

THE GOAT-GOD MOTIF IN HEAVY METAL MUSIC: THE RELEVANCE AND MEANING OF THE GOD PAN IN THE BLACK METAL PROJECT - *ARCKANUM*

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ABSTRACT

Since its emergence as a recognizable artistic endeavor, heavy metal has brought and enabled an authentic aesthetics in the wider culture: not only has it shaped its own unmistakable sonic “landscape”, but it has also shaped forms of visual presentation. Taken together, heavy metal has an adequate language for the communication of the ideas and motifs that are in its foundations. As art is one of the ways in which human beings gain an understanding of the self and the world (the other ways are philosophy, science, mythology, etc.) it is no surprise the art engages with various ways of perceiving. It is not only that these different ways correspond with each other, but are often the subject of one another as well. Heavy metal music is no exception as it also relies and draws its content from the phenomena of the world at large, and from introspection as well: the realms of the psyche. The mythical motif of the goat-like god Pan is a motif relating to both the outside world and the psyche: it expresses many things: divinity, humanity, nature, animalism, horror, psychosis, sexuality, countermovement and contrast as well as the cultivation of the individual and the community in the arts of dance and music. Claiming that Pan as motif has attained a significant place in the art of heavy metal as a symbol is an understatement, given that the discursive approximation and the exegesis of the Pan Mythos

can indeed clarify the overall aesthetic and form of heavy metal and some of its numerous subgenres specifically. The aim of this article is to provide a comparative analysis of the descriptions of the goat-god Pan originating in ancient culture, with its form and meaning in the domain of heavy metal; most notably in the artistic endeavour *Arckanum*.

Key words: animalism, goat, Pan, music, myth

INTRODUCTION

Whether or not it is agreed that the origin of heavy metal (as music and cultural phenomenon) was in *Black Sabbath*'s self-titled debut album from 1970, or that it is was somewhere in the 1960s, influenced by bands such as *Led Zeppelin*, *Deep Purple* or *Cream*, we can recognize a certain current as an authentic cultural heritage as an authentic cultural heritage. The notion of a 'current' reminds one of a common source, from which a flow springs, moving away from this source; yet regardless of its turns and deflections, the essence of its origin is always there. As is the case with the variations in sound that are associated with different subgenres of metal,^[1] the lyrical themes and motifs used for the transference of its message through an adequately formed artistic medium are a similar instance. Naturally, when it comes to understanding an art form under a common denominator, yet expressing various nuances, systematization is proposed. In this sense, Deena Weinstein suggests that there are two major clusters defining the themes in heavy metal: the Dionysian and the 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.” (Weinstein, 2002, 35).^[2]

[1] From this point on, the author will use term “metal” as an overarching term for all the subgenres belonging to it, such as heavy metal, black metal, death metal, doom metal, folk metal, power metal, progressive metal, speed metal, symphonic metal, thrash metal, etc.

[2] The Dionysian impulse that is primarily linked to vitality and ecstasy is clearly distinguished in this

Another systematization may be based on the difference between themes that are socio-political, emotional and psychosocial and themes of spirituality in a broader sense (which may include religious, mythological or fantasy themes and motifs). Whatever the case may be, metal has predominantly been an expressive countercultural force. Regarding the socio-political element in metal music, János Fejes states that “Politics is not an articulated problem of metal music on the level of party politics, metal is more like (or rather) a rebellion against the current social system and injustice.” (Fejes, 2017, 40). In fact, most topics in heavy metal were either considered taboo, or somewhat rebellious when compared to dominant cultural norms. The aesthetics of heavy metal are extensive: sound, fashion and attitude are in correspond to its lyrics, and often closely related to a particular band’s name (cf. Weinstein, 2002, 32–35). In other words, a thorough conceptualization of overall image and the impact of its art is common in metal. All the means for channelling the energy of a rebellious youth are thus put to good use.

“The main and common themes in metal music reflect the rebellion aspect of the music. Metal music as expressed by Reamon Bloem (Vocalist and songwriter of the Dutch band ‘Thronar’) is an aggressive music style that uses rebellious themes, revolving mainly around issues that are considered sensitive or a taboo in the society. In fact, the themes range from representation of real issues such as politics, wars, sex, violence, religion, history, to themes related to fantasy, poetry, mythology, etc.” (de Klepper et al., 2007, 10).

Views on sexuality play a significant role in the organization of a society, with governing institutions using art and culture as instruments for maintaining order and decency. “A principle of explanation emerges after the fact: if sex is so rigorously repressed, this is because it is incompatible with a general and intensive work imperative.” (Foucault, 1978, 5–6). Besides the economic basis for the utilization of sexuality, analyses in comparative anthropology suggest the presence of such bio-political legislative practices

description from the Chaotic impulse which, according to Weinstein, is symbolized by various motifs of conflict, rebellion, and separation, i.e., destruction and death in all its forms. The Dionysian aspect as recognized in metal music (community) can be understood by way of Friedrich Nietzsche’s explanation of the immersion in “Primordial Unity” by ecstasy and a natural and ebullient intoxication, as will be explained later in this paper.

as a kind of primitive genetics. “Amid all unknowns – of sexual attraction, mating reproduction, inheritance, genetic drift, future evolution – the shamans of every tribe try to establish guide-posts to tribal (gene-pool) survival. Thus ‘morality’ is invented.” (Wilson, 2000, 129). In *The History of Sexuality* Foucault also refers to the constant disposition that is present throughout ages and cultures. “But one notices that they ultimately revolve around a rather small number of rather simple principles: perhaps men are not much more inventive when it comes to interdictions than they are when it comes to pleasures.” (Foucault, 1990, 32). Historically, religion lent itself to this role, still attempting to do so (yet has lost its dominant position in contemporary culturalization, as Željko Senković has stated): religions have established themselves as “strict coding, measuring and regulating systems.” (Senković, 2015, 130).^[3] It is worth mentioning that metal has its origins in the blues (which has a strong social component) and rock ‘n’ roll. The history of rock ‘n’ roll is also one in which the taboos in the dominant culture had been broken (the term is etymologically related to sexuality): “The verbal phrase had been an African-American vernacular euphemism for ‘sexual intercourse,’ used in popular dance music lyrics and song titles at least since the 1930s.” (Online Etymology Dictionary, n.d.).^[4]

Once the intersection of various influences, such as dark mythologies, socio-political rebellion and sexual allusions, are backed by the medium of ferocious music, the nexus between metal and the ancient Greek goat-god Pan becomes evident; even more obvious as iconography related to this goat-god has spread throughout this vast genre as one of its most prominent symbols. As heavy metal has gone through various transformations since its emergence, so it was with the dancer/piper god Pan. As will be shown in the following chapters, different aspects of Pan had appeared in different localities and ages: such aspects include divinity, humanity, naturalism, animalism, fear, psychosis, horror, sexuality, countermovement and contrast, as well as the cultivation of the individual and the community through the arts of dance and music. The aim of this article is to explicate the meaning of Pan in relation to

[3] Both Foucault’s and Wilson’s theories of sexual utilization are specific views on subjects useful for the clarification of the paper’s interpretative key. There are, however, other theories of sexuality, and further elaboration on this subject would require a separate work.

[4] “Rocking” and “rolling” semantically correspond to “forwards” and “backwards” in this context, movement characteristic of a seductive dance or sexual intercourse.

these aforementioned concepts by employing a comparative analysis of its occurrence in ancient culture and in the domain of metal music. As our analysis is based on available works of art, it is also a review of these works. A discursive approach to such symbolism will view such content as a means of communication on both the introspective and extrospective levels. Our focus will be on how Pan is understood in the work of the Swedish one-man black metal band *Arckanum*. Johan S. Lahger, (the originator of this now defunct project), who performed under the pseudonym Shamaatae, has also written an extensive book on his connection to Pan titled *PanParadox: Pan Towards Chaos* (Vexior being his pen name). In this book, the author claims that, at certain periods, his music was a medium through which he achieved a connection with Pan, also telling the reader of his understanding of Pan's connection to the concept of chaos. An analysis on the similarities in the iconography of the Greek god Pan and Baphomet (another goat-like figure, yet of significantly different semantic value) will be provided in several paragraphs; such symbols are in common use in the metal community.

PAN – A MULTI-FACETED GOAT-GOD OF NATURE

Ever since Thales of Miletus attempted to explain natural phenomena in hypotheses as theories of nature and its principle(s), also implementing the method of deductive reasoning (for this reason he is regarded as the founder of the scientific method in Western civilization, Aristotle being one of the first, who considered him “the founder of this school of philosophy” (Aristotle, 1933, 983b21)), human understanding turned to *λόγος*, which overthrew *μῦθος* as the dominant explanatory discourse. In the course of the development of Greek pre-Socratic philosophy, even among philosophical poets, there was a tendency to criticize the content and forms of knowledge transmitted by authors of mythological tales. These critics included attacks on Homer and Hesiod among others. Thus, Xenophanes' *Silloi* were one of the results: satirical verses in which he also wrote on his predecessors.

“It was here that Xenophanes revealed his radical theology, and strongly condemned the Homeric and Hesiodic accounts of gods (frs. 10–

12). He went on to extend his criticism, it seems, to all existing theological beliefs. In a mock-serious fashion, he argues that if animals had gods they would make them in their own image (fr. 15), just as Ethiopians worship gods who are black and snub-nosed, while those of Thracians have grey eyes and red hair (fr. 16). No one has any clear view of the gods (fr. 34, cf. fr. 18) but, in spite of this, Xenophanes advanced a theology quite remarkable for its time. Completely rejecting the traditional plurality of anthropomorphic gods, he wrote of ‘one god, greatest among gods and men, unlike mortals in form or thought’ (fr. 23).” (Easterling and Knox, 1985, 247).

However, the heritage of myth was never abandoned entirely. The gods of men have undergone various transformations depending on a locality and its folklore. On more than one occasion in the history of culture, gods were perceived as various forms originating from the forms of living and non-living nature. As Arthur Fairbanks states “The choice of the right god when one prayed was no light matter. In the country Socrates prayed to Pan; Zeus Boulaios received the prayers of the assembly, Zeus Ktesios, prayers in the home.” (Fairbanks, 1910, 86). Indeed, Plato himself in his dialogues pays witness to Socrates’ invocations of the gods of myth; his communications with beings of a transcendent nature can be found in the *Phaedrus*. For e.g.: “Beloved Pan, and all ye other gods who here abide, grant me to be beautiful in the inner man, and all I have of outer things to be at peace with those within. May I count the wise man only rich. And may my store of gold be such as none but the good can bear.” (Plato, 1925, 279). The aim of this evocation in the language of myth does not signify a revocation of clarity and distinctness, both being constituents of logical thought expressed and revered through *λόγος*. In terms of philosophy, the development of notion as a central concept, in which thought and being gained a proximity of identification (“For it is the same thing that can be thought and that can be.” (Burnet, 1908, 198)) is the defining component of the human epistemic unit, in the sense of a cognitive progression by the principle of individuation. Taking into account the development, or even the emergence, of early Greek philosophy, and bearing in mind Wittgenstein’s dictum that “*The limits of my language mean the limits of my world.*” (Wittgenstein, 1974, 5.6), one may agree that cognition with a logical and linguistic foundation, formed by abstractions as concepts,

has essentially changed and expanded the boundaries, conditions and possibilities of human thought when compared to an earlier image-based mode of thought with its foundations in myth.

“Western philosophical tradition from its beginnings in the Presocratics and in the Old Testament has been prejudiced against images (*phantasia*) in favour of thought-abstractions. (...) One of the main arguments against the mythical mode of thinking has been that it works in images, which are subjective, personal, sensuous. This above all must be avoided in epistemology, in descriptions of nature.” (Hillman, 1972, xxi).

Even so, the value of mythological representation should not be discredited entirely. As conjoined images once had proper semantic value, both in individual introspection and in the collective cultural consciousness, one can assume that there are segments of cognition formed in such a way with intrinsic value, thus transmitted into a common, modern, and logically based scientific language and discourse. In this sense, such images in the form of mythical creatures, demons and gods can be understood as artefacts of mind, which served as a cultural-behaviouristic code. James Hillman interprets this from a psychological perspective, as his research concerns the archetypal models of the psyche.

“For depth psychology, however, the themes and personages of mythology are not subjects of knowledge. They are living actualities of the human being, having existence as *psychic realities* in addition to and perhaps even prior to their historical and geographical manifestation. Depth psychology turns to mythology less to learn about others in the past than to understand ourselves in the present.” (Hillman, 1972, vi).

This aspect is important in the context of this article; as its basis is expressive art (primarily) through the medium of music, and in the general concepts that constitute metal imagery as well. Artistic ventures universally have deep roots in the artist’s psyche and frequently serve as a medium for self-acknowledgment and self-affirmation during the course of the creative process. The shapes that surface, whether in the form of the visual or audio arts, are the symbolic language of that individual’s psychic state (his/her

beliefs, inclinations, moods, mindedness and personality). Another term for such states of the psyche is the tendencies of the personality; just as demons were personifications of particular, usually undesirable, psychic states. Symbolic language in images of anthropomorphic super-natural creatures, such as demons, is seen as primitive proto-psychiatry today.

“Mental illness was generally considered among the pathologies caused by demonic possession, which included epilepsy, common sins like lying or stealing, and even the ability of predicting the future. Demonic possession was therefore both an explanation and a solution for an unacceptable behaviour in society.” (Espí Forcén, C. & Espí Forcén, F., 2014, 262).

These entities were accused of possessing the soul ($\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$) of their victims,^[5] manic behaviour being the way possession was manifested: an “expert”^[6] would state a diagnosis – i.e. name the demon whose agency was in question. Jacques Collin de Plancy, a French occultist of the nineteenth century, compiled a systematic study of demonology in his book *Dictionnaire Infernal*, which, if understood in this context of demonology as proto-psychiatry, resembles a superstitious diagnostic manual. The description under the entry “Demonic”, states that facial expressions, body posture, tics and modes of verbalization, are some symptoms, thus, features of interest in the study of mental illnesses.

“A demoniac is one possessed by an evil spirit. (...) There were several ways of determining that a person was a demoniac... including facial swelling, grimaces, insensitivity and leprosy, immobility, twitching of the stomach, staring, French answers to Latin questions, and the absence of bleeding from cuts.” (de Plancy, 2019).^[7]

Although scientific discourse rejects such descriptions and explanations, mythology, religion and art have left deep cultural imprints

[5] A term denoting a person whose soul was possessed by a demon was “demonic”.

[6] An exorcist.

[7] In the *Dictionnaire Infernal* (illustrated by Louis Le Breton), de Plancy listed 65 different such demons, mainly inspired by Roman Catholic theology with its roots in Judeo-Christianity, from which it took the names of the demons. Another notable source with similar pattern to de Plancy's *Dictionnaire* is *Salomonis Regis (The Lesser Key of Solomon)* from the mid seventeenth century. “Ars Goetia” is the first part of this grimoire, containing a list of 72 demons, the descriptions of which are essentially anthropomorphic states of the individual psyche.

with such images; they are still entities at present, with whom individuals occasionally identify their personal psychic tendencies. Such identification is especially intensified among artists, as art allows and encourages communication via images as symbols, rather than via grammatical terms and notions. A good example of an artistic outlet used not only for the expression of such internal intimate states, but also for the possible overcoming of the obstacles and problems that block the proper functioning of the psyche, is Selim Lemouchi: a Dutch guitarist, songwriter, occasional vocalist and the main creative and driving force of the occult rock band, *The Devil's Blood*.^[8] In an interview for the *FaceCulture* channel, Selim spoke of the genetically inherited depression, with alcohol and drug abuse and life's hardships^[9], which led to his "downfall". In that period, Selim abandoned music as his expressive outlet and started painting. During the interview, Selim presented one of his paintings from that time and said: "Here we see an androgynous creature who's punishing itself because it feels that what it is and represents is not accepted and doesn't fit in. It doesn't have a face or gender... just pain. It just suffers from itself and the world." When asked by the interviewer: "Does it reflect a certain feeling you had at some point?", Selim replied: "Yes, some parts of me felt that way." (FaceCulture, 2011). The painting here exemplifies the way a symbolic language fits the artist's need for reflection and self-realization. In common terms, one could hardly agree that feeling like a "faceless and genderless androgynous creature" is a plausible sensation. In medical terms, this is even more difficult to grasp. However, art as an expressive tool allows the use of such forms and such forms can be fully infused with a meaning that, through such expression, becomes entirely legible and comprehensible. Later in this interview, while explaining the motifs in his music art, Selim explicitly mentions the limitations of rational thinking. This need in art to be liberated from the technical, rational, operative and mathematical mind is not new. In his lectures on aesthetics, Hegel reflected on this understanding of art as a way of producing content for reflection and self-realization. "The universal and absolute need from which art (on its formal side) springs as its origins in the fact that man is a *thinking* consciousness,

[8] Prior to the formation of *The Devil's Blood*, Selim also played in the bands *Godhead*, *Red King Rising*, *Powervice* and *The Temple of Azoth*. After Selim disbanded *The Devil's Blood*, he formed another band, *Selim Lemouchi & His Enemies*, which ended with his suicide in 2014.

[9] The end of a relationship in fact.

i.e. that man draws out of himself and puts *before himself* what he is and whatever else is.” (Hegel, 1988, 30–31). This extraction of content from the inside can be explained as the production of the material necessary in order that the practical demand of philosophy, formulated as *γνώθι σεαυτόν*, can be satisfied.^[10] This connection between the rationalization of the initially irrational derivative of the human spirit is, in Hegel’s aesthetic theory, understood as a duplication of spirit.

“The universal need of art, that is to say, is man’s rational need to lift the inner and outer world into his spiritual consciousness as an object in which he recognizes again his own self. The need for this spiritual freedom he satisfies, on the one hand, within by making what is within him explicit to himself, but correspondingly by giving outward reality to this his explicit self, and thus in this duplication of himself by bringing what is in him into sight and knowledge for himself and others. This is the free rationality of man in which all acting and knowing, as well as art too, have their basis and necessary origin.” (Hegel, 1988, 31–32).

Art is, thus, the best, yet irrational, method through which the true meaning of content can be elevated to a rational perception. “Art liberates the true content of phenomena from the pure appearance and deception of this bad, transitory world” (Hegel, 1988, 9), by way of the possibility to represent phenomena in a symbolic way, changing their shape to make their essence more open to our reception; “and gives them a higher actuality, born of the spirit.” (Hegel, 1988, 9). Art heals the fracture that produces worldliness and otherworldliness. As far as deception is concerned, it is necessary, because in order for truth to be truth, it has to be exposed and appear. The truly real is only that which is in-itself and for-itself, but as such always remains in the beyond. Art represents this true reality. The spiritual entities that inhabit the psyche of the artist (demons are one possible mode), when activated, stimulate the creative force in the artist, under influence of which he begins to articulate them in an adequate artistic form. “In this matter our consciousness confronts us with the common opinion that the task and aim of art is to bring home to our sense, our feeling, and

[10] Here becomes clear, what was in the introduction stated preliminary, regarding the interconnectedness of philosophy-science-art-mythology. In this relation, one cannot exclude any single element if the aim is a full understanding of what it means to be human, as well as an individual, on the level of self-realization in thought.

our inspiration everything which has a place in the human spirit.” (Hegel, 1988, 46). What is manifested in art depends on the meaning and form of this internal content, which is then understood as inspiration. This may become clearer should one take into account what Vexior said, who has dedicated himself to his musical work *Arckanum*, as well as to his writing in *PanParadox*. He states that he “never had a duologue with Pan”, but “[...] only understood what Pan has been divulging.” (Vexior, 2009, 9): A relation between idea and psyche can be defined in terms of the content affecting the spirit, setting it in motion towards the manifestation of such content. Artistic creation implies a specific enthusiasm, or rapture that derived from such content and under its influence the artist creates in such a form of expression. This rapture can be described in Nietzsche’s terms of the duality of the Apollonian and the Dionysian principle. Here rapture opposes the individuation of the Apollonian principle, drawing the artist back into logical inarticulation, into the common symbolism of archaic images. Although this duality in *The Birth of Tragedy* includes the distribution of the arts, according to which the fine arts, “the art of the shaper”, belong to the Apollonian principle and the musical “non-plastic art of music” (Nietzsche, 1923, 21), to the Dionysian principle. Nietzsche illustrates the Dionysian principle by an analogy with drunkenness. “Under the charm of the Dionysian not only is the covenant between man and man again established, but also estranged, hostile or subjugated nature again celebrates her reconciliation with her lost son, man.” (Nietzsche, 1923, 26), and the outcome of this immersion of man into nature is the ultimate artistic breach, in the form of the work of art, as a refined nutrient, a refined “spiritual nectar” – this is the symbolic form. This point demonstrates that the Dionysian principle, naturally, in direct line with ancient symbolism, is constantly represented by the forces of vitality and ecstasy, which, as stated in the introduction, constitute one of the defining conceptual clusters in heavy metal.^[11] This point also contributes to an understanding of the dedication to expressive elements within metal as an art, not just by using specific rhythms and melodies, but also by using specific instrumental

[11] It is worth noting that Nietzsche’s duality of principles (the Apollonian-Dionysian) is not correspondent to Weinstein’s division of themes in heavy metal (the Dionysian and Chaotic). However, that which belongs to the Chaotic cluster has its significance in the context of Pan, although it is related to the aforementioned primordial unity. In this sense, chaos becomes a matter of perceptual strata. There will be a further elaboration on this topic in our article.

and vocal sounds, as well as creating an entire aesthetic experience. “Man is no longer an artist, he has become a work of art: the artistic power of all nature here reveals itself in the tremor of drunkenness to the highest gratification of the Primordial Unity.” (Nietzsche, 1923, 27). Vexior’s work with *Arckanum*, as well as in his literary work, greatly inspired by Pan, has achieved this; he himself has said: “Pan is my chalice (poculum), which relates to my intellect – and the intellect is the configuration of the knowledge.” (Vexior, 2009, 13). Arthur Fairbanks provides a general description of Pan with an overview of his most prominent characteristics, his assumed habitat and attributes, as well the ritual practices with which he was associated and his importance for the ancient Greeks.

“*Pan*, the son of Hermes, was another Arcadian god of shepherds and goatherds. With his goat’s legs and beard he was the very spirit of that wild life of the goatherd and his goats. He too loved rocky peaks and wooded dells, springs and nymphs of springs the dances and music of the goatherd. Caves, mountain tops, and high oaks were sacred to Pan; music and choral dance belonged to his worship; torch festivals also were held in his honour. After the ‘Panic’ terror, by which Pan helped the Athenians win the battles at Marathon and Salamis, he was worshipped in a grotto near the entrance to the Acropolis. Such caves and grottoes were commonly the centres of his rustic worship.” (Fairbanks, 1910, 159–160).

We know that Pan is of Arcadian origin and this was undoubtedly held among all the Greeks (cf. Borgeaud, 1988, 48). This fortifies Pan’s links with humanity even more firmly, when compared to other gods and deities whose origins are more mythic. Arcadia was also referred to as Pania^[12] and there was the belief that Pan was born of earth, “tied to homeland”.^[13] In the remaining fragments of Pindar’s “Maidens’ songs”, Pan is referred to as the ruler of Arcadia: “O Pan, that rulest over Arcadia, and art the warder of holy shrines... thou companion of the Great Mother, thou dear delight of the holy Graces!” (Pindar, 1915, 563). Even the placement of Pan’s dwellings in grottoes and caves holds a specific significance for people, since “the cavern is the first dwelling of mankind – and even the place of

[12] The Land of the Pan.

[13] *Autochthon* or *gegenes* (cf. Borgeaud, 1988, 47).

human origin, if one thinks of Plato – (...)” (Borgeaud, 1988, 49). There are already suggestions here of Pan’s manifold meaning. This is because the story of Pan’s origin possesses the recognizable features of the animalistic side of humanity, while it is also reminiscent of the birth, emergence and development of what is highest in man: his mental, i.e. spiritual side. This also explains why “Most of mythological books classify Pan as one of the lower gods, higher than the humans, but subordinate to the ‘higher’ gods.” (Vexior, 2009, 28). For the Greeks, Pan was a true demon, thus an inspirational force.

“Pan impressed himself on the Hellenic consciousness in the image of this goat-footed monster with his sweet smile, at once animal and goatherdy with his active and unlucky sexuality, a musician able absolutely to disrupt the psycho-physiological balance of an individual by possession and the cohesion of a human group by panic.” (Borgeaud, 1988, 48).

As Pan’s nature is frolicsome, Vexior links him to another god of mischief, geographically belonging to his own cultural area – i.e., the Scandinavian Loki. Thus, Vexior explains that inspiration comes from Pan: “Pan is the one who creeps up behind, sprinkling gasoline on your back, and flicks sparkling matches at you. Not because of the fact that he hates you, but just to get your attention... to get you to wake up and for once, take your existence and subsistence seriously.” (Vexior, 2009, 13). Kathleen Atlass and James Redfield also mention the direct appeal Pan had for Borgeaud, whose discursive works on Pan and his cult may seem of significantly different to Vexior’s. Emphasizing that Pan’s music is a seductive medium, Atlass and Redfield provide a clear example why metal music^[14] is quite literally a transference of Pan’s attributes into the audio-spectrum; “(...) Pan’s music evokes the wild places of the spirit, everything that in us is animal, mad, undifferentiated and underdeveloped, the primal source of terror and creative power.” (Atlass & Redfield, 1988, vii–viii). This creativity from terror of which Atlass and Redfield wrote returns the entire concept of Pan to the cave and also returning another meaning to it that it

[14] *Arckanum’s* albums, with music which is one of “undifferentiation and undevelopment” is a case in point. In black metal as an art form, its indistinctiveness of tones and beats was always considered an integral part of its sound.

originally had in the Greek imagination. In this context, Borgeaud states. “the cave is something negative: a space where culture is refused or for those rejected by culture.” (Borgeaud, 1988, 49). We mentioned negativity and counterculturalism in heavy metal earlier, to be more precise, in the moment when a dominant, mainstream culture connects with heavy metal. It is only natural that a separation will be amplified, as there will be an increased intensity on one side or another; e.g., black metal, (regarded as a form of extreme metal^[15]) certainly intensifies separation. It thus becomes explicitly clear that a chaotic challenge to cultural hegemony (i.e., by negation, rebellion and renouncement), as Weinstein noted, under the mark of Pan, indicates a regression to an undifferentiated primordial nature, allowing the redefinition of cultural standards and social norms. Thus, Chaos preceding Order is another symbolic form representing the potential for the redefinition and challenge of actual cultural standards and norms. What is suggested is an authentic “chaos-order” relation in any established system, and their turnovers and successions are a matter of perceptual strata, in which chaos always symbolizes a restorative step that enables a reconfiguration based on the inexhaustibility of possible explications.^[16]

The animalistic representation of Pan as a god with attributes of both goat and man is a consistent motif in the visual arts, as well as literature. The first images of Pan, such as the Arcadian mid-fifth century bronze, shows that “Pan is an animal in the form of his hooves, his genitals, his little tail, the arrangement of his coat, and his head; from man he borrows only his upright posture, his torso, and his hands (...)” (Borgeaud, 1988, 52). There are other depictions of Pan in which the anthropomorphic is only the upper half of his body: such as the “oldest vase painting in which he appears – Athenian, from the very beginning of the fifth century”, and here “nothing distinguishes the god from a goat except that he is on his hind legs dancing with a maenad.” (Borgeaud, 1988, 53).^[17] Vexior mentions more

[15] Black metal and death metal are regarded as extreme metal.

[16] Another common motif related to a chaotic precedence to order (especially in black metal) is the “cauldron”. Erik Danielsson of the Swedish black metal act *Watain*, is dedicated to the motif of chaos, and described his composition process thus: “The way we compose is far more chaotic, like adding ingredients to a cauldron in which hell itself must eventually boil. Experimentation and experience in excess...” (The Serpent Bearer, 2012). The Norwegian black metal band *1349* released an album in 2014 “Massive Cauldron of Chaos”.

[17] Apes also walk upright, and similarity was used as a motif for the cover art “Satan’s Cross”, a debut album by the Australian blackened thrash metal band *Nocturnal Graves*. Andrei Bouzikov’s work depicts a beast with legs and a goat’s head, and with a man’s torso and arms, at the top of a church tower; an image that reminds one of King Kong on the Empire State Building.

than twenty versions of the story of Pan's birth, yet that Pan is the son of Hermes is the most common. The reason for Pan's goat-man shape vary: in one story Hermes raped Penelope in the guise of a goat. Another story claims Dryope is the mother of Pan: she gave birth to "an abnormal child (...) with hoofed feet and horns, boisterous and laughing, with hairy pointy ears and horizontal pupils like those of a goat." (Vexior, 2009, 24). Dryope loathed the child. However, Hermes took his son to Olympus where the gods, "the immortals looked upon the child with joy, especially Dionysus." (Vexior, 2009, 24). In his analysis, Borgeaud also stresses that the infant Pan is "repellent only to humans: the gods, and especially Dionysus, for their part find him charming" (Borgeaud, 1988, 54). In Borgeaud's further analysis Aristotle's view on the apolitical and asocial man are apparent: "The man who is isolated – who is unable to share in the benefits of political association, or has no need to share because he is already self-sufficient – is no part of the polis, and must therefore be either a beast or a god." (Aristotle, 1946, 6). Pan is both and this is why he has attained the peculiar position of demon.

"Pan is evidently the symbolic embodiment of the repressed. But everything man flees and rejects in order to distinguish himself from the animals makes him like to the gods. The myth seems to say: if we refuse the beast, we shall never know how to resemble a god. A double and liminal figure, always transformed already, Pan meets man only to leave him at the precise spot where animality corresponds to the divine." (Borgeaud, 1988, 54–55).

This aspect of 'panism' corresponds to the cave as symbolic regression, which only allows progression and enables new arrivals. It also moves the spirit to a liberation from social inhibitions, as morality has become an insensitive stale uniformity. Pan's animality provokes the standards and norms of society, as society rejects and is hostile to the naturalness of human beings. Contrasts and counterpoints, a constant shift from one extreme to another (already perceptible in the paradox of Pan's animalistic-divinity) are Pan's characteristics. Pan's actions, resembling a pendulum swinging from one extreme to another, are identifiable as Pan as Nature. Nature poses challenges to man; Pan teases man to the point that man transgresses the dominant social structure. In this sense,

meditations on Pan lead one's introspection to a vision of man through "Pan's perspective".^[18] "Pan's vision of man is that man too is pure nature in whom the volcanic eruptions, the destructive seizures and typhoons also reside." (Hillman, 1972, lxii–lxiii). This vision opposes the (false) ideal in which notions of "naturalism" are an "aesthetics of ugliness".

"As R. Herbig says (...) this God is always a goat, the goat always a divine force. Pan is not 'represented' by a goat, nor is the goat 'holy' to Pan; rather, Pan is the goat-God, and this configuration of animal-nature distinguishes nature by personifying it as something hairy, phallic, roaming and goatish." (Hillman, 1972, xx).

This is an aspect of pagan ritualism and a return to the wilderness (to forests, caverns, caves, grottoes, rocks, and mountains), strongly emphasized in *Arckanum's* work; especially on the first three full-length albums, "Fran Marder", "Kostogher" and "Kampen". The lo-fi (black metal) sound added to the atmosphere the album "Kostogher". A low volume level was used here so that the listener turns up the volume to a maximum: the result is that that the thunder sample at the end of the opening track "Skoghens minnen vækks" "cracks" the speakers, providing the listener an experience of the forces of nature, the wilderness, and Pan, etc. Enticing the listener in this way can be interpreted as the worship of Pan, as the recording, manipulates, seduces and plays with the listener. The music made by Pan was ascribed with similar qualities in ancient texts: "The poets allude to his powers of possession, panic, and seduction, they speak of his music and his dancing; they talk of his lustfulness and violent sexuality, and of the rocky landscape where he leads his flocks; (...)" (Borgeaud, 1988, 55).

Pan's lineage helps explain the nature of his sexuality, as Hermes is associated with fertility. Besides this, Pan was often described as a "chaser of Nymphs", yet could never catch them, passionately animating their dance with his music instead. In this sense, Pan's passion is the archetype of a twist in the concepts of what is allowed or encouraged in the realm of sexuality.

[18] Via the paradigm of the meaning of Pan.

“Panic passion is unstable for the same reason that it is violent and futile: it is entirely opposed to marriage. Just as Pan’s landscape is detached from the city and its agricultural land, so his erotic behaviour remains detached from the institution that gives passion its articulated form. (...) when Pan responds to his father Hermes: ‘Tell me, Pan are you married yet? – Oh, no, father! I belong to Eros, after all, and I wouldn’t want to get bound to one woman.’” (Borgeaud, 1988, 83).

Pan’s sexual energy represents an invitation to a natural vitality of open youthfulness and joy, unrestrained by moral standards and what is considered sexual decency. As such, it also reinvigorates sexual pleasure and aids one to abjure shame, by returning one to a sense of the natural and vital, yet also increasing one’s humanity. Pan’s sexuality is always humorous, (there is satire in his erotic misfortunes), and the transgression of norms as a mockery induces laughter as it mocks the status quo. Promiscuity and the detachment of sexuality from the shackles of marriage are elements metal culture has absorbed from its roots in rock ‘n’ roll; one such manifestation is in the glam metal of bands such as *Mötley Crüe*, another would be in the sadomasochistic and overemphasized erotic themes and imagery as one finds in the death/black metal band *Belphegor*. Both instances show that heavy metal as genre and cultural movement has aspects of Pan in its essence. Such approaches to sexuality are subversive, and this reveals their satirical character. One such (although different) example of ‘panism’ (besides those found in black metal) can be found on the Swedish band Ghost’s 2019 EP “Seven Inches of Satanic Panic”.

Thus, the mythological figure or concept of Pan, represented in various forms of art in vivid imagery, has a polysemic quality. In conclusion, Pan’s multifarious nature is versatile, and representative of his name; *Παν* is the Greek term for “whole”, as in Nature in its entirety: “Pan in the end is thought to be the god of the cosmic whole.” (Borgeaud, 1988, 219). In the context of humanism, this whole transcends nature and instead symbolizes the unification of god, human and animal (beast), yet there is another significant etymology: *Παοι*, from “the root *pā(s)*, meaning ‘guardian of flocks’” (Borgeaud, 1988, 181); i.e. shepherd.

HISTORICAL TRANSFORMATIONS AND THE “SATANIZATION” OF PAN

Other than Pan in the Greek world, there were also other gods, deities and mythological creatures in these historical and geographical surroundings. Pan and his significance are a symbol, an archetypal form primarily dwelling in the human psyche, and in traditional story he inhabits nature. The cult of the “he-goat”, according to chroniclers, historians and poets of the time, was present in Mendes, the Greek name for the ancient Egyptian city of Djedet. “The Mendesians (...) paid reverence to all goats (...) and particularly to one he-goat (...) they call both Pan and the goat Mendes, and both were worshipped as gods of generation and fecundity.” (Wallis Budge, 1904, 353). This Mendean goat was, in fact, the Mendean Ram.^[19] The people of Mendes also worshipped Min, who had an essence similar Pan’s (cf. Vexior, 2009, 34). The gods in ancient Italy show a similarity, particularly Silvanus. “His name descends from the Latin word Silva which means wood, and he is the god of the uncultivated lands.” (Vexior, 2009, 34). The closest resemblance, perhaps a transference of Pan, is the Romanized version known as Faunus, “which is identical, both in essence and form, with Pan.” (Vexior, 2009, 35), and this identification is mentioned by Ovid (Theoi Project, n.d.), yet “Faunus is no musician. Only in Greece, so far as we know, is the echo held to be a form of music made by wild gods rather than simply noises they stir up or their voices.” (Borgeaud, 1988, 93–94).

Eliphaz Levi was the originator of the great conceptual transgression and misdirection of Pan and his original. He identified the goat of the Sabbath of the Templars with the goat of Mendes, ultimately leading to the identification of Pan and Baphomet. “According to some, the Baphomet was a monstrous head, but according to others, a demon in the form of a goat.” (Levi, 2002, 86). Vexior also reflects on this.

“Goat of Mendes, which is what both Baphomet and Pan are called. Apart from that, these two ‘deities’ have the identical

[19] Banebdjedet.

looks and they also share epithets. Therefore most people at once take for granted that they also share qualities, powers and essence – but this is wrong; it is people like Levi that gave Baphomet the appearance as a half goat and half human. (...) The only spiritual thing Pan and Baphomet have in common is the source of knowledge; gnosis if you like. But if this is the important aspect, you can almost compare any ‘deity’ with Baphomet.” (Vexior, 2009, 137–138).

Baphomet symbolism includes that of the perfect balance among its aspects. Thus, it does not surprise us that this symbol has been revered by those who had aspired to a perfect social order. This is an attribute that is not compatible with Pan symbolism. Within order-chaos dichotomy, Baphomet perfectly fits in with the idea of cosmic order. Even Levi’s depiction of Baphomet as the Sabbatical goat, has the word *coagula* written on its left hand and the word *solve* on its right, perhaps a perfect translation of the Greek word *legein*, etymologically linked to *logos*, and in the history of philosophy since Heraclitus has the meaning of “to gather” and “to discern”. This distinction is of importance for the imagery used in metal music, since various goat-shaped Baphometes are often motifs on album covers;^[20] yet this is something significantly other than Pan.

The persecution of the Templars by the Catholic Church, based on accounts of its accusations that they worshipped Baphomet, also led to the “satanization” of this concept as well as, intentionally or not, the concept of Pan. Levi informs that “the Grand Masters of the Order of the Templars worshipped the Baphomet, and caused it to be worshipped by their initiates (...) But the adorers of this sign do not consider, as do we, that it is a representation of the devil (...)” (Levi, 2002, 81); he also recalls that “the Baphomet of the Templars; it is the Hyle of the Gnostics (...)”, meaning matter: the term *ἕλη* denoted the transient and corruptible, and it was seen as something of lesser value, especially in the teachings of the Catholic Church. Such thought also includes the popular image of the Christian devil, as a red Pan-like demon. This was not always the case in the Judeo-Christian tradition: “Unlike traditional Christian depictions of Satan as a dark or red figure resembling the satyr Pan, he is portrayed in 11:14 as

[20] For example: *Venom* “Welcome to Hell” (1981), *Bathory* “Bathory” (1984), *Behemoth* “Zos Kia Cultus (Here and Beyond)” (2002), *Dark Funeral / Infernal* “Under Wings of Hell” (2002), *Dimmu Borgir* “In Sorte Diaboli” (2007), *Nekrist* “Slava Satan” (2007), *Devin Townsend Project* “Transcendence” (2016), etc.

an angel of light. The latter idea may have evolved from the goat idols or demons (...) sometimes translated as 'satyr'." (Oropeza, 2016, 616). The devil with a satyr-like shape was an image which originated in 447 at the Council of Toledo. "At the council the devil was described as 'a large, black, monstrous apparition with horns on his head, cloven hoofs, or one cloven hoof – ass's ears, hair, claws, fiery eyes, terrible teeth, an immense phallus, and a sulphurous smell'" (Hughes, 1965, cited in Sage Elwell, 2013, 65; Russell, 1986, 69).

Ultimately, the equation or confusion of Pan with Baphomet is a historical misconception, based on a perception of the depiction of "part goat/part human being". However, depictions of Baphomet also include female breasts while Pan is a notably male god. Behind the figure of Baphomet is an aspiration to the reconciliation of opposites, which is the reason why animalistic and humane qualities are incorporated, among several others. Baphomet is not the symbol of a deity, but an icon of worship or an idol, which in its ultimate form incorporates ideas and symbols that have become heretical according to the tenets of the Catholic Church. The religion of myths, such as those in ancient civilizations, was a religion of nature, suppressed by Christianity as a religion distinguished by its reverence for the transcendent. Pan, both historically and symbolically, belongs to a naturalistic culture, which also led to its "satanization", yet this does not mean that Pan and Baphomet are the same.

CHTHONIC PAN AND MUSIC

The vibrant and energetic pace of metal music, often perceived as aggressive, is one of the key components of the sound that makes this genre distinctive. Aggression is usually the impression that listeners not familiar with or who do not like metal music have and they tend to emphasize this as if it were of importance.

“As its detractors have always claimed, heavy-metal rock is nothing than a bunch of noise; it is not music, it’s distortion – and that is precisely why its adherents find it appealing. Of all contemporary rock, it is the genre most closely identified with violence and aggression, rapine and carnage. Heavy metal orchestrates technological nihilism, which may be one reason it seemed to run dry in mid-Seventies.” (Bangs, 1980, cited in Weinstein, 2014, 40).

On the other hand, its specific sound reveals its very etymology, usually better received by listeners who approach it with “impartial ears” and who focus more on the audio experience as a form of art, rather than letting their own moods lead them. This was how the music producer and journalist/critic Sandy Pearlman and the author Barry Gifford approached metal, both who (among others) in the 1960s and 1970s, used ‘metal’ as a description of its sound. “They were probably referring to the denser, more harmonically layered sound of amplified electric guitars, and used the metal of the guitar strings as a metonym” (Weinstein, 2014, 46). Generally, there are two main sonic aspects that distinguish metal as a genre, which are also the basis for its internal division into subgenres. These are the accentuation of drums and use of distinctive drum patterns and a typically distorted guitar sound. These two elements accompanied by various styles of singing are what serve as guidelines for defining this style.

Noise is another aspect of metal that demonstrates it is an art form greatly inspired by Pan. The following account contributes to our conclusion:

“[...] Menander in the *Dyscolus* says that one should not approach this god in silence (...) His reasoning is evidently as follows: when

the god Pan is approached by humans, they become noisy; when humans, under certain circumstances, become noisy for no evident reason it is because Pan approaches them.” (Borgeaud, 1988, 92).

Noise is always a key element in awakening fear and it is part of a macabre imagination. This motif is crucial when understanding the aesthetics of extreme metal, namely black metal in which shrieks, screams and growls are the means by which the artist invokes Pan. ‘Shamataae’ on *Arckanum*’s sophomore album “Kostogher” explicitly intends this: while the opening track “Skoghens minnen vækks”, literally invokes Pan by name Pan appears and addresses Shaamatae directly, on the seventh track “Oþer trulhøyghda”. The *Arckanum*’s art is panoleptic^[21] soundtrack to Shaamatae’s (i.e. Vexior’s) forest ventures dedicated to Pan..

“Panic is a collective disorder: essentially, a breakdown in communication. Pan keeps his distance. (...) When distance is insufficiently maintained, another sort of madness lies in wait: a man may be invaded by the god and become deranged. In that case it is a matter of individual disorder.” (Borgeaud, 1988, 102).

When panic refers to the collective, “Pan seems to evade all apprehension.” When panic overtakes the individual, then Pan reveals himself, and man becomes panoleptic as the individual “actually borrows his behaviour from the god who invades him.” (Borgeaud, 1988, 102). Working with Pan, Vexior also includes the aspects of Pan related to chaos, primarily the chthonic and subterranean forces with which Pan is associated. “*Syrinx* is etymologically related to Sanskrit *sūrunḡā*, ‘subterranean corridor’.” (Borgeaud, 1988, 83). The frequencies in metal music, when compared to the music traditionally regarded as spiritual, are usually in the lower sonic spectrum (often by using down-tuned guitars): this is symbolic of a striving toward the depths of the underworld and displays an adherence to Pan, who “may please the Gods, but he never makes it to Olympus”. Pan is the true countercultural god, signifying a return from repression, yet conveying the force of nightmare and some of its “erotic, demonic and panic qualities.” (Hillman, 1972, xxiii).

[21] Inspired by Pan.

Such an aesthetic with an aim to provoke, or perhaps resemble the psychological state of panic, confrontations with the unknown or what is perilous and dark in nature, as well as states of alienation, is certainly characteristic of the innovations metal music has offered over several decades since its emergence. Black metal is no exception, and is also justifiably considered a counterculture. As Pan is not among the Olympians although a god, and one whose significant attribute is the music, “the Muses are with Apollo.” (Hillman, 1972, p. xxi). For the most part, metal music receives little air-play and does not belong to mainstream culture, but is always present on its margins. This has had profound consequences for how it has been understood by the mainstream, whether its reception has been positive or negative. The exclusion of metal music from mainstream radio is in proportion to the degree of the perceived panolepsy in a musical piece, and some of this displays a general repression of Panic, or that which belongs to Pan.

CONCLUSION

Our comparative analysis in this article has as its aim a provocation to rethink concepts of myth as an alternative form of communication, especially the importance of such concepts for artistic expression. Sometimes these concepts pertain to darker and suppressed states, as entities of the individual psyche and in order that the individual be able to understand them, they must be expressed in a perceivable form. One such adequate medium that can communicate the cluster of meanings associated with the idea of the god Pan is metal music. Pan descended upon Athens, where he was worshipped and celebrated in music, and this is a tradition that has been preserved throughout the ages, manifested today in concerts, festivals and other events that unify people around a single concept. This nexus is a witness to the existence of a strong trans-cultural element present in humanity, providing a sense of belonging to an existential whole with various intelligible forms. Pan, as concept, has inspired and invigorated the creative spirit for more than two millennia, constantly reminding us of the nature’s intrinsic value in all its forms. Our comparative analysis

has also recalled the far-reaching meaning of Pan's name: it means 'all', nature in its entirety, yet this also means that there are many ways in which this deity can be expressed symbolically. Furthermore, we have also stated that within the various modes of expression, some are more expressive of certain aspects of Pan, while other aspects may not be as important: this particular topic throws light on questions concerning the meaning of Pan in metal music as an art form. As art is the manifestation of something in a specific form and shape, individuation and articulation are both given, and here the artist separates himself from what he has created. This *a priori* prevents the artist from a complete immersion into an idea and from the Dionysian demand of becoming work of art itself. The works analyzed in this article have been considered regarding their meaning, impact, influence and underlying ideas, and as they have sources in myth, they are well and truly inspired by Pan. Other musical ventures in the metal genre may show an engagement with certain aspects of Pan, yet *Arckanum's* is a truly ambitious engagement, more representative than others as it shows an attempt to grasp the many facets of this ancient goat-god.

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**MOTIV BOGA-JARCA U HEAVY METAL-GLAZBI.
VAŽNOST I ZNAČENJE BOGA PANA, PREMA PRIKAZU U
BLACK METAL PROJEKTU – ARCKANUM**

SAŽETAK

Već prvom pojavom heavy metala na način prepoznatljivoga umjetničkog pokušaja, ovaj glazbeni pravac stekao je svoju autentičnu poziciju na kulturnoj pozornici društva; ponajviše oblikujući svoj vlastiti zvučni „pejzaž“, ali i kroz vizualnu prezentaciju. Ta i takva cjelina umjetničkoga izražavanja razvila se u odgovarajući jezik za komuniciranje ideja i motiva koji se nalaze u temeljima ovoga pokreta. S obzirom na to da je umjetnost jedna od metoda kojom čovjek dospijeva do razumijevanja samoga sebe i okolnoga svijeta (druge takve metode su: filozofija, znanost, mitologija itd.), ne iznenađuje da ona korespondira s artefaktima iz drugih sredstava za dohvaćanje smisla. Ne samo što ove metode međusobno korespondiraju nego su često jedna predmet druge. Heavy metal-glazba kao ekspresivna umjetnost u tome nije iznimka, pa i ona crpi svoj predmet, kako iz pojavnosti okolnoga svijeta, tako i iz introspekcije slika i oblika koji su prisutni u ljudskoj psihi. Jedno takvo obličje je i mitski motiv jarcolikoga boga Pana, podrijetlo kojega seže do kulture grčke antike, a koji izražava različite aspekte, kao što su: božanstvo, ljudskost, prirodnost, animalnost, strava, psihoza, seksualnost, kontrarnost i kontrastnost te kultivacija u plesnome i glazbenome umijeću. Malo bi bilo reći kako taj, značenjima nabijen, motiv Pana ima svoje značajno mjesto u umjetnosti heavy metala. Diskurzivno primicanje k mitu o Panu i njegova egzegeza

mogla bi rasvijetliti cjelokupno estetsko i kulturološko oblikovanje heavy metala, a posebno nekih od brojnih podžanrova koji mu pripadaju. Cilj članka je pružiti komparativnu analizu opisa jarca-boga Pana kakvi potječu iz kulture antike, s oblikom i značenjem ove figure unutar domene metal-glazbe; a značajnije s onima iz umjetničkoga pothvata imenovanoga Arckanum.

Ključne riječi: animalistika, glazba, jarac, mit, Pan