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Biblical language in the songs of the soul metal band Hunter

Introduction

This research paper is a presentation of the biblical language used in the songs of the soul metal band Hunter. The study consists of six main elements: definitions of the terms *metal music* and *biblical language*, an introduction to *frequency research* with examples of its application, information about the band Hunter, the demonstration of the conducted research, and the conclusions. Academic resources from sociology and linguistics have been used in the article, along with musical pieces by Hunter and interviews with the group's leader.

The aim of the empirical research was to present biblical language and the frequency of its occurrence in Hunter's song titles and lyrics. In addition, efforts have been made to find references to biblical verses in their musical pieces and to show their message based on interviews conducted with the band's leader. The research methodology involved a content analysis of 93 Hunter songs and 15 interviews. Previous studies of biblical language in metal music have examined the works of other metal bands (Moberg 2012; Szulc 2013; Matkowski 2014; Pluta 2018; Socha 2018; James, Walsh 2019; Ludwin 2019). The present research was conducted based on the texts of one representative of this musical genre.

Metal music

Metal music is usually defined as a genre of rock music that separated from its mother style (Skórski 2020: 11) in the late 1960s as a combination of blues-based hard rock with elements of psychedelic rock. The UK band Black Sabbath is most often considered the first full-fledged heavy metal band (Moberg 2009: 109–110). Themes contained in metal lyrics often include death and dying (death metal), magic and Satanic rituals (black metal), or fantasy (power metal). The guitar technique is mainly based

on playing staccato while muting the strings at the guitar bridge (Szulc 2013: 168–171). Heavy metal bands such as Iron Maiden, Megadeth, and Metallica gained international fame for their lyrical tours and became inspirations for future groups (Nail 2015: 1). The first three to five albums of the most famous bands have usually been considered highly influential heavy metal creations (Elflein 2010: 166). Between 1970–1976 and 1984–1991, metal groups dominated the charts and became global commercial brands in international music markets (Brown et al. 2016: 4).

Black metal is a more extreme variety of heavy metal (Szulc 2013: 170–171). It took its name from the title of the band Venom's 1982 second album, *Black Metal*. Although this group did not play black metal in its present form, it was one of the first bands to start including anti-Christian themes in its lyrics (Matkowski 2014: 95–96; Elflein 2018: 131–132). Scandinavian groups played a very important role in the development of the black metal trend in the 1980s and 1990s. In the following years, black metal gained prominence as international music (Polakowski 2018: 109).

Since it emerged in the 1980s, thrash metal has confronted listeners with socio-political problems. The function of its lyrics is to express intense criticism of problematic contemporary relationships within human communities (Buckland 2016: 1). Drone metal can be characterised sonically by extremes of repetition, extension, slowness, lowness, amplification and distortion, pushing the boundaries and conventions of the heavy metal tradition (Coggins 2018: 3). Whereas metal traditionally foregrounded the distorted electric guitar, drone metal has brought the amplifier to the forefront. The mystical "function" of drone metal can be associated with its fascination with altered states and the distant "elsewhere" (Khan-Harris et al. 2018: 189).

Metal music often has a purifying function for its fans, releasing the anger of individuals concerned about social phenomena (Pluta 2018: 28). It vents their emotions by improving their negative moods or enhancing existing positive feelings (Olsen, Terry, Thompson 2022: 11). It also plays a crucial role in forming a sense of common identity among fans and musicians (Saouma et al. 2007: 4). These groups share the same dress styles, cultural practices, media, and jargon (Sackl-Sharif 2014: 154). Metal music has been perceived as controversial for many years, mainly due to the musicians' dark images (e.g., black and white make-up called *corpse paint*); heavy sounds; performances accompanied by distressing atmospheres; lyrics that often contain themes of death, war or hell, Satan, and the dark side of human nature; and the musicians' critical attitudes towards social issues (Ludwin 2019: 48–50). Being a complex and dense field of academic study, which easily eludes control, it needs questions, theories, and methods to counter all these issues (Heesch, Höpflinger 2014: 10).

Biblical language

The influence of the Bible on metal culture is significant. For years, the Church and religious materials have provided inspiration for songwriters of this style, whether they intend to address them positively or negatively (Socha 2018: 127–131). Biblical language refers to statements or assertions about God or gods as mysterious and meta-physical beings (Ottuh, Godwin 2011: 225). Religious themes can also refer to angels, deities, miracles, grace, holiness, and sinfulness (Pinto 2020: 459).

From its very beginning, heavy metal has drawn on the Judeo-Christian tradition, using biblical apocalyptic content, the figure of Satan, demons, hellfire, and religious terminology. Biblical, spiritual, and mythological themes are commonly found at almost all levels of metal culture (Moberg 2009: 114–147). Thrash metal vocalists use an abrasive tone and dystopian language to attack norms, religion, the economic and political status quo, and social injustice (Buckland 2016: 1). Hence, religion in metal music often functions as a social and moral background that is contested by metal bands' members, fans, and other groups or individuals (Coggins 2016: 318).

Two main categories are outlined in the lyrics of heavy metal music: *Dionysian* and *chaos*. Within the former, there are themes of ecstasy, arousal, youthful vitality, strength, potency, and masculinity. The *chaos* category is associated with the problems of disorder, catastrophes, war, Evil, death, and Satan as the most common symbol of chaos. The Devil image often functions as a personification of evil in particular social contexts (Moberg 2009: 113–114). The content of metal songs often refers to secular humanism, which is highly sceptical of religious dogmas and traditions. The function of biblical references in metal music is usually to articulate criticism towards war, and the state of political, environmental, and social conditions of human life (Nail 2015: 1–2).

Frequency research

Frequency research is one of the most widely used methods for discovering significant words in a given text. A frequency list records the number of times each word occurs in the corpora. It can provide valuable information about the words used in a specific text (Baron, Rayson, Archer 2009: 1).

Halina Zgółkowska, Tadeusz Zgółko, and Krzysztof Szymoniak conducted a frequency analysis on 100,000 words from 1,896 lyrics of the rock music genre. These were divided into an official category (sourced from the press and rock album covers) and an unofficial category (comprised of songs submitted to the archives of the Yearly Meetings in Jarocin by bands wishing to become famous). The authors of the official lyrics were professional songwriters and rock band leaders; the unofficial lyrics came from writers or groups aspiring to be famous. The researchers analysed the songs of 214 rock bands; the words were then coded with designations and their combinations (Zgółkowska, Zgółko, Szymoniak 1991: 5–18).

In his frequency studies, Dietmar Elflein presented a list of 43 bands with 82 albums from 1981 to 2006, assigned to the genre of black metal and its precursors. He also created a list of the 15 most cited black metal bands along with their predecessors: Bathory, Emperor, Venom, Dimmu Borgir, Immortal, Mercyful Fate, Darkthrone, Mayhem, Destruction, Dissection, Sodom, Arcturus, Cradle of Filth, Burzum, and Enslaved. Elflein then analysed the structure of their songs (Elflein 2018: 132–150).

Hunter (the band)

Hunter's music verges on heavy metal and thrash metal. The band was founded in 1983 in Szczytno, Poland, by the guitarist Paweł "Drak" Grzegorzczak and the drummer Grzegorz "Brooz" Sławiński; their first concert took place at the High School in Szczytno

(Hunter – XXV lat wcześniej 2020). The official formation of the band took place in 1985 (Hunter's official website). In the same year, Hunter's first concert was held at the Community Center in Szczytno (Wikipedia). The first line-up featured Robert "Mooha" Ropiak (guitar) and Janusz Enerlich (bass), who was replaced in 1988 by Marek "Kosa" Kosakowski. In 1989–1990, Michał "Grzybek" Grzymysławski and Czarek "Ceziu" Studniak sang in the band, and "Mooha" was replaced on the guitar by Mirek "Walker" Szymańczak. In 1991, the group played their first concert in Germany, and Marek "Mariasz" Dyba played the drums for some time. Hunter released their first demo cassette, *Requiem*, in 1990 with Mooha and Kosa. In 1992, the group made a live recording with Tomek "Fester/Goljash" Goljaszewski playing the bass. A third, lost demo, *Requiem II*, was recorded in Wojtek Pilichowski's home studio (Hunter's official website).

From 1993, Hunter began to play regular concerts in Poland and abroad. In 1994, the CD *Requiem* was recorded, featuring Drak (guitar/vocals), Brooz (drums), and Fester (bass); it was released in 1995. In 1996, the band performed at the Woodstock Festival. In 1999, Mooha was replaced on the guitar by Piotr "Pit" Kędzierzawski, and Fester was replaced by Konrad "Saimon" Karchut on bass. In 2001, the band released the album *Live from the Woodstock Festival* with the song "Kiedy umieram" ("When I Die"), which was a number one hit on VIVA Polska TV for six weeks. In 2002, they played again at the Woodstock Festival (Wikipedia).

Hunter's next album, *MedeiS*, was released in 2003; it featured Drak, Brooz, Saimon, Fester, Michał Jelonek (a violinist from the band Ankh), "Musik" and "Żaba." Hunter then began to combine concert performances with colourful theatrical shows, costumes, and stage decorations to enhance their artistic message. In 2004, the band received the Golden Spinner Award, given by the Woodstock audience (Hunter's official website). Theatrical elements have been used by the band not only at concerts, but also in music videos (Nowy teledysk... 2017; TeleVizornia 2022).

The album *T.E.L.I.* was released in 2005; its anti-political overtones have become the band's trademark (Hunter's official website). The song "Pomiędzy niebem a piekłem" ("Between Heaven and Hell") from this album was the band's first radio hit (Wikipedia). In 2005, Brooz was temporarily replaced on the drums by "Docent," who died the same year. In 2006, Hunter released a CD of covers of other groups' songs and *HolyWood*, an album of material from the 2003 and 2004 Woodstock Festivals (Hunter's official website).

In 2008, after 23 years, Brooz left the band, and was replaced by Darek "Daray/Grząski" Brzozowski (Hunter – XXV lat wcześniej 2020). In 2009, Hunter recorded *Hellwood*, a film-inspired album that combined heavy sounds with a melodic style. In 2011, a DVD was released along with three CDs, entitled *XXV lat później (XXV Years Later)*. At this time, Arek "Letki" Letkiewicz joined the band on additional percussion instruments. Hunter also began performing with the choir Kantata from Szczytno. In 2012, *XXV lat później* was nominated for the Fryderyk Award in the category of Metal Album of the Year for 2011 (Hunter's official website).

Both the *Hellwood* album and the subsequent CDs were released in Polish (Superstacja 2017). In 2012, the band released the album *Królestwo (Kingdom)*, which in 2013 was honoured by the Association of Audio-Video Producers and received golden album

status. The label of *soul metal band* has stuck to Hunter. This term, which had not previously existed in the music industry, was coined by the group members, who describe their genre as *the music of the soul*. Hunter combines heavy thrash and metal sounds with elements of reggae, film music, and classical music. The band's lyrics are poetic, but often very violent, and address various social issues (Wikipedia; Radio 1.7 2016). The album *MedeiS* combined soul metal with necro pop (RJF 2005). The band members consider themselves to be pacifists demanding justice through sounds and words, not aggression (Radio Oko 88'5FM 2011).

In 2013, Hunter released the album *Imperium (Empire)* (Hunter's official website). The recorded material turned out to be very dark because, according to the band's leader, "empires are never beautiful" (Pietrasik 2013; Superstation 2017). In 2016, they released the album entitled *NieWolnOść (NotFreeDom)*. According to a review by Radio Signals, its material was better than *Królestwo* and *Imperium*, as it presented richer compositions (Pawelec 2016). The songs were aimed at believers (Mikulska 2016) and dealt with refugee issues (Grabowski 2016). In 2019, the album *Arachne* was released, containing many motifs from literature, film, and comics. However, the songs were inspired by very famous people (Stępowski 2019). The themes in the lyrics concerned deforestation, destruction of the environment, the earth, hate speech, politicians, the Church, people-spiders, their networks, and many other topics (Chamryk 2019). In 2020, Hunter performed at the Pol'and'Rock festival (Pol'and'Rock... 2020). The same year, the album entitled *XXXV* was released – a collection of Hunter's songs from their 35 years of musical activity, with two new tracks, "kArmageDoom" and "Zew" ("The Call") (Kornfanhead 2021).

Biblical references in Hunter's songs

The frequency study, looking for biblical language in the songs of the soul metal band Hunter, involved two main corpora: the titles of 93 songs and their content. In addition, an in-depth content analysis of the song lyrics made it possible to find specific references to biblical verses, and a study of interviews with the frontman allowed for presenting the band's message.

Among the band's song titles, 13 out of 93 have biblical references: "Amen" (1995), "Fallen" (2003), "NieRaj" ("NotParadise") (2005), "Wersety" ("Verses") (2006), "Wyznawcy" ("Confessors") (2006), "Armia Boga" ("Army of God") (2009), "Duch Epoki" ("Spirit of the Era") (2009), "\$mierci\$miech" ("Death\$mile") (2009), "Zbawienie" ("Salvation") (2009), "Pomiędzy niebem a piekłem" ("Between Heaven and Hell") (2013), "Imperium Diabła" ("The Devil's Empire") (2013), "PodNiebny" ("SkyLine") (2016), and "ShataNaBal" ("Satan's Ball") (2019).

Further frequency research shows that 57 out of the 93 available musical pieces contain words from the Bible. These can be divided into two groups: a set of biblical words describing Good and a collection of phrases describing Evil. Some of these words have different forms (e.g. believe and believing). However, due to the limitations of the scope of this article, the focus is on the basic forms of all the discovered terms.

In the first group, the word *God* (and its different forms) is used 55 times in Hunter's lyrics, the expression *Heaven* 23 times, and *Angel* (with all its variations) 17 times. *Faith* (in different forms) appears in the songs 45 times, *Soul* (with declinations) 12 times, *Eternal* 2 times, *Immortal* 1 time, *Gate* 3 times, and *Santa Maria* (and its combinations) 9 times. The term *Faithful* (in different forms) is used 16 times and *Eternal Life* 1 time. The word *Good* is used 4 times, *Paradise* (and its variations) 22 times, *Amen* 7 times, and *Judged* 1 time. The expression *Pray* is used 5 times, *Salvation* 16 times, and *Cross* 11 times. The term *Religious* is used 1 time, *Salvation* 3 times, *Glory* 2 times, *Kingdom* (in various forms) 7 times, *Throne* (and its combinations) 8 times, *Apocalypse* 2 times, and *Army* (in different variations) 11 times.

Among the second group, the word *Devil* (in various forms) is used 30 times, *Satan* 4 times, *Black Angel* 2 times, *Fallen* 1 time, *Evil* 20 times, and *Hell* (and its combinations) 31 times. The expression *Death* (in different forms) is used 24 times, *Fire* (in different variations) 8 times, and *Burn* (and its combinations) 11 times. The word *Possessed* (in various forms) is used 2 times, *Tempt* 4 times, *Doubt* 2 times, *Pagans* 2 times, *Reapers* 9 times, and *Crossfire* 2 times. The expression *Snake* is used 3 times and *Viper* 4 times.

There are also 14 references to biblical verses in Hunter's songs. In some cases, this is a real reference to God, religion, or Satan; in others, it is just a depiction of situations in which power or wealth becomes someone's god. The Devil or evil is referred to in such cases as greed for domination, money, hypocrisy, war, or the oppression of man.

The 1995 album *Requiem* features the song "Amen," whose text consists entirely of a sevenfold repetition of this word. The word *Amen* can be found in the Bible, in 1 Kings: "Amen. Amen to the Lord God's cause!" (1:36) or in the Apocalypse of St. John: "Yes: Amen!" (Rev. 1:7).

In the song "Fallen," from the 2003 album *MedeiS*, the leader sings:

I'm fallin' down...
I've lost my faith...
I'm fallin' down...
When I die all the angels fade away...

A description of this fall can be found in the Bible in the Apocalypse of St. John, which states: "And the great Dragon was cast down, the serpent of old, who is called the devil and Satan, deceiving all the inhabited earth, was cast down to the earth, and with him his angels were cast down" (Rev. 12:9).

In the song "Fantasmagoria," from the same album, the vocalist sings:

Witajcie w Kraju Umarłych!
Tutaj śmiech zniewoli Wasze lęki!
A marzenia i sny... Spełni Wielki Papier!!!

(Welcome to the Land of the Dead!
Here laughter will enslave your fears!
Where wishes and dreams ... Will be fulfilled by Big Notes!!!)

References to the dead can be found in the Bible, including in the Apocalypse of St. John: "And I saw the dead – great and small – standing before the throne, and the books were opened" (Rev. 20:12).

In the song "NieRaj" ("NotHeaven"), from the 2005 album *T.E.L.L.*, the leader sings:

Jesteś tym, kim chciałeś być
 Panem Światła i... Ciemności Król
 Brzemię żywych na swych barkach wnieś
 Skoro nie chcesz teraz spojrzeć w DÓŁ
 A tutaj jest Raj!
 Nie to nam obiecałeś
 Tutaj jest płacz!
 Świat w oceanie łez!

(You are who you wanted to be
 Lord of Light and ... King of Darkness
 Carry the burden of the living on your shoulders
 Since you don't want to look down now
 And here is Paradise!
 This is not what you've promised us
 Here is weeping!
 The world in the ocean of tears!)

The term associated with the Lord of Light is given in Genesis: "God, seeing that the light was good, separated it from the darkness" (Gen. 1:4) and Isaiah: "Arise! Shine, for your light has come and the glory of the Lord shines upon you. For behold, darkness covers the earth and thick gloom shrouds the peoples, but above you the Lord shines, and His glory appears above you" (Is. 60:1-2).

In the song "Łosiem" ("Moose") from the same album, the leader sings:

Panie i Panowie!
 Oto odwieczna walka między Dobrem i Złem!
 Walka... w której nie ma zwycięzców
 Ani pokonanych nie ma!
 Oto największy bezsens sensu naszego istnienia!!!

(Ladies and Gentlemen!
 This is the eternal struggle between Good and Evil!
 The fight ... in which there are no winners
 Nor are there the defeated!
 Here is the greatest nonsense of the meaning of our existence!!!)

Information on Good and Evil can be found in the Letter to the Romans: "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good!" (Rom. 12:21) and in Isaiah (5:20) or 1 Kings (3:9).

In the song “Imperium Miłości” (“The Empire of Love”), from the 2013 album *Imperium (Empire)*, the vocalist sings:

Proś o co chcesz
Kim pragniesz być
Śpi bestyjka mała bestia słodko śpi

Ask what you want
Who you want to be
The little beast is sleeping, the beast is sleeping sweetly

A similar phrase can be found in the Bible in St. Luke’s Gospel: “And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you” (Lk. 11:9–10).

In the song “Imperium Trujki” (“The Empire of The Three”), from the same album, the vocalist sings:

SANTA MARIA – woła mnie!
Pod Twoją obronę
SANTA MARY JA – oddam się!
Właśnie TEGO pragnę!
SANTA MARY JA – KOCHAM!!!

(SANTA MARIA – cries out to me!
Under your protection
SANTA MARY I – will surrender myself!
This is what I want!
SANTA MARY I – LOVE!!!)

The word *defence* can be found in the Gospel of St. Luke, which reads, “I tell you that he will quickly take them into his defence. But will the Son of Man find faith on earth when he comes?” (Lk. 18:8).

In the same song, the band’s leader sings:

Gdy tak stoję w swojej Ciemnej Dolinie
To zła się nie ulękę, bo DOBRO we mnie

(When I am standing in my Dark Valley
I will fear no evil, for the GOOD is in me)

This is a reference to the biblical Psalm 23, which reads: “Though I walk through a dark valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me” (Ps. 23:4).

The song “W sieci” (“In the Net”), from the 2019 album *Arachne*, consists entirely of a fragment of the Our Father prayer in Latin, which means “And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil”:

Et ne nos inducas in tentationem. (s)ed libera nos a malo (×10)
(S)ed libera nos a malo

This is a reference to the Gospel of St. Matthew, which reads, “and do not let us be tempted, but keep us from the evil one!” (Mt. 6:13) or the Gospel of St. Luke (11:4).

In the song “Arachne,” from the same album, the vocalist sings:

Pragnę CIE...
od początku stworzenia...
czuję głód kolejnego spełnienia...
To RAJ...

(I have desired YOU...
since the beginning of creation...
I feel the hunger for another fulfilment...
This is PARADISE...)

A similar phrase can be found in the biblical Book of Wisdom: “I will follow her footsteps from the beginning of creation, her knowledge I will bring to light, and I will not diverge from the truth” (Wis. 6:22).

In the song “Sauruman,” again from *Arachne*, the frontman sings:

Wytnie w pień
Stary bór by ziarna oddzielić od plew
Ma za nic wrogów i nie boi się bogów drzew

(He will cut into the stump
The old forest to separate the grain from the chaff
He cares nothing for his enemies and is not afraid of the tree gods)

This is a reference to the Gospel of St. Matthew: “He hath a reamer in his hand, and shall cleanse his threshing floor: he shall gather the wheat into the granary, and burn the chaff in the unquenchable fire” (Mt. 3:12).

In yet another *Arachne* song, “Gollum,” the vocalist sings:

Jest postacią z rozdarciem...
która złoWieszczy posiada cel...
być Niemiłości Pośląncem, Rybim Pomazańcem...

(He is a character with a split...
who has an evil goal...
to be the Unmerciful Messenger, the Fish Anointed...)

The term *anointed* is included in the Apocalypse of St. John: “And the seventh angel trumpeted, and loud voices arose in heaven saying: “The reign of our Lord and of his

Anointed One has come over the world, and he shall reign for ever and ever” (Rev. 11:15), and the First Book of Samuel (26:11).

In the same song, the leader sings:

Wciąż szukając przynęty
Wśród demonów wyklętych

(Still looking for bait
Amongst the demons of the outcast)

Information on demons can be found in 1 Corinthians: “You cannot drink from the cup of the Lord and from the cup of demons; you cannot sit at the table of the Lord and at the table of demons” (1 Cor. 10:21).

In the song “kArmageDoom,” from the 2020 album *XXXV*, the band’s leader sings:

Pogrzebowo. pogrzebowo. pieje KUR. wam daję słowo
. Nie będzie tu kolorowo
. Bo Sybilla-Possibilla
. Nie okłamię, nie
Tonie. Tonie IDYLLA!
Przepowiednia. PRZEPOWIEDNIA!

(“Funerally. funerally. The rooster is crowing. I am giving you my word
. It’s not going to be colourful here
. Because Sybilla-Possibilla
. Will not lie, will not
Sink. IDYLLA is sinking!
Prophecy. PROPHECY!”)

A similar phrase can be found in St. Matthew’s Gospel: “Jesus said to him: ‘Verily, I say unto thee, yet this night, before the cock crows, thou shalt deny me three times’” (Mt 26:34). This is also in the Gospels of St. Mark (Mk 14:30), St. Luke (22:34), and St. John (13:38).

The content analysis of the interviews enabled a better understanding of the band’s message. In 2005, Paweł Grzegorzczak, discussing the content of the album *T.E.L.L.*, stated:

What follows, then, is a confusion of concepts: who is God? Or rather – what is God? These words “I am the truth, the way and the life” can be the words of God, but also the words of money. This subject has recently been very often misinterpreted. (RJF 2005)

He added:

It seems that this battle is our destiny and we have to take sides in it. The benefit is that we have the opportunity to see who we are and where we are going. And in the grand

finale, which is repeated over and over again, the greatest benefit is the victory of good over evil. Let us hope... (RJF 2005)

In a 2010 interview, the frontman, answering a question about the Church and the people, stated:

I also believe that many of the church's teachings make deep sense, are, by definition ethical and valuable. The problem is that it is the church institution itself that gives us reasons to doubt its authority. I think the church is at a total crossroads. The paedophilia among priests, the scandals they serve us with increasing frequency – are the proverbial nail in the coffin and more and more intelligent people are turning away from it. Unless a miracle happens and a great reformation takes place, the equation on which it is rolling down will be very tilted. The most important thing is that people should not allow themselves to be intimidated and should stop believing in superstitions. They should start looking for God in themselves and others, not in images and temples. And God, if he exists, will judge everyone righteously. And then, I'm sure, he will pay special attention – *nomen omen* – to the hypocrites in cassocks (laughs). (Walewski 2010)

In a 2014 interview, Paweł Grzegorzcyk, answering the question of whether God exists, stated:

I still hope so. Especially when I hear the words of Archbishop Michalik, Bishop Paetz, Father Gil or Father Director and his Team of Breasts and Shadows. And I believe that he will be as just as they assure me he will be. (Gibadło 2014)

In a subsequent 2016 interview, talking about religious issues in the band's lyrics, he said:

'Cause we don't criticise faith. We have problems with the faithful, but not with the faith ... Imagine that priests also come to our concerts. And often! ... I truly reckon that we play for thinking people, regardless of faith, creed or belief. Fanatics do not tolerate and, above all, will not understand such things. (Garbowski 2016)

In another interview from the same year, describing the album *NieWolnOść (Not-FreeDom)*, Hunter's leader stated:

The album is aimed at people of faith. It asks a very simple question: whether you do as your religion and faith say. There are a lot of references on the album to refugees, for example. It's hard to believe that people of faith treat human beings like that – they are afraid of mothers with children who are drowning. I know we're all afraid of men who might turn out to be terrorists, but these mothers with children make you look at the bigger picture, not just that they're going to blow us up. (Mikulska 2016)

In a subsequent 2017 interview, he added:

We should certainly not sit passively. We need to be careful who we give the power to, who we vote for. Talk about it and, if needed – shout, write, sing. (Siwiński 2017)

In an interview about the 2019 album *Arachne*, Pawel Grzegorzcyk stated that the inspiration for using film or comic book characters such as Gollum or Figlarz Bugi in the songs came from people living nearby. He added that the music video for *Arachne*, which featured the lead singer in the roles of a priest and Jesus, was intended to

show the evil and hypocrisy in the Church, we should all be talking about it to limit it; it's so deep; it's just the tip of an iceberg; it's about the kids, right? (Chamryk 2019)

In a 2022 interview, Drak said:

We often cover painful topics in the lyrics, which are swept under the carpet, so we also choose to illustrate this in a way that further reinforces this message. We hit on topics that move us, that piss us off. We talk about what we worry about. It is a complicated path, but it is worth taking. (TeleVizornia 2022)

Conclusion

The creations of the Polish soul metal band Hunter fall into the category of metal *chaos* music. The frequency research has shown that there are biblical words in some of the band's song titles and lyrics. The in-depth content analysis of the song texts has found examples of references to biblical verses, and the study of the interviews with the band's leader has helped to present the group's message. The function of Hunter's application of biblical language is to show the eternal struggle between Good and Evil, which takes place in the social, political, and religious dimensions, and concerns individual human existential struggles. References to God or religion in the songs are sometimes direct; at other times, they are metaphors, showing god as power, wealth, or greed. Remarks about the Devil sometimes relate directly to the biblical stories of Satan as the Fallen Angel who spreads his nets and entangles people in them. The Devil is also referred to as the evil of the world, hypocrisy, wars, or the oppression of any human being by a particular regime or political system. To reinforce their message, the band uses elements of theatre, costumes, stage decorations, and cooperation with the Kantata choir from Szczytno. The musicians emphasise that they have a peaceful mission to accomplish, the aim of which is to speak out about difficult moral, social, and religious issues.

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Abstract

This research paper is a presentation of the biblical language used in the songs of the soul metal band Hunter. It consists of six main elements: definitions of *metal music*, *biblical language*, and *frequency research*; an introduction to the band Hunter; a description of the conducted studies with the use of the frequency method and content analysis; and a conclusion. Academic references from sociology and linguistics are used, along with 93 Hunter songs and 15 interviews with the band's leader. The article is accompanied by an introduction, bibliography, and summary.

Język biblijny w utworach soulmetalowego zespołu Hunter

Streszczenie

Niniejsza praca badawcza jest prezentacją języka biblijnego użytego w utworach zespołu soulmetalowego Hunter. Artykuł składa się z sześciu głównych elementów: przedstawienia definicji pojęć *muzyka metalowa*, *język biblijny* i *badanie frekwencyjne*, prezentacji informacji o zespole Hunter, opisu przeprowadzonych badań przy użyciu metody frekwencyjnej i analizy treści oraz podsumowania. Wykorzystano źródła naukowe z socjologii i lingwistyki, a także 93 utwory grupy Hunter i 15 wywiadów z liderem zespołu. Praca została opatrzona wstępem, bibliografią i streszczeniem.

Keywords: Hunter band, biblical language, soul metal

Słowa kluczowe: zespół Hunter, język biblijny, soul metal

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