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Between Medieval History and Medievalist Fantasy: On Neomedievalisms in Metal Music

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In the twenty years leading up to the long-awaited edited collection *Medievalism and Metal Music Studies: Throwing down the Gauntlet* (Barratt-Peacock and Hagen 2019), many studies on neomedievalism in metal music had already been published. According to the *ISMMS Metal Studies Bibliography*, there were 33 earlier works in total, 30 of which appeared in the 2010s, which means the 2019 edited book marked the culmination of an intense period of research on this topic.

Although the 2020s have seen the publication of three chapters dedicated to metal music in *The Oxford Handbook of Music and Medievalism* (Hagen; Trafford; Vaughn Carlos), as well as important monographs by [Spracklen](#) (2020), [Baur](#) (2025) and [Sagar García](#) (2026), and one further edited collection in press (Surek and Jaser, forthcoming in 2027), research activity on metal music neomedievalisms has waned in recent years, yet there is still so much more to say.

This call for papers therefore seeks to reinvigorate the field with articles in any of the languages accepted by the journal *Neomedieval* which study the different ways in which the Middle Ages manifest in metal music and its derivatives. We particularly—but not exclusively—seek contributions that might shed light on the following issues:

- 1- Neomedievalist themes beyond heroism in metal music, such as courtly love, troubadour poetry, or architecture.
- 2- Neomedievalist fantasy in metal music, including its sources, manifestations, and functions.

- 3- Sonic and visual neomedievalisms in metal music, such as the use of neo-medievalist instruments, graphic design, and formats.
- 4- Affective neomedievalism in metal music, including expressions of mourning, rage, or love.
- 5- Expressions or contestations of identity through neomedievalism in metal music, including gender, racial, national, or religious identities.
- 6- Neomedievalism as a transnational imaginary in metal music, including notions of cultural transfer and local adaptations.

This special issue is open to those working in all Humanities disciplines and interdisciplinary fields such as cultural studies, gender studies, etc., independent of their current academic status or affiliation.

Bibliography

- Ruth Barratt-Peacock and Ross Hagen, eds. (2019), *Medievalism and Metal Music Studies: Throwing Down the Gauntlet*, London, Emerald.
- Kilian Baur (2025), *Dark Medieval Times: Das Mittelalter im Metal*, Stuttgart, Kohlhammer.
- Ross Hagen (2020), «A Gothic Romance: Neomedieval Echoes of Fin'amor in Gothic and Doom Metal», in *The Oxford Handbook of Music and Medievalism*, eds. Stephen C. Meyer y Kirsten Yri, Oxford, Oxford University Press, pp. 546-563. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190658441.013.49>
- Amaranta Saguar García (2026), *Medievalism, Popular Culture and Politics in Metal Music: the Case of Hispanic Epic Themes*, Bristol, Intellect.
- Karl Spracklen (2020), *Metal Music and the Re-Imagining of Masculinity, Place, Race and Nation*, London, Emerald.
- Jonathan Surek y Christian Jaser, eds. (forthcoming 2027), *Mittelalter. Interdisziplinäre Beiträge zur Rezeption des Mittelalters im Heavy Metal*, Bielefeld, transcript.
- Simon Trafford (2020), «Viking Metal», in *The Oxford Handbook of Music and Medievalism*, ed. Stephen C. Meyer y Kirsten Yri, Oxford, Oxford University Press, pp. 563-585. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190658441.013.34>
- Caitlin Vaughn Carlos (2020), «“Ramble on”: Medievalism as a Nostalgic Practice in Led Zeppelin's Use of J. R. R. Tolkien», in *The Oxford Handbook of Music and Medievalism*, ed. Stephen C. Meyer y Kirsten Yri, Oxford, Oxford University Press, pp. 529-546. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190658441.013.48>