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**THE SOUND OF HORROR LITERATURE: AN ANALYSIS OF SONGS INSPIRED BY
EDGAR ALLAN POE.**

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Monograph presented to the Letters –
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Advisor: Arthur Beltrão Telló

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To my father from heart, José, who raised me, gave me and my mother all his love and respect, and was an example of a generous, wise, and kind man. You will live forever in our hearts and memories.

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RESUMO: Este trabalho propõe uma leitura sobre a relação da literatura com a música (mais especificamente literatura de terror com os subgêneros do heavy metal), analisando como as diferentes artes se alimentam uma da outra e como a música pode transmitir ao ouvinte vivências similares às experimentadas pelo leitor de certa obra. Para tanto, servem de suporte os pensamentos de Haroldo de Campos sobre a *transcrição* (2015) como uma fonte de diálogo fértil e inesgotável para o campo da teoria e da criação literária e as ideias de Luiz Tatit sobre a canção popular e sua composição, presentes em seu estudo *O Cancionista* (2012).

Palavras chave: Música; Literatura; Transcrição; Literatura comparada.

SUMMARY: This work proposes an analysis on the relationship between literature and music (more specifically horror literature with heavy metal subgenres), searching how the different arts feed on each other and how music can communicate to its listener experiences similar to those experienced by the reader of a certain literary work. Therefore, the thoughts of Haroldo de Campos on *transcreation* (2015) as a source of fertile and inexhaustible dialogue for the field of theory and literary creation and Luiz Tatit's ideas about popular song and its composition, present in his study *O Cancionista* (2012) will support this work's ideas.

Key words: Music; Literature; Transcreation; Comparative literature.

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INTRODUCTION

From the earliest heavy metal albums, literature has always been a part of the genre's imagery and lyrics, specifically gothic and horror stories. The relation between the music genre born in 1970 and terror texts is the center of this monograph. Two songs by different bands were selected to go through a comparative analysis with a short story and a poem written by Edgar Allan Poe, aiming to articulate an interface between them and observe how one art can inspire the other. In order to accomplish our analysis, firstly, we will have a grasp at heavy metal's and horror literature's history; secondly, with the support of the concept of *transcreation* by Haroldo de Campos (2015) and the ideas of André Bueno (1984), we shall exemplify how the different arts feed off each other; based on Luiz Tatit's (2012) studies about the relation between music and lyrics, we will show how music can convey personal experiences to its listeners (similarly as a literary work can); afterwards, based on Nathalia Pinto's (2014) research, a view of an inter-section between arts will be brought to our work through the lenses of comparative literature. Furthermore, we shall see a brief presentation of the bands and the author selected for this monograph followed by the presentation of the analysis of the songs per se.

HEAVY METAL

In order to introduce our reader to the music genre that we will work with in this paper we would like to talk a bit about the genre's history and characteristics. It's hard to say when and how heavy metal was born, according to Weinstein (2000, p. 14): "No one can name a specific date at which the genre became clearly distinguishable; its beginnings must be traced retrospectively from its phase of crystallization in the mid-1970s.", however, as any musical style, heavy metal has its own characteristics. Weinstein (2000) highlights that a musical genre requires a specific sound and sometimes specific visual and verbal dimensions, which in heavy metal all three are crucial contributions to the definition of the genre. *Black Sabbath*, for instance, is considered as the band that founded the genre and its main characteristics when in

1970, they released their first two albums, *Black Sabbath* and *Paranoid*. With riff-based¹ songs, dark and demonic lyrics, loud distorted guitars, dark clothes and long hairs, *Black Sabbath* set the genre's sound and visual.

Despite having those specific boundaries, heavy metal or simply “metal” is a far more complex music genre due to its offshoots, or as called by “metalheads”² its subgenres. The growth of this subculture is the main reason why metal has resisted far longer than most genres of rock music (Weinstein 2000). Due to these subgenres we are not going to specify the characteristics of metal as a solid true. We believe that each subgenre has its own characteristics (sharing some in common so they can be all under the same “metal” umbrella) in terms of lyrics, and specially in musical aspects. But, to give our reader a general view of the genre, we will briefly elaborate on some common lyric themes that can be found in metal's subgenres.

Metal band's lyrics can contain themes – as many people think are the only subjects in metal – as Satanism/occultism, violence, hatred, rebellion, substance abuse, sexual promiscuity, and perversion. That is very common in extreme metal³, but metal goes far beyond that. For instance, themes like socio-political criticism can be seen in bands like *Rage Against the Machine*; philosophical questions and existentialist thoughts with bands like *Death* and *Tool*; racial and class prejudice are very often criticized and exposed in *Body Count*'s lyrics; psychological and physical abuses suffered by Jonathan Davis, the group's vocalist, are common subjects in *Korn*'s lyrics; the environmental cause is a common theme in *Gojira*'s work; and, as we are going to see in this monography, literature related themes are also common and can be seen in songs by bands like *Metallica*, *Iron Maiden*, *Black Sabbath* and many more.

Although being a music genre that survived through many decades, since its birth in the 1970s, heavy metal has been the target of harsh criticism and prejudice, as well shown by Dr. Weinstein in the first pages of her book *Heavy Metal: The Music and Its Culture*:

“Heavy metal: pimply, prole, putrid, unchic, unsophisticated, antiintellectual (but impossibly pretentious), dismal, abysmal, terrible, horrible, and stupid music, barely music at all; death music, dead music, the beaten boogie, the dance of defeat and decay; the *huh?* sound, the *duh* sound, . . . music made *by* slack-jawed, alpacahaired, bulbous-inseamed imbeciles in jackboots and leather and chrome *for* slack-jawed, alpaca-haired, downy-mustachioed imbeciles in cheap, too-large T-shirts with pictures of comic-book Armageddon ironed on the front.” So heavy metal music is described by Robert Duncan, a rock critic. (2000, p. 1)

¹ In jazz or popular music, a tune that continues or appears regularly in a piece of music while other parts change or are added. Available in: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/pt/dicionario/ingles/riff> Access in: Nov. 8, 2021.

² A fan or performer of heavy metal music. Available in: <https://www.lexico.com/en/definicion/metalhead> Access in: Oct: 28, 2021.

³ A term used to cover some of metal's subgenres as black metal, grindcore, death metal and more.

This prejudiced view of the genre can be observed until today and demystifying it is one of the objectives of this monograph.

HORROR LITERATURE

In horror literature, films and television stories, in general, the point of a narrative is to create a sense of fear. These stories originated in ancient times and are an important part of folk literature. They are famous for featuring supernatural elements such as ghosts, witches, monsters or vampires, but they can also address more realistic cases involving serial killers and psychological fears.⁴

English author Horace Walpole may be said as the one who started the gothic movement and founded the horror story as a legitimate literary form with his work *Castle of Otranto* (1765).⁵ In its early stages, gothic literature could be characterized by its melodramatic stories with elements of the supernatural, commonly situated in bizarre locations and with characters who are constantly disturbed by profound emotions and feelings of fear, despair and impending doom. Another important name for the genre that marked the style was Mary Shelley with the introduction of science-fiction in the genre in her world-famous novel *Frankenstein* (1818).⁶ During the romantic era the American author Edgar Allan Poe, skillfully blending rationality with madness, grotesque atmosphere and daily reality, elevated horror stories to a level far beyond pure entertainment.⁷

A contemporary name that cannot be omitted when talking about horror literature is Stephen King. The American author is considered by many as the responsible for reviving the genre in the late 20th century.⁸ King is one of the most well-rounded horror writers, have written plots involving vampires, rabid dogs, deranged killers, pyromaniacs, ghosts, telekinesis, biological warfare, and even a sinister automobile.⁹ King is a terrific storyteller and many of his works are admired not only on its original forms, but also on its numerous tv and movies adaptations over many years.

⁴ BRITANNICA. **Horror Story**. [S.l], 2020. Available in: <https://www.britannica.com/art/horror-story> Access in: Oct. 29, 2021.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ BRITANNICA. **Stephen King**. Available in: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Stephen-King> Access in: Nov. 2, 2021.

⁹ Ibid.

1 THEORETICAL ASPECTS

In our analysis, we see the songs as translations of the literary texts, and translation is seen by us as a recreation, a re-reading, and even a critique of the original work. This idea of translation as the deconstruction and reconstruction of the original text comes from Campos' studies and his concept of *transcreation*.

From the initial idea of recreation, to the coining of terms such as transcreation, [...] This chain of neologisms expressed, from the outset, a dissatisfaction with the "naturalized" idea of translation, linked to the ideological presuppositions of restitution of the truth (fidelity) and literality (subservience of the translation to a presumed "transcendental meaning" of the original) – idea that underlies the usual definitions, more "neutral" ("literal" translation), or more pejorative ("servile" translation), of the translation operation.¹⁰ (CAMPOS. 2015, p. 78-79).

In our work, we can apply this idea to the composer of a song, turning him into a translator/composer, who, when composes music inspired by a literary work, is deconstructing and reconstructing an author's work, and more, is *transcreating* that author's piece from a form of art to another, creating a new context with the interference of the translator/composer extra-text, and finally, building a bridge between music and written literature. We can also say that every work of translation is also a metatext, because the artist is dealing with textual and generic conventions and re-signifying them in the new work.

Another link between our work and Campos' studies is to take his vision of translation between two languages as a special semiotic practice and applying it to a translation within the same language, a translation between two arts. Where our translator/composer, in possession of metalanguage and with his reading of the text to be *transcreated*, reconfigures, and bends the text to serve his musical creation, *transcreating* a written art into a verbal art, a silent art into the art of sound.

When talking about Brazilian literature, Campos (2015, p. 199-200) talks of "translation as a transgressive appropriation [...] as a dialogical practice [...] of saying the other and oneself through the other, under the species of difference." In our research, this idea can be easily applied to lyrics that are at the same time talking about themselves and about the literary text

¹⁰ Quote translated by João Vitor Mendes. All the following quotations in this section (**THEORETICAL ASPECTS**) were translated by the same.

from which came their inspiration/idea. Echoing Campos' words, we would like to emphasize that transcreation should not be seen as a theory of copying "but as a usurpatory impulse towards the dialectical production of difference from the same." (CAMPOS, 2015, p. 205).

Going further in the studies of the relationship between different arts, Pinto (2014, p.19) marks that "there are factors that indicate that the division of the arts is a rational invention, and does not occur in human brain capture." Therefore, our ability to create something that transposes the barrier of an art to another, using different artistic manifestations, is as natural as our innate ability to think.

Music and literature have been intertwined since their beginnings, but, as presented by Pinto (2009, p. 19), "The fixed structure that governed the works of other times", and here we speak of the pre-modernism era, "can no longer account for the chaotic reality represented through art." The fall of these "fixed structures" is due to the "modern chaos" established in our time. Of course, arts in general are intertwined since the first artistic manifestations, but we believe that metal and its subgenres, as well as some of other contemporary forms of arts, are a result – or a reflection – of the modern chaos in which we are inserted.

One of the reasons that motivated this research was our point of view that music is more easily accessible and more appealing to the general public, opinion which is shared with Bueno (1984, p. 63): "millions of Brazilians are passing directly into the world television (and radio, and record), without ever having gone through the book or the printed word." therefore, songs inspired by literature can, somehow, attract this audience that has no contact or interest in literature to look at literature with new eyes, and, for Bueno (1984), a poem recorded in a song by a famous interpreter "will reach millions of people in a short time", something that "not even the most beautiful poem" will perform printed in a book, at least nowadays.

In his study about music composition and lyric writing, Tatit (2012, p. 11) interprets the composer in a similar way as Campos thinks the translator, as someone that decompounds and composes at the same time, "The songwriter breaks down the melody with the text, but recomposes the text with the intonation.", that is, the text itself doesn't fit the melody, but it needs the songwriter's touch and expertise to be able to dwell in harmony within the music.

We, literature readers, know that a writer can convey a personal experience to the reader through their writing skills and techniques, and Tatit (2012, p. 18) shows us that this is also done by songwriters, that with "his personal experience with a certain content" and his "familiarity and intimacy with the expression and the technique of producing songs" can convey to the listener his own experiences through his music. Still on this subject, we would

like to highlight a passage from Tatit's book *O Cancionista* that meets our opinion in a sublime way:

The true content of a personal experience is unattainable by the other and untransferable by those who lived it. [...] Through songs, it seems that the very singularity of existence was hooked. As if the text collectivized the experience, the poetic treatment imprinted originality, but the subjective rescue of the experience, this, was only possible with the melody. (TATIT, 2012, p. 19).

Tatit (2012, p. 20) sees the lyrics of a song as a "disciplinarian of emotions", that does not need to be complex or rich in itself, "it must not aim to say everything. Everything will only be said with the melody." if we look at it from this perspective, it's easy to see that a song only has full meaning when we put text, melody and intonation together. But music goes further, it does not depend on the text or need it. For example, in 1723 Vivaldi had written a set of four concertos called *Le Quattro Stagioni*, where he described the four seasons of the year,¹¹ and in innumerable modern instrumental songs which can evoke emotions in anyone, even for those who do not excel in the musical language.

Still, Tatit (2012, p. 22) brings us two interesting concepts that will be used in our analysis: his concept of *passionalization*: "his tensions are transferred to the elongated emission of frequencies and sometimes to the wide oscillations of tessitura. I call this process *passionalization*." (Here Tatit is talking about the singer/composer) and *thematization*:

by investing in segmentation, in consonant attacks, the author acts on the influence of /doing/, converting its internal tensions into somatic impulses based on the subdivision of rhythmic values, on the marking of the stress and on recurrence. Here, we are dealing with *thematization*. (TATIT. 2012, p. 22).

The *thematization* and *passionalization* are deeply explored by heavy metal's singers, in special due to the fact that most metal bands write in English which is a language that relies a lot on consonants, what creates a fertile ground for *thematization*. One great example we can provide is on *Iron Maiden's Hallowed be thy name*. The group's vocalist, Bruce Dickinson, uses of both sources to create different sensations on its listener. *Passionalization* is used in the first verse of the song to build up anticipation while in the following section he uses

¹¹ SCHWARM, Betsy. **The Four Seasons**. [S.l.], [20--?] Available in: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/The-Four-Seasons-by-Vivaldi> Access in: Nov. 8, 2021.

thematization to rhythmically sing his lines as he builds the lyric persona and tells the song story. Throughout the song Bruce varies between one source and the other.

To conclude this section, we would like, through the thought of the great thinker of literature, Anatol Rosenfeld (2009, p.75) and his idea that there is a “*zeitgeist*’ a unifying spirit that communicates itself to all cultural manifestations in contact.”, to think of that as if the songs inspired by authors like Poe bring with them this spirit of his work to the audience.

2 BANDS AND AUTHOR

In this section of the work we will present the bands and authors selected for our analysis, starting with the selected bands, bringing a grasp of their careers and relations with literature and finishing by presenting the authors, his live and literary characteristics.

2.1 SELECTED BANDS

2.1.1 CRADLE OF FILTH

Formed in 1991, with their musical roots deep in black metal, the British group has a long and consolidated career in the metal scenario. Although going through several lineup changes, the group is still active and flirts with gothic, symphonic and other metal subgenres. *Cradle of Filth's* debut studio album *The Principle of Evil Made Flesh* was released in 1994 including mythology and horror films as some of the influences embedded in their lyrics. However, the most important aspect of the band's lyrics for us is the heavy influence of poetry and gothic literature present in their works.

Founding member and vocalist Dani Davey, known as Dani Filth, has many times spoken about his passion towards books and literature; "One of the first things I made the record company do [...] was to buy me a huge bunch of books that I was after."¹² When asked about what he reads to get inspired to write his lyrics, Dani declared to be an admirer of the 19th century horror literature and quoted a few authors, including H.P. Lovecraft (author who is greatly influenced by Poe).¹³ In another opportunity he has exemplified – in agreement with what was pointed previously in this monography – how music can appeal people to be interested in literature; "Now, we have parents thanking us for keeping their offspring away from bullies and drugs and getting them into literature."¹⁴ During an interview about *Cradle of Filth's* 2017

¹² BARTON, Steve. Dani Filth Talks Cradle of Filth, Music, Movies, and More. **Dread Central**, December 15, 2010. Available in: <https://www.dreadcentral.com/news/21258/dani-filth-talks-cradle-of-filth-music-movies-and-more/> Access in: Oct. 09, 2021.

¹³ Available in: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4h-tDQxkugw> Access in: Oct. 09, 2021.

studio album *Cryptoriana – The Seductiveness of Decay* the vocalist stated that he was worried to start writing the new album so close to their previous one, but at the time Dani was reading lots of Victorian ghost stories that got him inspired to write the new album and create the album's theme and imagery around it.¹⁵

In this monography we will analyze the song *A Gothic Romance (Red Roses for the Devil's Whore)* which brings some resemblances with two works by Edgar Allan Poe, The poem *Annabel Lee* (1849) and the short story *Ligeia* (1838). The song is present in the band's second full-length studio album *Dusk... And Her Embrace* (1996).

2.1.2 SYMPHONY X

The band from New Jersey was founded in 1994 by the guitarist Michael Romeo shortly after the release of his solo demo *The Dark Chapter*. In the same year, with the repercussion of his demo, Romeo decided to launch a new band to foment the progressive metal genre. Blending heavy metal, progressive rock and neo-classical sounds the group recorded their debut album, *Symphony x*, released in Japan in 1994 and worldwide in 1995.¹⁶

The group's vocalist Russel Allen was asked during an interview if there was a reason to write music based on literature epics (like Homer's *The Odyssey*, which the band has an album based on) and Allen stated that "It obviously creates an interesting soundscape when you have great literature to reference. Those messages are timeless."¹⁷ Allen expanded his answer adding that one can take inspiration from these literary classics and recreate them (an action similar to the concept of transcreation): "There's a link between Odysseus and Luke Skywalker. These are classic tales that inspire us and we tell these stories in our own way."¹⁸ In agreement

¹⁴ FLETCHER, David. Cradle of Filth's Dani Filth Says His Extreme Metal Music Is a Gateway to Literature. **Dallas Observer**, Dallas, TX, April 16, 2019. Available in: <https://www.dallasobserver.com/music/cradle-of-filth-talks-literature-and-the-positive-influence-of-extreme-metal-11641727> Access in: Oct. 09, 2021.

¹⁵ HELYES, Perran. INTERVIEW: Dani Filth – Cradle of Filth. **Distorted Sound**, September 14, 2017 Available in: <https://distortedmag.com/interview-dani-filth-cradle-of-filth/> Access in: Oct. 09, 2021.

¹⁶ Available in: <http://www.symphonyx.com/site/band/> Access in: Oct. 26, 2021.

¹⁷ SMYERS, Darryl. Russell Allen of Symphony X Talks Classic Literature's Connection to Star Wars and How Social Media Is Enslaving the Population. **Dallas Observer**, Dallas, TX, February 27, 2012. Available in: <https://www.dallasobserver.com/music/russell-allen-of-symphony-x-talks-classic-literatures-connection-to-star-wars-and-how-social-media-is-enslaving-the-population-7081134> Access in: Oct. 26, 2021.

¹⁸ Ibid.

with Allen's idea of taking inspiration from other medias (like literature and movies) to write music, Romeo exemplified how literature inspires him to write music "It's not telling a story, it's not copying some kind of logical thing from a book or something; it's just more the idea."¹⁹ Romeo also declared that Dante and the Orpheus In The Underworld myth were used by the band to create a framework for the music and lyrics in the band's 2015 album *Underworld*. In Romeo's instrumental solo album from 1994, *The Dark Chapter*, there are some songs he named with the title of Poe's short stories, as for instance, the songs *Cask Of Amontillado* and *Masque Of The Red Death*, furthermore, the band has a song called *Nevermore*, making allusion to Poe's poem *The Raven*.

Nevertheless, the selected song for our analysis is *King of Terrors*, present in the album *The Odyssey* (2002). Although the majority of the album is based on Homer's *The Odyssey*, the track *King of Terrors* draws inspiration, and quotes a passage, from Edgar Allan Poe's short story *The Pit and the Pendulum* (1842).

2.2 SELECTED AUTHOR

2.2.1 EDGAR ALLAN POE

Edgar Poe, born in 1809 in Boston, Massachusetts, is the son of two touring actors, his father disappeared soon after he was born, and his mother died when he was two and a half years old.²⁰ Poe and his two siblings were separated. Edgar was taken by a wealth merchant – who had no children of his own – in Richmond, Virginia (the same city where Poe and his mother were living), named John Allan. Despite never been legally adopted, the child was now on to be called Edgar Allan Poe.²¹ John Allan provided his foster-son a good education.

Poe had an exemplary schooling in England, where he lived with his foster-parents for five years, from 1815 to 1820.²² Back in the United States, some quarrels between John Allan

¹⁹ GRICOURT, Nicolas. SYMPHONY X: AN ALBUM SAVED FROM THE DARKNESS. **Radio Metal**, September 7, 2015. Available in: <http://www.radiometal.com/article/symphony-x-an-album-saved-from-the-darkness,186499> Access in: Oct. 26, 2021.

²⁰ SCOTT, Wilbur S. Introduction. In: POE, Edgar Allan. *Complete Tales & Poems*. New York: Castle Books, c2002. p. I-XIV.

²¹ *Ibid.* p. II.

and Poe started to emerge through Poe's teenage, and their relation got even worse when Poe entered the university of Virginia.²³ Poe entered the university in February 1826, and there might have been the start of his gambling, drinking and other addiction problems.

The college rules were quite severe but generally ignored. Tobacco, wine, liquor, servants, horses, dogs and guns were strictly forbidden and frequently enjoyed. [...] Gambling and dueling were both prohibited and commonplace, and the "hotel" keepers often gamed with the students. (MEYERS, 2000, p. 22).

The percentage of students who dropped college between 1825 and 1850 was very high,²⁴ and Poe was a part of these numbers. After losing a significant amount of money in gambling, Allan refused to support his foster-son on his studies at the university. Although Allan being a wealth merchant, Poe guilted him for his misfortune in college. In a letter sent by Poe to Allan, four years after he had been forced to abandon college, he blamed his foster father for his financials problems, since he had given him far less money than any student would need to frequent the college.²⁵

Poe returned to Richmond in December 1826 and after less than three months working for Allan, Poe decided to leave home and went back to the city he was born in.²⁶ He arrived in Boston in April 1827, he clerked and worked as reporter for some months, but on May 26, after having wasted his resources and having no prospects for the future, he joined the army under the name of "Edgar A. Perry," as a common soldier.²⁷ In the same year, Poe payed for the publication of his first work *Tamerlane and other poems*, which was published anonymously "by a Bostonian," and received no attention from the press.²⁸

With only two years in the army he attained a rank that most soldiers would not in such little time, but still, Poe was disappointed and asked to be discharged from the army, but his superior asked him to reach for his foster father to procure his liberation. After numerous letters from Poe, Allan finally accepted to do so after the death of Poe's foster mother.²⁹

²² Ibid., p. II. and MEYERS, Jeffrey. **Edgar Allan Poe: His Life and Legacy**. 1. Ed. New York: Cooper Square Press, 2000.

²³ MEYERS, Jeffrey. **Edgar Allan Poe: His Life and Legacy**. 1. Ed. New York: Cooper Square Press, 2000.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 22.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 26-28.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 29.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 32.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 33-34.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 36-38.

After leaving the army, Poe went to live in Baltimore in his cousin's house where he spent most of his time "reading, writing and vainly looking for work" (MEYERS, 2000, p.39). During that time, Poe wanted to make amends with Allan (and get some money from him), gain admission to the Military Academy and publish his second volume of poems.³⁰ In December 1829, *Al Aaraaf, Tamerlane and Minor Poems* was published in Baltimore and in June 1830 he was accepted in West Point Military Academy³¹. After six months in west point Poe was dismissed "for deliberately neglecting duty" (SCOTT, 2002, p. II). This put an end in the relation between Poe and Allan. "The adopted orphan [...] was orphaned once again" (MEYERS, 2000, p. 55).

Back in Baltimore, almost always without money and in debt, Poe won a short-story contest with *MS. found in a bottle* in 1833 and started his uneven journalist career. Poe went to one job to another due to "drinking bouts, quarrels, charges of plagiarism" (SCOTT, 2002, p. II) and another reasons. In the meantime, Poe survived writing poems, short stories, book reviews, and literary essays.³² In his "itinerant career", Poe left Baltimore and went back to Richmond where he stayed from 1835 to 1836. In 1836, he married his 13-year-old cousin, Virginia Clem and lived with her mother (his aunt) Mrs. Clem. In 1837. The family lived in poverty, having at times, only bread and molasse to eat.³³ Poe and his family lived in Philadelphia until 1844 when they moved, once again, to New York where his wife died in 1847. Two years later, Poe became engaged with a woman of Richmond.

Travelling from Richmond north to Baltimore to fetch Mrs. Clem for the wedding, he encountered—what, we do not know. But he was found dirty, injured, and sick, and taken to a hospital where he died four days later on October 7, 1849. Edgar Allan Poe was dead at 40. (SCOTT, 2002, p. III).

As many authors, Poe died in poverty and did not see the achievements and the recognition of his work.

Poe is one of the most notorious horror story authors and has influenced and inspired many after him. His expertise to write poems and short stories is unquestionable, for instance,

³⁰ Ibid., p. 39.

³¹ Ibid. p. 41-43.

³² SCOTT, Wilbur S. Introduction. In: POE, Edgar Allan. **Complete Tales & Poems**. New York: Castle Books, c2002. p. I-XIV.

³³ MEYERS, Jeffrey. **Edgar Allan Poe: His Life and Legacy**. 1. Ed. New York: Cooper Square Press, 2000.

The Raven is considered as one of the best-known poems in American literature.³⁴ For Scott (2002, p. VI) the most striking qualities that characterizes Poe's poetry are "his verbal music, his suggestion of horror, and his tone of melancholy." His verbal music will be explored in our analysis of the poem *Annabel Lee* and the song *A Gothic Romance (Red Roses for the Devil's Whore)* as well as his melancholic tone.

The first thing that comes to our minds when we talk about Poe's work are, without a doubt, his frightening tales: *The Black Cat*, *The Tell-Tale Heart*, *The Cask of Amontillado*, *The Fall of the House of Usher*, *The pit and the Pendulum* (which will figure in our analysis of the song *King of Terrors*), *Ligeia* and other stories. His ability to reach the readers fear might be related with his desire to write the terror of the soul, a terror beyond the bizarre.

It may be that in the gothic we find, therapeutically, the shaped and ordered externalization of our own fears and anxieties, our own private nightmares. If we slow down and "rubberneck" as we pass highway accidents, if we rush to nearby house-fires, we witness the horrifying events in solipsistic safety: the event is experienced by a stranger; we are the unthreatened observer. Then when we turn to Poe's tales of grotesque, we put ourselves into the hands of the author who presents not the crude experience, but a dramatization skillfully molded by the careful structuring of the actions and riches of the language. And so we return to his dark castle rooms, exotically and mysteriously lighted, to his graveyards and mausoleums, to his dank cellars, and his mysterious and unfathomable seas—to experience that special delight which a master of the Gothic tale offers. (SCOTT, 2002, p. X).

Moreover, Poe is also known for being the father of modern detective story³⁵ with his short story *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*. But the creation of this literary genre was not by accident. "in a few stories—those he called 'tales of ratiocination'—he wished to generate intellectual excitement." (SCOTT, 2002, p. X) In this short story Poe sets the reader with a puzzle that is slowly solved by the narrator, the violent murder of a woman and her daughter, and no clue of the murderer.

Beyond poems and short stories, Poe appears once again in another literary area: the literary theory. His essay *The Philosophy of Composition* (1846) is read by literature students until today. In his essay, Poe describes how he wrote *The Raven* and the elaborates on his composing choices and his aesthetics. Poe shares his view of poetry, and how a poet should

³⁴ MABBOTT, Thomas Ollive. **Edgar Allan Poe**. [S.l.], 2021. Available in: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Edgar-Allan-Poe> Access in: Nov. 6, 2021.

³⁵ BRITANNICA. **The Murders in the Rue Morgue**: short story by Poe. [S.l.], 2015. Available in: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/The-Murders-in-the-Rue-Morgue> Access in: Nov. 6, 2021.

treat his work. The essay covers the poems length, tone, the refrain, and effect. In addition to be an outstanding author, Poe is also recognized by his critical activities “He has been called the best American literary critic in the 19th century, and one who may justly be compared to the great critics in England.” (SCOTT, 2002, p. XII).

3 ANALYSIS

I *A Gothic Romance (Red Roses for the Devil's Whore)*

We will begin our analysis by the song *A Gothic Romance (Red Roses for the Devil's Whore)* by the band *Cradle of Filth*, present in their album *Dusk... And Her Embrace* from 1996. The song's lyrics is not explicitly related to Poe's poem *Annabel Lee*, but there are many similarities that we will bring to you.

In order to enrich our analysis, we will use Poe's *The Philosophy of Composition* to compare the effects present on his poem and *transcreated* by the band. In his text, Poe declares that the most important aspect in a brief artistic composition, such as a poem and a short story, is the *unit of effect*, so that the artist should start his work thinking about the end effect of the work and from it structure the composition of the text as a search for this specific effect. Reading *Annabel Lee*, we can think of melancholy as a structuring element. In this sense, by *transcreating* the poem into music, from vocal melody and instrumentation, the band seeks to make use of musical resources in search of the effect caused by the poem.

Keeping Poe's concept of effect in mind, there are some interesting points on the song to be highlighted. The song starts with an intro³⁶ played on the organ, shortly, a wolf howl can be heard preceding the vocalist's agonizing scream and the entrance of the band's instruments, setting the dark atmosphere also present in the poem. The heavy guitar and the slow tempo accompany the deep low voice that recites the song's lyrics while the drummer displays his skill, all this followed by a keyboard in the background repeating a pattern of notes and completing the dark and melancholic atmosphere. Both song and poem begin very similarly, mentioning a beautiful maiden and a castle/kingdom by the sea.

³⁶ An intro is the opening section of a piece of music, usually before the singing begins. Available in: <https://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/intro> Access in: Nov. 10, 2021.

Annabel Lee

[Edgar Allan Poe]

It was many and many a year ago,
 In a kingdom by the sea,
 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.

A Gothic Romance

[Dani Davey et al.]

Evening minuetto in a castle by the sea
 A jewel more radiant than the moon
 Lowered Her mask to me
 The sublimest creature the Gods, full of fire
 Would marvel at making their Queen
 Infusing the air with Her fragrant desire
 And my heart reeled with grave poetry

In Poe's poem the rhythms of anapests and iambs are well marked, and in many stanzas of the song the lyrics are recited like poetry, what keeps Poe's enviable musicality alive inside the song. The following stanza of the song is where Dani starts to *transcreate* the poem's atmosphere even more, vocals change drastically from a deep low voice reciting poetry to a much more aggressive, high tone, and visceral scream. Dani turns the story into a darker and more explicit romance between the lyric persona and his loved one. Although the vocals and lyrics distance themselves from the poem in this section of the song, the melancholy effect is heightened with a beautiful guitar melody which makes the effect present in the poem to be displayed even more in the music, and creates a duality that is also present in the lyric content of both poem and song; the relation between love and pain; life and death; grotesque and beauty. In the third stanza of the song the band goes back to the "reciting voice" and smoother rhythm, and another work of Poe appears, a mention of Ligeia, a character that gives name to one of Poe's short stories.

Annabel Lee

[Edgar Allan Poe]

For the moon never beams, without bringing
 me dreams
 Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
 And the stars never rise, but I feel the bright
 eyes
 Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
 And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the
 side
 Of my darling—my darling—my life and
 my bride,
 In her sepulchre there by the sea—
 In her tomb by the sounding sea.

A Gothic Romance

[Dani Davey et al.]

In a pale azured dawn like Ligeia reborn
 I tore free of my sleep - sepulchre
 On the sea misted lawn where stone figures,
 forlorn
 Lamented the spectre of Her
 Bewildered and weak, yet with passion
 replete
 I hungered for past overtures
 The curse of unrest and her ardent caress
 Came much more than my soul could
 endure

In the last stanza of Poe's poem, presented above, we can find some connections present in *Cradle of Filth's* song. In Dani's recreation of the poem the narrator wakes up and describes a place by the sea and a sepulcher, just as in *Annabel Lee*. Poe finishes his poem with the sound of the sea while the song finishes with a fading repeating melody on the keyboard, as waves repeating their movement at the sea.

II *King of Terrors*

The Pit and the Pendulum (1842), by Edgar Allan Poe, is a short story about a man sentenced to death during the Spanish inquisition that faints upon receiving his sentence and wakes up in complete darkness. The man, then, starts to walk where he thinks is a cell in a dungeon but soon stumbles and collapses to the ground, where he falls in a deep sleep. When he wakes up, he starts to walk again and finds a deep pit in middle of his cell, where he almost falls. He falls asleep again and when he wakes up, he realizes that he is now bound to a wooden board. On the ceiling of his cell there is a pendulum build up in a similar format to a scythe which is slowly descending toward him. When the deadly pendulum draws near him, he manages to escape from his bounds and from the pendulum's death blow. The pendulum then retracts to the ceiling, but the walls of his cell then starts to head up and to move toward the pit, the narrator believes this is his end as the walls push him to the edge of the pit, but suddenly, he hears voices and trumpets, the walls stop and retract. However, the man begins to faint again and as his body was making its fall into the pit a mysterious person saves him. "General Lasalle. The French army had entered Toledo. The Inquisition was in the hands of its enemies." (POE. 2002, p. 246).

The tale *The Pit and the Pendulum* by Edgar Allan Poe is the literary work that inspired our next song to be analyzed: *King of terrors* which is present on *Symphony X's* 2002 album *The Odyssey* and was the first song selected for this work. The song, as well as Poe's story, tells the story of man condemned to death and imprisoned in a cell during the Spanish inquisition. On the ceiling of his cell a massive razor-sharp pendulum was suspended, and as time passed by, the pendulum descended towards him. The song focuses on the agony and despair of the short story's protagonist and begins by setting the scene to its listener with Allen's vocals focusing on what Tatit (2012, p. 22-23) called *thematization*, that is, Allen is focusing on adding to the rhythm by segmenting his speech and attacking the consonant sounds while he creates and presents the poetic persona.

King of Terrors

[Russell Allen, Michael Romeo, Jason Rullo]

I awake - without the sun
encased in walls of steel
terror so real - it blinds me

Rancid darkness steals my breath
The Pit - on the edge of death
The wells of Hell know not my name

Just with the two first stanzas of the song (shown above) we can clearly see that *The Pit and the Pendulum* is being *transcreated* to a song. The cell, the agony, and the pit are there, and not only in the lyrics, the band was able to *transcreate* the effect of agony and never-ending cycle produced by Poe in his tale so well that you can almost feel yourself locked in that cell by the repeating—and yet not boring—main riff and Allen’s powerful distorted vocal lines in the verses. In the pre-chorus section, the aggressive sound of the band gives place to a calmer melody led by the keyboard while Allen’s aggressive vocals change to a soft low-pitched voice as he sings the following line:

King of Terrors

[Russell Allen, Michael Romeo, Jason Rullo]

I slip away... into black I fade away

The Pit and the Pendulum

[Edgar Allan Poe]

“The ground was moist and slippery. I staggered onward for some time, when I stumbled and fell. My excessive fatigue induced me to remain prostrate; and sleep soon overtook me as I lay.” (2002, p. 240)

In the chorus, another element from the short story appears in the song: the pendulum. The sweep of the terrifying pendulum—to the left and to the right—, its iron shadows casted on the walls and the terror brought by it as the tempo³⁷ of the song increases, intensifying the effect created by Poe. The fast drumming pattern also adds to that. The narrator’s loss of hope, praying

³⁷ Tempo can be defined as the pace or speed at which a section of music is played. Available in: <https://study.com/academy/lesson/tempo-definition-and-uses-in-musical-forms.html> Access in: November 11, 2021.

to be killed by the pendulum, is masterfully *transcreated* by the band in the last line of the chorus, not only on its lyrics but also on the melody with the abrupt change from the chorus' fluid melody back to the main riff's staccato³⁸ rhythm. Going back to Poe's concept of effect, in this change we can think of the fluid melody's end as the end of hope and will to survive in Poe's character.

King of Terrors

[Russell Allen, Michael Romeo, Jason Rullo]

Terrified - to the left and to the right
Spirits of the Damned, iron shadows cast
Hear my desperate cries
Shrieking demon - far and wide
praying for this breath to be my last

The Pit and the Pendulum

[Edgar Allan Poe]

“Days passed—it might have been that many days passed—ere it swept so closely over me as to fan me with its acrid breath. The odor of the sharp steel forced itself into my nostrils. I prayed—I wearied heaven with my prayer for its more speedy descent. I grew frantically mad, and struggled to force myself upward against the sweep of the fearful scimitar.” (2002, p. 243)

During the chorus (shown above), Allen's vocal goes higher in certain words such as “terrified” and “desperate cries”, and he extends the vowels creating what Tatit (2012, p.22-23) called *passionalization*, that is, Allen's tension is being transferred to his long emission of frequencies, and together with his high pitch he is creating a inaction—what we can relate to Poe's protagonist who is in an inactive state, locked on his cell. Going further in the lyrics, our first direct quotation from the short story appears as the poetic persona describes the loss of track of time and madness experimented by Poe's protagonist.

³⁸ Used to describe musical notes that are short and separate when played. Available in: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/pt/dicionario/ingles/staccato> Access in: November 11, 2021.

King of Terrors
 [Russell Allen, Michael Romeo, Jason Rullo]

 'Inch by Inch and line by line'
 The Blade - descending lost in time
 The fiends of Doom they call my name

The Pit and the Pendulum
 [Edgar Allan Poe]

 “Inch by inch—line by line—with a descent only appreciable at intervals that seemed ages—down and still down it came!” (2002, p. 242-243).

The melodic scheme alternates between the staccato rhythm and the melodic one present in the chorus as the song progresses. Then, in the song’s bridge³⁹ a voice—who’s we could not find information on—reads a passage from Poe’s tale. The quote appears near the end of both the song and the tale, and the title of the song is featured on the end of the quote:

The Pit and the Pendulum
 [Edgar Allan Poe]

“The Inquisitorial vengeance had been hurried by my two-fold escape, and there was to be no more dallying with the King of Terrors.”
 (2002, p. 246)

The song finishes with the chorus, but this time Allen expands the vowel sound on “my” as the guitars, the keyboard and the drums also prolongate their notes creating a tension that is released by Allen’s short and distorted “last”. The keyboard maintains its note sounding as the song fades out.

³⁹ A bridge is the section of a song that provides contrast, yet falls in the same context of the song. It is also known as a passage that serves as a link between sections of the song. Available in: <https://www.musicgateway.com/blog/how-to/what-is-a-bridge-in-a-song> Access in: Nov. 8, 2021.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In conclusion, we could see how music and literature can feed of each other. A relationship where music takes inspiration from literature and literature reaches more people through music's massive appeal. Through the concept of *transcreation*, we understand how the arts interrelate and can feed the other. Furthermore, we understand how the act of translating can be considered a creative activity, in which the writer-translator reads, interprets, transforms and recreates the original text in a new text and context.

In terms of music, we perceived the intertextual references and how the composer, just like a translator, *transcreates* the ideas of the original text into a new by means of, picking up themes, words and atmospheres from it, in order to create a relationship of dialogue between both works. Through resources such as *thematization* and *passionalization*, the band's artists enable the communication of sensations and feelings to its audience. In compositions that dialogue with literature, this arrangement evokes feelings similar to those of the reader in the listeners. We also could set Poe's concept of effect in use with a non-written source of effect as music. We also believe that a similar approach can be performed in classrooms around the world to help teacher to teach English together with music and literature.

Finally, we observed how bands like *Cradle of filth* and *Symphony X* can help spread literature to new audiences, and hopefully we could help to demystify the stereotypical and futile image that often permeates heavy metal with our work involving two metal bands and its connection to one of the most well-known authors in literature. With that, we hope that other works in the field of popular music studies and literature can feed of our work or be inspired to write on the same subject.

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ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT A – *Annabel Lee* by Edgar Allan Poe.

Available in: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/44885/annabel-lee>

ATTACHMENT B – Lyrics: *A Gothic Romance (Red Roses for the Devil's Whore)* by Cradle of Filth.

Available in:

<https://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/cradleoffilth/agothicromanceredrosesforthedevilswhore.html>

ATTACHMENT C – Song: *A Gothic Romance (Red Roses for the Devil's Whore)* by Cradle of Filth.

Available in: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yadgRtWoCdg>

ATTACHMENT D – *The Pit and the Pendulum* by Edgar Allan Poe.

Available in: https://www.ibiblio.org/ebooks/Poe/Pit_Pendulum.pdf

ATTACHMENT E – Lyrics: *King of Terrors* by Symphony X.

Available in: <https://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/symphonyx/kingofterrors.html>

ATTACHMENT F – Song: *King of Terrors* by Symphony X.

Available in: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yc-iE3z9m_0