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# The effect of literary devices in Bob Dylan's songs

Raziskovalna naloga

Raziskovalno področje: Tuji jeziki

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## *Zahvala*

Iskreno se zahvaljujem mentorju za pomoč in podporo.

Iskrena hvala tudi vsem tistim, ki so mi v procesu pisanja naloge stali ob strani.



## Povzetek

Namen te raziskovalne naloge je s temeljito analizo pridobiti poglobljeno razumevanje izbranih pesmi Boba Dylana in povezati rabo literarnih sredstev z avtorskimi odločitvami in učinkom teh sredstev. V analizo je vključenih pet pesmi (*Blowin' in the Wind*, *Visions of Johanna*, *All Along the Watchtower*, *Every Grain of Sand* in *Mr. Tambourine Man*.), ki so bile izbrane na podlagi svoje pojavnosti na različnih lestvicah. Z analizo so bile potrjene vse tri zastavljene delovne hipoteze. Prva hipoteza je bila potrjena, saj so v vsaki pesmi prisotna vsaj štiri različna pesniška sredstva. Učinek posameznega sredstva je v vseh pesmih podoben, zato je bila potrjena tudi druga hipoteza. Tretja hipoteza navaja, da bo v pesmih mogoče najti biblične aluzije. Ta hipoteza je bila potrjena zaradi očitne prisotnosti tovrstnih aluzij v dveh od petih analiziranih del. Kljub temu se avtorica zaveda, da kakršnekoli posplošitve niso relevantne zaradi majhnega vzorca pesmi v primerjavi s celotnim Dylanovim opusom.

## Abstract

The aim of this research project is to obtain a greater understanding of chosen most popular songs by Bob Dylan and find parallels between his use of literary devices, authorial choices and the effect of these devices. Five songs were analysed (*Blowin' in the Wind*, *Visions of Johanna*, *All Along the Watchtower*, *Every Grain of Sand* and *Mr. Tambourine Man*.) on the basis of their appearance on music popularity lists. By analysing the songs, all of the working hypotheses were accepted. The first one was confirmed because in all of the songs there are at least 4 different literary devices. The effect of a particular device is similar in all of the songs, thus making the second hypothesis valid. The third one states that Biblical allusions will be found. It has been accepted due to the appearance of Biblical allusions in two out of five analysed works. However, I am aware that any generalizations are inappropriate due to a small sample of the analysed works.



## Razširjeni povzetek

Bob Dylan je eden izmed najprepoznavnejših in najvplivnejših ameriških glasbenikov in ustvarjalcev dvajsetega stoletja. Njegova dela niso cenjena zgolj zaradi njihove literarne vrednosti in političnih tem, temveč tudi zaradi dobrega vpogleda v družbo in njene vrednote. Bob Dylan je znan po svoji mojstrski rabi jezika in svoji zmožnosti podajanja najkompleksnejših sporočil na razumljiv a globok način. Njegove pesmi imajo torej znaten vpliv ne samo na glasbo temveč tudi na literaturo, predvsem poezijo. Je eden izmed zelo redkih glasbenikov, ki so za svoje delo prejeli Nobelovo nagrado za literaturo zahvaljujoč svojemu doprinosu h kulturi in umetnosti. (Gill, 1998) (Shelton, 1997) (Sounes, 2021).

Namen te raziskovalne naloge je s temeljito analizo pridobiti poglobljeno razumevanje izbranih pesmi Boba Dylana in povezati rabo literarnih sredstev z avtorskimi odločitvami in učinkom teh sredstev. V analizo je vključenih pet pesmi, in sicer *Blowin' in the Wind*, *Visions of Johanna*, *All Along the Watchtower*, *Every Grain of Sand* in *Mr. Tambourine Man*, ki so bile izbrane na podlagi svoje pojavnosti na različnih lestvicah priljubljenosti.

Z analizo navedenih pesmi smo lahko potrdili vse tri zastavljene delovne hipoteze. Prvo hipotezo, da bo v vseh pesmih prisotno več kot eno literarno sredstvo, smo potrdili, saj je najmanjše število identificiranih sredstev štiri, in sicer v pesmi *All Along the Watchtower*.

Druga hipoteza, napovedujoč podoben učinek določenega literarnega sredstva v vseh obravnavanih pesmih, je bila prav tako potrjena. Ugotovljeno je bilo namreč, da je primarna naloga rabe simbolov ustvarjanje občutka univerzalnosti in dajanja konkretne podobe abstraktnim pojmom, npr. čustvom. Aluzije imajo vlogo pri ustvarjanju širšega konteksta pesmi, približevanju njenega sporočila širšemu občinstvu in soustvarjanju atmosfere, npr. temačne in surrealistične v povezavi z deli W. B. Yeatsa in A. Rimbauda oz. privzdignjene in svečane v primeru bibličnih aluzij. Podobno tudi raba arhetipov ustvari občutek univerzalnosti in brezčasnosti. Podobje ustvarja bolj živ in trajen vtis na bralca med tem ko sinekdoha, hiperbola in ukrasni pridevki (pri čemer se vsi pojavijo le enkrat) dodatno izpostavljajo lastnosti reči ali pojma, na katerega se navezujejo. Tako metafore kot tudi poosebitve imajo vlogo pri izkazovanju neprijetnih čustev lirskega subjekta in jih približajo bralcu oz. poslušalcu.

Pogosto skupaj s paralelizmi ta čustva dodatno poudarjajo, saj raba paralelizma zaradi ponavljanja neke strukture usmeri bralčevo pozornost na sporočilo ponavljajoče se strukture. Paralelizmi so zelo pogosti v Bibliji, zato ima njihova prisotnost vlogo tudi pri ustvarjanju svečane in skrivnostne, skoraj preroške atmosfere. V izbranih pesmih avtor uporablja retorična vprašanja, s katerimi izzove osebni bralčev odziv in mu tako približa sporočilo pesmi. V analiziranih pesmih se pojavita tudi dialog in nakazovanje oz. napoved (ang. foreshadowing), sredstvi ki ustvarjata občutek pomembnosti, nujnosti in neizogibnosti.

Prav tako je bila potrjena tretja hipoteza, ki napoveduje prisotnost bibličnih aluzij v analiziranih pesmih. Bob Dylan je sam večkrat povedal, da je veren, kar se odraža v mnogih njegovih pesmi. V pesmi *Every Grain of Sand* Dylan piše o svojem odnosu do Boga in o občutku, da ga ta spremlja in usmerja tudi med pisanjem pesmi. V intervjuju leta 1985 je namreč izjavil, da je za pesem dobil nenaden navdih, med pisanjem pa je imel občutek, da mu besede nekdo narekuje, on pa je le tisti, ki jih zapisuje na papir. Tudi *All Along the Watchtower* je izrazito religiozno delo, saj je široko prepoznano kot parabola v obliki pesmi, katere snov je iz 21. poglavja Izakove knjige, vrstice 5-9 in govori o dveh konjenikih, ki naznanjata padec Babilona ter o prihajajoči nevihti, ki namiguje na bližajočo se apokalipso. (Attwood & Fyffe, 2018)

Kljub ugotovitvam poudarjam, da bi bile kakršnekoli posplošitve, saj je vzorec petih pesmi premajhen, da bi lahko predstavljal Dylanov opus več kot petstotih pesmi.



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# 1 Introduction

This research project focuses on the literary devices that Bob Dylan uses in his most popular songs and the effect they have on their message.

Bob Dylan is an American guitarist, singer and songwriter who received the Nobel Prize in literature in 2016 for his songs that are widely considered poetry. As a motivation for the Nobel Prize to be awarded to Dylan, the committee wrote: "For having created new poetic expressions within the great American song tradition". (NobelPrize.Org, 2016).

The aim of this written work is to examine how Bob Dylan uses literary devices and language in his songs. Firstly, the literary devices will be listed and briefly explained in the theoretical part which will be followed by thorough analysis of four most popular Dylan's songs. They will be selected objectively by looking at their popularity ranking on various websites.

As Dylan's songs are known for being very rich in figurative language, I would like to identify Dylan's most common literary devices in his most popular songs. I would also like to determine how certain literary devices affect the message and whether these different literary devices may be used to achieve the same effects. Knowing Dylan was deeply religious (Sounes, 2021), I expect to find Biblical allusions.

The following hypotheses have been formed based on read literature:

- H1: All of the selected songs will display multiple different literary devices.
- H2: A specific literary device will have a similar purpose in all of the selected Dylan's songs.
- H3: Biblical allusions will be found in the songs.

Based on this knowledge and expectations, I have formulated the research question:

How and with what effect does Bob Dylan use literary devices in selected songs?

## 2 Theoretical background

This section focuses on the knowledge needed to understand the following song analysis.

### 2.1 Bob Dylan

Bob Dylan is an American singer-songwriter, artist, and writer who is widely considered to be one of the most influential musicians of the 20th century. He was born Robert Allen Zimmerman on May 24, 1941, in Duluth, Minnesota. Dylan first rose to prominence in the 1960s with his song writing and distinctive singing style, which blended elements of folk, rock, and blues music. (Sounes, 2021).

Dylan's songwriting has been praised for its poetic and political themes, as well as its insightful commentary on society and the human condition. Some of his most influential songs include "Blowin' in the Wind," "All Along the Watchtower" and "Mr. Tambourine Man. It has had a profound impact on popular culture and has been a source of inspiration for countless artists and musicians. He is often credited with revolutionizing the folk music genre and paving the way for the 1960s counterculture movement. (Gill, 1998)

Dylan's lyrics often address social and political issues, such as civil rights, poverty, and war, and they often challenge prevailing cultural norms and values. For example, his song "Blowin' in the Wind" is a powerful protest anthem that asks difficult questions about peace, justice, and equality, and it remains an enduring symbol of the struggle for social justice to this day. The themes in Dylan's songs have been described as timeless, and his lyrics continue to resonate with audiences of all ages and backgrounds. He has been praised for his mastery of language and his ability to express complex ideas in a simple, yet profound way. In addition to his impact on popular music, Dylan's songwriting has also had a significant impact on literature and poetry. He is one of the few musicians who has been awarded a Nobel Prize in Literature, an honour that recognizes his unique contribution to the art of songwriting. (Gill, 1998) (Shelton, 1997) (Sounes, 2021).

## 2.2 Definitions of literary devices

This section provides clarification of literary devices and outline of their usual intended effect within texts.

### 2.2.1 Repetition

Repetition, which refers to a variety of word, phrase, and even structural repetitions—that is, the appearance of an element more than once in a short text—is a fairly large category of rhetorical devices. Different patterns apply to the repetition(s) of an element depending on the subcategory of a duplication. (Dupriez, 1991)

#### 2.2.1.1 **Gemination**

The Latin etymology of the word "gemination" indicates that it originally denoted doubling. Gemination is described as the instantaneous repetition of a word or phrase or the use of two synonymous terms for rhetorical effect in A Dictionary of Literary Devices. (Dupriez, 1991)

#### 2.2.1.2 **Parallelism**

Parallelism is a literary device in which parts of the sentence are grammatically the same or similar in construction. (Dupriez, 1991)

When writers use parallelism as a figure of speech, it not only affects the grammatical structure of sentences but also the meaning of the thoughts and ideas being communicated. It is often used for formation of antithesis, asyndeton, or epistrophe.

The main goal of using parallelism in literature is to improve the flow of the text, make it stand out from the rest of the text, make it memorable, and leave a lasting impression.

By highlighting parallels and variations in expression, writers can help readers better understand the meaning of their work by drawing reader's focus towards the parallelisms and the message they implicitly and or indirectly carry. (Literary Devices Editors, 2014)

### 2.2.2 Metaphor

Metaphor is a figure of speech in which a word or phrase is applied to an object or action to which it is not literally applicable. (Dupriez, 1991).

A metaphor is a figurative language device that compares two unrelated things. Metaphor, used as a literary device, establishes an implicit parallel without the use of the words “like” or “as”. When two objects are compared, metaphor might be used to claim that they are identical rather than just similar. This is helpful in writing when expressing abstract facts with specific imagery or notions. The characteristics of one item are figuratively transferred to another using metaphor. It might offer, conceal, clarify, or reveal concealed parallels between two disparate ideas. Metaphors are often compared with other types of figurative language, such as antithesis, hyperbole, metonymy, and simile. (Literary Devices Editors, 2014)

### 2.2.3 Hyperbole

Hyperbole is an exaggerated or extravagant statement to express strong feeling or produce strong impression and is not intended to be understood literally. It is frequently utilized in rhetoric and literature for serious, humorous, or sarcastic purposes. (Dupriez, 1991)

### 2.2.4 Personification

Personification is a figure of speech when a concept or object is given human characteristics and/or emotions or is discussed as if it were a person. Personification is a popular type of metaphor in which non-human objects are given human traits. (Dupriez, 1991).

These literary devices help readers comprehend ideas and make parallels, interpret symbols and themes, and appreciate language. Personification is a common technique used by poets to produce memorable symbolism and vivid imagery. Additionally, it enables the development of absurdity- and even incongruity-related humor. (Literary Devices Editors, 2014)

### 2.2.5 Oxymoron

Oxymoron is a figure of speech in which apparently contradictory terms appear in conjunction. As a literary device, it is used to make certain word combinations more thought-provoking to stand out. (Dupriez, 1991).

### 2.2.6 Synecdoche

Synecdoche is a figure of speech in which a part of something is used to signify the whole, or vice-versa. It is a type of metonymy and is used to emphasize certain parts of a whole, highlighting their importance. (Dupriez, 1991)



### 2.2.7 Symbol

A symbol is something that stands for or suggests something else; it represents something beyond literal meaning. (Dupriez, 1991)

### 2.2.8 Imagery

Imagery is a literary device that refers to the use of figurative language to evoke a sensory experience or create a picture with words for a reader. (Dupriez, 1991)

### 2.2.9 Simile

A simile is a figure of speech in which two essentially dissimilar objects or concepts are expressly compared with one another through the use of “like” or “as.” (Dupriez, 1991)

### 2.2.10 Epithet

Epithet is a descriptive literary device that describes a place, a thing, or a person in such a way that it helps in making its characteristics more prominent than they actually are. (Dupriez, 1991)

### 2.2.11 Inversion (anastrophe)

It is characterized as the regular sequence of words within a single group being reversed. The term “inversion” refers to the reversal of what is thought of as the regular or typical order of the sentence's component words or word groupings. Only when not demanded syntactically can inversion have any literal meaning, and its impact is amplified by the fact that it is unexpected. (Dupriez, 1991)

Like other literary techniques, its primary purpose in prose or poetry is to aid authors in achieving stylistic effects, such as emphasizing a certain point or diverting readers' attention from a certain issue. Inversions are frequently employed in poetry to establish rhythm, meter, or a rhyme scheme. (Literary Devices Editors, 2014)

### 2.2.12 Juxtaposition

A literary device known as juxtaposition suggests comparison or contrast. When two things are put side by side to create a dramatic or ironic contrast, writers use juxtaposition. This enables the reader to understand how the two items differ or are similar. This literary strategy

has the effect of enhancing contrast comprehension and giving the comparison a sense of fate or inevitability. (Dupriez, 1991).

#### 2.2.13 Allusion

It is an expression designed to call something to mind without mentioning it explicitly; an indirect or passing reference. (Dupriez, 1991).

#### 2.2.14 Rhetorical question

Rhetorical question is a question asked in order to create a dramatic effect or to make a point rather than to get an answer. (Dupriez, 1991).

#### 2.2.15 Irony

The use of words to express something other than and especially the opposite of the literal meaning. (Dupriez, 1991).

#### 2.2.16 Foreshadowing

“Foreshadowing” is a narrative device in which suggestions or warnings about events to come are dropped or planted. (Dupriez, 1991).

### 3 Methodology

#### 3.1 Song lyrics selection

The songs were chosen based on their popularity. Several popularity scales were combed to make an objective selection. A table with most often mentioned songs was created and as a song appeared on a particular scale, it has been marked with an x, with results presented in Table 1. Chosen songs have their titles written in bold text.

Table 1: Selection of songs based on their popularity, obtained from different sources.

	Like a Rolling Stone	It's Alright Ma (I'm only bleeding)	Blowin' in the Wind	Visions of Johanna	A Hard Rain is Gonna Fall	All Along the Watchtower	I Shall be Released	Mr. Tambourine Man	Every Grain of Sand
Rollingstone.com	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Thetoptens.com	X		X	X	X	X		X	X
Ultimateclassicrock.com	X		X	X		X		X	X
Theguardian.com		X	X	X		X	X	X	
Faroutmagazine.co.uk			X	X		X		X	X

Thus, for the analysis 5 songs have been chosen, namely: *Blowin' in the Wind*, *Visions of Johanna*, *All Along the Watchtower*, *Every Grain of Sand* and *Mr. Tambourine Man*.

#### 3.2 Analysis strategy

In order to provide structured and coherent analysis, each song has been analysed as a whole. In the first paragraph its message is briefly explained and is followed by thorough analysis of the song that is not chronologically ordered but rather organized in such a way, that each identified literary device is outlined, exemplified, and followed by the explanation of the effect that this particular literary device has on the reader or listener and how that supports Dylan's message of the song. The colour coded song lyrics are provided at the end of the document as appendices (Priloga I, II, III, IV and V).

### 3.3 Identification of the frequency of literary devices

After each song is analysed, the number of all literary devices found in each song will be counted and presented in a graph.

## 4 Analytical part

### 4.1 Song analysis

#### 4.1.1 Blowin' In the Wind

In *Blowin' In the Wind*, Dylan points out some of the challenges humanity was facing at the time, trying to raise awareness of them. While the problems are pointed out in the verses, the chorus is ambiguous. It hints at the suggested answers to the problems and can either mean that these are so obvious, omnipresent, and simple that we have not yet grasped them, or that they are so complex and intangible that they are impossible for us to understand. (Songfacts LLC, 2022). The colour coded song lyrics can be found in Priloga I.

The verses in *Blowin' In the Wind* are sets of rhetorical questions, e. g. *"How many seas must a white dove sail before she sleeps in the sand?"*, each of which highlights another global problem. By stating these as rhetorical questions, Dylan invites listener to think about them, demanding engagement from the reader, bringing the message across more forcefully.

The author uses symbols in the song. For the second rhetorical question in verse 1, *"How many seas must a white dove sail before she sleeps in the sand?"* Dylan uses the dove as a conventional symbol of peace, making his wishes for peace more visually striking. Additionally, Dylan's message is thus more universally understandable and made accessible to the global audience. Symbols can also be found in the line *"Yes, and how many times must the cannonballs fly before they're forever banned?"* where cannonballs represent violence and war, and in the verse *"Yes, and how many times must a man look up before he can see the sky?"* the sky is a symbol of beauty and freedom, which can further refer to freedom being an allusion to the slave trade and racism in the United States, two major global problems of past and present. The message of the 2nd rhetorical question *"And how many years must some people exist before they're allowed to be free?"* in verse 2 is connected to it, being an allusion to the Civil Rights Movement, one of the most prominent events in the US at the time, adding Dylan's lyrics a clear political undertone. Another very time-specific allusion can be found at the end of verse 1 where Dylan talks about cannonballs. It can simply be understood as a universal allusion to war, but understanding the historical background, it is much more likely to be a critique of the US interference in the Vietnam war. Using allusions, Dylan creates more

subtle, implicit connections to then global problems. Further, allusions also allow a more universal interpretation and may have prevented Dylan from being overly criticized.

By using synecdoche in verse *"Yes, and how many times must the cannonballs fly before they're forever banned?"*, Dylan uses *"cannonballs"*, a category of weapons, and by only mentioning them, the author emphasizes death, destruction, and the sorrows of war, which he felt that the American army had brought upon the Vietnamese people unjustly. (Gill, 1998).

The last rhetorical question in verse 2 and the entire verse 3 can be understood as the analogy for human ignorance (turning our heads, failing to see the obvious, not listening to those who suffer and ignoring the fact that innocent people are dying) and it is presented through visual (*"... see the sky"*) and auditory (*"... hear people cry"*) imagery, which positions the listener directly in the situation and leaves a more lasting sensory impression.

#### 4.1.2 Mr. Tambourine Man

Mr. Tambourine Man (colour coded lyrics available in Priloga II) is characterized by a strong feeling of longing for listening to music that helps the speaker escape reality, transporting him to a better place and to a peaceful state of mind. The widely accepted interpretation of the song is that music is a device that can help people cope with depressing reality, loneliness, and pressures of everyday life. (Polyphonic, 2021 and Shelton, 1997).

In Mr. Tambourine Man, we can find elements of intertextuality. Verse 1 is an allusion to W. B. Yeats's Byzantium. Dylan himself said that Yeats was a source of inspiration for many of his songs and the parallels between Byzantium and Mr. Tambourine Man are visible because just like Yeats describes the night falling onto a mysterious city in his dreams, Dylan sets a scene in a dreamy night. Like Yeats, Dylan, too uses the motif of an Empire: "*Though I know that evening's empire has returned into sand*" to emphasize the greatness of a city and make it even more surreal. Another parallel with Yeats' works is that Dylan too employs symbolic metaphors (*evening's empire*) to create a sense of a surreal world that helps one cope with the harsh reality of the world one lives in. Entire verse 3 is a reference to Rimbaud's explanation of the philosophy of his writing being "*I is someone else,*" and is most prominent in line "*It's just a shadow you're seeing that he's chasing*" and seems to talk about the speaker observing himself from a distance. This adds to the dark and surreal atmosphere in the song, infusing a sense of mystery and supports the message by presenting the absurdity of something as simple as the night and the perception of self.

Dylan uses "feet" as the symbol of his own tiredness and weariness and appears in three different forms in the song; firstly, in the first verse, "*My weariness amazes me, I'm branded on my feet*", and directly expresses weariness. It also appears as "*toes*" and "*boot heels*" in the second verse. Another symbol found is "*Mr. Tambourine Man*" himself because he is a symbol of all musicians and is used as metonymy because tambourine players represent just a small group of musicians. However, the tambourine player resonated with Dylan because of Bruce Langhorne, a tambourine player that played with him. In fact, Dylan said in 1985 that "*he was playing, and this vision of him playing this tambourine just stuck in my mind*" (Unterberger, 2012). While the symbol of "*feet*" carries negative emotions and highlights the negative feelings that Dylan had towards everyday life at the time, the symbol of "*Mr. Tambourine*

*Man*” carries positive connotations and aids the message in showing how music has an almost salvaging effect.

Parallelisms are another literary device that Dylan commonly used in his songs and are abundant in here. In verse 2 they illustrate the feeling of numbness and stillness saying: *“My senses have been stripped; My hands can’t feel the grip; My toes too numb to step”* and their structural similarity underscores rigidity and the feeling of being caught in depressing reality. Finally, the entire last extended verse is full of parallelisms because Dylan describes a way of his escape by writing *“... through the smoke rings of my mind; out to the windy beach...”* where all the lines follow the same pattern of a preposition, epithet, and a verb, creating rhythm and making the impression more vivid, painting a picture of a world that music helps Dylan escape to.

Mr. Tambourine Man abounds in epithets, which have the role of enhancing characteristics of a noun they modify, aiding the message by presenting a robust picture of Dylan’s real or imaginary world. They either highlight negative aspects (*“ancient empty street, foggy ruins of time, haunted frightened trees, twisted reach, crazy sorrow”*) or very positive ones, for example, *“diamond sky, circus sands”*. For similar purposes, Dylan uses visual imagery, e. g. *“just a shadow you’re seeing that he’s chasing”* and auditory imagery *“hear laughing, spinning, swinging madly”, “hear vague traces of skipping reels of rhyme”*. The last extended verse is rich in visual imagery because Dylan is metaphorically painting the picture of the imaginary world that the music takes him to (*“And take me disappearing through the smoke rings of my mind down the foggy ruins of time... with one hand waving free silhouetted by the sea...”*). Imagery helps the author create a more vivid impression and highlights how he experiences the world. In this case, it emphasizes his experience of the world he lives in as unorderedly and mad (*“hear laughing, spinning, swinging madly”, “hear vague traces of skipping reels of rhyme”*) while the music reminds him of *“to dance beneath the diamond sky with one hand waving free...”*, which is a distinctly positive experience.

Personification is used exclusively in the first and second verse, e. g. *“street’s too dead for dreaming”*, which evokes a morbid atmosphere, and lines *“my hands can’t feel to grip; my toes too numb to step”* create a feeling of dissociation from self, not having control over one’s



body. In both cases, it is associated with unpleasant feelings, and as it is used in verses describing Dylan's reality, emphasizing its unpleasantness.

In Mr. Tambourine Man, Dylan also uses metaphors, but rather sparingly. They aid the atmosphere which indirectly affects the message of the song.

#### 4.1.3 Visions Of Johanna

At first glance it seems Visions of Johanna is a love song for a lost lover, but it is believed that it is actually about the curse that all artists feel, striving for unattainable ideals. It can be understood as a poem about how perfectionism can destroy a person and hurt people who love them. (Gill, 1998). You may access the colour coded lyrics in Priloga III.

Both categories of imagery have the main role in setting and describing the scene (*"the country music plays soft", "voices echo", "see the primitive wallflower freeze", "... visions of Johanna, they make it all seem so cruel"*). In some cases, it seems like the speaker is observing himself from the perspective of a third person e. g. *"just Louise and her lover so entwined"* or identifies as several different people; *"Now, little boy lost, he takes himself so seriously, he brags of his misery, he likes to live dangerously", "The peddler now speaks..."*, suggesting he does not identify with himself anymore. Personifications are primarily combined with imagery, making the speaker's surroundings seem like a living creature, independent of human actions (*"... the heat pipes just cough; the country music station plays soft"*) and therefore seem more out of his hands, emphasizing his feelings of helplessness, loneliness, and insignificance. This supports the message by highlighting speaker's negative feelings towards the world because of his own unhappiness. Parallelisms at the end of each stanza could be considered a chorus, but every new line presents a new idea about the author's visions of Johanna (*"And these visions of Johanna that conquer my mind", "Where these visions of Johanna have now taken my place", "And these visions of Johanna, they kept me up past the dawn" ...*) and their appearance at the end of every line shows the speaker's inability to stop thinking about Johanna, hinting at obsession. Johanna can be considered a symbol of an unattainable ideal or figure (*"But [Louise] just makes it all too concise and too clear; that Johanna's not here", "...visions of Johanna are now all that remain"*) that the speaker is trying to replace but finds no satisfaction. Furthermore, Louise may be understood as a symbol for the second best, that is, the best momentary choice when knowing the ideal is unreachable (*"Louise, she's all right, she's just near"*). Those two symbols effectively illustrate the paradox of striving for ideal or perfection, remembering it is unattainable yet still longing for it and trying to comfort oneself with the second-best choice, remaining incomplete and empty (*"little boy lost ... he brags of his misery...", "... to be so useless and all...", "It's so hard to get on"*). Parallelisms and symbols

of the two lovers, e. g. Johanna and Louise, can be considered the main carriers of the message. While the symbols emphasize the abyss between the unattainable perfection and the most satisfactory reachable thing, the parallelisms show that even though the speaker understands that the ideal is unreachable, it still preoccupies his mind: *“And these visions of Johanna that conquer my mind”*.

Further, there is an allusion to the famous DaVinci’s artwork from the 1500s, Mona Lisa: *“But Mona Lisa musta had the highway blues...”*. The painting is famous for the woman’s mysterious smile, with no one knowing who Mona Lisa truly was, if she was real and what her mysterious smile represents. The same sense of mystery surrounds Johanna, a woman from the poem, for whom Dylan never revealed her true identity, whether or not was she even a real person or why he longs for her so much. (Potter, 2022) By adding this allusion, Dylan hinted that this is meant to stay a mystery and is therefore more easily applied to a broader context and should not be understood just as an elegy about a past lover.

Dylan used rhetorical questions: *“Ain’t it just like the night to play tricks when you’re tryin’ to be so quiet?”* which immediately engage the reader, inviting us to actively think about the message of the song. Speaker asks about the universal experience, trying to sleep but finding your mind racing. *“How can I explain?”*, on the other hand, shows that speaker is in distress and makes the reader empathize with him. The effect that the speaker’s thoughts and feelings have on the reader are important because the stronger the connection, the more lasting the impression the song leaves on the reader, making the message resonate more strongly with us.

#### 4.1.4 All Along the Watchtower

All Along the Watchtower (Priloga IV) may be considered a parable because Dylan uses “Joker” and “Thief” as broad archetypes and parable is a narrative whose core remains the same throughout many various periods, places, and personalities; it often teaches and explains moral or religious ideas. (Cambridge Dictionary, 2023). The main message of the song is that humanity does not act sustainably or in line with natural order and common morals and will soon begin to feel the effects of doing so.

Dylan uses two archetypes<sup>1</sup>, a joker and a thief (*“said the joker to the thief”*). The joker represents the artist – someone who entertains others and provokes them by suggesting other perspectives on reality – and the thief, someone who ignores the rules of society. Furthermore, both of them are outsiders, separated from the more orderly parts of society. By using archetypes, Dylan creates a feeling of timelessness, making the message available to broader audience. Joker and the thief engage in a dialogue - *There must be some kind of way outta here; said the joker to the thief; ...; No reason to get excited; the thief, he kindly spoke* - about how humans are irrational and foolish, making the issue seem more pressing. By having outsiders talk about such issues, Dylan creates a sense of objectivity. It supports the message by indicating that we are wasting natural resources, taking them for granted (*“Plowmen dig my earth; none of them along the line; know any of its worth”*).

The last line of the second verse *“The hour’s getting late”* is allusion to the apocalypse approaching and serves as a hint about what comes with the last stanza. Also, the entire last stanza is a biblical allusion to the Book of Isaiah (21:5-9)<sup>2</sup> because it seems to be a poetic summary of this section of The Bible. It talks about two horsemen (*“Two riders were approaching”*) approaching to tell that the great Babylon, the city of sins, has fallen. Considering that 63% of the entire US population is Christian (Smith, 2021), Dylan illustrated his message by using a biblical reference to address more people. The Babylon can be an

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<sup>1</sup> a recurrent symbol or motif in literature, art, or mythology. (Oxford Languages, 2023)

<sup>2</sup> *“Prepare the table, watch in the watchtower, eat, drink: arise, ye princes, and anoint the shield. For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Go, set a watchman, let him declare what he seeth. And he saw a chariot with a couple of horsemen, a chariot of asses, and a chariot of camels; and he hearkened diligently with much heed: And he cried, A lion: My lord, I stand continually upon the watchtower in the daytime, and I am set in my ward whole nights: And, behold, here cometh a chariot of men, with a couple of horsemen. And he answered and said, Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground.”* (Book of Isaiah 21:5-9, King James version)

analogy to the capitalistic world and values that are condemned to fall soon. This is hinted in the very last line of the poem (*"And the wind began to howl"*), where Dylan uses foreshadowing to show the beginning of an end, again using an allusion to the apocalyptic storm in The Bible, further adding the sense of urgency for humanity to change its ways or the world as we know it will be destroyed.

#### 4.1.5 Every Grain of Sand

Every grain of sand (available in Priloga V) is considered one of Dylan's most religious writings. It appears to depict Dylan's relationship with God and celebrate God's almightiness. He reported that he had got the inspiration and then wrote down the words that he felt were coming from somewhere else and not from himself. It could be said that the song is about Dylan seeing God in everything around him, even in the process of his song writing. (Bunn, 2021)

Dylan uses a lot of parallelisms in Every Grain of Sand. The opening line "In the time of my confession, in the hour of my deepest need" is a parallelism, metaphorically representing Dylan's feeling of despair, and a parallelism of similar structure in the next stanza, "in every leaf that trembles, in every grain of sand." It depicts the place where Dylan can observe God and his working. There are also three lines that are parallelisms in the fifth stanza: "In the violence of a summer's dream ...; In the bitter dance of loneliness ...; In the broken mirror of innocence ...". All of the parallelisms have a function in common: to describe where Dylan feels he can observe God's working and feel his presence. Parallelisms are common in The Bible, making them structurally similar to those in the Bible. There is an allusion to Cain, the Earth's first murderer (Genesis 4:1-16) in line "Like Cain, I behold this chain of events that I must break" and points to Dylan's feeling of guilt for not always behaving like a proper Christian man. Even direct allusions to The Bible can be found in text such as "That every hair is numbered like every grain of sand" which is the allusion to "But the very hairs of your head are numbered" (Matthew 10:30). It supports the message of the song by referring to Institutional Christian dogma that Judeo-Christian Bible is the source of all knowledge, which makes it logical that Dylan feels God's presence everywhere. (Attwood & Fyffe, 2018). The forementioned example is also a simile and makes Dylan's message clearer to the reader because by direct comparison, the author depicts the matter more concretely and makes it accessible to the wider, non-Christian audience, because it compares a Biblical reference to a non-Biblical one.

Of all songs that I have chosen to analyse, Every Grain of Sand is the richest in genitive metaphors. All of them evoke negative feelings ("pool of tears", "morals of despair", "pain of idleness" "sorrow of the night", "violence of a summer's dream" ...). For Dylan, the genitive

metaphor seems to be a convenient literary device because its structure allows him to use it as a basis for building contradictions e.g., “violence of a summer’s dream”, adding an ironic undertone to the intended message. The phrase “summer dream” would traditionally evoke an image of something pleasing, but in the form of a genitive metaphor the author added the noun violence, creating an unexpected twist. Here, Dylan builds on the seemingly irreconcilable contrast between “violence” and “summer’s dream,” thus going against the established (or even expected) poetic conventions.

Similarly, the genitive metaphor can have a hyperbolic effect to build the dramatic atmosphere. The quote “pool of tears” is a prominent example of a hyperbole because crying so much that tears literally fill the pool is impossible meaning that the “pool of tears” is an over-exaggeration but as a literary device emphasizes the sadness of the lyrical subject which indicates that the genitive metaphors were used consciously to get the message more successfully across by influencing the reader’s emotions and creating somewhat dark and a little ironic atmosphere. It all supports the message that can be also found in Bible, that everything is in the hands of God which makes a single person and his will almost meaningless, and Dylan appears to feel it so.

In this poem, Dylan used exclusively auditory imagery, e.g., “dying voice inside me reaching out somewhere”, “every time I pass that way, I always hear my name” and “I hear the ancient footsteps ...” and it corresponds well to what he said in an interview in 1985: “That was an inspired song that came to me. It wasn’t really too difficult. I felt like I was just putting words down that were coming from somewhere else, and I just stuck it out.” (Bunn, 2021), again confirming that he feels that God influences everything, including his song writing.

## 4.2 Frequency of literary devices

The graph below (Figure 1) shows the number of distinct literary devices in each individual song from the selection.

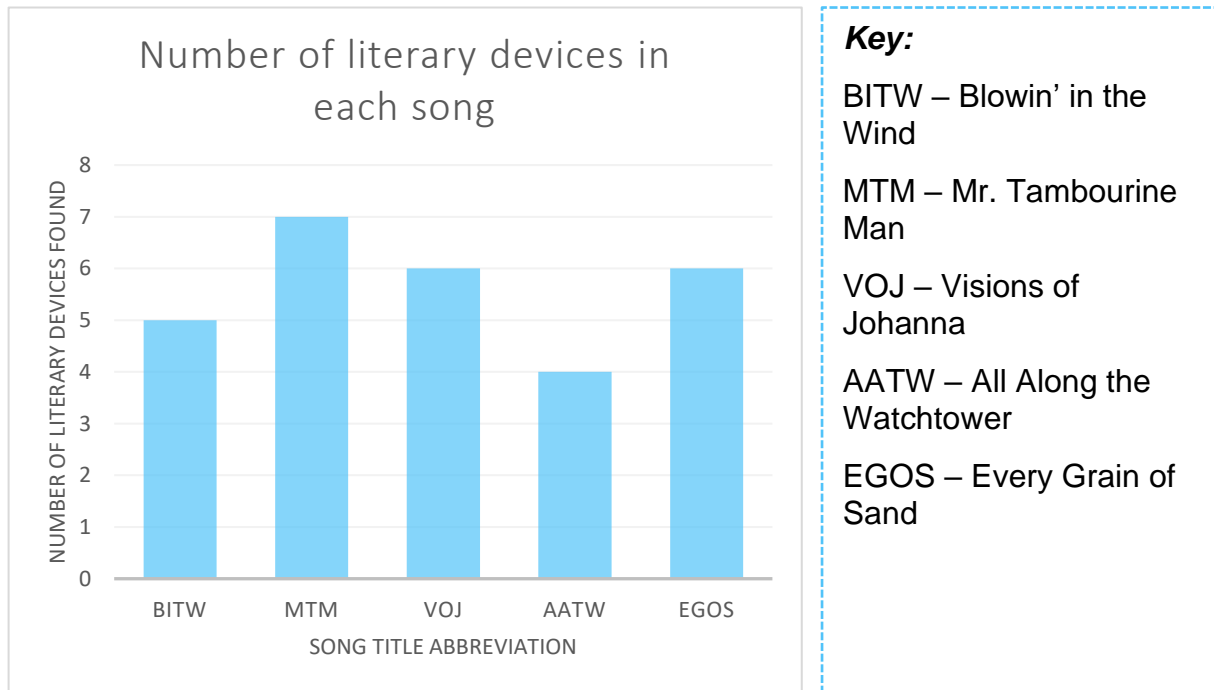


Figure 1: Bar chart representing number of distinct literary devices that Bob Dylan used in each song from the selection with a key to understanding the abbreviations alongside it.

It can be observed that Mr. Tambourine Man is the richest in the diversity of literary devices, as it has 7 distinct literary devices. A song with the least literary devices identified is All Along the Watchtower with 4 different literary devices.



## 5 Discussion

Table 2 is a summary of all the literary devices and their role in each chosen song.

Table 2: Summary of the effects of each literary device found in each analysed song.

	Effect in the song				
	Blowin' In The Wind	Mr Tambourine Man	Visions of Johanna	All Along the Watchtower	Every Grain of Sand
Symbol	Add universality, provide concrete representation	Carriers of emotions (either good or bad)	Add universality, moves song away from being an elegy for a past lover		
Allusion / intertextuality	Highlight global problematic in a subtle, implicit way	Helps create dark, surreal, mysterious atmosphere; hints at distorted perception of self	Provides broader context	Biblical, creates sense of importance, appeal of prophecy, accessible to wider audience	Adds universality, provide direct support to the message (Biblical)
Imagery	Lasting impression	Vivid impression, description, author's own experience	Setting scene, descriptiveness, Third person experience of self		Author's own experience, directly supports the message
Synecdoche	Emphasize a trait				
Epithet		Emphasizing extremes (positive or negative)			
Metaphor		Add to the atmosphere (negative; gloomy, surreal)			Evoke negative feelings, irony, create atmosphere
Personification		Emphasize unpleasant feelings, morbidity	Negative feelings (insignificance, helplessness)		
Parallelism		Create rhythm, emphasize negative emotions	Emphasize obsession, constant thoughts		Mimics Biblical texts, elevates the message, indicates God's presence

Hyperbole					Emphasize negative emotions
Archetype				Create universality, timelessness, objectivity	
Rhetoric question	Engagement of the reader		Engagement of the reader, evokes empathy		
Simile					Comparison of Biblical concepts to non-Biblical; accessible to wider audience
Dialogue				Significance, authenticity, objectivity	
Foreshadowing				Urgency, inevitability	

## 5.1 Purpose of literary devices in specific songs

A comprehensive summary of the effect of literary devices will be given in this sub section.

### 5.1.1 Blowin' in the Wind

Dylan uses rhetorical questions to highlight global problems, often in connection to allusions that critique social problems. To add a dimension of universality, Dylan uses symbols while also using synecdoche to reinforce visual imagery in war-related themes. The combination of visual and auditory imagery has the function of intensifying the message, leaving a more lasting impression.

### 5.1.2 Mr. Tambourine Man

By using intertextuality, Dylan creates a dark and surreal atmosphere, and he more effectively achieves the desired outcome by referencing Yeats and Rimbaud, both known for creating dark and surreal pieces. In this song, symbols are the carriers of emotions and the speaker's attitudes, while parallelisms and epithets are used to emphasize them. Imagery has the primary role of evoking those feelings in the reader and thus leaving a stronger impression. Personification serves as a tool for expressing the author's feeling of losing touch with self, due to living in a dreadful reality. Lastly, metaphors are used most sparingly, and they are used

to help create an apocalyptic image of the world which Bob Dylan tries to escape by running to the world of music.

#### 5.1.3 Visions Of Johanna

The author uses abundant auditory and visual imagery to better present the speaker's negative and fatalistic view on their surroundings. By including third person observations and by using personifications within imagery, feelings of helplessness and insignificance are created. By using parallelisms and the symbols of Johanna (the unattainable ideal) and Louise (best attainable option), the author highlights the paradox of constantly striving for unreachable perfection despite knowing that it cannot be reached while having the second-best option at hand to soothe one's own wounded ego and likely hurting someone in the process. Using the allusion to Mona Lisa, Dylan hinted that the real persons (if there are any) behind the names in the poem are meant to stay a mystery, which makes the song more open to interpretation and less likely an elegy for a past lover.

#### 5.1.4 All Along the Watchtower

Dylan used archetypes to create a timeless and more objective view on the issue of humanity's exploitation of nature and by framing it as a dialogue to add objectivity. Allusions are exclusively biblical and enable the author to reach a wider audience and evoke a call for action. It could be argued that Dylan aims to evoke fear of apocalypse either in biblical or natural sense, making people more motivated to behave proactively.

#### 5.1.5 Every Grain of Sand

Dylan used parallelisms primarily to depict his feelings but present them in an elevated way, imitating the typical literary device found in the Bible, adding an air of solemnity to his song. He also uses biblical allusions to illustrate his feeling of God's eternal presence, which supports the main message of the poem, that Judeo-Christian Bible is the source of all knowledge because the world is God's own working. Using a simile right after has the function of making his allusions understandable to a non-religious audience. Genitive metaphors generally create a dark and ironic atmosphere, helping Dylan get across the one's feeling of meaninglessness because anyways, he feels that everything is in the hands of God and not in his control. Finally,

using auditorial imagery, Dylan creates a sense of God's voice guiding him while Dylan is writing the song and so he even says it in an interview in 1985.

## 5.2 Evaluation of the hypotheses

### 5.2.1 Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1 states: "*All of the selected songs will display multiple different literary devices.*" The hypothesis is confirmed.

Figure 1 clearly shows that the lowest number of identified literary devices in a song is 4 in *All Along the Watchtower*.

### 5.2.2 Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 states: "A specific literary device will have a similar purpose in all of the selected Dylan's songs." The hypothesis is confirmed.

Using Table 2 it can be observed that the primary role of symbolism is creating a sense of universality and giving abstract ideas (e. g. emotions) a concrete representation. Allusions are constantly used to provide a broader, more universal context and make the message accessible to the wider audience and help create the atmosphere (e. g. dark and surreal when using reference to Yeats or Rimbaud and elevated and mysterious with allusions to the Bible). Similarly, the use of archetypes creates a sense of universality, too. Imagery is used to create a more vivid and lasting impression on the reader while synecdoche, hyperbole and epithet, all of which appear only once, further emphasize the traits of the object that they refer to. Both metaphor and personification are used to show the speaker's negative feelings and make them more pronounced to the intended audience. When combined with parallelisms, those emotions and attitudes are further emphasized because the author draws the reader's attention to them. Since parallelisms are also common in the Bible, their presence creates an elevated, solemn atmosphere. The author uses rhetorical questions to further engage the reader, making the message seem more significant and personal. Finally, a dialogue and foreshadowing are used only in *All Along the Watchtower* and they both create feeling of significance, urgency and inevitability.

### 5.2.3 Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3 states: *“Biblical allusions will be found in the songs.”* It is confirmed.

Knowing that Bob Dylan was, even though he was raised Jewish, baptized again and fully converted to Christianity in the 1970s, Biblical allusions were expected to be observed. On multiple occasions he talked about his close relationship with God and Church in the interviews and often directly mentions characters from the Bible in his songs. (Attwood & Fyffe, 2018).

Biblical allusions appear more than once in the selection of songs, namely in Every Grain of Sand and in All Along the Watchtower. Every Grain of Sand is considered one of the most religious writings penned by Bob Dylan and describes his feelings that God is present everywhere and even influences his song writing. Dylan reported that he had got the inspiration and then wrote down the words that he felt were coming from somewhere else and not from himself in an interview in 1985. The song is a celebration of Dylan’s career and God’s almightiness that helped him create it. (Bunn, 2021).

Additionally, All Along the Watchtower can be seen as a theme from King James’ version of The Book of Isaiah (21:5-9) that Bob Dylan took and framed as a parable. Considering its source, it is obvious that it is a deeply religious writing and talks about the two horsemen, the Joker and the Thief, approaching a watchtower to bring the message that the Great Babylon, the city of sins, has fallen. Another Biblical allusion is in the very last verse of the song, hinting at an apocalypse as another Biblical event. (Bowie, 2020).

## 6 Conclusion

In answering the research question *How and with what effect does Bob Dylan use literary devices in selected songs?* the analysis show that Dylan often achieves the following effects with the use of rhetorical devices (Table 2):

- 1) A sense of universality is achieved with symbolism, allusions, and the use of archetypes. Symbolism adds to the sense of universality either in the form of conventional symbols (e. g. white dove as a symbol of peace) or symbols, whose meaning is content-specific and contextual (e. g. Mr. Tambourine man). With allusions Dylan often refers to global problems, e. g. the Vietnam war, the Bible – fall of Babylon – or other artists and their works (Da Vinci’s Mona Lisa, W.B. Yeats, A. Rimbaud). Archetypes, such as Joker and Thief, highlight universality as ever-present figures in human history.
- 2) Enhancing the audience’s impression by highlighting the speaker’s experience is achieved using imagery, epithets, and foreshadowing. The chosen songs only contain auditory and visual imagery and are used descriptively of the speaker’s experience of surroundings, while epithets are often included in the imagery to emphasize their characteristics “past the haunted frightened trees...”.
- 3) Metaphors, parallelisms, and personification create atmosphere. Especially metaphors in the form of genitive constructions are used exclusively to highlight the surreal and gloomy atmosphere. Parallelisms emphasize the atmosphere’s effect as they draw attention to the repetitive parts of the song, while personification shows the speaker’s feeling of hopelessness.
- 4) Rhetorical questions have a role of engaging the audience, which is done by inviting the reader to think about the issues they address.
- 5) The use of foreshadowing and dialogue creates feelings of significance, urgency and inevitability.

Lastly, due to the fact that this essay focuses only on five of Dylan’s most popular songs, it would be an overgeneralization to say Dylan uses these literary devices that same way in all

his songs, as he penned over 500 of them. For this, a larger-scale analysis of his body of work would be necessary.

## 7 Social responsibility

This research project did not in any sense disregard any right of any individual, nor did it threaten the well-being of any living organism. Additionally, by correctly citing the authors of sources that I have used in this investigation, the authors of any intellectual property were protected from abuse of their property, and I did not falsely claim any knowledge that was not of entirely mine acquisition. Even though Dylan's songs discuss some political and ethical issues, in this paper they were not discussed more than necessary due to their sensitive nature to avoid any misunderstanding as a consequence of my possible lack of knowledge about the subject. Additionally, the efforts to leave minimal carbon footprint were kept in mind throughout and ensured by having only the essential final version of the research paper printed out due to the requirement of handing in one printed version of the research paper. All feedback and corrections were given in electronic form.

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How many roads must a man walk down  
Before you call him a man?

How many seas must a white dove sail  
Before she sleeps in the sand?

Yes, and how many times must the cannonballs fly  
Before they're forever banned?

The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind  
The answer is blowin' in the wind

Yes, and how many years must a mountain exist  
Before it is washed to the sea?

And how many years can some people exist  
Before they're allowed to be free?

Yes, and how many times can a man turn his head  
And pretend that he just doesn't see?

The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind  
The answer is blowin' in the wind

Yes, and how many times must a man look up  
Before he can see the sky?

And how many ears must one man have  
Before he can hear people cry?

Yes, and how many deaths will it take 'til he knows  
That too many people have died?

The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind  
The answer is blowin' in the wind

ALLUSION  
SYMBOL  
IMAGERY  
SYNECDOCHE  
METEORICAL QUESTION

## Mr. Tambourine man

Hey, Mr. Tambourine Man, play a song for me  
I'm not sleepy and there is no place I'm going to  
Hey, Mr. Tambourine Man, play a song for me  
In the jingle jangle morning I'll come following you

EPITHET  
METAPHOR  
IMAGERY  
SYMBOL  
PERSONIFICATION  
PARALLELISM  
ALLUSION/  
INTERTEXT.

Though I know that evening's empire has returned into sand  
Vanished from my hand

Left me blindly here to stand, but still not sleeping  
My weariness amazes me, I'm branded on my feet  
I have no one to meet

And the ancient empty street's too dead for dreaming

Hey, Mr. Tambourine Man, play a song for me  
I'm not sleepy and there is no place I'm going to  
Hey, Mr. Tambourine Man, play a song for me  
In the jingle jangle morning I'll come following you

Take me on a trip upon your magic swirling ship  
My senses have been stripped  
My hands can't feel to grip  
My toes too numb to step

Wait only for my boot heels to be wandering  
I'm ready to go anywhere, I'm ready for to fade  
Into my own parade

Cast your dancing spell my way, I promise to go under it  
Hey, Mr. Tambourine Man, play a song for me  
I'm not sleepy and there is no place I'm going to  
Hey, Mr. Tambourine Man, play a song for me  
In the jingle jangle morning I'll come following you

Though you might hear laughing, spinning, swinging madly across the sun

It's not aimed at anyone  
It's just escaping on the run

And but for the sky there are no fences facing  
And if you hear vague traces of skipping reels of rhyme

To your tambourine in time  
It's just a ragged clown behind

I wouldn't pay it any mind

It's just a shadow you're seeing that he's chasing

Hey, Mr. Tambourine Man, play a song for me ...

...

And take me disappearing through the smoke rings of my mind

Down the foggy ruins of time

Far past the frozen leaves

The haunted frightened trees

Out to the windy beach

Far from the twisted reach of crazy sorrow

Yes, to dance beneath the diamond sky

With one hand waving free

Silhouetted by the sea

Circled by the circus sands

With all memory and fate

Driven deep beneath the waves

Let me forget about today until tomorrow

Hey, Mr. Tambourine Man, play a song for me  
I'm not sleepy and there is no place I'm going to  
Hey, Mr. Tambourine Man, play a song for me  
In the jingle jangle morning I'll come following you



## Visions of Johanna

Ain't it just like the night to play tricks when you're tryin' to be so quiet?

We sit here stranded, though we're all doin' our best to deny it  
And Louise holds a handful of rain, temptin' you to defy it

Lights flicker from the opposite loft

In this room the heat pipes just cough

The country music station plays soft

But there's nothing, really nothing to turn off

Just Louise and her lover so entwined

And these visions of Johanna that conquer my mind

In the empty lot where the ladies play blindman's bluff with the key chain

And the all-night girls they whisper of escapades out on the "D" train

We can hear the night watchman click his flashlight

Ask himself if it's him or them that's insane

Louise, she's all right, she's just near

She's delicate and seems like the mirror

But she just makes it all too concise and too clear

That Johanna's not here

The ghost of electricity howls in the bones of her face

Where these visions of Johanna have now taken my place

Now, little boy lost, he takes himself so seriously

He brags of his misery, he likes to live dangerously

And when bringing her name up

He speaks of a farewell kiss to me

He's sure got a lotta gall to be so useless and all

Muttering small talk at the wall while I'm in the hall

ALLUSION  
PERSONIFICATION  
PARALLELISM  
SYMBOL  
IMAGERY

How can I explain?

It's so hard to get on

And these visions of Johanna, they kept me up past the dawn

Inside the museums, infinity goes up on trial

Voices echo this is what salvation must be like after a while

But Mona Lisa musta had the highway blues

You can tell by the way she smiles

See the primitive wallflower freeze

When the jelly-faced women all sneeze

Hear the one with the mustache say, "Jeez, I can't find my knees"

Oh, jewels and binoculars hang from the head of the mule

But these visions of Johanna, they make it all seem so cruel

The peddler now speaks to the countess who's pretending to care for him

Savin', "Name me someone that's not a parasite and I'll go out and say a prayer for him"

But like Louise always says

"Ya can't look at much, can ya man?"

As she, herself, prepares for him

And Madonna, she still has not showed

We see this empty cage now corrode

Where her cape of the stage once had flowed

The fiddler, he now steps to the road

He writes ev'rything's been returned which was owed

On the back of the fish truck that loads

While my conscience explodes

The harmonicas play the skeleton keys and the rain

And these visions of Johanna are now all that remain

### All along the watchtower

ALLUSION!  
ARCHETYPES

There must be some kind of way outta here  
Said the **joker** to the **thief**  
There's too much confusion  
I can't get no relief

Business men, they drink my wine  
Plowmen dig my earth  
None will level on the line  
Nobody offered his word  
Hey, hey

No reason to get excited  
The **thief**, he kindly spoke  
There are many here among us  
Who feel that life is but a joke  
But, uh, but you and I, we've been through that  
And this is not our fate  
So let us stop talkin' falsely now  
The hour's getting late, hey

Hey

All along the **watchtower**  
Princes kept the view  
While all the women came and went  
Barefoot servants, too  
Well, uh, outside in the cold distance  
A wildcat did growl  
**Two riders were approaching**  
And the wind began to howl, hey

## Every grain of sand

In the time of my confession, in the hour of my deepest need  
When the pool of tears beneath my feet flood every newborn seed  
There's a dying voice within me reaching out somewhere  
Toiling in the danger and in the morals of despair

ALLUSION  
IMAGERY  
PARALLELISM  
METAPHOR  
SIMILE

Don't have the inclination to look back on any mistake  
Like Cain, I behold this chain of events that I must break  
In the fury of the moment, I can see the master's hand  
In every leaf that trembles, in every grain of sand

Oh, the flowers of indulgence and the weeds of yesteryear  
Like criminals, they have choked the breath of conscience and good  
cheer

And the sun beat down upon the steps of time to light the way  
To ease the pain of idleness and the memory of decay

I gaze into the doorway of temptation's angry flame  
And every time I pass that way I always hear my name  
Then onward in my journey, I come to understand  
That every hair is numbered like every grain of sand

I have gone from rags to riches in the sorrow of the night  
In the violence of a summer's dream, in the chill of a wintery light  
In the bitter dance of loneliness fading into space  
In the broken mirror of innocence on each forgotten face

I hear the ancient footsteps like the motion of the sea  
Sometimes I turn, there's someone there, at times it's only me  
I'm hanging in the balance of a perfect finished plan  
Like every sparrow falling, like every grain of sand