

Headbanging to History

Disseminating Premodernity through Extreme Metal Genres

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This presentation will summarise almost two decades worth of personal work I have done as a lyricist, collaborating with extreme metal bands (Viking / Death / Black / Folk / Symphonic) dedicated exclusively to disseminating themes of premodernity (including historical events and anecdotes, mythology and local legends). Through cover artwork, lyrics' abstracts and occasional videoclip stills, I will first present the case of [Folkearth](#), an international heavy / folk metal project showcasing up to 31 musicians from 8 different countries, using traditional instruments and focusing almost exclusively on Viking-era Scandinavian history and mythology. Then, I will present Folkearth's offshoot, [Folkodia](#), where lyrical themes encompassed a wider spectrum of premodernity, addressing historical events, myths and legends from various cultures and civilizations around the world. Following that, we will explore the case of two Greek epic / folk power metal bands, [Sacred Blood](#) and Athlos, focusing exclusively on concepts drawn from ancient Greek mythology and history. We will briefly discuss the social stigma associated with utilising ancient Greek imagery in metal music after its appropriation by extreme right political groups in the country's recent past. On that theme, we will also examine the case of Dimlight's concept album [The Lost Chapters](#), a work focusing on ancient Egyptian mythology, and its reception by metal fans particularly in modern Egypt. Finally, I will briefly present the case of [Downcast Twilight](#), a UK-based international metal project whose every album addresses a different world culture, its history, and mythology. Closing remarks will touch upon on how premodernity-themed metal can be used as an inspirational tool to prompt its audience towards a further study of history and folklore as well as a means of strengthening self-identity and promoting a healthy and constructive sense of cosmopolitanism.