

Trebaruna pagão é teu ventre
(Trebaruna pagan is your womb)

The Reinvention of the Luso-Pagan Past in the Music of Moonspell

Giordano Calvi, Universidade NOVA de Lisboa

Moonspell is an internationally renowned Portuguese band formed in 1992. At the beginning of their career, they stood out for their personal approach to black metal sounds. Inspired by the epic and romantic vein of Bathory's albums *Blood Fire Death* (1987) and *Hammerheart* (1988), they produced two demos and an EP featuring black metal sounds with the declared intention of creating a sound with Mediterranean flavours, self-described as Lusitanian black metal. However, the poetics of the lyrics and visual aesthetics showed a reworking of the satanic and ritualistic imagery of more canonical black metal. After obtaining a contract with the German label Century Media, in 1995 they produced and released the album *Wolfheart*, which marked a turning point in their artistic career. The change also occurred from a conceptual and musical point of view. The ritualistic black metal of the early days was replaced by less aggressive but more persuasive sounds, drawing on an erotic and romantic-gothic imagery sung in English. However, among the musical tracks that would later influence gothic metal, there are two episodes of folk metal music sung in Portuguese that rediscover and glorify two pre-Christian Lusitanian deities: Trebaruna and Ataegina.

This paper aims to analyse the two songs, which take their titles from the deities, in order to show the iconic, sound and textual elements that reinvent Portugal's mythical and premodern past. The aim is to illustrate the reworking process carried out by Moonspell from the perspective of an ethnomusicological analysis of the songs. The analytical framework that emerges allows us to observe how the use of symbols from Portugal's pagan past, discovered and valorised as early as the end of the 19th-century by the philologist, ethnographer and archaeologist José Leite Vasconcellos (1858-1941), corroborates an aesthetic that valorises the Moonspell's "Lusitanian" identity, placing the discourse in the broader debate on the cultural and constitutive processes of ethno-nationalism.