

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis, this thesis concludes that Alesana's *The Emptiness* (2010) functions as a full adaptation of Edgar Allan Poe's poem *Annabel Lee* (1849) within the framework of Linda Hutcheon's Theory of Adaptation. At the same time, the findings also highlight a hermeneutic problem: the adaptation inevitably invites multiple, and sometimes conflicting, interpretations of Poe's original themes, forcing readers and listeners to renegotiate the meaning of love, grief, and madness across different media. The album maintains recognizable narrative and symbolic elements from the poem, such as the devoted lover, the dead beloved Annabel, and recurrent sea and tomb imagery yet reorganizes them into a multi-chapter Gothic thriller. In moving from poem to song lyrics, the work does not only change its medium but also its basic narrative conditions: a brief, single-voiced elegy is reshaped into a multi-track storyline with added characters, new plot events, and intensified psychological conflict, so that the lyrics no longer simply "carry" the poem but actively rewrite it. These transformations fulfil Hutcheon's requirement that adaptation involves "repetition without replication," because recognizable elements from *Annabel Lee* are retained while their structure, focus, and emotional weight are reorganized in line with the demands of a post-hardcore concept album.

First, the study finds clear narrative and symbolic similarities and differences between the poem and the album. *Annabel Lee* presents a static, memory-based confession focused on eternal love and devastating loss, supported by recurring images of the "kingdom by the sea," the grave, and the jealous angels. In *The Emptiness*, these elements are adapted into a dynamic plot involving murder, pursuit, and psychological breakdown: the loyal lover becomes a fragmented, unreliable protagonist, the beloved Annabel becomes both victim and obsession, and the seaside setting is recontextualized into a violent, urban Gothic environment. The album thus conserves Poe's central preoccupation with love and grief while intensifying themes of obsession, guilt, madness, and moral inversion.

Second, the research demonstrates how *The Emptiness* transforms Poe's narrative structure, characterization, and setting. The poem's brief, first-person monologue is

expanded into an episodic narrative distributed across multiple tracks, with shifting perspectives, dialogic exchanges, and recurrent motifs that mimic a rock-opera or novel-like structure. Characters that are only implied or absent in the poem, such as the detective, the murderer persona, and other antagonistic forces, are added to fill narrative gaps and drive the plot forward. Likewise, the idealized “kingdom by the sea” is reimaged as a claustrophobic, crime-ridden space in which psychological terror replaces elegiac contemplation. These changes confirm Hutcheon’s insight that adaptation is not judged by fidelity alone, but by how and why narrative elements are varied to suit a new medium and context.

Third, the findings show that Alesana’s artistic decisions systematically reshape Poe’s themes of love, grief, and madness into a darker psychological storyline. Where Poe’s narrator remains ambiguously unstable, the album’s protagonist is pushed toward explicit obsession, violent acts, and self-destruction. Genre-specific devices of post-hardcore, the tension between clean and screamed vocals, abrupt tempo shifts, dissonant passages, and fragmented song structures are used to render the character’s mental collapse audible and immediate. In Hutcheon’s triadic terms, *The Emptiness* operates as product (a new Gothic narrative built upon Poe’s hypotext), as process (a deliberate rereading of *Annabel Lee* through the lens of post-hardcore aesthetics), and as reception (an intensified audience experience that relocates the story from romantic mourning to immersive psychological horror).

Overall, this thesis establishes adaptation as a creative dialogue between Poe’s canonical poem and Alesana’s concept album. *Annabel Lee* contemplates eternal love and sorrow in a compact lyric form, while *The Emptiness* reinterprets that contemplation through the sound, structure, and audience expectations of contemporary post-hardcore music. The album embodies Hutcheon’s notion of “repetition with variation”: it preserves the foundational narrative of love and loss yet reorients its emotional focus toward fixation, brutality, and mental unraveling. Future research may extend this approach by comparing other musical and non-musical adaptations of Poe, or by examining how such adaptations influence readers’ and listeners’ engagement with classic texts across different media and cultural contexts.

More specifically, this study confirms the usefulness of Hutcheon’s framework for reading adaptations that cross both medium and genre boundaries. Treating *The*

Emptiness as adaptation rather than simple poetry musicalization makes it possible to trace how “product, process, and reception” interact: the album as product condenses and expands Poe’s material into a coherent Gothic thriller; the creative process reveals conscious strategies of variation, addition of characters, reorganization of plot, and intensification of psychological motifs; and the reception dimension shows how contemporary audiences experience *Annabel Lee* through the codes of post-hardcore music instead of nineteenth-century lyric poetry. In this way, the research not only applies Hutcheon’s concepts to a specific case, but also illustrates her broader claim that adaptations are always context-bound reinterpretations that negotiate between the memory of a source text and the demands of a new cultural, historical, and aesthetic environment.

