

UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

ARTICULATION OF FEMININITY IN BLACK METAL LYRICS
A case study on the lyrics of Cradle of Filth

A Pro Gradu Thesis

by

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Black metal -musiikki on viime vuosina saavuttanut kaupallisesti menestyvän musiikkialan aseman. Kuitenkaan edes populaarikulttuurin tutkijat eivät vielä ole tutkineet black metallia sen enempää kulttuurillisena kuin musiikillisenakaan ilmiönä. Tämä on suorastaan yllättävää, kun otetaan huomioon, että black metal on ennen kaikkea antikristillinen ja antisosiaalinen liike. Black metal -musiikki ja -sanoitukset muodostavat siis erinomaisen aineiston voimasuhteiden ja niiden muutoksen tutkimiseen.

Tutkielmassa selvitettiin, miten naiseus artikuloidaan black metal -sanoituksissa. Tutkielmassa yhdistyvät siis kiinnostus black metalliin ja feministinen kysymystenasettelu. Naiseus ymmärretään kulttuurillisesti rakentuneena käsitteenä, jolle ei ole olemassa 'ydintä'. Naiseus on siis käsitteellinen uskomusten muodostama konstruktio, joka on avoin erilaisille artikuloinneille. Koska black metal -musiikin määrittävä tekijä on moderneissa länsimaissa vallitsevien arvojen ja ideologioiden sekä moraalin kieltäminen, ovat black metal -sanoitukset erityisen mielenkiintoisia aineistona kriittisesti suuntautuneelle diskurssitutkimukselle. Näin siksi, että naiseuden artikuloinnin black metal -sanoituksissa voidaan odottaa käyttävän vakiintuneiden ja hallitsevien diskurssien tapaa artikuloida naiseus. Toisaalta black metal -musiikin 'kapinallisen' luonteen vuoksi voidaan olettaa, että sanoituksissa pyritään myös horjuttamaan samojen diskurssien valta-asemaa ja artikuloida naiseus uudella tavalla.

Tutkielman teoreettisena viitekehyksenä käytettiin kriittisen diskurssianalyysin (critical discourse analysis, CDA) ontologiaa ja episteemisiä teoreettisia taustaoletuksia. Useita eri lähestymistapoja mahdollistavan CDA:n mukaisessa analyysissä käytettiin metaforan, intertekstuaalisuuden, transitiivisuuden ja lähinnä narratologisessa tutkimuksessa sovellettuja käsitteitä. Materiaaleina tutkimuksessa käytettiin Englantilaisen Cradle of Filth -yhtyeen kappaleiden *Of Dark Blood and F**king* ja *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* sanoituksia.

Analyysien perusteella voidaan todeta, että black metal -sanoituksissa ei välttämättä artikuloida naiseutta tavalla, joka olisi välttämättä radikaali tai muuten patriarkaalisten diskurssien käytännöistä selkeästi poikkeava. Naiseus esitetään usein mystisenä ja liitetään metaforisessa kielenkäytössä usein luontoon ja myytteihin. Usein naiseus liittyy poikkeavuuteen, 'toiseuteen', joka saattaa ulottua aina hirviömäisyyteen saakka. Lisäksi sanoituksissa esitettyjen naishahmojen toimijan asema ja valta kätketään verbiprosessien ja esimerkiksi pornograafisen diskurssin avulla. Toisaalta black metal -diskurssi yhdistelee ja diskursseja ja sisällyttää niitä toisiinsa tavalla, joka paljastaa kaikkien kielen ja kaikkien artikulaatioiden ja rakennelmien kontingentisti rakentuneen luonteen. Ainakin jossain määrin sanoitukset avaavat uuden tilan, jossa naiseus voidaan artikuloida patriarkaalisten diskurssien hallitsevasta asemasta huolimatta uudella tavalla. Näille uusille artikulaatioille diskurssit eivät ole ainoastaan rajoitteita, vaan myös voimavaroja, joita yhdistelemällä saadaan aikaan artikulaatioita, jotka murtavat vanhojen ajatus- ja uskomusjärjestelmien rakentamia rajaitoja. Koska samalla osoitetaan eri artikulaatioiden kontingentti luonne, uudet artikulaatiot saattavat olla kohtuullisen tasavertaisessa asemassa muiden artikulaatioiden kanssa.

Asiasanat: critical discourse analysis. CDA. black metal. lyrics. femininity

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1 POPULAR CULTURE, BLACK METAL AND FEMININITY

In the late modern world language plays an increasingly central role when power, beliefs and ideologies are constructed, reproduced and circulated in the society. This is especially true in the industrialised western world, as manifested by the political power of the media, the power of both the written and the spoken word. Information is easily available through the Internet and the television. The same channels have also become the medium of a strong popular culture. The cultural impact and power of MTV can scarcely be overestimated. Products of popular culture such as music, books, art and multimedia are produced and distributed in large quantities with little regard for national boundaries. As the role of popular culture as a form of cultural production and reproduction has risen, so has scholarly interest in it. As research has been able to show, popular culture is a valid subject of study for social scientists as well as anthropologists. It has become clear, that the values of a society are reflected, reproduced and transmitted in popular culture. In other words, popular culture is one sphere in which prevalent systems of knowledge and belief are supported and maintained, but which can also become the site for struggle.

In terms of research, however, some spheres of popular culture remain relatively marginalised. Black metal is one such sphere. Although, in the recent years, black metal music has become commercial enough for some black metal bands to make it to the top 20 charts of some European countries, the black metal audience is still relatively small. It is quite evident that the public's relative disinterest in black metal is connected with its unflinching denial of Christian values and ethics and lyrics dealing with themes such as death, pain and, most notably, Satanism. Since black metal can be seen as a counteraction to existing beliefs, morality and social practices (especially ones stemming from Christianity) and as something of a social 'movement', it warrants attention and scientific study.

The present study approaches black metal by investigating the lyrics of one of the most popular black metal bands, the British Cradle of Filth. Cradle of Filth's lyrics are rich as materials and they are read and listened to by a significant number of black metal fans. However, it is not only black metal in general that the study is concerned with, but primarily the articulation of femininity in black metal lyrics, i.e. the way femininity is constructed and posited in relation to other concepts (for my definition of femininity, see page 14). The basic assumption that motivates and is the basis of the study is the notion that femininity exists only insofar as it is performed and created, i.e. there is no single core idea of femininity, which would be merely represented or mirrored by language (see page 15). The articulation of femininity in black metal lyrics is an interesting issue, because black metal is popular culture that operates at the margins of society. The fact that black metal music is nowadays commercial and consumed by large numbers of people places it in a position of contradictions. At its heart, black metal is an anti-Christian and anti-social movement. But since black metal music is also commercial, the production of the music takes place within the sphere of other conventions of popular culture and the values, beliefs and language of the rest of the society. Consequently, articulating an issue such as femininity becomes a potentially complicated issue for black metal lyricists. There are concurrent pressures to deviate radically from the standardised, conventional and 'approved' articulations of femininity and to articulate femininity in accordance with what is dictated by the existing structures of power.

The present study is a crossroads of several scholarly interests with the theoretical framework of critical discourse analysis (CDA) serving as the common denominator for all of them. To begin with, the present study is a linguistic enterprise, as is all research conducted under the label of CDA. The lyrics are analysed with tools and concepts used mainly by linguists (transitivity and metaphor, for example). On the other hand, there is also great interest in social issues, issues of power and struggle in discourse. This is what I take the word 'critical' to stand for in the phrase critical discourse

analysis. Finally, the study investigates issues that are of central concern to those interested in gender studies, as the phrase ‘articulation of femininity’ in the title of the present study attests. The articulation of femininity need not be a central or necessary theme within all projects of CDA. However, in the present study femininity is understood as having to do with gender (power and politics) rather than sex (biology). As a result, gender and femininity are considered cultural and political constructions rather than natural phenomena or facts. The articulation of femininity is therefore of great interest to critical discourse analysts. As something of a side issue, themes relating to the role and power of popular culture will be dealt with, too.

As an interdisciplinary field of research, CDA allows for the adoption of concepts and intellectual tools from different spheres of scientific study. CDA therefore meets the demands of the present study more than adequately. To begin with, the central precepts and ontological and epistemological assumptions of CDA, insofar as they concern the present study, will be briefly reviewed in the next chapter. Concerns relating to post-modern theories and gender studies will also be discussed. In chapter 3, the analytical tools used will be introduced and their relevance to CDA discussed. Chapter 4 contains the analyses of the materials, the lyrics from the songs *Of Dark Blood and F**king* and *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* of Cradle of Filth. In the final chapter I make an attempt to briefly sum up the findings and discuss their relevance in terms of larger-scale social issues and further study.

2 DISCOURSE AND CRITICAL STUDY OF LANGUAGE

The theoretical framework within which the present study is to be conducted is that of critical discourse analysis (CDA). More precisely, the study will be largely built on the foundation laid by Norman Fairclough's work on CDA. Although certain theoretical concepts will be adapted from domains other than traditional, linguistically oriented discourse analysis, there is no significant discrepancy with Fairclough's work since utilising (or 'operationalising') concepts from other fields of research is in accord with his notion of transdisciplinarity (as opposed to interdisciplinarity), which will be dealt with later. As the most central concept of CDA, discourse will be discussed before moving on to CDA as a framework for analysis. The concept of discourse will be approached as presented in literature on CDA and feminist linguistics (Fairclough 1993, Mills 1995).

2.1 Discourse within the Context of the Social

Within the discipline of linguistics, discourse is often defined as a stretch of language extending the limits of sentence. Stubbs, for example, simply defines discourse as "language above the sentence or above the clause" (Stubbs 1983:1). However, language and discourse do not exist independently of the context of their use. The first step in taking context into account is supplementing the definition of discourse with a statement about discourse being actual, real-world language in use rather than an abstracted language system. Desiring to go further in situating language in not only its use, but especially in its *social* context, many scholars interested in discourse have added the level of the social to their theoretical frameworks. Fairclough, probably the leading theorist from the linguistic branch to strongly argue for the social nature of discourse, sees discourse as "more than *just* language use, it is language use, whether speech or writing, seen as a type of social practice" (1992:28; emphasis original). It is this emphasis on discourse as social practice that, to a large extent, motivates CDA and the present study. Fairclough's model for social practice,

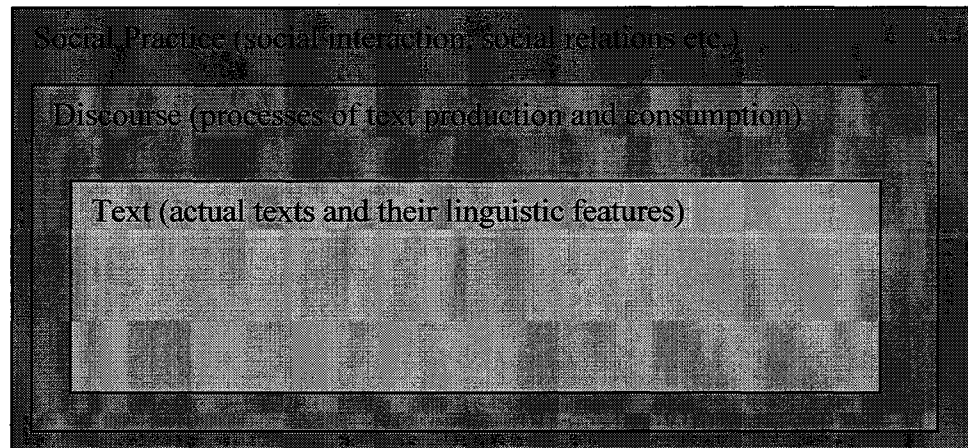
discourse and text therefore offers a convenient means of approaching the issues relevant for the present study.

One of the important starting points for CDA is that language is not just a means of representing the world. In uttering a sentence such as *The mind is like a drunken monkey on hot coals* the speaker does not use language to reflect reality by asserting a fact. Rather, in giving a concrete linguistic form to a proposition s/he constructs reality in a certain way, which may well be, if not predefined, at least limited by ideologies and cultural practices. In other words, values and beliefs are, to an extent, encoded into the languages of speech-communities. In participating in the production of discourse a speaker thus reproduces social structures whether or not s/he wants to. Nevertheless, there is always a choice in language, which means that while discourse sets limitations on those who take part in it, the members of a speech-community can also resist discourses. One of Fairclough's aims has actually been to show that sociolinguistics and discourse analysis have been weak in social theory, failing to make note of an individual's power to redefine the discourse s/he takes part in and use it as a 'resource'. Discourse has been misunderstood to be a direct consequence of the parameters of the social context within which language users operate. I feel that such complete structuralism¹ should be avoided and that a view of the relationship between discourse and language users as dialectical better corresponds with real-world circumstances. Consequently, following the lines of Fairclough, I propose that discourse should be seen as a social practice, which both sets limits on those partaking in it, but also bestows power on them (Fairclough 1993:63).

In accordance with the three-dimensional model presented by Fairclough (1993:73), I shall use discourse as a mediating term between society and text. I accept the general layout of Fairclough's model and see no reasons for readjustments as I feel it responds to my specific needs quite

¹ Structuralism here refers to a belief in the primacy of structures, i.e. the belief that the actions of individuals are a direct consequence of structures (social structures, discourses, value systems etc.)

adequately as it is. The model, which is reproduced below, shows how black metal lyrics (texts) are situated in other practices and processes (c.f. Fairclough 1993:73).



The model reveals the hierarchical ordering and ‘embeddedness’ of the three dimensions and discourse’s mediating position between the textual and societal levels. As the model places discourse within social practice, the implication is that social practice can be wholly or partly constituted by discursive practice (Fairclough 1993:71). Since social practice is precisely the interaction that transforms or reproduces social structures and relations (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999:21-22), discourse is a key element in establishing and contesting social structures and relations as well as systems of knowledge and belief. In this sense, discourse is a site for the negotiation of meaning and power relations. However, a dialectical relationship comparable to that between discourse and language users also exists between discourse and society.

Negotiating relations of power results in a relatively stable order of discourse, i.e. a set of discourses whose relationships with each other are relatively fixed. Black metal discourse, for example, is structured by an order of discourse of its own. The term ‘order of discourse’ signifies a “socially ordered set of genres and discourses associated with a particular social field, characterised in terms of the shifting boundaries and flows between them” (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999:58). As all contemporary

texts are heterogeneous (Fairclough 1993:34), the concept is useful. With it, it is possible to account for and study the struggle between the different discourses representing ideological systems and relations of power in a text. By focusing on the order of discourse in a text, the hierarchical ordering of the discourse elements becomes visible, partially also revealing the ideological strata of the text.

The difference between text (in the broad sense of the word) and discourse is difficult in that “one never really talks about features of a text without some reference to text production and/or interpretation” (Fairclough 1993:73). The difference, however, is important to make. Vocabulary and grammar, for example, are textual features. Without an appreciation of them, a critically oriented discourse analysis is without a foundation. Nevertheless, for the critical discourse analyst, aspects of vocabulary, to take an example, only have a meaning when they are observed in relation to aspects of discourse such as processes of text production and consumption. The consequence of this notion to the present study is that the linguistic analysis of the lyrics must be paralleled or followed by an analysis of the socio-political relevance of the textual features.

I have been trying to give a picture of discourse as not just language as it occurs and is used in actual, every-day life, but also as a system of knowledge and belief (for the relationship between the terms ‘discourse’ and ‘ideology’ see Mills 1997:29-30), in which social relations and ideas are negotiated, contested and reconstructed. Now that a theory of discourse has been established, it is time to turn to CDA for a look at how the theoretical knowledge of discourse can be put to the use of critical investigation of phenomena such as the representation of femininity.

2.2 Criticality in Discourse Analysis and the Representation of Femininity

The theory of discourse presented above is undoubtedly enough to justify CDA as a legitimate field of study. As CDA offers an overwhelmingly large field for any researcher of either language or society (or both), there are

bound to be differences between the emphases of different studies. Fairclough (1993), for example, has proposed that CDA be used to study social change, which certainly is – and has been – a feasible prospect. After all, all social practices being at least partially discursive, change in social practices results in discursive change and vice versa. What it all means is that discourse shows signs of social change. If women gain social status and power, this should be reflected in the discursive practices of the discourse community. It should also result in new articulations of femininity. The concept of articulation refers to the process in which the “symbolic/discursive resources (such as genres, discourses, voices)” are “brought into new combinations with each other” (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999:21) and thus transformed into relatively permanent structures. As the relationship between discourse and social practice is dialectical, each affecting the other, discourse can be actively ‘used’ to achieve change on the level of the social, i.e. articulations can precede social change instead of resulting from it. At the very least, discursive change points to tensions in power structures and are an indication of either resistance to existing social structures or social change that is perhaps only starting to emerge.

Nevertheless, not all conductors of CDA are especially interested in studying social change in particular. The common denominator for all of them, however, is the critical approach. Criticality, in the context of CDA, means a focus on what I would call the ‘ideological potential’ of discursive practices. Discourse can be said to be ideological when it either perpetuates existing power relations or actively reshapes them (Fairclough 1993:91). Social realities are constructed in discourse, whereby ideological significations are constructed as ‘natural’. In other words, the way reality is talked about becomes one way, perhaps even *the* way, of understanding it. It is those who are socially disadvantaged or the disadvantaging of whom is made to seem ‘common-sense’ and/or justified by means of naturalising discursive practices (Fairclough 1993:9) that CDA strives to empower. Discourses have a tendency of excluding and including people. Working-

class people, for example, have no access to elite discourses, such as the discourse of economics. A great many people have no means of entering the discourse of economics, in which economics can be discursively constructed as 'a being' inevitably rolling forwards from one situation to another. In the case of economic regression, for example, it often seems that no-one is portrayed as responsible for the situation. It is as if the inexorable progression of economics, a being living a life of its own, dictates what is to come. An utterance such as "The economic situation demands that wages be cut", reveals no causal relationship between human activity and the cutting of wages. When inflation or unemployment 'rise' or 'strike', there often seems to be no human agency involved in the coming about of the undesirable changes. One of CDA's central aims is to deconstruct discursive practices like this, especially when there is hope of such action resulting in a more acceptable situation. In the process, those who are disadvantaged may gain resources for resisting oppressing discourses and gain a critical language awareness (Fairclough 1993:239-240).

All of the above ties up with the project of feminist linguistics. It is a fact that the dominant discourses in the western world (public discourses, the media discourse and so on) still construct femininity in ways that are in accord with patriarchal values. The ways of talking about women and womanhood are consistent with male dominance in society. Mills (1995:160-163) has discussed how, in literature², women are often described in terms of their sexual availability and how the description reduces them to their bodily parts (fragmentation). The codified ways of talking and thinking about 'the other sex' are reproduced in discourse in which they may also be contested. Much of the vocabulary and metaphors of femininity is naturalised so as to make the ideological nature of representation (and articulation) invisible. Since my materials are not an element seamlessly incorporated into any dominant discourse, studying the representation of

² I consider literature to be a good example of dominant discourses. Many find 'high' literature difficult to 'access'. Literature is also written and regulated by a relatively small number of people.

femininity in them is interesting. However, it is necessary to first define what the concept of femininity means in the context of the present study. Only then can the notion of criticality be explored more closely in connection with a study on the articulation of femininity.

2.3 Femininity

In the present study, no *a priori* definition of femininity is used. Rather, it suffices to say that the concept of femininity is used to refer to the common understanding³ of womanhood and the complex of qualities regarded as characteristic of women and girls. No assumptions about what is or is not feminine or central to femininity is not made. For the purposes of the present study, it is enough to be able to make statements about how the lyrics of *Cradle of Filth* articulate femininity. As will be argued, femininity and the female gender are cultural and political constructions rather than clearly defined entities, so femininity can be articulated in an unlimited number of ways. This argument is based on post-modern ontology, which is one of the most central premises of the present study. Since post-modern theories are strongly visible on the background of the present study, I will briefly introduce its central ideas insofar as they relate to the articulation of femininity.

Post-modernist theorists such as Judith Butler (1990) and Richard Rorty (1989) have argued that the traditional and contemporary conceptions of reality are based on a morality, ethics and a value system that are without a 'foundation'. In other words, ideas and values have no core idea or essence. Instead, people's conceptions of right and wrong or just and unjust are merely historical constructions dependent on contingent events. This is an idea that Nietzsche was among the first ones to voice. As Honig (1993:47) has conveniently summed up, Nietzsche thought that people "are too weak to accept nature's contingency, to endorse that contingency as a challenge that might humble us but might also do honor if we responded to it

³ As the present study is conducted within a western framework, 'common understanding' here means, of course, common understanding in modern western societies.

honorably, that is, out of strength instead of weakness“. Nietzsche’s message is that clinging to morality as such amounts to little more than a submitting oneself to the value system of those in power, a value system that is contingent and systematic only insofar as it helps to stabilise the *status quo*. Values and entities have no ‘essence’ that language would merely reflect (and perhaps distort). Instead, reality is constructed in human action and meaning exists only insofar as it is created or assigned to entities.

Making use of the post-modernist ideas presented above, it can be argued that femininity and gender have no universal and homogeneous essence that their articulations would stem from. For Butler (1990:112), for example, “gender is itself a kind of becoming or activity“ and “”woman” need not be the cultural construction of the female body”. People perform rather than act out or reflect their gender. In showing that femininity is not a homogeneous or natural construction, Butler’s theory, in part, legitimises and rationalises the present study. Femininity is not an entity that is entirely closed, but one that is actually open to multiple diverse articulations. If it is accepted that texts on femininity do not reflect and present the central idea of femininity, but that they construct and articulate it, it is easy to see the relevance of studies on discursive articulation of entities and values. Femininity is not something that is described and mirrored by texts, but something that is under constant articulation and negotiation.

Articulating and negotiating femininity, however, does not take place in a power vacuum. Some feminist theorists have claimed that since language and the media are dominated by men, representation of femininity without reproduction of patriarchal structures is impossible and should not be even attempted. Others, such as Peggy Phelan (1993:1-4), have called for representation without reproduction. Even the production of ‘rebellious’ black metal takes place in a context saturated with other, dominant discourses, which causes a pressure to reproduce rather than just produce. It therefore remains to be seen whether the articulation of femininity in the lyrics of Cradle of Filth reproduces patriarchal power structures or if the lyrics are capable of constructing rather than reproducing femininity.

Clearly, femininity is not a fixed entity that is represented in texts, but a construction that is constantly negotiated, articulated and rearticulated. How femininity is articulated is therefore a valid question for critically minded discourse analysts. Answering this question may provide analysts with information about the ideological motivations of certain articulations and the power of certain discourses over others. However, since the articulation of femininity in black metal lyrics takes place in written texts (that are performed on records and live performances), textual analysis is needed to analyse and investigate articulation.

2.4 The Textuality of Discourse

The present study is aimed at making sense of the articulation of femininity in black metal lyrics through a detailed investigation of their textual level. Fairclough (1999) is a helpful discussion on why textual analysis is highly relevant and helpful for not only discourse analysts, but also social scientists in general. Fairclough states three reasons for doing close textual research: “a theoretical reason, a methodological reason and a political reason” (1999:203). The theoretical reason has to do with the notion that language is not somehow ‘transparent’, but, as has been noted above, discourse actually constitutes social practice. Thus, by analysing discourse it is possible to achieve a heightened understanding of the social practice it is embedded in and partly constitutes. The primary methodological gains of textual analysis are, firstly, that texts are in abundance and, secondly, that they provide concrete material which can be used as evidence when any claims about social structures are made. Fairclough also claims that texts are sensitive to changes in society and therefore “particularly good indicators of social change” (1999:204). In the same way, texts can be used to prove a hypothesis or another claim disputable. Finally, the political reason relates to the critical aims social scientific research may have. In contemporary western societies, power (control and domination) is increasingly exercised and negotiated through texts. That is to say, there is a need for a ‘critical

language awareness' (for discussion on critical language awareness see, for example, Fairclough 1993:239-240).

Despite Fairclough's obvious concern for taking social scientific research to the textual direction, he recognises the fact that textual analysis has in the past often been rather ignorant of context. The fact is that social scientific researchers in general and critical discourse analysts in special should pay detailed attention to the textual level of the discourse involved with or surrounded by the social practice(s) under investigation, while at the same time also locating their findings in the context of the text production and consumption. The present study accordingly sets as its aim to approach the social issues involved through textual analysis. However, it is the social issues, the ideologically motivated articulation of femininity being the most important one, that motivate the study. It is not the intention to study the language of black metal for its own sake, but to reveal the ideological nature of representation of femininity in black metal lyrics and its potential effects on social structures. The study thus seeks to strike a balance between studying social issues and doing close textual analysis with both approaches supporting each other.

2.5 The Theoretical Starting Points for the Study

To sum up, in the present study it is assumed that the relationship between language and society is dialectical. Language as an abstract system is not political or ideological, but when it is regarded in its context with the circumstances of text production and consumption, i.e. as *discourse*, language is never neutral, but laden with values and beliefs. Since discourse gives an access to the systems of belief and knowledge (and their contestations) that obtain in its context, it is possible to do critical study of social scientific significance by analysing the language of that context. For the present study the context is the (sub)culture of black metal and the issue of social scientific significance is the representation of femininity.

Even in the modern industrialised world, women and femininity are linguistically disadvantaged, women having little access to some discourses

and being surrounded by texts whose production and consumption are controlled by men. Representation of femininity is thus largely governed by male language, male power and male desire. This is true for most texts circulating in modern western societies. Whether it is true for the lyrics of *Cradle of Filth* is of special interest in the light of the goals of the present study. Since many of the oppressive/ideological linguistic practices of discourse communities are naturalised, close linguistic analysis of texts is especially beneficial as it is concrete and based on real-world data, be the interest of the analyst the articulation of femininity or anything else. It is for these reasons that CDA proves a convenient framework for the present study.

3 ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK AND TOOLS

The present section introduces the analytical tools used to analyse the lyrics and sums up their theoretical background insofar as it is necessary. The first analytical tool is metaphor. The discussion on metaphor is followed by short chapters on transitivity, some narratological tools and intertextuality. The discussion has been limited to the basic theoretical background and analytical use of the concepts, because the scope of the study does not allow for a thorough discussion of any, yet all, of the tools. Since dealing with, for example, metaphor would alone require a book of its own, the reader is advised to refer to the works listed in the bibliography for more information.

3.1 Metaphors and Representation

Studying the use of metaphor is a well-motivated choice for any critical discourse analyst. Far from being the study of the ‘ornaments’ or ‘rhetorical trickery’ of a text, analysing the metaphors of any text is a useful way of capturing and foregrounding the ideological assumptions and cognitive structures that underlie the text under scrutiny. This is the point that will be made in the present chapter. To begin with, theories of metaphor will be discussed briefly. After that, I will present my own approach to and views on metaphor. The final point to be made will be showing why including metaphor in the analytical framework of CDA is useful. Naturally, *how* this will be achieved will be a topic of discussion as well.

Before moving on, however, I will present a definition of the concept of metaphor. As metaphor has been concisely theorised and discussed at great length by cognitive scientists, linguists, psychologists as well as philosophers, I feel no urge to present a radically novel definition. Instead, while acknowledging the complexity of the issue, I abide by Andrew Goatly’s working definition:

Metaphor occurs when a unit of discourse is used to refer [...] unconventionally to an object, process or concept, or colligates in an unconventional way. And when this unconventional act of reference or colligation is understood on the basis of similarity, matching or

analogy involving the conventional referent or colligates of the unit and the actual unconventional referent or colligates.

(Goatly 1998:8)

Colligation is one type of collocate, a syntactic tie between two words. In a metaphorical expression such as *My love is a rose, it blossoms* the “conventional referent” is *rose* and the “actual unconventional referent” is *love*. In Goatly’s terminology, *rose* and *love* are called Vehicle-term (V-term) and Topic-term (T-term), respectively. Goatly also includes Ground-term (G-term) in his terminology. In the previous example the G-term is *it blossoms*, as it is the similarity/analogy between *love* and *rose*, the grounds for the analogy, so to speak (Goatly 1998:9). Of course, the G-term need not be explicitly stated in every metaphor. One could say merely *My love is a rose*, in which case the G-term would have to be inferred by the one interpreting the metaphor. Goatly resembles Aristotle in that both of them see the most essential feature of a metaphor to be its ability to construct and/or reveal similarity between the two colligates. Aristotle states that “a good metaphor implies an intuitive perception of the similarity in dissimilars” (quoted in Ricoeur 1986:23). It is no coincidence that I should mention Aristotle in this context, as he was the first one to explicitly theorise on metaphor. Despite the temporal distance of centuries, his work continues to exert a strong influence on contemporary discussion on metaphor. Although Aristotle’s work on metaphor has been influential, to say the least, the ways of thinking about metaphor have undergone a rather radical change as the time has passed. It is this the outcomes of this change that motivate my inquiries into the metaphorical language in my materials and which I shall next turn to.

3.1.1 Theories of Metaphor – From Ornaments to Cognition

Goatly (1998) begins the introductory chapter of his insightful book *The Language of Metaphors* with a reference to the shift in attitudes concerning the role of metaphor. Considering the significance of the shift, this should come as no surprise. As the title of the present chapter implies, the modern conception of metaphor, as Goatly (1998:1) puts it, as “indispensable basis

of language and thought” is something quite different from Aristotle’s understanding of metaphor as an ornament of language⁴. However, rather than making an attempt at summarising the history of thinking on metaphor, I see it as more appropriate to adapt Goatly’s standpoint. I believe that his version of the comparison theory of metaphor best provides for critically oriented discourse analysis mindful of metaphors.

The comparison theory seeks to combine the insight of interaction and substitution theories. The central idea of the interaction theory was the recognition of two distinct subjects in a metaphor (the T- and V-terms introduced above) and the projection of some features of the Vehicle on to the Topic (G-term). The comparison theory extends the interaction theory, but states that “metaphor is best viewed as an elliptical version of a simile or comparison” (Goatly 1998:118). In other words, metaphor is both interaction between the Vehicle and the Topic as well as a comparison. Goatly states that comparison can be based on similarity (antedecent or attributional) and analogy. Attributional similarity is similarity that requires working out by the one who interprets the metaphor, whereas antedecent similarity is similarity between V- and T-terms that is perceived without a process of active interpretation. A tree being referred to as a *shelter* during a rainfall is a case of antedecent similarity, because *shelter* and *tree* are both inanimate and provide cover. Attributional similarity may need an explicit G-term to be interpretable as in *George is a flower, he only blooms in the summer*, which might not make much sense if someone just said *George is a flower*. Analogy, on the other hand, suggests similarity in the relationships. *Drinking alcohol is like digging your own grave* is an analogy. *Drinking* is not compared to *digging*. Nor is *alcohol* compared to *grave*. The attention is drawn to the relationship between the activities and the person conducting them, which in this case implies that drinking alcohol leads to premature death or is symptomatic of a death-wish.

⁴ This view is presented in Ricoeur (1986), although Ricoeur seems to suggest that Aristotle’s theory on metaphor, in fact, goes deeper than their interpretations have allowed.

I agree with Goatly that similarity is a key feature of metaphor, but I would like to stress even more the constitutive and representational force of metaphor. Lakoff and Turner, although not paying much attention to the constitutive aspects of metaphor, state that “[f]ar from begin a matter of words, metaphor is a matter of thought: thought about emotion, about society, about society, about human character, about language, and about the nature of life and death. It is indispensable not only to our imagination but also to our reason” (1989:xi). These aspects of metaphor are of specific interest to a critical discourse analyst. Since a theory of metaphor that is adapted for a specific context (CDA) is probably best described in relation to its *use* in that context, the present chapter will be followed by an account of why metaphor serves well as a tool in CDA and how it is put to use.

3.1.2 Metaphors in Critical Discourse Analysis

Using a metaphor is always a question of selection. When one introduces a metaphor s/he is bound to lay emphasis on some features of the Topic-term, while, if not ignoring, at least downplaying others. *Love is war*, for example, emphasises such aspects of love as juxtaposition and bitterness at the cost of commitment and happiness. Metaphors are structured by cultural or ideological factors, which means that a close inspection of metaphor can tell an analyst a great deal about the background knowledge and assumptions of the creator of the piece of discourse under scrutiny.

In the chapter on discourse (page 10) I discussed how social structures are rearticulated and contested in social interaction with discourse being an essential part of that interaction. I propose that metaphor is, in a sense, a ‘mini-discourse’. Like discourse, metaphors can support existing structures of power or question the presuppositions they depend on. The previous example *Love is war*, may be claimed to support Discourses which maintain that it is impossible for men and women to have intercourse (sexual or social) without clear dichotomies between them. One might want to resist such metaphors on the basis that they reinforce and stem from particular ideological positions. For example, the male dominance held up by

patriarchal ideologies requires antagonist positioning between men and women rather than equality and unity. Resisting metaphors such as *Love is war* would, therefore, equal to trying to strip patriarchal Discourses of their power. By resisting ideologically loaded or founded metaphors members of discourse communities have a possibility to denaturalise them, reveal their ideological nature and introduce new metaphors. For example, it might not be impossible to introduce a metaphor such as *Love is a container for two inseparable souls*, which stresses the unity of those in love instead of their antagonist positions. It is therefore reasonable to expect that different discourses employ different metaphorical concepts and networks of metaphors. These networks, more importantly than individual metaphors, form an integral part of the Discourse they feature in, especially when the network is systematic. When this is the case, those root analogies which form the basis for the network of metaphors, are supported by sheer repetition.

3.2 Systemic-Functional Linguistics and Transitivity

3.2.1 Systemic-Functional Linguistics and CDA

Systemic-functional linguistics (SFL) is based on the grammar that, at the moment, seems to best suit the needs of many researchers involved in textual analysis. Halliday (1985:xx), the most important figure for the development of SFL, actually intends his work to be used as “a resource for the interpretation of texts of a broad variety of registers in modern English”. He also holds that when texts are analysed, grammatical analysis can, but also must only be the first step, which is to be followed by further interpretative observation or commentary (Halliday 1985:xvi). Such an approach synchronises with the call for text-based discourse analysis. More important, however, is the fact that the theory of language that SFL reflects coincides well with the central tenets of CDA (Fairclough and Chouliaraki 1999:139). The SFL theory of language, like CDA, opts for a dialectical view of language and sees language as a semiotic form of social action.

What this means is that texts are seen to at once structure social life and to be constrained by it. In other words, the language system is structured, but open to change (Fairclough and Chouliaraki 1999:139-140). SFL's interest in the social environment of text production thus makes it theoretically compatible with CDA.

Like any theory or method, also SFL has been criticised. The most weighty argument relates to SFL's tendency for refined theoretical constructions, which is at the cost of texts (specific instances of language or discourse). This tends to simplify the complexity of the texts' contexts. Likewise, SFL has been said to neglect the hybridity of texts, the 'orders of discourse' (see page 10) working as organisational principles of texts (Fairclough and Chouliaraki 1999:143). Nevertheless, SFL provides CDA with a sound methodology for close textual analysis. SFL places its interest on how language is *used* instead of examining language as a formal, abstract system, which is convenient from the point of view of CDA. I shall not introduce the conceptual tools of SFL here in their entirety. Instead, I shall focus on transitivity, which, within the framework of SFL, is the most suitable tool for approaching the materials of the present study.

3.2.2 Transitivity as a Tool in CDA

In SFL, language is seen as a system that is used to express a meaning, i.e. a "text is a semantic unit, not a grammatical one" (Halliday 1985:xvii). This is one central idea that frames SFL. In terms of representation, the most notable concept of SFL is 'transitivity'. Transitivity deals with how experiences of different 'processes' are encoded into language (the concept of process will be dealt with below). Language systems offer their users a myriad of choices for wording an experience of a process. In other words, one process may be represented by multiple linguistic realisations, all different from each other.

Transitivity has been widely used among critical linguists and critical discourse analysts (Fairclough 1993:178). This comes as no surprise since transitivity provides CDA with a powerful tool for tackling the ways in

which texts build causal links (attribute responsibility) and the agents of actions are represented, for example. From the point of view of the present study, using transitivity is a well-motivated choice as it can be used to track down which sex is 'acting' and which one is 'acted upon'. Similarly, it is possible to use transitivity to find out what kind of processes female characters are agents of. The use of transitivity analysis shall be discussed more concisely below after the central concepts of transitivity have been briefly introduced.

'Process' is a key concept in transitivity. It means, to adapt Halliday's (1985:101) term, "goings-on" in the world. Processes may be of several kinds, and they are divided into three main categories: material, mental and relational processes. Material processes are processes of doing. In them, someone or something does something. They are often referred to as action processes. A material process, such as *George kicked the ball over the fence*, consists of the process itself, the participants of the process and the circumstances of the process (Halliday 1985:101), of which the first two ones are obligatory in all cases. In the preceding example, the process is *kicked*, *George* and *the ball* are participants and *over the fence* is a circumstance of the process. Introducing the concepts of Actor (or Agent) and Goal makes it possible to examine agency with the system of transitivity more closely. It can be assumed that every process has an Actor, someone who carries it out. In the preceding example the Actor is *George*. His action, however, 'carries over' to *the ball*, which is called Goal or Patient within the system of transitivity. This latter element is not obligatory to every material process. This is especially true of some material processes that are called event processes. In event processes, such as *It started to rain*, there is never conscious or intentional action or an animate actor. Event processes are somewhat similar to supervision processes in that they lack the intention. However, supervision processes have an animate Actor, as in *Liz fell*.

Not all processes are of the kind in which something materially 'happens', in which change is brought about to the world that can be

perceived with all the different senses. Mental processes are also grammatically distinct from material processes (Halliday 1985:106-112), but here it is sufficient to say that they are processes of perception, affection and cognition. When someone says *I like music*, s/he is not thought to act or do something in the same way as in a material process because s/he does not 'act upon' the world in any way. The terms Actor and Goal are therefore not suitable and Senser (*I*) and Phenomenon (*music*) are used in their stead.

The third primary group of processes is formed by relational processes, processes of being and sensing. In English, they can be divided in the following manner (adapted from Halliday (1985:112)):

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------|
| (1) intensive | 'x is a' |
| (2) circumstantial | 'x is at a' |
| (3) possessive | 'x has a' |

Each subcategory has two modes, the attributive and the identifying. To take an example, the identifying intensive process *Sheila is the judge* is different from the intensive attributive *Sheila is intelligent*. The former identifies or defines *Sheila* as someone specific who, within the context of speech/writing, is not to be mistaken for anyone else, whereas the latter does not. The attributive clause merely assigns a quality to *Sheila*. What were called participants in the case of material process are called the Identified (*Sheila*) and Identifier (*the judge*) in identifying clauses and Carrier (*Sheila*) and Attribute (*tall*) in attributive clauses.

In addition to the three principal process types it is possible to distinguish three other process types: behavioural, verbal and existential. As these are not relevant for the purposes of the present study, however, they will not be discussed in more detail.

Transitivity is undoubtedly a useful tool for any text analyst. In CDA, however, the justifications for using transitivity have to be grounded with social considerations. A little has already been said about the theoretical compatibility of CDA and SFL. From the methodological point of view, it

can be said that analysing transitivity is useful because it can help to “work out what social, cultural, ideological, political or theoretical factors determine how a process is signified in a particular type of discourse [...] or in a particular text” (Fairclough 1993:179-180). In other words, the motivation is, again, social and/or emancipatory. What transitivity analysis has to offer for studies in the representation of femininity is insight into what kinds of processes are associated with women and femininity. In the present study, transitivity analysis is used to find out how women’s actions are represented and whether action by men or women is emphasised, for example. At the same time, some light will inevitably be shed on the participant roles that are assigned to women. For example, if women in some text tend to be represented as Sensers rather than Actors, i.e. they are not agents in material processes, it can be argued that they are represented as incapable or unwilling of action that has material consequences. In such cases, women feel rather than cause pain, to take an example.

Transitivity is not the only tool SFL provided its users with, but it certainly is the most widely used one, and for a reason. As it is based on *functional* linguistics, it enables seeing how language is used in its context and the functions it serves, be they ideological, cultural or political. Transitivity analysis begins with linguistic analysis which, as such, does not tell why certain kinds of choices are made. This is where the element of interpretation comes in. In the present study, feminist theories and the social scientific theory of Fairclough and Chouliaraki (1999) facilitate this interpretative work. The results of the analysis will be interpreted from the feminist point of view, focusing on the potential of black metal discourse to either perpetuate or break down dominant systems of knowledge and belief. The data from the transitivity analysis is used to find out whether the linguistic practices of patriarchal and other dominant discourses are reproduced or rearticulated. Transitivity analysis therefore reveals something about the ideological foundations the lyrics of Cradle of Filth are based on.

3.3 Narratology: Characterisation, Focalisation and Reader Positioning

During the last decade, social sciences have developed an interest in narratives. This shift of interest has been labelled 'the narrative turn'. The term suggests a change in perspective comparable to that brought about by 'the linguistic turn', which meant language coming to be seen as constitutive of reality and thought. Some of contemporary theorists of narrative (see, for example, Currie (1998) and Rimmon-Kenan (1989)) have come to the conclusion that narratives, just as language, construct realities instead of fictionalising or representing them. Moreover, it has been argued (See Butler (1990)) that people build their identities by making up 'narratives of the self'. An individual may tell her narratives of the self differently any given time, according to her current interests and the self-image and the role s/he wishes to hold up (identities are dynamic and multiple, not fixed). The concepts of narratology are useful in studying society and its power structures since by operationalising them within the framework of CDA new perspectives into issues such as the role of the narrator and underlying ideological assumptions s/he makes are opened up.

One example of narratological approaches being used in feminist studies is Mieke Bal (1987), who, in addition to her other pursuits, has studied how women and their love are interpreted/understood in dominant readings of biblical love stories. Another example of narrative tools put to use for purposes of feminist text analysis can be found in Mills (1995). For my purposes, the concepts of characterisation, reader positioning and, above all, focalisation are the most useful and will therefore be added to my analytical framework. These concepts are relatively easy to operationalise within the framework of the present study. As will become clear when the actual analysis is carried out, the lyrics can well be viewed as narratives, which is another reason why using narratological tools is justified. The theoretical compatibility and analytical relevance of the concepts will be revealed in more detail as the concepts are introduced in the following few paragraphs.

Focalisation, a term coined by Gérard Genette, is distinguished from narration, but is nevertheless defined in its terms. A story is narrated by a narrator, but the perspective encompassed by the narration may be that of someone else, a 'focaliser'. Expressions like "prism" and "angle of vision" (Rimmon-Kenan 1989:71) have been used to describe focalisation, but the term transcends a visual orientation, a 'point of view'. A story may be focalised through a character not only visually, but also cognitively, emotionally and ideologically. William Nelles (1990:366) even argues that the visual metaphor has caused the term to be largely misunderstood. For example, the narrator of a story might be an imaginative and enthusiastic woman, while the narration could still be filtered through the perspective and experience of a lethargic, disillusioned and misogynist male. This would be unusual, to say the least, but nevertheless possible and accountable for with the concept of focalisation. It is the term's ability to convey cognitive and ideological 'filtering' that makes it a useable tool in analysing narratives.

Not only may a story be focalised *through* someone, but also *on* someone. In the lyrics of *Cradle of Filth*, the protagonist is usually a female, on whom the story is focalised. The focaliser, however, tends to be, at least implicitly, male. Focalisation, then, is a theoretically motivated choice for analysing female characters and, thus, the representation of femininity.

Characters in a written narrative are made up of words, of the descriptions provided by whoever is narrating the story (Mills 1995:160). According to Rimmon-Kenan (1989:59), characterisation can fall into two different categories: direct or indirect definition. The former is the conventional method of characterisation much used in novels from the last century. Direct definition, often supplied by the narrator, is basically a listing of the key features of a character. Direct and indirect definition may sometimes overlap, as when a physical trait of a character (external appearance) implies a psychological quality. For example, a character who has slanted eyes and a constant wry smile on her face is easily perceived as cunning, perhaps even treacherous. Other ways of indirect definition are

providing the reader with knowledge of the character's actions, environment or reporting her speech. A reader can imply a great deal about a character based on how s/he looks, what s/he does or does not do, what s/he says and what kind of surroundings s/he is associated with. Rimmon-Kenan (1989:67-70) also argues that analogous relationships between different characters themselves or characters and landscape or names can reinforce the impressions created by characterisation.

One aspect of characterisation relevant to the present study, but not so much for Rimmon-Kenan's purposes, is the light looking at characterisation can shed on the ideological stance of the narrator. Characterisation can obviously be done in a number of ways, and where there is a choice, there is politics, i.e. room for ideological work. Since it is reasonable to expect that black metal discourse fails to escape the influence of dominant discourses (the most important one of them for the present study being the patriarchal discourse) and the order of discourse it itself constitutes and is embedded in (see page 9), it seems probable that characterisation is used in a manner not overtly confusing to an average reader, i.e. according to literary conventions. The canonised characterisation of female characters is therefore likely to be found in the data.

Although literary authors have devices such as focalisation and characterisation at their disposal, a text does not have a meaning independent of its reader (Rimmon-Kenan 1989:117-129). Reading a text is a process of interaction in which the reader uses the resources provided by the text to construct meaning. Texts are never completely 'open' so as to allow virtually any possible reading, but one text is certainly likely to be read in, even if only slightly, differing ways. Just as a text exercises control over its reader, so does the reader have some control over the text. For the purposes of the present study, those aspects of the text that control the construction of meaning and the readers' interpretations, which I will place under the more general label 'reader positioning' are more interesting. To be more specific, it will be of interest to examine reader positioning in relation to gender. There will be an attempt to find out whether or not readers of the

texts are set up in specific reader positions, in which they can only make sense of the text or conceive the text as coherent by adapting a clearly male or female point of view.

Focalisation and characterisation are not independent of reader positioning, but parts of it. Mills (1995:185) gives an example of a text which strongly resists identification with the protagonist. In this text, the female protagonist is focalised from someone else's perspective and her experience is "written out of the text". Mills points out that women are likely to find it impossible to identify with a female character who is focalised from the perspective of a lusting man. I expect to be able to make similar kind of discoveries from my data. The analysis should clarify what kind of audience the lyrics are written to, what kind of assumptions are made concerning them and whether they require that the reader adapt some particular reader position. Reader positioning will therefore be often discussed along with analysis of other features of the data.

In the preceding paragraphs I have tried to rationalise and justify a selection of some narratological concepts within my analytical framework. The discussion has been rather abstract and it is to be borne in mind that all of the concepts given here can only be used, made sense of and prove useful in actual textual analysis. It is my intuition that narratological analysis easily slides into the kind of discourse analysis that has little basis in the actual linguistic details of the text. Only the concrete analysis that will be done on the data will reveal the full potential of narratological theory in CDA.

3.4 Intertextuality and Interdiscursivity

Fairclough's concern for textual analysis already discussed in chapter 2.4 includes an awareness of the importance of intertextual analysis, which he takes to be inevitable for the necessary "macro-level" analysis of discourse (Fairclough 1993:85). Considering his views on discourse and language (the primacy of orders of discourse) this comes as no surprise and seems justified. The purpose of the present chapter is to introduce the terms intertextuality and interdiscursivity, especially from Fairclough's point of

view, and demonstrate their usefulness in CDA and the study of black metal lyrics.

Intertextuality is a term that refers to the dialogicality of language. What it means is that, firstly, texts are “always responding, always anticipating and eliciting responses” (Fairclough and Chouliaraki 1999:49). Secondly, language is internally hybrid, full of many voices. When a military officer utters a command, for example, his or her orders are one link in a chain of ‘texts’, preceded by other utterances and anticipating some more or less specific linguistic responses. To put it in other words, the ‘text’ s/he creates is dialogical in nature. However, the officer’s language is also *internally* hybrid, i.e. his or her language may display signs of military language mixed with other discourses s/he is in contact with in his or her private life. These signs may be above the boundaries of the sentence, perceivable mostly on the level of discourse. In such cases, it is more appropriate to talk of ‘interdiscursivity’ instead of intertextuality, because a discourse may be perceivable not so much on the level of single lexical items, but sentence structures, for example. The term interdiscursivity shall here be used, in accordance with Fairclough and Chouliaraki (1999:49), when it is conventions and structuring principles that are being mixed rather than lexical items or stretches of language from discourses and genres. The term intertextuality is used generically and interchangeably when the difference between interdiscursivity and intertextuality does not specifically need to be made.

In terms of the present study, the term ‘interdiscursivity’ is the more central one. No text (or discourse) exists in a void but all discourses are embedded and operate in conjunction with a number of other discourses. Fairclough’s term ‘order of discourses’ is practical in this respect as it highlights the fact that the ordering of discourses is hierarchical. To take an example, the underlying structural principles of biblical discourse can be said to have a significant effect on the discourse of sermons while the opposite is not true (a radically different sermon is not likely to somehow transform biblical texts, except for maybe new translations of the bible yet

to be made). Sermons can be shaped not only by biblical texts, but also newspaper texts, biographies and so on. In practice virtually all modern texts⁵ are interdiscursive, combining elements from a variety of discourses. It has already been presented that the perpetuation and contestation of relations of power, to an extent, takes place in discourse (see chapter 2.1), but what this means in terms of intertextuality, interdiscursivity and orders of discourse is yet to be discussed more thoroughly.

Fairclough (1993:147-148) has used intertextuality as a method in studying, among other things, how the discourse of counselling and discourses from the private sphere of life may penetrate the discourse of medical interview. Fairclough's main aim in CDA has been studying social change, which is largely about power relations between different groups and classes of people (see, especially Fairclough (1993)). Indeed, it is the larger-scale social changes implied by and partly constituted by the shifting configurations of orders of discourse that are interesting rather than just the newly 'hybridised' discourses as such. Black metal lyrics are combinations of different discourses, whose internal power struggle critical discourse analysts should be especially interested in studying. For the present study, the role female characters and femininity feature in within black metal's orders of discourse is relevant. It is of great importance to find out whether or not the discourses of femininity are brought into new discursive configurations that hold the potential for new articulations of femininity.

As suggested by the findings in Bal (1987), the biblical discourse contains a separate discourse on femininity. When one thinks of the relationship between black metal and Christian discourse and the prominence of female characters in the lyrics of *Cradle of Filth* (see page 37), it becomes clear that studying the way in which the biblical discourse on women is (or is not) merged into black metal discourse is essential in order to find out how black metal discourse functions in its representation of

⁵ In this context, 'text' may be applied to almost any outcome of semiotic production, for example commercials, paintings etc.

women and femininity. Just as revealing is to study how the lyrics of Cradle of Filth intertextually or interdiscursively draw on romantic poetry, other black metal lyrics and gothic horror texts, traces of which can be easily spotted in the data. Theoretically, it is possible to posit a 'superdiscourse' underlying some or most of the other discourses, namely the patriarchal discourse. Despite the attempts of feminism, language is still steeped in patriarchal ideology. How black metal discourse responds to and anticipates 'responses' from this discourse is of special interest, because it should tell a great deal about its relationship to a kind of a 'tradition', the values that are only too firmly built into human culture. In this way it becomes possible to, in a sense, test whether black metal is as radical as it claims to be.

4 BLACK METAL LYRICS AS MATERIALS

4.1 *Black Metal in General*

The contents of the chapters on black metal are largely based on the author's personal experience⁶ of black metal due to the fact that metal music has not attracted the attention of academic scholars (Walser 1993:x). Academic studies on black metal are even more rare. None could be found to be used in conjunction with the present study. Although Robert Walser's *Running with the Devil* (1993), to my knowledge the only serious in-depth academic piece of work on heavy metal, is an excellent account of the genre, it does not deal with black metal. As the present piece of writing is a case study and does not seek to make large-scale and definitive conclusions on black metal as a whole, black metal's definitions and history are not of foremost significance.

Since bands in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Walser 1993:3) first started distorting their guitar sounds on purpose and writing lyrics on the occult and the darker aspects of life, heavy metal has developed into several directions. Metal music can nowadays be divided into power metal, trash, grindcore, death metal and the more recent rapcore, to mention a few categories. One trend of metal music has always been to make music ever more extreme: more intense, faster and, as far as lyrics are concerned, more explicit. Black metal can be considered the culmination of this trend with extremely fast drumming, often shrieking vocals and lyrics that deal with Satanism, anti-Christianity and the occult. Black metal bands are naturally not a homogeneous group, but there is one common feature: the inclination for Satanism. However, not all black metal bands share Satanist values, but if they do not, they are forced to make a note of it. Bands that are musically black metal but do not write about Satanism, for example, are with almost no exception questioned about their ideology in interviews. Members of

⁶ I have been listening to black metal for about ten years. I have had an interest in the lyrics for the same period of time. I developed a scholarly interest in black metal in 1998.

what are called 'true' black metal bands often claim that bands who do not share the Satanist ideology cannot rightly call themselves black metal.

From the point of view of the present study, the lyrics of black metal bands are the important issue. As the lyrics tend to be Satanist and anti-Christian in nature, they represent a social movement that goes against the prevalent values of western societies. Reading black metal lyrics, it is not unusual to find the idea that the modern society and the church are corrupt and dysfunctional. The discourse of black metal lyrics is therefore interesting in the sense that there are necessarily tensions between it and other common discourses circulating in western societies. The reason why the present study focuses on the articulation of femininity is that it is an issue that is prominent in the materials. What is more, ways of talking, writing and thinking about sex and gender definitely have far-reaching social implications. There are, however, other reasons for studying black metal lyrics, which will be explained in the next chapter.

4.2 Rationale for Studying Black Metal Lyrics

As noted above, studies on black metal are rare. Popular culture is studied by those involved in cultural studies, but no studies that would have proven useful for the present study could be found. Even studies on heavy metal, which I consider black metal to be a subcategory of, were scarce. It seems that for academic scholars black metal is not a valid subject of study. In a sense, then, the present study ventures on uncharted territory. From the point of view of CDA, black metal lyrics are as valid a subject of study as any other texts. In fact, black metal not being an interest for the vast majority of linguists is a reason for researching them. Research is always carried out in a context that is bound up with time and space and thus not free of ideologies or cultural norms of the right and wrong. By choosing a subject of a study from a field that is belittled or even scorned by the scientific community (Walser 1993:20), researchers have a chance to break free from the normative rules that define what is a legitimate and useful object of study. Critical discourse analysts should not be interested in

governmental or public texts only. Surely, the construction of femininity, to take an example that is of immediate concern for the present study, takes place in popular culture and discourses of the private sphere no less than in texts like the constitution or the laws of a state.

4.3 Materials of the Study

The materials of the present study are comprised by the lyrics of two songs by Cradle of Filth, *Of Dark Blood* and *F**king* from the 1999 E.P. *From the Cradle to Enslave* and *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* from the 1998 CD *Cruelty and the Beast*. Cradle of Filth meets the criteria, outlined in the previous chapter, for being called a black metal band. Unlike the majority of acclaimed black metal bands, however, Cradle of Filth is commercially successful. The fact that the band has gained commercial success only makes it a more suitable object of study as its lyrics are read by and available to a wider audience. Musically Cradle of Filth is not necessarily 'traditional' black metal. Terms like 'groundbreaking' and 'avant-garde', although a bit strong, are nevertheless to the point. Cradle of Filth was one of the first bands, if not the very first one, to have a regular keyboard player, which some black metal fans still resent. The vocals are at times guttural and shrieking while the overall appearance of the music is aggressive and up-beat. One of the central reasons behind Cradle of Filth's fame, however, is in their explicit and often sexually loaded lyrics. One of the band's T-shirts, which had the line "Vestal masturbation" from the song *Queen of Winter, Throned* reproduced under a picture of a masturbating nun was banned in the UK after legal action was brought against it. Clearly, the lyrics of Cradle of Filth are controversial and reflect attitudes that are easily considered illegitimate in modern western countries.

The band's lyrics are written by a native speaker of English, the vocalist who prefers to go by the name Dani Filth. The lyrics are more complex, literary and intellectually provocative and linguistically innovative than the lyrics of most black metal bands (the complex and innovative facets of the lyrics will be demonstrated in the course of the analysis). One reason for

choosing to study the representation of femininity in black metal lyrics is the fact that almost in every song of Cradle of Filth there is a female 'character' or femininity is in some other way related to the lyrics. In this respect, the lyrics of Cradle of Filth are rich and interesting as materials for the present study, especially since Walser (1993:109) notes that "[h]eavy metal is, inevitably, a discourse shaped by patriarchy".

Two pieces of lyrics will be analysed in the present study. The scope of the present study does not allow for a larger bulk of materials, but, on the other hand, having two pieces of lyrics enables at least some sort of comparisons to be made. Both are fairly recent and have female characters in them, but are nevertheless different from each other. *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* is a story of a period in Countess Elizabeth Bathory's life whereas *Of Dark Blood and F**king* is a kind of a bizarre love story. While in the former the narrator recounts the story of the female protagonist, in the latter song the female character and the narrator are both involved in the story. As a result, the perspectives of the two pieces of lyrics differ from each other. Although femininity could be discussed in connection with almost any of Cradle of Filth's songs, the two songs that are analysed are especially suitable. They were chosen because in them femininity is clearly something of an issue and, on the basis of preliminary studies, both are ideologically invested. What is more, having two pieces of lyrics instead of just one makes it possible to make comparisons and find out if there are similar features in the lyrics.

5 LYRICS IN DETAIL – THE ANALYSES

5.1 “*Of Dark Blood and F**king*” – Pornographic Poetry

5.1.1 Metaphors of Femininity

*Of Dark Blood and F**king* is rich in metaphors and metaphorical language. An exhaustive analysis of the metaphors presented would require that one go through the lyrics line by line. For the purposes of the present study, however, it will suffice to examine the metaphors that have to do with the representation of femininity. Since the analysis of metaphors gains more from qualitative than quantitative analysis, metaphorical language will be approached through examples rather than extensive listings of tropes in the lyrics. The focus will be on examining extended metaphors and what might be called 'unconventional' metaphors.

The most central metaphor in *Of Dark Blood and F**king* is “seventh heaven” in the recurring chorus “Thou art my seventh heaven burning”. The same metaphor was already discussed in the chapter on transitivity, but there is more to be said. The expression “seventh heaven” is metaphorical in itself, but using it in a new way and in the new context presented by the lyrics to *Of Dark Blood and F**king* creates a new meaning for it. It is not just a matter of ‘filling a lexical gap’, but of creating and extending meaning. “[S]eventh heaven” is not just a substitute for some other word or expression like ‘bliss’ or ‘joy’. Firstly, it implies that a woman can be defined with reference to nature (heaven). Secondly, it sets up a religious (Christian) imagery of God and angels. Thirdly, “seventh heaven” implies extreme happiness, ecstasy. Every reader will, of course, give differing meanings to the metaphor, but the above-mentioned three aspects of the metaphor are probably acknowledged – even if subconsciously – by most Western and/or Christian readers. The three above-mentioned associations are more or less conventionalised, for which reason they are likely to be identified by most readers.

Although “seventh heaven” may seem almost platitudinous with its range of conventionalised associations, the whole expression is, in fact, rather complex. If an understanding of the initial meanings of any metaphor is to be achieved with at least *some* amount of certainty, the metaphor should be analysed and/or interpreted in its original context. In the case of *Of Dark Blood and F**king* this means, among other things, taking the underlying anti-Christian attitudes and ideologies and the portrayal of female figures as sexual, powerful, evil and even monstrous⁷ into account. Hence, “Thou art my seventh heaven burning” constructs the female character as something gratifying the narrator and capable of constituting or substituting for a religion. The underlying basic metaphor is WOMAN IS A RELIGION. The implication of the word “burning”, on the other hand, can be interpreted as signifying that, for the narrator, the female character is as worthy as the destruction of a religion. Nevertheless, the metaphorical expression more or less inverts Christian senses of the “seventh heaven”. Heaven is not personified in God or angels, but in a sexually (rather than physically) powerful female. Heaven is, therefore, not about chastity or Platonic existence. Instead, heaven, the place or state of utter joy, is devoid of essentially Christian qualities. The subversion of Christian metaphor is also evident in the third chorus in which “heaven” is replaced with “angel”. Angels are rendered no more Platonic than heaven. Femininity, on the other hand, is glorified and constructed as something that is comparable or even superior to a religion. This positive sense is undermined by the fact that the apparent reasons for the glorification are, given the sexually loaded vocabulary and content of the lyrics, firstly sexual and only secondly amorous.

Much of the metaphorical language in *Of Dark Blood and F**king* revolves around Christianity, sexuality, femininity and nature. For example, the metaphor “Sister midnight”, creates a new space for interpretation, in

⁷ The argument that women are represented as ‘other’ is also supported by the findings in the analysis of *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow*. See also the rest of the analysis.

which nuns are identified with night rather than day or light. In addition to the metaphor opening up a new way of conceptualising and perceiving an ecclesiastic figure, it suggests that a woman, even a nun, is a 'creature' of the night. "Baring lunar curvature/ Like canvas for a lick of pain" implies that the female body has to do with the moon, which stands in a relation of synecdoche to night. The female body is further metaphorically described as "canvas for a lick of pain". The metaphor invites the reader to perceive "canvas" as similar to female skin. In other words, woman's skin is but a platform for artistry, the artistry in this case being male violence or sadomasochism. The female body is foregrounded and, by means of a metaphor, framed as an object for the male and the male eye. The female body is an object that can be used as a site for the creative work of a man.

Now that attention has been directed to the metaphoric representation of the female body, it is convenient to take up a few other similarly relevant metaphors in *Of Dark Blood and F**king*. If the basic metaphor underlying the metaphor of seventh heaven was WOMAN IS RELIGION, then the lines "Writhing like a viper/ Deep inside her Eden" extends it so as to give the basic metaphor THE FEMALE BODY IS DIVINE. The basic metaphor suggested here, however, does not capture all the implications of "Eden", which is clearly the metaphor for female genitalia. As such, it is not very surprising that the female body is identified with paradise, desire and joys, especially since the narrator is male⁸. Be as it may, using "Eden" instead of the less specific 'paradise' makes it impossible to escape the biblical connotations. The metaphor plays with the Christian discourse in which female sexuality and body is often associated with evilness as in the story of Adam and Eve. Nevertheless, the very place of innocence, Eden, is identified with female genitalia. In this sense, the Christian metaphor is renounced and undermined by revealing the contingency of the Ground-term of the metaphor, i.e. that SEXUALITY IS SIN. The mentioned

⁸ The narrator's sex is discussed more closely in the analysis of the narratological aspects of the lyrics.

Ground-term then becomes not a fact, but a cultural and ideological construction. The metaphorical construction suggests that sexuality is not sinful because of laws of nature or some divine command, but because it is constructed as such. The metaphors in “Writhing like a viper/ Deep inside her Eden” warrant the perception that the lyrics are emancipatory for women in the sense that in them the culturally constructed relations between femininity and sexuality are not taken at face value. In other words, they empower women by deconstructing patriarchal conceptions of feminine desire and enabling new articulations of femininity and sexuality.

The lines “Back to the fruits of her womb/ Back to the crack of her tomb” further extend the metaphors of the female genitalia. “[T]he fruits of her womb” moves on the same metaphorical level as Eden, the female body being a fertile source of pleasure. The greatest difference is that fruits can be collected for the benefit of the collector, which means that the female body becomes the instrument for fulfilling needs. This more or less negates the emancipatory aspects of the metaphor discussed in the previous paragraph. More important than this, however, is the line “Back to the crack of her tomb”, which, in conjunction with the preceding line, sets up a metaphorical relationship between the womb and death (tomb). In the discourse of Christianity, the idea of the female body as dangerous and monstrous as such is nothing new (see, for example, Bal (1987) or Mills (1995)), but portraying the monstrosity as an appeal is.⁹ The fertility of the female genitalia implied by “Eden “ and “fruits” is coupled with death, i.e. fertility does not imply reproduction or necessarily even life. The metaphor may well be suggestive of the lyrics’ intertextual relationship to gothic stories (see the analysis on intertextuality below). In any case, it denies the existence of any natural one-to-one connection between sex and reproduction. The metaphor therefore transforms rather than subverts. In the

⁹ The appeal of monstrosity suggests that the discourse of Christianity has been collapsed into another discourse (or vice versa). See chapter 5.1.3 for more proof.

metaphoric representation of *Of Dark Blood and F**king* the female body remains dangerous and deathly.

As far as metaphors are concerned, femininity is often represented as if in opposition to Christianity. Moreover, the female character often seems to be perceived with regard to nature, especially its 'darker side'. The female body is mostly described metaphorically, which lends it a somewhat mystical appeal. Female sexuality is something sinister and dark, yet enchanting and powerful. The complex of ideas surrounding it, which is constructed in metaphors, is complicated, to say the least. On the one hand, the female body is liberated from the Christian and culturally dominant conceptions. On the other hand, it remains trapped by some strong conceptions rooted deep in the modern Western culture. These conceptions become evident in *Of Dark Blood and F**king* when female sexuality is presented as dangerous, harmful and the female body is used to appease the narrator's sadomasochistic desires.

5.1.2 Femininity in Action and Inaction

The analysis of processes is complicated by the linguistic conventions of lyrical texts. In metaphorical language intention and materiality are often assigned to, for example, inanimate entities. The present analysis of verb forms is intended to reveal how, and to what effect, such linguistic strategies operate, i.e. what the mechanisms of representing (semi-fictional) reality in *Of Dark Blood and F**king* are.

The first thing to make note of is that when any actions are conducted by the narrator, the form "I" is used, whereas in the case of the female character synecdoche is made use of, a part thus substituting the whole. "Her roseate sliver" and "The torque of her hips" fragment the female character and defy her existence as a coherent and independent unit. The source of actions is not the female character's unified consciousness. It is possible to argue that each fragmented part of the female body is powerfully compelling and too much for the narrator to resist, but the fact remains that fragmentation makes it difficult to make sense of the female character as a

conscious actor. The narrator is also fragmented in “My dreams weep”, but the difference in the representation between the action of the male and the female is highlighted by the fact that “I” appears six times in the lyrics while “Thou” (indicating the female character) appears only three times. Moreover, the two occurrences of “we” and “Our slow orgasmic fuses” do nothing to alter the situation. Rather, they imply that the female character is more or less supplementary to the male character, capable of action and worthy of representation only together with the narrator. Another interesting agent of action (as far as the representation of femininity is concerned) can be found on the first line. The metaphorical expressions “Sister midnight” and “Thou art my seventh heaven” discussed in the previous chapter are no different from the first example in building up a connection between nature and the feminine. In such metaphors, what is represented is not just nature, but femininity is also represented in terms of nature. In the process of constructing similarity between women/femininity and nature, femininity is set up in a position in which it has more to do with being different (from coherent actors, i.e. men) than with being human. Femininity is connected with nature more than humanity, connected with ‘otherness’. Thus, the agency of the female actor is undermined: either the female character is constructed as if she formed a unit capable of action only together with the narrator or her position as an independent actor is ‘sabotaged’. This ‘sabotage’ may include fragmentation of the female body and metaphorical expressions such as “like a sculptured nymph”, both of which are briefly dealt with below.

As for the actual processes, on every line where the agent is “I”, they are material intention processes. The most frequent reference to the female character “Thou art” expresses a relational process. Thus, whereas the narrator acts and his actions have material consequences, the female character simply ‘is’. In “Thou art my seventh heaven” the relational process is used to define the female character in relation to the narrator. “Her roseate sliver quivers” is a material action supervision process. In addition to the action being performed by a part of “Her” body rather than

the character as an independent actor, the action is depicted as an unintentional tremble. Whether it is possible to classify the material action process in “The torque of her hips lip-syncs” as clearly intentional is debatable. The movements of human bodies hardly qualify as agents conscious of their actions and the consequences of those same actions, even less so than characters described metaphorically. It seems, therefore, that in what seems to be the only process in the lyrics where the affected explicitly is the male, the narrator (“lip-syncs me”), the agency is more or less concealed. The female character does not have power and capacity to act intentionally. Instead, this capacity is attributed to her body and its parts. Thus, any power over the narrator is not possessed by the female character, but her body, which is described in graphic overtones of sexuality.

As the lyrics are poetic or even literary in nature, they pose some problems for the analyst with the ellipses and breaches in conventional grammatical structure. Also, *Of Dark Blood and F**king* has a considerable amount of verbs in their progressive forms. For example, in “Thou art my seventh heaven burning/ Going down as with the day/ Baring lunar curvature/ Like canvas for a lick of pain” agency for the act of “baring” is somewhat diminished. There is a certain ambiguity about who is in the active role, the narrator or the female character. A reader will, naturally, infer the agent from the context, but the linguistic choice is nevertheless something different from simple present: the reader’s interpretation is inevitably affected by the uncertainty concerning the agency. This is made even more important by the fact that the narrator seems to be the dominant actor in almost any other respect. Agency and responsibility are almost solely attributed to the narrator. When the female character is responsible for the behaviour or actions of the narrator, however, agency is swiftly obscured and rendered ambiguous so that it is not easy to perceive her as the direct consequence of the actions. The undermining of the female character as a coherent and rational human being makes it difficult to view her as a unified being capable of agency.

5.1.3 Intertextuality – Pornography, Myth and Gothic Images

The genre of *Of Dark Blood and F**king* is that of black metal lyrics. Although the lyrics may (or may not) have been revised and rewritten more than once, there is only one author. As the lyrics are written by one person, any intertextual cues are likely to be intentional as in any piece of prose or poetry. Looking at intertextuality in *Of Dark Blood and F**king* thus sheds light on the conscious choices of the author and, in the process, reveals the ideological background of the piece of lyrics.

*Of Dark Blood and F**king* is a pastiche of texts more conspicuously than many of the typically heterogeneous modern texts, for example advertisements. It has elements of narrative fiction, myth, poetry and gothic and pornographic stories as well as references to the discourse of Christianity. What is interesting is not just the fact that certain discourses have been brought together in the lyrics, but the way they have been combined and textured together and the effects of these actions.

As there is more than one discourse in the lyrics that is central in the order of discourse that is in question, it is not easy to point out which one is dominant. Nevertheless, the discourse of gothic stories is certainly one of the main threads running through the piece of lyrics. The lines

“By night and by candle
At each other’s throats
In a slick drift of red
Setting god’s teeth on edge
We were as wolves praying inside the fold
Of a slaughtered lamb fold
On a four poster bed...”

quite obviously refer to gothic horror stories (We were as wolves praying inside the fold), creatures of the night (By night and by candle) and drinking blood (At each other’s throats). The vampire stories are also evident, even if less explicitly, on the lines “Yet in obituary/ My dreams still weep/ Of dark blood and f**king thee”, where “obituary” refers to the afterlife and “dark blood” to sucking blood. As a whole, the piece of lyrics is like a gothic horror story with supernatural beings, bloodshed and a sting of erotica.

At least in the vampire stories of the more ‘traditional’ vein, for example in Bram Stoker’s stories, women are usually victims who are acted upon by male vampire characters. *Of Dark Blood and F**king* is peculiar in the sense that it grants the female character more than just the role of the victim, at least initially. Consider the first stanza:

“Sister midnight comes blaspheming
Screaming in the keys of faith and fear
Unentwining our spines twists me to kneeling...
Spilling like the moonlight on her glistening rear”.

Here “[s]ister midnight” is in a position of superiority (where this superiority actually stems from is discussed below). The superiority of the female character is further manifested on the lines “Bound to please/ On denierred knees/ In any wicked way/ That her whims may warrant”. The discourse of the gothic horror story, in which the male vampire is typically in a position of dominance in relation to all the female characters, whether or not they were supernatural, is therefore transformed. In *Of Dark Blood and F**king* the female character seems to be the wicked, the supernatural and the dominating party. Female dominance, however, seems to be short-lived, as the analysis of agency in the lyrics shows (see chapter 5.1.2 above). Where things get interesting, however, is when the discourse of gothic horror stories is merged into and comes into play with the discourse of (sadoomasochistic) pornography.

References to pain and sex, especially fellatio, are explicit in the lyrics to the point of making the lyrics seem like an act of recounting a male sexual fantasy that has an air of sadoomasochism. Certainly, pain is relevant in (some) gothic horror stories as well, but in *Of Dark Blood and F**king* the references to pain imply not the content of gothic stories, but sadoomasochist sex. Especially the stanza

“Writhing like a river
Fluids moves a torrent
Bound to please
On denierred knees

In any wicked way
That her whims may warrant”

speaks in language of mistress and slave rather manifestly. Total submission and pleasing are clearly the issues of the stanza, which is by no means the only example of the language of sadomasochism. Another one would be the first few lines of the sixth stanza: “Christlike whipped and weak/ Painted nails driven through the meek”. The lines present an image of violence that is coupled with sexual allusions that are implied by both the context and other content of the lyrics and especially the “[n]ails” that are “driven” into the flesh of ‘the submissive’ or “the meek”. In addition, lines such as “Gorge upon my seed”, “Our orgasmic fuses greet” and “Her roseate sliver/ Quivers with snuff appeal”, although not necessarily always implying sadomasochism, demonstrate that the piece of lyrics is steeped in the language of pornography.

The discourses of pornography and gothic horror do not operate independently from each other. In the previous examples they have been discussed separately, but the title of the song, for example, combines the two aforementioned discourses into a whole. After the third discourse prevalent in the piece of lyrics, the discourse of Christianity, is taken into consideration, the discussion on intertextuality in *Of Dark Blood and F**king* can be more fruitful. Consider the tenth stanza:

“Her roseate sliver
Quivers with snuff appeal
The torque of her hips
Lip-syncs me in for the kill
Tongue-tied, tightroped and spread like disease
I drain the cup of this Miss Sire
Her waters into wine for me”.

The elements of horror are combined with sex and sadomasochism. “[S]nuff” and “kill” imply violence that is beyond the borders of sadomasochism (snuff films are pornographic films in which the climax of sexual activity is a murder). By the tenth stanza, the discourse of pornography has more or less stripped the female character of the power she

wielded in the first six to seven stanzas. The discourse of pornography attaches overt attention to the female genitals and presents her as a sexual object who is “[t]ongue-tied, tightroped and spread like disease” for the narrator. The result is a discourse in which even the supernatural, evil and seemingly powerful¹⁰ female can be subjected to the power of the phallus. Her power is taken away by simply making her a sexual object, which has the effect of presenting her as the passive receiver of male action. The role of object is crystallised to the point of vulgarity by the lines “Gorge upon my seed/ Starved Persephone”.

The last line of the stanza quoted above, “Her waters into wine for me”, also displays one element of the discursive pastiche that has not yet been discussed: the discourse of Christianity. The reference to the story in which Jesus turns water into wine is subjected to the order of discourse in *Of Dark Blood and F**king*, inserted into a new context and thereby given a new meaning. The narrator describes the bodily fluids of the female character as “wine”, thereby identifying himself with Jesus, but with wholly different pleasures. One also cannot help thinking of sacramental wine (in the bible, wine seems to be the common drink). As the analysis of the metaphors above showed, metaphors from the biblical discourse are imported into the black metal discourse, but the blending of discourses goes even deeper. The second stanza provides a good example:

“Under red leaves bleeding
 Over sealed château we fell
 To demonocracy
 Where neither Adam or Eve
 Conceived of such iniquities
 From pleasure or pain
 Or the razor’s edge inbetween”.

The story of Adam and Eve is definitely of biblical origin, but it is inserted into the narrative of *Of Dark Blood and F**king*, in which it is transformed and reinterpreted. The paradise of Adam and Eve becomes a “demonocracy”

¹⁰ The supernaturally powerful position of the female is undermined by agency and

to which they “fell” and which kept them from seeing the possibilities of gratification provided by ruthless “pleasure and pain/ Or the razor’s edge inbetween”. In such a context, Eve’s sin is insignificant. Other references to the discourse of Christianity include “Sister”, “heaven”, “Christlike”, “Eden”, “angel”, “beast”, “lamb” and “nightfall from grace”, all of which are inserted into the discourse of the lyrics seamlessly. They are a part of the discourse that treats them as equivalent with the discourses of Greek and Roman mythology, which are referred to by the expressions “nymph”, “Persephone”, “Hades” etc. in the last few stanzas. It therefore seems that the present instance of black metal discourse denies the conventions of any single and unified discursive framework for representing femininity or other aspects of reality/fiction, although the discourse of pornography, at least, clearly has a strong bearing on the lyrics.

The tenth stanza (see above) shows that the discourses are actually merged into each other so that one discourse internalises the conventions of another. For example, the discourse of Christianity is internalised by the discourse of pornography on the line “Her waters into wine for me”. Readers can only make sense and interpret the line if they are familiar with both discourses involved. Often, however, the manifest intertextuality in the lyrics is little more than a reference, with which alone interdiscursivity cannot be reached. The device with which interdiscursivity is reached is the poetic form of the lyrics, which textures the discourses together and forces coherence on them. Without the coherence brought about by the poetic language the lyrics might be difficult to make sense of as there would be no connecting thread that solidifies the piece of lyrics. The language of the lyrics is, in many respects, similar to the language of old English romantic poetry in the vein of P. B. Shelley and Coleridge. For example, “Thou” and “thy” are identified with the language of romantic or old poetry. Their use in a context such as “In thy arms/ And thy wetness” forces the reader to accept their use with reference to content more explicit than that of romantic

transitivity (see previous chapter).

poetry. Likewise, the rhyming and play with sounds (take, for example, the stanza “Gorge upon my seed/ Starved Persephone/ Succulent. Succubus. Succour me”) and references to Greek mythology or a “château” would be quite ordinary in a romantic poem. In other words, the discourses in *Of Dark Blood and F**king* are textured together with the poetic language, which seems to be the source of much of the creativity or uniqueness of the piece of black metal discourse under scrutiny. Pornography, violence, the supernatural and the bible are merged together into a new discourse that has at least some degree of internal coherence.

The intertextual structure of *Of Dark Blood and F**king* puts femininity in a peculiar position. It renounces the submissive role of woman in the biblical discourse and selectively draws on the discourse of mythology to paint a picture of a strong female figure. The female character is also granted with power by the use of the discourses of pornography and gothic horror stories. However, the power is later taken away by the use of the former discourse (and the representation of processes). After the female character is first represented as powerful, she is then presented as an object of male desire, who can only succumb to the power of the phallus. Consequently, the power she possessed in the first place seems to originate from little else than her ability for the sexual gratification of the male. Besides, the female character is seemingly powerful only because she is monstrous, a “Succubus”. Nevertheless, the intertextual structure is complex and combines discourses to form a discourse different from any of its constituent parts.

5.1.4 Narration and the Male Gaze

5.1.4.1 Characterisation and Indirectness

Even if the narrator in *Of Dark Blood and F**king* is authoritative enough to make explicit statements and definitions, the characterisation of the female character is largely based on indirect presentation. Indirect presentation is quite ordinary and an accepted practice in texts akin to

poetry, which I propose Cradle of Filth's lyrics belong to (see, for example, page 50), especially since there is little 'space' for describing characters. There are some more or less direct definitions such as "Christlike, whipped and weak...", "Succulent. Succubus" and "Starved Persephone". However, the reader is often forced to make inferences based on the narrator's reactions to the "Succubus". "Thou art my seventh heaven" may, at first, seem like an explicit definition, but the expression is metaphorical or figurative rather than factual and should therefore not be counted as a direct definition. The lines "I hang on every verb/ Every dirty word/ Interred/ In her pornoglossa..." are an ample example of the way the female character tends to be characterised throughout the text. The readers are directed to construct their understanding by reacting to the narrator's experience, not the female experience. The narrator's perspective is, therefore, once again in a dominant role as the readers construct their mental images of the "Persephone".

There is no well-defined scene for the actions in the text, but references to "midnight", "perfect hell", "tomb", "Autumn" and "Hades", to name a few, suggest an unearthly environment associated with death. In accordance with Rimmon-Kenan (1989:69), I propose that the surroundings of a character imply traits in her. Understanding and making sense of metaphoric and metonymic relationships between characters and their surroundings has to do with such literary conventions that are acknowledged by the readers. It has been argued (Mills 1995:160) that learning to read literary texts is largely about learning to 'decode' linguistic and literary conventions used in the speech-community. At any rate, in *Of Dark Blood and F**king* the reader is certainly likely to make a connection between the surroundings and both the male and female characters, especially since the latter is called not only a demon (Succubus), but the goddess of death (Persephone) as well. As regards the surroundings, then, femininity is something identified with

darkness instead of light¹¹ and with death instead of life. With sexuality being so central and conspicuous theme in *Of Dark Blood and F**king*, however, it is probably more suitable to talk of not just representation of femininity alone, but female sexuality as well.

It is likely that the female character is interpreted in slightly differing ways due to the figurative and indirect manner she is presented in the lyrics. An important point to note is that she is never given voice. Neither is her external appearance given except suggestively. What little is given at any rate points at highlighted sexuality. “Her roseate sliver”, “Painted nails” and “glossed lips”, for example, confirm any expectations a researcher adopting a feminist viewpoint might have of the female character being described in terms of her sexual availability. Even the characterisation brings out the narrator with the description at no point being ‘external’ in any way. Instead, all definitions are made as if they were filtered through the narrator’s thoughts and vision, which can be expected to render them untrustworthy for some readers, as, considering the violent and pornographic qualities of the lyrics, identification with the narrator may not always be easy. Since the narrator’s point of view is explicitly that of a sexually aroused male, descriptions and statements made by him may not be taken at their face value. This is the case especially if such a point of view or subject position seems uncomfortable to the reader. On the other hand, it is also true that the narrator is authoritative (he controls the flow of information and gives no hints of his subjectivity), which adds to the reliability of the description and characterisation in the lyrics. One interpretation could be that the lyrics should be viewed as a representation of a male fantasy of femininity and female sexuality. This would make sense, as what is characterised seems to be a sexual fantasy rather than a construction of actual femininity or woman. Be as it may, a representation of a female in a fantasy is still a representation of femininity. Moreover, it

¹¹ The feminine being identifiable with darkness is an idea presented in Chinese philosophical thought based on the theory of yin and yang, in which yin is identified with (among others) night, darkness, coldness and the feminine.

can be argued that fictional and poetic texts *never* have a one-to-one relationship with reality.

5.1.4.2 Focalisation and Desire

The division between the narrator and the “Succubus” in *Of Dark Blood and F**king* corresponds to the difference between the focaliser and the focalised (Rimmon-Kenan 1989:71-74) rather neatly. While the unnamed narrator can be called a ‘narrator-focaliser’, the female character is definitely ‘the focalised’. As has already become more than obvious, it is the narrator whose perspective is adopted and the “Succubus” that is being observed and who is ‘the object’ in more than just one sense. In other words, the reader has access to the story mainly through the narrator’s visual, cognitive and emotional orientation and s/he is bound to, more or less, adopt the narrator’s approach. The emphasis seems to be on the focaliser-narrator’s visual perception as manifested by expressions like “her glistening rear” and “glossed lips”. The contribution of this kind of focalisation sets some parameters for the interpretation of the lyrics. Certainly, describing the female character as an object of male gaze (as in pornography, for example) makes any readings of her as an powerful and independent female less fluent. Was the focaliser the female character, a different reading (and writing) of the story might emerge. The fact that the focaliser is the narrator who fantasises about and observes the focalised female character has to do with the gendering of the reader, which will be discussed next.

5.1.4.3 Female Identification

I suggest that *Of Dark Blood and F**king* forces the reader to take up a reader position in which s/he can only identify as a male. The vocabulary and imagery, which, in part, can easily be deemed to belong to the sphere of pornography. With the narrator dominating both focalisation and characterisation, making sense of the text is difficult – if not impossible – without embracing a male orientation. For the reader, it is necessary to

succumb to a view according to which the female is the object of desire, not a sexual subject. This view holds it that pornographic fantasies and femininity can be described in the same way as in *Of Dark Blood and F**king*. For a female reader *Of Dark Blood and F**king* may even be a disturbing experience should she fail or refuse to accept the reader position that is constructed in the lyrics.

Identifying with the female character, in the first place, is difficult. The actions of the female character are mediated through a male consciousness and she is not described as a whole, unitary subject, but as fragmented, in terms of her bodily parts (“Painted nails”, “thy arms” etc). She is, however, in some ways powerful and in control, even ‘flattered’ by the lyrics. Still, the lyrics offer far less chances for identification and ‘natural’ or ‘ideal’¹² reader positioning for women than they do for men. The line “Tongue-tied, tightroped and spread like disease”, which describes the female character, certainly does not invite the majority of female readers to identify with her. Sex as such may not hinder female identification, but when it is coupled with violence, it becomes, at least, a potential obstacle to it. As shown by Hester Eisenstein (1984:119), Susan Griffin considers that to identify with “the pornographic idea of women” is to “identify with meaninglessness, with nothingness”, which certainly is not an inviting prospect.

The discourse of pornography is central in terms of positioning and identification of male readers as well. Damien Byers (1993:3) has written about how pornography ‘desentisizes’ its consumer. This happens when the consumer establishes a “relation to the other not in the immediacy of the one, but mediated via the image”, which Byers believes can be both visual and textual. For him, this constitutes violence (Byers 1993:4) as it weakens the capacity to care. In this sense, *Of Dark Blood and F**king* is ‘violent’.

As far as pornographic language and imagery is concerned, then, *Of Dark Blood and F**king* presupposes a male audience. As pornography aims “to sever the connection between [the female] mind and body”

¹² Natural or ideal in the sense of being easily accessible and not foreign.

(Eisenstein 1984:118), it also resists identification by women. It posits male readers in a position in which they approach the female figure through an ideologically filtered textual image, legitimising sexual violence against women.

5.1.5 In Conclusion – Instrumental Use of Pornography

The lyrics for *Of Dark Blood and F**king* deny agency from women. Although the female character would appear to have a great deal of power and influence over the narrator, on the linguistic level some of this power is diminished. The structure of the piece of lyrics is such that the role of the female character slides from ascendancy to submission. On the semantic level, the situation seems somewhat paradoxical. It is as if the narrator gained power over the female in sexual acts while it is exactly sexuality that the female seems to owe her power to. Any power possessed by the female exists without her having physically acted to gain it. So, female power is sexual power, power gained by sexual allure or by ‘bewitching’ a male.

By combining femininity with power, death, overt sexuality and evilness in metaphors and on the levels of lexical items and discourses, *Of Dark Blood and F**king* may be pointing at traditional Christian conceptions and myths revolving around women and femininity. In the Christian tradition/myth, women have often been tempted into darkness by sexuality, their sexuality thus shaming them. Mieke Bal (1987) has discussed how biblical love stories (including the story of Adam and Eve) have been interpreted in the context of patriarchy so as to render women’s love “lethal”. Women in the Bible have been seen as victimisers whose love, and thus sexuality, is treacherous and perilous, Eve being the ultimate example. Griffin (1981:31, quoted in Eisenstein 1984:117) states that the “idea that the sight of woman’s body calls a man back to his own animal nature” is pervasive of the Christian culture. The idea can be used to justify male violence and assign the reason for the violence to females, who ‘bring it on themselves’. In *Of Dark Blood and F**king*, the female character gains power and ascendancy from sexuality which is totally unrestrained and

often self-gratifying, yet it is her sexuality that makes her the object of sexual violence. It does not help that sexuality in the lyrics is rid of negative connotations and shame and female sexuality is constructed by emphasising pain and sadism while at the same time glorifying them. Nevertheless, the issue is complex as the process is overseen by an authoritative male voice and perspective. The wording, perspectives and imagery employed are likely to alienate female readers from the text, especially since the sadomasochism of the pornographic images conveys a sense of violence being directed at the female character. Of course, it is not clear whether the lyrics are actually meant to be read (or listened to) by women. Reader positioning, for example, suggests otherwise.

*Of Dark Blood and F**king* may actually be just another instance of pornography invading the mainstream culture, claiming that normal women desire and need sexual violence (Eisenstein 1984:121). This pornography seems to be mixed up with the Christian discourse and, in effect, mystified. What is more, under close scrutiny it seems that the female character is not really an actor capable of independent decisions and actions. Instead, she is constructed as acting on impulse, as suggested by the phrase “her whims”. The different discourses are used as a resource in the lyrics. The author draws on what the readers already know or recognise, i.e. the discourses of Christianity, pornography and gothic horror, but uses them in a manner that breaks their conventions, rules and underlying presuppositions. Thus, *Of Dark Blood and F**king* may be indicative of a new social or intellectual movement, but from the point of view of women, it certainly is not emancipatory.

5.2 'Thirteen Autumns and a Widow' – Female Wickedness

5.2.1 Metaphors – Sex and Nature

Like in the examination of metaphors in *Of Dark Blood and F**king*, the purpose here is not so much to analyse each and every metaphor in the lyrics in great detail according to their cognitive mappings etc. Rather, the

intention is to pick out those metaphorical expressions that relate to representing and articulating femininity in one way or the other.

Many of the metaphors (or metaphoric expressions) in *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* are sexually loaded, built on an association with genitalia or sexual activity. As could be expected with metaphors, the actual effect/interpretation is complex, and they rarely yield to straightforward interpretations. However, some general observations can be made on the basis of them. For one thing, it can be argued that there is an extended metaphor which seems to suggest that the female body is like nature (consider the first line of the lyrics, see my analysis below). However, the issue is a bit more complicated than this.

Metaphors truly never simply suggest that 'A is like B'. Rather, the relationship between the Vehicle and the Topic is complex, implying subtle similarities reciprocally. In the process, several, even conflicting, interpretations are summoned. *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* opens up with the line "Spawned wanton like blight on an auspicious night". Although the word "like" tends to be regarded as the standard indicator of not a metaphor but a simile, the phrase is nevertheless worth some investigation. "Spawned" and "blight" are both semantically connected with vegetation. In other words, the underlying basic metaphor would seem to be ELIZABETH IS A PLANT, which might be generalised as WOMAN IS A PLANT. One could also look at "Spawned wanton" and "blight" separately and make notice of the fact that they are more or less 'pejorative' metaphors. "Spawned" implies contempt as spawned things are produced in great numbers and are thus relatively valueless. A blight, on the other hand, is a disease or a parasite that kills or harms plants. The heroine is therefore something of a deadly parasite among other flowers, or women.

The preceding metaphorical construct is complicated by other metaphors such as "menstrual sky" and "forest's vulva", which work the other way around, basically saying that NATURE IS A WOMAN. To be more specific, nature (which plants are in metonymic relationship with) seems to be defined in terms of the female body, not mind or psyche ("the

forest's vulva" is a good example). More so than in the previous example, these metaphors seem to extend the meaning of menstruation and the female genitalia by defining or classifying them with entities and processes external to and logically unconnected with the female body. In "So with windows flung wide to the menstrual sky/ Solstice Eve She fled the castle in secret", "menstrual" becomes something ranging from abnormal to sinister. This actually seems to reflect the male attitude towards menstruation, which designates women as entities different from men (as 'other'). Menstruation is beyond any patriarchal mechanisms of power and control (except for that of taboo). Its mystification and its identification as evil serve, more than anything else, patriarchal interests. Metaphorisation of this kind labels the essentially feminine (which can never be neither masculine nor defined in terms of masculinity) evil, suspect and shameful. Likewise, "the forest's vulva" does more than just make the reader think of forest in terms of the female body. In *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* 'vulva' is framed as the centre of malign activity, secrets and mystery. The effect of 'the forest's brain', for example, would undoubtedly be quite different. It certainly would not posit outward appearance and sexual attractiveness before intellectual faculties, capability for compassion or the like.

Menstruation is also implied in "Stigmata still wept between Her legs/ A cold bloodedness which impressed new hatreds". The female body and its sexual functions become understood in terms of Christian myth and legend. This is no different from the other metaphoric mystifications except for the special relationship black metal holds to Christianity. The protagonist is at odds with the Christian attitude towards her actions and thoughts, which make her feel guilt, which is evident in the lines "No sermons intoned/ Dragged such *guilt* to Her door/ [...] For She swore the priest sighed/ When she knelt down to atone..." (emphasis added). Her feelings of guilt and shame are explicated in, for example, the phrase "No sermons intoned/ Dragged such guilt to her door". The basic metaphor GUILT IS A WOUND is implied by the line "Stigmata [...] between Her legs". The phrase also suggests that guilt is essentially Christian and that it is in some respects

similar to menstruation, i.e. an inconvenience or a 'hindrance' to freedom. It is also sexual and impure. Strangely, stigmata are marks of shame and reproach, except when they appear on a religious person, when they are a sign of some kind of spiritual and religious exceptionality often thought of as something of a superiority or even holiness. The metaphor purges the meaning of stigmata from implications of sexual and religious purity and holiness. For Elizabeth, they are marks of shame, but the reference to Christian myth cannot be ignored. It is most important, however, to notice how other metaphors get extended. The female body is not represented as normal or natural, but, on the contrary, as an entity that can only be understood and represented through metaphor, myth and fable, all of which are primarily based on cultural and ideological constructions, even when they are transformed.

The metaphors in *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* construct Elizabeth as an object to be looked at and whose 'surface' is possibly the most central aspect (though focalisation, for example, might suggest something else). Consider, for example, the line "At mass without flaw". 'Flaws' are scratches or cracks that are considered faults on the surface of an object. Thus, Elizabeth is 'flawless' because her outward appearance is perfect. In the lines "Elizabeth christened, no paler a rose/ Grew so dark as this sylph" the metaphor WOMAN IS A PLANT is reinvoked, but in a way that calls attention to appearance. Words such as 'beautiful' and 'sweet' collocate with 'rose'. Sylph is also, by dictionary definition, 'slender' and 'graceful'. The metonymy used in "Her beauty spun webs" and "Nine twisted fates threw hewn bone die/ For the throat of Elizabeth" further enhance the perception of the protagonist as being defined and significant due to her beauty, which compels one to think that the language and lyrics would be quite different if the reader was to think that Elizabeth was, to put it grossly, hideously ugly. Elizabeth's beauty is considered an asset and there is a sense of her being largely defined in terms of her outward appearance.

Although the protagonist in *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* may be presented as attractive on the outside, some of the metaphors employed

clearly mark her off as ‘a monster’. Seeing the female body as ‘other’ and as dangerous is a part of this scheme. “She kissed the Devil’s phallus/ By Her own decree” and “A daughter of the storm, astride Her favourite nightmare” further reinforce the reader’s perception of Elizabeth as someone not of this world. The metaphorical representation of turning away from Christianity as voluntary fellatio with the devil bears some resemblance to the Victorian stereotype of the woman as sexual and thus evil (Millet 1991:132 takes Thomas Hardy’s work as an example). This attitude pervasive of Christian myths has already been discussed in chapter 5.1.5, but it seems that the point needs to be reiterated for *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow*. The tale of Adam and Eve also identifies sexuality and sin with the female. The metaphorism in “astride Her favourite nightmare” works much in the same way. While “astride” is sexually loaded, it also suggests being in control of “Her favourite nightmare”. There is, once again, a connection being set up between sexuality and evilness, the whole phrase as such suggesting deviance or monstrosity (one rarely has a “favourite” nightmare). “Her hidden face spat murder”, on the other hand, suggests the duality of a werewolf, or Dr. Jekyll and Hyde. It is not only metaphorical, but intertextual as well. The same is true of “lacerations of dawn”, in which the implicit Ground-term is *light wounds the flesh*. The metaphor associates Elizabeth with a vampire-like creature, i.e. the female is framed as a monster. She is the other, the different, the deviant and the sinful.

Elizabeth is sinful and in opposition with the church, which does not seem like a new articulation of femininity. Eager suitors at the mass are “a coven” and the priest is a “wolf of the cloth” who is “Pouncing to haunt/ Her confessional box”. These metaphors contradict the ones painting Elizabeth as monstrous. It is as if it was not the sensual woman that is the unscrupulous and bestial predator, those ‘with’ God are. In a sense, the metaphorism is turned upside down, with the holy and righteous being the wicked and the amoral actually being the right-minded. The whole Christian metaphor on femininity is subverted, but the dichotomy on which it operates is not challenged. The basic premise that there is ‘good’ and there is ‘evil’

that are in opposite relationship with each other, remains the same. Therefore the extreme polarities of good – evil and male – female are not changed in any way. A more radical approach would be to break the dichotomy and, for example, and construct evil as inseparable with and indistinguishable from good. What actually happens is that the underlying structure, the Grounds for the metaphors, remain the same.

Other metaphors in the lyrics do not seem to be extended or connected to each other in the same way as the ones already discussed. The rationale for choosing some metaphors to be studied over others has been the extent to which they create ‘schemes’ or ‘networks’. Metaphors hold some power over those who use and recognise them, but they can only have real power once they are systematised and reach a certain status in which they are automatically accepted, taken for granted, rather than resisted. The metaphoric networks in *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* cannot be claimed to be systematised so as to have some kind of ‘permanency’. A metaphor such as “menstrual sky” is not likely to be considered ‘normal’ or a convention in the same way as a rose is considered a metaphor for love, for example. The lyrics may therefore often come under resistant readings.

5.2.2 Construction of Action Processes

The processes in *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* are clearly more complex than those in *Of Dark Blood and F**king*. The sheer length of the text makes the analysis of processes more challenging with the increased number of processes to be made sense of.

Perhaps more interesting than the actual processes in *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* are the participants. The actors in the processes are often neither material nor of the kind to be interpreted literally. Take, for example, the processes “Her walk went to voodoo”. The process appears to be a material intention process. However, it is ambiguous because it may be difficult for the reader to decide whether the turning to voodoo is a result of contemplation or a subconscious/uncontemplated action. “A tragedy crept to the name Bathory”, on the other hand, is complicated because it posits an

event or a sequence of them (tragedy) as an acting consciousness. In a sense, the phrase is tautological: countess Bathory's life is a tragedy because tragedy sought her out. In both previous examples the source of the complexities are the actors, which in neither case is the protagonist herself. In effect, the countess covertly appears to be an object of action rather than an agent in a great many processes even if "She" or "Elizabeth" is explicitly given as the agent in less than one third of all the processes and she is an implicit actor in about ten processes¹³.

The ambiguity of the actors creates problems for analysis of processes in other ways, as well. Many of the processes have been listed as material action processes, although, on semantic grounds, such categorisation can be questioned. To take an example, "Church bells wringing Her madly from sleep" is, on the surface, very much like a material intention process. Strictly speaking, church bells are not capable of intentional action that has effects on the material world. Metaphorisation works in such cases as personification, whereby human qualities, most notably agency and responsibility, are attributed to entities that are not human (c.f. "the elements led", "His gaze brings" or "Stigmata [...] wept"). When agency is attributed to almost any entity possible, the agency of the protagonist is rendered less central.

The framing of the protagonist as an object is taken further by the obfuscation of responsibility for actions. More so than in *Of Dark Blood and F**king*, agency is made ambiguous or, when stated, implicit. Consider the line "Spawned wanton like..." Representation of the process implies a will or force behind the act of spawning, but leaves the agent implicit. "Her true mother was fed" is similar, also featuring the passive voice and an omission of the agent. "A tragedy crept to the name Bathory" and "Nine twisted fates threw hewn bone die" both have an agent, but neither tragedy nor fate can, logically speaking, be pointed as a centre of intentional activity.

¹³ The number of the latter kind of processes depends on how they are counted; mostly on whether processes with an omitted subject and processes where there is a metonymical relationship between the actor and the protagonist are included.

Nevertheless, they are represented as such. All in all, the lyrics convey a sense of some mysterious force(s) behind those actions which are not directly attributed to the protagonist. The effect of metonymy, which, even if not as frequent as in *Of Dark Blood and F**king*, is somewhat similar. In some processes it is the protagonist's actions or bodily parts that appear as agents. Giving "Her eyes", "Her beauty" or "Her walk" as acting in place of "Her" further reinforces the reader's interpretation of the protagonist as exercising relatively little control over her fate.

To take a closer look at the numbers of different process types, the vast majority of the processes are material processes, with the other process types accounting for less than 30 per cent of the other processes. The countess is an explicit or implied (through metonymy) actor in a significant number of the material processes. She is also the actor in "I must avert mine eyes", where she is given the voice. In addition, she is the unambiguous actor in some mental and relational processes. Finally, The protagonist can be posited as the actor in four of the relational processes by interpreting the metaphors (as in "no [...] rose/ Grew so dark") or complementing the processes that have ellipted subjects. What these proportions of process types imply is subject to two contradictory interpretations. The first one is that the protagonist is active, responsible for her own actions, a person who 'takes action' rather than 'undergoes action'. After all, she is the prominent agent in great many material processes and it is not possible to point out another agent who would feature even nearly as often. The other one is that, since the acting role of the protagonist has to be deduced often, the protagonist's active role is made less central. In six of all the processes in which the countess is responsible for material action it is her bodily part, quality or action that is, structurally speaking, the actor (e.g. "Her beauty spun webs"). Four of the same processes are supervision processes, which further diminishes the conception of the agent as active. Agency is muddled in altogether 30% of the material processes in which the protagonist is the actual actor. For example, "Her walk went to voodoo" constructs the action as involuntary. In a narrative text it is more or less inevitable that the

protagonist be introduced as a character who acts upon her surroundings, but there are ways to make the active role seem more passive. It seems that such strategies are made use of in *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow*. What is more, in the majority of the mental processes Elizabeth is an actor, or rather, senser. They can only be contrasted with the mental process “He knows”, which is the only one with someone else than the protagonist as a senser. The number of mental processes is too low to warrant far-reaching conclusions, but the few instances would seem to indicate that it is the woman who is represented as feeling and thinking, not any of the male characters. To sum up briefly, it is justified to claim that the protagonist’s central role and responsibility are diminished by the ideologically motivated representation of the processes and the protagonist is portrayed as more prone to emotionality than men.

A brief analysis of transitivity in *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* would seem to suggest that the female protagonist, through the processes of representation and identification, is portrayed as having an active role. It is not clear, however, if this is any different from any narrative with a female character as the protagonist. Be as it may, the protagonist is, to a great extent, also portrayed as an object who has only marginal control over her life. It is clear that the text is open to several differing readings and it may be wise to withhold strong judgement until other levels of the lyrics have been looked into.

5.2.3 Intertextuality – Transforming History and Christianity

Thirteen Autumns and a Widow is no different from *Of Dark Blood and F**king* in terms of genre. In the same manner, it is created by one person and is subject to no changes or editing. *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* is a piece of black metal lyrics pertaining to romantic poetry, the gothic novel, horror movie, fairy tale and Christian myth just like *Of Dark Blood and F**king*. One element of the pastiche that was not found in *Of Dark Blood and F**king* is the historical narrative. In some sense, *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* is but a transformation of one part of the historical narrative of

countess Elizabeth Bathory. The album *Cruelty and the Beast* is a theme album whose lyrics, apart from one song, are directly related to the countess and her life. While *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* tells only a part of the story, the lyrics, as a whole, tell a story that spans from her birth to her eventual death in the solitary confinement of her castle. Thus, the lyrics are intertextually related to all the other lyrics on the album, but they are also linked with the historical narrative of countess Bathory.

Thirteen Autumns and a Widow is intertextual in many other respects as well. Traces of intertextuality (poetry, gothic/horror stories etc.) are more frequent than in most conventional pieces of lyrics written in the context of western popular culture. Studying *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* as one link in a chain of texts on femininity is therefore justified and interesting. Black metal lyrics are a sort of a conjuncture in the sense Fairclough and Chouliaraki (1999:22) use the term, i.e. a “relatively durable” assembly of “people, materials, technologies and therefore practices”. Black metal lyrics are written by a limited number of people and published using established channels, methods and materials. Like any conjuncture, therefore, *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* is a crossroads of different practices. Black metal lyrics undoubtedly strengthen the group solidarity that exists between black metal fans, have something of an ‘industry’ organised around their (and the music’s) publication and draw on more or less similar source materials, such as horror films and mythology. Nevertheless, the lyrics do not raise femininity or womanhood as the main theme. Although femininity is clearly an issue, the lyrics also deal with the themes of sexuality, religion, romance and history. Although these themes may not be explicitly referred to, they are all articulated together in the text. The uniqueness of the text is very much a question of how such elements are brought together. Mills (1997) has discussed the view that the primary control and creative power language users hold over their language is in the way they make use of different discourses and bring them together in new and thus far unseen (or unheard) ways.

The first thing that strikes the analyst as specifically intertextual in *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* is the language of romantic poetry. The rhyming and use of diction, I propose, are an integral part of the texturing together of different discourses in the lyrics. Gothic literature, biblical language, historical narrative and other intertextual elements seem to appear in the lyrics embedded in the discourse of romantic poetry. It is impossible to point out a distinct (homogeneous) discourse of black metal. With reference to *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow*, it seems more justified to say that black metal discourse here is a sum of its intertextual parts. The ideology of black metal shines through in how different discourses are textured together, i.e. it is not so much a question of how black metal discourse is different from other discourses, but how black metal discourse relates to, internalises and selects from other discourses. A reader familiar with black metal might expect to be able to identify a piece of text as black metal lyrics most easily by means of looking at what might be identified as 'content'¹⁴ rather than 'form'. *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow*, however, can be designated as belonging to the genre of black metal lyrics by approaching it through the concept of order of discourse. The hierarchy and the relationships of the different discourses as they appear in *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* is the most accessible, linguistic and concrete method of grasping the 'meaning' and the 'agenda' of the text (insofar as they can be thought of as something more than interpretations of the researcher). The lyrics undermine Christianity by articulating it together with oppression, guilt etc. Intertextually, the black metal discourse subsumes Christian discourse, also positing it as equal or ambivalently similar to the genre of gothic novel. The Christian discourse is not above or even different from discourses of fiction, romanticism and horror. A hegemonic struggle similar to that discussed by Fairclough (1993:93-95) is easily detected. The order of discourses in the lyrics clearly has internal tensions, which signify a struggle to break down and subvert the hegemony of certain discourses. It is easy to

¹⁴ By 'content' I refer to the propositions in the text and the text's strictly ideational level.

agree with Fairclough that such tensions are a sign of social struggle that is both expressed by and carried out in discourse.

It seems that the strongest interdiscursive connection is between romantic poetry and the gothic narrative. Even if its presence is clear, the discourse of Christianity is not internalised in the lyrics. When Christian discourse is made use of, there is a sense of a distance being maintained between the lyrics and the discourse of Christianity. For example, in “I must avert mine eyes to hymns/ For his gaze brings dogmas to my skin/ He knows that I dreamt of carnal rites/ With him undead for three long nights” “hymns”, “dogmas” and “carnal” refer to biblical language, but there is no clear internalisation of narrative structure, internal organisation etc. of the biblical discourse. Separate lexical items from the biblical discourse are inserted into the text, but a high frequency of ‘imported’ words is hardly an indication of an internalisation of another discourse.

As for the relationship of poetry and the gothic story, the following example can be used to call attention to a few noteworthy points:

“Elizabeth christened, no paler a rose
Grew so dark as this sylph
None more cold in repose
Yet her beauty spun webs
Round hearts a glance would betroth”.

The rhyming and the syntactic structure of the example suggest that the few lines could be placed under the label ‘poetry’. Considering the metaphor of a rose and the mention of beauty, all in all the centrality of a woman figure being the centre of attention in the whole piece of lyrics, it could be further argued that this is a case of romantic poetry. However, the metaphor of rose is complicated by the ‘paleness’ of the rose and its growing to dark, which hint at a gothic element in the lyrics. In gothic horror stories, paleness refers to death, horror or being ‘undead’ and ‘growing dark’ is a reference to a transformation whereby evil takes control (c.f. stories of werewolves and the story of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde). The theme of transformation also

connects with vampire stories, in which vampires turn into wicked creatures after dying first. “The looking glass cast Belladonna wreaths/ ‘Pon the grave of Her innocence/ Her hidden face spat murder” hints to a duality (good/evil) of character while implicitly also hinting at vampire stories (i.e. death is but the beginning of a new life, the death of innocence creates a new life).

The arrangement of the lyrics into separate lines, the use of old-fashioned expressions such as “looking glass” and “Pon” and the conspicuously metaphoric use of language are the means by which the different discourses are textured together. Features of this kind remain constant throughout the lyrics, whereas the discourses of Christianity and the gothic horror story are only alluded to. For example, in the two first stanzas there is a heterogeneous mix of the romantic and the gothic. Consider, for example, the lines “Bled white and dead, Her true mother was fed/ To the ravenous wolves that the elements led/ From crag-jagged mountains [...]” The gothic and the poetic are merged together, but there is no reference to the discourse of Christianity. On the other hand, the sixth stanza is not explicitly gothic:

“Elizabeth listened
No sermons intoned
Dragged such guilt to Her door
Tombed Her soul with such stone
For she swore the priest sighed
When She knelt down to atone.....”

The poetic structure and expression is still present, but this time intertextual cues to the Christian discourse have been inserted. In this instance, however, it is much more easy to differentiate between which parts of the texts are from which discourse. In other words, the discourse of Christianity is not internalised, but referred to, in the lyrics. It is my belief that this is a strategy of making use of the Christian discourse while maintaining a ‘safe’ distance to (and perhaps even subverting) it. After all, adopting the language of Christianity amounts to accepting the premises and beliefs of Christianity

with its conceptual and linguistic system (see the discussion on discourses as ideological systems of knowledge and belief under chapter 2). Thus, the relationship between the discourses of romantic poetry and gothic stories is interdiscursive, while the discourse of Christianity is ‘only’ intertextually referred to. The order of discourse is ordered so as to not give too great an emphasis for the discourse of Christianity.

So far little has been said about the role of femininity in relation to intertextuality. The aspects of interdiscursivity and intertextuality discussed above are nevertheless meaningful as regards representation of femininity as they tell something about the kind of configuration of discourses femininity is articulated within.

5.2.4 Sympathy and Gaze in Narration

5.2.4.1 Characterisation – Frail Bestiality

Like in *Of Dark Blood and F**king*, in *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* there is a great deal more indirect than direct definitions of the female character. However, the voice of the narrator is not as prominent and there seems to be more room for the characterisation of the protagonist. The pronounced role of the protagonist (in comparison with *Of Dark Blood and F**king*) naturally has to do with her centrality in the lyrics and the sheer length of the piece of lyrics. Nevertheless, the characterisation of the Countess is somewhat complex. Although she is presented as vain, cruel, sexual, pagan and even beastly, the readers are also given a picture of a frail, fearful and beautiful maiden that has been mentally brutalised. This connects with the generally acknowledged view that narration can be used to manipulate interpretations and to render moral judgements impossible or at least more complicated (Currie 1998:19). Even for a reader not previously familiar with the song, it is quite evident that the countess escapes judgement in the lyrics of *Cradle of Filth* more easily than in other (historical) accounts of her life. In other words, she can be a cruel,

ambitious and independent woman without necessarily being morally judged by the readers.

Currie's (1998:19) discussion on the issue of readers' sympathies and moral judgements can be related to *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* with not much effort. According to him, readers sympathise with a character whose mind they have access to and who is judged by other characters without the same access. Such narrative strategies are clearly at work in *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow*, which results in the sympathies of the reader being invited to be with the Countess. One method of achieving such reactions concerns the basic question of narration. In this case, the narrator of the story is omniscient, i.e. he¹⁵ has access to the countess' thoughts and experiences. The issue of readers' sympathies, however, will be discussed more closely in the section on focalisation in *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* below.

Much of the information concerning Elizabeth in *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* must be derived from either her actions, which are recounted chronologically, or metaphorical expressions such as "A daughter of the storm, astride Her favourite nightmare". In the lyrics she is not depicted as so monstrous as might be easily expected considering her reputation as 'the blood Countess'. Instead, she becomes a victim of both Christianity and her circumstances. For example in "At mass without flaw/ Though inwards she abhorred/ Not Her coven of suitors/ But the stare of their Lord" the Countess is not positioned as an autonomous subject. Rather, she is an object oppressed by guilt probably brought about by the picture of Jesus in an altarpiece. In the same manner, the lines "Nine twisted fates threw hewn bone die/ For the throat of Elizabeth" suggest that she is a victim of the arbitrariness of her fate. The countess is presented as not an agent in control of her own life, but a passive object.

¹⁵ 'He' for the same reasons that were presented in the analysis of *Of Dark Blood and F**king*.

5.2.4.2 Focalisation of the Protagonist

Focalisation is also connected with the manipulation of the readers' sympathies. Like many conventional narratives, *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* is focalised on the protagonist through a narrator-focaliser. The narrative is focalised on Countess Bathory, but the narration is filtered (focalised) through a male narrator. The focalisation in *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* has certain effects, some of which are linked with the manipulation of the readers' sympathies.

The events of the story are observed as if from above and the whole narrative is focalised through the main character, countess Bathory. The manipulative use of narrative devices makes it quite natural for the readers to feel solidarity with the countess. Consider, for example, the sixth stanza (see page 69). "No sermons [...] Tombed Her soul with such stone" implies a profound understanding of the Countess' plight and the expression itself constructs her despair so strongly that it is likely to come to the reader as striking. The reader is given access to the Countess' self-reproach and anxiety, which almost automatically invites sympathy. Moreover, the reference to the reproachful priest who does not see the countess the way the readers are likely to, distances the reader from him and, at the same time calling forth understanding for the Countess. Calling her by the first name further adds to the feeling of intimacy between her and the reader.

Although focalisation is used to create sympathy for the protagonist, the reverse can also be argued to be true. The sexual overtones of the character are not as flagrant as in *Of Dark Blood and F**king*, but they are still there. The biggest difference is that the male narrator is not as conspicuous in his use of sexual allusions or sexual language. The Countess is actually given voice (as indicated by the quotes in the lyrics) when she says that she "dreamt of carnal rites". In other words, the Countess, purportedly, confesses being guilty of the carnal sin herself. Likewise, in "Never were her dreams so maniacally cruel/ (And possessed of such delights)" it is *her* dreams that are sexual, not the narrator's. This might suggest that Elizabeth

is capable of being sexual on her own terms and not just as an object for the male eye, but as “maniacally” and “possessed” imply, she is not in control of her dreams or sexuality.

5.2.4.3 Reader Positioning and Identification

It seems that it is much easier to identify with the protagonist of *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* than the protagonist of *Of Dark Blood and F**king*. The important point to make note of is that the readers of *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* are likely to find it possible to identify with the protagonist. As the distance to the Countess is minimised, the readers are positioned so that their judgement is suspended. What makes this interesting is that the same readers would be likely to find it impossible to identify with Countess Bathory if they were reading ‘the official’ version of the story as it is presented in historical or scholarly narratives. I propose that this is significant in terms of the articulation of femininity, for the disarticulation of whole schemes of stereotypes begins with the deconstruction of one myth.

Although the *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* seems less problematic in terms of female identification, it is still clear about implicating a male audience. Although the language does not go to the lengths of pornography as it does in *Of Dark Blood and F**king*, the protagonist is still observed through the desiring male eye. Even if the readers have access to her inner world, she is often described with reference to her outward appearance. Consider, for example, the stanza that was already discussed on page 68. In the stanza the characterisation of “Elizabeth” is largely based on her outward aspects, most notably in the expressions “rose”, “sylph” and “beauty”. This alone might not account for much. After all, characters in a narrative are usually always described in terms of what they look like. However, the line “At mass without *flaw*” (emphasis added) with the sexually coloured expressions such as “She kissed the Devil’s phallus” and “Stigmata still wept between Her legs” indicate that the implied reader of the lyrics is male (female readers are likely to find such expressions foreign

and difficult to identify with). *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* is, to go back to the ideas presented by Currie (1998:31), made for "the male heterosexual voyeur". The positioning of the readers, however, is subtle enough to allow for women at least some kind of identification with the protagonist.

5.2.5 Summing up – Body, Power and Transformation

Before the analyses of *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* and *Of Dark Blood and F**king* are compared and contrasted, some key aspects of *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* will be briefly summed up.

First, it seems that, under close scrutiny, *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* is not as radical as it might first appear to a random reader. Nevertheless, the lyrics posit the female body as a site of struggle. A prominent aspect of the femininity appears to be the female body, whose materiality, availability and attractiveness are central and a focus of attention in the lyrics. This is suggested by the sexual allusions and metaphors. On the other hand, the female body is mystified, metaphorised and attributed power to. The implication is that the female body, even when it is desirable and flawless, is abnormal, dangerous and 'other'.

Much of the articulation of femininity seems to come down to monstrosity. In *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow*, however, monstrosity is constructed as 'good' or at least understandable. The protagonist is powerful, terrifying and unstable in all her beauty. Such an image is reinforced and conveyed by the inclusion of the gothic and Christian discourses. The gothic images of vampire-like monsters and the Christian myth of the unyielding and wicked woman are summoned and utilised. The female is the wicked and the other that is in conflict with the standard of the male.

The observations mentioned above are contradicted and complicated by the fact that the reader is not totally alienated from the protagonist. On the contrary, the narrative is laid out so that the readers are in a position to sympathise with her and understand her actions. The protagonist is not simply wicked because she is a woman, but because she has little actual

choice in the environment within which she operates. In other words, she can be evil and rebellious and still escape judgement.

The problem, however, is that the protagonist is not necessarily assigned an actual capacity to act. The protagonist is a victim and an object of her circumstances and environment. The ending of the narrative suggests that she does gain control of her own fate, even if by surrendering to 'darkness'. For female readers the experience of the narrative does not necessarily confirm their positioning as "socialised females" or as objects succumbing to "masculine desire". Still, the question is complicated as the countess' journey from oppression to redemption is not taken forward by her own actions. It seems more suitable to talk of her 'drifting' into her triumph over Christianity, with 'forces of evil' being the implied agents.

The ramifications of *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* are complicated. If it is accepted, as I do, that the representation of a female figure or character has a bearing on the way women and femininity by and large are conceived of, *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* clearly is a case of discursive transformation. Elizabeth Bathory is a legend and a potential object of identification. However, the actual meaning of the lyrics is difficult to make sense of, as the findings of the analysis are, in part, contradictory and complex. For this reason the findings made during the analysis of *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* are compared and contrasted with the findings in the analysis of *Of Dark Blood and F**king*.

6 FINDINGS, PROBLEMS AND POSSIBILITIES

6.1 Contextual Relevance of Black Metal Lyrics

The analyses of *Of Dark Blood and F**king* and *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* have demonstrated that the language of black metal, at least as it appears in the lyrics of Cradle of Filth, is heterogeneous and complex, loaded with different meanings and internal discursive tensions. In other words, black metal discourse is a site of struggle, in which prevalent and existing meanings are disarticulated to bring about new articulations. Although it would be possible to identify several ideological constructions revolving around Christianity, freedom and history, for example, and that are contested in the lyrics of Cradle of Filth, the present study has focused on the articulation of femininity. Mills' discussion (1997:72) on how discourses are used as a resource by language-users, even if, in a sense, they also restrict them, makes sense in this context. It has become clear that black metal discourse is unable to break free from many linguistic and ideological structures forced on it by the surrounding environment of discourse production. Even black metal lyrics have to discuss their themes in a language that is intelligible to their readers. Christian and patriarchal discourses may be resisted, but it seems to be too difficult to resign from them altogether. Nevertheless, as has been noted and will be explicated later in the present chapter, the lyrics of Cradle of Filth manage to bring something new to the articulation of femininity. The new articulation may not, if examined more closely, be called radical or inherently emancipatory for women, but especially the analysis of intertextuality shows that the meaning of femininity is nevertheless articulated anew by interdiscursive means. The structure of the complex of discourses is manipulated and the orders of discourses are rearranged to yield a new order of discourses for black metal, one in which femininity can be constructed through new articulations.

To start with the aspects of the lyrics that are not emancipatory or that reinforce established patriarchal power structures, it may be said that the

lyrics fail to be as subversive or rebellious as might be anticipated on the basis of the denial of prevalent values and ideologies by the black metal subculture. In both songs, the female character's capability of independent agency is diminished and undermined. In other words, femininity is connected with being an object and passivity, which coincides with the popular and stereotypic notion that 'men act' while 'women think or feel'. What is more, the metaphors do offer some seemingly novel ways of constructing femininity, but actually fail to deconstruct the underlying polar structures (see page 62). Without passing judgement on the lyrics it can also be said that the women in the songs (especially in *Of Dark Blood and F**king*) are portrayed as fragmented (in terms of their bodily parts) and overtly sexualised. The effect is reinforced by the fact that representation is filtered through the fantasising and objectifying consciousness of the self-gratifying narrator. The aspects of feminine sexuality seem to have been harnessed to serve the objectives of patriarchal ideology as well. In *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* sexuality seems to be a resource and a source of power for the protagonist and the lyrics seem to imply that she gains ascendancy by breaking out of the limits that the society has set on her sexuality and freedom. In *Of Dark Blood and F**king*, however, what first seems to be a similar kind of idea turns out to be male empowerment by means of a sadomasochistic and pornographic discourse.

Quite clearly, sexuality is a complicated issue in terms of power. In both songs, sexuality seems to both grant the female characters with power and deprive them of it. Sexuality and the loss of innocence in *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* are empowering, but they are, initially, also a source of guilt. In *Of Dark Blood and F**king* feminine desire, although at first seemingly subjecting the narrator to an inferior status, inevitably implies and leads to male dominance. Another similarity between the songs is the fact that female sexuality tends to be connected with evilness. In *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow*, the Countess is freed from the anxiety brought about by her sexuality by abandoning Christianity after she has been "scholared" by a witch. In *Of Dark Blood and F**king* the narrator keeps the explicitly

sexual female character, on whose lips he can taste “[c]onspiracies, secrecies, sorceries laced”, with him in Hades. The implication is that female sexuality can be a source of power, but only at the cost of abandoning any Christian and other moral values cherished in modern Western societies and most of the world.

One positive thing to be said about feminine desire in the lyrics analysed is that, in them, feminine sexuality is not connected with sexual reproduction or maternity. It can therefore be argued that the lyrics open up a space for the interpretation of female sexuality outside reproductive functions that are ideologically dominated by “paternalist sexual ideologies” (Jacobus 1990:26), which equate femininity with motherhood and power with the father. On the other hand, as has been already noted, patriarchal structures are by no means totally escaped by the lyrics. Maternity not appearing to be an issue in terms of feminine desire may well be a matter of style rather than ideology as maternity can scarcely be classified as a central theme for gothic stories or romantic verse. Both of these discourse types are central for the discursive constellation that comprised the lyrics of *Cradle of Filth*. But even if *Cradle of Filth*’s lyrics differ from the Christian discourse in not identifying maternity with feminine desire, they do identify the evil woman with the sexual woman (see pages 41 and 61).

Both pieces of lyrics represent femininity as mysterious, other, dangerous, pathological and even monstrous. All these qualities attributed to femininity are, within the context of black metal lyrics, positive. As has already been noted, the powerful woman cannot be moral, chaste, Christian or ‘decent’. Both songs have a supernaturally powerful female character, but the supernatural element actually makes feminine power less meaningful as it renders power simply a symptom of deviance. The female characters are ‘other’, defined largely in terms of difference and monstrosity. Patriarchal structures seem to constrain the black metal discourse¹⁶.

¹⁶ This is not to say that there is a conscious attempt to break any patriarchal structures of power. The present study makes no attempt to reveal the intentions of the writer of the lyrics, which the analyst is always deemed to be ignorant of.

Feminine power poses a threat to the patriarchal ideology, which is why it can only be presented 'negatively', as connected with inhumanity, evilness and deviance. Other interpretations are of course possible. The argument presented above, however, rests, to an extent, on the presumption that female readers/listeners of *Of Dark Blood and F**king* and *Thirteen Autumns and a Widow* will face difficulties with identifying with the female characters in them.

To briefly sum up, it can be said that in the lyrics analysed femininity does not seem to be straightforwardly articulated as something essentially different from what is found in patriarchal and Christian discourses, for example. There are, however, some aspects in the lyrics that can be considered as being more or less emancipatory or as opening routes for emancipatory strategies. The heterogeneity manifested in the intertextuality and interdiscursivity of the lyrics is what frees femininity from its traditional western conceptions. By articulating different discourses together, the lyrics of *Cradle of Filth* transforms the meaning of femininity. When femininity is articulated within an order of discourse, which has internalised the Christian discourse within the pornographic or gothic discourse, it is inevitable that a new articulation should rise. The fact that the articulations in the lyrics of *Cradle of Filth* are not radical is explained by the fact that they are regulated by other discourses. To ignore all or the most dominant discourses circulating in the society would require making up a totally new language, which, in turn, would mean losing the means of communication.

As for the potential effects of representing femininity as is done in the lyrics of *Cradle of Filth*, I will discuss them more closely in the final chapter, which is probably the best place for such discussion. In the final chapter I will suggest some other interpretations of the findings and deal with the possibilities for further research presented by the present study.

6.2 Shortcomings and Problems

One point to be remembered is the context of the present study. Although it has been possible to make statements about the representation of femininity

in black metal lyrics, these statements are by no means universal. The lyrics of Cradle of Filth are written and primarily consumed in the context of the Anglo-American culture. Since, on the basis of the present case study, it is not possible to make far-reaching conclusions about the articulation of femininity within the black metal genre and discourse as a whole, it is even less possible to assert that the findings apply to black metal discourse in, for example, Malaysia.

Considering that the findings were based on a case study, it should also be noted that what has been argued may not hold true for the lyrics of every single black metal band. It should be borne in mind that Cradle of Filth's lyrics are probably not 'typical' in the black metal genre. The foremost aspect that distinguishes Cradle of Filth's lyrics from those of other black metal bands is their intertextuality. Even if all texts are more or less intertextual (Fairclough 1993:34-35), the author, for one, is yet to see black metal lyrics that would explicitly draw on as wide a variety of myths, legends and discourses as the lyricist of Cradle of Filth apparently does. It is also the author's intuition that the lyrics of Cradle of Filth are more deeply embedded in metaphor and other devices of poetic language (rhyming, alliteration etc.) than the lyrics of the majority of black metal bands. When *Of Dark Blood and F**king* is compared with another song about a 'Succubus', it becomes clear that Cradle of Filth's lyrics are loaded with more complex meanings and images than lyrics by many other black metal bands. For example, in the lyrics of *A Succubus in Rapture*, a song from Dimmu Borgir's¹⁷ 1997 CD *Darkness Enthroned Triumphant*, the lines "Her diabolical beauty/ enchants your bewildered mind" are used to describe a 'Succubus'. Anyone familiar with *Of Dark Blood and F**king* and *A Succubus in Rapture* is likely to notice significant differences between the lyrics. Cradle of Filth's characterisation of their Succubus on the lines "Thou art my seventh heaven burning/ Going down as with the sun...", to

¹⁷ The Swedish Dimmu Borgir, who classify themselves as black metal, is probably the commercially most successful black metal band at the moment.

take but one example, makes use of a greater variety of poetic language and mysticism than the lines from *A Succubus in Rapture* above. Several other examples could be easily found and presented. Consequently, the present study has focused on the lyrics of one of the more articulate black metal bands around.

In spite of the fact that in some terms Cradle of Filth is not the most typical representative of the black metal genre, the band can be identified with the black metal genre with little difficulty. Similarities between musical features as well as clothing and the images of Cradle of Filth and other black metal bands can be easily found. It would therefore be unreasonable to assume that the lyrics of Cradle of Filth, a band deeply embedded in the black metal subculture, differ from those of other black metal bands in terms of larger-scale themes and ideas. In other words, the linguistic strategies employed by different bands may vary, but the underlying ideological assumptions and structures of power as well as the surrounding circumstances of discourse production remain the same for the great majority of black metal bands. Otherwise, it would be quite impossible to talk about 'the black metal genre' in the first place. I take this as sufficient evidence of the argument that the findings of the present study can be more or less generalised. Certainly, more extensive study is needed to make assertive statements on black metal discourse and its relations to social reality, but I would be rather surprised to find significant variance in the ideological structures framing the representation and the articulation of femininity in black metal lyrics.

Another noteworthy problem that concerns the present study is the study of musical discourses as such. Mills (1995:151-153) points out that analysing songs as poems is problematical and calls for analysis of not only lyrics, but also voice quality, tempo and so forth. Walser (1993:26) also points out that "verbal meanings" are only a fraction of what people listening to music respond to. In this respect I admit that the present study has decontextualised its materials, paying practically no attention to the musical qualities of the songs. Such a method, however, was necessitated by

the time-frame and scope of the present study. Moreover, the articulation of femininity or any other concept/idea takes place primarily in the lyrics of songs. The semiotic signs of music that go beyond lyrics are more contingent and open to interpretation. Although language, too, is a product of contingent processes, the meanings conveyed (and produced, reproduced and articulated) by it are relatively fixed. Articulating femininity is primarily linguistic activity, but the analyses presented in the present study would naturally benefit from the study of the analysed songs as musical discourse.

Finally, it should be mentioned that it is not implied that the tools used in the course of the present study are necessarily the most suitable or best ones. That having been said, it can be argued that the conceptual tools that were used served the study well. Each tool revealed something inherent to the articulation of femininity in the songs. There is, however, one tool without which the present study would have been lacking in many respects. CDA allows for a great variety of analytical approaches, but I would nevertheless like to stress the importance of intertextual analysis, which also Fairclough (1999:203) suggests is central to any project subsumed by CDA and which proved more than useful for the present study. Intertextual analysis is the single tool with which a great deal can be found out about the relationship of the text under analysis with other texts and discourses. By exposing the nature of these relationships and the processes in which they are constructed, i.e. the selective regulation and the ordering of discourses that takes place in the text, it is possible to make conclusions concerning the social implications¹⁸ of black metal discourse and the circumstances of discourse production surrounding it.

¹⁸ By 'social implications' I mean changes in social attitudes and, therefore, social institutions, to take an example.

6.3 Unsolved Questions and Prospects for the Study of Black Metal

The present study has been an attempt to find out how femininity is articulated in the lyrics of *Cradle of Filth*. Some answers have been offered, but the ideas and findings presented obviously do not exhaust the subject matter totally and leave nothing to be said. Analysts with different points of view and analytical tools would naturally have come to other conclusions, paid attention to other aspects of the lyrics and shown interest in other social issues. Be as it may, I believe that the central findings of most critical discourse analysts would coincide with what has been discussed in the course of the present study. Considering the limited scope of the study, however, it is evident that there remain issues concerning black metal lyrics and even the articulation of femininity in them that are yet to be dealt with. I will therefore point out some directions or analytical frameworks that could be relevant to subsequent studies on black metal.

Rorty (1989:48) notes that the speakers of an ‘old’ language consider the appeal of the metaphors of a ‘new’ language simply irrational. Similarly, the users of the ‘new’ language view the speakers of the ‘old’ language “as irrational – victims of passion, prejudice, superstition, the dead hand of the past, and so on”. His observation, I think, can be applied to black metal lyrics, which tend to be regarded ‘rebellious’, irrational and blasphemous. Certainly, black metal discourse is something unordinary and is therefore bound to meet with resistance and disapproval, remaining music for the marginal audiences, defying all the rules of conformity with its musical and lyrical extremities. What is actually at issue is an attempt to speak a new language with new metaphors, or as Rorty (1989:47) formulates it, change the old “vocabulary”¹⁹. In this light, the black metal discourse could be studied as a site of struggle from a more politological point of view than has been done in the present study. What I am talking about is a study on power,

¹⁹ Rorty uses the Wittgensteinian term ‘vocabulary’ much as the term ‘discourse’ has been used in the present study.

ideology and morality and their transformations in and by means of discourse. Such a study would investigate the ideological structures behind black metal lyrics and the articulation of femininity in them. The present study could serve as a starting point for such investigations.

Rorty's work is also interesting in terms of the present study insofar as it deals with the concepts of liberty and freedom. Based on the findings of the present study, I would like to argue that the power of black metal lyrics to transform the conceptions of femininity and articulate them anew (at least as far as *Cradle of Filth* is concerned) lies in its capacity to 'poeticise' femininity. Rorty (1989:53) considers the liberal society to be one in which culture is not "rationalized" or "scientized" but "poeticized". The idea is based on the post-modernist epistemology, which holds it that there is no essential 'core' to entities, only layers and constructions, i.e. there is nothing beyond representation and, thus, no basis for privileging one representation over another. I would like to argue that *Cradle of Filth's* representation and articulation of femininity deconstructs the 'core' that is built for femininity by the Christian discourse and grand narratives of industrialised societies, by poeticising femininity. The heterogeneous language of the lyrics and metaphors reveals the instability and contingency of the dominant orders of discourse, metaphors and linguistic conventions. In other words, by articulating diverse discourses together in unconventional ways, *Cradle of Filth's* lyrics renounce the legitimacy of dominant ways of talking, writing and thinking about reality and femininity. The lyrics open up a new space of emergence for understanding, representing and articulating femininity. The lyrics create new images from the old ones by utilising old even ancient myths and stories, which are mixed, blended and recontextualised. In the context of such understanding and images there is a new freedom to construct femininity with fewer restraints and for such constructions to be accepted as equal with other constructions.

On the other hand, it is not unthinkable that black metal discourse might simply seek to provide femininity with merely another 'core'. After all, it has already been noted that black metal discourse is somewhat tied up with

patriarchal ideologies and discourses and does not seem to make an effort to totally 'emancipate' women from disadvantaged representation. Consequently, one direction the study on black metal could take is finding out whether the lyrics betray an inclination to establish a new status quo and balance of power, in which a different articulation of femininity is more suitable, or whether black metal discourse is post-modern and does not give advantage to one single representation of femininity over others. In other words, one should ask whether black metal discourse reveals the contingency and relative validity of all concurrent representations, thus creating space for convergence, enabling yet new articulations of femininity, or whether black metal discourse is yet another manifestation and site of patriarchal power and prevalent morality.

There are other questions for the more politically minded discourse analyst, too. For example, if discourses to any extent follow the laws of the market, is not there a demand for black metal discourse, which seems to be growing? To draw an analogy, if Ricoeur (1986) is right in insisting that new metaphors only arise if there is a 'demand' for them, the same must be true of discourses. Following this line of reasoning, the rise and spread of black metal discourse signifies a need to articulate values and ideologies in manner that is not necessarily consistent with 'traditional' Western values and moralities, to develop a new language. As has been seen, Christianity and Christian values are issues in the lyrics of *Cradle of Filth* at least as much as femininity. The role of Christianity and religion in the lyrics as well as the ideology behind black metal are issues that need to be dealt with, if any understanding of the overall nature of black metal is to be reached. To begin with, it is not clear whether there is such a thing as the ideology of black metal.

Linguistically oriented discourse analysts, on the other hand, could add to the understanding of black metal by quantitative research, for example surveys of the lyrics of several different black metal bands. Such work would be useful in either confirming the findings of the present study or showing which corrections need to be made for them to be true for black

metal in general. Of course, even critical discourse analysts who put the emphasis of their research on social issues cannot detach themselves from linguistic analysis, either assuming that language is transparent, merely representing reality, or disregarding the role of language as social action. It might, then, be necessary for linguists to provide social scientists with data and study on black metal that would enable going deeper into the structures of power and ideology of black metal. I see the present study as a small-scale study on black metal in its own right. Nevertheless, it could serve other researchers too and has hopefully proven that black metal and black metal lyrics are as legitimate an area of scientific study as any other area.

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APPENDIX 1: "OF DARK BLOOD AND F**KING"

Sister midnight comes blaspheming
 Screaming in the keys of faith and fear
 Unentwining our spines twists me to kneeling...
 Spilling like the moonlight on her glistening rear

Defiled at heart
 In this perfect hell
 Under red leaves bleeding
 Over sealed château we fell
 To demonocracy
 Where neither Adam or Eve
 Conceived of such iniquities
 From pleasure or pain
 Or the razor's edge inbetween

Thou art my seventh heaven burning
 Going down as with the sun...

Writhing like a river
 Fluids moves a torrent
 Bound to please on
 Denierred knees
 In any wicked way
 That her whims may warrant

I hang on every verb
 Every dirty word
 Interred
 In her pornoglossa...

Christlike, whipped and weak
 Painted nails driven through the meek
 Yet in obituary
 My dreams still weep
 Of dark blood and f**cking thee

Thou art my seventh heaven burning
 Going down as with the day
 Baring lunar curvature
 Like canvas for a lick of pain

Writhing like viper
 Deep inside her Eden
 Forbidden to eat
 I kiss leylines to her feet
 Then baiting wrath
 I steal a path
 Back to the fruits of her womb

Back to the crack of her tomb...

Her roseate sliver
 Quivers with snuff appeal
 The torque of her hips
 Lip-syncs me in for the kill
 Tongue-tied, tightroped and spread like disease
 I drain the cup of this Miss Sire
 Her waters into wine for me

Thou art my seventh angel squirming
 'Neath the forked tongue of the beast
 Arching toward the fabled
 Like a sculptured nymph seeking base relief

Whilst the world outside
 (A wood of suicide)
 Would die for this release
 Our slow orgasmic fuses greet...

By night and by candle
 At each other's throats
 In a slick drift of red
 Setting god's teeth on edge
 We were as wolves praying inside the fold
 Of a slaughtered lamb throw
 On a four poster bed...

Succulent. Succubus.

Laid without rest
 In the dead of the night
 Succulent. Succubus.

In thy arms
 And thy wetness
 On glossed lips I taste
 Conspiracies, secrecies, sorceries laced
 With thick unguent rum
 Black-rayed suns and Autumn
 Always in season for our nightfall from grace

Gorge upon my seed
 Starved Persephone
 Succulent. Succubus. Succour me

That I might keep
 Thee with me in Hades
 Succulent. Succubus. Succour me

APPENDIX 2: "THIRTEEN AUTUMNS AND A WIDOW"

Spawned wanton like blight on an auspicious night
 Her eyes betrayed spells of the moon's eerie light
 A disquieting gaze forever ghosting far seas
 Bled white and dead, Her true mother was fed
 To the ravenous wolves that the elements led
 From crag-jagged mountains that seemingly grew in unease

Through the maw of the woods, a black carriage was drawn
 Flanked by barbed lightning that hissed of the storm
 (Gilded in crests of Carpathian breed)
 Bringing slaves to the sodomite for the new-born
 On that eve when the Countess' own came deformed
 A tragedy crept to the name Bathory

Elizabeth christened, no paler a rose
 Grew so dark as this sylph
 None more cold in repose
 Yet Her beauty spun webs
 Round hearts a glance would betroth

She feared the light
 So when She fell like a sinner to vice
 Under austere, puritanical rule
 She sacrificed...
 Mandragora like virgins to rats in the wall
 But after whipangels licked prisoners, thrall'd
 Never were Her dreams so maniacally cruel
 (And possessed of such delights)
 For ravens winged Her nightly flights
 Of erotica
 Half spurned from the pulpit
 Torments to occur
 Half learnt from the cabal of demons
 In Her
 Her walk went to voodoo
 To see Her own shadow adored
 At mass without flaw
 Though inwards She abhor'd
 Not Her coven of suitors
 But the stare of their Lord

"I must avert mine eyes to hymns
 For His gaze brings dogmas to my skin
 He knows that I dreamt of carnal rites
 With Him undead for three long nights"

Elizabeth listened

No sermons intoned
 Dragged such guilt to Her door
 Tombed Her soul with such stone
 For She swore the Priest sighed
 When She knelt down to atone...

She feared the light
 So when She fell
 Like sinner to vice
 Under austere, puritanical rule
 She sacrificed
 Her decorum as chaste
 To this wolf of the cloth
 Pouncing to haunt
 Her confessional box
 Forgiveness would come
 When Her sins were washed off
 By rebaptism in white...

The looking glass cast Belladonna wreaths
 'Pon the grave of Her innocence
 Her hidden face spat murder
 From a whisper to a scream
 All sleep seemed cursed
 In Faustian verse
 But there in orgiastic Hell
 No horrors were worse
 Than the mirrored revelation
 The She kissed the Devil's phallus
 By Her own decree...

So with windows flung wide to the menstrual sky
 Solstice Eve She fled the castle in secret
 A daughter of the storm, astride Her favourite nightmare
 On winds without prayer
 Stigmata still wept between Her legs
 A cold bloodedness which impressed new hatreds
 She sought the Sorceress
 Through the snow and dank woods to the sodomite's lair

Nine twisted fates threw hewn bone die
 For the throat of Elizabeth
 Damnation won and urged the moon
 In soliloquy to gleam
 Twixt the trees in shafts
 To ghost a path
 Past the howl of buggered nymphs
 In the sodomite's grasp
 To the forest's vulva
 Where the witch scholared Her
 In even darker themes

Amongst philtres and melissas
Midst the grease of strangled men
And eldritch truths, elder ill-omen
Elizabeth came to life again

And under lacerations of dawn She returned
Like a flame unto a death'shead
With a promise to burn
Secrets brooded as She rode
Through mist and marsh to where they showed
Her castle walls wherein the restless
Counted carrion crows

She awoke from a fable to mourning
Church bells wringing Her madly from sleep
Tolled by a priest, self castrated and hung
Like a crimson bat 'neath the belfry
The biblical prattled their mantras
Hexes six-tripled their fees
But Elizabeth laughed, thirteen Autumns had passed
And She was a widow from god and His wrath, finally...