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Obsessed with the Past?

IMKE VON HELDEN

Out of emptiness
Out of Ginnungagap
Came Yggdrasil
Came life
Out of emptiness
Out of Ginnungagap
Came all of what is today

Einherjer: 'Out of Ginnungagap', *Odin Owns Ye All* (1998)

Viking metal is one of the few varieties of metal music defined by the songs' contents and visual elements rather than sonic aspects. While a band's music can be affiliated with folk metal, death metal or black metal, the lyrics and visual elements are clearly centred around the Viking Age, Old Norse mythology and the portrayal of Nordic nature. Time is an important feature in Viking metal lyrics and imagery and appears in the shape of a 'past' that can be identified as the Viking Age (793–1066 AD) or as a past that lacks a time stamp. Often without a specific description of the underlying idea, the past is frequently attributed with wisdom and continuity. It appears in song lyrics and is depicted in various scenes from a seeming past or with direct reference to the Viking Age in the cover artwork of Viking metal bands. Why is the past such an important feature of Viking metal? What other aspects are deemed important? What ideological aspects do the references to the past entail? To answer these questions, I will identify defining features of Viking metal to then analyse the connotations of 'the past' in Viking metal.

Features of Viking Metal

Viking metal became popular during the 1990s. Instead of dealing with Satan and the occult in their lyrics and cover artwork, numerous bands turned their focus to Norse or Nordic topics and made this idea popular. Many of the early bands were of Scandinavian origin, including the Swedish

band Bathory, who, as early as 1988, released their album *Blood Fire Death*, which is regarded today as one of the most influential Viking metal albums and the precursor to Viking metal.¹ The album cover, lyrics and music combined Romantic nationalism with the Viking Age in the form of metal music by showing the painting *Asgardsreien* (1872) by the Norwegian painter Nicolai Peter Arbo, which was a novelty. Emerging from or strongly influenced by black metal,² other bands chose the same lyrical focus, which was displayed in the cover artwork of their albums and sometimes in their clothing as well: the Norwegian band Enslaved released their EP *Hordanes Land* (1993) and their debut album *Vikingligr Veldi* (1994), and were joined by other Norwegian bands such as Einherjer³ and Helheim.⁴ Swedish Unleashed⁵ and Amon Amarth⁶ added to Viking metal's sonic dimension by introducing death metal with a focus on Viking motifs. Even though the term was not widely used during the 1990s, Enslaved labelled their music 'Viking metal' in the sleeve notes of their album *Frost* (1994).

Well before the Scandinavian extreme metal Vikings, others matched rock and metal music with lyrics on Vikings: Led Zeppelin's 'Immigrant Song' (1970) is frequently mentioned as a precursor of Viking motifs in metal music, as is Yngwie Malmsteen's *Rising Force*'s song 'I am a Viking' (1985). Other bands deployed these themes without being deemed Viking metal, including Manowar on their 1983 album *Into Glory Ride* and their more recent *Gods of War* (2007) or, to name a more recent example, Burning Witches with their album *The Witch of the North* (2021). Today, bands such as Amon Amarth or Týr have a huge fan base and play concerts worldwide. Despite the numerous bands coming from Northern Europe, bands from other countries came into play by the end of the 1990s. Viking metal, one of the 'place-based metal labels full of mythology',⁷ became a global phenomenon, and today there are, for example, Viniir from Malaysia, Thorvald from Egypt or Jörmungandr from New Zealand. Apart from Old Norse mythology, other mythologies such as references to ancient Mesopotamia also emerged.⁸ The early 2000s saw the rise of Pagan metal, with bands mixing folk and metal music with lyrics about pre-Christian eras or other religious or historical backgrounds.⁹

Viking metal as a name of a metal subgenre is highly contested. While it is certainly a genre featured in metal magazines¹⁰ and the *Encyclopaedia Metallum – The Metal Archives*, many bands such as Amon Amarth reject the term for their own music because it refers to the textual instead of the sonic dimension.¹¹ Sometimes, even atmospheric bands that do not indulge in metal music are included in the genre. One of them is Wardruna, a band

that are partially made up of (former) metal musicians but do not use electric guitars, which is an indicator of metal music for many. The question of why some bands are deemed part of the Viking metal genre while others, whose lyrics also take up Viking and Norse mythology, are not, shows the complexity of the manifold genres of metal music.¹² In order to understand the features that define Viking metal, one has to turn to the history of black metal. Many of the 1990s Viking metal bands moved away from the nascent Norwegian black metal scene¹³ when realising Satanism and the occult were based on the same Christian beliefs they were trying to avoid. With the Viking Age, bands focused on an era before the Christianisation of Norway or Scandinavia – or, as some of the musicians I interviewed¹⁴ argued, ‘the authentic religion of Scandinavia’. Sometimes, musicians from the respective countries even extend the geographical focus to Germany, the United States and others.

One can only make assumptions about the music of the Viking Age, as there are no written sources on music from this era. Today’s knowledge derives from sagas,¹⁵ Eddic and Skaldic poetry, various Latin chronicles, illustrations and archaeological findings.¹⁶ The sources mention music-making frequently¹⁷ and suggest that musicians were of importance during the Viking Age.¹⁸ The little information that exists on the horns, lures and rattles¹⁹ may have inspired bands such as Wardruna. Having said that, some sonic characteristics appear in Viking metal, which may have derived from popular images of the Vikings. As a seafaring population, they are often depicted as chanting in a sort of choir, an image reflected in more epic passages, such as in songs like Skálmöld’s ‘Gleipnir’ (2012) or Helheim’s ‘Rignir’ (2019). Another feature is horn sounds, which are perhaps intended to resemble a Gjallarhorn, a horn instrument associated with the god Heimdallr, as in Helheim’s ‘Yme’ (2000) or King of Asgard’s ‘The Nine Worlds Burn’ (2012). Simon Trafford also suggests that bands try to make their sound more ‘Viking’ and highlights instruments such as violin (for example, in the Swedish band Månegarm) and accordion (for example, in the Finnish band Ensiferum). He further mentions sea shanties²⁰ or, in the case of Týr, traditional Faroese folk songs collected in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

An important feature of both the sound and the lyrics is the language. Many Viking metal bands use their respective native language exclusively or add some English lyrics. Some bands include local variants, such as the Sognamål dialect used by Windir from Norway. Often, a translation is available in the album booklet by the bands themselves or in online sources such as Darklyrics.com, usually provided by fans.

Apart from a 'Viking sound', the visual elements of Viking metal in the cover artwork of albums, on various merchandise and in stage props are also crucial to the overall concept. These references to a Viking past in popular culture are usually dominated by male figures: 'indeed the Viking is hyper-masculine. They are big and strong with blond or red hair, and equipped with swords or axes and winged or horned helmets'.²¹ Without the winged helmets, this image could be applied to Viking metal as well: strong bearded with long, wild hair and beards, apparently ready to climb onto their longboats and sail to their next battle. The martial appearance can include women, but it usually does not. In terms of musicians, the impression is similar: in a cursory review of the first twenty of 486 entries in the *Encyclopedia Metallum* for the music genre 'Viking metal', 54 musicians are male, while only six are female. A comprehensive study including cis- or transgender women musicians in Viking metal is still lacking,²² as is a comprehensive analysis of Viking metal outside of Europe and North America.²³

Focus on the Past

History and mythology have often been addressed in metal music: From references to the colonisation of the Americas (Iron Maiden: 'Run to the Hills', 1982) to Greek myth (Iron Maiden: 'Flight of Icarus', 1983) and the history of the Middle East²⁴ (Melechesh: *Enki*, 2015), history has always been a part of metal music and is certainly not restricted to Viking metal. And yet, the Vikings were the first to establish their own metal subgenre. What is it that renders the topic so suitable for metal music? Simon Trafford and Aleks Pluskowski state that

[i]t is in heavy rock and metal that enthusiasm for the Vikings has been most evident, largely because the characteristics typically attributed to the Vikings – machismo, chaos, freedom, irreverence for authority and so on – correspond closely to those most lauded by heavy metal culture.²⁵

With respect to the rebellious character of metal music, Catherine Hoad argues that the Viking in Viking metal is 'frequently configured as oppositional',²⁶ that is, the figure is characterised in opposition to Judeo-Christian religion like Satan is in black metal, or, in the case of Týr from the Faroese Islands, in opposition to the Celts. Yet, while this might be the reason the Vikings became popular in metal culture, I argue that this is only one of many reasons why the Vikings and Norse mythology have

infiltrated metal music. It does not explain, for instance, why references to the past in general play such an important role for the musicians and fans and, more importantly, what the meaning of this past could be. In order to understand this phenomenon, it is necessary to analyse the elements of the Viking era and Norse mythology in Viking metal and the contexts in which they appear.

With a focus on the Viking Age and Norse mythology at the heart of the definition of Viking metal, the phenomenon raises questions as to the reason for applying Norse motifs, the sources considered and, looking back at the history of the use of Viking motifs, what ideological aspects this use in Viking metal entails. The following analysis is an extension of my earlier work on cultural identity in Norwegian metal music. In an attempt to grasp the character of 'Norse-themed metal music', I conducted qualitative analyses of outputs by Norwegian metal bands and identified five main categories that mattered within this frame: nature, religious elements, representations of history, references to metal music and aesthetics, as well as Nordic and Norwegian aspects of cultural identity.²⁷ The categories overlap in some aspects: when Amon Amarth's vocalist Johann Hegg sings about Thor in 'Twilight of the Thunder God' (2008), he does so by referring to the Christianisation (and a Vikings' battle against Christian invaders) in 'Where is Your God?' (2008) on the same album (*Twilight of the Thunder God*, 2008), setting the mythical thunder god in direct relationship to the Christianisation and a possible defence against an intruding force. The study included many representations of history and considered references to battles and fighting without concrete historical contexts (including imagery of past battles, weaponry and wounds, but also personal struggles and peace), mentions of historical practices, and some literary, sonic and visual sources. It is interesting that most of the battles are mentioned in the context of the fight against Christianity and the emotions of hate, grief and wrath connected to a force perceived as colonial. Another big group in this category are mythical battles, often specified as *Ragnarök*, the mythological end of the world.

The second biggest sub-category are references to 'time and the past'. Even when the Viking Age is not mentioned explicitly, the analysis suggests a connection to the era due to references to Norse mythology, for example, in Helheim's 'Det Eteriske Åndevesenes Skumringsdans' (1997): 'I edle tider og døde stormenns land, hvor myter ble skrevet av norrøn mann' (In noble times and the land of the dead lords, where myths were written by Norse man). Specific historical events such as the Lindisfarne raid in 793 are mentioned in Enslaved's '793 (Slaget om Lindisfarne)' (1997) or the

Battle of Stamford Bridge in 1066 in the case of Amon Amarth ('The Berserker at Stamford Bridge', 2019), among others. It is striking that the 'past' in general, as well as 'timelessness', are mentioned often, sometimes connected to words such as 'ancient' and 'eternal'. Even though the past is presented as a lost one in most cases, it is a time of primordial power that is lingering and waiting for its return. Some ancient elements are connected to sound(s). For example, Einherjer mention sounds that suggest a force that connects warriors to their roots: 'Gamle tonar, djupe tonar' (Ancient sounds, deep sounds) in their song 'Norrøn Kraft' (2011). In the same song, ancient elements are related to wisdom, which affects the people involved: 'Eg står støtt på norrøn grunn/I kraft av tanken på vår tid' (I'm standing supported on Nordic ground/strengthened by the thought of our time).

The Vikings in the lyrics usually show certain characteristics and are portrayed as very masculine in their strength and endurance, and hard-working 'men' and 'sons'. They are intimidating, tough and brutal, for example, in 'Svart Visdom' (1995) by Helheim. Time has left a mark on these men: Vikings are 'Menn tæret av tidens tann' (Men marked by time) and, in the same song, one is also described as old and possibly marked by many battles: 'Hans hår er grått og hans sinn er likeså/Hans øyne speiler bare sverd' (His hair turned grey, just like his mind/His eyes mirror only the sword). A certain fixation on wisdom and age is shown by referring to ancient knowledge and ideas, which might be superior to those of the present world and transmit powers to people relating to their antique roots, such as in Glittertind's 'Svart Natt' (2005). In their song 'Jotunblod' (Blood of Giants) (1994), Enslaved present a primaeval force alongside mythical references: 'Vår Urkrafts dype røtter/med energi fra treets fire elver' (The deep roots of our primaeval power/with energy from the tree's four streams), the tree being a reference to the gigantic ash tree Yggdrasil, which in itself is a reference to the cosmos. Further Viking characteristics are glory: 'Let's drink to the sons of glory!' and seafaring skills (Glittertind: 'Longships and Mead', 2009).

Ancestors are a vital factor in establishing a connection to the past: They are 'sønner av den norrøne ætt' (sons of the Norse tribe; Helheim: 'Svart Visdom', 1995) and 'sviklause ættar' (authentic dynasties; Einherjer: 'Balladen om Bifrost', 2011). They are immortal in spirit, as described by Helheim's 'Fra Ginnunga-gap Til Evig Tid' (1997): 'Den norrøne ætt vil aldri dø!' (The Norse lineage will never die!). In 'Jotunblod' (1994), Enslaved connect to mythology and primordial forces: 'Om en søker all Midgards viten/Om den kloke Volve svinger sin stav/En unngår ei sitt opphav/Urkraftens kaos, Jotunblod' (If one seeks all Midgard's knowledge/If the wise woman swings

her staff/One cannot avoid one's origin/The chaos of the primitive force/Jotun blood). Outside of Viking metal, the Vikings were farmers and seafaring people, but especially in Viking metal's early days, very few bands included this aspect of Viking life.

Another vital aspect connected to the bands' lyrics, cover artwork and interviews are sources, yet the information gathered from interviews with musicians is certainly a limited one. While musicians are able to provide information on specific sources and material they gathered for writing a particular song or album, we can never know what other elements may have subconsciously influenced their way of portraying Vikings, which might include elements from popular culture, such as films and books that are often consumed at a young age. However, some of the material is referenced in album booklets and, in the case of Norwegian metal bands, often points to Old Norse literature, such as quotations from and references to the Poetic Edda. Many bands refer to 'Hávamál' (for example, Helheim's 'Viten og Mod', 2011) and other sources such as the 'Völuspá' (for example, Ásmegin's 'Vargr i Véum', 2003) or 'Lokasenna' (for example, Solefald's 'Lokasenna', 2003).

The question remains why musicians (and fans) spend so much energy on members of a people who lived and raided more than a thousand years ago and are often associated with ideologies of right-wing extremists. The answer to why bands devote their band concept to the Vikings and what they aim to achieve with their work is complex and, of course, invariably depends on the person writing the lyrics and the band concept in question. Both have been analysed by scholars in various academic disciplines, focusing on the role of authenticity in Viking metal and other metal styles with 'country- or place-of-origin references'.²⁸ Catherine Hoad calls this phenomenon with reference to Týr's music a 'practice of symbolic (Nordic) ethnicity' and describes the band's work as a fight against Christianity as a 'foreign, slave religion' in order to prepare the 'return to their "true" gods' and describes it as 'hegemonic representation of ethnicity'.²⁹ Toni-Matti Karjalainen, in his work on Finnish metal bands, observes 'country-specific characteristics and stereotypes' appearing in media coverage on such bands, including 'features of the local scenes and cultures, natural environments, geography and weather, cultural mentality, and other contextual portrayals', set to connect with the musical style.³⁰ Jan-Peter Herbst sheds light on the economic perspective and perceives the bands' efforts in presenting their heritage, and thus authenticity, as a marketing principle.³¹

In my previous research, I have found that the musicians indeed strived for authenticity, but also to connect to their very own, personal level of how

they perceive the world and emotions. I asked Norwegian musicians about their motivation and intention when writing about Norse themes and what they wished to express with their work. Enslaved's guitarist Ivar Bjørnson explained that one way of writing lyrics for him meant historical and mythical references with a poetic take on Nordic history, for example, an interpretation of runes, which Enslaved have been well known for since their album *Isa* (2004) or even earlier in the case of single songs (for example, 'Ansuz Astral', 1998). In order to make sure fans from across the world would understand the lyrics, the band switched from Norwegian to English lyrics. In contrast, a member of a band, which I will call band A in the following to grant their wish to remain anonymous, connects their lyrics to their life phases and refers to the Vikings, especially in an early period, when they were in search of identity and belonging. The project led them to Norwegian history and specifically Romantic nationalism and the (forceful) Christianisation of Norway. The person described their music as heavily inspired by Viking rock, which is decidedly ideological and revered by right-wing extremists, especially in Sweden. When moving to another city and becoming less isolated, however, they began working with other musicians and widened their lyrical focus, turning away from potentially right-wing ideas. Another band, here referred to as band B, explained to me that they imagined their music as a view into the Norse with a dark take on mythology and interpretation of runes. It is interesting that this band's bassist studies languages and is fascinated by the diachronic aspect of the Norwegian language. So, rather than presenting a Viking image with longships and the likes, this band aims at finding meaning in the language itself. For a band that I call C, the concept behind their music was a reverence to their roots with an emphasis on nature, Norse mythology and belief. Another band in the study, here called band D, focused on history, mythology and Norwegian roots, but without too much focus on the exact words. Their idea of making music was to transport moods and tell stories while making it sound as Norwegian as possible.

While there is a lot of literature on the role of religion in metal music studies, the role of religion in Viking metal – or, for that matter, pagan metal – has been surprisingly rarely studied in academia. In 'Antichrist Superstars', Simon Trafford and Aleks Pluskowski draw a link between Ásatrú and the evolving Viking metal phenomenon during the 1990s. They describe the turn from Satanism and the occult in favour of Norse gods as the opposers of Christian followers and Scandinavia's conversion to Christianity as a 'wrong that needs to be righted'.³² My 2017 study suggests that religion plays a surprisingly limited role in the opinion of musicians.³³

In her research focusing on the visual and textual representation of Celtic and Germanic mythology by Pagan metal bands, Serina Heinen concludes that Pagan metal bands may seem like a religious movement to outsiders, while musicians seldom refer to religious aspects.³⁴

As mentioned above, ideological aspects are certainly a part of Viking metal. While many bands claim, '[w]e're not even political in any way',³⁵ the focus on Norse themes is influenced and informed by studying Vikings and runes in Europe in the past. Romantic nationalism in Northern Europe adapted the Viking (and rural depictions) as a means of connecting with their past, especially in Norway, a country that was under Danish and Swedish rule until independence in 1905. European history also referred to strong male and blonde Viking warriors prior to and during World War II in Nazi Germany and beyond. While the representations of Vikings in Viking metal are certainly martial, the ideology behind the music is, in most cases, not connected to ideas of a supreme race. However, there are subgenres called National Socialist Black Metal, or the aforementioned Viking rock, which have a distinct right-wing extremist and racist agenda. Yet, it is important to include the etic perspective by people not involved in metal, who view the music and culture as problematic, which may not correspond to the musicians' emic perspective. Additionally, there are racist or right-wing extremist bands that use (Viking) metal aesthetics, so Viking metal becomes adaptable by people following this ideology or is being used by bands from this spectrum.

Having said that, some bands change their way of dealing with the past. While in the 1990s, bands such as Helheim can certainly be perceived as referring to 'mean' and brutal Vikings conquering and taking in terms of 'narratives of nationhood and liberation',³⁶ the band Helheim in the 2010s is one that focuses on different perspectives of the topic, taking a more personal approach to the Norse. The same can be said about Enslaved, who, rather than describing Viking or mythical battles, analyse and explore the inherent meaning of runes, trying to interpret them in a way that fits into their personal and today's world (for example, on the albums *Riitir* (2012) and *E* (2017)). In a recent interview with a German metal magazine, Johann Hegg of Amon Amarth, a band that write about battles and fighting on the majority of their eleven albums, talks about lyrics with different themes: On *Jomsviking* (2016), he wrote about a Viking burial rite ('One Thousand Burning Arrows') and included a duet of a man and a woman, in which the woman perceives the changed character of the man, who wants to take her by force, and refuses to let him 'take her with him' ('A Dream That Cannot Be').³⁷

Conclusion

Viking metal is part of a growing phenomenon in metal music. Instead of focusing purely on sonic characteristics, as is the case with black or folk metal, a focus on the Vikings is the defining feature. It is interesting that some bands do not wish to label their music Viking metal and instead refer to the style of music as death, black or progressive metal. Regardless of the debate on subgenres, the aspects of time and the past play a crucial role in defining the Viking genre and are closely related to questions of religion, mythology and ideology, but they also serve very different purposes and for very different reasons, such as a means of placing oneself within a tradition and heritage, telling stories and exploring Norse mythology, among others.

Scholars have pointed out the role of authenticity in metal in general and Viking metal in particular, which can be perceived as problematic in terms of the politics of belonging but can also be a way to engage with heritage, tell stories or be a means of marketing for labels. Viking metal has been widely regarded from the musicians' perspectives. A comprehensive study of the fans' perceptions of Viking metal in general, ideology in particular, and the way Viking metal culture works (for example, at festivals such as *Midgardsblot* in Norway and *Ragnarök* in Germany) is still missing and would contribute to understanding the way the 'products' rendered by Viking musicians are received and what the interaction between both parties is like.

Notes

1. Simon Trafford, 'Viking Metal', in Stephen C. Meyer and Kirsten Yri (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Music and Medievalism* (Oxford University Press, 2020), pp. 564–85.
2. Ross Hagen, 'On Horseback They Carried Thunder: The Second Lives of Norwegian Black Metal' in this volume.
3. Einherjer released their first album, *Aurora Borealis*, in 1994, including the song 'Einherjer' about the fallen warriors in Norse mythology, and have been writing lyrics about mythology and stories from a Norse past ever since.
4. Helheim is a Norwegian band with a clear focus on Norse mythology. The band released their first album, *Jormundgand*, in 1995.
5. Unleashed released their first album, *Where No Life Dwells*, in 1991. The early lyrics are not exclusively about Vikings or Norse mythology but include songs that refer to topics like legal injustice (for example, 'Legal Rapes', 1995). The more recent albums focus on a martial take of Norse mythology and Vikings.

6. Their first album, *Sorrow Throughout the Nine Worlds* (1996), already pointed to the band concept, which Amon Amarth still apply today.
7. Jan-Peter Herbst, 'Teutonic Metal: Effects of Place- and Mythology-Based Labels on Record Production', *International Journal of the Sociology of Leisure* 4 (2021): 291–313.
8. *Encyclopaedia Metallum: The Metal Archives*, the most comprehensive online archive on metal bands, currently lists 474 bands that are labelled 'Viking metal', with 152 bands from outside Europe.
9. Serina Heinen, *Odin Rules: Religion, Medien und Musik im Pagan Metal* (Transcript, 2017).
10. Metal Hammer UK lists '10 Essential Viking Metal Albums' that are 'known to man and Valkyrie', *Metal Hammer* (2020). www.loudersound.com/features/10-essential-viking-metal-albums (accessed 24 June 2021).
11. Stef Lach, 'Amon Amarth: Don't Call Us Viking metal', *Metal Hammer* (2014). www.loudersound.com/news/amon-amarth-don-t-call-us-viking-metal (accessed 14 August 2020).
12. The 'bricolage of heavy metal' has been addressed in many instances, for example, in Deena Weinstein, *Heavy Metal: The Music and its Culture* (Da Capo Press, 2000) and Sam Dunn's documentary *Metal Evolution: The Series* (Banger Films, 2011). For his series, Sam Dunn developed a 'Heavy Metal Family Tree' with 26 subgenres.
13. During the 1990s, the Norwegian black metal scene became notorious for arson and murder. In the name of black metal, a group of young people set fire to stave churches, and some of them were convicted for murder. The story of Norwegian black metal is featured in many books, journalistic works, documentaries and movies, for example, Sam Dunn's documentary *Metal: A Headbanger's Journey* (Warner Bros. Home Entertainment, 2005), Harald Fossberg, *Nyanser av svart: Historien om norsk Black Metal* (Cappelen, 2015) and the controversial Michael Moynihan and Didrik Söderlind, *Lords of Chaos: The Bloody Rise of the Satanic Metal Underground* (Feral House, 1998).
14. Imke von Helden, *Norwegian Native Art: Cultural Identity in Norwegian Metal Music* (LIT, 2017).
15. Trafford, 'Viking Metal'.
16. Nils Grinde, *Norsk musikkhistorie: Hovedlinjer I norsk musikkliv gjennom 1000 år* (Musikk-Husets Forlag, 1993).
17. Trafford, 'Viking Metal'.
18. Grinde, *Norsk musikkhistorie*, p. 11; von Helden, *Norwegian Native Art*, p. 58.
19. Cajsa S. Lund, 'People and Their Soundscape in Viking-Age Scandinavia: Critical Reflections in a Music-Archaeological Perspective', in Ellen Hickmann, Ricardo Eichmann and Lars-Christian Koch (eds.), *Studien zur Musikarchäologie* (Verlag Marie Leidorf, 2000), pp. 235–41.
20. Trafford, 'Viking Metal', p. 574.

21. Simon Trafford and Aleks Pluskowski, 'Antichrist Superstars: The Vikings in Hard Rock and Heavy Metal', in David W. Marshall (ed.), *Mass Market Medieval* (McFarland, 2007), pp. 57–73.
22. There are studies focusing on female metal fans, for example, Rosemary Lucy Hill, *Gender, Metal and the Media: Women Fans and the Gendered Experience of Music* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), and gender aspects in metal music, for example, Florian Heesch and Niall Scott, *Heavy Metal and Gender: Interdisciplinary Approaches* (Routledge, 2016), as well as on queer metal fans, see Amber R. Clifford-Napoleone, *Queerness in Heavy Metal Music* (Routledge, 2017).
23. Viking metal outside of Europe is addressed in various papers, for example, Catherine Hoad, 'Hold the Heathen Hammer High: Viking Metal from the Local to the Global', in Oli Wilson and Sarah Atfield (eds.), *Shifting Sounds: Musical Flow* (IASPM, 2013), pp. 62–70.
24. Peter Pichler, 'Mesopotamian Metal' in this volume.
25. Trafford and Pluskowski, 'Antichrist Superstars', p. 71.
26. Hoad, 'Hold the Heathen Hammer High', p. 2.
27. von Helden, *Norwegian Native Art*, pp. 59–129.
28. Toni-Matti Karjalainen, 'Tales from the North and Beyond: Sounds of Origin as Narrative Discourses', in Toni-Matti Karjalainen (ed.), *Sounds of Origin in Heavy Metal Music* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2018), pp. 1–40.
29. Hoad, 'Hold the Heathen Hammer High', p. 1.
30. Karjalainen, 'Tales from the North and Beyond', p. 5.
31. Herbst, 'Teutonic Metal', pp. 294–6.
32. Trafford and Pluskowski, 'Antichrist Superstars', p. 63.
33. Heinen, *Odin Rules*, confirms this view the role of religious ('Pagan') elements in Viking and Pagan metal, p. 210.
34. *Ibid.*
35. Statement by Moonsorrow and Týr on the occasion of accusations against the bands at the music festival *Paganfest* in Germany in 2008 on YouTube (2018). www.youtube.com/watch?v=HRsSamI1MLs (accessed 31 August 2021).
36. Hoad, 'Hold the Heathen Hammer High', p. 4.
37. Wedekind Gisbertson, 'Amon Amarth: In der Ruhe liegt die Kraft', *Legacy: The Voice from the Dark Side* 123 (2021): 20–3.

