guns Fell Silent”, by Warbringer.

Aggressive drum rolls resembling gunfire return the meter to 4/4 and introduce the fourth part of the song, which owes its lyrics to Gilbert Frankau's "The Voice of the Guns". Inspired by the first stanza of the poem, some verses were reworked to fit the rhythmic scheme of the song. In call-and-response fashion, the words "We are the guns!" are replied by the effect of the weapons: "the flashes of light [...] Filling the graves". The combatants are now war puppets. If part III was a chant of lament in waltz meter, part IV relies on a more aggressive musical context to explain how the war machine ultimately succeeds. The final section of the song ("All Quiet") deals with post-war desolation, providing closure to the piece and also to the album by returning to the initial guitar riff and distilling a sour taste in the final verses:

And when the guns fell silent, at last
There's nothing that remains of the past
The world that I knew is dead and gone
My soul is left in ruins
And I cannot see the dawn.

The song's notable concern with the death of the soldiers and the overt grief of the poetic persona introduce new elements to the narrative of its hypotexts, thus introducing the pragmatic transformation of *motivation* (Genette 1997[1982]: 324-25). In remembrance of the Armistice, which was signed at 11:00 am on the eleventh of November (the eleventh month), 1918, the song has a running time of eleven minutes and eleven seconds (Kevill 2017: n.p.). Unlike the previous examples, "When the Guns Fell Silent" does not revel in victory or celebrate the sacrifice of the soldiers, nor does it explicitly oppose war. Its main focus is on the inevitability of loss of life and on the dire psychological aftermath the war participants must endure. Although the song explicitly refers to a First World War setting – "I saw warriors broken / Upon the anvil of Verdun" –, the clarity of its message allows it to recontextualise the poems in present times, thus perpetuating them and turning a description of a troubled past into a warning about a potentially troubled future.

5.2.3 PHASE III (1917-1918)

5.2.3.1 "ANTHEM FOR DOOMED YOUTH" (WILFRED OWEN, 1920) AND "ANTHEM – CHAPTER I" AND "ANTHEM – CHAPTER II" (SIEGES EVEN, 1990)

The second change of attitude of First World War poetry took place when some of the poets abandoned their initial patriotic assessment of the war to embrace a stark opposition to the prolonged continuation of the armed conflict. In 1917, Siegfried Sassoon published a letter whose content matches the rebellious spirit of metal music:

I am making this statement as an act of wilful defiance of military authority, because I believe that the War is being deliberately prolonged by those who have the power to end it. I am a soldier, convinced that I am acting on behalf of soldiers. I believe that this War, upon which I entered as a war of defence and liberation, has now become a war of aggression and conquest. [...] I have seen and endured the sufferings of the troops, and I can no longer be a party to prolong these sufferings for ends which I believe to be evil and unjust. I am not protesting against the conduct of the War, but against the political errors and insincerities for which the fighting men are being sacrificed. On behalf of those who are suffering now I make this protest against the deception which is being practised on them [...] (qtd. in Silkin 1998: 148)

While hospitalized due to war injuries, Sassoon met fellow soldier and poet Wilfred Owen, who has been referred to as “the quintessential War Poet” (Bloom 2003: 44; Cuthbertson 2014: 300). His work has been prominently featured in war poetry anthologies, and some of his poems are among the best-known verses on war. His elegy “Anthem for Doomed Youth” adds political overtones to his feelings of pity for the dead soldiers. On a 1917 letter to his mother, Owen had stated that “pure Christianity will not fit in with pure patriotism” (2012: n.p.). The poet’s disappointment at the church’s support of the war (Bloom 2002: 37) is expressed in the poem’s opening octet, which, making ample use of auditory imagery, deems Christian rituals incapable of providing relief to so grave a situation: “What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?” The closing sestet focuses on the “patient minds” of the mourners, in whose eyes “[s]hall shine the holy glimmers of goodbyes” (Owen 1933[1920]: 80). By confronting the public sphere of organised religion against the private sphere of his close relatives, Owen claims that “if dead soldiers cannot find immortality in the ritualized abstractions of religious ceremony, then they can still find it in the memory and affection of their families” (Bloom 2002: 37).

As the closing of their 1990 album *Steps*, German progressive metal band Sieges Even crafted a double approach to Owen’s poem: a *retelling* in “Anthem – Chapter I” and a *reelaboration* in “Anthem – Chapter II”. In the first song, and unlike in the poem, the First World War context –and consequentially the diegesis of the hypotext– is made explicit: “Desolate winter, 1914 [...] the fields / Of Belgium and France”. While the poet looks at a dire future with a thread of faint hope –“What candles may be held to speed them all? / Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes / Shall shine the holy glimmers of

good-byes” (Owen 1933[1920]: 80)– the band use the past tense to recount the consequences of war as an appraisal of a doomed past: “What candles were held to speed them all? / Whose grimy hands closed these tired eyes?” If the first octet of the poem remarked the incapability of religion to properly account for the demise of the soldiers, the last line of the song finds no relief even in the families of the mourned: “Noone left to sound an anthem for their doomed youth”. By eliding verses from the poem and adding lines of the band’s own, the hypertext combines the transpositional practices of *trimming* and *amplification* (Genette 1997[1982]: 230, 260). In musical terms, the song is consistent with the poem’s elegiac mode. The use of non-functional harmony and additive rhythms typical in the progressive metal subgenre provides a continuous feeling of instability and lack of resolution that contributes to creating unease in the listener. The inclusion of piano and acoustic guitar highlights an absence of distortion that contributes to the overall dramatism by avoiding harsher timbres that would suggest anger instead of lamentation. Snare drum rolls resembling a machine gun create a musical parallel to the visual imagery evoked by the lyrics. “Anthem – Chapter II” also thrives from Owen’s conceit, but with a divergent approach: the verses are now appropriated via a movement of *transdiegetization* (Genette 1997[1982]: 296) to illustrate a different dark past that also affected the young: heroin addiction in the 1980s. If the first song verse of “Chapter I” was “Desolate winter, 1914 / A child in the trenches, a young life betrayed”, “Chapter II” starts with “Desolate winter, 1980 / Children in limbo, heroin slaves”. Unlike its predecessor, “Chapter II” uses guitar distortion, thus making a direct allusion to the music of the era it refers to. The lyrics are more explicit and their identification with the music is more direct. The first song retells, the second one reelaborates; both of them share the common idea of the young being betrayed and estranged from institutional support, as well as a pessimist reference to Owen’s poem in their closing line: “Noone left to sound an anthem for their doomed youth”.

5.2.3.2 “ANTHEM FOR DOOMED YOUTH” (WILFRED OWEN, 1920) AND “ANTHEM FOR DOOMED YOUTH” (DARKER HALF, 1999)

Wilfred Owen died in battle only one week before the end of the war (Blunden 1933: 38-39). In the preface to the posthumous editions of his poems, he states that his verses are not “about glory, honour, might, majesty, dominion, or power”, and that they “are to this

generation in no sense consolatory. They may be to the next. All a poet can do to-day is warn” (1933: 40-41). This generational glance at the future, his unromantic anti-war stance, and his crude rendering of first-person war experiences are the main motives why Owen’s work is still current today, and why it has called the attention of metal bands. In fact, his mastery of par rhyme has been said to reinforce “effects of dissonance, failure, and unfulfillment” (Ramazani and Stallworthy 2012: 2034), characteristics which resonate –either musically or thematically– with metal music.

Australian thrash metallers Darker Half craft another *reelaboration* of the poem in their own “Anthem for Doomed Youth” (1999), which weaves a dystopic view of the present world –a “wasteland of regret”– and the future: a “darkening horizon” that comes “[t]o lead the way”. The hypertext performs processes of *transvocalization* –from third to first person– and *proximization* –from the Great War to present times (Genette 1997[1982]: 213, 304). The song chorus is a call of attention to the consequences of past wars –“Why should we wander on, / To blindly follow, / Those who’ve gone before”– and a foreboding of hopelessness: “A nightmare future stands before us all! / Will we stand or fall! / Fight for your life!” Although the only evident trace of the poem in the song is its title, both texts are intimately connected: if Owen’s verses focused in the impossibility of consolation for the lost generation of the war, Darker Half’s song is a warning to the present generation, thus achieving Owen’s goal that “all a poet can do to-day is warn” (1933: 40-41).

5.2.3.3 “PEACE” (RUPERT BROOKE, 1915) / “ANTHEM FOR DOOMED YOUTH” (WILFRED OWEN, 1920) AND “THE NEW BRYTHONIC LEGACY” (NIHTERNNES, 2009)

Known for his romantic vision of the war, of which he did not have much experience (Bloom 2003: 14), Rupert Brooke has been termed “a pre-war poet” (Means n.d.: n.p.), and his poems “not of war, but of preparation for war” (Bloom 2003: 16). At the start of the conflict, his patriotic poetry granted him the status of national hero, only to find death less than a year into the conflict (Bloom 2003: 11). In his sonnet “Peace”, Brooke thanks God for leading him and his fellow soldiers into battle, leaving behind “the sick hearts that honor could not move, / And half-men”. He claims to “have found release there, / Where there’s no ill, no grief, but sleep has mending” (Brooke 1918: 5). The English one-man black metal band Nihternnes crafted “The New Brythonic Legacy” (2009), an elaborate fifteen-minute song that stems from two apparently irreconcilable poems like “Peace” and

Owen's "Anthem for Doomed Youth", thus performing a movement of *contamination* –the mixture of two or more hypotexts (Genette 1997[1982]: 258). After reproducing Owen's verses in full, only the final sestet of Brooke's poem is included, thus avoiding the poet's glorification of war and his reprimand to those reluctant to enlist. Both sets of verses are framed by a Second World War-related text: the recording of Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain's address to Britain where he declared war with Germany on September 3rd, 1939. This way the sequence of texts works at different pragmatic levels: The initial excerpt from Chamberlain's speech fulfils the performative function of declaring war; the sung verses of "Anthem for Doomed Youth" lament the death of the soldiers and criticise the inability of public institutions to provide comfort; then a transvocalization from third to first person finds rasped vocals screaming the closing sestet of "Peace", where the soldiers acknowledge their sacrifice; finally, another excerpt of Chamberlain's address calls the British to "play your part with calmness and courage". The song title points toward the consequences of the soldiers' sacrifice for their country. Even although one of the hypotexts is quoted in its entirety, the song belongs to the *reelaboration* category in the present transformation taxonomy. The reason is that the meaning of both hypotexts is altered by the presence of each other, Chamberlain's speech –which alters the poems' diegesis– and even the song's primary paratext –its title. As for musical devices, "The New Brythonic Legacy" moves from a calm acoustic setting with a flute melody and church bells in the background to guitar distortion and heavy drumming. The song's unhurried pace benefits from the insertion of passages in 3/4 meter suggesting movement away from the heaviness of its slow 4/4 sections. The album's title is *The Mouthless Dead*, a direct reference to Charles Hamilton Sorley's anti-war poem "When You See Millions of the Mouthless Dead" (1932: 78). The song was re-recorded by Dan Astley, the musician behind the band, in his 2020 album *Dunharrow*, but without Chamberlain's address framing the poems.

5.2.3.4 "DULCE ET DECORUM EST" (WILFRED OWEN, 1920) AND "WAR GRAVES" (SCYTHIAN, 2015)

Owen's "Dulce et Decorum Est" (1920) is an example of what Reisman calls "brutal realism" (2012: 142): a detailed first-person account of a chemical warfare attack to his company. Owen paints a picture of despair and desolation, with his fellow soldiers "[b]ent

double, like old beggars under sacks [...] coughing like hags”, focuses on the disgusting death of a comrade who could not fit his helmet in time to prevent the attack, and commits the last stanza to criticising the war effort by depriving it of romantic patriotism. In fact, he terms Horace’s verse “Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori” –“It is sweet and proper to die for one’s country” (Zamorano and García Lorenzo 2011: 145)– as “[t]he old lie” (Owen 1933[1920]: 66). In “War Graves” (2015), the London-based death metal band Scythian use recitation to approach the verses of “Dulce et Decorum Est” as originally written. Recorded exactly one century after the first month of World War I, guitarist A. von Moller comments that the poem “exposed the horrors of modern warfare and mocked the hubris of the British Empire” (2015). This way the song consciously perpetuates the political comment of its poetical source. An instance of the *reproduction* adaptation category, “War Graves” finds clean guitars intertwining arpeggios and single line melodies in G minor during more than half of its duration. Right after the recitation tells the agony of a dying soldier –“In all my dreams before my helpless sight, / He plunges at me, guttering choking, drowning”– sounds of a gagging man prelude a dramatic musical contrast with the introduction of guitar distortion. At the end of the song, when the recitation is about to address “the old lie”, eerie guitar sounds draw a static musical landscape that resembles a bombardment and suggests feelings of chaos and decay. The poem’s extreme realism helps bridge the gap not between the music and the poet, but between the song and the war experience itself, with Owen as sole mediator.

5.2.3.5 “DULCE ET DECORUM EST” (WILFRED OWEN, 1920) AND “ANTHEM FOR A DOOMED YOUTH” (INTERNAL BLEEDING, 1999)

In an original homage to Wilfred Owen that also serves to recontextualise the poet’s vision in present times, American brutal death metal band Internal Bleeding wrote “Anthem for a Doomed Youth” (1999) which, although takes its title from the poem of the same name, is a *retelling* of “Dulce et Decorum Est”. Contrary to most transformations analysed so far, the most obvious transpositional practice performed in this song is not thematic, but formal, as the simplicity and directness of the new words has the band engaging in a process of *destylization* (Genette 1997[1982]: 227). Although diction varies considerably, the song lyrics run parallel to the poem: the first half looks at the horrors the soldiers had to endure and at the use of chemical armament, focusing on vivid descriptions of death and

destruction, as usual in the brutal death subgenre: “Mustard gas burns lungs, blisters flesh, ends life / Grotesque spasms / Wrenching up blood”. The second half mirrors the poem’s explanation of “the old lie” by explicitly blaming the war organisers: “Testament to man’s greed”. If, as aforementioned, Owen conceived his poetry as a warning to future generations, *Internal Bleeding* honours the poet’s desire by calling to attention the relevance of the old verses in a contemporary setting: “Are we so blind to such waste? / Will we ever learn from the past? / Pain, misery, death, suffering”. Not referring to any specific war –mustard gas is still used today as a chemical weapon (Schram 2016: n.p.)–, the lyrics’ speaker takes the role of a distant observer both spatially and temporally. Musically, the song is a straight-ahead brutal death performance featuring additive rhythms and tempo changes, but with no specific war-evoking musical resources.

5.2.3.6 “ANTHEM FOR DOOMED YOUTH” / “DULCE ET DECORUM EST” (WILFRED OWEN, 1920) AND “ANTHEM FOR DOOMED YOUTH” (VOID OF SILENCE, 1999)

Finally, Italian doom metal band Void of Silence craft an original adaptation by merging partial reproductions of both “Dulce et Decorum Est” and “Anthem for Doomed Youth” – another instance of Genette’s *contamination*– with their own lyric material, thus giving birth to a *retelling* of two different sources. Their “Anthem for Doomed Youth” (1999) is an ironic anti-war statement (Zara 2018: n.p.). The song starts with a clean guitar and a gargling voice that recounts the gas attack in “Dulce et Decorum Est”. Once guitar distortion joins the sonic picture, rasped grunts finish the partial retelling of the poem and criticise the war effort from a religious point of view –“Blasphemy in my eyes / The holy sin for the glory”–, as Owen does in “Anthem for Doomed Youth”. After narrating the despair of a soldier –“I come, falling in the dark / The world and men are hurting me!”– a voice speaks words of patriotism and military might: “Our sword is truth, our shield is faith and honor / [...] No shot or shell can still our mighty song”. It is a sarcastic comment concluded by a contrasting appraisal –“Oh falling Earth / Covered with pestilence and death”– and continued by an unfinished recitation of “Anthem for Doomed Youth”. In order to establish a parallelism with the first part of the song –the contrast between the atrocities of war (the gas attack) and the desolation of a combatant–, the recounting of the poem is contrasted with an ironic translation of Horace’s sentence: “It’s sweet and meet to die for one’s country”. The extremely slow rhythm typical of the doom metal subgenre

helps create a musical expression of sorrow and hopelessness that matches the afflicted tone of the lyrics.

5.3 DISCUSSION

If the First World War was never “the war to end all wars”, as the popular slogan said, it also failed at fostering a common agreement on the perception of war in popular culture, as evidenced by the dissimilar views found on coetaneous poetry, and which included glorifying the war (Brooke), accounting for its necessity (Binyon, McCrae), voicing its anxiety (Sassoon, Frankau) or openly expressing doubts and even opposition (Owen). Mirroring the War Poets, and inspired on them, metal musicians would craft differing takes on the matter several decades later. Even although this varied range of appreciation suggests a certain continuity of thought, most metal musicians express opposition to the existence of armed conflicts and compassion for the soldiers, and only a minority embrace belligerent values. In that regard, the War Poets from phases II and III are responsible for opening a thread of thought that would be picked by metal authors roughly a century later. This chapter focuses on ten metal bands whose songs cover almost the full range of the proposed transformation taxonomy (most of them belonging to the *reelaboration* category and with no instances of *citation*).

Band	Extreme metal subgenre	Album closing song	Start without distortion	Sonic anaphones
Bolt Thrower	<i>Death</i>			“...For Victory”
Sabaton	Power	“In Flanders Fields”		
Crimson Falls	<i>Death</i>		“We Are the Dead”	
Warbringer	<i>Thrash</i>	“When the Guns Fell Silent”	“When the Guns Fell Silent”	“When the Guns Fell Silent”
Sieges Even	Progressive	“Anthem – Chapter II”	“Anthem – Chapter I”	“Anthem – Chapter I”
Darker Half	<i>Thrash</i>	“Anthem for Doomed Youth”		
Nihternes	<i>Black</i>		“The New Brythonic Legacy”	
Scythian	<i>Death</i>		“War Graves”	
Internal Bleeding	<i>Death</i>	“Anthem for a Doomed Youth”		
Void of Silence	<i>Doom</i>		“Anthem for Doomed Youth”	“Anthem for Doomed Youth”

Table 31. Common transformation elements in metal music songs inspired by the War Poets. Extreme metal subgenres are italicised.

Certain similarities in the resources chosen by the different ensembles are worth noticing: eight of the ten bands scrutinised belong to different subgenres of extreme metal, and six have decided to finish their albums with war poetry adaptations, therefore having their solemn reflections on war be the closing statement of their works. In regard to musical resources, six bands have designed a song structure that increases intensity progressively, starting with clean guitar sounds, soft voices and even symphonic instruments like the piano, to later embrace the full expressive range of the genre with guitar distortion, grunted or screamed vocals and heavy drumming. This way listener expectations are delayed and dramatism increases. Although this is a common practice for a progressive metal group like Sieges Even, it is not for the rest of the bands, which use it only sparingly. This approach denotes a special desire for elaboration when addressing such a solemn topic as war, especially when the informing source is a canonical cultural product like a poem, thus supporting Grant’s assertion that “[s]ome artists eschew their usual styles when performing [First World War-based] songs” (2017: 5). Another noticeable musical element is the instrumental reproduction of war sounds resulting in “a mimicking of the cacophony of battle” (Puri 2010: 55). Half the bands analysed use *sonic anaphones* (Tagg 2015: 486-87): guitar and drum-based sound effects resembling machine guns or bombardments, thus imitating war machinery. This descriptive function of music was defined by Rabinowitz as *imitation*: not an “evocation” or “representation” of human emotion, but the “sort of pretense” by which an instrument “pretends” to be something else (1981: 197). This pervasive practice reinforces the position of the War Poets as mediators between the metal musicians and the actual historical events, since the songs do not only evoke the poets’ depiction of war, but represent war through anaphonic imitation. Table 31 summarises the analysed transformation elements.

Poem	Song
Reproduction	
“For the Fallen” (Laurence Binyon, 1914)	“For the Fallen...” (Silent Wood, 2014)
“In Flanders Fields” (John McCrae, 1915)	“In Flanders Fields” (Mourning Dawn, 2009)
	“In Flanders Fields” (Altherya, 2019)
	“In Flanders Fields” (Wound Collector, 2020)
“I Stood with the Dead” (Siegfried Sassoon, 1919)	“I Stood with the Dead” (Satyrus, 2009)
“Suicide in the Trenches” (Siegfried Sassoon, 1919)	“Suicide in the Trenches” (Deus Mori, 2020)
“Dulce et Decorum Est” (Wilfred Owen, 1920)	“Dulce et Decorum Est” (Et Verbi Sathanus, 2006)
	“Dulce et Decorum” (Frost Commander, 2011)
Retelling	
“The Unreturning” (Wilfred Owen, 1913)	“The Unreturning” (Cerebrium, 2015)

Poem	Song
“Anthem for Doomed Youth” (Wilfred Owen, 1920)	“Anthem for a Doomed Youth” (Tivaz, 2010)
Reelaboration	
“In Flanders Fields” (John McCrae, 1915)	“In Flanders Fields” (Amplifire, 2007)
Reorientation	
“In Flanders Fields” (John McCrae, 1915)	“In Flanders Fields” (Beyond the Labyrinth, 2005)
“When You See Millions of the Mouthless Dead” (Charles Hamilton Sorley, 1916)	“Millions of the Mouthless Dead” (Blacksheep, 2018)
“Dulce et Decorum Est” (Wilfred Owen, 1920)	“1917 – Spring Offensive (Dulce et Decorum Est)” (The Monolith Deathcult, 2005)
Citation	
“For the Fallen” (Laurence Binyon, 1914)	“For the Fallen...” (Mourning Dawn, 2009)
“In Flanders Fields” (John McCrae, 1915)	“In Flanders Fields” (Allegaeon, 2019)
“When You See Millions of the Mouthless Dead” (Charles Hamilton Sorley, 1916)	“When You See Millions of the Mouthless Dead” (Nihternnes, 2009)
“Anthem for Doomed Youth” (Wilfred Owen, 1920)	“Anthem for Doomed Youth” (The Restless Breed, 2003)
“Dulce et Decorum Est” (Wilfred Owen, 1920)	“Dulce et Decorum Est” (NecroCarcass, 2008)
	“No Man’s Land (Dulce et Decorum Est)” (Unjustice, 2019)

Table 32. Further examples of metal songs inspired on the War Poets.

Besides the twelve analysed transformations, further metal songs based on the War Poets are listed in Table 32. A quantitative glance at all twenty-eight bands unveils relevant information. Regarding their fourteen different nationalities, 42.86% of the bands are from English-speaking countries (see Table 33). Even although this still implies that more than half of the bands come from non-English-speaking countries, therefore confirming the trend found in previous chapters in favour of the global appeal of poetry in English, the figures are more balanced than usual. The main reason might be associated with the fact that both the United States and the United Kingdom (which at the time included Australia and Canada as dominions) fought in the Great War. Great Britain being the country that contributes more bands might have to do with the War Poets being all British, therefore prescribed to some degree in the national school curriculum. Another remarkable fact is that Belgium occupies the second place, with four bands writing songs based on First World War poetry. The reason is that Belgium became a giant battlefield during the armed conflict, so Belgian metal musicians are projecting their compatriots’ concern with their own history. Twenty out of the twenty-eight bands are from countries that fought in the war on the side of the allies, while only three come from the central powers. Five bands are from countries which did not participate in the conflict.

Country	Bands
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Country	Bands
<i>United Kingdom</i>	Bolt Thrower, Deus Mori, Nihternnes, The Restless Breed, Scythian, Silent Wood, Unjustice
Belgium	Beyond the Labyrinth, Crimson Falls, Satyrus, Wound Collector
<i>USA</i>	Allegaeon, Internal Bleeding, Warbringer
France	Altherya, Mourning Dawn
Germany	Amplifire, Sieges Even
Russia	Cerebrium, Tivaz
<i>Australia</i>	Darker Half
<i>Canada</i>	NecroCarcass
Chile	Et Verbi Sathanus
Italy	Void of Silence
Netherlands	The Monolith Deathcult
Poland	Frost Commander
Romania	Blacksheep
Sweden	Sabatón

Table 33. Metal bands that perform transformations based on the War Poets by country. Native English-speaking countries are italicised.

The bands' division into subgenres shown in Table 34 confirms previous trends, yet also introducing notorious variations. The relevance of poetry for extreme metal subgenres is more evident than usual, with three quarters of the bands listed belonging to extreme metal styles. However, there is only one doom metal band and no presence of either gothic metal or symphonic metal groups. This finding is consistent with the thematic approaches of the three subgenres, since they embrace abstract fantasy settings over the concrete roughness of real-life struggles, and they usually address death and grief from the romantic point of view of the estranged individual more than from a political, activist position. While their thematic scope allows them to bend to their will works like *Paradise Lost* or Edgar Allan Poe's poems, the specific harshness of the war setting suits better more militant subgenres like death, black, or thrash metal. The obscurity of the present theme is consistent with the fact that no band is featured in the popularity lists commented in section 3.5 with the exception of Sabatón, which appears in Louder Sound's and Ranker's.

Subgenre	Bands
<i>Death</i>	Allegaeon, Blacksheep, Bolt Thrower, Crimson Falls, Internal Bleeding, The Monolith Deathcult, NecroCarcass, Scythian, Wound Collector
<i>Black</i>	Cerebrium, Deus Mori, Et Verbi Sathanus, Mourning Dawn, Nihternnes, Satyrus, Silent Wood, Tivaz
Heavy	Amplifire, Beyond the Labyrinth, The Restless Breed
<i>Thrash</i>	Darker Half, Unjustice, Warbringer
Power	Frost Commander, Sabatón
Progressive	Altherya, Sieges Even
<i>Doom</i>	Void of Silence

Table 34. Metal bands that perform transformations based on the War Poets by subgenre. Extreme metal subgenres are italicised.

Wilfred Owen, the most popular war poet, is also the favourite of metal bands, his poems being referenced up to thirteen times in the transformations under scrutiny. Through war poetry, metal musicians convey a political message that might stem from historical evidence –Neville Chamberlain’s address in Nihternnes’s “The New Brythonic Legacy”– or from the very nature of the band –Crimson Falls being Belgian. If the adaptations addressed in this thesis fulfil the function of making literature available to a larger audience, war poetry adaptations may also activate that audience’s critical thought in regard to history.

6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

The presence of poetry in English in metal music is pervasive. Not only do metal musicians resort to old verses as a source for channelling their own lyrical views, but they demonstrate a high level of imaginativeness and resourcefulness in doing so. Due to its large size, the present working corpus allows for a quantitative analysis of data. Annex I includes all tables whose size is too massive to be included along the text of this section. Among them, there is a comprehensive list of all seventy-two analysed songs separated by category in tables Table 50 to Table 54. Their distribution throughout thesis chapters and transformation categories is shown here in tables Table 35 and Table 36. Songs belonging to albums analysed in full are excluded, since their analysis is not as deep as that of songs analysed individually.

Chapter	Songs
2. Classification	20
3. Edgar Allan Poe	27
4. <i>Paradise Lost</i>	13
5. The War Poets	12

Table 35. Distribution of analysed songs by thesis chapter.

Category	Analysed Songs	Listed songs
Reproduction	12	106
Retelling	18	87
Reelaboration	16	49
Reorientation	14	31
Citation	12	111

Table 36. Distribution of songs by transformation category.

The rightmost column in Table 36 includes all 384 identified songs, not only the seventy-two analysed transformations. The most heavily populated categories are *citation* –the easiest transformational approach– and *reproduction* –the one that requires less textual elaboration–, while the most interesting technique of *reorientation* is the least used by metal bands. However, since *reorientation* is a subtype of *reelaboration*, their transformations together add up to eighty in total, which represents a significant 20.83% of all songs, therefore suggesting a balanced distribution of transformations throughout the main proposed categories.

One of the questions this thesis raises has to do with the poetic interests of metal musicians and, consequentially, of the metal audience. Table 55 in annex I displays the number of times each of the 146 listed poems has been made the hypotext of any of the identified metal songs. *Paradise Lost*, with seventy occurrences, is the most referenced poem by far, followed by Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Raven”, with forty, and at a distance by Poe’s “Spirits of the Dead”, “A Dream within a Dream” and “The City in the Sea”, and by John McCrae’s “In Flanders Fields”. These results are consistent with the present work’s separation into chapters, and they validate these three foci (*Paradise Lost*, Poe’s poetry, and the War Poets) as encompassing sources of the most relevant topics in metal music. Regarding the poets themselves, Edgar Allan Poe is the most referenced author by an ample margin, as Table 37 shows. John Milton, second in the list, is present in less than half the number of metal songs his American counterpart is. William Blake appearing in the third position appeals to the Romantic spirit of metal music, one of whose usual topics is love. However, most of the transformations derived from his work are simple citations. Following Blake are War Poets Wilfred Owen and John McCrae. Thirty-seven poets are British –the vast majority English–, ten American, two Irish and two Canadian –at the poets’ time, Canada was still legally dependent upon the British crown. Only six of the fifty-one poets are women, their poems amounting to nine out of all 384 transformations. This lack of concern for female authors is consistent with critical agreement on metal music being fundamentally a male culture (Walser 1993: ch. 4; Weinstein 2000: 65; Kahn-Harris 2007: 76; Vasan 2011; Hill 2016).

Transformations	Poets
163	Edgar Allan Poe
72	John Milton
23	William Blake
17	Wilfred Owen
9	John McCrae
6	Lord Byron, John Keats
5	William Shakespeare, H. P. Lovecraft, Dylan Thomas
4	John Dowland, Lord Tennyson, <i>Emily Dickinson</i> , Aleister Crowley, T. S. Eliot
3	Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Oscar Wilde, William Butler Yeats, Thomas Hardy, Rupert Brooke, Laurence Binyon
2	Andrew Marvell, William Wordsworth, Henry W. Longfellow, Walt Whitman, Algernon Charles Swinburne, Madison Julius Cawein, Charles Hamilton Sorley, Siegfried Sassoon, J. R. R. Tolkien
1	Geoffrey Chaucer, <i>Anne Boleyn</i> , Robert Devereux, Robert Sidney, William Hamilton, Alexander Pope, <i>Christina Rossetti</i> , Francis W. Bourdillon, <i>Isabella Valancy Crawford</i> , Rudyard Kipling, David Park Barnitz, <i>Laurence Hope</i> , G.

Transformations	Poets
	K. Chesterton, Gilbert Frankau, C. S. Lewis, Siegfried Sassoon, <i>Mary Elizabeth Frye</i> , Charles Manson, Charles Bukowski

Table 37. Number of transformations by poet. Female poets are italicised.

As for the poems' dates of composition, Table 38 unveils metal musicians' preference for nineteenth century poetry. A certain logic applies, since this is not only the era of metal's beloved Edgar Allan Poe, but also of the Romantic poets and other authors whose themes may be consistent with metal music's topics, like Emily Dickinson, Lord Tennyson, Walt Whitman, or Oscar Wilde. The prominence of seventeenth-century poems in the present study should be taken with caution, since metal musicians' favourite *Paradise Lost* accounts for 86.4% of its century's total numbers. No poem from the present century has made it to a metal song in the working corpus and, although sixty-nine poems looks like a high number for the twentieth century, only two of them were written after 1954. This can be interpreted as metal bands' will to stamp their works with the quality approval associated with old, classic, academically and popularly canonised literary texts.

Century	Poems
15	1
16	7
17	81
18	24
19	209
20	69
21	0

Table 38. Distribution of poems by century.

Regarding the bands, the band-to-transformation ratio –224 bands for 384 songs– indicates that incorporating poetry into their work is not the monopoly of certain groups, but an extended practice within the metal community, as Table 39 displays. Table 40 shows not only that the vast majority of poetry transformations belong to the twenty-first century, but that this is, apparently, an increasing approach to crafting metal songs. No band from the 1970s has made it to the list, and out of the four earliest efforts in the 1980s, the first three are by poetry-transforming pioneers Iron Maiden: “Revelations” (1983), “The Trooper” (1983), and “Rime of the Ancient Mariner” (1984). Table 56 in Annex I provides a detailed chronological list with all transformations.

Transformations	Bands
10	Akin, Symphony X
9	Theatres des Vampires
8	In Tha Umbra, Nimphaion, Shadowthrone, The Sundial
7	Aesma Daeva, David Brewster, Hornwood Fell
6	A Hill to Die Upon, Aeternitas, Cerebrum, Iron Maiden, Mourning Crimson
5	Devilish Impressions, Draconian, Drastic, Mandibulla, The Old Ones
4	Cradle of Filth, Dødsengel, Mad Duck, Silent Planet
3	Aeons ov Frost, Carnal Agony, Grave Digger, Lyriel
2	A Dream of Poe, Advent, Armageddon, Bet the Devil, Bruce Dickinson, Crimson Falls, Dark at Dawn, Delight, Legacy of Emptiness, Mortis Mutilati, Mourning Dawn, My Dying Bride, Nightwish, Nihternnes, Saturnus, Scythian, Sieges Even, Skylad, Sorg Uten Tårer, Stormlord, Symphonia, Thy Catafalque, Tremor
1	4th Dimension, A Hero for the World, Abandoned by Light, Aborym, Advent Sorrow, Adversam, Aethara, Agalloch, Agathodaimon, Ahab, Allegaeon, Altherya, Amplifire, Anaal Nathrakh, Arbiter, Arcturus, Atrocity, Atten Ash, Avantasia, Beyond the Labyrinth, Black Aurora, Blacksheep, Blind Guardian, Blinded by Faith, Bolt Thrower, Burnt Church, C.I.A. Hippie Mind Control, Cadaverous Condition, Carpathian Forest, Cathedral, CETI, Chaos Theory, Chris Violence, Circus Maximus, Cirith Ungol, Colour Trip, Conducting From the Grave, Cosmivore, Crown of Thorns, Crystal Crow, D. Throne, Danse Macabre, Dantesco, Dark Mirror ov Tragedy, Dark Moor, Darkage, Darker Half, Darkest Hour, David Valdes, Dawn of Winter, De Lirium's Order, Decapitated, Delain, Deus Mori, Dimmu Borgir, Distorted Force, Division, Döxa, Dream Theatre, Eluveitie, End Zone, Enjoy Sarma, Epoch of Unlight, Et Cetera, Et Verbi Sathanus, Even Song, Ever Circling Wolves, Farmer Boys, Fer de Lance, Fireign, Forest of Shadows, Forsaken, Fountain of Tears, Frost Commander, Gaia's Revenge, Garage Days, Geoda, Ghost, Goresleeps, Grave, Greedy Invalid, Green Carnation, Guilthee, Hades, His Statue Falls, Hollenthon, Ilium, Imperial Triumphant, In Hell, Insomnium, Internal Bleeding, James D. Gilmore, Judas Iscariot, Kelly Simonz's Blind Faith, Kickback, Killin' Kind, Lilla Veneda, Lucyfire, Lunatic Invasion, Malnätt, Means End, Metropolis, Minotaurus, Moonson, Morgana Lefay, Mourned by Flies, My Refuge, NecroCarcass, Necronomicon, Nevermore, Night Screamer, Nightcap, Odes of Ecstasy, Odin's Court, Odium, Pale Divine, Pandora 101, Paragon of Beauty, Pathfinder, Primordial, RavenSkül, Rotting Christ, Sabaton, Sacred Oath, Sanhedrin, Satyrus, Shantak, Sighisoara, Silent Wood, Sinister Creed, Sinister Moon, Solefald, Sorg Uten Tårer, Sorrowful Angels, Soulfallen, Souls of Rage, Sudden Access, Sun of the Sleepless, Swallow the Sun, Symphony of Sorrow, Tersivel, The Black League, The Grotesquery, The Monolith Deathcult, The Ocean, The Pagan Dead, The Red Shore, The Restless Breed, The Vision Bleak, Theory of Chaos, Tiles, Tivaz, Tool, Toxic, Tristania, Turbo, Uhrilehto, Unjustice, Valkyrja, Virgin Steele, Vlad, Void of Silence, Wachenfeldt, Warbringer, Warlord, Wastefall, Within the Fall, Wolfuneral, Wound Collector, Wräth, Xandria, Yngwie J. Malmsteen, 刹那

Table 39. Distribution of poems by band.

Decade	Transformations
1970s	0
1980s	4
1990s	52
2000s	152

Decade	Transformations
2010s	166
2020s	10

Table 40. Metal transformations of poetry by decade.

Following the approach of chapters 3, 4 and 5, certain characteristics about the metal bands that incorporate poetry into their own original work need addressing, mostly their country of origin and their metal music subgenre, fully displayed in annex I's Table 57. Table 41 shows that the bands come from forty different countries, only eight of which have English as an official language. Even although the USA is the country that contributes more groups, over two thirds of all 224 bands come from non-English speaking countries, thus confirming the tendency seen so far, and which indicates the pervasive presence of the English language and of English literature and poetry in today's globalised world. The distribution by continent in Table 42 shows that seventy percent of the bands are European, a quarter come from the American continent, and five from Australia. Only four bands are from Asia, and none comes from Africa. These results may be interpreted in two different ways: either non-western bands are not knowledgeable or interested in English and literature in English, or the number of non-western metal bands is minimum compared to global numbers. Studies validate the second approach (Maguire 2015; DeHart 2018).

Bands	Countries
41	<i>USA</i>
26	Germany
19	Italy
18	<i>UK</i>
15	Sweden
11	Norway
9	Poland
8	Finland
7	Russia
6	<i>Canada</i>
5	<i>Australia</i> , Belgium, France, Greece
4	Spain
3	Austria, Brazil, Hungary, Netherlands
2	Argentina, Czechia, Japan, Portugal, Serbia, Slovakia, Turkey
1	Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chile, Colombia, Denmark, <i>Ireland</i> , <i>Malta</i> , Mexico, <i>Philippines</i> , <i>Puerto Rico</i> , Romania, South Korea, Switzerland, Uruguay

Table 41. Number of bands per country. Native English-speaking countries are italicised.

Continents	Bands	Countries
Europe	158	27
America	57	9
Oceania	5	1
Asia	4	3
Africa	0	0

Table 42. Number of bands per continent.

The data analysed so far had identified a dominant presence of extreme metal bands in the present sample. Table 43 confirms the tendency, with over half of the 384 listed transformations belonging to any of the styles associated with extreme metal. The subgenre that features more adaptations is black metal, counting almost a hundred songs. Except for metalcore and groove metal, the rest of subgenres are usually characterised by an acute sense of theatricality and lyricism, for which reason their allegiance to poetry comes as no surprise. None of the bands listed in this thesis belongs to either early heavy metal or to the more commercially successful styles (glam, grunge). Coincidentally, Table 44 shows that only seven of all 224 bands appear in any of the metal band popularity lists described in section 3.5. Among them there are groups associated with classic heavy metal (Bruce Dickinson, Iron Maiden, Yngwie J. Malmsteen), progressive metal (Dream Theater, Tool), power metal (Sabaton), and symphonic metal (Nightwish). None of the extreme metal bands listed in this thesis has made it to any of these popularity lists. This may signal that although, as results show, using poetry is an extended practice in metal music, it mostly affects minority subgenres with limited audience outreach.

Transformations	Subgenre
96	<i>Black metal</i>
45	<i>Death metal</i>
42	Gothic metal
41	Progressive metal
40	<i>Doom metal</i>
38	Classic heavy metal
31	Symphonic metal
19	Power metal
16	<i>Thrash metal</i>
6	Folk metal

Transformations	Subgenre
	Metalcore
4	Groove metal

Table 43. Number of metal transformations per subgenre. Extreme metal subgenres are italicised.

List	Position	Band
<i>Rolling Stone's</i> "Readers' Poll: The Top 10 Metal Bands of All Time" (Greene 2011)	2	Dream Theater
	4	Iron Maiden
	10	Tool
<i>Loudwire's</i> "Top 50 Metal Bands of All Time" (Loudwire Staff 2016)	2	Iron Maiden
	9	Tool
	38	Dream Theater
<i>Louder Sound's</i> "The 50 Best Metal Bands of All Time" (Alderslade <i>et al.</i> 2020)	2	Iron Maiden
	11	Tool
	19	Dream Theater
	28	Nightwish
<i>Ranker's</i> "The Greatest Heavy Metal Bands of All Time", including 116 bands (Ranker Community 2020)	34	Sabaton
	2	Iron Maiden
	16	Tool
	43	Bruce Dickinson
	44	Dream Theater
	60	Nightwish
61	Yngwie J. Malmsteen	
	62	Sabaton

Table 44. Bands from this corpus appearing in journalistic and fan-based top band lists.

A closer look at the seventy-two analysed transformations will help find patterns regarding the specific motivations and tools behind the bands' adaptations, appropriations, and citations of poetry. Tables Table 50 to Table 54 in annex I assign a certain list of overlapping topics to each one of the scrutinised songs, so that each hypotext may address more than one topic and each song may address different topics than its hypotext(s) (especially in the case of *citations*). The regrouping of specific topics displayed in Table 45 shows a deep concern with death, individual feelings, spirituality, violence, alienation, and power. These findings are consistent with Gross's (1990: 124), Arnett's (1996: 46-47) and Weinstein's (2000[1991]: 39), but not so much with *Hit Parader's* earlier studies, which emphasised longing for intensity and lust as main thematic driving forces (Walser 1993: 139). The reason might be that the magazine focused on popular metal from the 1980s,

which is notably absent from the present thesis. This also explains why, within Weinstein’s dichotomous take on metal lyrics, only what she describes as the discourse on chaos is covered, with no trace of the Dionysian approach favoured by glam metal bands (2000: 35).

Transformations	Topics
34	Death
30	Grief and sorrow
21	Love
20	Religion and spirituality
19	War and violence
18	Alienation and madness
13	Power
	Rebellion
2	Freedom
	Nationalism
1	Ecology
	Community
	Honour

Table 45. Distribution of topics in metal transformations of poetry.

Regarding Genette’s transpositional practices, Table 46 displays how many times each one of them has been featured in this work, showing a balance between the use of formal and thematic resources. Since the musical format presents certain time limitations, *translongation* is broadly featured, mostly to reduce the length of the hypotext. The presence of thirteen instances of *transmotivation* and twelve of *axiological transformation* speaks for the bands’ will to appropriate the original verses in order to recontextualise them as they see fit. Because of their lack of textual elaboration, these practices do not apply to transformations of the *reproduction* and *citation* categories. As for *reorientations*, Table 47 shows an even distribution of changes in voice and narrating, with a tendency to change focalisation, especially regarding the focalizer. These results validate the use of Gérard Genette’s and Mieke Bal’s theories as very powerful resources to analyse literary transformational processes. Nevertheless, an expansion of Genette’s transpositional practices would be welcome for specific situations, like hypertexts that reorder the hypotext’s content, transdiegetizations at the temporal level –like *Conducting from the Grave’s* “Nevermore”– or omissions of the hypotext’s diegesis in songs based on the War

Poets that do not explicitly reference the armed conflict –like Internal Bleeding’s “Anthem for a Doomed Youth” (1999).

Transpositional practice		Occurrences		
Formal		38		
	Transstylyzation		4	
	Translongation		34	
	Reduction	24		
	Augmentation	10		
Thematic		36		
	Diegetic transposition		11	
	Pragmatic transformation		25	
	Transmotivation	13		
	Axiological transformation	12		

Table 46. Distribution of transpositional practices used in metal transformations of poetry.

Area	Change	Occurrences
No changes in focalization, voice or narrating		1
Focalization	Change in focalizer	9
	Change in focalised	2
Voice	Extradiegetic to intradiegetic	3
	Intradiegetic to extradiegetic	1
	Heterodiegetic to autodiegetic	4
	Homodiegetic to heterodiegetic	1
Narrating	Subsequent to interpolated	2
	Subsequent to simultaneous	1
	Interpolated to prior	1
	Interpolated to simultaneous	1
	Interpolated to subsequent	1

Table 47. Distribution of changes in focalization, voice, and narrating in instances of the *reorientation* transformation category.

In regard to musical resources, tables Table 48 and Table 49 show the distribution of musical keys and meters, which is displayed per song in annex I’s tables Table 50 to Table 54. In pursuit of a useful analysis, simplifications have been made as to the identification of both elements. As far as 86.44% of all analysed transformations are written in minor keys, with six further songs using non-functional harmonies. Only one is written in a major key, while another one mixes a major and a minor key. The preferred keys are E minor (ten songs), A minor (nine songs), D minor and G minor (five songs each). Coincidentally, the

root notes of these four keys are those of the four lower open strings in a guitar with standard tuning, while D does also correspond to the lower string for extreme metal bands that downtune their instruments a whole step. Using open strings simplifies guitar and bass playing, and the tendency towards E minor allows both stringed instruments to play their lowest possible chords which, in combination with guitar distortion, contributes to the dark, penetrating sound commonly associated with metal music. As for rhythmic concerns, two thirds of the scrutinised songs use single time meters, while the other third combines at least two different time signatures. Eight of the songs, mostly by progressive metal bands, use additive rhythms. Within single meters, 61.02% of the bands use typical binary 4/4 rhythms. Both key and meter distributions seem consistent with the overall metal production only if we discard the output of early metal, glam metal and grunge bands, which favour 4/4 meters to a higher extent and which –specifically in the case of glam metal– include more songs in major keys than usual in the genre at large.

Key	Mode	Songs
Am	Minor	9
Bm	Minor	2
Cm	Minor	4
C#m	Minor	2
Dm	Minor	5
D#m phryg	Minor	1
D#m	Minor	2
Em	Minor	10
Fm	Minor	1
F#m	Minor	2
Gm	Minor	5
G#m	Minor	2
D	Major	1
Bm and C#m	Minor	1
Dm and Am	Minor	1
Dm and Em	Minor	1
Em and Am	Minor	2
Em and Dm	Minor	1
Dm and A	Both	1
Non-functional	N/A	6

Table 48. Distribution of musical keys for metal transformations of poetry.

Meter	Songs
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Meter	Songs
3/4	2
4/4	36
6/8	1
3/4 and 4/4	4
4/4 and 3/4	7
7/4 and 4/4	1
Additive	8

Table 49. Distribution of musical meters for metal transformations of poetry.

6.2 CONCLUSIONS

Metal music is not only an adequate medium to transmit poetry, but a specially well suited one. Besides its being music, thus a natural means of poetic communication, it provides its audience with an enhanced experience due to its inherent technical and visual characteristics, cultural positioning, and social outreach. Metal music reinforces the poetic journey of its listeners through the use of highly expressive musical elements like vocals on the verge of collapse –high register, grunts, screams–, guitar distortion, or extended forms. Its paratexts, performers, and live presentations are ripe with suggestive visual aesthetics that tap into the fans’ imaginations as they relate to the underlying lyrical themes. Against dissenting voices that have tried to undermine the cultural power of metal music throughout recent decades, the present study vindicates the music’s legitimate power of cultural dissemination regarding the transmission, perpetuation, expansion and recontextualisation of poetry in English. The said recontextualisation mostly occurs through diegetic transposition as metal music renews, rethinks and challenges the narratives and motivations of past poetry into new, fresh cultural products destined to the consumption of present-day audiences. Metal music’s power to succeed in this task is not only due to its inherent technical characteristics, but also to its place in contemporary culture, where its aim towards young listeners and its being perceived as a rebellious, establishing-challenging cultural form allows it to function as a literature-transmitting means that complements the school curriculum. Poetry finds its logical place in metal music as poets of the past and musicians of the present share concerns for similar topics among them and with their audiences, providing a means of reflection and a way to escape social constraints that, in metal music, is reinforced by a sense of belonging to a community of fans who share these concerns. Metal music becomes a channelling force for

poetry and for the sentiments derived from it, and helps listeners contain and cope with negative emotions rather than instil them.

Besides understanding why does poetry find a natural place in metal music, the present work has explained how does this happen, becoming a ground-breaking effort due to its scope's unprecedented length in the metal studies field –384 items found, seventy-two analysed in depth covering a total running time of eleven hours, thirty-one minutes and five seconds of music²⁹–, a combination of textual and musical analysis that revels in interdisciplinarity, a combination of a qualitative and a quantitative approach due to the generous size of the working corpus, and the definition of an original set of five transformation categories. Regarding the latter, besides having been designed for the present corpus, it consists of a practical evolution from previous adaptation taxonomies whose shortcomings it has tried to improve. The present categorisation has successfully accounted for all scrutinised elements –some bending was necessary when addressing *Paradise Lost*, though, in part due to the historical lack of critical agreement on the poem's meaning–, and, due to its focus on the relationship between hypotext and hypertext, it may be useful for any future study of textual transformations –adaptations, appropriations, citations– regardless of whether music is involved or not. Beholding the transformation process from a philological point of view has allowed the application of Gérard Genette's list of transpositional practices, which have proved most useful yet, as aforesaid, may need expansion in order to cover specific recurring cases.

Quantitative analysis has brought to the fore the power of the English language, and more specifically of poetry in English, as a means of popular expression, with most featured bands coming from non-English speaking countries, the vast majority of which are western. The national origins of the surveyed bands are consistent with the general distribution of metal bands around the globe. Despite the vast presence of poetry in metal music, results do also show that songs referencing poems are confined to some of the more obscure corners of the genre, with more than half of the bands belonging to the extreme metal classification. The absence of early metal, glam metal and grunge bands from the study, as well as the vast majority of featured groups not being part of some of the most popular “best metal band” polls, may deem the transformation from poem to song lyric as a specialised technique within a metal realm whose fan-favoured bands prefer to avoid the

²⁹ This figure includes the runtime of the full EPs and albums analysed: *Deliver Us* (Darkest Hour 2007), *Through Chasm, Caves and Titan Woods* (Carpathian Forest 1995), *Damnation and a Day* (Cradle of Filth 2003), and *Paradise Lost* (Symphony X 2007).

extra complications of thorough textual elaboration. This lack of poetry as a lyrical driving force does also apply to popular bands from not so popular subgenres, like Metallica, Slayer, Anthrax and Megadeth (thrash metal), Halloween (power metal), Pantera and Machine Head (groove metal), Fear Factory and Rammstein (industrial metal), Korn, Limp Bizkit and Linkin Park (nu metal). The advantage of this apparently negative conclusion is that fans of underground, extreme subgenres, are usually the most loyal and committed to the music, so the poem behind the song will cause a stronger impact on them.

Nineteenth-century poets are metal musicians' favourites, with an alarming lack of female poets in the corpus. As for lyrical themes, both the songs and the poems they reference address the main topics of death, sorrow, love, religion, war, alienation, and power. These topics are detailed in the chapters devoted to specific poetic sources. The vast presence of Edgar Allan Poe's poetry in metal music is due to its sharing individual anxieties with present-day youth. Poe's verses treat the subjects of madness, death and living in a world where religion does no longer provide solace, for which reason he focuses on the extraordinary in order to provide escape. The accessibility of Poe's verses, grounded on musicality and formal rigour, have fuelled a large number of adaptations where the poet's words were unchanged, and metal bands have expressed a special devotion to Poe's figure in crafting long, solemn musical compositions. *Paradise Lost* revels on spiritual anxiety as it presents a dichotomous world that confronts an establishment rooted in tradition against the force of communal rebellion. The dyad power/powerlessness is at the centre of the work, which does also indulge in escapism due to its fantastic, mythological setting, yet not all metal bands are escaping from the same place, or in the same way. By following this path, they mirror the critical controversy surrounding Milton's grand epic since its publication. The poem is accessible in terms of content, but not of form, for which reason bands have crafted more appropriations and citations than adaptations of the hypotext, while not using specific musical resources to enhance the presence of old verses into new lyrics. As for songs inspired by the War Poets, they also focus on power and rebellion, but evading escapism. On the contrary, their approach is usually pragmatic, addressing violence either as nonsense, a necessary evil, or even a human trait to embrace. These transformations show the power of recontextualisation, as old military conflicts are made current and the past warns about the present. If Poe's poetry appeals to individual feelings, and *Paradise Lost* to the communal experience, the War Poets speak to anxieties about the world at large, for which reason bands transforming war poetry indulge in

specific resources like an increase in formal complexity, the use of sonic anaphones or making their war poetry-inspired song the last one in the album.

Over half a century after its inception, metal music has established itself as a stable means of expression whose cultural relevance should not be overlooked. The metal studies discipline is also well established today, with an increasing number of papers and books being published every year in order to give the music the academic attention it deserves, mostly from an interdisciplinary standpoint. The editorial of a *Metal Music Studies* journal release dedicated to metal music and musicology claimed that “[g]iven its short history as a self-conscious academic field, metal studies’ interdisciplinarity is impressive. Metal studies actively draws upon and engages sociology, anthropology, cultural studies, gender studies, history, geography and, of course, musicology” (Kennedy and Yavuz 2019: 293). I hope that the present work amends the omission of literature from the list, and that it will help extend this specific line of questioning with further research, either involving the analysis of larger corpora or the study of different elements from those covered here.

ANNEX I

Year	Poem	Author	Year	Song	Band	Country	Subgenre	Meter	Key	Topics
1800	A Slumber Did My Spirit Seal	William Wordsworth	2003	A Slumber Did My Spirit Seal	Draconian	Sweden	Doom	3/4 4/4	Gm	Death of a loved one
1827	Evening Star	Edgar Allan Poe	2012	Evening Star	Ahab	Germany	Doom	Additive	Cm	Love (longing)
1829	Alone	Edgar Allan Poe	1997	Alone	Arcturus	Norway	Black	4/4 3/4	Non-func.	Isolation, alienation
			2006	Alone	Green Carnation	Norway	Gothic	3/4	Dm	
1845	The Raven	Edgar Allan Poe	2016	The Raven: A Thrash Metal Opera	Chris Violence	USA	Thrash	4/4	Em	Madness, death of a loved one
			2018	Raven	Nimphaion	Russia	Symphonic	Additive	Em Dm	
1861	I Felt a Funeral	Emily Dickinson	2008	I Felt a Funeral	Malnätt	Italy	Black	4/4	Am	Madness
1906	The Hosting of the Sidhe	W.B. Yeats	2002	Hosting of the Sidhe	Primordial	Ireland	Black	6/8	Em	Freedom, nationalism
1915	In Flanders Fields	John McCrae	2006	In Flanders Fields	Crimson Falls	Belgium	Death	4/4	F#m	War, grief, death
			2019	In Flanders Fields	Sabatón	Sweden	Power	4/4	D	War, grief, death
1920	Dulce et Decorum Est	Wilfred Owen	2015	War Graves	Scythian	UK	Death	4/4	Gm	War, violence, death
1936	Eyes That Last I Saw in Tears	T.S. Eliot	2000	Eyes That Last I Saw in Tears	Delight	Poland	Gothic	4/4	Em	Lament over a lost past

Table 50. Analysed transformations of the *reproduction* category.

Year	Poem	Author	Year	Song	Band	Country	Subgenre	Meter	Key	Topics
1596	Flow My Tears	John Dowland	1999	Downvain	Aesma Daeva	USA	Symphonic	4/4	Am	Sorrow over lost love
			1999	Darkness	Aesma Daeva	USA	Symphonic	4/4 3/4	Em	
1667	<i>Paradise Lost</i>	John Milton	2000	Crescent	In Tha Umbra	Portugal	Black	4/4 3/4	C#m	Power, religion, rebellion
			2000	Fumes She Holdeth	In Tha Umbra	Portugal	Black	4/4 3/4	Am	
			2002	War in Heaven	Warlord	USA	Power	4/4	Em	
			2009	Tenebrarum	Forsaken	Malta	Doom	N/A	N/A	
1817	<i>The Rime of the Ancient Mariner</i>	Samuel Taylor Coleridge	1984	Rime of the Ancient Mariner	Iron Maiden	UK	Heavy	4/4 3/4	Em Am	Fantasy, death, ecology
1843	The Conqueror Worm	Edgar Allan Poe	2000	The Conqueror Worm	Odes of Ecstasy	Greece	Gothic	4/4	Em Am	Death is inevitable
1845	The City in the Sea	Edgar Allan Poe	2005	The City in the Sea	The Ocean	Germany	Death	Additive	Non-func.	Death is inevitable
			2012	The City in the Sea	Armageddon	Serbia	Heavy	4/4	Am	
1845	The Raven	Edgar Allan Poe	2006	Nevermore	Conducting from the Grave	USA	Death	3/4 4/4	Fm	Madness, death of a loved one
			2018	The Raven	Aeternitas	Germany	Symphonic	4/4	Ebm	
1849	Eldorado	Edgar Allan Poe	2012	Eldorado	Armageddon	Serbia	Heavy	4/4	F#m	Spirituality over materialism
1861	You Left Me	Emily Dickinson	2011	Elderberry and Lavender	Lyriel	Germany	Symphonic	4/4	Dm	Love (celebration and lament)
1892	Song of Myself	Walt Whitman	2011	Song of Myself	Nightwish	Finland	Symphonic	7/4 4/4	Dm Em	Freedom, community
1920	Anthem for Doomed Youth	Wilfred Owen	1990	Anthem - Chapter I	Sieges Even	Germany	Progressive	Additive	Non-func.	War, grief, death
1920	Anthem for Doomed Youth	Wilfred Owen	1999	Opus III. Anthem for Doomed Youth	Void of Silence	Italy	Doom	4/4	C#m	War, grief, death
1920	Dulce et Decorum Est	Wilfred Owen								War, violence, death
1920	Dulce et Decorum Est	Wilfred Owen	1999	Anthem for a Doomed Youth	Internal Bleeding	USA	Death	Additive	Non-func.	War, violence, death

Table 51. Analysed transformations of the *retelling* category.

Year	Poem	Author	Year	Song	Band	Country	Subgenre	Meter	Key	Topics
1667	<i>Paradise Lost</i>	John Milton	2012	Paradise Lost	Burnt Church	Canada	Death	Additive	Non-func.	Power, religion, rebellion
			2016	Paradise Lost as Harmony Breaks	Abandoned by Light	UK	Black	4/4	Am	
			2019	Paradise Lost	Night Screamer	UK	Heavy	4/4	Am	
1724	Ah the Shepherd's Mournful Fate	William Hamilton	1993	Black God	My Dying Bride	UK	Doom	4/4	Cm	Spirituality, religion
1845	The Raven	Edgar Allan Poe	1999	Les Posédes	Agathodaimon	Germany	Black	4/4	Dm	Madness, death of a loved one
			2001	Raven	Grave Digger	Germany	Heavy	4/4	Dm	
1849	A Dream Within a Dream	Edgar Allan Poe	2014	Dream Within a Dream	Lyriel	Germany	Symphonic	4/4	Cm	Life (intangibility)
1849	Annabel Lee	Edgar Allan Poe	1996	A Gothic Romance (Red Roses for the Devil's Whore)	Cradle of Filth	UK	Black	3/4 4/4	Cm	Death of a loved one
			2001	Annabel Lee	Lucyfire	Germany	Gothic	4/4	Bm	
1863	The Challenge of Thor	Henry W. Longfellow	2010	Stormgod	Imperial Triumphant	USA	Black	4/4	Em	Religion (anti-Christian)
1898	The Ballad of Reading Gaol	Oscar Wilde	2016	Hands of Gold	Delain	Netherlands	Symphonic	4/4	Am	Love (dangerous)
1906	O God of Earth and Altar	G.K. Chesterton	1983	Revelations	Iron Maiden	UK	Heavy	4/4	Am	Spirituality, religion
1915	Peace	Rupert Brooke	2009	The New Brythonic Legacy	Nihternnes	UK	Black	4/4 3/4	Am	War, honour
1920	Anthem for Doomed Youth	Wilfred Owen								War, grief, death
1919	Prelude: The Troops	Siegfried Sassoon	2017	When the Guns Fell Silent	Warbringer	USA	Thrash	4/4 3/4	G#m	War, grief, death
1916	The Voice of the Guns	Gilbert Frankau								War, death
1920	Anthem for Doomed Youth	Wilfred Owen	1990	Anthem - Chapter II	Sieges Even	Germany	Progressive	Additive	Non-func.	War, grief, death
			1999	Anthem for Doomed Youth	Darker Half	Australia	Thrash	4/4	Em	

Table 52. Analysed transformations of the *reelaboration* category.

Year	Poem	Author	Year	Song	Band	Country	Subgenre	Meter	Key	Topics
1674	<i>Paradise Lost</i>	John Milton	1993	Paradise Lost	Morgana Lefay	Sweden	Power	4/4	Dm	Power, religion, rebellion
			2005	The Apostasy Canticle	Draconian	Sweden	Doom	3/4 4/4	Gm	
			2014	White Logic	4th Dimension	Italy	Power	4/4	Abm	
1829	Alone	Edgar Allan Poe	2007	From Childhood's Hour	Circus Maximus	Norway	Progressive	Additive	Em	Isolation, alienation
1842	The Lady of Shalott	Alfred, Lord Tennyson	2010	Lady of Shalott	A Dream of Poe	Portugal	Doom	4/4	Bm C#m	Love (sorrow), fantasy
1845	The Raven	Edgar Allan Poe	1998	My Lost Lenore	Tristania	Norway	Gothic	3/4	Em	Madness, death of a loved one
			2004	Ravenheart	Xandria	German	Symphonic	4/4	Gm	Love (dangerous)
			2010	Quoth the Raven	Eluveitie	Switzerland	Folk	4/4	Ebm	Madness, death of a loved one
1849	Annabel Lee	Edgar Allan Poe	2001	Annabel Lee	Akin	France	Progressive	4/4	Dm A	Death of a loved one
1849	Eldorado	Edgar Allan Poe	2010	El Dorado	Iron Maiden	UK	Heavy	4/4	Gm	Spirituality over materialism
1854	The Charge of the Light Brigade	Alfred, Lord Tennyson	1983	The Trooper	Iron Maiden	UK	Heavy	4/4	Em	War, death, nationalism
1899	The Night Has a Thousand Eyes	Francis W. Bourdillon	2007	Drawn to Black	Insomnium	Finland	Death	4/4	Dm Am	Love (sorrow)
1914	For the Fallen	Laurence Binyon	1994	...For Victory	Bolt Thrower	UK	Death	4/4	D#m phryg	War, grief, death
1915	In Flanders Fields	John McCrae	2006	We Are the Dead	Crimson Falls	Belgium	Death	4/4	Bm	War, grief, death

Table 53. Analysed transformations of the *reorientation* category.

Year	Poem	Author	Year	Song	Band	Country	Subgenre	Topics
1593	<i>Venus and Adonis</i>	William Shakespeare	1996	For My Fallen Angel	My Dying Bride	UK	Doom	Death of a loved one
1648	To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time	Robert Herrick	1995	A Change of Seasons	Dream Theater	USA	Progressive	Cycle of life
1667	<i>Paradise Lost</i>	John Milton	2001	Wish	Forest of Shadows	Sweden	Doom	Power, religion, rebellion
			2003	Landscape	Advent	Italy	Black	
			2014	First Mother (Lilith)	Silent Planet	USA	Metalcore	
1827	Imitation	Edgar Allan Poe	2014	Spirit	Ghost	Sweden	Heavy	Sadness (broken friendship)
1844	Dreamland	Edgar Allan Poe	1995	[Whole album]	Carpathian Forest	Norway	Black	Escape to a fantasy world
1845	The Raven	Edgar Allan Poe	1995	The Eclipse/The Raven	Carpathian Forest	Norway	Black	Madness, death of a loved one
			2005	This Godless Endeavor	Nevermore	USA	Progressive	
1849	A Dream Within a Dream	Edgar Allan Poe	1992	Sweat	Tool	USA	Progressive	Life (intangibility)
			1998	Through the Looking Glass	Symphony X	USA	Progressive	
1936	<i>The Waste Land</i>	T.S. Eliot	2007	The Light at the Edge of the World	Darkest Hour	USA	Death	Despair (about life)
1959	Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night	Dylan Thomas	2015	Resonance	Within the Fall	Sweden	Doom-death	Hope (against depression)

Table 54. Analysed transformations of the *citation* category.

Transformations	Poems
70	“Paradise Lost” (John Milton, 1667)
40	“The Raven” (Edgar Allan Poe, 1845)
18	“Spirits of the Dead” (Edgar Allan Poe, 1826)
16	“A Dream within a Dream” (Edgar Allan Poe, 1849)
10	“The City in the Sea” (Edgar Allan Poe, 1845)
9	“In Flanders Fields” (John McCrae, 1915)
8	“Alone” (Edgar Allan Poe, 1827)
	“Annabel Lee” (Edgar Allan Poe, 1849)
	“Anthem for Doomed Youth” (Wilfred Owen, 1920)
	“Dulce et Decorum Est” (Wilfred Owen, 1920)
7	“The Conqueror Worm” (Edgar Allan Poe, 1843)
6	“Dream-Land” (Edgar Allan Poe, 1844)
5	“Lenore” (Edgar Allan Poe, 1830)
	“The Sleeper” (Edgar Allan Poe, 1831)
	“The Valley of Unrest” (Edgar Allan Poe, 1831)
	“The Haunted Palace” (Edgar Allan Poe, 1839)
	“Eldorado” (Edgar Allan Poe, 1849)
	“Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night” (Dylan Thomas, 1952)
4	“The Bells” (Edgar Allan Poe, 1849)
3	“Flow My Tears” (John Dowland, 1596)
	“Visions of the Daughters of Albion” (William Blake, 1793)
	“The Tyger” (William Blake, 1794)
	“Evening Star” (Edgar Allan Poe, 1827)
	“For the Fallen (Ode of Remembrance)” (Laurence Binyon, 1914)
2	“To His Coy Mistress” (Andrew Marvell, 1681)
	“The Book of Thel” (William Blake, 1789)
	“Auguries of Innocence” (William Blake, 1794)
	“Darkness” (Lord Byron, 1816)
	“Kubla Khan” (Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 1816)
	“Imitation” (Edgar Allan Poe, 1826)
	“Tamerlane” (Edgar Allan Poe, 1827)
	“The Lake. To —” (Edgar Allan Poe, 1827)
	“The Lady of Shalott” (Alfred, Lord Tennyson, 1833)
	“I Felt a Funeral in My Brain” (Emily Dickinson, 1862)
	“When You See Millions of the Mouthless Dead” (Charles Hamilton Sorley, 1916)
	“The Waste Land” (T.S. Eliot, 1922)
	1
“O Death, Rock Me Asleep” (attributed to Anne Boleyn, 1536)	
“Venus and Adonis” (William Shakespeare, 1593)	
“Change Thy Mind Since She Doth Change” (Robert Devereux, 1597)	
“The Sunn Is Set” (Robert Sidney, 1597)	
“Sonnet CIV” (William Shakespeare, 1609)	

Transformations	Poems
	"Sonnet CXLVI" (William Shakespeare, 1609)
	"Sonnet CXXX" (William Shakespeare, 1609)
	"Sonnet XXIX" (William Shakespeare, 1609)
	"A Pilgrime's Solace - The Fourth Book of Songs" (John Dowland, 1612)
	"Comus" (John Milton, 1634)
	"Lycidas" (John Milton, 1638)
	"The Hag" (Robert Herrick, 1648)
	"To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time" (Robert Herrick, 1648)
	"Ah the Shepherd's Mournful Fate" (William Hamilton, 1724)
	"An Essay on Man" (Alexander Pope, 1734)
	"Gwin, King of Norway" (William Blake, 1777)
	"Night" (William Blake, 1789)
	"Spring" (William Blake, 1789)
	"A Song of Liberty" (William Blake, 1792)
	"Earth's Answer" (William Blake, 1794)
	"Infant Sorrow" (William Blake, 1794)
	"London" (William Blake, 1794)
	"The Book of Urizen" (William Blake, 1794)
	"The Human Abstract" (William Blake, 1794)
	"Never Pain to Tell Thy Love" (William Blake, 1796)
	<i>Rime of the Ancient Mariner</i> (Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 1798)
	"A Slumber Did My Spirit Seal" (William Wordsworth, 1798)
	"Jerusalem – To the Jews" (William Blake, 1804)
	"Vala – Night the Fourth" (William Blake, 1807)
	"Ode: Intimations of Immortality" (William Wordsworth, 1807)
	"English Bards and Scotch Reviewers" (Lord Byron, 1809)
	"A Spirit Passed Before Me" (Lord Byron, 1813)
	"The Corsair" (Lord Byron, 1814)
	"After Dark Vapours Have Oppres'd Our Plains" (John Keats, 1817)
	"When the Moon Is on the Wave (from Manfred)" (Lord Byron, 1817)
	"Meg Merrilies" (John Keats, 1818)
	"Ozymandias" (Percy Bysshe Shelley, 1818)
	"Hyperion" (John Keats, 1819)
	"Peter Bell the Third" (Percy Bysshe Shelley, 1819)
	"Ode on a Grecian Urn" (John Keats, 1820)
	"Ode to a Nightingale" (John Keats, 1820)
	"Jerusalem" (William Blake, 1820)
	"Time" (Percy Bysshe Shelley, 1821)
	"A Dream" (Edgar Allan Poe, 1827)
	"Al Aaraaf" (Edgar Allan Poe, 1827)
	"Dreams" (Edgar Allan Poe, 1827)
	"Stanzas. 4" (Edgar Allan Poe, 1827)
	"Romance" (Edgar Allan Poe, 1828)

Transformations	Poems
	“Fairy-Land” (Edgar Allan Poe, 1829)
	“The Coliseum” (Edgar Allan Poe, 1832)
	“Ulysses” (Alfred, Lord Tennyson, 1833)
	“Serenade” (Edgar Allan Poe, 1833)
	“To One in Paradise” (Edgar Allan Poe, 1834)
	“The Reaper and the Flowers” (Henry W. Longfellow, 1839)
	“Eulalie” (Edgar Allan Poe, 1845)
	“The Divine Right of Kings” (Edgar Allan Poe, 1845)
	“Ulalume” (Edgar Allan Poe, 1847)
	“When I Have Fears That I May Cease to Be” (John Keats, 1848)
	“The Charge of the Light Brigade” (Alfred, Lord Tennyson, 1854)
	“A Song of Joys” (Walt Whitman, 1855)
	“Song of Myself” (Walt Whitman, 1855)
	“You Left Me” (Emily Dickinson, 1861)
	“When I Am Dead, My Dearest” (Christina Rossetti, 1862)
	“Because I Could Not Stop for Death” (Emily Dickinson, 1862)
	“The Challenge of Thor” (Henry W. Longfellow, 1863)
	“Hymn to Proserpine” (Algernon Ch. Swinburne, 1866)
	“Hertha” (Algernon Ch. Swinburne, 1869)
	“The Night Has a Thousand Eyes” (Francis W. Bourdillon, 1873)
	“Tristitia” (Oscar Wilde, 1876)
	“Panthea” (Oscar Wilde, 1881)
	“The Camp of Souls” (Isabella V. Crawford, 1882)
	“The Sorrow of Love” (William Butler Yeats, 1891)
	“The Hosting of the Sidhe” (William Butler Yeats, 1893)
	“The Law for the Wolves” (Rudyard Kipling, 1894)
	“The City of Darkness” (Madison Julius Cawein, 1896)
	“In Tenebris” (Thomas Hardy, 1896)
	“The Ballad of Reading Gaol” (Oscar Wilde, 1898)
	“Requiem” (David Park Barnitz, 1901)
	“Sombre Sonnet” (David Park Barnitz, 1901)
	“Unforgotten” (Laurence Hope, 1901)
	“At the Sign of the Skull” (Madison Julius Cawein, 1901)
	“To Life” (Thomas Hardy, 1901)
	“To Pan” (H. P. Lovecraft, 1902)
	“A Hymn: O God of Earth and Altar” (G. K. Chesterton, 1906)
	“The Dead Man Walking” (Thomas Hardy, 1906)
	“Sleeping Out: Full Moon” (Rupert Brooke, 1908)
	“Dead Men’s Love” (Rupert Brooke, 1911)
	“These Are the Clouds” (William Butler Yeats, 1911)
	“Hymn to Pan” (Aleister Crowley, 1913)
	“The Supreme Ritual” (Aleister Crowley, 1913)
	“Κεφαλα: Sabbath of the Goat” (Aleister Crowley, 1913)

Transformations	Poems
	"The Unreturning" (Wilfred Owen, 1913)
	"Peace" (Rupert Brooke, 1914)
	"The Voice of the Guns" (Gilbert Frankau, 1916)
	"A Garden" (H. P. Lovecraft, 1917)
	"Satan Speaks" (C. S. Lewis, 1919)
	"Despair" (H. P. Lovecraft, 1919)
	"I Stood with the Dead" (Siegfried Sassoon, 1919)
	"Suicide in the Trenches" (Siegfried Sassoon, 1919)
	"The Troops" (Siegfried Sassoon, 1919)
	"Eyes That Last I Saw in Tears" (T. S. Eliot, 1919)
	"The Titanic" (Aleister Crowley, 1920)
	"The Cats" (H. P. Lovecraft, 1925)
	"The Wood" (H. P. Lovecraft, 1929)
	"Do Not Stand by My Grave and Weep" (Mary Elizabeth Frye, 1932)
	"Four Quartets – Burnt Norton" (T. S. Eliot, 1943)
	"All That Is Gold Shall Not Glitter" (J. R. R. Tolkien, 1954)
	"Three Rings for the Elven Kings" (J. R. R. Tolkien, 1954)
	"A Poem about an Old Prison Man" (Charles Manson, 1984)
	"Dinosauria, We" (Charles Bukowski, 1991)

Table 55. Number of transformations per poem.

* The poet's death. Exact date of composition unknown.

Year	Song	Album	Band
1983	Revelations	<i>Piece of Mind</i>	Iron Maiden
1983	The Trooper		
1984	Rime of the Ancient Mariner	<i>Powerslave</i>	Iron Maiden
1986	The Raven	<i>Time Heals Everything</i>	Metropolis
1990	Bring Your Daughter to the Slaughter	<i>No Prayer for the Dying</i>	Iron Maiden
1990	Anthem – Chapter I	<i>Steps</i>	Sieges Even
1990	Anthem – Chapter II		
1990	The Raven	<i>Dead End</i>	Turbo
1990	Judas	<i>Eclipse</i>	Yngwie J. Malmsteen
1991	A Funeral Request	<i>Forest of Equilibrium</i>	Cathedral
1991	Paradise Lost	<i>Paradise Lost</i>	Cirith Ungol
1992	Sweat	<i>Opiate</i>	Tool
1993	Sonnet No. 146	<i>Colour Trip</i>	Colour Trip
1993	Paradise Lost	<i>The Secret Doctrine</i>	Morgana Lefay
1993	Black God	<i>Turn Loose the Swans</i>	My Dying Bride
1994	...For Victory	<i>...For Victory</i>	Bolt Thrower
1994	The Raven Song	<i>The Marriage of Heaven & Hell</i>	Virgin Steele
1995	The Eclipse/The Raven	<i>Through Chasm, Caves and Titan Woods</i>	Carpathian Forest
1995	The Lord of the Rings	<i>The Burning</i>	Crown of Thorns
1995	A Change of Seasons	<i>A Change of Seasons</i>	Dream Theatre
1995	S.O.D.	<i>First Bequest</i>	End Zone
1995	Gwin, King of Norway	<i>And the Voice from Legend Will Proclaim</i>	Goresleeps
1995	The Haunted Palace	<i>Totentanz</i>	Lunatic Invasion
1996	A Gothic Romance (Red Roses for the Devil's Whore)	<i>Dusk and Her Embrace</i>	Cradle of Filth
1996	Paradise Lost	<i>Paradise Lost</i>	Division
1996	Babylon	<i>The Cold Earth Slept Below...</i>	Judas Iscariot
1996	For My Fallen Angel	<i>Like Gods of the Sun</i>	My Dying Bride
1997	Alone	<i>La Masquerade Infernale</i>	Arcturus
1997	A Dream within a Dream	<i>Till the Cows Come Home</i>	Farmer Boys
1997	Alone Walkyng	<i>The Dawn of the Dying Sun</i>	Hades
1997	Kingdom	<i>Forever War</i>	Kickback
1997	When the Moon Is on the Wave	<i>The Linear Scaffold</i>	Solefald
1998	Jerusalem	<i>The Chemical Wedding</i>	Bruce Dickinson
1998	Book of Thel		
1998	A Dream within a Dream	<i>Totentanz</i>	Danse Macabre
1998	Unearthly	<i>Thieves of Kisses</i>	Drastic
1998	...By Untrodden Paths		
1998	Sringjail		
1998	Blue Light Prisoners		
1998	Stream of Unconsciousness		
1998	Ad Infinitum	<i>What Will Be Has Been</i>	Epoch of Unlight

Year	Song	Album	Band
1998	Through the Looking Glass	<i>Twilight in Olympus</i>	Symphony X
1998	My Lost Lenore	<i>Widow's Weeds</i>	Tristania
1999	Les Posédes	<i>Higher Art of Rebellion</i>	Agathodaimon
1999	Sonnet XXIX	<i>Listen and Cry</i>	D. Throne
1999	At the Night's Plutonian Shore	<i>Baneful Skies</i>	Dark at Dawn
1999	Anthem for Doomed Youth	<i>Duality</i>	Darker Half
1999	The Sleeper	<i>Fountain of Tears</i>	Fountain of Tears
1999	Reprisal – Malis Avibus	<i>Domus Mundi</i>	Hollenthon
1999	Anthem for a Doomed Youth	<i>Driven to Conquer</i>	Internal Bleeding
1999	Paradise Lost	<i>Silent Scream</i>	Kelly Simonz's Blind Faith
1999	Paradise Lost	<i>Paradise Lost</i>	Symphony of Sorrow
1999	Thule	<i>The Vampire Chronicles</i>	Theatres des Vampires
1999	Throne of Dark Immortals		
1999	Preludium		
1999	Anthem for Doomed Youth	<i>Criteria Ov 666</i>	Void of Silence
2000	Stay	<i>Here Lies One Whose Name Was Written in Water</i>	Aesma Daeva
2000	When I Have Fears That I May Cease to Be		
2000	Downvain		
2000	Darkness		
2000	Darkness (Stromkern)		
2000	O Death (Rock Me Asleep)		
2000	Eyes That Last I Saw in Tears	<i>Last Temptation</i>	Delight
2000	Plenitude Is a Perfect Vacancy		
2000	Fumes She Holdeth	<i>Midnight in the Garden of Hell</i>	In Tha Umbra
2000	Crescent		
2000	Shadow, Caressing Shadow		
2000	The Spring Breathes Horrors		
2000	The Mercenary	<i>Brave New World</i>	Iron Maiden
2000	The Conqueror Worm	<i>Deceitful Melody</i>	Odes of Ecstasy
2000	The Raven Pt.1	<i>Phantasmagoria</i>	Odium
2000	After Dark Vapours Have Oppres'd Our Plains	<i>Seraphine... Far Gone Gleam</i>	Paragon of Beauty
2000	Thou Art Free	<i>Martyre</i>	Saturnus
2000	Lost My Way		
2000	Paradise Lost	<i>Divine Lies</i>	Sinister Creed
2000	Deja-Vu Ain't What It Used to Be	<i>Folkemon</i>	Skyclad
2000	Ozymandias	<i>Ichor</i>	The Black League
2001	A Poem by Yeats	<i>Of Stone, Wind and Pillor</i>	Agalloch
2001	Stanza #4		
2001	Dreamland		
2001	To One in Paradise		
2001	Evening Star		
2001	Lenore	<i>Verse</i>	Akin

Year	Song	Album	Band
2001	A Dream Within a Dream		
2001	The Valley of Unrest		
2001	Annabel Lee		
2001	Lenore		
2001	Serpents in Paradise	<i>The Metal Opera</i>	Avantasia
2001	Reptilian Shudders	<i>Veiled Hideousness</i>	Blinded by Faith
2001	A Dream Within a Dream	<i>The Lesser Travelled Seas</i>	Cadaverous Condition
2001	A Winter's Dream	<i>Crimson Frost</i>	Dark at Dawn
2001	Architecture of a Genocidal Nature	<i>Puritanical Euphoric Misanthropy</i>	Dimmu Borgir
2001	Time	<i>Mysterium</i>	Even Song
2001	Haunted Palace	<i>The Grave Digger</i>	Grave Digger
2001	Raven		
2001	Spirits of the Dead		
2001	Annabel Lee	<i>This Dollar Saved My Life at Whitehorse</i>	Lucyfire
2001	Xanadu (A Vision in a Dream)	<i>At the Gates of Utopia</i>	Stormlord
2001	The Secrets of the Earth		
2001	Dances with Satan (Cut the Throat Version)	<i>Iubilaeum Anno Dracula 2001</i>	Theatres des Vampires
2001	Une Saison en Enfer	<i>Bloody Lunatic Asylum</i>	Theatres des Vampires
2001	Pale Religious Letchery		
2001	Oath of Supremacy		
2001	Lunatic Asylum		
2001	Mirkwood Sonnet	<i>Microcosmos</i>	Thy Catafalque
2001	These Are the Clouds		
2002	Nevermore	<i>The Gates of Oblivion</i>	Dark Moor
2002	Paradise Lost	<i>Paradise Lost</i>	David Valdes
2002	Valley of Unrest	<i>Valley of Unrest</i>	Fireign
2002	The Hosting of the Sidhe	<i>Storm Before Calm</i>	Primordial
2002	Spirits of the Dead	<i>Sick of Silence</i>	Toxic
2002	War in Heaven	<i>Rising Out of the Ashes</i>	Warlord
2003	Paradise Lost	<i>The Dawn</i>	Advent
2003	Landscape		
2003	The City in the Sea	<i>Forecast</i>	Akin
2003	Better to Reign in Hell	<i>Damnation and a Day</i>	Cradle of Filth
2003	Serpent Tongue		
2003	Carrion		
2003	A Slumber Did My Spirit Seal	<i>Where Lovers Mourn</i>	Draconian
2003	Quoth the Raven	<i>Sirens of the Styx</i>	Ilium
2003	Paradise Lost	<i>Resurrection</i>	James D. Gilmore
2003	Paradise Lost: Chapter 1	<i>Driven By Fate</i>	Odin's Court
2003	Anthem for Doomed Youth	<i>Hiding in Plain Sight</i>	The Restless Breed
2003	Annabel Lee	<i>Fallen Stars and Rising Scars</i>	Wastefall
2004	Rage, Rage Against The Dying Of	<i>Domine Non Es Dignus</i>	Anaal Nathrakh

Year	Song	Album	Band
	The Light		
2004	To Pan	<i>The Raven</i>	The Old Ones
2004	Alone		
2004	Funeral Song		
2004	Eulalie		
2004	The Raven		
2004	Slippers in the Snow	<i>Window Dressing</i>	Tiles
2004	Modern Nemesis Syndicate	<i>Viimeinen vitutus</i>	Uhrilehto
2004	Ravenheart	<i>Ravenheart</i>	Xandria
2005	Spirits of the Dead	<i>Iridescent Fear</i>	Aeons ov Frost
2005	Imitation		
2005	Bells Pt.4		
2005	Possession (Lord of Shadow Pt. I)	<i>Dark Mirror ov Tragedy</i>	Dark Mirror ov Tragedy
2005	The Apostasy Canticle	<i>Arcane Rain Fell</i>	Draconian
2005	Wish	<i>Where Dreams Turn to Dust</i>	Forest of Shadows
2005	Raven	<i>Meaning of Life</i>	Greedy Invalid
2005	Thunderchaos Pentagramma	<i>Nigrium Nigrius Nigro</i>	In Tha Umbra
2005	Once Atrocitie Has Hacked Upon Daylight's Throat		
2005	Linger Venom		
2005	Through Lycanthropie's Trod Communion		
2005	This Godless Endeavor	<i>This Godless Endeavor</i>	Nevermore
2005	1917 – Spring Offensive (Dulce et Decorum Est)	<i>The White Crematorium</i>	The Monolith Deathcult
2005	The City in the Sea	<i>Aeolian</i>	The Ocean
2006	Paradise Lost	<i>Whispers of Doom</i>	Chaos Theory
2006	In Flanders Fields	<i>The True Face of Human Nature</i>	Crimson Falls
2006	We Are the Dead		
2006	A Poem about an Old Prison Man	<i>Organic Hallucinosi</i>	Decapitated
2006	Dulce Et Decorum Est	<i>No cesa el tronar del cañón</i>	Et Verbi Sathanus
2006	Alone	<i>Acoustic Verses</i>	Green Carnation
2006	Drawn to Black	<i>Above the Weeping World</i>	Insomnium
2006	Dances with Satan	<i>Desire of Damnation</i>	Theatres des Vampires
2007	The Camp of Souls	<i>Dawn of the New Athens</i>	Aesma Daeva
2007	In Flanders Fields	<i>Back at the Front</i>	Amplifire
2007	Paradise Lost	<i>Polar Night</i>	Black Aurora
2007	Paradise Lost	<i>(...) Perfecto Mundo (...)</i>	CETI
2007	From Childhood's Hour	<i>Isolate</i>	Circus Maximus
2007	The Light at the Edge of the World	<i>Deliver Us</i>	Darkest Hour
2007	The Conqueror Worm	<i>Cemetery Earth</i>	Pale Divine
2007	Spirits of the Dead	<i>Quoth the Raven Nevermore</i>	Shadowthrone
2007	The Lake. To —		
2007	Fairyland		
2007	Lenore		

Year	Song	Album	Band
2007	The Haunted Palace		
2007	The City in the Sea		
2007	Annabel Lee		
2007	Tamerlane		
2007	Expiration	<i>World Expiration</i>	Soulfallen
2007	Set the World on Fire (The Lie of Lies)	<i>Paradise Lost</i>	Symphony X
2007	Domination		
2007	The Serpent's Kiss		
2007	Paradise Lost		
2007	Eve of Seduction		
2007	The Walls of Babylon		
2007	Seven		
2007	The Sacrifice		
2007	Revelation (Divus Pennae Ex Tragoedia)		
2007	Paradise Lost	::Ga[Я]deN::	刹那
2008	The Conqueror Worm	<i>Proclama</i>	Adversam
2008	A World in Darkness	<i>Dominion VIII</i>	Grave
2008	I Felt a Funeral	<i>La Voce Dei Morti</i>	Malnätt
2008	Dulce et Decorum Est	<i>The Fifth Stage</i>	NecroCarcass
2008	Paradise Lost	<i>End of Time</i>	Sudden Access
2008	The Wood	<i>Transition</i>	The Sundial
2008	Sleeping Out: Full Moon		
2008	Spirits of the Dead		
2008	A Dream		
2008	Of Paradise and Love		
2008	Dreamland		
2008	Dream within a Dream		
2008	Dead Men's Love		
2009	Season of the Starved Wolf	<i>Infinite Titanic Immortal</i>	A Hill to Die Upon
2009	Prometheus Rebound		
2009	Tenebrarum (Intro)	<i>After the Fall</i>	Forsaken
2009	The Conqueror Worm From E. A. Poe	<i>Lustration</i>	Guilthee
2009	Paradise Lost	<i>Among the Serpents</i>	In Hell
2009	Spirits of the Dead	<i>Spirits Of...</i>	Mourning Crimson
2009	The Sleeper		
2009	Ulalume – A Ballad		
2009	In Flanders Fields	<i>For the Fallen...</i>	Mourning Dawn
2009	For the Fallen...		
2009	The New Brythonic Legacy	<i>The Mouthless Dead</i>	Nihternnes
2009	When You See Millions of the Mouthless Dead		
2009	Paradise Lost	<i>Sacred Oath</i>	Sacred Oath

Year	Song	Album	Band
2009	I Stood with the Dead	<i>Erase the Equation</i>	Satyrus
2010	Lady of Shalott	<i>Lady of Shalott</i>	A Dream of Poe
2010	Psychogrotesque X	<i>Psychogrotesque</i>	Aborym
2010	A Corsair's Name	<i>Colossus</i>	Arbiter
2010	Control the Divine	<i>At the Edge of Time</i>	Blind Guardian
2010	Nevermore	<i>Revenants</i>	Conducting From the Grave
2010	Quoth the Raven	<i>Everything Remains (As It Never Was)</i>	Eluveitie
2010	If Shakespeare Had a Myspace Profile	<i>Collisions</i>	His Statue Falls
2010	Stormgod	<i>Obeisance</i>	Imperial Triumphant
2010	El Dorado	<i>The Final Frontier</i>	Iron Maiden
2010	Elderberry and Lavender	<i>Paranoid Circus</i>	Lyriel
2010	Another Time		
2010	The City in the Sea	<i>The City in the Sea</i>	Mourning Crimson
2010	Deep Into That Darkness Peering	<i>Beyond the Space Beyond the Time</i>	Pathfinder
2010	Salvation Through Sin	<i>Salvation Through Sin</i>	Sanhedrin
2010	Spirits of the Dead	<i>From Passion... To Chaos</i>	Sinister Moon
2010	Spirits of the Dead	<i>Tales of the Coffin Born</i>	The Grotesquery
2010	Anthem for a Doomed Youth	<i>Krieg</i>	Tivaz
2010	Paradise Lost	<i>Night's Symphonies</i>	Wolfuneral
2011	The Chant of Mighty Offspring	<i>Omens</i>	A Hill to Die Upon
2011	Lenore	<i>Bet the Devil</i>	Bet the Devil
2011	Midnight Dreary		
2011	Tamerlane	<i>The Raven</i>	David Brewster
2011	City in the Sea		
2011	Within a Dream		
2011	The Sleeper		
2011	Aaraaf		
2011	The Bells		
2011	The Raven		
2011	The Death of Hours	<i>A Rose for the Apocalypse</i>	Draconian
2011	Elysian Night		
2011	Dead World Assembly		
2011	Dulce Et Decorum	<i>Magic Dagger</i>	Frost Commander
2011	Valley of Unrest	<i>Legacy of Emptiness</i>	Legacy of Emptiness
2011	Song of Myself	<i>Imaginaerum</i>	Nightwish
2011	Dreamland	<i>Rhymes of Man</i>	Pandora 101
2011	Spirits of the Dead	<i>The Poe Sessions – and Random Pieces of Black Metal</i>	Tremor
2011	Lenore		
2012	Raven	<i>Disconnected</i>	Aethara
2012	Evening Star	<i>The Giant</i>	Ahab
2012	City in the Sea	<i>Eldorado</i>	Armageddon
2012	Eldorado		

Year	Song	Album	Band
2012	Paradise Lost	<i>Embracing the Void</i>	Burnt Church
2012	.44	<i>Veniversum</i>	De Lirium's Order
2012	The Last Farewell	<i>Simulacra</i>	Devilish Impressions
2012	Lilith		
2012	Spiritual Blackout		
2012	The Scream of the Lambs		
2012	Vi Veri Vniversum Vivus Vici		
2012	Hymn to Pan		
2012	Κεφαλή: Sabbath of the Goat		
2012	The Supreme Ritual		
2012	Darkness		
2012	Paradise Lost (Weltschmerz)	<i>Diagnosis</i>	Lilla Veneda
2012	The Raven	<i>Lost in Transylvania</i>	Sighisoara
2012	The Cats	<i>Somnolent Melancholy</i>	Sorg Uten Tårer
2012	Alone		
2012	A Dream within a Dream		
2012	Labyrinth of London (Horror pt. IV)	<i>Emerald Forest and the Blackbird</i>	Swallow the Sun
2013	Pandæmonium	<i>Okkult</i>	Atrocity
2013	The Conqueror Worm	<i>We Don't Fear Your God</i>	Dantesco
2013	Mourning Star	<i>The Didact</i>	Means End
2013	A Dream within a Dream	<i>Silent Pieces</i>	Moonsun
2013	Nameless Here for Evermore	<i>Nameless Here for Evermore</i>	Mortis Mutilati
2013	Quoth the Raven, Nevermore		
2013	Alone	<i>Night Serenade</i>	Mourning Crimson
2013	Night Serenade		
2013	Paradise Lost	<i>The One of the Black Goatskin</i>	The Pagan Dead
2014	White Logic	<i>Dispelling the Veil of Illusions</i>	4th Dimension
2014	Satan Speaks		
2014	A Jester Arrayed in Burning God		
2014	Rime (Jerub-Ba'al)	<i>Holy Despair</i>	A Hill to Die Upon
2014	The Raven		
2014	The Raven	<i>These Castle Walls</i>	Cosmivore
2014	The Raven	<i>Once Upon a Midnight Dreary</i>	Crystal Crow
2014	Dream within a Dream	<i>Social Disorder</i>	Enjoy Sarma
2014	Dreamland	<i>After Dawn</i>	Et Cetera
2014	Dream Within a Dream	<i>Skin and Bones</i>	Lyriel
2014	Élan	<i>Endless Forms Most Beautiful</i>	Nightwish
2014	Wasteland (Vechnost)	<i>The Night God Slept</i>	Silent Planet
2014	Depths II		
2014	First Mother (Lilith)		
2014	For the Fallen...	<i>For the Fallen</i>	Silent Wood
2014	Misery Hymn	<i>Unconsecrated</i>	The Red Shore

Year	Song	Album	Band
2015	Hopeless	<i>As All Light Leaves Her</i>	Advent Sorrow
2015	City in the Sea	<i>Atten Ash</i>	Atten Ash
2015	Rebel's Lament	<i>Preludes & Nocturnes</i>	Carnal Agony
2015	Rebellion		
2015	The Frozen Throne		
2015	To Life	<i>When I Am Dead</i>	Cerebrium
2015	The Hag		
2015	In Tenebris		
2015	The Dead Man Walking		
2015	Song [When I Am Dead]		
2015	The Unreturning		
2015	Spirit	<i>Meliora</i>	Ghost
2015	Paradise Lost	<i>Far Beyond the Grave</i>	Mourned by Flies
2015	The Raven	<i>A Matter of Supremacy</i>	My Refuge
2015	War Graves (Dulce et Decorum Est...)	<i>Hubris in Excelsis</i>	Scythian
2015	The Laws...		
2015	Against the Dying of the Light	<i>Remedie</i>	Sorrowful Angels
2015	Paradise Lost	<i>Reign of Illusion</i>	Symphonia
2015	Lady of Shalot		
2015	Paradise Lost	<i>Gateway to Madness</i>	Theory of Chaos
2015	Resonance	<i>Where Sorrow Grows</i>	Within the Fall
2016	Eldorado	<i>Champion</i>	A Hero for the World
2016	Paradise Lost As Harmony Breaks	<i>The Angel Experiment</i>	Abandoned by Light
2016	The Haunted Palace	<i>House of Usher</i>	Aeternitas
2016	The Raven: A Thrash Metal Opera	<i>The Raven: A Thrash Metal Opera</i>	Chris Violence
2016	The Bells	<i>Tales from Obscurity</i>	Darkage
2016	Hands of Gold	<i>Moonbathers</i>	Delain
2016	Paradise Lost	<i>Under a Green Sky</i>	Gaia's Revenge
2016	The Raven	<i>Dying Earth</i>	Killin' Kind
2016	The Haunted Palace	<i>Insolubilis</i>	Minotaurus
2016	The Raven	<i>For the Darkening</i>	Shantak
2016	Inherit the Earth	<i>Everything Was Sound</i>	Silent Planet
2016	Spirits of the Dead	<i>The Unknown</i>	The Vision Bleak
2016	The Ghost Possessed	<i>Alive Asleep Awake</i>	Vlad
2017	Annabel Lee	<i>Lust for Wonder</i>	Döxa
2017	Lenore	<i>Of Woe or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Gloom</i>	Ever Circling Wolves
2017	Evening Star	<i>Over the Past</i>	Legacy of Emptiness
2017	City of Darkness	<i>Braggart Stories and Dark Poems</i>	Mad Duck
2017	At the Sign of the Skull		
2017	Eldorado		
2017	Tyger		

Year	Song	Album	Band
2017	Paradise Lost	<i>Inside This Fucking World</i>	Nightcap
2017	The Queen of the Moors	<i>Forward Into the Past</i>	Skyclad
2017	The Raven	<i>To Conquer</i>	Souls of Rage
2017	Phoenix Rise	<i>To the Elements</i>	Sun of the Sleepless
2017	Proserpina	<i>Worship of the Gods</i>	Tersivel
2017	When the Guns Fell Silent	<i>Woe to the Vanquished</i>	Warbringer
2018	Dream in a Dream	<i>Tales of the Grotesque</i>	Aeternitas
2018	Annabel Lee		
2018	The Bells		
2018	Eldorado		
2018	The Raven		
2018	Millions of the Mouthless Dead	<i>War Ethics</i>	Blacksheep
2018	A Dream within a Dream	<i>Pray for Doom</i>	Dawn of Winter
2018	Raven	<i>Curves of Sidereal Cosmos</i>	Distorted Force
2018	Paradise Lost	<i>Here It Comes</i>	Garage Days
2018	Damn Demons of Despair	<i>Bleeding Black</i>	Mandibulla
2018	The Garden		
2018	Alone		
2018	Underwater Grave		
2018	A Dream within a Dream		
2018	Spirits of the Dead	<i>Quoth the Raven</i>	Nimphaion
2018	A Dream within a Dream		
2018	Annabel Lee		
2018	Raven		
2018	Lenore		
2018	The Sleeper		
2018	The Conqueror Worm		
2018	Valley of Unrest		
2018	The Raven Nevermore	<i>Gates of the Gods</i>	RavenSkül
2018	Paradise Lost	<i>Throne Ablaze</i>	Valkyrja
2018	Spirits of the Dead	<i>The Interpreter</i>	Wachenfeldt
2019	Spirits of the Dead	<i>The Wraith Uncrowned</i>	A Dream of Poe
2019	Apoptosis, 2 vinyl limited edition	<i>Apoptosis</i>	Allegaeon
2019	In Flanders Fields	<i>New Dawn</i>	Altheya
2019	In Flanders Fields	<i>Brand New Start</i>	Beyond the Labyrinth
2019	The Conqueror Worm	<i>Special Purpose</i>	C.I.A. Hippie Mind Control
2019	Paradise Lost?	<i>Here and Now</i>	Geoda
2019	Paradise Lost	<i>Unus</i>	Necronomicon
2019	Paradise Lost	<i>Dead of Night</i>	Night Screamer
2019	The Raven	<i>The Heretics</i>	Rotting Christ
2019	In Flanders Fields	<i>The Great War</i>	Sabatón
2019	No Man's Land (Dulce Et Decorum Est)	<i>Fall of Justice</i>	Unjustice
2019	I Felt a Funeral in My Brain	<i>Maladaptive</i>	Wräth

Year	Song	Album	Band
2020	Suicide in the Trenches	<i>Umbra Mortis</i>	Deus Mori
2020	City in the Sea	<i>Colossus</i>	Fer de Lance
2020	The Spirits of the Dead	<i>Cursed Thoughts – Part II</i>	Hornwood Fell
2020	The Divine Right of Kings		
2020	The Lake		
2020	Dream-Land		
2020	The Sleeper		
2020	The Valley of Unrest		
2020	Alone		
2020	In Flanders Fields	<i>Depravity</i>	Wound Collector

Table 56. Chronological list of metal transformations.

Band	Country	Subgenre
4th Dimension	Italy	Power
A Dream of Poe	Portugal	Doom
A Hero for the World	Philippines	Power
A Hill to Die Upon	USA	Death
Abandoned by Light	UK	Black
Aborym	Italy	Black
Advent	Italy	Black
Advent Sorrow	Australia	Black
Adversam	Italy	Black
Aeons ov Frost	Russia	Black
Aesma Daeva	USA	Symphonic
Aeternitas	Germany	Symphonic
Aethara	UK	Death
Agalloch	USA	Black
Agathodaimon	Germany	Black
Ahab	Germany	Doom
Akin	France	Progressive
Allegaeon	USA	Death
Altherya	France	Prog
Amplifire	Germany	Heavy
Anaal Nathrakh	UK	Black
Arbiter	USA	Metalcore
Arcturus	Norway	Black
Armageddon	Serbia	Heavy
Atrocity	Germany	Death
Atten Ash	USA	Doom
Avantasia	Germany	Power
Bet the Devil	USA	Thrash
Beyond the Labyrinth	Belgium	Heavy
Black Aurora	Canada	Heavy
Blacksheep	Romania	Death
Blind Guardian	Germany	Power
Blinded by Faith	Canada	Black
Bolt Thrower	UK	Death
Bruce Dickinson	UK	Heavy
Burnt Church	Canada	Death
C.I.A. Hippie Mind Control	USA	Doom
Cadaverous Condition	Austria	Death
Carnal Agony	Sweden	Power
Carpathian Forest	Norway	Black
Cathedral	UK	Doom
Cerebrum	Russia	Black
CETI	Poland	Power

Band	Country	Subgenre
Chaos Theory	Australia	Power
Chris Violence	USA	Thrash
Circus Maximus	Norway	Progressive
Cirith Ungol	USA	Heavy
Colour Trip	Germany	Death
Conducting From the Grave	USA	Death
Cosmivore	USA	Doom
Cradle of Filth	UK	Black
Crimson Falls	Belgium	Death
Crown of Thorns	Sweden	Death
Crystal Crow	Germany	Gothic
D. Throne	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Thrash
Danse Macabre	Belgium	Gothic
Dantesco	Puerto Rico	Doom
Dark at Dawn	Germany	Power
Dark Mirror ov Tragedy	South Korea	Black
Dark Moor	Spain	Power
Darkage	Italy	Heavy
Darker Half	Australia	Thrash
Darkest Hour	USA	Death
David Brewster	USA	Progressive
David Valdes	Spain	Heavy
Dawn of Winter	Germany	Doom
De Lirium's Order	Finland	Death
Decapitated	Poland	Death
Delain	Netherlands	Symphonic
Delight	Poland	Gothic
Deus Mori	UK	Black
Devilish Impressions	Poland	Black
Dimmu Borgir	Norway	Black
Distorted Force	Greece	Progressive
Division	USA	Power
Dødsengel	Norway	Black
Dōxa	Spain	Gothic
Draconian	Sweden	Doom
Drastic	Italy	Black
Dream Theatre	USA	Progressive
Eluveitie	Switzerland	Folk
End Zone	Russia	Thrash
Enjoy Sarma	Serbia	Thrash
Epoch of Unlight	USA	Black
Et Cetera	Slovakia	Black
Et Verbi Sathanus	Chile	Black

Band	Country	Subgenre
Even Song	Hungary	Gothic
Ever Circling Wolves	Finland	Doom
Farmer Boys	Germany	Gothic
Fer de Lance	USA	Doom
Fireign	Canada	Thrash
Forest of Shadows	Sweden	Doom
Forsaken	Malta	Doom
Fountain of Tears	USA	Gothic
Frost Commander	Poland	Power
Gaia's Revenge	USA	Death
Garage Days	Austria	Heavy
Geoda	Argentina	Death
Ghost	Sweden	Heavy
Goresleeps	Russia	Death
Grave	Sweden	Death
Grave Digger	Germany	Heavy
Greedy Invalid	Czechia	Gothic
Green Carnation	Norway	Gothic
Guilthee	Hungary	Death
Hades	Norway	Black
His Statue Falls	Germany	Metalcore
Hollenthon	Austria	Folk
Hornwood Fell	Italy	Black
Ilium	Australia	Power
Imperial Triumphant	USA	Black
In Hell	Mexico	Black
In Tha Umbra	Portugal	Black
Insomnium	Finland	Death
Internal Bleeding	USA	Death
Iron Maiden	UK	Heavy
James D. Gilmore	USA	Progressive
Judas Iscariot	USA	Black
Kelly Simonz's Blind Faith	Japan	Heavy
Kickback	France	Groove
Killin' Kind	Italy	Heavy
Legacy of Emptiness	Norway	Black
Lilla Veneda	Poland	Black
Lucyfire	Germany	Gothic
Lunatic Invasion	Germany	Doom
Lyriel	Germany	Symphonic
Mad Duck	Italy	Heavy
Malnàtt	Italy	Black
Mandibulla	Brazil	Doom

Band	Country	Subgenre
Means End	Sweden	Progressive
Metropolis	USA	Heavy
Minotaurus	Germany	Folk
Moonsun	Germany	Symphonic
Morgana Lefay	Sweden	Thrash
Mortis Mutilati	France	Black
Mourned by Flies	USA	Death
Mourning Crimson	Belarus	Gothic
Mourning Dawn	France	Black
My Dying Bride	UK	Doom
My Refuge	Italy	Heavy
NecroCarcass	Canada	Death
Necronomicon	Canada	Death
Nevermore	USA	Progressive
Night Screamer	UK	Heavy
Nightcap	Italy	Black
Nightwish	Finland	Symphonic
Nihternnes	UK	Black
Nimphaion	Russia	Symphonic
Odes of Ecstasy	Greece	Gothic
Odin's Court	USA	Progressive
Odium	Poland	Thrash
Pale Divine	USA	Doom
Pandora 101	Brazil	Progressive
Paragon of Beauty	Germany	Gothic
Pathfinder	Poland	Power
Primordial	Ireland	Black
RavenSkül	Spain	Thrash
Rotting Christ	Greece	Black
Sabaton	Sweden	Power
Sacred Oath	USA	Power
Sanhedrin	UK	Black
Saturnus	Denmark	Doom
Satyrus	Belgium	Black
Scythian	UK	Death
Shadowthrone	Germany	Gothic
Shantak	Italy	Death
Sieges Even	Germany	Progressive
Sighisoara	Slovakia	Gothic
Silent Planet	USA	Metalcore
Silent Wood	UK	Black
Sinister Creed	USA	Death
Sinister Moon	Uruguay	Black

Band	Country	Subgenre
Skyclad	UK	Folk
Solefald	Norway	Black
Sorg Uten Tårer	Turkey	Black
Sorrowful Angels	Greece	Gothic
Soulfallen	Finland	Death
Souls of Rage	Brazil	Groove
Stormlord	Italy	Black
Sudden Access	Netherlands	Thrash
Sun of the Sleepless	Germany	Black
Swallow the Sun	Finland	Doom
Symphonia	Italy	Symphonic
Symphony of Sorrow	Sweden	Groove
Symphony X	USA	Progressive
Tersivel	Argentina	Folk
The Black League	Finland	Gothic
The Grotosquery	Sweden	Death
The Monolith Deathcult	Netherlands	Death
The Ocean	Germany	Death
The Old Ones	Czechia	Heavy
The Pagan Dead	USA	Death
The Red Shore	Australia	Death
The Restless Breed	UK	Heavy
The Sundial	Russia	Doom
The Vision Bleak	Germany	Gothic
Theatres des Vampires	Italy	Gothic
Theory of Chaos	Italy	Groove
Thy Catafalque	Hungary	Black
Tiles	USA	Progressive
Tivaz	Russia	Black
Tool	USA	Progressive
Toxic	Colombia	Thrash
Tremor	Norway	Black
Tristania	Norway	Gothic
Turbo	Poland	Thrash
Uhrilehto	Finland	Black
Unjustice	UK	Thrash
Valkyrja	Sweden	Black
Virgin Steele	USA	Heavy
Vlad	USA	Death
Void of Silence	Italy	Doom
Wachenfeldt	Sweden	Death
Warbringer	USA	Thrash
Warlord	USA	Power

Band	Country	Subgenre
Wastefall	Greece	Progressive
Within the Fall	Sweden	Doom
Wolfuneral	Italy	Black
Wound Collector	Belgium	Death
Wräth	USA	Death
Xandria	Germany	Symphonic
Yngwie J. Malmsteen	Sweden	Heavy
刹那	Japan	Gothic

Table 57. Full list of metal bands along with their country of origin and metal subgenre.

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