

FORMAL DIALECTIC IN HEAVY METAL MUSIC

by

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DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

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This dissertation investigates verse-chorus-bridge form in heavy metal music. Spread by the popular music industry and media, verse-chorus-bridge form became the most prominent form in rock music from the 1970s onward (Stephenson 2002). At the same time, heavy metal emerged as an international cosmopolitan subculture, freely adopting and modifying the syntax of popular music while negotiating its consumerist trappings (Weinstein 2001, Hudson 2021). I demonstrate that metal transformations of verse-chorus-bridge form enhance its value by contributing a vocabulary of section types and reorient its teleology to make for more flexible song structures. Drawing on a variety of examples from various metal subgenres, I show that verse-chorus-bridge form—usually appearing as a *compound AABA form* (Covach 2005)—is used as the template for expanded and truncated formal types (collectively called *rotational form with bridge* (Hudson 2021)) and that bridge sections are accorded greater importance in heavy metal as compared to other genres of commercial popular music. Bridge sections play a special role in signifying the metal genre and provide a means to diverge from referential models. By creating moments of expectation in bridge sections with instrumental passages and dance sections, metal artists divert the usual chorus teleology of verse-chorus-bridge form. These new methods of organization reinvigorate the possibilities of song form within metal and artists influenced by metal (Osborn

2011). Avant-gardism in metal composition therefore functions to produce new technologies within the dialectic of the popular music industry.

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INTRODUCTION

This dissertation explores the ways musical form manifests in heavy metal songs and connections between compositional practice and capitalist political economy. The notion that culture gains meaning from its sociopolitical contexts is not a new one. According to a common refrain, such mechanisms in metal music are prominently displayed as subjects of critique as a product of the structural contradictions that undergird industrial capitalism.¹ While acknowledging this thesis, I examine the role of form in the wider dialectic of cultural production and the music industry.

From its beginnings in the late 1960s, heavy metal has been one of the most influential styles of rock music. With a generally oppositional attitude and a penchant for transgression, the genre has inspired both a fiercely loyal fanbase and periodic moral panics. The endurance and intrigue of metal subculture has made it a subject of numerous sociological studies,² but theoretical treatment of metal music has had a slow start. The history of academic analysis of metal music now stretches three decades. The earliest musicological monograph dedicated to metal, Robert Walser's *Running With the Devil: Power, Gender, and Madness in Heavy Metal Music*, appeared in 1993, and the first presentation on metal analysis at the national meeting of the Society for Music Theory, "Conflict Between Pitch Class and Timbre Functions in Metallica's 'Devil's Dance' and 'Enter Sandman'," was given by Ciro Scotto in 1999 (following the establishment of the Popular Music Interest Group in 1998). Analytical scholarship was otherwise sparse during this initial decade, operating under the wider umbrella of popular music analysis—a situation similar to the shared spaces of jazz and popular music in the early days of the SMT.³ Limited mentions of

¹ Robert Walser. *Running With the Devil: Power, Gender, and Madness in Heavy Metal Music* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1993), xvi.

² See: Arnett 1996, Weinstein 2000, Purcell 2003, Kahn-Harris 2007, Vasan 2010 and 2011, Hecker 2012, Clifford-Napoleone 2015, Hill 2016.

³ For example, the *Jazz and Popular Music* panel discussion in the 1978 SMT meeting in Minneapolis.

metal can be found scattered throughout the literature on rock analysis, but usually in passing in the course of discussing other phenomena.⁴

Recently, metal analysts have sought more distinct venues for their research, tacitly arguing that their object of study deserves unique attention, a view supported by the aforementioned welter of sociological literature. In the initial volley, music theorists focused on analysis of specific artists and pieces. Such case studies, understandably, favored popular bands like Metallica (Pillsbury 2006, Van Valkenburg 2010) and Dream Theater (McCandless 2013). The idiosyncratic rhythmic and metric techniques of one band alone, the Swedish progressive death metal group called Meshuggah, have received disproportionate attention in academic journals given metal music's relative depth and diversity (Pieslak 2007, Capuzzo 2018, Hannan 2018, Lucas 2018 and 2021). In a move from the particular to the general, some studies address broad stylistic elements, including harmony (Lilja 2004 and 2009, Biamonte 2012, Scotto 2019), timbre (Scotto 2016, Wallmark 2018), rhythm and meter (Garza 2017 and 2021) and form (Elflein 2010, Vanek 2018, Hannan 2019, Hudson 2021).

This dissertation contributes to the understanding of formal experimentalism by way of sociological theory and musical analysis. Namely, while metal songs share the formal components of their mainstream rock counterparts, their organization and scale can differ considerably. Some examples are especially difficult to place; nevertheless, my methodology attempts to explain these as continuous with principles that appear throughout metal repertoire. I observe that metal song structure did not develop independently but has roots in prototypes from rock songs. Musical form is a potent topic for investigation, as form in metal songs is often in direct or indirect dialogue with models emerging from mediated commercial culture. The historical development of popular song

⁴ See: Moore 2012 and 2017, Stephenson 2002, Everett 2004 and 2009, Doll 2009, Nobile 2020.

forms has been a subject of interest, for example, in Ken Stephenson's (2002) evolutionary model of common song forms and Jay Summach's survey of sentential modules in Top-40 songs (2009), and the idea of a creative dialogue pushing stylistic development is the basis of a significant branch of modern discourse on eighteenth-century European classical music (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006). However, these explanations provide little insight into what impels the dialogue and development of form outside of a detached musical sphere where the primary catalysts are artistic influence and structural concerns such as teleology, formal balance, or performance considerations. To connect music to its historical contingencies, I shift the focus away from *artworks* to *artistic production* (Born 2010), factoring economic history and theories of rationalization into musical analysis (Habermas 1984).

Marxist theory posits that political and cultural institutions emerge from and reinforce a society's given *economic mode of production*—the resources, technologies and social relations that maintain humans' relationship to the physical world.⁵ Modes of production organize people's productive activity—that is, their labor—and therefore structure their time and relationship to one another. As an example, the development of opera in the seventeenth century was structurally linked to the system of mercantile capitalism: the social division of labor reflected not only in the court orchestras and opera companies of Florence and Mantua, but also in the routing of profits and taxes from serfs, slaves and contract labor to shareholders and noble patrons. Without a system for the accumulation and distribution of capital, there would have been neither professional musicians nor patrons to hire them.⁶ The context for rock and metal music is the postwar American

⁵ Karl Marx. "Preface to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy" in *Karl Marx and Frederick Engels Selected Works, Volume 1* (Moscow: Progress, 1976), 503–504.

⁶ Manfred F. Bukofzer. *Music in the Baroque Era: From Monteverdi to Bach* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1947), 395–400.

and European music industry, which was instrumental in providing the material means to create rock music and codifying modern song forms.^{7,8}

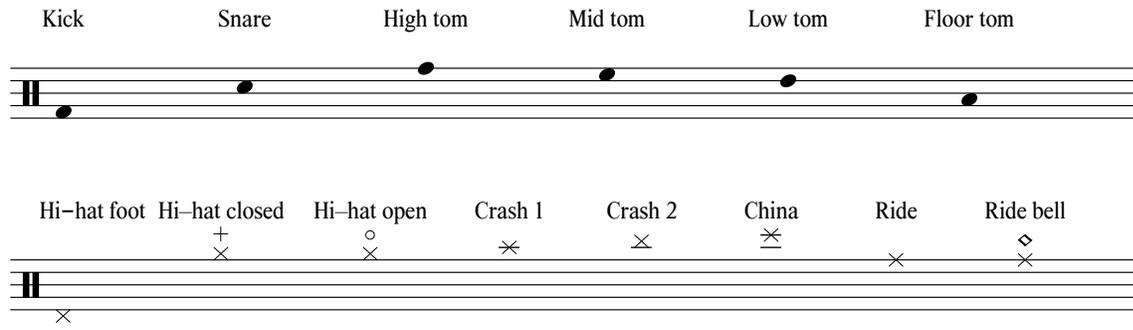
Although there are many diverse subgenres of metal music, sometimes with wildly divergent features, I have chosen not to minimize the nuanced discussion of styles, preferring instead to identify the general impulses and features that carry across subgenres, recognizing the inevitability of exceptions and acknowledging style-specific concepts where necessary.

All musical examples and formal tables are formatted [Artist, “Track Title” (*Album Title*, Year)], so the song “Battery” by Metallica from the 1986 album *Master of Puppets* will be listed in the caption as Metallica, “Battery” (*Master of Puppets*, 1986). Measure numbers in musical figures appear only for analytic purposes, as no authoritative transcription exists for most songs. This means that what is marked as m.1 in an example might come from the middle of the song. Wherever possible, I have attempted to render examples in tablature to make them accessible to musicians familiar with that notation system and demonstrate the guitar fretboard as a physical space. Tablature transcriptions may or may not reflect the artist’s fingerings but should be sufficient to realize a possible interpretation. Unless otherwise specified, tablature examples are in E standard tuning (from lowest to highest, Guitar: E–A–D–G–B–E; Bass: E–A–D–G). As the number and arrangement of instruments can vary on a drum kit, there is no uniform notation. I use the drum legend shown in Figure 0.1. for all examples. Hi-hat articulations apply to all notes after the articulation. The “closed” articulation (+) is only used to cancel an “open” articulation (○); otherwise, the hi-hat is presumed closed by default.

⁷ Peter Manuel, “Formal Structure as a Reflection of Socio-Economic Change,” *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music*, Volume 16, no. 2 (1985), 166–167.

⁸ Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action, Vol. 1: Reason and the Rationalization of Society* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1984), 177–178.

Figure 0.1. Drum set legend.



PART 1: HISTORICAL AND ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

1. A MATERIALIST HISTORY OF METAL FORM

This dissertation contextualizes metal music's formal experimentalism within the music industry and capitalist political economy. In this chapter, I demonstrate that metal form is contingent on historical developments of capitalism through the application of historical materialist analysis. According to the historical materialist thesis, economic systems organize human social activity and relations, and therefore determine culture. Consequently, the shape cultural forms take reflects their economic-social function and reinforces the system of economic production.⁹

Metal compositional strategies then are not arbitrary but prefigured by the historical state of capitalist political economy. The main point of departure, verse-chorus form, was developed to commodify popular music and take advantage of advertising methods that began in the 1880s and which would transmute into their current form in the 1930s. The stripped-down instrumentation of rock bands that preceded metal and their means of sound production were promoted by the American music industry to maximize its own share of capital accumulation by cutting out large, unionized orchestras. Commercial recordings, which would become the principal means for disseminating compositions and promoting bands, both increased the commodification of songs and undercut unions' ability to participate in organized labor actions.

Heavy metal music's relationship with broader popular culture is complicated. On the one hand, the materials and strategies of metal songwriting overlap significantly with those of mainstream rock and pop music. On the other hand, metalheads imagine their community in opposition to the consumerism of the popular mainstream.¹⁰ This distinction is made musically through aesthetics and compositional technique. Verse-chorus form, being a mainstay of popular

⁹ Frederick Engels, "Letter to J. Bloch in Königsberg, September 21[-22], 1890," in *Karl Marx and Frederick Engels Selected Works, Volume 3* (Moscow: Progress, 1976), 487.

¹⁰ Karen Bettez Halnon, "Heavy Metal Carnival and Dis-alienation: The Politics of Grotesque Realism," *Symbolic Interaction*, Vol. 29, no. 1 (2006), 34–35.

music, becomes a symbol of commercialism and a source of predictability (favorably or not). Elements valued in pop music are not necessarily shared in metal: “choruses make anthems, but any metalhead would pick riffs over choruses.”¹¹ Andrew Cope argues that heavy metal, in comparison to rock, “re-centred the function of the music from the vocals to instrumental timbre and textures,” focusing on episodic multi-sectional forms based on guitar riffs “and judicious omission of blues and rock conventions.”¹² But as a practical concern, recognizable song structures are still important for a song’s commercial success. Speaking of the 2003 album, *Anatomy is Destiny*, by the American death metal band, Exhumed, guitarist-vocalist Matt Harvey remarks that choruses could be missed:

The real problem with the album from my point of view was the lack of really memorable choruses. At the time, I was writing really involved lyrics that had layers of meaning and tons of puns / plays on words that kind of got in the way of the directness of the songs, making even the best ones musically (“Death Walks Behind You”, “Consuming Impulse”, “Waxwork”) not nearly as catchy as some of the stuff from the first two albums.¹³

The tension between reified pop structures and the more spontaneous, phenomenological ones engendered by riff-based writing has produced in metal repertoire a range of forms extending from and consciously negating verse-chorus form.

1.2 Song Form

The effect of economic systems can be felt in song form by how technology and commerce constrain composition. Whereas “traditional non-Western musics [and] pre-Renaissance Western music” contain strophic form, additive structures and ostinati, Peter Manuel observes that “very

¹¹ Cosmo Lee, “Arch Enemy – Wages of Sin,” Invisible Oranges, December 8, 2006, <https://www.invisibleoranges.com/arch-enemy-wages-of-sin/>.

¹² Andrew L. Cope, *Black Sabbath and the Rise of Heavy Metal Music in Britain* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2010), 66–70.

¹³ Matt Harvey, “Interview With Matt Harvey of EXHUMED.,” MetalManiacs, August 23, 2010, <https://web.archive.org/web/20160630064028/http://www.metalmaniacs.com/2010/interview-with-matt-harvey-of-exhumed/>.

little [of these features] are identified with song form per se.”¹⁴ Song form and other types of sectional form in Western music reflect the mediatization of music by capitalism: the marking off, commodification and management of discrete units of abstract time (in contrast to cyclical “concrete” time).¹⁵ The logic of commodity exchange has, over the modern period, produced neatly packaged compositions featuring a limited number of section repetitions, clear teleology, and strategic dramatic contrasts endemic to presentational performance.¹⁶

An oft-repeated piece of advice in songwriting manuals is to keep songs “to the point,” a parallel to the economy of time and motion that characterizes industrial management techniques.¹⁷ Charles K. Harris, a songwriter and publisher who was instrumental in the creation Tin Pan Alley in the 1880s, underlines the features of a song that contribute to its memorability and salability: concision, clarity of purpose, and of course good design. “Tell your tale tersely, make it as strong as possible, and let it almost sing itself as you write it.”¹⁸ These axioms limit sectional repetition, in contrast with the free and constant iteration of traditional strophic and variative forms. Marshall McLuhan’s aphorism, “the medium is the message,”¹⁹ finds explicit purchase in another piece of advice offered by Harris, who cautions against writing more than two distinct verses lest the public singers who advertise songs omit them:

¹⁴ Peter Manuel, “Modernity and Musical Structure: Neo-Marxist Perspectives on Song Form and its Successors” in *Music and Marx: Ideas, Practice, Politics*, edited by Regula Qureshi (New York and London: Routledge, 2002), 47.

¹⁵ “Concrete time is characterized less by its direction than the fact that it is a dependent variable. In the traditional Jewish and Christian notions of history, for example, the events mentioned do not occur within time, but structure and determine it. ... Abstract time is an independent variable; it constitutes an independent framework within which motion, events, and action occur. Such time is divisible into equal, constant, nonqualitative units.” Moishe Postone, *Time, Labor and Social Domination* (New York and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 201–202.

¹⁶ Thomas Turino. *Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 37.

¹⁷ Harry Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1998), 60.

¹⁸ Charles K. Harris, *How to Write a Popular Song* (New York, Chicago and London: Charles K. Harris, 1906), 13.

¹⁹ Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (Cambridge and London: The MIT Press, 1994).

In most song lyrics ... two verses are ample. One argument in favor of this is, that the public singer of your songs, who is, of course, its best advertisement, rarely cares to use more than two verses. If three are written, and the third verse contains, as it naturally would, the climax, or moral of your story, the public seldom hears it sung, and accordingly entertains a totally wrong impression as to the merits of your composition, which to them appears unfinished, and, therefore, uninteresting. Thus, a handicap is attached to the song at the outset.²⁰

Although more than a century has passed since Harris' publication and public singers have been rendered historical artifacts by audio recordings and radio, television and internet advertising, the mode of production has stayed basically the same, so the commodification of time remains a material determinant on song form. For instance, John Braheny, a career A&R (artists and repertoire) screener and songwriting coach, recommends that the aspiring songwriter keep the standardized format of radio time slots and the general public's psychology in mind:

In writing lyrics for radio songs, we need to remember that, in a quick three to four minutes, the listener doesn't have time, as in poetry, to wonder what the words really mean.²¹

While it's true that holding someone's attention on the radio is accomplished by a combination of song, artist, and production, you need to start with a song that lends itself well to radio.²²

There are obviously no hard-and-fast rules about this, but the general principle is that every word should perform a valuable function for the song. If a word does nothing to enhance the rhythm, meaning, or sound of the lyric, it shouldn't be there.²³

You want listeners to learn your song quickly and easily. If they hear the same chorus three times during the song, they can go away singing it.²⁴

Although it may be tempting to attribute audiences' reception of catchiness and memorability to psychological phenomena or other transhistorical forces, Harris remarks that

²⁰ Harris 1906, 13.

²¹ John Braheny, *The Craft and Business of Songwriting: A Practical Guide to Creating and Marketing Artistically and Commercially Successful Songs* (Cincinnati: Writer's Digest Books, 2002), 39.

²² *Ibid*, 40.

²³ *Ibid*, 100.

²⁴ *Ibid*, 79.

songs structures focused on memorable choruses were not always popular but only became so during the tenure of song publishers like himself:

Not so many years ago, refrains to songs were not considered so important, but now the chorus is looked upon as the kernel of the whole song. In ninety-nine cases out of every hundred it is the words of the refrain and the melody that the public sings, whistles and hums, and so it becomes known as “the popular hit.”²⁵

Psychology may determine how a song could be memorable, but the premium placed on memorability is a function of media technologies and capital’s requirement to recapture wages from workers.

Other factors contribute to modern song form, and the history of popular *song* is not necessarily that of popular *music*. Arguably, the single most impactful event in the history of the American music industry was its turn from promoting live dance bands to promoting recording vocalists. Prior to the 1940s, the biggest share of the recording market was classical and jazz music (though classical recordings would recede into the background). Classical and jazz musicians were heavily unionized under the American Federation of Musicians (AFM). During the Great Depression (1929–1939), record company profits plummeted to 10% of their 1920s numbers, since consumers couldn’t afford such luxuries for one, but also because of alternate mediums of entertainment like sound film and especially radio, which allowed listeners to hear music for free.²⁶ Radio broadcasts at the time featured live musicians, but recordings (pejoratively referred to as “canned music”) threatened to displace musicians’ jobs at radio stations, theaters, and other live venues.

James C. Petrillo was elected president of the AFM in 1940 on a platform to ensure the employment of live union musicians, including efforts to prevent broadcasters from playing

²⁵ Harris 1906, 14.

²⁶ Pekka Gronow, “The Record Industry: The Growth of a Mass Medium,” *Popular Music* 3 (1983), 63–65.

records which resulted in two recording bans (in 1942–1943 and 1948). During the first ban, record companies, unable to hire unionized instrumentalists, began shifting toward vocal music, releasing records with *a cappella* groups and solo singers. Vocalists were represented by the American Federation of Radio Artists (AFRA), which did not participate in the AFM ban, and were less unionized than instrumentalists to begin with.^{27,28} Anticipating another walkout in response to the 1948 Lea Act (which reversed the union’s gains from the first ban, including the royalties that paid out-of-work musicians to play free public performances through the Music Performance Trust Fund), record companies built a stockpile of albums.²⁹ When a second recording ban was declared, the AFM was in a weaker position due to an anti-labor political environment and the record labels’ strategic preparation. The AFM was fighting an uphill battle and lost. Moving forward, record companies favored smaller bands—like those of the blues, country and, eventually, rock—so that they would not have to pay as many musicians and would be less vulnerable to collective worker action. Vocalists in big bands in the 1930s were just part of the band but came to be marketed as the main attraction after the first recording ban.³⁰ In short, to break the AFM, the record industry displaced instrumental dance music with vocal music and promoted the popular genres that would come to dominate the postwar musical landscape.

Although record companies could cut out the militant AFM by changing ensembles, *a cappella* groups and smaller performing forces were hardly a drop-in replacement for jazz orchestras and the change exposed problems in musical form. Harold Adamson and Jimmy McHugh’s “I Couldn’t Sleep a Wink Last Night” (1943), an AAB tune with a single verse of lyrics,

²⁷ Jonathan Zvi Sard Pollack, *Strike Up the Band: The American Federation of Musicians’ Recording Bans, 1942–1948*, Master’s thesis (University of Wisconsin at Madison, 1992), 34–35.

²⁸ Robert A. Gorman, “The Recording Musician and Union Power: A Case Study of the American Federation of Musicians,” *SMU Law Review* 37, no. 4 (1984), 707.

²⁹ Pollack 1992, 54.

³⁰ Gunther Schuller, *The Swing Era: The Development of Jazz, 1930-1945* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 847.

was recorded several times. In a 1944 live recording from the Raymond Scott Show with Dorothy Collins, (MGM Records – X1137) there are five choruses in total, with only the third featuring the vocalist and the fifth with a tenor saxophone solo. By comparison, a cappella recordings from the same year (Dinah Shore on Victor – 20-1562, and Frank Sinatra on Columbia – 36687) are necessarily more repetitive, with both the solo vocalist and the a cappella chorus singing the single line of verse many times. Other big band recordings (Jimmy Cash on the Burns and Allen show in 1943, Barry Wood on Something for the Girls with Al Goodman’s orchestra in 1944) strike a middle ground, playing two choruses with the singer on the first, then the band for the first half of the second chorus with the singer returning in the second half. Big bands could stretch a single verse lyric farther by alternating the band and singer and use various compositional techniques (including soli sections, shout choruses and improvised solos) to create variety within the arrangement. However, the narrative thrust of vocal music would require new devices, leading to innovations that turned recorded songs into “set items”³¹ with specially arranged formal elements to highlight the composition.

When the broadcasting industry completed its transition from live music to recorded programming, recording formats placed limitations on musical form. For instance, the 78-rpm shellac record standard could only hold three minutes of music per side. RCA Victor sold 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ “long-playing” (LP) records that could hold approximately 44 minutes of music (22 minutes per side) as early as 1931, but they were used mainly for classical recordings and did not see as many sales as the earlier 78s due to a decrease in aggregate spending during the Great Depression.³² At this time, the radio was a more affordable option for music consumption. Syndicated radio broadcasters settled on the 78-rpm transcription discs for distribution in 1929, generating the

³¹ Turino 2008, 58–59.

³² Ibid, 203–204.

format of the three-minute radio pop song.^{33,34} Not only did radio songs have a time limit, but recording artists were apparently compelled to use it. David Temperley’s corpus analysis of the Rolling Stone “500 Greatest Songs of All Time” list shows an average song length of 3:43 between the years 1949 and 1965, and then 4:26 from 1966 onward. Songs during the earlier period tended toward simple verse-chorus and AABA design, with verse-chorus form being strophic repetitions of the verse and chorus and AABA usually being an expanded version of the form such as AABABA. Temperley states, “If an AABA song (with, say, a 12-measure repeating section) was nothing but AABA, its duration might be well under two minutes; further material would be needed to bring it up to acceptable length.”³⁵ By the late 1950s, verse-chorus-bridge form had begun to emerge from verse-chorus and AABA form, fusing the catchy verse-chorus schema Charles K. Harris wrote about at the beginning of the century with the dramatic bridge section from AABA form. Bridge sections became more prominent with each decade since the 1960s. Jason Summach’s survey of *Billboard Annual* Top-20 songs, 1955–1989, demonstrates that as strophic and AABA songs declined in incidence, verse-chorus-bridge songs became more prominent.^{36,37}

Table 1.1. Incidence of verse-chorus-bridge songs (144 total) as a percentage of verse-chorus songs (total 408), by five-year period.³⁸

1955–9	1960–4	1965–9	1970–4	1975–9	1980–4	1985–9
16%	10%	29%	29%	29%	38%	54%

Not only did bridge sections appear with greater frequency in verse-chorus songs, but in AABA songs as well. Summach notes that in 1975, there was a sharp increase of AABA songs with multiple bridges. The inclusion of multiple bridges in the had the double effect of “creating

³³ Katz 2005, 2–3.

³⁴ Kyle Barnett, *Record Cultures: The Transformation of the U.S. Recording Industry* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2020), 168–169.

³⁵ David Temperley, *The Musical Language of Rock* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 155.

³⁶ Jay Summach, *Form in Top-20 Rock Music, 1955–89*, Ph.D. diss. (Yale University, 2012), 168.

³⁷ *Ibid*, 188.

³⁸ Reproduced from Example 5.38 in Summach 2012, 250.

particular teleological effects” such as building momentum and anticipation, underscoring lyrical themes, and increasing compositions’ expressive range and increasing song length (by a median of 30 to 40 seconds in Summach’s corpus).³⁹

Being limited to broadcast charts for hit singles, these figures (and those of other charts-based corpus studies) present a particular view of musical practice filtered through the music industry’s promotion and advertising efforts. Charts are, after all, compiled by the music industry from the music industry’s own mediatization venues, with significant financial barriers (in the form of copyrights, broadcasting licenses, manufacturing technology, and the like) preventing the entry of competition. Thierry Rayna and Ludmila Striukova characterize the music industry as a *monometapoly*, a combination of a monopoly (the sole seller of a commodity, e.g., musical recordings or sheet music) and a monopsony (the sole buyer of a commodity, e.g., musicians’ labor). Through vertical integration and connections with other media companies, the music industry was able to influence advertising, maintaining a monopoly not only over the production of songs but their distribution as well. The expense of production technology was an initial barrier to entry for competitors, but as these options became cheaper and more widely available, record companies could rely on copyrights and a back catalogue of hits as a permanent “war chest” to give a competitive advantage over new labels.⁴⁰

During the Great Depression, the music industry became concentrated into a small number of firms through mergers and acquisitions. During the period of 1948 to 1955 (following the defeat of AFM’s recording bans), between 8–14 firms and 9–16 record labels controlled all the market shares in the Weekly Top Ten of the popular music single record market. However, Richard

³⁹ Ibid, 88–92.

⁴⁰ Thierry Rayna and Ludmila Striukova, “Monometapoly or the Economics of the Music Industry,” *Prometheus: Critical Studies in Innovation* 27, no. 3 (2009), 212–216.

Peterson and David Berger argue that the 1948–1955 oligopoly resulted in relatively homogeneous products, and consequently “unsated demand.” They give as evidence of this unsated demand the emerging market of “communal music—that is not merchandised through the mass media but is disseminated primarily through live performance” such as jazz, R&B, country & western gospel, trade union songs, and urban folk revival. Independent labels that came into being in the period following 1948 catered to these communal musics. The emergence of (mostly non-unionized, untrained) rock-n-roll bands in 1955 displaced (unionized, trained) woodwind dance bands, and, along with the availability of cheap transistor radios, led to a diversity of products. Advertisement for these innovative styles took the form of radio stations dedicated to addressing each discrete taste group.⁴¹

A specialist class of music professional, the disc jockey, curated the radio programs that were essential to the profusion of new genres. Aware of the power of this influence, independent record companies illegally paid radio stations to play their music without disclosing the paid advertisement, a practice called *payola*. Payola prevents the entry of competitors and distorts consumer demand. So, while rock-n-roll was seen as rebellious and new, this posture must be contextualized by the class interests of record company shareholders to become the successors of the pre-war recording industry. As part of the paradigm shift in the rock era, the ideology of rock rebellion was weaponized in a dispute between the AFM and rock record labels, first over a congressional hearing on payola in 1958, and then a conflict over international touring (which the union argued would violate their contracts) when the Beatles and other British rock bands began to play in the United States—the so-called British Invasion. Concerns about labor practices (as in the earlier recording bans) were transmuted into generational cultural conflict, putting the newly

⁴¹ Richard A. Peterson and David G. Berger, “Cycles in Symbol Production: The Case of Popular Music,” *American Sociological Review* 40, no. 2 (1975), 160–165.

formed youth culture into service of capital.⁴² (That said, the AFM did themselves no favors by refusing to accept rock musicians into their ranks, as they had done previously with jazz. This lesson should have been learned during the 1942 recording ban, when the AFM was forced to reconsider its attitude toward players of the harmonica, ocarina, and other non-orchestral instruments. In retrospect, the union's stubborn aesthetic opposition to rock-n-roll was a strategic blunder.)⁴³

Peter Alexander corroborates Peterson and Berger's claim coordinating market homogeneity with oligopolistic collusion, but also observes homogeneity in periods of low market concentration. Alexander surveys sheet music transcriptions of Top 40 songs from 1955 to 1988, assigning qualitative values to meter, form, accent, harmonic structure, and melodic range. Although I have questions about the music-analytical method (for example, whether a melody's range is within or exceeds an octave is a reliable measure of product diversity), the variable for form essentially measures whether a song is in verse-chorus-bridge form or not (Figure 1.1).

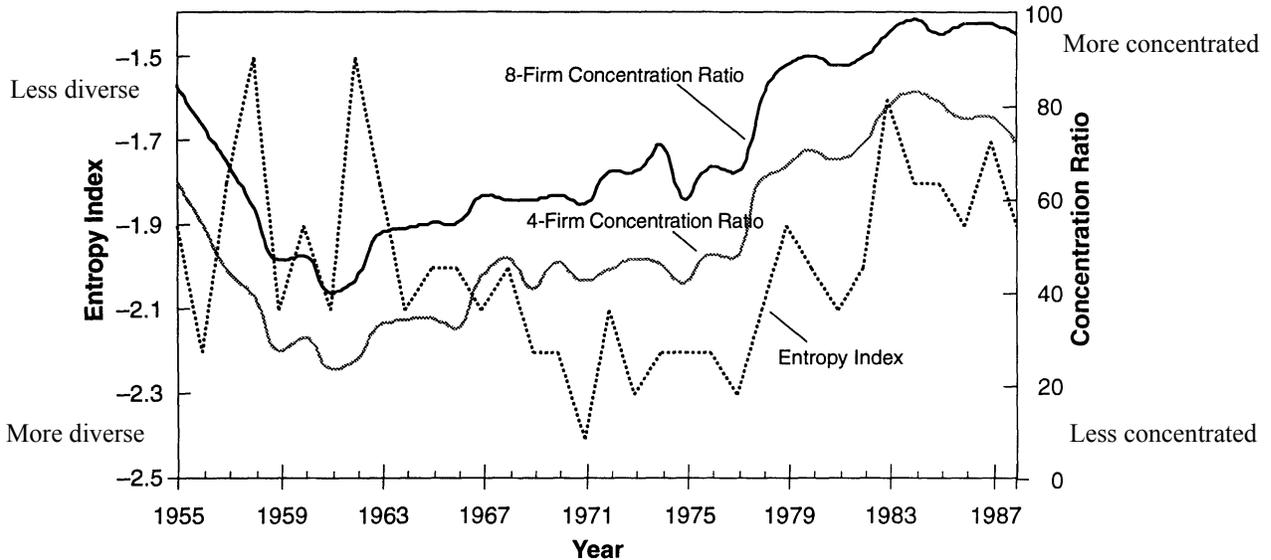
Alexander contradicts the claim that the market was more diverse in the second half of the 1950s but finds greater diversity during the period of rock's hegemony when market concentration was lower, 1967–1977. Homogeneity increased, along with market concentration, from 1978–1988. Overall, Alexander's entropy index demonstrates that the relationship between compositional diversity and market concentration is nonlinear: periods of very low and very high market concentration are both relatively homogenous, and periods of moderate concentration are relatively diverse.⁴⁴

⁴² Michael Roberts, "A Working-Class Hero is Something to Be: The American Musicians' Union's Attempt to Ban the Beatles, 1964," *Popular Music* 29, no. 1 (2010), 5–7.

⁴³ Michael Roberts, "You Say You Want a (Counter) Revolution? Attempts by the Musicians' Union to Jam Up Rock and Roll," *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas* 4, no. 4 (2017), 34–35.

⁴⁴ Alexander 1996, 171–174.

Figure 1.1. Concentration Ratios and Entropy Index: Music Recording Industry, 1955–1987⁴⁵



Correlating Alexander’s measures of market concentration against Summach’s more granular assessment of formal trends, it can be seen that as the market consolidated from 1977 to 1987, verse-chorus-bridge form doubled in frequency.

The basic form having been established, technological developments related to recordings’ runtime and production techniques allowed musicians greater range of expression. As a result, the main unit of popular music production shifted from singles to albums, and the compositional scope of rock records increased considerably during the 1960s and 1970s, as will be discussed in Chapter 5.

1.3 Electrophones and the World-Economy

In addition to creating a new kind of consumer, musical genres also required a new kind of musician: one attendant to the technology and techniques of electronic sound production. The invention of genre in popular music created a market for specialist equipment particular to given

⁴⁵ Reproduced from Alexander 1996, Figure 1. Low (negative) scores on Entropy indicate greater product diversity.

styles.⁴⁶ In metal, the demand for “heaviness” was met with a slew of new technologies. Heaviness is often articulated in terms of timbre, but also includes production and compositional elements such as harmony and speed. While gritty but pitched vocals may have been heavy in the 1970s and in some quarters in the early 1980s, those immersed in nonharmonic vocal techniques emerging from the triad of extreme metal—black, thrash and especially death metal—generally do not consider the older styles to be (as) heavy by modern standards. Heavy guitars are invariably distorted, and bass guitars “are heavy when they give the aural impression of great size.”⁴⁷ Both depend on amplification technology and, in the studio, recording and production technologies and techniques.

Distortion in an amplifier circuit is a product of the gain exceeding the voltage capacity of the preamplifier. The earliest guitar amplifiers, meant for “Hawaiian” lap steel guitars, went into production in 1932.⁴⁸ When the volume was turned up, these low-wattage combo amplifiers would distort. Players at the time found the distortion undesirable for stylistic reasons, but for mechanical ones too: hollow body “Spanish” electric guitars would become microphonic if the gain was too high, causing feedback. For this reason, the first dedicated guitar amplifiers, starting with the Gibson EH-150 (1936), featured higher output and larger speaker cones to give the player more volume before the signal started “breaking up.” To combat the problem of feedback, the solid body Spanish electric guitar was developed independently through the 1940s by Les Paul, Orba Wallace Appleton, Paul Bigsby, and Leo Fender, with Fender introducing two production models in 1950 (the single-pickup Esquire and the dual-pickup Broadcaster, later renamed the Telecaster).⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Jan-Peter Herbst and Jonas Menze, *Gear Acquisition Syndrome: Consumption of Instruments and Technology in Popular Music* (Queensgate: University of Huddersfield Press, 2021), 60.

⁴⁷ Harris M. Berger, *Metal, Rock, and Jazz: Perception and the Phenomenology of Musical Experience* (Hanover and London: Wesleyan University Press, 1999), 58.

⁴⁸ Richard R. Smith, *The History of Rickenbacker Guitars* (Fullerton: Centerstream Publishing, 1987), 28.

⁴⁹ Paul Atkinson, *Amplified: A Design History of the Electric Guitar* (Reaktion, 2020), 74.

Throughout the 1950s, blues guitarists experimented with distortion, Hubert Sumlin and Auburn “Pat” Hare being early examples.⁵⁰ (Junior Barnard played with overdriven amplifier distortion, as well as rudimentary humbucking pickups, in the 1940s, but with an electrified hollow body Epiphone Emperor.)⁵¹ Some guitarists—including Willie Kizzart, Link Wray, and, later, Dave Davies—produced a distorted effect with damaged speakers. In 1955, Seth Lover invented a double coil “humbucker” pickup to be used in Gibson’s electric guitars, reducing hum from the circuit. (Humbucking designs go back to Al Kahn’s 1934 design for Electro-Voice V-1 Velocity microphone, however.)⁵² The basic design on the electric guitar has remained stable since the 1950s, but developments of amplification and effects pedals (also called *stompboxes*) in the 1960s increased the sonic capabilities of the electric guitar.⁵³ Leo Fender’s 1960 design for the 6G6 Bassman—which had a separate amplifier head (containing the preamp and power amp circuits) and speaker cabinet—was modified by Jim Marshall’s technicians to make an amplifier that could compete more easily with drums, producing the Marshall JTM45 in 1963. In 1972, Randall Smith modified Fender amplifiers with an extra gain stage in the preamp, producing the Mesa Boogie Mark I, the first high gain amp. While technologies continue to develop, metal still showcases advancements made in tube amplification during the 60s and 70s.

Merely enumerating the names and technological achievements is to give but one side of the story. From the point of view of political economy, mass-produced electronic consumer goods

⁵⁰ Robert Gordon, “Cotton, James,” in *Encyclopedia of the Blues*, Vol. 1, edited by Edward Komara (New York: Routledge, 2006), 229.

⁵¹ Charles McGovern, “The Music: The Electric Guitar in the American Century” in *The Electric Guitar: A History of an American Icon*, edited by André Millard (Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press, 2004), 31.

⁵² Keith Clark, “A Historical Look at Electro-Voice,” *Pro Audio Encyclopedia*, January 15, 2015, <http://proaudioencyclopedia.com/a-historical-look-at-electro-voice/>.

⁵³ Roy C. Brewer, “Guitars” in *Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World, Vol. 2: Performance and Production* (London and New York: Continuum, 2003), 286–287.

are synonymous with American and European economies following the great European wars of the twentieth century. The animating force behind these conflicts was a battle for political and economic hegemony between the United States and Germany for succession to the empire of Great Britain, which itself was the successor to the European world-economy following the French Revolution of 1799. The United States, of course, was the victor in these wars. Immanuel Wallerstein defines a singular capitalist world-economy “whose temporal boundaries go from the long sixteenth century to the present,” which encompassed Europe and Iberian America at first but has since come to dominate the entire globe, becoming the *global capitalist world-system*.⁵⁴ During this time, three hegemonies—which simultaneously control “agro-industrial production, commerce, and finance” across the world-economy—have come into being: the United Provinces of the Netherlands in the mid-seventeenth century (from which came the Dutch East India Company and Dutch West India Company), the United Kingdom in the mid-nineteenth century, and the United States of America in the mid-twentieth century. Each hegemony formed after long wars that restructured the world-system: the Thirty Years’ War (1618–1648) where Dutch interests triumphed over the Hapsburgs, the Napoleonic wars (1792–1815) where British interests triumphed over France, and World Wars I and II (1914–1945) where U.S. interests triumphed over Germany.⁵⁵

The changeover from one hegemony to another is a function of capitalism’s normal operation. The hegemonic power must stratify the world-system into an imperial core and an exploited periphery, with some intermediate states called the semi-periphery. Core states provide the bulk of the world’s intellectual production, patents, technologies and finished goods. Periphery

⁵⁴ Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Politics of the World-Economy: The States, the Movements, and the Civilizations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 37.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 39–42. Note: Wallerstein calls these *World War Alpha, Beta and Gamma* respectively.

states mainly produce agricultural products and raw materials, and semi-periphery states exhibit a mixture of core-like and periphery-like production. This global division of labor is therefore asymmetric, in favor of the core states and collaborators in the ruling classes within the periphery and semi-periphery. It follows that, if proletarianized workers in periphery states were able to work for their own improvement rather than that of the core, they would be able to develop themselves more efficiently. The reason for periphery states' lack of prosperity is that they are actively prevented from developing by policies and interventions from the core states and their own local ruling classes. This arrangement gives capitalists in the core access to cheap labor in the periphery and semi-periphery and controls the international flow of commodities so the core can accumulate capital at the expense of the rest of the world. Particularly important to the capitalist hegemony is 1) regular development of new technologies and commodities in the core, 2) the availability of cheap labor and resources to produce commodities, 3) a relatively high marginal propensity to consume in the core, created by relatively high wages, and 4) protectionist policies and other forms of state intervention (including military) to artificially maintain monopolies on the core's intellectual products and to secure new labor and consumer markets. However, firms can only maintain a monopoly on their goods for so long before competitors figure out ways to squeeze more profit out of a product by lowering production costs. One tried and true method is to outsource the labor to places where the standard of living—and therefore the average wage—is lower. But this also makes it more difficult to maintain profits with current production techniques. Outsourcing involves drawing new populations into the wage pool while unemployment builds in the core. As the demand for goods or the supply of cheap labor dries up, stagnation and recession follow, putting pressure on capitalists to create new technologies and production techniques again. But competing firms can only go so many places to find cheaper labor, so eventually the core's

economy will cease to turn sufficient profits and it will stagnate, resulting in a recession. At the same time, it becomes necessary to share technological expertise to run factories abroad, so over time the core is less capable of maintaining hegemony over commerce.⁵⁶

The American colonies were once on the periphery of the British empire, but through expansionism grew in influence as Great Britain's hegemony faded. The United States became a major center for technological innovations and new methods of production. American manufacturing came to define industrial production at the turn of the twentieth century, with a management technique called Taylorism, named after Frederick Winslow Taylor. Taylorism analyzes and atomizes the motions of labor to eliminate inefficiencies and control a labor force. Although it is now periodized and declared outmoded, Harry Braverman observed that Taylorism contains "the explicit verbalization of the capitalist mode of production" and that "its fundamental teachings have become the bedrock of all work design."⁵⁷ By precisely specifying the activities of shop labor, management could exercise a high degree of control over every degree of the performance of labor, demanding a degree of output that pushed workers to their limits. Another early turn-of-the-century development was American electrical infrastructure, which made power available for industrial applications.

After 1945, American business interests were able to exercise global distribution of labor and collect tariffs from international trade through developmentalist policy, creating a unipolar global capitalist world-system. Like in all other world-systems, production in periphery states contributed to the economic growth of the core. This global system was administrated under the template of the 1944 Bretton Woods agreements, which required the adoption of the gold-backed

⁵⁶ Ibid, 44–45.

⁵⁷ Harry Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1998), 60.

U.S. dollar as a global reserve currency and created a system for international economic cooperation around the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD). Loans made through these institutions gave states the means to build local industries but stipulated their usage in such a way that “they would do the bidding of their imperial power with which they are in alliance, but as a junior partner.”⁵⁸

Popular music is implicated in the world-economy by its relations of production. A decisive development came with the mass production of electrophones. Fender was founded in California in 1946. They made several innovations to the productive process, including bolt-on neck construction, which cuts down both on manufacture and repair costs by separating the guitar into two large parts.⁵⁹ Lower production costs made Fender competitive for a while. But during the 1970s, semi-peripheral Japanese firms produced unlicensed copies of Fender designs. Because of the difference in labor costs, Fender was not able to enter the Japanese market, so Fender negotiated with the Japanese factories to use their brand name. Satisfied with this arrangement, Fender wanted a way to make cheaper guitars closer to home, so in 1987 they contracted some of the Japanese FujiGen team to outfit a factory in Mexico, another semi-periphery state. According to Fender CEO Bill Mendello,

FujiGen brought their machinery with them, plus five or six people. We opened up our Mexican operation, and FujiGen trained the people, using their techniques. So the manufacture of guitars in Mexico was more Japanese-like than it was US-like. We had a few people from the USA help them, but for the most part the training, the techniques, the painting, were all Japanese.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Andre Gunder Frank, “Debunk Mythology, Reorient Reality” in *Theory and Methodology of World Development: The Writings of Andre Gunder Frank*, edited by Sing C. Chew and Pat Lauderdale (New York: Palgrave-MacMillan, 2010) 249–250.

⁵⁹ Paul Atkinson, *Amplified: A Design History of the Electric Guitar* (London: Reaktion Books, 2021) 70–72.

⁶⁰ Tony Bacon, “35 years of Fender Mexico: a timeline,” *Guitar World* (July 18, 2022), <https://www.guitarworld.com/features/35-years-fender-mexico>.

Dan Smith, leader of Fender’s electric guitar team, confirmed, “The original plan was for Mexico to make products for export to the USA and other parts of the world, plus a lower-priced line of product for the Japanese market. This was Fujigen’s plan for combating the production being lost by Japan to Korea.”⁶¹ Other manufacturers would follow Fender’s scheme for dividing their production lines into instruments produced within the core and without.

Another technology would factor into metal’s production and distribution: magnetic tape. After World War II, tape recorders from Germany entered the United States and began to be used in professional music settings.⁶² However, it wasn’t until consumer electronics had been sufficiently developed—initially in the 1960s but especially after the introduction of Dolby type B noise reduction and increased magnetization from chromium dioxide tape in the 1970s—that the technology became tenable as a commercial medium for music.⁶³ An especially impactful development was the Sony corporation’s Walkman portable compact cassette player in 1979. The individualized listening experience the Walkman afforded consumers allowed for ever-more particularized lifestyle marketing and the cultivation of (sub)cultural identities under the totality of neoliberal commodification⁶⁴ Increased access to affordable recording and playback technology allowed amateur musicians to harness both the means of producing and distributing their music.

Bands could advertise their demos in fanzines published by other members of the metal community. Unlike capitalist marketing, the zine would not generate profit through the sale of advertising space for these demos. However, as a tradeoff, zines had no contractual obligation to represent demos positively. As an example, in issue 7 of the German zine, *Metal Warriors*, staff

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Albin Zak, *The Poetics of Rock: Cutting Tracks, Making Records* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2001), 10.

⁶³ Eric D. Daniel, C. Denis Mee and Mark H. Clark, *Magnetic Recording: The First 100 Years* (Piscataway: IEEE Press, 1999), 105–106.

⁶⁴ Timothy Taylor, *Music and Capitalism: A History of the Present* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 47

writer Michael Voss makes no effort whatsoever to butter up the sole demo tape produced by the short-lived German band Gorrnhoea (sic), “Fuck AIDS – Join Gorrnhoea.”

Shitmetal at its best...absolute beginners try to jump on the Thrash bandwagon. But they didn't met (sic) the bandwagon, they fell into the garbage-can!!!! Yeah, it's TRASH! If you think you've too much money, buy this bad four-track recording for 10 DM (!!!) at: C. Halder, Leimäcker str. 14, 7996 Meckenbeuren, West Germany.⁶⁵

However, zines still needed to raise money to fund their printing and would sell ad space to businesses. In the same issue, editor Rüdiger Schmitz confides the financial realities of publishing a zine but makes it clear that the publication is still oriented around the community.

Hi friends!

First of all I want to say sorry for the extreme day (sic). The reason for the delay is quickly told: we had serious problems to get all the bills for #6 paid...this is also the reason why we don't use glossy paper again because it was just too expensive and we don't like to raise the price of our mag. I mean we could have used glossy paper again, but with less pagas (sic), but that's bullshit!!!

The most important things are the stuff that's featured and not what it is printed on. As you can see we added some more pages but this may change with the next issues as we want try (sic) releasing METAL WARRIORS more often, like three times a year.

Another problem is that many record labels don't give ads to Fanzines anymore, which makes the whole thing even harder for us. But we will keep on doing METAL WARRIORS as long as you like to read what we think about the LP's, Demos, and the scene in general. And right now it's fun being involved into (sic) the scene cause there are so many great bands coming up these days and they deserve your and our support.

Keep on buying Demos, Fanzines, underground records etc., the scene needs your help.

Okay, I think I've bored you enough, so have fun and TAKE CARE!

-Rüdiger-⁶⁶

Despite financial necessities, metal fans were able to operate in parallel to mass media through tape trading. Not bearing the obligation to generate profits for studios and alienate themselves from the products of their labor, the self-organizing underground metal scene was able

⁶⁵ Rüdiger Schmitz, *Metal Warriors 7* (Neuss, 1990), 62.

⁶⁶ *Ibid*, 3.

to be more reflexive and produce its own modes of expression.⁶⁷ Although “Metal history is most often summed up by metalheads as a progressive quest for ever-heavier music,”⁶⁸ the parallel existence of tape-trading networks to mainstream media offers a slightly different narrative. As thrash metal became more mainstream, fans sought underground sources to sate their demand for more extreme music.⁶⁹ Thus, developments in metal aesthetics and technologies from one perspective could appear quite different from another, and not always in a linear manner. For example, Benjamin Hiller demonstrates that melodic death metal bands would “eschew riffs in favour of chord progressions” when the opposite sequence was predominant in other death metal subgenres.⁷⁰ However, it would not suffice to say that no progression had been made. Rather, developments in metal would conform to the contours of a popular music market through an intensive, dialectical relationship.

⁶⁷ Minka Stoyanova and Ariel Huang remark upon similar counter-hegemonic production in hip hop and Jamaican dub (Stoyanova and Huang 2016).

⁶⁸ Berger 1999b, 58.

⁶⁹ Jason Netherton, “Extremity Reframed: Exhuming Death Metal’s Analog Origins” in *Modern Heavy Metal: Markets, Practices and Cultures* (Helsinki: Aalto University, 2015), 312.

⁷⁰ Benjamin Philip Hiller, *Principles of Harmony, Voice Leading and Aesthetics in Early Melodic Death Metal*, Master’s thesis (University of New South Wales, 2017), 61–62.

2. HEAVY METAL IN THE CAPITALIST DIALECTIC

Although frequently imagined as a subversive artform, metal music fits neatly within the historical process of capitalism in terms of innovation, commodity production and mediatization. Along with every other American cultural form, metal has even served imperialist expansion through soft power influence. This analysis demonstrates that metal music is not unlike other cultural products. I conclude with a Habermasian communication model to demonstrate an alternative to countercultural explanations for fundamentalism and experimentalism in metal music in preparation for my own contribution to the theory of form.

2.2 Beyond the Cultural Thesis

In his 1993 monograph, Robert Walser introduces an idealist dialectical framework to link social reality with musical style. Walser looks to the international metal scene for clues and recounts his experience listening to a band from the Hungarian Socialist Republic, Pokolgép. He describes their music as “oppressive, lacking ... the heavy metal dialectic” between freedom and control.⁷¹ This dialectic counterposes different dimensions of the ensemble or rhythmic organization: the band’s rhythm section (bass, drums and rhythm guitar) representing control, the solo voice or lead guitar offering transcendent freedom; and, by extension, the regular beat of the ensemble versus the arhythmic or syncopated accents of the soloist.⁷² In his evaluation of Pokolgép, Walser observes that

...the guitar solos, which are fewer than is normal in U.S. and British metal, offer no escape, no transcendence. The guitars don't contribute transgressive fills (harmonics, bent notes, etc.), and the mood is very controlled and mechanical. No harmonic momentum is ever built up; progressions are heavily grounded by dominant chords, which are rare in Western metal. The lyrics, which my friend translated for me, are poignant and desperate, speaking eloquently of a state of

⁷¹ Robert Walser. *Running With the Devil: Power, Gender, and Madness in Heavy Metal Music* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1993), 33.

⁷² *Ibid*, 53–54.

alienation where there is no future, no past, no freedom, no security, and also no hope, no fantastic transcendence, no dreams of anything better. The lyrics recount youthful and historical pain but, along with the music, suggest no youthful exuberance, no energetic defiance. I don't know the context well enough to assert that the implications of this reading are correct; what seems clear is that the international conventions of heavy metal have been strongly inflected by the particular ideological needs of a local community.⁷³

It is unclear whether Walser means that the “ideological needs of the local community” might include rejection of the potentially transcendental elements he identifies (in which case, the “heavy metal dialectic” is extricable from the genre), or if the music’s semiotic content is merely reflective of its political environment. This passage is the only time music from the Eastern Bloc is mentioned. It must be said that the sample size—a single album from one band—is negligible. Given the narrow channels of circulation in the West for Eastern European metal bands at the time, it is understandable that Walser can only offer a limited analysis. Nevertheless, he makes testable claims.

The simplest assertion to resolve is that metal lyrics embody “youthful exuberance” and “energetic defiance” by default. While such examples are easy to find in Western metal, dismal lyrics are not in short supply either. For instance, Judas Priest’s anthem to the alienation, “Breaking the Law” (1980):⁷⁴

There I was completely wasting, out of work and down
All inside it's so frustrating as I drift from town to town
Feel as though nobody cares if I live or die
So I might as well begin to put some action in my life

Breaking the law, breaking the law
Breaking the law, breaking the law
Breaking the law, breaking the law
Breaking the law, breaking the law

⁷³ Ibid, 33–34.

⁷⁴ “Breaking the Law” potentially supports Walser’s theory, as the song does not contain a solo. The group is otherwise known for the superlative lead guitar capabilities of K.K. Downing and Glenn Tipton, to say nothing of Rob Halford’s effortlessly virtuosic mixed-voice vocal performances.

So much for the golden future I can't even start
I've had every promise broken, there is anger in my heart
You don't know what it's like, you don't have a clue
If you did, you'd find yourself doing the same thing too

The protagonist's frustration stems from unemployment ("out of work and down"), but they do not recognize themselves as a victim of class struggle. With no other options apparently remaining, they resort to criminal activity ("breaking the law"). Giving Walser the benefit of the doubt, one could argue that this criminal resolution can be read as defiance. While crime and obstinacy are sometimes regarded (positively or negatively) as rebellious and anti-systemic, an unstable and precarious working class—divided into an active army and a reserve army of labor—is a structural element of capital.⁷⁵ Neoclassical economists also acknowledge that discharging the labor force is a cyclical feature of capitalist economies: workers are not fully reabsorbed into industries after recessions, when new technologies eliminate the need for certain skills and workers must retrain for new skillsets, creating a "ratchet effect" on employment.⁷⁶ However, it is not machines that make the decision to hire or fire workers but employers. "The point at which the worker is cheaper than the machinery which replaces him or her is determined by more than a mere technical relationship," Harry Braverman clarifies: "it depends as well upon the level of wages, which in turn is affected by the supply of labor [N.B. the unemployed, who will accept lower wages] as measured against the demand."⁷⁷ Although the protagonist in "Breaking the Law" may be transgressing cultural taboos against vagrancy and criminal behavior, they know that this too offers no transcendence from their miserable situation and their decisions ("So I might as well begin to

⁷⁵ Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, Vol. 1 (New York: Penguins Books, 1982), 790.

⁷⁶ A summary of these arguments, as well as a Marxist response, is provided in Hans Despain, "Secular Stagnation: Mainstream Versus Marxian Traditions," *Monthly Review* 67, no. 4 (2015), 39–55.

⁷⁷ Harry Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1998), 163.

get some action in my life”) terminate short of resolving either their individual unemployment or its underlying social contradictions.

Slayer’s “Expendable Youth” (1990) captures another of capitalism’s antinomies, American inner-city gang violence:

Injured soul on the hard ground
Head blown off, face down
Lying in a pool of blood
An accidental death, homicide

Expendable youth fighting for possession
Having control, our principal obsession
Rivalry and retribution
Death the only solution

Struggling to survive
The drug induced warfare
Having control our principal obsession
Expendable youth fighting for possession
Violence is only a friend

During the 1980s and 90s, drugs and violence were prominent themes in public and political discourse. Some parties, notably the journalist Gary Webb, alleged that weapons and drugs flowed into the United States as a consequence of the CIA’s anti-communist activities in Nicaragua, fueling gang violence.⁷⁸ The CIA denied the allegation, but a Senate subcommittee found that U.S. agencies looked the other way while the CIA-supported Contras collaborated with drug and weapon traffickers who smuggled narcotics into the United States. Starting in 1983, planes landed on Contra-friendly airfields in Costa Rica with guns from Panama. Then, “The pilots unloaded the weapons, refueled, and headed north toward the U.S. with drugs.”⁷⁹ The subsequent crack “epidemic” was sensationalized by U.S. media and seized upon as justification for exorbitant law

⁷⁸ Gary Webb, *Dark Alliance: The CIA, the Contras, and the Crack Cocaine Explosion* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 1998).

⁷⁹ U.S. Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, Subcommittee on Terrorism, Narcotics and International Operations, Drugs, Law Enforcement and Foreign Policy, 100th Cong., 2nd sess., 1988, 41.

enforcement budgets, leading to the militarization of police departments.⁸⁰ In “Expendable Youth,” Slayer presents the issue as basically transhistorical and immutable: the gangsters fight for turf because they are compelled to, (mal)adapting to an environment of drugs, perpetual violence, and senseless death, and society accepts them as “expendable.” The song portrays the fatalistic motions of individuals caught in the trap, as well as its tragedies. Again, the allegory’s Sisyphian characters cannot escape their circumstances and are forced to reproduce them or die anyway. However, the hopeless situation does not prevent Slayer from including a guitar solo, though whether the solo can be said to transcend the violence is debatable.

Walser’s comments on the heavy metal dialectic then seem to only describe a particular subset of metal music in the West. Walser’s claims regarding the musical components of Hungarian metal also distort the relationship of geopolitics that brought metal into Hungary in the first place, as well as the historical agency of its actors. Pokolgép’s second studio release, *Pokoli színjáték* (1987), is listed in Walser’s selected discography, so I assume that Walser’s impression of the band is based upon that album. Contrary to Walser’s attribution of bleak Easternness (and perhaps confirming the fears of socialist censors), a contemporary reviewer for the Hungarian magazine *Metallica Hungarica*, described the tour accompanying *Pokoli színjáték* as “the first truly Western concert in the history of Hungarian heavy metal,” replete with pyrotechnics, stage pieces, and other spectacles.⁸¹ The reviewer also describes Pokolgép’s sound as “unique and evolving,” praising especially the development of the composition and performance since the group’s 1986 debut album, *Totális Metál*—an opinion at odds with the portrayal of the group as

⁸⁰ Jeremy Kuzmarov and John Marciano, *The Russians Are Coming, Again: The First Cold War as Tragedy, the Second as Farce* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2018), 158–164.

⁸¹ Péter Cselótei, “Pokolgép, Attila, Beast of Prey: Pokoli színjáték show, 87. aug. 21. Petőfi Csarnok,” *Metallica Hungarica* 4, 1987, 10. A full translation of the review is included in Appendix A.

without past, future, or freedom.⁸² Nor are guitar solos “fewer” than in Western metal. Except for the crowd chant number, “Az a szép...” every track on *Pokoli színjáték* contains at least one guitar solo or lead.⁸³ On “Tökfej,” “Vallomás,” “Pokoli Színjáték” and “Újra Születnék,” guitarists Gábor Kukovecz and László Nagyfi trade off solos and harmonize virtuosic lead lines, suggesting virtuosic ease, accomplishment, savviness, and braggadocio.

Furthermore, Walser’s claims about the lack of “transgressive” elements in Pokolgép’s music (“harmonics, bent notes, etc.”) can be dispelled through analysis. The solo from “Éjféli Harang” (Figure 2.1) is standard fare for the style at the time. The techniques used include slides (mm.1, 5, 6), tapping and pull-offs (m.7), and using the Floyd Rose tremolo system to articulate secondary attacks (mm.4, 12) and a “divebomb” (mm.21–23). Amplifier feedback appears in mm. 18–20 and has the same aural effect as a natural harmonic. The accusation that Pokolgép’s guitars don’t contribute bent notes is false, as this example contains single bends (mm.8–10, 13–15), oblique bends (mm.16–17), and a more complex figure (m.8) involving bending, tapping with the picking hand, and then releasing the bend while still holding the tap.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ I discuss the distinction between solos and leads in Chapter 4.

Figure 2.1. Pokolgép, “Éjféli Harang” (*Pokoli színjáték*, 1987); guitar solo (2:53).

The guitar score is presented in six systems, each with a musical staff and a corresponding guitar tablature (TAB) staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4.

- System 1 (Measures 1-4):** The musical staff shows a melodic line starting with a quarter note on G4, followed by eighth notes. The TAB shows fret numbers: 5, 7, 8-10/12, 12-13-12-10-12-10-0, 8-7, 7-7-5, 5-7/9. Annotations include "flick tremolo bar" above the staff and "flick tremolo bar" below the TAB.
- System 2 (Measures 5-8):** The musical staff features a dense sixteenth-note tremolo pattern. The TAB shows: 5-7, 5-5/7, 5-7, 5-5/7, 5-7, 8-7-8-7-8, 5-7, 7-8-7-10-7-8-7-8-7-8-7, 7/9, 9-0-7-0-5-0-4-0-4-0-2-2-2, 2-9-9-2, 17. Annotations include "1/2", "full", and "hold bend..." below the TAB.
- System 3 (Measures 9-12):** The musical staff continues with tremolo patterns and some melodic fragments. The TAB shows: 19-(17)-17, 19-(17)-17, 19, 12-14-15-15, 15-14-15-14-12-10-12-10, 13. Annotations include "full" and "flick tremolo bar" above and below the staff.
- System 4 (Measures 13-16):** The musical staff shows a complex tremolo pattern. The TAB shows: 12-13-12-13, 11-12-11-12-12-13-12-13-15-12-13-12, 13-12-10, 10-8-8-10-5, 12-13-14, 12-14, 12-12-12-14, 14, 14-14-14, 17. Annotations include "full" and "hold bend..." below the TAB.
- System 5 (Measures 17-20):** The musical staff features sustained notes with a tremolo effect. The TAB shows: 15-17, 12, 15. Annotations include "full" and "amp feedback" above the staff.
- System 6 (Measures 21-24):** The musical staff shows a "slow tremolo dive" where the pitch of the note gradually lowers. The TAB shows: 0, 0. Annotations include "dive down..." and "raise tremolo..." below the TAB.

Figure 2.3. W.A.S.P., “Wild Child” (*The Last Command*, 1985); introduction.

Tuning: E \flat -A \flat -D \flat -G \flat -B \flat -E \flat

let ring $\hat{1} \hat{5} \flat\hat{7} \hat{5}$ $\hat{1}$ F5 $\flat\text{VI}$ D \flat 5

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

7 iv B \flat 5 $\hat{1}$ F5

The verse riff in “Éjféli Harang” (Figure 2.4), with its syncopated descending chromatic line against a tonic pedal point, is similar to the prechorus riff from Dokken’s “Unchain the Night” (Figure 2.5). Both riffs exhibit an eight-bar motivic scheme—aa’aa’ in “Éjféli Harang” and aa’ab in “Unchain the Night”—with the melodic figure $\flat\hat{3}-\hat{4}-\flat\hat{5}-\hat{4}$ in the fourth bar.⁸⁴ They are also derived from an eighth-note tresillo timeline rhythm (8:332), with “Unchain the Night” alternating between the tresillo grouping and regular duple divisions (8:332,2222).^{85,86}

⁸⁴ Such riff schemes are discussed in McCandless 2013 and Easley 2015.

⁸⁵ Richard Cohn, “A Platonic Model of Funky Rhythms,” *Music Theory Online*, Volume 22, no. 2 (2016).

⁸⁶ Nicole Biamonte, “Formal Functions of Metric Dissonance in Rock Music,” *Music Theory Online*, Volume 20, no. 2 (2014).

Figure 2.4. Pokolgép, “Éjféli Harang” (*Pokoli színháték*, 1987); verse (0:29).

The musical score for Pokolgép's "Éjféli Harang" is presented in two systems. The first system contains measures 1 through 6, and the second system contains measures 7 through 12. The music is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The guitar part is shown in standard notation with a treble clef and includes palm muting (P.M.) markings. The bass part is shown in standard notation with a bass clef and includes fret numbers (9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4) and palm muting (P.M.) markings. The vocal line is written in a soprano clef and includes lyrics: "a", "a'", "b3 4 b5 4", "a", and "a''".

Figure 2.5. Dokken, “Unchain the Night” (*Under Lock and Key*, 1985); prechorus (1:05).

The musical score for Dokken's "Unchain the Night" is presented in two systems. The first system contains measures 1 through 6, and the second system contains measures 7 through 12. The music is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of three flats (Bb, Eb, Ab). The guitar part is shown in standard notation with a treble clef and includes palm muting (P.M.) markings. The bass part is shown in standard notation with a bass clef and includes fret numbers (9, 8, 7, 5, 4, 2) and palm muting (P.M.) markings. The vocal line is written in a soprano clef and includes lyrics: "a", "a'", "b3 4 b5 4", "a", and "b". Tuning information is provided at the top: "Tuning: E-A-D-G-B-E".

What these comparisons reveal is that Pokolgép were nothing if not good students (perhaps too good) of their Western counterparts. Helloween guitarist Michael Weikath drew attention to the similarities between materials on *Pokoli színháték* and records from other bands—as well as the Hungarian language lyrics—as barriers to the album’s potential international success, but otherwise found the execution successful, calling it “fresh” (*frissek*) even while he recognized his own musical fingerprints in the mix of generous influences.⁸⁷ As Weikath predicted, the band

⁸⁷ László Cselótei and László Lénard, “Friss Füllel: Michael Weikath (Helloween) a Pokolgép ‘Pokoli színháték’ c. új albumáról,” *Metallica Hungarica* 4, 1987, 15. The segment is translated in full in Appendix B.

would only remain relevant in Hungary. International listeners would criticize their efforts as derivative but accepted it as a reality of the historical process of metal's development in Hungary, as indicated in Ralph André's review of *Éjszakai Bevetés* (1989):

From Hungaria is this release...the music is a mixture of one of SORTILEGE 1983 and KRUIZ 1989...the pictures on the cover showing the stageacting remind me on SCORPIONS 1987. The only thing why this release is acceptable is that it comes from Hungaria...nothing else.⁸⁸

What cannot be said is that Pokolgép's music differs in organization or content from their American and British contemporaries at any fundamental level, if only because they imitate their models so closely. Their position as a premier Hungarian group at least speaks to their competence in digesting the style from foreign sources (but maybe they could chew a bit more before swallowing). This is apparent even from the single album from which Walser's conclusions are drawn.

Although propaganda has painted the divide between the USSR and the West as one of ideological difference, it was more fundamentally an economic one. Capitalism requires new markets for labor and consumption of its economic outputs, and during the era of capitalist-socialist bipolarity, hundreds of millions of would-be consumers were mostly inaccessible to the global capitalist world-system. Seeing the band as mini capitalists, Pokolgép's imitations are akin to successful acts of corporate espionage. Michael Weikath may have been correct that a Hungarian-language group could not succeed on an "international" level (read: within the global capitalist world-system) where English is the *lingua franca*, but neither could Helloween or any other group advertise to Hungarian-speaking consumers in the way Pokolgép could, instrumentalizing their musical knowledge and familiarity with the language to carve out their niche. It does not matter if the riffs are blatantly taken from another source: the linguistic packaging

⁸⁸ Rüdiger Schmitz, *Metal Warriors 7* (Neuss, 1990), 7, 72.

makes it accessible to a different consumer. However, the West still benefitted from metal bands emerging behind the Iron Curtain.

Heavy metal did not erupt spontaneously in Cold War Eastern Europe but required an extensive media network doing the work of U.S. foreign policy. While Walser might have been content to accept that the expressive techniques of heavy metal met an oppressed community's "particular ideological needs,"⁸⁹ there was an active effort in the United States government to inject American cultural forms into Eastern Europe to produce cultural communities (especially nationalists) and break apart the Soviet Union's program of multinational political unity. Major players in American international relations determined that military engagement would have the effect of uniting the Soviet satellite states behind Russia, their geopolitical rival, so a policy of soft power came to be favored, targeting Eastern Europe as a contested space between the American Empire and the Soviet Socialist Republics.^{90,91} Zbigniew Brzezinski, the architect behind the soft power approach to foreign policy during the Jimmy Carter administration, saw the war of cultural supremacy as purely one-sided—giving an advantage against a foe who was otherwise America's military and economic peer.

What makes America unique in our time is that confrontation with the new is part of the daily American experience. For better or for worse, the rest of the world learns what is in store for it by observing what happens in the United States: whether it be the latest scientific discoveries in space and medicine or the electric toothbrush in the bathroom; pop art or LSD; air conditioning or air pollution; old-age problems or juvenile delinquency. The evidence is more elusive in such matters as style, music, values, and social mores, but there too the term "Americanization" obviously implies a specific source.⁹²

⁸⁹ Walser 1993, 34.

⁹⁰ John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy During the Cold War* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 102.

⁹¹ Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Alternative to Partition: For a Broader Conception of America's Role in Europe* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1965), 28.

⁹² Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Between Two Ages: America's Role in the Technetronic Era* (New York: The Viking Press, 1970), 31.

Brzezinski therefore advanced a strategy of cultural infiltration, playing the Soviet satellites' commercial and cultural ties to Western Europe to wrest the Eastern Bloc from Moscow's influence. The radio was used as a propaganda tool. Radio Free Europe, a CIA front, broadcasted political programs with Western criticisms of communism into Eastern Europe alongside news and music programs. Radio Free Europe benefited from Brzezinski's advocacy:

I also used my office to provide more support for Radio Free Europe. I felt strongly that the Radio offered us the best means for influencing the internal political transformation of Communist systems and that more use should be made of this vital instrument. Accordingly, I pressed for larger financial support and I also used my White House office to free the Radio of excessive political control, notably from State. While the Radio should not be used to foment insurrections in the East, it should, in my judgment, serve as an instrument for the deliberate encouragement of political change. This meant that the broadcasts had to be addressed to the internal problems of the Communist systems and offer a genuine alternative to Communist policies.⁹³

In 1958, Radio Free Europe began broadcasting the Hungarian-language rock program, *Teenager Party*, featuring disk jockey Géza Ekecs, into Hungary from Munich. Ekecs' presentation style was not overtly political and focused instead on issues of purely musical nature that his audience enjoyed, "so that he could tell his listeners something about Little Richard's biography, explain why Jimi Hendrix used a particular guitar, or delve into the relationship between African American history and rhythm and blues." Faced with the uncontrollable popularity of *Teenager Party*, Hungary introduced a homegrown rock music program on Radio Budapest, capitulating the state policy of censoring rock.⁹⁴

The effect of Western soft power radio on Hungarian metal bands is illustrated in detail in an interview with Endre Balaton, one of the two guitarists for Vas Macska,⁹⁵ a group that formed

⁹³ Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Power and Principle: Memoirs of the National Security Adviser 1977–81* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1983), 300.

⁹⁴ Arch Puddington, *Broadcasting Freedom: The Cold War Triumph of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2000), 138–140.

⁹⁵ Literally "Iron Cat"; the compound *vasmacska* is the word used for a ship's anchor. Heavy metal, indeed.

in 1984 and gained local popularity in Miskolc before disbanding in 1992 (Appendix C). Balaton reflects that rock radio programs and youth clubs were central to the formation of his musical tastes, and that bootleg cassette tapes allowed for the transmission of recordings where officially published records were prohibitively expensive.

I was living in Leninváros (now Tiszaújváros), there was a youth club where I liked to go. It was here that I first came across rock music albums, where I saw and heard people playing electric guitars for the first time, and where I was infected with the love of rock music (including metal) at the age of 12 or 13. The first record was AC/DC's *Dirty Deeds Done Dirt Cheap*, which the club manager copied onto a cassette for me at my endless begging, and I listened to it at home almost all the time. Later, the club bought other rock albums, and I couldn't resist buying the tapes with my pocket money. That's how I got Black Sabbath, Nazareth, Iron Maiden, Deep Purple and Rainbow, and that's how I grew up with ambitious music and my musical taste was formed. When the club closed down, for a long time the only way to record György Komjáti's shows was from the radio.⁹⁶ We didn't have money for records or turntables, we copied cassettes and didn't give a shit that the recording was humming and hissing if it had good music on it.

It was also at the same club that other boys would bring guitars. Balaton would practice, then saved up his money to buy his own guitar. The manufacturing origins of his early instruments East Germany and Czechoslovakia, and other parts of his rig were made at home, including a distortion pedal, amplifier, and guitar cables. Later, when Balaton was playing with Vas Macska, he replaced his gear with Western brands, including a Gibson and an Ibanez guitar, a Fender distortion pedal, a Dunlop wah pedal, a Korg tuner, a Marlboro solid state amplifier (from New York) and then a Laney speaker cabinet with a Simms-Watts amplifier head.

While in the army, Balaton played in a band at a cultural home (*művelődési otthon*), where he met drummer György Markó, alias *Pidi*. Pidi was a founding member of Vas Macska. None of the members of Vas Macska received formal education in music because, as Balaton elaborates, the academy at that time treated popular music “as a stepchild” (*mostohagyermekként*). However,

⁹⁶ György Komjáti is a radio host known for his popular music programs.

he gives the impression that the cultural homes were supportive, as they organized concerts where bands could play for free, and the band took their 1989 demo to the homes to be distributed by public culture cultivators (*népművelőinek*).⁹⁷

Vas Macska's style was modeled after the speed metal that was then popular in West Germany. Balaton cites several contemporary German, British and American bands among their influences:

We were consciously trying to catch up with the sound of Accept's *Russian Roulette*, for example—at the time it was the hottest sounding German metal album, and we were very close to that style. We wrote vocals (Pidi and I already had a year of guest vocal experience in this field, and we applied it diligently), paired solos in thirds, standouts [*kiállásokat*, lead melodies] like Iron Maiden, rhythmic riffs like Metallica or Testament. But it was the Germanic metal influence that was the strongest, trying to catch up with the sound of bands of that style (Helloween, Running Wild, Accept, later Udo, Gamma Ray).

He further defines the features of German metal as “fast and mid-tempo songs, big melodies, even solos in thirds á la Helloween, Accept, Iron Maiden or Stormwitch.” Unlike Pokolgép, Vas Macska “tried to create a unique sound, so as not to cast a shadow of someone stealing a riff or something from another” (though this is difficult to verify empirically with only a three-song demo being available). Their lyrical content tended toward fantasy and “social criticism.” Balaton's examples of the latter include “Bűn” (Sin), “a vision of one man's attempts to grapple with the challenge of choosing between integrity and the easier but more dishonest temptation to get ahead,” and “Aranyásó” (The Prospector), an allegory about a man who toils his entire life only to reach the end realizing he never took the time to enjoy himself—like a Hungarian speed metal version of Harry Chapin's “Cat's in the Cradle.”

⁹⁷ Cultural homes (*művelődési otthonok*) were established by the Hungarian government in 1960 to address adult education and to uplift workers and youth under supervision of the Ministry of Culture, which also administrated arts and music education. Randolph L. Braham, *Education in the Hungarian People's Republic* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Office of Education and Welfare, 1970), 171–172.

Balaton also recounts the quotidian aspects of playing in a metal band in the Hungarian countryside in the 1980s. He rode the bus 50km one way to rehearse at bassist Péter Kovács' parents' house, the band shared equipment with other bands during shows, and they played to enthusiastic crowds—though infrequently due to lack of money, equipment, and parties to play. Economic issues ultimately closed the door on Vas Macska's career. It became too expensive to continue, and the band agreed to break up with a farewell concert. Balaton summarizes how money and proximity to Budapest—where there were more opportunities to play to audiences—decided many bands' fates:

It was still the case, before and after, that if you wanted to make it, you either had to cough up some dough or move to Budapest. Only the provincials were interested in the rural “buzz,” but the biggest movements were always in the capital. ... Only the “big guys” could dream of a record. ... The smaller bands were left with the rehearsal room recordings, the more wealthy with the studio demo tapes, and the poorer ones with a big zero...

The currents that put a cassette tape of Pokolgép songs into Robert Walser's hands are complex, involving propaganda warfare to upset the political order of the Eastern Bloc and an uphill battle of that war's cultural byproducts to cross back over the Iron Curtain through tape trading networks run by international metal fans. Despite the geopolitical antagonism between socialist and capitalist states during the time, the only significant difference that can seemingly be found between Western and Hungarian metal of the 1980s is language. Perhaps it is unfair to Walser to critique a single quote so thoroughly, but the assumed difference of national-political context informs his theory of meaning and the generative construct of the heavy metal dialectic. Even within the Hungarian context, Pokolgép (from Budapest) had an advantage over more peripheral bands like Vas Macska, yet both consciously appropriated the Western metal bands of their day with similar expressive goals that were undoubtedly shared with at least some of their Western counterparts. An alternative explanation posits that metal bands do not create a

transparent biography with every song they write, revise, painstakingly practice, perform, and carefully record, but that their efforts are designed teleologically, as a means to present themselves in a certain way and to evoke a desired aesthetic response.

2.3 Structuralism and Teleological Action

Discussions on metal frequently interrogate the genre's capacity for political expression⁹⁸ or lack thereof.⁹⁹ Less frequently is metal's apparent cultural radicalism or reactionism considered in terms of economic function. This section briefly considers in what ways the political capacities of art are constrained by its reliance on the prevailing economic order, and offers an alternative view of the avant-garde as a laboratory for developing productive techniques.

2.3.1. Structural Limitations on Radical Art

For Adorno, art was central to the formation of consciousness. Mass-produced, mechanical art reinforced the processes and relations of industrial capitalism, becoming static, losing its processual quality in the course of its reification (*becoming a thing*). The culture industry, to artificially integrate art into the logic of exchange, renders impossible art's "aura"—the capacity to create distance in the observer from both the art object and their own subjecthood. Adorno summarizes the logic of capitalist integration: "If art is useless for the business of self-preservation [...] it should at least demonstrate a sort of use-value modeled on sensual pleasure."¹⁰⁰ As such, commodified art produces in capitalist subjects merely aesthetical appreciation—through

⁹⁸ Jeffrey Arnett, *Metalheads: Heavy Metal Music and Adolescent Alienation* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995), 17.

⁹⁹ Keith Kahn-Harris, *Extreme Metal: Music and Culture on the Edge* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 142–166.

¹⁰⁰ Theodor Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory* (London and New York: Continuum, 1997), 14.

sensuous, subjective *lived* experience, instead of “fully-comprehending” and philosophical artistic experience.¹⁰¹

The supposition of lived artistic experiences is based on the assumption of an equivalence between the content of experience—put crudely, the emotional expression of works—and the subjective experience of the recipient. A listener is, in other words, to become excited when the music seems to do so, whereas to the extent that one understands anything, one should become emotionally all the more disinterested the pushier the work’s gesticulations become. Science could hardly think up anything more alien to art than those experiments that presume to measure aesthetic effect and aesthetic experience by recording the heartbeat [N.B. one could substitute neurological and cognitive studies]. The fount of any such equivalence remains murky. What purportedly is to be lived or relived in the work—according to popular assumption, the feelings of the author—is itself only a partial element in works and certainly not the decisive one. (244)

Adorno’s categories of lived and philosophical artistic experience mirror Eduard Hanslick’s “pathological” (having to do with physical, bodily sensation, especially emotions) and “aesthetic” (having to do with the psychological, or “pure contemplation”) modes of perception. Hanslick interprets emotion as intentional and thereby not immanent to a work, which is to say emotion is what you feel *about* something rather than a thing or aspect of a thing in itself.¹⁰² For instance, your emotive response to the outcome of a sporting event relies largely on your personal investment in the game and which team you are rooting for. Adorno sees these respective modes of listening as an historical product of capitalism in the way of reification: the ascribing of conceptual values (which arise from human social relations) onto things that cannot physically possess them. The crassest example of reification is commodity fetishism, offered by advertisers who would vest their products with the ability to induce happiness, non-conformity, coolness, love, self-improvement, humor, or any other idea beyond its direct use-value, for the purpose of enhancing its exchange-value. Commodity fetishism, simply put, is the belief that commodities

¹⁰¹ Ibid, 131.

¹⁰² Eduard Hanslick, *Eduard Hanslick’s On the Musically Beautiful: A New Translation* translated by Lee Rothfarb and Christoph Landerer (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2018).

contain an intrinsic value divorced of their social relations.¹⁰³ Here, Adorno walks the line between historical materialism (by acknowledging the social consequences of material relations) and Kantian idealism (that a noumenal, conceptual realm exists autonomously beyond the physical one). Recognition of the *genuine concept*¹⁰⁴ of art is incompatible with the demands of exchange, so observers assimilated into the regime of aesthetic experience sense, more reflexively than those whose engagement with art is philosophical, that artworks which challenge reification and aestheticization are foreign and incompatible to capitalist modernity, so they are likely to reject it.

Those who have been duped by the culture industry and are eager for its commodities were never familiar with art: They are therefore able to perceive art's inadequacy to the present life process of society—though not society's own untruth—more unobstructedly than do those who still remember what an artwork once was.¹⁰⁵

So, it followed that the avant-garde contained the potential for social transformation: art that creates sufficient aesthetic distance (or, distance from the aesthetical, from reification)¹⁰⁶ could

¹⁰³ “The mysterious character of the commodity-form consists therefore simply in the fact that the commodity reflects the social characteristics of men's own labour as objective characteristics of the products of labour themselves, as the socio-natural properties of these things. Hence it also reflects the social relation of the producers to the sum total of labour as a social relation between objects, **a relation which exists apart from and outside the producers**. Through this substitution, the products of labour become commodities, sensuous things which are at the same time supra-sensible or social. In the same way, the impression made by a thing on the optic nerve is perceived not as a subjective excitation of that nerve but as the objective form of a thing outside the eye. In the act of seeing, of course, light is really transmitted from one thing, the external object, to another thing, the eye. It is a physical relation between physical things. As against this, the commodity-form, and the value-relation of the products of labour within which it appears, have absolutely no connection with the physical nature of the commodity and the material [*dinglich*] relations arising out of this. **It is nothing but the definite social relation between men themselves which assumes here, for them, the fantastic form of a relation between things**. In order, therefore, to find an analogy we must take flight into the misty realm of religion. **There the products of the human brain appear as autonomous figures endowed with a life of their own, which enter into relations both with each other and with the human race**. So it is in the world of commodities with the products of men's hands. I call this the fetishism which attaches itself to the products of labour as soon as they are produced as commodities, and is therefore inseparable from the production of commodities.” Marx, *Capital, Vol. 1*, 164-165; italics in source, bold added.

¹⁰⁴ In the German Idealist sense.

¹⁰⁵ Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, 16.

¹⁰⁶ “What slips through the wide mesh of this theory, which tends toward copyrealism, is the element opposed to cultic contexts that motivated Benjamin to introduce the concept of aura in the first place, that is, that which moves into the distance and is critical of the ideological superficialities of life. The condemnation of aura easily becomes the dismissal of qualitatively modern art that distances itself from the logic of familiar things; the critique of aura thereby cloaks the products of mass culture in which profit is hidden and whose trace they bear even in supposedly socialist countries.” Ibid, 56.

induce in the observer a shock, “the shudder,” an affective response “colored by fear of the overwhelming”¹⁰⁷ that could pierce the veil of capitalism’s aesthetic ideology by communicating “that not everything in the world is exchangeable.”¹⁰⁸

Shudder, radically opposed to the conventional idea of [lived] experience [Erlebnis], provides no particular satisfaction for the I; it bears no similarity to desire. Rather, it is a memento of the liquidation of the I, which, shaken, perceives its own limitedness and finitude. This [fully comprehending] experience [Eifahrung] is contrary to the weakening of the I that the culture industry manipulates. For the culture industry the idea of the shudder is idle nonsense; this is probably the innermost motivation for the deaestheticization of art. To catch even the slightest glimpse beyond the prison that it itself is, the I requires not distraction but rather the utmost tension; that preserves the shudder, an involuntary compartment, incidentally, from becoming regression.¹⁰⁹

Adorno’s understanding of ideology comes from Marx. Ideology, a mental technology of the superstructure of classed society, obscures the reality of capitalist social relations. The avant-garde then functions, in the Marxian sense, as the opposite of ideology—critique. However, the shocks produced by the new and different could only be sustained as far as those qualities remained as such.

Capitalism contains mechanisms for absorbing the new and the shocking. The Situationist International, a European artistic and philosophical collective active from 1957 to 1972, theorized that an ideological apparatus, which they called “the spectacle,” had been erected to put a façade over the social and environmental costs of capitalism’s normal operations.¹¹⁰ The spectacle uses reification to present commodities as carriers of positive social meaning and even to commodify

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, 245.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, 83.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, 245.

¹¹⁰ “[3] The spectacle presents itself simultaneously as society itself, as a part of society, and as a means of unification. As a part of society, it is the focal point of all vision and all con-sciousness. But due to the very fact that this sector is separate, it is in reality the domain of delusion and false consciousness: the unification it achieves is nothing but an official language of universal separation. [4] The spectacle is not a collection of images; rather, it is a social relationship between people that is mediated by images.” Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, translated by Ken Knabb (London: Rebel Press, 2005), 7.

human experience, not only to sell products but to distract and deflect responsibility from corporations by restricting public discourse to a “simplified summary of the sensible world.”¹¹¹

All products come with a lifestyle prescribed or at least suggested by mass media and contemporary politics. Likewise, music, be it jazz or classical or hip hop or punk or metal, also comes with its prepackaged lifestyles (typically of the more elective sort) which allow the consumer to participate vicariously in various social attitudes, encapsulating them within the logic of capital. In the opening pages of a situationist pamphlet, Larry Law summarizes,

We live in a spectacular society, that is, our whole life is surrounded by an immense accumulation of spectacles. Things that were once directly lived are now lived by proxy. Once an experience is taken out of the real world it becomes a commodity. As a commodity the spectacular is developed to the detriment of the real. It becomes a substitute for experience.¹¹²

Music that contains a political or social message is a neat substitute for actual political practice, and even artworks that would outpace reification (and hypothetically trigger the shudder) can be safely compartmentalized. For example, despite dispensing reified musical vocabulary (which should have at least rocked the boat, according to Adorno) and the blatantly political presentation of free jazz, efforts by critics and musicologists to foster appreciation of the genre ended up aestheticizing it.

What purely musical innovations happen in free jazz are first and foremost effects and symptoms of a more general change in the relation of black Americans to their culture and in the role culture plays in their political struggles. Analyzing and assessing only the musical transformations performed by free jazz would amount to obfuscating what determined them at the political level, and thus ultimately obfuscating the political itself.¹¹³

¹¹¹ Guy Debord, *Comments on the Society of the Spectacle*, translated by Malcolm Imrie (London and New York: Verso, 1990), 28.

¹¹² Larry Law, *Images and Everyday Life* (London: Spectacular Times, 1993).

¹¹³ Philippe Carles and Jean-Louis Comolli, *Free Jazz / Black Power* translated by Grégory Pierre (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2015), 12–13.

The situationists adopted the term *récupération* (translated as “recuperation” or “co-option”) from the Letterists International to describe the reabsorption of counter-hegemonic messages back into the spectacle.¹¹⁴ Like the Letterists and Dadaists before them, the Situationists created art that appropriates symbols the symbols of consumerism in order to undermine them, a practice called *détournement* or *culture jamming*. By altering the images of the spectacle in a way that juxtaposes the thick layer of ideology against the reality it conceals, anti-ideology is produced.¹¹⁵ “Détournement and récupération,” Karen Kurczynski writes, “can only be understood in direct relation to each other, since they operate as a sort of hinge between authority and subversion. They reveal power as a dialectic, never static but incessantly reestablished through struggle.”¹¹⁶

Given the framing of avant-gardism and counterculture as presented by Adorno and the situationists, one could conclude that the anti-commercial attitude of the metal scene, especially that of extreme metal, functions as a rejection of the commodity’s market logic. Or, that appropriating and distorting rock song forms somehow creates aesthetic distance in the perception of the listener. Some metal artists and scenes are especially vested in alternatives to the present

¹¹⁴ “[192] The spectacular consumption that preserves past culture in congealed form, including co-opted rehashes of its negative manifestations, gives overt expression in its cultural sector to what it implicitly is in its totality: the communication of the incommunicable. ... The critical truth of this destruction—the real life of modern poetry and art—is obviously concealed, since the spectacle, whose function is to use culture to bury all historical memory, applies its own essential strategy in its promotion of modernistic pseudo-innovations. ... This is an expression, in the domain of spectacular pseudo-culture, of advanced capitalism’s general project of remoulding the fragmented worker into a ‘socially integrated personality,’ a tendency that has been described by recent American sociologists (Riesman, Whyte, etc.). In all these areas the goal remains the same: to restructure society without community.” Debord 2005, 106–107.

¹¹⁵ “[208] *Détournement* is the opposite of quotation, of appealing to a theoretical authority that is inevitably tainted by the very fact that it has become a quotation—a fragment torn from its own context and development, and ultimately from the general framework of its period and from the particular option (appropriate or erroneous) that it represented within that framework. *Détournement* is the flexible language of anti-ideology. It appears in communication that knows it cannot claim to embody any definitive certainty. It is language that cannot and need not be confirmed by any previous or supracritical reference. On the contrary, its own internal coherence and practical effectiveness are what validate the previous kernels of truth it has brought back into play. *Detournement* has grounded its cause on nothing but its own truth as present critique.” Ibid, 113–114.

¹¹⁶ Karen Kurczynski. “Expression as Vandalism: Asger Jorn’s ‘Modifications,’” *Res: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, no. 53–54 (2008), 295.

configuration of global capitalist modernity, particularly where nationalism and decoloniality are concerned.^{117,118,119} If the goal of the spectacular society is to “restructure society without community,” then such constructions of identity might minimally counter-hegemonic in principle.¹²⁰ Regardless of artists’ political views and the musical content, without an existence outside of the capitalist mode of production such projects will be vulnerable to recuperation: “because popular culture does not resist its own commodity form it can serve the reification of commodity culture as it innovates new practices of capturing difference.”¹²¹

2.3.2. Avant-Gardism as Research

When compared to other areas of the productive economy, novelty in music most closely resembles innovation in commodity production. Popular music during the period of American productive hegemony—roughly from 1920 through the 1970s—could be sharply periodized such that a given decade or even year could be associated with their own contemporary musical styles. Not only were these styles novel during their day but were rendered commercially obsolete with the coming of the next new popular style. For example, both The Beatles and The Bee Gees began as skiffle groups in the 1950s (as The Quarrymen and The Rattlesnakes respectively) but did not revisit the style in any significant way after finding success as rock groups in the 1960s.

¹¹⁷ Annika Christensen, “Making Heritage Metal: Faroese Kvæði and Viking Metal” in *Medievalism and Metal Music Studies: Throwing Down the Gauntlet*, edited by Ruth Barratt-Peacock and Ross Hagen (Bingley: Emerald Publishing Limited, 2019), 107–120.

¹¹⁸ Nelson Varas-Díaz, Sigrid Mendoza and Eric Morales, “Porous Communities: Critical Interactions Between Metal Music and Local Culture in the Caribbean Context” in *Heavy Metal Music and the Communal Experience*, edited by Nelson Varas-Díaz and Niall Scott (London: Lexington Books, 2016), 101–124.

¹¹⁹ Jacob Rekedal, “Martyrdom and Mapuche Metal: Defying Cultural and Territorial Reductions in Twenty-First-Century Wallmapu,” *Ethnomusicology* 63, no. 1 (2019), 78–104.

¹²⁰ Debord 2005, 107.

¹²¹ Giana M. Eckhardt and Alan Bradshaw, “The Erasure of Antagonisms Between Popular Music and Advertising,” *Marketing Theory* 14, no. 2 (2014), 15.

Such rapid stylistic turnover was not a feature of prior economic systems, and only reached such a pace when publishing and mass media had become sufficiently developed. Feudal economies revolved around the stable and predictable annual cycles of agricultural seasons, and artistic production for the courts had to appeal to the sensibilities of hereditary nobility. As capitalism supplanted feudalism, shifting the working class from agrarian production into the service of finance and industrial production within cities, employment became more fluid and less certain. The dynamism of capitalism created, as the reverse side of new industries and innovation, unemployment and obsolescence.¹²² Likewise, art began to be produced to accommodate the tastes of the bourgeoisie, mediated by the growing publishing industry, gradually matching the pace of capitalism's appetite for the new. No longer propped up by externally legitimizing forces like the Church, nobility and royalty, intellectual work came to conform to publishers' cultural logic of competition.¹²³

Although metal artists have developed their own styles, record companies have often stepped in to try to push artists toward supposedly relevant trends. Black Sabbath singer Tony Martin recalls when I.R.S. Records imposed a stylistic direction that nobody in the band asked for on the 1995 record, "Forbidden":

...there was a meeting at the Sabbath offices in London to which we were summoned to discuss the possibility of doing a Run-D.M.C. type of album. I thought it wouldn't work, and voiced that. Cozy Powell thought it wouldn't work. I was never sure that most of the others were convinced, but we were kinda steered

¹²² "The bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionizing the instruments of production, and thereby the relations of production, and with them the whole relations of society. Conservation of the old modes of production in unaltered form was, on the contrary, the first condition of existence for all earlier industrial classes. Constant revolutionizing of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones. All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses his real conditions of life and his relations with his kind." Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party" in *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844 and the Communist Manifesto* (New York: Prometheus Books, 1988), 212.

¹²³ Pierre Bourdieu, "Intellectual Field and Creative Project," *Social Science Information* 8, no. 2 (1969), 90.

into a “Rap Sabbath” album. Then I was told that Ice-T was gonna be doing it and they couldn’t or wouldn’t tell me if he was doing the whole thing or just one track... and I *still* didn’t know the answer to that when I was in the studio singing the tracks. They said they were gonna take it and see what Ice-T wanted to do.¹²⁴

However, there are often enough willing participants to take music in new directions, incentivized and focused by record labels, advertisers and press to capitalize on minute consumer demographics. Sumerian Records, a metal label founded in 2006, has been pejoratively labeled as a fount of “Sumeriancore,” a genre of allegedly soundalike progressive metalcore bands.^{125,126} While defending his roster and the authenticity of the music and the label, Ash Avildsen, founder of Sumerian Records and former Reflux singer, nevertheless admits that some of the similarity is by design:

As far as the “Sumeriancore” thing, I have a love-hate relationship with that tag. When I started the label, everyone was telling me metalcore is dead, everything was thrash metal or New Wave of Brit/American heavy metal being regurgitated or it was straight death metal and no one wanted breakdowns anymore. I never believed that. I just believed that it was evolving and there was going to be a new cast of characters and it was still going to grow and it was going to change. The bands that had real songs were going to be the ones that stuck around. Killswitch Engage’s *Alive or Just Breathing* is the greatest metalcore record of all time. I never subscribed to the thinking that metalcore is a bad word. Metalcore is like any genre of music, it can be great or it can be shitty. Bands like Born of Osiris. Veil of Maya, The Faceless, After the Burial, they’ve been dubbed ‘Sumeriancore’ by the press and some of the fans. I don’t think there’s a contrived sound but there are similarities... They all have a fresh sense of melody in their riffs. Their chugging patterns are not the same regurgitated rhythms... but make no mistake, The Faceless is not any type of “core” band.¹²⁷

¹²⁴ Tony Martin, interview by Peter Hodgson, “The Gibson Interview: Black Sabbath’s Tony Martin,” Gibson, July 29, 2011.

¹²⁵ Metalcore is a fusion genre of metal and hardcore punk especially known for featuring breakdown sections (derived from the punk side) and blending harsh and clean vocals.

¹²⁶ Vince Neilstein used “Sumerian-core” as a shorthand for “modern progressive death metal.” “Vince’s New England Metal and Hardcore Fest Wrap-Up,” MetalSucks, April 20, 2009, <https://www.metalsucks.net/2009/04/20/vinces-new-england-metal-and-hardcore-fest-wrap-up/>.

Axl Rosenberg added, “I’m loving this new subgenre title Vince has coined—“Sumeriancore.” I love it because a) it instantly lets you know the band in question plays proggy tech deathcore, and b) if we’re gonna get silly with these subgenres names, let’s get *really* silly with them, right?” “New BOO,” MetalSucks, May 13, 2009, <https://www.metalsucks.net/2009/05/13/new-boo/>.

¹²⁷ Ash Avildsen, interview by Mike Gitter, “Sumerian Records Founder Ash Avildsen on Success, ‘Sumeriancore’ and His Famous Father,” Noisecreep, September 25, 2012.

Avildsen built Sumerian Records on a niche—technically impressive, rhythmically complex, djenty,¹²⁸ melodic metal—observing from his experience promoting shows that labels that specialize in a scene can efficiently promote their artists, since “Even if no one really knew who the band was ... there were kids who wanted to see those bands because they were on the label.”¹²⁹

While personnel at record labels may have a sincere connection and belief in the music they are promoting, the function they serve is to convert musical labor into capital, if only to pay the landlord and shareholders. In this way, there is a direct connection between music and the process of capital accumulation. However, if this were a closed system, then record labels could rest at ease continually recycling skiffle revival songs from the 1950s. Because this is not the case, we must consider how musical innovation is linked to the dialectic of capitalism.

Following the earlier observation that science and culture were legitimated by an external unitary authority under feudalism, and that capitalism dissolved this relationship, we can then say that the differentiation of knowledge was also accompanied by its rationalization. That is to say that no longer could a single theological explanation suffice to prove what was true, good, and beautiful. Truth, it had been shown, could be proven from empirical observation. The good (that is, morality) and beauty though had largely been neglected by positivists, who regarded science as objective and untainted by the metaphysical trappings of moral reasoning. David Hume was skeptical of this assumption: empirical knowledge, being based on observation, could never be held to be universally valid. In defense of Enlightenment rationality, Immanuel Kant posited that under the rubric of theoretical and practical reason—theoretical being accepted knowledge,

¹²⁸ ‘Djent’ is an onomatopoeia attributed to Misha Mansoor of Periphery or Frederik Thorendal of Meshuggah to describe the timbre of a high-gain, aggressively picked, palm-muted, low-pitched power chord but is occasionally expanded to encompass other properties of associated music. Marc Okubo and Misha Mansoor, “Marc Okubo (Veil Of Maya) & Misha Mansoor (Periphery) Interview,” *Guitar Messenger*, November 12, 2010, <https://guitarmessenger.com/marc-okubo-veil-of-maya-misha-mansoor-periphery-interview/>.

¹²⁹ Avildsen 2012.

practical being actions based on those assumptions—practical reasoning could be held to be rational. Max Weber would further develop practical reason into goal-rational and value-rational social action. Value rationality directs action in accordance with a held value rather than its result. Goal rationality, on the other hand, places priority on an intended result.¹³⁰ Adding to this, according to Karl Popper, knowledge can only ever be imperfect (while rejecting relativism), so an actor’s rationality is more realistically modeled on “openness to criticism—readiness to be criticized, and eagerness to criticize oneself.”¹³¹

Artistic rationality, by way of Weber and Popper, is given systematic treatment in Jürgen Habermas’ theory of communicative rationality. Habermas defines different spheres of rationality which can be analyzed through a logic of argumentation. He asks:

- How can problematic validity claims be supported by good reasons?
- How can reasons be criticized in turn?
- What makes some arguments, and thus some reasons, which are related to validity claims in a certain way, stronger or weaker than other arguments?¹³²

When considered as a discourse, the criteria for validity in positivists’ empiricism (which Habermas calls cognitive-instrumental rationality) are the apparent truth of a claim and its material demonstrability through causal sequence. Habermas considers three types of validity claims: truth, rightness, and truthfulness, corresponding to theoretical, moral-practical, and aesthetic-expressive knowledge respectively. In Table 2.1, I have reproduced Habermas’ table indexing the types of argumentation for each sphere of rationality, but I will focus here mostly on the aesthetic sphere.

¹³⁰ Mark R. Rutgers, “Be Rational! But What Does It Mean? A History of the Idea of Rationality and Its Relation to Managerial Thought.” *Journal of Management History* 5, no. 1 (1999), 22–24.

¹³¹ Karl Popper, *Unended Quest: An Intellectual Autobiography* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 132.

¹³² Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action, Vol. 1: Reason and the Rationalization of Society* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1984), 24.

Table 2.1. Types of Argumentation¹³³

Forms of Argumentation \ Reference Dimensions	Problematic Expressions	Controversial Validity Claims
Theoretical discourse	Cognitive-instrumental	Truth of propositions; efficacy of teleological actions
Practical discourse	Moral-practical	Rightness of norms of action
Aesthetic criticism	Evaluative	Adequacy of standards of value
Therapeutic critique	Expressive	Truthfulness or sincerity of expressions
Explicative discourse	—————	Comprehensibility or well-formedness of symbolic constructs

Because aesthetics “do not appear with a claim to universality” (unlike physical laws), they fall into “the circle of intersubjective recognition that forms around cultural values,” constituting criticism rather than discourse.¹³⁴ The expression of aesthetic criticism is, by nature, evaluative: it cannot lead to a universal truth but instead “[bring] us to see a work or performance in such a way that it can be perceived as an authentic expression of an exemplary experience.” Aesthetic criticism guides perception, so that the (now intersubjective) perceptive experience *itself* becomes the rational basis for accepting the argument’s pretexts—in contrast to practical arguments that attempt to establish a socially generalizable interest (such as ‘we ought to build another electrical substation to improve the power grid’s efficiency’).¹³⁵ Because of this, aesthetic criticism is not conclusive, and normative aesthetic values are subject to change: the relative efficiency of the power grid will always be quantitatively measurable, but the appreciation of what is ‘heavy’ or original or overdone in metal music can be influenced through aesthetic argumentation.

¹³³ Reproduced from Habermas 1984, 23.

¹³⁴ Habermas’ definition of discourse comes from George Herbert Mead’s “universal discourse.” Universal discourse is an ideal form of communication “that [has] to be carried through *in fact*” and through a “communication community.” Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action, Vol. 2: Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1987), 95.

¹³⁵ Habermas 1984, 20.

Therapeutic critique, which concerns subjective expression, forms another important aspect of Habermas' aesthetic-practical rationality, so I shall address it here. Therapy involves self-reflection and the willingness to be honest about one's own "illusions... desires and inclinations, feelings and moods," otherwise being sincere.¹³⁶ Outwardly, it is not possible to know objectively whether someone is being sincere by the content of their self-expression alone—they could be acting deceptively. Likewise, someone can be sincere while acting on objectively false or incomplete information. "Expressions of this kind cannot be objectively criticized because of their insincerity; they are to be judged rather according to their intended results as more or less effective."¹³⁷ Therefore, what is being evaluated in therapeutic critique is not factual but a simulation or performance of reported fact.

Musicians and actors train to communicate sincerity as part of their regular performance. In metal, fans may even be aware and openly acknowledge the illusion of the performance, yet still validate the sincerity of the expression. Writing about Slayer's 1989 European tour, self-proclaimed born-again Christian, Bob Larson, allegorized himself as "a fundamentalist Sherlock Holmes" searching out true Satanism as the concerts only to be shocked by how scripted, phony, and "two-dimensional" the performative imagery was. "Every comment was canned. Night after night, the same song intros. ... Nothing was spontaneous. ... Even [Tom] Araya's eyelid, which arched slightly when he said 'Satan,' appeared to be choreographed." The audience too partook in the music's evil masquerade, putting on a devilish pageant and scowling everywhere, "Except when [Larson] took their pictures. Then, they smiled." On the tour bus, the band made no effort to maintain their stage persona:

Was Lucifer living in the lives of the boys of the band? I wasted no time getting to the big "S" question.

¹³⁶ Ibid, 20–21.

¹³⁷ Ibid, 21.

“Are the members of Slayer Satanist?”

The four answers I got (in order) from guitarist Kerry King, fellow axeman Jeff Hanneman, drummer Dave Lombardo and bassist/lead vocalist Tom Araya were:

“No.”

“What’s a Satanist anyway?”

“That stuff scares me.”

“I won’t say.”¹³⁸

These two forms of argumentation—aesthetic and therapeutic critique—enter into practical rationality through artworks, expressions of dramaturgical communicative action (Table 2.2). “Dramaturgical actions embody a knowledge of the agent's own subjectivity,” Habermas writes. As communicative acts, artworks combine expressive and value-normative argumentation: “Expressive [therapeutic] knowledge can be explicated in terms of those values that underlie need interpretations, the interpretations of desires and emotional attitudes. [Aesthetic] Value standards are dependent in turn on innovations in the domain of evaluative expressions.”¹³⁹ In other words, artworks instrumentalize aesthetic knowledge (gained from familiarity with norms and, as we shall see, theoretical insights) and are evaluated on their sincerity and ability to lead an audience “to an authenticating aesthetic experience.”¹⁴⁰

Table 2.2. Aspects of the Rationality of Action¹⁴¹

Types of Action	Type of Knowledge Embodied	Form of Argumentation	Model of Transmitted Knowledge
Teleological Action: instrumental, strategic	Technically and strategically useful knowledge	Theoretical discourse	Technologies, Strategies
Constative Speech Acts (conversation)	Empirical-theoretical knowledge	Theoretical discourse	Theories
Normatively Regulated Action	Moral-practical knowledge	Practical discourse	Legal and moral representations
Dramaturgical Action	Aesthetic practical knowledge	Therapeutic and aesthetic critique	Works of art

¹³⁸ Bob Larson, “Desperately Seeking Satan: Our 1989 Slayer Feature,” Spin, February 12, 2022, <https://www.spin.com/2022/02/slayer-bob-larson-feature/>.

¹³⁹ Habermas 1984, 334.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid, 42.

¹⁴¹ Reproduced from Habermas 1984, 334.

Mainstream semiotic theories, in Habermas' view, advance the idea that language "carries a consensus that is merely reproduced with each additional act of understanding,"¹⁴² usually as a culturally determined system of meanings. The most prominent example—and the one Habermas references—is linguistic relativism, which suggests the structure of language affects speakers' thought.¹⁴³ To this, we could add conceptual metaphor theory, which has influenced many recent music-theoretical studies in embodied cognition.¹⁴⁴ In contrast, consensus in Habermas' theory of communicative action can only arise dialectically through argumentation. All communication actions are teleological: they intend to evince a response. To this end, dramaturgical actions, while expressing an actor's subjectivity, only present a limited and curated form of that subjectivity. "Thus the central concept of *presentation of self* does not signify spontaneous expressive behavior but stylizing the expression of one's own experiences with a view to the audience."¹⁴⁵ As Zachary Wallmark describes, death metal performance exercises a "faked"¹⁴⁶—or stylized—ritual violence

¹⁴² Ibid, 95.

¹⁴³ "We dissect nature along lines laid down by our native languages. The categories and types that we isolate from the world of phenomena we do not find there because they stare every observer in the face; on the contrary, the world is presented in a kaleidoscopic flux of impressions which has to be organized by our minds—and this means largely by the linguistic systems in our minds. We cut nature up, organize it into concepts, and ascribe significances as we do, largely because we are parties to an agreement to organize it in this way—an agreement that holds throughout our speech community and is codified in the patterns of our language. The agreement is, of course, an implicit and unstated one, BUT ITS TERMS ARE ABSOLUTELY OBLIGATORY; we cannot talk at all except by subscribing to the organization and classification of data which the agreement decrees." Benjamin Whorf, *Language, Thought and Reality: Selected Writings of Benjamin Lee Whorf* edited by John B. Carroll (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1956), 213–214.

¹⁴⁴ "The meaning of a sentence is given in terms of a conceptual structure. As we have seen, most of the conceptual structure of a natural language is metaphorical in nature. The conceptual structure is grounded in physical and cultural experience, as are the conventional metaphors. Meaning, therefore, is never disembodied or objective and is always grounded in the acquisition and use of a conceptual system. Moreover, truth is always given relative to a conceptual system and the metaphors that structure it. Truth is therefore not absolute or objective but is based on understanding. Thus sentences do not have inherent, objectively given meanings, and communication cannot be merely the transmission of such meanings." George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press 2003), 197.

¹⁴⁵ Habermas 1984, 86.

¹⁴⁶ Zachary Wallmark, "The Sound of Evil: Timbre, Body, and Sacred Violence in Death Metal," in *The Relentless Pursuit of Tone: Timbre in Popular Music*, edited by Robert Fink, Melinda Latour and Zachary Wallmark (New York: Oxford University Press), 76–77.

in order to produce an authenticating aesthetic experience in the audience, “[channelizing] destructive chaos into socially productive modes of organization.”¹⁴⁷

As illustrated in this example, artists’ aesthetic decisions appear with the same function as teleological actions (see Table 2.2 again): as purpose-rational technologies and strategies. As a result of this teleological orientation, death metal artists develop new production techniques in pursuit of the ever-more extreme. The apotheosis of current aesthetic techniques even presents in the same way as in the dialectic of capitalist industry: a crisis of production and innovation.¹⁴⁸ This is hardly a surprise, for the limitations on extremity are based on the historical development of technologies: distortion and noise reflect physical limitations of amplifier circuits, and physiological limits of aural perception and speed prevent further developments of downtuning and tempo. Perhaps it is for this reason that Meshuggah-inspired “djent” bands became popular in the 2000s: with the horizons of speed and timbre closing, polyrhythmic and polymetric composition provides a new locus for aesthetic authentication. Jonathan Pieslak details the exemplary position of complex metric and rhythmic patterns has among Meshuggah’s fans:

... fans’ process of identification revolves significantly around the sophisticated rhythmic and metric structure of [Meshuggah’s] music. One of the most popular links, for example, on Meshuggah’s website is ‘Polymetrics and Polyrhythms: The science of insane rhythms’, in which fans discuss issues of metre and rhythm in the music. Transcriptions and tabs are often meticulously scrutinised in these postings as admirers of the music work in a notationally centric way towards an accurate score rendering of different songs - the ability to decipher musical complexities is often met with great admiration. Fan reviews of their recent album *I* refer to it as ‘a new standard for intelligent, complex metal’, with an ‘impeccable sense of timing’ ... this is one of the most important features through which they not only identify with the music, but distinguish themselves from other metal subgenres¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁷ Ibid, 80.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Jonathan Pieslak, “Sound, Text and Identity in Korn’s ‘Hey Daddy’,” *Popular Music* 27, no. 1 (2008), 46–47.

The crisis of extremity in extreme metal shows that the music, too, adheres to the logic of historical systems: it was born, it grew and lived, and it will one day die in the sense that its expressions will no longer carry a critical mass of cultural currency. Its lifespan will ultimately depend on the innovation of new productive techniques.

This brings us to the place of rationality in artistic production. Habermas argues that art is not an autonomous realm unto itself but intersects the physical and mental plane and is thus dependent on the objective world and subjective states. Habermas modifies the concept of three domains of reality, or *worlds*, from Karl Popper: the objective world, the social world, and the subjective world. The objective world is material reality (the realm of truth), the social world is the intersubjective world of culturally constructed values (the realm of rightness), and the subjective world is the inner world of inner meaning (the realm of truthfulness). Toward these worlds, one can take different attitudes: the *objectivating* (or success-oriented) attitude, the *norm-conformative* attitude, and the *expressive* attitude (Table 2.3).

Table 2.3. Rationalization Complexes¹⁵⁰

Worlds Basic Attitudes	1 Objective	2 Social	3 Subjective	1 Objective
1 Expressive	↓ Art			
2 Objectivating	↑ Cognitive-instrumental rationality Science Technology	↓ Social Technologies	X	
3 Norm- conformative	X	↑ Moral-practical rationality Law	↓ Morality	
1 Expressive		X	↑ Aesthetic-practical rationality Eroticism	↓ Art

Each world has a complex of contrary attitudes that an actor can take (indicated on the table by opposite arrows).¹⁵¹ For example, toward the objective world, one can take an expressive (1.1) or objectivating attitude (2.1), an example of the former being art, and the latter being scientific theory and technology. Toward the social world, an objectivating attitude produces social technologies (2.2) and a norm-conformative attitude produces law (3.2). Toward the subjective world, a norm-conformative attitude produces morality (3.3) and an expressive attitude produces eroticism (1.3). The remaining combinations are excluded, indicating “that nothing can be learned in an objectivating attitude about inner nature qua subjectivity” (2.3), that there is “a scepticism concerning the possibility of giving a rational form to fraternal relations with a nonobjectivated

¹⁵⁰ Ibid, 238.

¹⁵¹ Reproduced from Habermas 1984, 244.

nature—for instance, the form of a philosophy of nature that could compete with the modern sciences of nature” (3.1), and “that expressively determined forms of interaction (for example, countercultural forms of life) do not form structures that are rationalizable in and of themselves, but are parasitic in that they remain dependent on innovations in the other spheres of value” (1.2).¹⁵²

The disposition of attitudes upon the objective, social and subjective worlds are institutionalized in three types of rationality: cognitive-instrumental, moral-practical, and aesthetic-practical. Cognitive-instrumental knowledge is institutionalized as scientific and social progress; moral-practical knowledge is institutionalized as legal and moral representations, and aesthetic-practical knowledge is institutionalized as art and other forms of personal expression, speaking to the “authentic interpretations of needs... that have to be renewed in each historically changed set of circumstances.”¹⁵³ Rather than ideal objects divorced from the social, political and economic spheres, art then appears as “afterimages of empirical life,”¹⁵⁴ with the added function of bringing the objective world into relation with the subjective.

Under the template of capitalist modernism, progress can be made in each of the three domains listed above by the process of “value enhancement.” In the cognitive-instrumental domain, this is straightforward: advancements are made by the development of theoretical/scientific and technical knowledge. Habermas regards value enhancement as more problematic in the moral-practical domain in that law and morality are difficult to universalize, but notes that improvements can be made in working out more universalistic principles and improving their implementation. Aesthetics, too, because they are not universal, pose an issue: “the idea of

¹⁵² Ibid, 237–239.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Adorno 1997, 4.

progress fades into that of renewal and rediscovery, an innovative revivification of authentic experiences,” which is to say that new forms of aesthetic criticism—and here we could include the projects of music history, analysis and performance practice—enhance the values of aesthetic expressions (artworks). However, in the domain of the aesthetic-practical or aesthetic-expressive, value-enhancement is palpable through new materials, performance techniques, and production methods. Habermas notes that aesthetic-practical value enhancement does not always entail enhancement of aesthetic appreciation, and “in fact,” (quoting Weber), “it often has the opposite effect of ‘impoverishing’ the feeling for form.”¹⁵⁵

What appears outwardly to be subversive or anti-commercial in music then may serve an important function in the capitalist rationalization of technology. We shall see that the treatment of song form in metal music addresses problems that have been part of recorded popular song since the beginning: the balance of structure, repetition, novelty, and variety.

¹⁵⁵ Habermas 1984, 177.

PART 2: FORMAL COMPONENTS

3. RIFFS AND REPETITION

In this chapter, I introduce riffs as the smallest formal component of heavy metal songs, beginning the description of a syntactical hierarchy that will unfold through Chapter 6. The hierarchy of formal levels is summarized in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1. Formal levels.¹⁵⁶

 <p>Biggest</p> <p>smallest</p>	Hypercompound Form	whole song form
	Compound Form	
	Hypersection	a group of supersections
	Supersection	a Verse/Chorus rotation, or a Compound Bridge
	Section	such as Verse, Chorus, Prechorus, Bridge, etc.
	Module	several contiguous repetitions of a riff
	Riff	distinct melodic/rhythmic idea that repeats

Due to the intertwined historical development of rock and metal, form in the two genres overlap significantly. Verse-chorus-bridge form, for example, is the dominant scheme in both rock and metal music. However, despite the nearly identical formal vocabulary between them, recent theoretical and analytical studies in rock do not address the “distilled affective intensity”¹⁵⁷ resulting from an ethos of subversion and extremity, which pushes experimental developments toward outwardly chaotic sonic conclusions.¹⁵⁸ Keeping similarities with rock in mind, this chapter describes not what is unique about heavy metal, but what characterizes it. For example, while riffs are an occasional feature of rock, they are nearly omnipresent in metal. Metal also emphasizes virtuosic musicianship and physical participation through practices such as headbanging and moshing, which reflects in genre-specific bridge types.

¹⁵⁶ This table is adapted from Stephen Hudson, “Compound AABA Form and Style Distinction in Heavy Metal,” *Music Theory Online* 27, no. 1 (2021), Example 2.

¹⁵⁷ Ronald Bogue, *Deleuze's Wake: Tributes and Tributaries* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004), 93.

¹⁵⁸ Zachary Wallmark. "The Sound of Evil: Timbre, Body, and Sacred Violence in Death Metal." In *The Relentless Pursuit of Tone: Timbre in Popular Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 77–78.

3.2 Riffs

Perhaps no formal element is more closely identified with heavy metal than the riff. Riffs are short, self-contained sub-phrase units that behave simultaneously as harmonic and melodic entities.¹⁵⁹ Additionally, Ciro Scotto observes that riffs “flatten” the multiple dimensions of melody and harmony in the same way as a fugal subject, demonstrating a propensity for recombinant arrangement and generative set-class properties.^{160,161} Many existing definitions emphasize riffs’ “distinctiveness” and ability to identify a song:

The primary difference between metal and rock is that metal songwriting revolves around riffs, repeating guitar patterns with distinct melodic/rhythmic identities.¹⁶²

Riffs are distinctive combinations of pitches and rhythms, and in hardcore, they are most often performed with power chords. Like phrases, they express a complete musical thought and end with a cadence.¹⁶³

On both Cream's “Sitting on top of the world” and Led Zeppelin's “I can't quit you baby”, for example, the thinness of texture throws the emphasis on the lead guitarist, whose solos are executed with extreme clarity, and whose riffs define the song.¹⁶⁴

...some riffs are more singable than the melodic lines they accompany (e.g. the 'verse' parts of [The Rolling Stones'] “Satisfaction,” [Cream's] “Layla: and [Muddy Waters' rendition of Willie Dixon's] “Hoochie Coochie Man”...¹⁶⁵

Others draw attention to their capacity for repetition and to generate larger structures:

Repeated phrases and riff structures help create a framework against which variation can take place; they also invite in and make comfortable a perhaps

¹⁵⁹ Aaron Van Valkenburg. “Musical Process and the Structuring of Riffs in Metallica,” MM thesis (Waco: Baylor University, 2010), 37.

¹⁶⁰ Ciro Scotto. “What is a riff? A Structural Definition and its Analytical Consequences for Process and Form in Heavy Metal,” (paper presented at West Coast Conference of Music Theory and Analysis, University of California Irvine, Irvine, CA May 28, 2022).

¹⁶¹ Ciro Scotto. “System 7.” In *The Routledge Companion to Popular Music Analysis: Expanding Approaches* (New York and London: Routledge, 2019), 251–252.

¹⁶² Hudson 2021, [2.1.0].

¹⁶³ David Easley, “*It's Not My Imagination, I've Got a Gun on My Back!*”: *Style and Sound in Early American Hardcore Punk, 1978-1983*, Ph.D. diss. (Florida State University, 2012), 45.

¹⁶⁴ Allan F. Moore, *Rock: The Primary Text*, 2nd Edition (London and New York: Routledge, 2017), 80.

¹⁶⁵ Philip Tagg, *Everyday Tonality: Towards a Tonal Theory of What Most People Hear* (New York and Montréal: The Mass Media Music Scholars' Press, 2009), 58.

heterogeneous, perhaps distracted audience. Thus 'hook' lines offer a route through the song to both producer and listener...¹⁶⁶

For many rock musicians, [the riff] has become synonymous with 'musical idea', particularly in the realm of melody. Here, however, it retains its earlier (jazz) sense of being an idea that is repeated, and that can often be used over different harmonies with minimal alteration. This is the technique from which much hard rock develops.¹⁶⁷

These two ideas turn out to be mutually supportive. In Arnold Schoenberg's theory of formal functions, themes are built upon a basic idea containing "characteristic features" which provide motivic unity. Through the process of development, the characteristic features of the basic idea become liquidated and are replaced by "uncharacteristic ones," which transform motives into conventionalized melodic figures during transitions and cadences.¹⁶⁸

Classical theme types like sentences and periods contain parts with different functions, but such behavior is not always observed in riff-based music. Rather than processing the motivic content into a phrase, riffs are often repeated over an entire section without alteration or development that would mark the passage of musical time. The verse in Black Sabbath's "Electric Funeral" (Figure 3.1) consists of a two-bar riff repeated four times. The vocal line follows the riff, excepting minor rhythmic variations, and so does not introduce new melodic content that would suggest an independent theme.

¹⁶⁶ Richard Middleton, *Studying Popular Music* (Milton Keynes and Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1990), 138.

¹⁶⁷ Moore 2017, 40–41.

¹⁶⁸ Arnold Schoenberg, *Fundamentals of Musical Composition* (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1967), 30. For further discussion, read William Caplin, *Classical Form: A Theory of Formal Function for the Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 9–12.

Figure 3.1. Black Sabbath, “Electric Funeral” (*Paranoid*, 1970), first verse.

Re - flex in the sky, warn you you're gon - na die. — Storm com - ing, you bet - ter hide from the a - tom - ic tide.

Flash - es in the sky — turns hous - es in - to sties, turns peo - ple in - to clay. Ra - di - a - tion, minds de - cay. —

In fact, the entire song consists only of a handful of riffs. Figure 3.2 shows the riff content for the *supersection A*.¹⁶⁹ Notably, the preverse and verse riffs share the same melodic outline of an initial leap from E to B a perfect fifth higher, and then descending in preparation of a return to the starting point, as well as a rhythmic timeline based on a regular beat generated from eighth note divisions in groups of 2 (8:2222).¹⁷⁰ In the recording, differences in timbre (such as the use of a wah pedal in *preverse a* and its absence during the verse), dynamics (*preverse a* is played loud, *verse a* soft) and especially instrumentation (the preverse is entirely instrumental, the verse contains a vocal line) demarcate the sections, but a functional relationship is not readily apparent.

¹⁶⁹ The concept of supersection will be explored in detail in Chapter 6.

¹⁷⁰ This notation indicates a beat pattern based upon four groups of two eighth notes.

Figure 3.2. Black Sabbath, “Electric Funeral” (*Paranoid*, 1970); Riffs in supersection A.

My formal labels reflect that the two sections are consistently paired in the composition rather than any mutual form-functional dependency—an ambiguity that is only heightened when *preverse a* eventually does not precede a verse but a transition into the next supersection instead. The *transition* and contents of *supersection B*—being another preverse/verse pair—have irregular 3-generated rhythms in common (as opposed to the 2-generated isochronous rhythms in *supersection A*) and are more rhythmically dense than the prior sections (Figure 3.3). The syncopated rhythm of the *transition* is a tresillo rhythm based on the eighth note division (8:332), and that of the *preverse b/verse b* pair is a double tresillo based on the sixteenth note division (16:333322).¹⁷¹ Like in *supersection A*, *preverse b* is entirely instrumental and *verse b* contains a vocal line.

¹⁷¹ *Tresillo* and *double tresillo* are the names preferred by Nicole Biamonte, “Formal Functions of Metric Dissonance in Rock Music” in *Music Theory Online* 20, no. 2 (2014), [3.3].

Table 3.2. Black Sabbath, “Electric Funeral” (*Paranoid*, 1970), form graph.

Hypersection	Supersection	Time	Section	Description
A	Introduction	0:00	Introduction ⇒ Preverse a	Isochronous divisions
	A	0:16	Verse a	
	A	0:47	Preverse a	
	A	1:02	Verse a	
	A (abbr.)	1:34	Preverse a	
B	Bridge Introduction	1:49	Transition	Tresillo
	B	2:17	Preverse b	Double tresillo
		2:25	Verse b	
	B	2:34	Preverse b	
		2:42	Verse b	
	C	2:50	Hyperchorus	“Electric Funeral”
2:58		Codetta	Based on hyperchorus	
A	A	3:08	Preverse a	Isochronous
		3:24	Verse a	
	A	3:54	Preverse a	
	Coda	4:09	Verse ⇒ Coda	Verse riff

The entire form of “Electric Funeral” is illustrated in Table 3.2. This global view of the form, combined with the short riffs shown in the previous examples, demonstrates that riffs, as a rule, are like basic ideas that can stand on their own—all character and no liquidation—and so do not organize into traditional phrase types like sentences or periods. It is sufficient to build entire sections out of a single riff without the expectation of progression through medial material toward a cadential function.

Through their interaction with meter, riffs are intrinsically temporal, but they are also “autotelic,” “naturally looping back to their own beginning” rather than anticipating the next element in a sequence.¹⁷³ The chorus riff from Kreator’s “Material World Paranoia” (Figure 3.5) features a pattern already seen in some of the riffs from “Electric Funeral”: a melodic contour that outlines the tonic harmony and prepares the re-arrival of the beginning of the riff. The $\hat{1}\rightarrow\flat\hat{5}\rightarrow\hat{3}\rightarrow\flat\hat{7}\rightarrow\hat{2}$ scale degree progression (laid bare in the bass line) lends itself to circular repetition, setting up the return to $\hat{1}$ through a $\flat\hat{7}\rightarrow\hat{2}$ double neighbor figure.

¹⁷³ Hudson 2021.

Figure 3.5. Kreator, “Material World Paranoia” (*Coma of Souls*, 1990). Chorus riff

As self-contained entities, riffs have served a similar commercial function as choruses.¹⁷⁴ During the early days of the music industry (ca. 1880–1930), songwriters and publishing houses stressed the importance of a memorable chorus to make a song sell.¹⁷⁵ Technologies such as sheet music, phonographs and records allowed retailers to commodify music to sell to a listening audience, but with the advent of radio the audience suddenly became a commodity to sell to advertisers. The basic form of songs stayed consistent through this transformation— “musically simple, chorus-oriented, and about three minutes in length”¹⁷⁶—but in rock music, blues influence, amplified instruments, improvements in recording technology and distribution through radio and, later, television had the effect of centering instrumental motifs. The characteristic, self-contained qualities of riffs have afforded to advertisers the concentrated meaning of a chorus without the need even for memorable lyrics, the ultimate semiotic compression.

For example, the popularity of “Bad to the Bone,” performed by George Thorogood and the Destroyers, was driven not by sales of the single but by its placement in countless

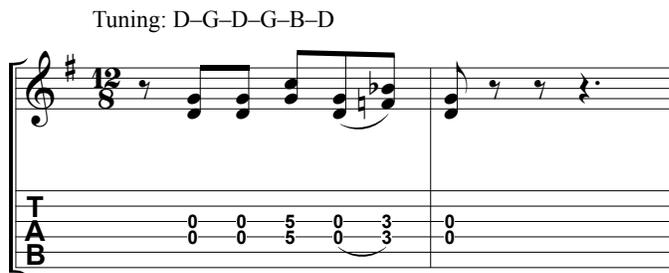
¹⁷⁴ Self-contained, separable “sectional choruses” are particularly suited for this purpose. Nobile 2020, 105–106.

¹⁷⁵ David Suisman, *Selling Sounds: The Commercial Revolution in American Music* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2009), 49–50.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 277–278.

advertisements and television and film soundtracks.¹⁷⁷ The overdriven blues-rock riff (Figure 3.6) and Thorogood’s confidently self-aware lyrics have become a sonic shorthand for swagger, which advertisers have eagerly exploited.

Figure 3.6. George Thorogood and the Destroyers, “Bad to the Bone” (*Bad to the Bone*, 1982), guitar riff.



A 1985 television advertisement for the Buick Regal Grand National coupe¹⁷⁸ even features Thorogood singing the song with retooled lyrics:

When I drive down the street
 The people all gather ‘round
 And they gazed in wide wonder
 At the car I had found
 Two-hundred horsepower
 No time for chrome
 They can tell right away
 That it’s bad to the bone

But the riff itself is often sufficient for advertisers’ purposes. In a 1988 trailer for Oliver Stone’s drama, *Talk Radio*, the guitar riff sounds twice before the editor mixes the music beneath the dialogue and effects tracks.¹⁷⁹ The music track is edited in such a way that the vocal elements are almost completely excised, leaving the instrumental elements intact if not heavily rearranged—possible because of the song’s single repetitious riff. The lyrics are reduced to an illegible snippet beneath Eric Bogosian’s dialogue followed by a solitary entry of Thorogood’s machine-gun

¹⁷⁷ Jim Beviglia, *Playing Back the 80s: A Decade of Unstoppable Hits* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2018), 79–81.

¹⁷⁸ <https://archive.org/details/buick-grand-national-commercial-1-360p>

¹⁷⁹ <https://archive.org/details/talk-radio-1988-theatrical-trailer-480p>

stuttering “B-b-b-b-b-b-bad” half a minute into the trailer. The opening riff, together with the trebly, compressed timbre of Thorogood’s guitar, provides for the audience an instant synopsis of the song and a ready-made interpretation of the film’s characters.

Such synoptic compression of meaning is observed elsewhere in advertising, even when the music is not so easily given to reduction. In an ad for Intel’s 2016 “Experience Amazing” campaign,¹⁸⁰ Walter Werzowa intertwines his sound logo for Intel with the first movement from Beethoven’s fifth symphony, “[editing] the movement drastically, interrupting transitions, cutting the second theme, moving directly from exposition to recapitulation, and ultimately condensing the entire movement from its original 502 measures down to a radically truncated collage of fifty-some measures, selected from various points in the movement.”¹⁸¹ Marianna Ritchey observes:

The “atomized listening” that, Adorno argues, radio broadcasts both encourage and require shifts the meaning of the symphony “from the totality to the individual moment,” because the relation of the individual moments to one another “is no longer fully affected.” The symphony, once so inspiring for its ability to transform monads into cells, is reduced ... to a pastiche of unrelated and isolated utterances. ... For Adorno, broadcasting the symphony over the radio has both “trivialized and romanticized” it: “what is heard is not Beethoven’s Fifth but merely musical information from and about Beethoven’s Fifth.” In the intervening decades since Adorno wrote these words, both the Fifth Symphony and our listening habits have become exponentially more fragmented; the symphony has become a ringtone, a cultural touchstone detached from its original meaning, and we now listen to it on a plethora of devices, which allow us to pause, rewind, and skip sections we are tired of.¹⁸²

Riffs, as demonstrated with “Bad to the Bone,” are more agreeable in many ways to “atomization” precisely for their self-complete aspect. Listeners do not strictly need to be able to identify formal functions to follow the form, as their favorite moments might be linked instead to the occurrence of a certain riff which may arrive at any point. Returning to “Electric Funeral”

¹⁸⁰ <https://archive.org/details/intel-beethoven-experience-amazing-360p>

¹⁸¹ Marianna Ritchey, *Composing Capital: Classical Music in the Neoliberal Era* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2019), 127.

¹⁸² *Ibid*, 127–128.

(Table 3.2), the lack of a chorus does not impede the song’s catchiness—the main riff fulfills the chorus’ function, encapsulating the affect and meaning through its content and presentation.¹⁸³ The implications that this mode of hearing has on the larger organization of metal songs are significant, for it potentially frees form from harmonic teleology or expectation of certain form-functional progressions (such as the verse-chorus cycle). In the following sections, I will expand on ways that riffs influence and generate higher syntactic levels in ways that variously reinforce or depart from analogous structures in non-riff-based rock music.

3.3 Repetition

Riff-based music makes use of repetition to generate larger grouping structures that Glenn Pillsbury refers to as *riff modules*.¹⁸⁴ Pillsbury’s modules consist of exact repetitions of riffs, but there is ample reason to treat groupings of riffs more flexibly. To refine Pillsbury’s typology, I will introduce three categories of riff modules: *strict repetition*, *contrapuntal projection* to higher hypermetric levels using a repeated riff, and *harmonic riff transposition* to accommodate chord progression.

Repetition has factored prominently into many recent discussions on musical organization, especially where psychology is concerned.^{185,186} David Huron suggests that “clumps of repetition”

¹⁸³ “The plodding tempo and wah-drenched guitars of “Electric Funeral” portray the scorched landscape of earth despoiled by nuclear war. Tony Iommi masterfully creates guitar riffs that paint vivid pictures in the mind of the listener. When one hears the well-known riff from ‘Iron Man,’ one easily visualizes a monstrous, plodding, hulking figure made of metal. Similarly, when one hears the two primary riffs of ‘Electric Funeral,’ one easily conjures up a mental image of a scorched landscape, even without knowing what the lyrics are about.” Tim Smolko and Joanna Smolko, *Atomic Tunes: The Cold War in in American and British Popular Music* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2021), 189.

¹⁸⁴ Glenn Pillsbury. *Damage Incorporated: Metallica and the Production of Musical Identity* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 20–25.

¹⁸⁵ Justin London, *Hearing in Time: Psychological Aspects of Musical Meter* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

¹⁸⁶ Elizabeth Margulis, *On Repeat: How Music Plays the Mind* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press 2014).

may reflect the *prediction effect*: “By repeating the first segment, the listener will already have an opportunity to benefit from predicting what will happen next.”¹⁸⁷ Too much repetition results in habituation, which can have diminishing returns for listeners’ pleasure, incentivizing variation and *dishabituating stimuli*, e.g. the introduction of new material, predicating sectional form. Supportive of this point, Richard Middleton distinguishes between two modes of formal repetition: *musematic repetition* (the repetition of “musemes”—such as rhythmic patterns, call-and-response structures and riffs), and *discursive repetition* (the repetition of phrases or sections).¹⁸⁸ Under the rubric of discursive repetition, repetition can also be periodic. Thomas Turino points out that repetition, predictable cyclic structures, and habitual opening and concluding formulas contribute to participatory musicmaking by making it easier for newcomers and the unprepared “to learn and join in a performance quickly,” tying the technology of repetition into the social realm.¹⁸⁹

We have already observed strict repetition of a riff without any intervening counterpoint or transpositions in “Electric Funeral” (Figure 3.1). The verse of Metallica’s “Seek and Destroy” demonstrates simple repetition (Figure 3.7). In such instances, riffs generally organize into regular quadruple hypermeter.

¹⁸⁷ David Huron, *Sweet Anticipation: Music and the Psychology of Expectation* (Cambridge and London: MIT Press, 2006), 255.

¹⁸⁸ Richard Middleton, *Studying Popular Music* (Milton Keynes and Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1990), 269–270.

¹⁸⁹ Thomas Turino, *Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 38.

Figure 3.8. Iron Maiden, “Aces High” (*Powerslave*, 1984); introduction riff with changing bass

The musical score for the introduction riff of "Aces High" by Iron Maiden is presented in three parts: Guitar 1, Guitar 2, and Bass. Each part includes a standard musical notation staff and a corresponding TAB staff. The riff is in 4/4 time and features a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). Brackets labeled "riff" are placed above the first two measures of each staff. The bass line starts with a hat symbol (î) and changes to b6 and b7 in the second and third measures respectively.

Riffs are not the exclusive domain of metal music but have precedents in other styles. Another example of counterpoint producing higher levels of metric organization against an ostinato-like riff is Henry Mancini’s title theme for “Peter Gunn.” A one-bar riff appears at the same transposition level throughout the composition while woodwind instruments elaborate a melody above it (Figure 3.9).

Figure 3.9. Henry Mancini, “Peter Gunn” (1958)

The musical score for the title theme of "Peter Gunn" by Henry Mancini is presented in two parts: Treble and Bass. The bass line contains a repeating eighth-note riff, with a bracket labeled "riff" under the first measure. The treble line features a melody with triplets and rests.

Mancini refers to the figure as an ostinato but admits that the composition “actually derives more from rock and roll than jazz,” where ‘riff’ is appropriate terminology.¹⁹¹ Furthermore, the “Peter Gunn” riff shares numerous features endemic to blues, rock and metal riffs, such as being written for the low register of the guitar, outlining a single (tonic) harmony, and a strong metric profile (Figure 3.10).

Figure 3.10. Henry Mancini, “Peter Gunn” (1958); guitar riff.



A simple example of a harmonic riff transposition spans the entire verse-prechorus-chorus cycle from “Am I Evil” by Diamond Head (Figure 3.11). During the verse, a pedal tone riff outlines the chord progression $i \rightarrow \flat III \rightarrow \flat VI \rightarrow i \rightarrow \flat V \rightarrow iv$, which prolongs the tonic. The entire riff is transposed up a perfect fifth (T7) for the prechorus, generating the progression $v \rightarrow \flat VII \rightarrow i \rightarrow v \rightarrow \flat II \rightarrow i$. The riff is transposed back down a perfect fifth (T5) to its original transposition level in the chorus, creating a global $i \rightarrow v \rightarrow i$ progression. Unlike the previous examples, harmonic riff transposition applies a transformation on the riff while still maintaining its recognizable motivic shape.

Figure 3.11. Diamond Head, “Am I Evil” (*Lightning to the Nations*, 1980)

Verse $\xrightarrow{T7}$ Prechorus $\xrightarrow{T5}$ Chorus
 $i \quad \flat III \quad \flat VI \quad i \quad \flat V \quad iv \quad v \quad \flat VII \quad i \quad v \quad \flat II \quad i \quad i \quad \flat III \quad \flat VI \quad i \quad \flat V \quad iv$

¹⁹¹ Henry Mancini and Gene Lees. *Did They Mention the Music?: The Autobiography of Henry Mancini* (Chicago: Contemporary Books, 1989), 236.

Harmonic riff transposition is not a new development. Like many features of modern popular music, riffs can be traced back to the blues. In “Pine Top’s Boogie Woogie” (composed 1928), Clarence “Pine Top” Smith uses a one-bar riff in the left hand, transposing in order to match the harmony of the twelve-bar blues harmonic scheme (Figure 3.12).

Figure 3.12. Clarence “Pine Top” Smith, “Pine Top's Boogie Woogie” (*Pine Top Blues/Pine Top's Boogie Woogie*, 1929).

The musical score for "Pine Top's Boogie Woogie" is presented in three systems, each representing a four-measure segment of a 12-bar blues structure. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major/F minor), and the time signature is 4/4. The right hand (RH) plays a simple harmonic accompaniment, while the left hand (LH) plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The first system is in C major, with a chord symbol 'I C' above the first measure. The second system is in F major, with chord symbols 'IV F9' above the first measure and 'I C' above the third measure. The third system is in G7, with chord symbols 'V G7' above the first measure, 'IV F9' above the second measure, and 'I C' above the third measure. The LH riff consists of eighth notes: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F6, G6, A6, B6, C7, D7, E7, F7, G7, A7, B7, C8, D8, E8, F8, G8, A8, B8, C9, D9, E9, F9, G9, A9, B9, C10, D10, E10, F10, G10, A10, B10, C11, D11, E11, F11, G11, A11, B11, C12, D12, E12, F12, G12, A12, B12, C13, D13, E13, F13, G13, A13, B13, C14, D14, E14, F14, G14, A14, B14, C15, D15, E15, F15, G15, A15, B15, C16, D16, E16, F16, G16, A16, B16, C17, D17, E17, F17, G17, A17, B17, C18, D18, E18, F18, G18, A18, B18, C19, D19, E19, F19, G19, A19, B19, C20, D20, E20, F20, G20, A20, B20, C21, D21, E21, F21, G21, A21, B21, C22, D22, E22, F22, G22, A22, B22, C23, D23, E23, F23, G23, A23, B23, C24, D24, E24, F24, G24, A24, B24, C25, D25, E25, F25, G25, A25, B25, C26, D26, E26, F26, G26, A26, B26, C27, D27, E27, F27, G27, A27, B27, C28, D28, E28, F28, G28, A28, B28, C29, D29, E29, F29, G29, A29, B29, C30, D30, E30, F30, G30, A30, B30, C31, D31, E31, F31, G31, A31, B31, C32, D32, E32, F32, G32, A32, B32, C33, D33, E33, F33, G33, A33, B33, C34, D34, E34, F34, G34, A34, B34, C35, D35, E35, F35, G35, A35, B35, C36, D36, E36, F36, G36, A36, B36, C37, D37, E37, F37, G37, A37, B37, C38, D38, E38, F38, G38, A38, B38, C39, D39, E39, F39, G39, A39, B39, C40, D40, E40, F40, G40, A40, B40, C41, D41, E41, F41, G41, A41, B41, C42, D42, E42, F42, G42, A42, B42, C43, D43, E43, F43, G43, A43, B43, C44, D44, E44, F44, G44, A44, B44, C45, D45, E45, F45, G45, A45, B45, C46, D46, E46, F46, G46, A46, B46, C47, D47, E47, F47, G47, A47, B47, C48, D48, E48, F48, G48, A48, B48, C49, D49, E49, F49, G49, A49, B49, C50, D50, E50, F50, G50, A50, B50, C51, D51, E51, F51, G51, A51, B51, C52, D52, E52, F52, G52, A52, B52, C53, D53, E53, F53, G53, A53, B53, C54, D54, E54, F54, G54, A54, B54, C55, D55, E55, F55, G55, A55, B55, C56, D56, E56, F56, G56, A56, B56, C57, D57, E57, F57, G57, A57, B57, C58, D58, E58, F58, G58, A58, B58, C59, D59, E59, F59, G59, A59, B59, C60, D60, E60, F60, G60, A60, B60, C61, D61, E61, F61, G61, A61, B61, C62, D62, E62, F62, G62, A62, B62, C63, D63, E63, F63, G63, A63, B63, C64, D64, E64, F64, G64, A64, B64, C65, D65, E65, F65, G65, A65, B65, C66, D66, E66, F66, G66, A66, B66, C67, D67, E67, F67, G67, A67, B67, C68, D68, E68, F68, G68, A68, B68, C69, D69, E69, F69, G69, A69, B69, C70, D70, E70, F70, G70, A70, B70, C71, D71, E71, F71, G71, A71, B71, C72, D72, E72, F72, G72, A72, B72, C73, D73, E73, F73, G73, A73, B73, C74, D74, E74, F74, G74, A74, B74, C75, D75, E75, F75, G75, A75, B75, C76, D76, E76, F76, G76, A76, B76, C77, D77, E77, F77, G77, A77, B77, C78, D78, E78, F78, G78, A78, B78, C79, D79, E79, F79, G79, A79, B79, C80, D80, E80, F80, G80, A80, B80, C81, D81, E81, F81, G81, A81, B81, C82, D82, E82, F82, G82, A82, B82, C83, D83, E83, F83, G83, A83, B83, C84, D84, E84, F84, G84, A84, B84, C85, D85, E85, F85, G85, A85, B85, C86, D86, E86, F86, G86, A86, B86, C87, D87, E87, F87, G87, A87, B87, C88, D88, E88, F88, G88, A88, B88, C89, D89, E89, F89, G89, A89, B89, C90, D90, E90, F90, G90, A90, B90, C91, D91, E91, F91, G91, A91, B91, C92, D92, E92, F92, G92, A92, B92, C93, D93, E93, F93, G93, A93, B93, C94, D94, E94, F94, G94, A94, B94, C95, D95, E95, F95, G95, A95, B95, C96, D96, E96, F96, G96, A96, B96, C97, D97, E97, F97, G97, A97, B97, C98, D98, E98, F98, G98, A98, B98, C99, D99, E99, F99, G99, A99, B99, C100, D100, E100, F100, G100, A100, B100, C101, D101, E101, F101, G101, A101, B101, C102, D102, E102, F102, G102, A102, B102, C103, D103, E103, F103, G103, A103, B103, C104, D104, E104, F104, G104, A104, B104, C105, D105, E105, F105, G105, A105, B105, C106, D106, E106, F106, G106, A106, B106, C107, D107, E107, F107, G107, A107, B107, C108, D108, E108, F108, G108, A108, B108, C109, D109, E109, F109, G109, A109, B109, C110, D110, E110, F110, G110, A110, B110, C111, D111, E111, F111, G111, A111, B111, C112, D112, E112, F112, G112, A112, B112, C113, D113, E113, F113, G113, A113, B113, C114, D114, E114, F114, G114, A114, B114, C115, D115, E115, F115, G115, A115, B115, C116, D116, E116, F116, G116, A116, B116, C117, D117, E117, F117, G117, A117, B117, C118, D118, E118, F118, G118, A118, B118, C119, D119, E119, F119, G119, A119, B119, C120, D120, E120, F120, G120, A120, B120, C121, D121, E121, F121, G121, A121, B121, C122, D122, E122, F122, G122, A122, B122, C123, D123, E123, F123, G123, A123, B123, C124, D124, E124, F124, G124, A124, B124, C125, D125, E125, F125, G125, A125, B125, C126, D126, E126, F126, G126, A126, B126, C127, D127, E127, F127, G127, A127, B127, C128, D128, E128, F128, G128, A128, B128, C129, D129, E129, F129, G129, A129, B129, C130, D130, E130, F130, G130, A130, B130, C131, D131, E131, F131, G131, A131, B131, C132, D132, E132, F132, G132, A132, B132, C133, D133, E133, F133, G133, A133, B133, C134, D134, E134, F134, G134, A134, B134, C135, D135, E135, F135, G135, A135, B135, C136, D136, E136, F136, G136, A136, B136, C137, D137, E137, F137, G137, A137, B137, C138, D138, E138, F138, G138, A138, B138, C139, D139, E139, F139, G139, A139, B139, C140, D140, E140, F140, G140, A140, B140, C141, D141, E141, F141, G141, A141, B141, C142, D142, E142, F142, G142, A142, B142, C143, D143, E143, F143, G143, A143, B143, C144, D144, E144, F144, G144, A144, B144, C145, D145, E145, F145, G145, A145, B145, C146, D146, E146, F146, G146, A146, B146, C147, D147, E147, F147, G147, A147, B147, C148, D148, E148, F148, G148, A148, B148, C149, D149, E149, F149, G149, A149, B149, C150, D150, E150, F150, G150, A150, B150, C151, D151, E151, F151, G151, A151, B151, C152, D152, E152, F152, G152, A152, B152, C153, D153, E153, F153, G153, A153, B153, C154, D154, E154, F154, G154, A154, B154, C155, D155, E155, F155, G155, A155, B155, C156, D156, E156, F156, G156, A156, B156, C157, D157, E157, F157, G157, A157, B157, C158, D158, E158, F158, G158, A158, B158, C159, D159, E159, F159, G159, A159, B159, C160, D160, E160, F160, G160, A160, B160, C161, D161, E161, F161, G161, A161, B161, C162, D162, E162, F162, G162, A162, B162, C163, D163, E163, F163, G163, A163, B163, C164, D164, E164, F164, G164, A164, B164, C165, D165, E165, F165, G165, A165, B165, C166, D166, E166, F166, G166, A166, B166, C167, D167, E167, F167, G167, A167, B167, C168, D168, E168, F168, G168, A168, B168, C169, D169, E169, F169, G169, A169, B169, C170, D170, E170, F170, G170, A170, B170, C171, D171, E171, F171, G171, A171, B171, C172, D172, E172, F172, G172, A172, B172, C173, D173, E173, F173, G173, A173, B173, C174, D174, E174, F174, G174, A174, B174, C175, D175, E175, F175, G175, A175, B175, C176, D176, E176, F176, G176, A176, B176, C177, D177, E177, F177, G177, A177, B177, C178, D178, E178, F178, G178, A178, B178, C179, D179, E179, F179, G179, A179, B179, C180, D180, E180, F180, G180, A180, B180, C181, D181, E181, F181, G181, A181, B181, C182, D182, E182, F182, G182, A182, B182, C183, D183, E183, F183, G183, A183, B183, C184, D184, E184, F184, G184, A184, B184, C185, D185, E185, F185, G185, A185, B185, C186, D186, E186, F186, G186, A186, B186, C187, D187, E187, F187, G187, A187, B187, C188, D188, E188, F188, G188, A188, B188, C189, D189, E189, F189, G189, A189, B189, C190, D190, E190, F190, G190, A190, B190, C191, D191, E191, F191, G191, A191, B191, C192, D192, E192, F192, G192, A192, B192, C193, D193, E193, F193, G193, A193, B193, C194, D194, E194, F194, G194, A194, B194, C195, D195, E195, F195, G195, A195, B195, C196, D196, E196, F196, G196, A196, B196, C197, D197, E197, F197, G197, A197, B197, C198, D198, E198, F198, G198, A198, B198, C199, D199, E199, F199, G199, A199, B199, C200, D200, E200, F200, G200, A200, B200, C201, D201, E201, F201, G201, A201, B201, C202, D202, E202, F202, G202, A202, B202, C203, D203, E203, F203, G203, A203, B203, C204, D204, E204, F204, G204, A204, B204, C205, D205, E205, F205, G205, A205, B205, C206, D206, E206, F206, G206, A206, B206, C207, D207, E207, F207, G207, A207, B207, C208, D208, E208, F208, G208, A208, B208, C209, D209, E209, F209, G209, A209, B209, C210, D210, E210, F210, G210, A210, B210, C211, D211, E211, F211, G211, A211, B211, C212, D212, E212, F212, G212, A212, B212, C213, D213, E213, F213, G213, A213, B213, C214, D214, E214, F214, G214, A214, B214, C215, D215, E215, F215, G215, A215, B215, C216, D216, E216, F216, G216, A216, B216, C217, D217, E217, F217, G217, A217, B217, C218, D218, E218, F218, G218, A218, B218, C219, D219, E219, F219, G219, A219, B219, C220, D220, E220, F220, G220, A220, B220, C221, D221, E221, F221, G221, A221, B221, C222, D222, E222, F222, G222, A222, B222, C223, D223, E223, F223, G223, A223, B223, C224, D224, E224, F224, G224, A224, B224, C225, D225, E225, F225, G225, A225, B225, C226, D226, E226, F226, G226, A226, B226, C227, D227, E227, F227, G227, A227, B227, C228, D228, E228, F228, G228, A228, B228, C229, D229, E229, F229, G229, A229, B229, C230, D230, E230, F230, G230, A230, B230, C231, D231, E231, F231, G231, A231, B231, C232, D232, E232, F232, G232, A232, B232, C233, D233, E233, F233, G233, A233, B233, C234, D234, E234, F234, G234, A234, B234, C235, D235, E235, F235, G235, A235, B235, C236, D236, E236, F236, G236, A236, B236, C237, D237, E237, F237, G237, A237, B237, C238, D238, E238, F238, G238, A238, B238, C239, D239, E239, F239, G239, A239, B239, C240, D240, E240, F240, G240, A240, B240, C241, D241, E241, F241, G241, A241, B241, C242, D242, E242, F242, G242, A242, B242, C243, D243, E243, F243, G243, A243, B243, C244, D244, E244, F244, G244, A244, B244, C245, D245, E245, F245, G245, A245, B245, C246, D246, E246, F246, G246, A246, B246, C247, D247, E247, F247, G247, A247, B247, C248, D248, E248, F248, G248, A248, B248, C249, D249, E249, F249, G249, A249, B249, C250, D250, E250, F250, G250, A250, B250, C251, D251, E251, F251, G251, A251, B251, C252, D252, E252, F252, G252, A252, B252, C253, D253, E253, F253, G253, A253, B253, C254, D254, E254, F254, G254, A254, B254, C255, D255, E255, F255, G255, A255, B255, C256, D256, E256, F256, G256, A256, B256, C257, D257, E257, F257, 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C305, D305, E305, F305, G305, A305, B305, C306, D306, E306, F306, G306, A306, B306, C307, D307, E307, F307, G307, A307, B307, C308, D308, E308, F308, G308, A308, B308, C309, D309, E309, F309, G309, A309, B309, C310, D310, E310, F310, G310, A310, B310, C311, D311, E311, F311, G311, A311, B311, C312, D312, E312, F312, G312, A312, B312, C313, D313, E313, F313, G313, A313, B313, C314, D314, E314, F314, G314, A314, B314, C315, D315, E315, F315, G315, A315, B315, C316, D316, E316, F316, G316, A316, B316, C317, D317, E317, F317, G317, A317, B317, C318, D318, E318, F318, G318, A318, B318, C319, D319, E319, F319, G319, A319, B319, C320, D320, E320, F320, G320, A320, B320, C321, D321, E321, F321, G321, A321, B321, C322, D322, E322, F322, G322, A322, B322, C323, D323, E323, F323, G323, A323, B323, C324, D324, E324, F324, G324, A324, B324, C325, D325, E325, F325, G325, A325, B325, C326, D326, E326, F326, G326, A326, B326, C327, D327, E327, F327, G327, A327, B327, C328, D328, E328, F328, G328, A328, B328, C329, D329, E329, F329, G329, A329, B329, C330, D330, E330, F330, G330, A330, B330, C331, D331, E331, F331, G331, A331, B331, C332, D332, E332, F332, G332, A332, B332, C333, D333, E333, F333, G333, A333, B333, C334, D334, E334, F334, G334, A334, B334, C335, D335, E335, F335, G335, A335, B335, C336, D336, E336, F336, G336, A336, B336, C337, D337, E337, F337, G337, A337, B337, C338, D338, E338, F338, G338, A338, B338, C339, D339, E339, F339, G339, A339, B339, C340, D340, E340, F340, G340, A340, B340, C341, D341, E341, F341, G341, A341, B341, C342, D342, E342, F342, G342, A342, B342, C343, D343, E343, F343, G343, A343, B343, C344, D344, E344, F344, G344, A344, B344, C345, D345, E345, F345, G345, A345, B345, C346, D346, E346, F346, G346, A346, B346, C347, D347, E347, F347, G347, A347, B347, C348, D348, E348, F348, G348, A348, B348, C349, D349, E349, F349, G349, A349, B349, C350, D350, E350, F350, G350, A350, B350, C351, D351, E351, F351, G351, A351, B351, C352, D352, E352, F352, G352, A352, B352, C353, D353, E353, F353, G353, A353, B353, C354, D354, E354, F354, G354, A354, B354, C355, D355, E355, F355, G355, A355, B355, C356, D356, E356, F356, G356, A356, B356, C357, D357, E357, F357, G357, A357, B357, C358, D358, E358, F358, G358, A358, B358, C359, D359, E359, F359, G359, A359, B359, C360, D360, E360, F360, G360, A360, B360, C361, D361, E361, F361, G361, A361, B361, C362, D362, E362, F362, G362, A362, B362, C363, D363, E363, F363, G363, A363, B363, C364, D364, E364, F364, G364, A364, B36

4. SECTIONAL FORM

This chapter outlines a taxonomy of formal functions for metal song form. Song forms are divided into sections. Mediating the dramatic sequence of these sections is a primary concern for composers, and metal fans develop a vocabulary of formal functions as part of metal's participatory practices.

As discussed in Chapter 1, song form developed through Tin Pan Alley and the American postwar recording industry, eventually arriving at compound AABA form in the 1960s. Metal musicians continued the development of song form by infusing tendencies of instrumental composition from electric blues, cultivating a wide variety of section types. This dissertation divides these sections into two categories: *presentational* and *fluid functions*.

4.2 Functional Tendencies

Presentational sections contribute to a composition's sense of closed-endedness and periodicity, and fluid sections lend to open-endedness and successive composition. This classification superficially resembles A.B. Marx's division of classical forms into structures of rest and motion: the close-ended *Satz* and the open-ended *Gang*, the latter of which requires external reasons for closure.¹⁹² In my typology, presentational and fluid functions are not dialectical opposites but exist independently, each imbued with a set of distinctive characteristics: presentational functions have a tendency toward goal-directedness and recapitulation, and fluid functions dissipate goals and tend toward through-composition.

¹⁹² Scott Burnham, "The Role of Sonata Form in A.B. Marx's Theory of Form," *Journal of Music Theory* 33, no. 2 (1989), 251.

To this basic distinction, I add a secondary tendency that will become clearer when considering the relationship of individual sections within supersections (Chapter 5). Certain section types in the recapitulatory *presentational* category can disrupt or confound teleological processes, and certain section types in the through-composed *fluid* category can temporarily set up local teleology. Table 4.1 accounts for these variations. The principal tendency (P for presentational, F for fluid) indicates, overall, whether a section is a candidate for recapitulation (P) or not (F). Within these principal categories there are two secondary categories that describe which section-types construct (p) or suspend (f) moment-to-moment teleology.

Table 4.1. Typology of presentational and fluid sectional functions.

	p	f
P	Pp Verse-chorus family	Pf Riff-section family
F	Fp Bridge verse, hyperchorus, decoy chorus, breakdown, buildup, framing functions	Ff Solo, lead, topic bridge, interlude

Roughly, the Presentational-presentational (Pp) quadrant is occupied by what I will define as *verse-chorus family* functions, the Presentational-fluid (Pf) quadrant by *riff-section family* functions, the Fluid-fluid (Ff) quadrant by solo, topic bridge, and interlude sections, and the Fluid-presentational (Fp) quadrant by the other bridge types discussed in this chapter: bridge verse, hyperchorus and decoy chorus, lead, breakdown, buildup, and framing functions. The Fp category seems well-populated, implying that bridges are less fluid than I am suggesting, but, as I will explain, this is because these categories are already identified for their markedness. The majority of bridges in metal, even within a single song, are usually in the Ff category. It is common for

several leads, solos, or interludes to follow one another, but a hyperchorus, if one does occur, only does so once.

4.3 Presentational Sections

In popular songs, the main part usually consists of a verse and a chorus that together form the body of the tune. In metal, other section functions can contribute to the same integral body without being identifiable as a verse or chorus. I refer to these as *presentational sections*. Presentational sections contribute to the thematic identity of a composition and are suitable candidates for discursive repetition (recapitulation after intervening material). Specific presentational section types can be divided into those historically shared with mainstream rock genres and which organize into a functional cycle, which I refer to as the *verse-chorus family*, and a more free-flowing category based on functionally salient riffs that can interweave presentational materials without regard to form-functional progression, which I call the *riff-section family*.

4.3.1. The Verse-Chorus Family (Pp)

Metal songs use the same kinds of sections that are prevalent in other pop songs, which can be grouped into the *verse-chorus family*, a collection of formal functions that relate to the verse-chorus cycle. These include, of course, the verse and chorus themselves, as well as prefix functions like preverses and prechoruses, and suffix functions such as postchoruses and codettas. The verse-chorus family exhibits specific goal-oriented temporal relationships, such as the chorus as the termination of a musical process. An ordered list of functions within the verse-chorus family is given in Table 4.2. Because functions in the verse-chorus family may be defined in relational

terms¹⁹³ and are tied to formal cycles that span an entire supersection,¹⁹⁴ I will refrain from providing examples and discussion until Chapter 5.

Table 4.2. Formal functions in the verse-chorus family.

Function	Temporality
Introduction	Before-the-beginning
Preverse	Before-the-beginning
Verse	Initiating
Prechorus	Medial
Chorus	Concluding
Postchorus	Prolongs conclusion, or after-the-end
Codetta	After-the-end

Introductions are external to the functional cycle, coming “before-the-beginning,” what Caplin calls a framing function.¹⁹⁵ However, they often share material and functional relations with other song sections and may be incorporated into cyclic rotations. Introductions are often texturally, timbrally, or dynamically “incomplete” in relation to the rest of the functional cycle. Hudson refers to such cases as a “buildup intro,” but I regard the buildup to be but a detail of the introduction function. Likewise, Hudson’s “extra intro” describes sections generally consisting of atmospheric effects and without a buildup function (although his example, Metallica’s “Phantom Lord” (1983) up to 0:32, contains a textural accumulation before the “buildup intro”).¹⁹⁶ Hudson’s observation on the “extra intro” seems to reflect a peculiarity of his corpus, which generally consists of songs with one or two introductory sections. However, lengthy, multi-sectional introductions are not uncommon in metal, so to keep labeling conventions simple and allow greater

¹⁹³ Trevor de Clercq, *Sections and Successions in Successful Songs: A Prototype Approach to Form in Rock Music*, Ph.D. diss. (University of Rochester, 2012), 38–39.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid, 85.

¹⁹⁵ ¹⁹⁵ William Caplin. *Classical Form: A Theory of Formal Function for the Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 15.

¹⁹⁶ Hudson 2021.

room for interpretation, I label sequences of introductions as “introduction a, introduction b, introduction c...”

Preverses are texted or untexted sections that lead into verses. As a prefix function, the identity of a preverse is dependent on the following verse. Smialek remarks that, in contrast to an introduction, the analytical label “draws attention to the specific pairing” of preverse and verse.¹⁹⁷ Preverses may act as a link¹⁹⁸ between the introduction and verse, presenting the introduction’s material in “complete” form. In such cases, I regard the introduction to be based, retrospectively, on the preverse.

Verses are initiating functions that expose the story of a song. Lyrics are typically variant from one verse to the next. Musically, verses tend to be melodically and rhythmically tautological and dynamically relaxed (though not always, given metal’s sonic profile), meandering about and ‘spinning the yarn’ until the chorus comes along. Although usually found alongside choruses, verses can also stand alone.

Prechoruses are medial formal functions that build off of the cycle initiated by the verse and gain energy to strengthen the arrival of the chorus. Prechorus lyrics are usually invariant. If untexted, prechoruses can be distinguished from other intervening sections by the way they build up to the chorus.

Choruses are concluding functions, closing off the cycle initiated by the verse by reaching a high-energy plateau. Chorus lyrics are almost always invariant or very near to it. Whereas verses provide narrative exposition, choruses offer interpretation, crystallizing a general meaning. Choruses can also be detected by the presence of the song’s title. In contrast to the choppy,

¹⁹⁷ Eric T. Smialek, *Genre and Expression in Extreme Metal, ca. 1990–2015*, Ph.D. diss. (McGill University, 2015), 219.

¹⁹⁸ Hudson 2021 discusses various interpretations of pre-verses as links and comes to his own technical definition for a link function as distinct from a pre-verse, but here I only mean ‘link’ in the vernacular sense.

tautological qualities of verses, choruses tend to be rhythmically relaxed but melodically purposeful, using longer note values and less active riffs. Dynamically and texturally, choruses are usually fuller than verses.

Postchoruses prolong the plateau of the chorus. Although Nobile describes postchoruses as “after-the-end,” they often contribute important thematic information and possibly even the song’s title if it is withheld during the chorus, in which case the postchorus is chorus-like. On the other hand, the effect of energy dissipation may also be felt, in which case the postchorus is verse-like.¹⁹⁹ Verse-like postchoruses, in turn, can sound like the initiation of another formal cycle. This functional ambiguity may be phenomenologically experienced as a bridge section. Therefore, postchoruses are highly contextual.

Codettas are framing functions that come “after-the-end.”²⁰⁰ Like postchoruses, codettas are contextual. Codettas may be short and lack a discernible melodic identity, or they may be longer if they dissipate energy or maintain a high level of energy without presenting new material as in a cadential extension. A common strategy is to return to material from a previous section, especially the riff from the beginning of the cycle to introduce the same riff at the beginning of the next rotation.

¹⁹⁹ Smialek 2015, 168–169.

²⁰⁰ Caplin 1998, 16.

4.3.2. The Riff-Section Family (Pf)

A second presentational category is the *riff-section family*. While the verse-chorus family focuses on presenting a song's story and message in a forward-driven narrative, riff-sections foreground riffs, as the name suggests. These riffs contribute to the thematic content of the presentational supersection but not to the progression of textual narrative. Michelle Phillipov thus describes riff-sections as a force of disruption in death metal, responsible for its incommensurability with verse-chorus form.²⁰¹ While my findings confirm Phillipov's observation, I will demonstrate that riff-sections may also serve to organize presentational materials in a similar way as verse-chorus family sections.

Riff-sections can function with or without lyrics. If given lyrics, they can come to resemble other formal functions. However, riff-sections are functionally fluid and do not mesh well with the directionality of the verse-chorus cycle. While descriptors like "initiating," "concluding," "before-the-beginning" and "after-the-end" can be attached to specific verse-chorus family functions, the temporality of a riff-section is "whenever-I-wish," potentially appearing at different points in the cycle over the course of multiple rotations and even disrupting the normal flow from initiating to concluding functions. Riff-sections then provide an avenue for loosening up the prescribed temporality of the verse-chorus family of formal functions without sacrificing discursive repetition. Doing so opens the possibility of more flexible narratives than the predictable alternation of verses and choruses.

Main riff. The most consequential type of riff-section is the main riff. In common parlance, a main riff is just a riff that is prominent in a song, but here I make a functional distinction: the main riff must stand by itself at least some of the time. The riff of a chorus section, for instance,

²⁰¹ Michelle Phillipov, *Death Metal and Music Criticism: Analysis at the Limits* (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2012), 82.

does not count as a main riff unless it appears elsewhere independently in the same supersection. Main riffs may make up the majority of a song’s thematic material, or just a small but memorable section. Dio’s “Holy Diver” (Table 4.3) is one of the most well-known songs with one of the most well-known main riffs from the classic heavy metal style. The only other presentational sections to appear are a verse (with a head refrain, albeit a weak one) and a section that has all of the characteristics of a prechorus, but which is not followed by a chorus.

Table 4.3. Dio, “Holy Diver” (*Holy Diver*, 1983)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	Wind sound effects
	0:27		– Synth lead
	0:45		– Synth pads
	1:09		– Instruments fade out
	1:16		– Anacrusic ‘scoop’
A	1:20	Main riff	
	1:42	Verse	
	2:03	Prechorus (fakeout)	
A	2:06	Main riff	
	2:16	Verse	
	2:37	Prechorus	
B	2:43	Bridge a	
A	3:04	Verse	
C	3:25	Bridge b	Guitar solo
	3:56	Bridge c	Guitar solo, prechorus
A	4:11	Verse	
	4:31	Prechorus	
	4:42	Main riff ⇒ Coda	Chorus-like

In the first two rotations of supersection A, the main riff comes before the verse, but it resists being identified as a preverse on account of being more memorable than the verse and its move to the end of the cycle in the final A supersection. The prechorus is tentative throughout the composition, seeking a chorus that never comes. In the final rotation, the prechorus extends outward and finally finds resolution in the main riff—functioning as a chorus surrogate—which is now texted with the title lyric repeated over and over again (Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1. Dio, “Holy Diver” (*Holy Diver*, 1983); final prechorus to main riff (4:31).

The musical score is divided into two main sections: the Prechorus and the Main Riff.

Prechorus (Measures 1-4): The vocal line consists of the lyrics "Got-ta get a-way, get a-way, got-ta get a-way, get a-way,". The guitar accompaniment features a series of chords. The harmonic functions are labeled as PD, VI, VII, VI, and D. The guitar tablature shows various fretting patterns, including power chords and single-note lines.

Main Riff (Measures 5-17): The vocal line includes the lyrics "yeah. Ho-ly Di-ver, soul sur-vi- vor, you're the one who's clean. Ho-ly Di-ver, Ho-ly Di-ver, there's a cat in the blue com-ing af- ter you, Ho-ly Di-ver. Yeah, Ho-ly Di-ver, Yeah, al- right. Get a-way, get a-way, get a-way. Ho-ly Di-ver, Ho-ly Di-ver. Oh, Ho-ly Di-ver". The guitar part features a prominent power chord riff. The harmonic functions are labeled as VII, VI, VII, VI, and D. The guitar tablature includes power chord patterns and single-note lines.

The main riff section becomes chorus-like in that it indexes memorable material, supports the title text, and terminates an apparent functional harmonic and formal circuit initiated by a tonic-prolonging verse and prechorus progressing from syntactical predominant to dominant harmony.²⁰² In other ways, it makes for a poor chorus. Although the title text is used, no general,

²⁰² Drew Nobile, “Harmonic Function in Rock Music: A Syntactical Approach,” *Journal of Music Theory* 60, no. 2 (2016), 149–180.

crystallized message emerges. Ronnie James Dio's vocal line is improvisatory, does not organize into regular phrases, contains melisma, and creates a collage of lyrical ideas from the verses and prechorus. Although the main riff summarizes the song like a chorus would, the loose-knit vocal line is more characteristic of a postchorus or coda, or even a terminal climax in that it permits no further autonomous sections.²⁰³ Thus, the main riff straddles multiple temporal zones, beginning the song as an analogue to a preverse and ending it as an amalgamation of concluding and post-conclusion functions.

Main riff sections factor prominently in early "classic" heavy metal from the 1970s and 1980s that relied on few compositional materials compared to the extravagances that would follow the New Wave of British Heavy Metal (NWOBHM).²⁰⁴ Nevertheless, they have remained an important component of metal's presentational materials.

Tattoo. Tattoos are riff-sections that contribute to the thematic content of the presentational material with an exposed instrumental melody but do not function in as prominent a role as the main riff. Everett remarks that a tattoo "is a short, one-phrase unit that may reappear as if to bring the song back into focus, perhaps to call extra attention to the following verse or, if the phrase had functioned as the song's introduction, to make it seem as if we are off to a fresh start."²⁰⁵ Tattoos in rock are impactful even if they are fairly short, such as the lick at the beginning of "Something" by George Harrison (Figure 4.2).

²⁰³ I draw this parallel because "Holy Diver" is a compound AABA form built on elements of the verse-chorus paradigm, yet the function fluidity of the main riff problematizes both the verse-prechorus-chorus model and Brad Osborn's terminally climactic form.

²⁰⁴ Raymond David Aglugub, "Shape Shift: Riff Variation and Development in the Music of Metallica." Master's thesis (Boston University, 2007), 64.

²⁰⁵ Walter Everett, *The Foundations of Rock: From "Blue Suede Shoes" to "Suite: Judy Blue Eyes"* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 151.

Figure 4.2. The Beatles, “Something” (*Abbey Road*, 1969); opening tattoo.

Everett cites Cream’s “White Room” (Figure 4.3) for an example of a longer, eight-measure excerpt that consistently introduces sections.

Figure 4.3. Cream, “White Room” (*Wheels of Fire*, 1968); opening tattoo.

In metal, longer phrases are common. Tattoos may occur periodically in the same place in a rotation. In “Bite the Pain” by Death (Table 4.4), the tattoo (Figure 4.4) appears twice in each presentational rotation: between the prechorus and chorus, and again after the chorus.

Table 4.4. Death, “Bite the Pain” (*The Sound of Perseverance*, 1998)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
	0:16	Introduction'	
A	0:41	Verse	
	1:04	Prechorus	
	1:26	Tattoo	
	1:31	Chorus	
	1:54	Tattoo	
	2:00	Bridge a	Vocal interlude
B	2:12	Bridge b	Guitar solo
	2:39	Bridge c	Guitar solo
	3:02	Bridge d	Retransition
	3:05	Verse	
A	3:28	Prechorus	
	3:51	Tattoo	
	3:57	Chorus	
	4:20	Tattoo	

Figure 4.4. Death, “Bite the Pain” (*The Sound of Perseverance*, 1998); tattoo (1:26).
Tuning: D–G–C–F–A–D

Like a main riff, a tattoo is not restricted to a single role. In Angel Witch’s eponymous song (Table 4.5), the tattoo (Figure 4.5) appears before each verse, but also concludes the second rotation of supersection A. It is altogether absent after the chorus recapitulates.

Table 4.5. Angel Witch, “Angel Witch” (*Angel Witch*, 1980)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	Guitar lead
A	0:12	Tattoo	8 bars
	0:22	Verse	
	0:42	Chorus	
A	0:52	Tattoo	4 bars
	0:57	Verse	
	1:17	Chorus	
	1:26	Tattoo	8 bars
B	1:35	Bridge	Bridge verse
	1:54	Reintroduction	Guitar lead
A (abbr.) ⇒ Coda	2:04	Chorus	
	2:24	Chorus	Texture reduced
	2:44	Chorus ⇒ Coda	Guitar solo

Figure 4.5. Angel Witch, “Angel Witch” (*Angel Witch*, 1980); tattoo (0:12).

Break. When a riff-section does not emerge as a main riff or a tattoo, it falls under the category of a break. “Break” belongs to the informal vocabulary used by musicians and fans to describe a textural interruption—typically of the continuity of the vocal part with instrumental passages, though other meanings are possible. For instance, Walter Everett and Tim Riley describe Paul McCartney’s unaccompanied voice before the beginning of each verse in The Beatles’ “Oh! Darling” (*Abbey Road*, 1969) as a “solo vocal break.”²⁰⁶ While instructive about texture, such an analysis does not say much about formal function. Using the term somewhat differently, Sheila Whiteley discusses “lead breaks” as a stylistic element of the blues in Jimi Hendrix’s music. In this case, the “break” interrupts the singer’s vocal line but is contained within the rotational structure of the twelve-bar blues (or, in this case, the cyclic quadruple plagal progression of “Hey Joe,” C–G–D–A–E).²⁰⁷ “Lead break” is sometimes used interchangeably with “solo,”²⁰⁸ but for the sake of terminological consistency (Osborn 2010, Nobile 2020, Hudson 2021) I will later define solos as a type of bridge function. I define **lead breaks** as soloistic sections within a presentational supersection (that is, as an accessory to a presentational cycle), and other non-teleological riff-sections simply as **breaks**. According to this definition, a break is conceived as a suspension of a form-functional cycle. It may or may not interrupt the texture, so while breaks are by default instrumental passages, **vocal breaks** are also observed, being the texted version of an instrumental break. Because breaks are easier to identify in context, I will reserve examples for the discussion on presentational supersections in Chapter 5.

²⁰⁶ Walter Everett and Tim Riley, *What Goes On: The Beatles, Their Music, and Their Time* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 227.

²⁰⁷ Sheila Whiteley, “Progressive Rock and Psychedelic Coding in the Work of Jimi Hendrix” in *Reading Pop: Approaches to Textual Analysis in Popular Music*, edited by Richard Middleton (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 238–240.

²⁰⁸ Neil Daniels, *The Story of Judas Priest: Defenders of the Faith* (London and New York: Omnibus Press, 2007), 273–277.

4.4 Fluid Sections: Bridge Types

While many popular songs have been written with nothing but presentational functions, it is normal for rock songs since the 1970s to include a section external to the presentational material called a *bridge*. Metal artists have developed and codified bridge sections extensively, resulting in numerous bridge types. Just as an acquainted listener of pop/rock can identify a chorus upon hearing it, so too can a metal fan recognize the style’s special bridge types. The proliferation of bridge types gives metal songs unique formal characteristics that are absent from mainstream rock, orienting compositional practice around sections that are treated as liminal in other styles. Bridge sections, being the site for metal’s most intense formal experimentation, outgrow their traditional functions and meanings, requiring new theories and vocabulary. For this reason, this dissertation proposes a theory that decouples metal bridge functions from traditional relational definitions.

The bridge section, or “middle eight,” comes from the B part of the 32-bar AABA (*simple AABA*) form of Tin Pan Alley pop songs. Simple AABA form was hybridized with strophic verse-chorus form such that each A section is itself a verse-chorus pair, creating what John Covach calls *compound AABA form*. The B section retains its role as a bridge (Table 4.6).²⁰⁹

Table 4.6. Simple and compound AABA forms.²¹⁰

Simple AABA Form				Compound AABA Form			
A	A	B	A	A	A	B	A
Verse	Verse	Bridge	Verse	Verse Chorus	Verse Chorus	Bridge	Verse Chorus

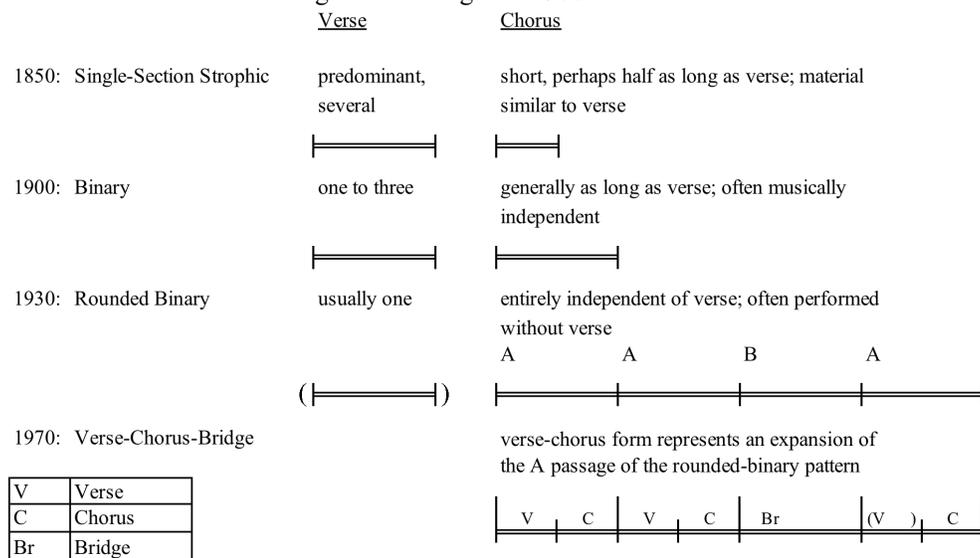
In a similar explanation, Ken Stephenson traces the historical development of verse-chorus-bridge form from its nineteenth-century antecedents to its introduction at the outset of the

²⁰⁹ John Covach. 2005. “Form in Rock Music: A Primer.” In *Engaging Music: Essays in Music Analysis*, edited by Deborah Stein, 65-76. (New York: Oxford University Press), 74.

²¹⁰ Covach refers to the A sections of simple AABA songs as “verses” because they lack the invariant lyrics of choruses (Covach 2005, 67–71), even though *verse* traditionally indicates a strain entirely external to the AABA structure. Vic Hobson, *Creating Jazz Counterpoint: New Orleans, Barbershop Harmony, and the Blues* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2014), 18.

1970s, using the paradigm of verse/chorus structure to demonstrate the binary division of various forms (Figure 4.6). These forms range from strophic verse-chorus songs in which the chorus is dependent on the verse, to binary songs in which verse and chorus constitute different independent but unequal sections, to rounded binary verse-chorus forms in which the verse only sounds once at the beginning and may be omitted altogether while the chorus manifests simple AABA structure.

Figure 4.6. The evolution of common song forms through the 1970s.²¹¹



Simple AABA forms, in Stephenson’s taxonomy, constitute entire choruses in and of themselves (reflecting the form’s usage and terminology in jazz),²¹² but may be hybridized with verse-chorus form to create verse-chorus-bridge form (Covach’s compound AABA form). Speaking to the providence and uniqueness of verse-chorus-bridge form, Stephenson writes:

...in numerous cases, the desire for variety after the second chorus results in a completely new section: a bridge. The resulting form is something of a hybrid... It resembles verse-chorus strophic form in that a verse and chorus come one after the other two or three times, but it differs in that it has in the middle of the song a third section that doesn’t fit into the otherwise consistent scheme of repetition. It

²¹¹ Adapted from Ken Stephenson, *What to Listen for in Rock: A Stylistic Analysis* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 137-141.

²¹² Scott DeVaux, *The Birth of Bebop* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997), 203.

resembles rounded-binary form with its bridge, but it differs in that the bridge is preceded by two distinct sections, not just one. Not exactly like any other musical form, the verse-chorus-bridge form nevertheless finds a link with tradition.²¹³

Rock theorists have characterized bridges as texted sections and treated other sections that occur in the same formal location—such as guitar solos—as distinct from bridges.²¹⁴ Theorists sensitive to experimental rock, metal and hardcore, on the other hand, have argued that it may be more fruitful to speak in terms of bridge *functions*, which would include solos under the same category.²¹⁵ Brad Osborn, for example, generalizes “several distinct types of [bridge] sections that nonetheless share the same role within the song—sections that appear roughly two-thirds of the way through the song, separating adjacent verses and/or choruses.”²¹⁶ Like Osborn, I prefer to classify these not as sections with diverging formal functions but as different flavors of a unitary bridge function.

A second problem concerns how a bridge fits into the functional structure of a song. Christopher Endrinal observes that not all sections that are labeled “bridge” provide a connecting function and proposes the terms “interlude” and “interverse” to describe sections that comes between verse-chorus rotations, contrast them, but do not connect them. “Interludes” are instrumental, “interversed” are texted.²¹⁷ In this way, Endrinal addresses the unfortunate linguistic implications of the term “bridge,” but still defines these sections by their interior location within the form. As I will demonstrate later, metal bridge functions frequently occur without such bookends. Another issue is that metal “bridges” have distinct identities and functions that are recognized by fans. The theoretical task is then to pick apart the terminology, unpack its baggage,

²¹³ Stephenson 2002, 140-141.

²¹⁴ Nobile 2020, 153–167.

²¹⁵ Easley 2015, 132–133.

²¹⁶ Osborn 2010, 69.

²¹⁷ Christopher Endrinal, *Form and Style in the Music of U2*, Ph.D. diss. (Florida State University, 2008), 74-76.

and find some logic that can describe generally the various formal processes and section types in metal songs while preserving their particularity. Begrudgingly, I do not have a label that resolves these contradictions. However, taking a cue from Osborn’s bridge functions while seeking to discard the dual assumptions of connectivity and contrast, I propose a system for describing bridge section types through their *fluid function*. By replacing the noun “bridge” with an adjective, I describe a family of section-types by their flowing, anti-periodic quality in a way which places no requirement on connection or contrast.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of fluid functions—or bridge types—that appear frequently in metal. When referring to actual sections in analysis, I retain the term “bridge” because of its historical usage and to encourage hearing sections with otherwise unrelated features as cohesive within a supersection. For example, a solo, a bridge verse, and a breakdown are all different types of bridge.

4.4.1. Solos (Ff) and Leads (Fp)

Solo and lead sections feature an instrument in the melodic role otherwise occupied by the vocalist. Perhaps more than any other section type, solo and lead sections demonstrate the division of musical labor in metal bands. Metal bands often have two types of guitarists: a rhythm guitarist who specializes in playing riffs, and a lead guitarist who specializes in performing exposed melodic passages such as solos, licks, and fills. When not playing these specialized lead parts, lead guitarists usually join the rhythm guitarist in articulating the riff. The sonic requirements of rhythm and lead guitar differ. To facilitate switching from rhythm to lead playing, lead guitarists will use a separate channel on their amplifier or otherwise change their input signal—boosting their volume and adjusting their EQ—to be heard above the ensemble. In common parlance, “solo” and “lead”

are used interchangeably. However, I differentiate between the terms to mark section types with diverging expressive functions.

“Solo” conventionally refers to a texture (as in a piece written for solo piano) or a passage with an exposed instrument (as in the oboe solo in the *Marcia funebre* movement of Beethoven’s third symphony). In blues music and its successors—including jazz, rock, and metal—solos express the soloist’s subjectivity and thus are rhetorically set apart from the rest of the composition both in terms of formal organization and compositional techniques. Richard Kostelanetz wrote about “the purely personal spiritual release into 'timelessness' suggested by the beat-and-metre-destroying arabesque of [B.B. Kings’] solo style” as an antipode to “communal” ostinato figuration.²¹⁸ In blues and jazz, entire “choruses” (rotations of a piece’s harmonic schema) are set aside for the soloist, a precursor to the bridge sections composed out specifically for purposes in rock’s verse-chorus-bridge form.

Unlike blues and jazz, most metal solos are meticulously composed, but they ideally *suggest* improvisational fluidity by avoiding motive-derived phrase structure (such as sentences and periods), narrow melodic contours, and rhythms that emphasize the meter too strongly. Adopting William Caplin’s distinction, these strategies contribute to “loosening techniques” that help to distinguish solos from presentational melodic content, though harmonic instability is not always found in rhetorically loose metal passages.²¹⁹ Whereas solos are loose-knit and performatively transcend restrictions, leads are tight-knit and restrictive in every sense of the word: their rhythms are constructive to meter, their motivic design contributes to periodicity and

²¹⁸ Richard Kostelanetz, *The B.B. King Reader: 6 Decades of Commentary* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard Corporation, 2005), 43–44.

²¹⁹ Caplin 1998, 84–86.

presentational function, and their melodic ambitus is limited.²²⁰ Without reading too much into Kostelanetz's metaphor, solos are "individualistic," leads are "communal." It is even common for leads to be harmonized at a constant interval by a second instrument, creating what I call a "dual lead." Solos can be partially harmonized, but they resist constant harmonization by using wide registral skips and melodic figures that are difficult to coordinate across multiple instruments.

An instructive example may be found in the "Rising from Ruins" by Judas Priest (Table 4.7). Though not a bridge section, introduction a' contains a lead (Figure 4.7). Measures 2–5 of the example feature tight motivic construction. M.2 introduces motive α , a double-neighbor figure beginning with a bend up to C, and motive β , an ascending scale against a tonic pedal point. Together, motives α and β make up a basic idea. In m.3, the basic idea is repeated at a transposition, with motive α sequenced up a step with a bend up to D, and motive β now on a dominant pedal point. M.4 repeats motive α at its original transposition but an octave higher, and then substitutes motive γ , which is sequenced down a step in m.5 in the manner of fragmentation as the lead approaches the cadence. The melodic progression follows a linear path from scale degree $\hat{5}$, which is prolonged through mm. 2–4, down to $\hat{1}$ in m.6, emphasizing the relative orderliness that characterizes leads. Although the total range is quite wide—a sixteenth, spanning B4–C7—the repetition of motive α in m.4 subtracts from the sense that the upper register offers anything new. The phrase begins and ends in its obligatory register.

²²⁰ These are not hard rules but general guidelines. Only by weighing the attributes of a complete passage can one conclude whether it falls more on the lead category or the solo category.

Table 4.7. Judas Priest, “Rising from Ruins” (*Firepower*, 2018)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction a	Chorus riff
	0:11	Introduction a'	Guitar lead
	0:22	Introduction b	
A	0:32	Verse	
	0:54	Verse	
	1:21	Chorus	
A	1:42	Introduction b	
	1:53	Verse	
	2:14	Chorus	
B	2:36	Bridge a	Interlude
	2:46	Bridge b	Vocal interlude
	3:07	Bridge c	Guitar solo
	3:28	Bridge d	Guitar solo
	3:39	Bridge e	Guitar lead
	3:58		Dual guitar lead
A (abbr.)	4:24	Chorus	
	4:45	Chorus	Guitar solo
Coda	5:07	Coda	Introduction b

Figure 4.7. Judas Priest, “Rising from Ruins” (*Firepower*, 2018). Introduction a' (0:11) guitar lead.

The first guitar solo (Figure 4.8) also contains recurrent motives, but they are used successively rather than periodically, and though the range is nearly identical to the previous example (B4–B6), frequent wide intervallic leaps and arpeggiations integrate the whole of the wide tessitura. The solo begins with motive α , which only occurs once and thus is not established as a basic idea. Motive β occurs twice in m.3, outlining the tonic harmony with a tonic and dominant pedal point, and is never heard again. In mm. 5–6, motive γ fills out an ascending linear progression

from $\flat\hat{3}$ to $\hat{5}$ against a tonic pedal. However, the linear progression is not associated with a cadential figure as it is in Figure 4.7, but plateaus at $\hat{5}$ for the rest of the solo. In m.7, motive δ uses a double tresillo rhythm (16:333322), ornamented by manipulation with the tremolo bar. In m.8, motive δ sounds again with the pitch contour modified and without the tremolo, but $\hat{5}$ is maintained throughout, eliding into the next solo.

Figure 4.8. Judas Priest, “Rising from Ruins” (*Firepower*, 2018). Bridge c (3:07) guitar solo.

It is not always easy to tell a solo from a lead. Some solos are lead-like and some leads are solo-like. The second solo in “Rising from Ruins” (Figure 4.9) is only four measures long (plus an elided cadence) with almost no intervening material between the two motives and a relatively narrow range of A5–G6—only a minor seventh. But what it lacks in individuality and expressive variety it makes up for in improvisational character and avoidance of a discernable theme type. The solo, made up mostly of motive α , may be repetitive and directional (the entire solo outlines

The undifferentiated stream of tapping is briefly interrupted by motive β (identical to motive δ from Figure 4.8, though in a lower octave) before a compressed, perhaps fragmented, version of motive α gains energy in anticipation of the cadence. Furthermore, the harmony stands on the dominant (as shown by the rhythm guitar part in the lower staff), making the harmony unstable and preventing the emergence of a tight-knit form. Arguably, bridge d is just a continuation of bridge c, for it has few defining features of its own, but the two solos are two distinct parts played by separate people, occupying different registral spaces and exploiting different performance techniques.

The platonic ideal of a lead section is demonstrated in bridge e (Figure 4.10). The melody consists entirely of a three-note stepwise motive that constantly unfolds thirds; annotating the example for this would clutter it beyond readability. It possesses none of the virtuosic adornment of a solo: it is just a melody, through and through. The hypnotic rhythm is scarcely more than the tactus itself, rarely interrupted by the tamest of syncopations. The melodic form does not adhere to any well-documented theme type, but each phrase begins on the tonic and ends on a syntactical dominant (\flat VII in mm.4, 7, 11 and 14; V in m. 16)²²¹ and the phrases repeat with regularity, forming the scheme *ababc*. After the first pair of phrases, a second lead guitar joins, harmonizing a third above for the most part, turning this lead section into a dual lead. The mixture of three- and four-bar phrases is unique, but otherwise bridge e is the picture of conventionality. These qualities are not to be held against it, however, because it is precisely conventionality and the inexorable march of repetitive teleology (a quarter note followed by two eighth notes, tonic going to dominant, forever and ever) that identifies it as an anthem—the ultimate communal genre in the rock

²²¹ Drew Nobile, “Harmonic Function in Rock Music: A Syntactical Approach,” *Journal of Music Theory* 60, no. 2 (2016), 149–180.

repertoire. Although this is an instrumental passage, it is not difficult to imagine, hermeneutically, the functional connection between the formal rhetoric of persistence and renewal in bridge e and the song’s chorus, leaving no doubt to its integration:

We’re standing as one
 We’re carrying on
 Rising from ruins
 We bring the lights
 Out from the nights
 Rising from ruins

Figure 4.10. Judas Priest, “Rising from Ruins” (*Firepower*, 2018). Bridge e (3:39) guitar leads.

There is no traditional consensus among metalheads, either in language or in practice, on the distinction between solos and leads. However, quantitative differences translate to qualitative ones. Writing of “Runnin’ with the Devil” by Van Halen, Walser comments, “The guitar is featured alone, with its own melodic material, but these four bars are actually very little like most heavy metal guitar solos: too short, too simple, and since the same statement is repeated later in the song, the necessary impression of spontaneity and improvisation is lacking.”²²² Distinguishing solos from leads allows us to better understand the various rhetorical functions of instrumental textures and explain how both expressive modes can be used to good effect within the same composition.

4.4.2. Breakdowns and Buildups (Fp)

If solos are meant to appeal to individualism and leads to communalism, then breakdowns belong to the communal camp. Breakdowns compel audiences to an aggressive, corporeal style of communal dance called “moshing.”²²³ The taxonomy of breakdowns is controversial among metalheads due to association of the technique with metalcore styles that reached commercial popularity in the early 2000s. Conversations among metalheads about what constitutes a breakdown has led to taxonomies based on tempo, complexity of riffs, and so forth. Doug Moore, for example, distinguishes between three types of “heavy parts”: slowdowns, slams, and breakdowns.²²⁴ However, the process and musical function of these examples is identical despite

²²² Walser 1993, 53.

²²³ Gabrielle Riches, *‘Caught in a Mosh’: Moshpit Culture, Extreme Metal Music and the Reconceptualization of Leisure* M.A. Thesis, Edmonton: University of Alberta, 42–47.

²²⁴ Doug Moore, “The Heavy Part: Slowdowns, Slams & Breakdowns,” Invisible Oranges, July 30, 2012, <https://www.invisibleoranges.com/feature-the-heavy-part-slowdowns-slams-and-breakdowns-doug-moore-raw/>.

the vagaries of their realization: a temporary reduction of the band texture with a focus on the rhythm guitar and drums (or analogous parts) to coordinate audience participation.²²⁵

Breakdowns are not unique to metal. Mark Butler, tracing the terms “break,” “breakbeat” and “breakdown,” arrives at the following definition for breakdowns in electronic dance music: “a section with a significantly thinner texture, usually marked by the removal of the bass drum.”²²⁶ Breakdowns in hardcore music, according to David Easley, are “characterized by [the] tempo (cutting the previous tempo in half), placement in a song (near the end), and lyrical focus (direct statements that sum up a song’s sentiments).”²²⁷ Easley’s approach highlights the breakdown’s formal function and the identity of the section as a type of bridge.²²⁸

Breakdowns often modulate time feel, the proportional relationship of a backbeat timeline to the meter. A normal backbeat in a 4/4 measure places the primary rhythmic accents on beats 2 and 4.²²⁹ Time feels can then be expressed as multiples of this “normal time.” For example, “double time” moves the accent from every other quarter note in 4/4 to every other eighth note, doubling the rate. “Quadruple time” places accents on every other sixteenth note. “Half time” decreases the rate of accents per measure so that they only fall on beat 3, and “quarter time” places an accent on the downbeat of every other measure.²³⁰ Arithmetically, a normal backbeat = 1x, double time = 2x, quadruple time = 4x, half time = ½x, and quarter time = ¼x. Figure 4.11 summarizes time feels with alternating bass and snare drum hits.

²²⁵ Steven Gamble, “Breaking Down the Breakdown in Twenty-First Century Metal,” *Metal Music Studies* 5, no. 3 (2019), 347.

²²⁶ Mark Butler, *Unlocking the Groove: Rhythm, Meter, and Musical Design in Electronic Dance Music* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2006), 325.

²²⁷ Easley 2015, 4.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, 145.

²²⁹ Garry Tamlyn, “Backbeat” in *Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World, Vol. 2: Performance and Production* (London and New York: Continuum, 2003), 604.

²³⁰ Jose Garza, *Adapt and Prevail: New Applications of Rhythmic and Metric Analysis in Contemporary Metal Music*, Ph.D. diss. (Florida State University, 2017) 88–89.

Figure 4.11. Time feels as a function of the backbeat rhythm.



The conventions metalcore and deathcore, the styles that come to mind for many metalheads when the word “breakdown” is uttered, typically dictate that the drums play in half-time or quarter-time and that the rhythm of the guitar is synchronized with the kick drum. I will show that other metal subgenres use breakdowns too and that the kick drum and guitar are not always synchronized. But for now, let us see an example.

Table 4.8. As Blood Runs Black, “Beneath the Surface” (*Allegiance*, 2006)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description	Time feel
Introduction	0:00	Introduction		Blast beat
A	0:18	Verse a		2x
	0:34	Chorus		1/2x
	0:50	Break a	Breakdown	1/2x
	1:00	Verse a		2x
	1:16	Verse b		2x
B	1:31	Bridge a	Breakdown	1/4x
	1:48			1/8x
	2:00	Bridge b	Interlude	1/8x
	2:26	Bridge c	Interlude	2x
	2:54	Bridge d	Interlude	1/4x
	3:13	Bridge e	Interlude	2
Coda	3:32	Bridge f ⇒ Coda	Breakdown	1/2x

“Beneath the Surface” by As Blood Runs Black (Table 4.8) contains three breakdowns. The breakdown in bridge a demonstrates a quarter-time backbeat and synchronization between the

guitar and kick drum (Figure 4.12). Following Steven Gamble, the drums are transcribed unconventionally above the guitar to facilitate comparison between the guitar and drums.²³¹ Although the time feels listed in Figure 4.11 only go down to quarter time, other multiples of the backbeat are possible. Later in the breakdown, the backbeat is halved again into eighth time, the snare drum now only landing on the downbeat of the third of every four measures, and the kick drum no longer reinforces the guitar's rhythms (Figure 4.13).

Figure 4.12. As Blood Runs Black, "Beneath the Surface" (*Allegiance*, 2006); breakdown in quarter time (1:31).

Tuning: C-F-B \flat -E \flat -G-C

The score for Figure 4.12 is presented in three systems. The top system is a drum staff with a 4/4 time signature, featuring a kick drum on the downbeats and a snare drum on the backbeats. The middle system is a guitar staff in the key of F major (one flat), showing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and quarter notes. The bottom system is a guitar TAB staff with fret numbers (0, 2) and pickup selection indicators (P.M.).

Figure 4.13. As Blood Runs Black, "Beneath the Surface" (*Allegiance*, 2006); breakdown in eighth time (1:48).

Tuning: C-F-B \flat -E \flat -G-C

The score for Figure 4.13 is presented in three systems. The top system is a drum staff with a 4/4 time signature, showing a snare drum on the downbeats and a kick drum on the backbeats. The middle system is a guitar staff in the key of F major, showing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and quarter notes. The bottom system is a guitar TAB staff with fret numbers (0, 2) and pickup selection indicators (P.M.).

²³¹ Steven Gamble, "Breaking Down the Breakdown in Twenty-First Century Metal," *Metal Music Studies* 5, no. 3 (2019), 341.

Breakdowns are usually followed by a process of accumulation that restores the full band texture, dividing breakdown sections into an initiating phase and buildup phase.²³² Often, the initiating phase is marked by a suspension of time feel so that its return is made all the more impactful. A simple example is given in “한 (Han)” by Sad Legend (새드 레전드) (Table 4.9).

Table 4.9. Sad Legend, “한 (Han)” (*Sad Legend*, 1998)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description	Time feel
Introduction	0:00	Introduction		2x
A	0:26	Verse		1x
	0:53	Chorus		1x
A	1:20	Verse		1x
	1:48	Chorus		1x
B	2:15	Bridge a	Guitar lead	1x
	2:43	Bridge b	Breakdown; guitar, no backbeat	–
	2:56		– Backbeat, vocals enter	½x
	3:24	Bridge c	Guitar lead	1x
	3:51	Bridge d	Vocal interlude	2x
	4:05	Bridge e	Interlude	2x
4:28	Bridge f	Guitar lead, based on chorus	1x	
A (abbr.)	4:42	Chorus	Guitar lead, no vocals	1x
Coda	4:56	Coda		1x

Bridge b (Figure 4.14) begins with the guitar and drums playing together, but the drums do not yet support the breakdown riff with a backbeat. The backbeat enters in half time, along with the vocal line. Although the guitar and drums (especially the kick drum) are not as tightly paired in “한” as in Gamble’s metalcore examples, the guitar line still emphasizes the half-time backbeat with anacruses and onsets on strong beats.

²³² Butler 2006, 225.

Figure 4.14. Sad Legend, “한 (Han)” (*Sad Legend*, 1998); breakdown (2:56).

Both Garza and Gamble emphasize “slower” (half- and quarter-) time feels with breakdowns, as well as rhythmic discontinuity and unison playing between the guitar and kick drum (though Garza supports this final detail less strongly).

Breakdowns feature slow time feels, low-register notes in the guitar and bass, crash or China cymbals, and uneven rhythms played in unison on the guitar, bass, and sometimes kick drum. ... the palm-muting in breakdown riffs generates clearly articulated and temporally separate rhythmic gestures...²³³

An expressive emphasis is placed upon the pick attacks of the right hand, which produces rhythmic patterns of chugs in synchrony with the kick. The drum part thus divides into two fairly independent layers. For human players, this demands a separation between hands (maintaining a cymbal–snare backbeat) and feet (producing a distinct kick rhythm to match guitar chugs). This more active percussive layer created by the kick, guitar and bass always coincides with an even bar structure, developing a unique pattern which may be repeated throughout the breakdown section. It is this series of notes which becomes the breakdown pattern: many breakdowns feature the half-time backbeat, but it is rare to encounter the same kick-chug rhythm in multiple songs. Evidently, the construction of this pattern is the principal domain of creativity for this musical moment.²³⁴

However, their definitions of breakdowns derive mostly from metalcore repertoire since the turn of the millennium. In earlier styles, specifically thrash metal, temporal separation of guitar attacks and mimetic synchronization between the guitar and kick drum was hardly proscribed. For

²³³ Jose Garza, “Transcending Time (Feels): Riff Types, Timekeeping Cymbals, and Time Feels in Contemporary Metal Music,” *Music Theory Online* 27, no. 1 (2021), <https://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.21.27.1/mto.21.27.1.garza.html>.

²³⁴ Gamble 2019, 340.

example, in Razor’s “Violent Restitution” (Table 4.10), the breakdown goes through several time feel changes and the kick drum does not follow the guitar’s rhythm or vice versa.

Table 4.10. Razor, “Violent Restitution” (*Violent Restitution*, 1988)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description	Time feel
Introduction	0:00	Introduction		1x
A	0:09	Verse		2x
	0:34	Chorus		
A	0:44	Verse		
	1:00	Chorus		
B	1:10	Bridge a	Breakdown; guitar alone	–
	1:27		– Drums enter	½x
	1:40		– Voice enters	
	1:53		– Double kick	1x
	2:05	Bridge b (a')	Guitar solo	4x
Coda	2:20	Coda		

The riff is built on a double tresillo timeline (8:333322) switching to a tresillo (8:332) in mm.5–6 with a rapid-fire pedal tone throughout; Garza’s taxonomy of riff types places pedal tone riffs and breakdown riffs into separate categories, but pedal tone riffs evidently can be coincident with breakdowns in styles more closely derived from speed and thrash metal.²³⁵ As the breakdown continues, the drums enter with a half-time feel (Figure 4.15). The kick drum pattern is at odds with the accents of the 3-generated riff, though they synchronize on the anacrusis on the last beat of every second bar. Next, the voice returns to the texture, also synchronizing with the anacrusis.

²³⁵ Garza 2021.

Figure 4.15. Razor, “Violent Restitution” (*Violent Restitution*, 1988); breakdown in half time (1:27).

Tuning: C#-F#-B-E-G#-C#

1

3 3 3 3 2 2

P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M.

9 9 9 9 7 10 9 9 9 9 7 10 9 9 9 7 10

P.M. P.M.

5

3 3 2 3 3 2

P.M. P.M.

7 7 7 3 3 7 10 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 7 10

P.M. P.M.

Without adding another instrument, the texture is made denser when the drummer enters a double-kick pattern (Figure 4.16). The rate of the snare drum doubles, changing the time feel to normal time. As the time feel changes and the drums become more active, the polyrhythmic effect increases between the regular 4s of the drums, divided by a normal backbeat, and the 3-generated riff. The diminution continues when the drums play a quadruple-time beat, with the kick and snare drum playing a sixteenth-note triplet figure, introducing cross rhythm into the complex interplay between the syncopated guitar figure and the drums (Figure 4.17). The riff is the same throughout, but time feel modulations and a guitar solo qualitatively transform the breakdown into a solo section.²³⁶

²³⁶ Time-feel transformation as a form-functional process of becoming reflects Ronald Bogue’s discussion of quantitative and qualitative speed. Ronald Bogue, “Becoming Metal, Becoming Death,” in *Deleuze’s Wake: Tributes and Tributaries* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004), 95–102.

As mentioned previously, breakdowns often go through a buildup process. A buildup may also anticipate a breakdown, becoming its own proper bridge type. In Slayer’s “Raining Blood” (Table 4.11), a buildup section (which itself contains many features of a breakdown, including reduction of the texture, half-time feel, and a buildup process) precedes a breakdown (Figure 4.18).

Table 4.11. Slayer, “Raining Blood” (*Reign in Blood*, 1986)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description	Time feel
Introduction	0:00	Introduction a	Sound effects	–
	0:33	Introduction b		½x
	0:44	Introduction c		1x
	1:06	Introduction d		2x
A	1:22	Verse		2x
	1:39	Chorus		1x
B	2:00	Bridge a	Buildup; introduction b riff	½x
	2:11	Bridge b	Breakdown	½x
	2:38	Bridge c	Hyperchorus	½x
	2:49	Bridge d		–
	2:53	Bridge e	Overlapping guitar solos	2x
Coda	3:23	Coda	Sound effects	–

The first phase of the buildup has the guitar playing in unison with the drums but is not supported throughout the entire riff. Then, a half-time backbeat materializes along with another guitar harmonizing the riff a perfect fifth higher and Tom Araya’s vocal line announcing the breakdown, with the word “away” eliding with the downbeat of bridge b.

Awaiting the hour of reprisal
Your time slips away

Figure 4.18. Slayer, “Raining Blood” (*Reign in Blood*, 1986); buildup (2:00).

Tuning: E \flat -A \flat -D \flat -G \flat -B \flat -E \flat

The musical score for the buildup of "Raining Blood" is presented in three systems. Each system consists of three staves: a drum staff, a vocal melody staff, and a guitar staff with tablature. The guitar tuning is E \flat -A \flat -D \flat -G \flat -B \flat -E \flat . The score is in 4/4 time. The first system shows a drum staff with a double bar line, a vocal melody starting with a quarter note, and a guitar staff with tablature (0 0 0 7 8 9 8) and a 'P.M.' marking. The second system shows a drum staff with six 'x' marks indicating cymbal hits, a vocal melody with eighth notes, and a guitar staff with tablature (0 0 0 9 10 11 10 11 10 9 10 9 8) and a 'P.M.' marking. The third system shows a drum staff with a double bar line, a vocal melody with eighth notes, and a guitar staff with tablature (0 0 0 7 8 9 8 9 8 7 8 7 6) and a 'P.M.' marking.

Gamble writes that “vocalists [often] give an introductory call in the moments preceding the breakdown, inviting the listener to anticipate the arrival of the breakdown proper.”²³⁷ The subsequent breakdown section (Figure 4.19) contains all the features that would become standard for later metalcore styles: sparse guitar attacks synchronized with the kick drum, half-time feel, and once-per-beat (OpB) timekeeping cymbals.²³⁸

²³⁷ Gamble 2019, 341.

²³⁸ Garza 2021.

Figure 4.19. Slayer, “Raining Blood” (*Reign in Blood*, 1986); breakdown (2:11).

Tuning: E \flat -A \flat -D \flat -G \flat -B \flat -E \flat

The musical score is presented in three systems, each containing three staves: a drum staff at the top, a guitar staff in the middle, and a bass guitar staff at the bottom. The key signature is E-flat major (three flats), and the time signature is 4/4. The guitar and bass parts include 'P.M.' (pick mute) markings. The bass part in the third system features a complex line with fret numbers 10, 9, 10, 8, 10, 7, 10, and 4.

Lastly, buildup sections are not limited to introducing breakdowns only but can lead into any section role. In Sodom’s “Agent Orange” (Table 4.12), bridge d (built on a stripped-down version of the verse section) builds up to a guitar solo in bridge e (also built on the verse riff).

Table 4.12. Sodom, “Agent Orange” (*Agent Orange*, 1989)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description	Time feel
Introduction	0:00	Introduction a		1x
	0:24	Introduction b	Triplets	1x
	1:09	Introduction c		2x
A	1:14	Verse		2x
	1:40	Chorus		2x
A	1:57	Verse		2x
	2:23	Chorus		2x
B	2:41	Bridge a	Breakdown; guitar 1, bass, drums	½x
	2:46		Guitar 2 added	½x
	3:09	Bridge b	Sound effects	½x
	3:32	Bridge c		2x
	4:22	Bridge d	Buildup, verse riff	–
	4:32	Bridge e (d’)	Guitar solo, verse riff	2x
	4:57	Bridge f	Guitar lead, chorus riff	2x
A	5:14	Verse		2x
	5:40	Chorus		2x
Coda	5:56	Coda		2x

4.4.3. Bridge Verses, Hyperchoruses and Decoy Choruses (Fp)

Among the various bridge types are sections that appear to parallel presentational functions in some way: bridge verses, hyperchoruses, and decoy choruses. However, as we shall see, these formal functions are not as proscribed as their presentational counterparts. Bridge verses may be stated multiple times, but do not necessarily predict a chorus. Hyperchoruses (which include decoy choruses) are not given to periodic repetition. Like lead sections and breakdowns, bridge verses and hyperchoruses have a distinct thematic profile. However, they are not suitable candidates for rotational treatment, lest they be heard as presentational sections.

Stephen Hudson defines a *bridge verse* as:

A verse-like section that occurs during a B supersection. Unlike a normal verse, which usually leads to a chorus within Compound AABA form, a bridge verse does not lead to any kind of chorus, but is subsumed within the larger bridge function of

the B section. A bridge verse usually has different riffs from the regular verses in the same song.²³⁹

Hudson defines a verse, in turn, as “a conventional section type, which features the same music but with different lyrics each time” that advances the plot of the song, and which is “quieter, less memorable, and less singable than the chorus.”²⁴⁰ A question remains as to what verse-like qualities a bridge verse retains, and which it rejects. If a bridge verse does not lead to any kind of chorus, does it lead to anything at all? Among Hudson’s examples is “Blackened” by Metallica (Table 4.13).

Table 4.13. Metallica, “Blackened” (...*And Justice for All*, 1988)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction a	
	0:38	Introduction b	Based on main riff
A	0:56	Introduction b ⇒ Main riff	Preverse-like
	1:13	Verse	
	1:36	Main riff	
	1:44	Chorus	
	1:54	Main riff	Preverse-like
A	1:59	Verse	
	2:14	Main riff	
	2:21	Chorus	
	2:34	Bridge a	Breakdown; guitar and kick drum – Half-time, band joins
2:53			
B	3:08	Bridge b	Bridge verse?
	3:30	Bridge a	Breakdown riff
	3:44	Bridge b	Bridge verse?
	4:07	Bridge c	Guitar lead
	4:31	Bridge d	Guitar solo
	4:58	Bridge e	Stop time
	5:02	Bridge f	Guitar solo
	5:13	Bridge g	Guitar lead; chorus riff
	5:23	Bridge	Guitar
A	5:33	Main riff	Preverse-like
	5:51	Verse	
	6:06	Main riff	
	6:13	Chorus	
Coda	6:36	Coda	Main riff

²³⁹ Hudson 2021.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

Bridge b, the section Hudson calls a bridge verse (Figure 4.20), presents a vocal line. Conventionally, a verse advances a song’s narrative. The first set of lyrics in bridge b describes the anthropogenic degradation of the Earth’s biosphere:

Opposition, contradiction, premonition, compromise
 Agitation, violation, mutilation, planet dies
 Darkest color, blistered Earth, true death of life

Figure 4.20. Metallica, “Blackened” (*...And Justice for All*, 1988); bridge b (3:08).

The musical score for Metallica's "Blackened" bridge b is presented in a multi-stem format. It includes two vocal lines and three guitar tablature (TAB) systems. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The score is divided into four measures. The first measure is marked with a "delay:" above the vocal line. The lyrics are: "Op - po - si - tion, con - tra - dic - tion, pre - mo - ni - tion..." in the first line, and "Op - po - si - tion, con - tra - dic - tion, pre - mo - ni - tion, com - pro - mise. Ag - i -" in the second line. The third measure contains the lyrics: "Ag - i - ta - tion, vi - o - la - tion, mu - ti - la - tion..." and "ta - tion, vi - o - la - tion, mu - ti - la - tion, pla - net dies." The fourth measure contains the lyrics: "Dark - est co - lor, blis - tered earth, true death of life." The guitar tablature shows a consistent riff of eighth notes (0 0 0 2) with a palm mute (P.M.) indicated by a dashed line. The TAB systems are labeled "T A B" and include fret numbers and a final chord diagram (8/6).

The text is fragmentary and expressionistic, each word chosen for its brutal directness with nowhere to hide among the minimal guitar riff and laid-back half-time backbeat. When the same

music returns, a second set of equally merciless declamations concerns the subsequent mass death of humanity:

Termination, expiration, cancellation human race
Expectation, liberation, population laid to waste
See our mother put to death, see our mother die

Without doubt, the two stanzas taken together form an intelligible narrative like any set of verses should. But when reflecting upon the rest of the song's lyrics, the "bridge verses" appear less as developments of the song's plot and more as elaboration or commentary on the existing narrative in the manner of a traditional bridge section:

[Verse 1]
Blackened is the end, winter, it will send
Throwing all you see into obscurity
Death of Mother Earth, never her rebirth
Evolution's end, never will it mend
Never

[Verse 2]
Blistering of Earth, terminate its worth
Deadly nicotine kills what might have been
Callous frigid chill, nothing left to kill
Never seen before, breathing nevermore
Never

Rather than continuing the plot, the "bridge verses" reinscribe it. Even some of the words are recycled between the presentational verses and bridge b. For this reason, I am not entirely convinced that bridge b is in fact a bridge verse, or if a bridge verse is anything more than a bridge section with lyrics. Hudson's other bridge verse examples, "De Mysteriis Dom Sathanas" by Mayhem and "The Conjuring" by Megadeth, are linear continuations of the preceding plot, and are therefore less controversial.

Nobile’s definition of verses emphasizes the role of the section as the starting point of a verse-chorus cycle. Although the type of section discussed here falls into my “presentational” category, we can nonetheless use it to come to a more rigorous definition of verse bridges:

Verses are starting points. No matter how many different sections a song has, when we come to a verse, we feel that the formal clock has been reset; the verse does not continue a thought, it starts a new thought. Some verses carry that new thought through to its conclusion, while others merely plant a seed to be further explored in later sections such as choruses, prechoruses, etc.²⁴¹

Of course, there are plenty of bridge types that start new thoughts. As discussed in the previous subsection, this qualifier by itself could apply to breakdowns and buildups. The fluid equivalent of a presentational verse then requires additional qualification. All of Hudson’s bridge verse examples feature the voice, and it is this quality that invites comparison to the conventional presentational verse. A breakdown or buildup may contain a vocal part, but it is secondary to processes that play out in the instrumental domain. In a bridge verse, the vocal part is primary. However, I hesitate to declare that all vocally-oriented bridge sections are automatically bridge verses. A stronger case can be made in instances where the lyrics advance the song’s plot and therefore signal teleology within the bridge supersection.

Plot-heavy songs like “The Heritage” by Ancient (Table 4.14) provide a strong case for bridge verse functions. Ancient is a second wave (early 1990s) black metal band which began and ended in Norway but relocated at various times to the United States, Italy and Greece. Their songs are often theatrical, employing multiple singers and different vocal techniques to voice characters. The story of “The Heritage” imagines the scene of an occult ritual in which a female human virgin—performed by Hayam Nur As Sufi, stage name Deadly Kristin—copulates with a vampire—performed by Magnus Garvik, stage name Aphazel—resulting in the virgin joining the

²⁴¹ Drew Nobile, *Form as Harmony in Rock Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), 65.

ranks of the immortal undead herself. The linear text does not entertain the possibility of lyrical recapitulation. Only one section recapitulates, being a main riff section which at first sounds like a verse function since it repeats with new lyrics. However, it is the only presentational section to return at the end of the song—this time without lyrics, suggesting the vocal component is optional. Because this section appears multiple times and indexes supersection A in the manner of a chorus, I analyze it as a main riff section.

Table 4.14. Ancient, “The Heritage” (*The Halls of Eternity*, 1999)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description	Time feel	Collection
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	Topic: Pipe organ	–	C minor
	0:52			–	C# minor
A	1:14	Riff-section a	Verse-like; main riff	1x	
	1:54	Riff-section b		1x	E minor
	2:35	Riff-section a	Main riff	1x	C# minor
B	3:15	Bridge a	Bridge introduction	–	C minor
	3:26	Bridge b	Bridge verse	–	A Nikriz (A–B–C–D#–E–F#–G)
	4:15	Bridge c		¼x	A Phrygian
	4:31			½x	
	4:47	Bridge d		1x	A minor
	5:03	Bridge e		2x	D harmonic minor
	5:17	Bridge f	Bridge verse	2x	G minor
	5:29				
	5:43				
	6:09	Bridge g		2x	D Phrygian
	6:23	Bridge h	Bridge verse	–	E minor
	6:36			½x	
	6:49	Bridge i	Bridge verse	2x, 2:3	
A (abbr.)	7:29	Riff-section a	Main riff, no vocals (4/4)	1x	C# minor

Regardless of formal labels, the song’s text neatly breaks into two parts: preparation for the ritual (supersection A), and the ritual itself (supersection B). The transformation of the female protagonist throughout supersection B is articulated not only through the text but also her vocal technique (Table 4.15). Deadly Kristin’s vocal delivery in the beginning is either sung or spoken, and the completion of her transformation is signaled by her transition to screaming in bridge i.

Table 4.15. Ancient, “The Heritage” (*The Halls of Eternity*, 1999); coordination between characters, lyrics, and form.

Section	(Singer) Character	Vocal Style	Lyric
Introduction	(Aphazel) Summoner	Low growl	“Obscure forces of the shadows, I call you!”
Riff-section a	(A.) Vampire	False cord scream	“I’m the one who raped the children of Abel I am the wicked King of the night And I am ready to face your strength.”
Riff-section b	(Deadly Kristin) Virgin	Vocalise	
	(A.) Narrator	Speaking, false cords	In the stone-cold temple, the four are gathered. The sweet innocent virgin lays unveiled Surrounded by candles on the black altar
Riff-section a	(A.) Vampire	False cord scream	"Companions and brothers, I want you on my side. Be ready now, for our ritual shall begin!"
Bridge a	(A.) Vampire	Speaking, false cords	“Are you ready to become the Bride of Evil? Are you prepared to receive my Dark Power?”
Bridge b (Bridge verse)	(D.K.) Virgin	Melodic Speaking	“Don’t let my beauty die away Like a dead dry leaf Come to me, give me immortality. Here, on this black altar, I make my promise of faith!”
Bridge f (Bridge verse)	(A.) Narrator	False cord scream	He’s coming closer and pierces her neck With passionate inhuman fury Then cuts his pulsing veins And makes her drink his precious blood. The two minds fight and dance together, A frenzied dance of secret love.
Bridge h (Bridge verse)	(D.K.) Virgin ⇒ Undead	Speaking	“Under this ivory full moon I rise now, immortal!”
	(A.) Vampire	False cord scream	“Now reborn with dead, indifferent eyes Join me, night creature, in my Anthem of Glory!”
Bridge i (Bridge verse)	(D.K.) Undead	False cord scream	“Lord of Darkness, Your obscure gift made me Undead. In crimson passion we’ll live together Screaming in filth Forever damned!”

Supersection A is also characterized by a normal-time backbeat while supersection B disrupts the time feel before progressing gradually from quarter-time to double-time. In the first bridge verse (bridge b), the virgin progresses the plot by making her vows of unholy matrimony, pleading with the vampire for immortality. Several instrumental bridges follow, establishing a backbeat and beginning the progression through time-feels (Figure 4.21). At the height of the frenzy, the drums play in double-time, introducing the second bridge verse (bridge f) detailing the consummation of their marriage. In the third bridge verse (bridge h), the drums drop out and the

virgin-no-longer announces her transformation in speaking voice. The drums re-establish a half-time backbeat as the vampire invites her to join him.

Figure 4.21. Ancient, “The Heritage” (*The Halls of Eternity*, 1999); time-feel progression in supersection B. Drum patterns are only partially transcribed to demonstrate time feel.

Bridge c (4:15) – quarter time

Am F

4:31 – half time

Am F

Bridge d (4:47) – normal time

Am C5 E5

Bridge e (5:03), f (5:17) – double time **Bridge f (4:43), g (6:09) – shift to downbeat** **Bridge h (6:23)**

6:36 – half time

Bridge i (6:49) – double time, 2:3

Main riff (7:29) – normal time

The narrative arc now completed, the undead protagonist summarizes the drama in bridge i, the final bridge verse. The drums in bridge i heighten the energy by returning to a double-time feel and introducing, for the first time, a 2:3 cross-rhythm between the snare drum’s backbeat and the timekeeping cymbals. Deadly Kristin’s screaming heightens the level of distortion and “saturates” the acoustic space, complemented by the drums’ double-kick pattern which fills the bass register with sixteenth notes. Altogether, bridge i becomes rhythmically and timbrally

dissonant.^{242,243} The dissonance is resolved when the protagonist screams the final words, “forever damned,” eliding into the recapitulation of the main riff. The eighth note is held as constant between bridge i (in 12/8) and the main riff (4/4), accomplishing the return to the original tempo through a metric modulation. Harmonically, bridge i (Figure 4.22) is open-ended, consisting of the power chord progression E5–G5–B5 (i ♭III V). The main riff (Figure 4.23) begins on a C#5 power chord; the progression from B5 to C#5 suggests a deceptive resolution in E major, the parallel major of E minor in bridge i and the relative major of C# minor in the main riff. C# minor and E minor are also given as the two principal key areas in supersection A (Figure 4.21), potentially offering further logic for the ultimate juxtaposition of bridge i and the main riff as the composing-out of the minor third relationship. In the final moment, bridge i functions as a preparation for the main riff, like a verse initiating a cycle ending in a chorus, albeit over a supersection boundary.

Figure 4.22. Ancient, “The Heritage” (*The Halls of Eternity*, 1999); bridge i (bridge verse) (6:49).

The musical score for bridge i of "The Heritage" by Ancient is presented in two systems. The first system begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 12/8 time signature. The guitar part (TAB) consists of a sequence of power chords: E5, G5, and B5, each held for a full measure. The bass part (TAB) features a steady eighth-note pattern. The second system continues the progression, with a final double bar line. Chord symbols E5, G5, and B5 are indicated above the guitar staff.

²⁴² Ciro Scotto, “The Structural Role of Distortion in Hard Rock and Heavy Metal.” *Music Theory Spectrum* 38, no. 2 (2016), 185–187.

²⁴³ Nicole Biamonte, “Formal Functions of Metric Dissonance in Rock Music,” *Music Theory Online* 20, no. 2 (2014), www.mtosmt.org/issues/mt0.14.20.2/mt0.14.20.2.biamonte.html.

Figure 4.23. Ancient, “The Heritage” (*The Halls of Eternity*, 1999); main theme recapitulation (7:29).

The four bridge verses in “The Heritage” exemplify the initiating function of presentational verses as well as qualities associated with fluid functions such as non-periodicity and loose-knit teleology that points forward but not to a specifically preconceived end point (contrary to a verse-chorus cycle). Bridge verses do not culminate in any kind of “bridge chorus” function, although a fluid equivalent to choruses do exist.

Climactic plateaus that mix chorus-like qualities with fluid functions are *hyperchoruses*. A hyperchorus is a vocal section that is singable, memorable, and usually states the song’s title (often in a repetitious manner) but is not given to discursive repetition. Similar to bridge verses, hyperchoruses appear without attachment to any specific sequence of formal functions.

The hyperchorus is Brad Osborn’s generalization of another section type called a terminal climax.²⁴⁴ In Osborn’s view, terminal climax sections “are so climactic that no musical logic would

²⁴⁴ Brad Osborn, “Brad Osborn Responds,” *Music Theory Spectrum* 36, no. 1 (2014), 177.

permit anything [autonomous] to occur after them.”²⁴⁵ Indeed, this assumption is the basis for a new formal type: *terminally climactic form*. According to Osborn, experimental rock and metal artists use terminally climactic form (TCF) to subvert the “verse-chorus paradigm,” a set of axioms held by songwriters and theorists that orient songs around the teleology of pop music’s verse and chorus sections, which means a song must end on a verse or chorus—a view which Osborn regards as restrictive. Terminally climactic form plays off of the role of the chorus, presenting the terminal climax as better than the chorus within a song:

This novel and refreshing model for organizing songs is what I call terminally climactic form (TCF), where not a chorus but a single, thematically independent section placed at the end functions as the song’s most memorable moment. TCF’s unique dramatic shape derives from tension between the expected highpoint (repeated chorus) and the climactic ending, the song’s actual highpoint.²⁴⁶

Climaxes can present through statistical features such as high and low pitches, dynamics, rhythm and tempo, or syntactical features such as a memorable hook (especially featuring repeated lyrics), change of texture and timbre (especially added vocal parts), change of time feel and harmonic modulation (especially to relative major). Syntactical features are especially relevant for rock music because they apply to entire sections—such as choruses—rather than single moments.²⁴⁷

In contrast to Osborn’s declarations of the novelty of terminally climactic forms, Hudson investigates the ways that the verse-chorus paradigm serves as the basis for open-ended structures in metal songs, especially compound AAB form. Like Osborn, Hudson remarks that an open-ended bridge section stands in opposition to the standard interpretation of formal functions in popular

²⁴⁵ Brad Osborn, *Beyond Verse and Chorus: Experimental Formal Structures in Post-Millennial Rock Music*. Ph.D. diss. (University of Washington, 2010), 104.

²⁴⁶ Brad Osborn, “Subverting the Verse–Chorus Paradigm: Terminally Climactic Forms in Recent Rock Music,” *Music Theory Spectrum* 35 (2013), 23.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 28–29.

music scholarship, which describes bridge functions as connectives between verse-chorus cycles.

However, Hudson deliberately avoids making a comparison to Osborn's terminally climactic form:

Although [...] AAB songs have been compared to Osborn's theory of "Terminally Climactic Form" in recent rock, I believe they are still part of the previous "verse-chorus paradigm." The B sections in Metallica's AAB songs have the same kinds of looser structures as the B sections in Metallica's compound AABA songs, including guitar solos, melodic breaks, and short bridge verses that do not lead to choruses—structures which are largely absent from Metallica's A sections. In fact, if an A reprise were added to these songs, their forms would be indistinguishable from Metallica's other compositions. These AAB songs are part of the verse-chorus paradigm which dominates the core of the metal genre, not early precedents for a new way of organizing form in rock music.²⁴⁸

Thus, his solution is to lean into Glenn Pillsbury's thesis that metal has a "modular aesthetic" that weakens teleology. He therefore labels AAB songs as "incomplete," a description he does not use for the other truncations of compound AABA form. The implication is that even though compound AAB form has dispensed with chorus teleology, it is still yearned for.

Hudson goes on to describe bridge supersections as loosely organized, able to host a variety of different section types, and as a result are less teleological, becoming a space for "transcendence." However, this transcendence never translates into telos, because physical and emotional release is the function of sections with "transcendent peaks." But is the process of transcendence truly antithetical to teleology? Walter Everett indicated that moments of form-functional energy gain engender such ecstatic moments: "Where, musically, did the Beatles and their 1964 listeners shake their mop-tops and shriek most fervently? Follow the retransitional dominants!"²⁴⁹

²⁴⁸ Hudson 2021.

²⁴⁹ Walter Everett, "Confessions from Blueberry Hell, or, Pitch Can Be a Sticky Substance" in *Expression in Pop-rock Music: A Collection of Critical and Analytical Essays* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 2000), 270.

To harmonize Hudson and Osborn’s approaches requires a more generalized formal function. According to Osborn, “TCs essentially act like a hyperchorus.”²⁵⁰ To make the concept more flexible, climaxes do not necessarily need to be terminal. Climaxes that demonstrate chorus-like characteristics are then *hyperchoruses*. Metallica’s “Through the Never” (Table 4.16) illustrates a normative compound AABA form in which the B supersection concludes with a hyperchorus in the manner of a terminally climactic form but is followed by another autonomous section.

Table 4.16. Metallica, “Through the Never” (*Metallica*, 1991)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description	Time feel	Tonality
Introduction	0:00	Introduction a		1x	F# minor
	0:15	Introduction b		1x	
A	0:36	Verse		½x	E minor
	0:55	Prechorus		½x > 1x	
	1:05	Chorus		½x	F# minor
	1:19	Transition	Introduction b	1x	
A	1:30	Verse		½x	E minor
	1:49	Prechorus		½x > 1x	
	1:59	Chorus		½x	F# minor
	2:12	Transition		–	
B	2:14	Bridge a	Guitar solo	1x	A minor
	2:34	Bridge b	Solo continued	1x	
	2:38	Bridge c	Solo continued	1x	F# minor
	2:44	Bridge d		–	
	2:47	Bridge e	Breakdown ⇒	½x	E minor
	3:13	Bridge e’	Hyperchorus	½x	
A (abbr.)	3:35	Codetta	Based on chorus	1x	F# minor
Coda	3:43	Chorus		½x	
	3:55	Coda	Based on chorus	1x	

As far as choruses go, the one from “Through the Never” (Figure 4.24) is not particularly compelling. At six measures, it is short and uneven, the final measure contains the single instance of the song title in the lyric, and the rhythms are disjunct and become more compressed toward the end of the phrase. The accompanying riff follows the same pattern, consisting entirely of an F#5 power chord and its lower neighbor, fragmenting and becoming more compressed as the chorus

²⁵⁰ Osborn 2014, 177.

wears on. Less a plateau, more a narrowing balance beam. The insubstantial chorus leaves room for a more memorable, singable later section.

Figure 4.24. Metallica, “Through the Never” (*Metallica*, 1991); chorus (1:05).

The musical score for the chorus of "Through the Never" by Metallica is presented in three staves. The top staff is the vocal line in treble clef, with lyrics: "All that is, ev-er, ev-er was, will be ev-er twist-ing, turn-ing, through the nev-er." The middle staff is the guitar line, showing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and quarter notes. The bottom staff is the bass line, showing a similar rhythmic pattern. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#) and the time signature is 4/4.

The hyperchorus, on the other hand, is more robust (Figure 4.25). At sixteen measures, divided into even four-bar phrases, it is much more spacious and regular than the chorus. The title lyric is repeated numerous times in a call-and-response texture, inviting the audience to sing along. The effect is heightened through the studio mix, which alternately pans James Hetfield’s voice to the center (C◀) for the “call,” then to the left (L◀) and right (R◀) for the “response.” The texture is underpinned by a two-bar riff with a rising and falling melodic contour which locks into the half-time backbeat, contributing to the groove. The hyperchorus also emerges from a breakdown, which disrupts the normal-time feel of the other bridge sections for a more relaxed half-time feel. The E minor breakdown and hyperchorus are in a different key than the F# minor chorus and the other bridge sections as well, and the same key as the more relaxed verse, debatably reaching a harmonic climax prefigured by the tonal polarity of the verse and chorus. Thus, the hyperchorus satisfies all of Osborn’s parameters for a syntactical climax, including “repeated lyrical/melodic hooks, modulations, presentations of the song’s title, relatively simple harmonic progressions, ‘laid-back’ rhythmic feels,” and the textural simplification of the preceding breakdown, which mimics “strategies usually used to intensify the arrival of a chorus in verse-chorus-based songs.”²⁵¹

²⁵¹ Osborn 2013, 27.

Figure 4.25. Metallica, “Through the Never” (*Metallica*, 1991); bridge e’, hyperchorus (3:13).

The musical score for Metallica's "Through the Never" bridge e', hyperchorus (3:13) is presented in four systems. The first system shows the vocal line with lyrics: "On through the nev - er. We must go". Above the vocal line, there are rhythmic markings: L (left hand) and R (right hand) with a '3' indicating a triplet, and C (cymbal) with a '2' indicating a pair. The second system shows the guitar riff with a '3' indicating a triplet. Below the guitar riff is the guitar tablature (TAB) with fret numbers: 2 0 0 0 3 0 0 6 5 5 7 5 6. The third system shows the vocal line with lyrics: "on through the nev - er. Out to the". Above the vocal line, the marking "sim." (similando) is present, and below it, "guitar riff continues" is written. The fourth system shows the vocal line with lyrics: "edge of for - ev - er. We must go on through the nev - er. Then nev - er comes." The score is in 4/4 time and the key signature has one sharp (F#).

Other configurations of the hyperchorus are possible, including a special subtype I call the *decoy chorus*. Like Osborn’s terminal climaxes, decoy choruses are contextually dependent on earlier, less convincing material in order to present as the “better choice” for a chorus. Unlike the examples we have examined so far, decoy choruses do not punctuate the ends of processes within fluid supersections but “overflow” from the processes of presentational supersections—like a postchorus that exceeds the teleology of the chorus, and breaks the boundary between supersections. Decoy choruses therefore *initiate* fluid supersections rather than conclude them. This can be disorienting to the listener, as such sections on their surface reflect presentational tendencies while they are firmly tied to fluid structural functions.

Chuck Schuldiner amplified the disorienting effect through the use of compound ABA form, denying the listener compound AABA’s initial second presentational rotation that would

confirm the identity of the true chorus. In “Individual Thought Patterns” (Table 4.17), the decoy chorus comes between the true chorus and a guitar solo.

Table 4.17. Death, “Individual Thought Patterns” (*Individual Thought Patterns*, 1993)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:10	Verse	
	0:28	Verse	
	0:44	Prechorus	
	1:01	Chorus	
B	1:29	Bridge a	Decoy chorus
	1:53	Bridge b	Guitar solo
	2:18	Bridge c	Interlude
A	2:41	Verse	
	2:58	Verse	
	3:15	Prechorus	
	3:34	Chorus	

The true chorus (Figure 4.26) forms out of a cumulative process. A 3-3 (014) pitch-set class, C#–A–C, is decomposed into a major third (C#–A; <19>, i.c. [4]) and a minor second (C#–C; <10>, i.c. [1]). The chorus riff is generated from i.c. [4]—C#–A (<19>), C–G# (<08>), D–B♭ (<2t>), producing the hexachord 6-z4 (012456)—and i.c. [1]—D–E♭ (<23>) and G–F# (<76>); these last four pitch-classes form 4-7 (0145), which itself can be expressed as a transpositional combination of minor seconds a major third apart (<23> and <67>), two major thirds a minor second apart (<26> and <37>), or even as two interlocking 3-3 (014) trichords (<236> and <367>). Altogether, the pitch-class content of the riff is <01236789t>, completing a pseudo-aggregate²⁵² of the nonachord 9-5 (012346789) every two bars.

²⁵² The total pitch-class content of a locally defined pitch-class set.

Figure 4.26. Death, “Individual Thought Patterns” (*Individual Thought Patterns*, 1993); chorus (1:01).

Tuning: D–G–C–F–A–D

riff

1

6 7-7 5 6 7-7 5 6-6 6 7-7 5 6-6 7 8 8 5 6-6 7-8 7-6 6 7-7 5 6-6 7 8 8 5 6-6 7-8

7

11

15

The riff is divided rhythmically with a double tresillo timeline (8:333322), with a different dyad in each group. The pitch content in the final two rhythmic groups swap places, as can be seen in m.4 and m.6. It is worth noting that the entire chorus riff fits within a single position on the fretboard, occupying the 5th to 8th frets. The ambulatory chromaticism, fast harmonic rhythm (a new dyad every 2 or 3 eighth notes), claustrophobic fingering, recombinatorial organization and the constant stream of eighth notes makes the riff feel like a warmup exercise. A listener may not be aware of this connection, but nevertheless the aural effect comes across: a slithering and mechanically meticulous perpetuum mobile of frantically transposed set-class motives.

The vocal line in Figure 4.26 is not especially chorus-like either. The lyrics, for one, are obscure and do not contain the title of the song or distill a general message. The rhythm is

disjointed, most frequently synchronizing with the final two groups of 2 in the double tresillo pattern but only about half the time: there are no onsets in mm.9–10 and mm.13–14. The final line in mm.17–18 locks into the timeline most successfully, reinforcing the guitar’s rhythm and lending to the singability of the part. However, this is short-lived as the singer elides the final note into the next section.

The decoy chorus (Figure 4.27) appears as the resolution of the tense and uncertain chorus. The riff is 8 measures long and follows a periodic abac scheme. The minor second motive is retained from the chorus section, but each dyad is given considerably more room to breathe: mm.1–2 only contain A \flat and G power chords.²⁵³ The constant eighth note rhythm of the chorus is replaced with long notes. Although the guitar does less work in playing the rhythm, the voice plays a more active role in articulating the double tresillo timeline (8:333322), which is slightly altered in the eighth measure with a truncated group, reducing the rhythm from 16 eighth notes to 15 (8:333222). Both the guitar and voice accentuate the final groupings. The voice has regular onsets that come predictably after the guitar’s onsets. The lyrics present a general, consolidated message (rather, a central question or problem), and, perhaps most importantly, the title of the song. It feels less like a warmup routine and more like the real deal. The ambiguities present in the chorus have been dissolved in the decoy chorus.

²⁵³ Power chords “fuse” their fifth into the fundamental, with the harmonic distortion caused by the upper fifth and intermodulation distortion coming from the amplifier contributing to a complex, strengthened timbre. Therefore, unless there is a compelling reason, power chords are treated in my analyses as enhanced versions of a single fundamental pitch. Esa Lilja, *Characteristics of Heavy Metal Chord Structures: Their Acoustics and Modal Construction, and Relation to Modal and Tonal Context*. Licentiate thesis (University of Helsinki, 2004), 56–58.

Figure 4.27. Death, “Individual Thought Patterns” (*Individual Thought Patterns*, 1993); decoy chorus (1:29).

Tuning: D-G-C-F-A-D

1

3 3 3 3 2 2

Where is the in - vis - i - ble line

3 3 3 3 2 2

that we must draw to cre - ate

5

3 3 3 2 2 2

in - di - vi - du - al

7

thought pat - terns?

Of course, this analysis is built on a post-hoc reading with the advantage of transcriptions and analytical models. If we imagine ourselves as first-time listeners, we might not hear Figure 4.26 as a chorus but as a (second) prechorus, and Figure 4.27 not as a bridge section but as a genuine chorus. We would be none the wiser until a second rotation of the presentational supersection. Coming up to 3:34, we would expect one more section to follow, only to meet an abrupt ending, demanding a revision to our hearing of the form (Table 4.18).

Table 4.18. Two temporalities of form in “Individual Thought Patterns” (*Individual Thought Patterns*, 1993).

Time	Initial Hearing		Retrospective Reinterpretation		Description
0:00	Introduction		Introduction		
0:10	A	Verse	A	Verse	
0:28		Verse		Verse	
0:44		Prechorus a		Prechorus	
1:01		Prechorus b		Chorus	
1:29		Chorus		B	Bridge a
1:53	B	Bridge a	Bridge b		Guitar solo
2:18		Bridge b	Bridge c		Interlude
2:41	A	Verse	A	Verse	
2:58		Verse		Verse	
3:15		Prechorus a		Prechorus	
3:34		Prechorus b		Chorus	

Another possibility is that the chorus is actually a (second) prechorus, and the decoy chorus is actually a chorus (that does not return at the end of the second rotation of supersection A), but this reading is at odds with an extremely prevalent pattern in Chuck Schuldiner’s songwriting: in compound ABA songs, the A supersections are always identical rotations. Therefore, what does not appear in the second rotation does not belong to the first either. As we will see in Chapter 6, Schuldiner uses a suite of a techniques to obscure the boundaries of supersections. The normal characteristics of the chorus section are minimized, and a decoy is produced by placing a hyperchorus immediately after, causing severe distortions to the perception of macro form. Although the implications for this formal function are exciting and within the purview of the more common hyperchorus, I have only observed this strategy in Schuldiner’s compositions, and even then, only sparingly.²⁵⁴

4.4.4. Topic Bridges (Fp)

A topic bridge evokes a genre or style contrary to the song’s main genre. The stylistic juxtaposition may reference other metal subgenres or non-metal styles, underlined especially by

²⁵⁴ Refer to Appendix D. In addition to “Individual Thought Patterns,” see “Spiritual Healing” (1990), “Nothing is Everything” (1993), “Zero Tolerance” (1995), and (potentially) “Track 4” from the posthumous *Zero Tolerance* compilation (2004).

the use of identifiable instruments, timbres, and compositional and performance techniques. “Kappa” by Whispered (Table 4.19) contains a bridge featuring a jazz topic. A tenor saxophone takes a solo over a Hammond-style organ (Figure 4.28).

Table 4.19. Whispered, “Kappa” (*Shogunate Macabre*, 2014)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction a	
	0:53	Introduction a’	
	1:09	Introduction b	
A (abbr.)	1:31	Verse	
	1:41	Prechorus	
A	1:52	Verse	
	2:02	Prechorus	
	2:13	Chorus	
B	2:53	Bridge a	Interlude
	3:11	Bridge b	Saxophone solo; Topic: Jazz
	3:39	Bridge c	Interlude
A	3:50	Verse	
	4:01	Prechorus	
	4:12	Chorus	
Coda	4:51	Coda	

Figure 4.28. Whispered, “Kappa” (*Shogunate Macabre*, 2014), jazz tenor saxophone solo in topic bridge (3:11). Concert pitch.

Swing 16ths

The jazz topic is identified not only in the instrumentation, but also through swing rhythm, extended and altered tertian harmony, and the saxophonist’s slinky phrasing, making use of glissandi and fall-off articulations (as in measure 5).

Topic bridges are common in progressive metal, where genre-switching enhances the value of compositions by reinforcing the perception that the musicians are erudite and open to experimentalism. Mastery of vocabulary from numerous genres also confirms technical prowess. “Streams” by Haken (Table 4.20) contains several topical bridges that work to illustrate the narrative. The story concerns a mermaid who is captured by a fisherman and sold to a circus. A global flood frees the mermaid from her prison. She is reunited with the ocean but is conflicted whether to exercise forgiveness and help humanity, whom she alone has the power to save by benefit of a plot device. Haken divide the song into three large sections, which I have indicated in the “Hypersection” column.

Table 4.20. Haken, “Streams” (*Aquarius*, 2010)

Hypersection	Supersection	Time	Section	Description
I. Streams	Introduction	0:00	Introduction a	
		0:33	Introduction b	Chorus riff
	A	0:52	Verse	
		1:09	Transition	Based on introduction a
		1:13	Chorus	
		1:33	Verse	
	A	1:50	Transition	
		1:54	Chorus	
		2:14	Postchorus	Chorus-like
		2:31	Bridge a	Breakdown, synth lead
	B	2:43	Bridge b	Interlude
		3:02	Bridge c	Topic: Sitar
		3:09	Bridge d	Guitar solo
		3:28	Bridge e	Topic: Choir, major tritone progression
		3:42	Transition	Based on introduction a
	A	3:50	Verse	
4:07		Transition		
4:11		Chorus		
II. Veins	C	4:50	Bridge f	Topic: Pipe organ
		5:11	Bridge g	Topic: Pipe organ, death metal
III. Digression	D	6:21	Bridge h	Clean guitar, clean vocals
		7:44	Bridge i	
		8:26	Bridge j	Violin lead, chorus theme
	A (abbr.)	9:12	Chorus	
	Coda	9:37	Coda	Guitar lead, based on chorus

The first section, “Streams,” depicts the mermaid’s freedom after the flood and the joy of “swimming with the many fishes of the stream” again. The topic bridges in the first hypersection

illustrate the mermaid’s world as uncanny and foreign to that of humans. Bridge c employs a synthesized sitar sound which creates incongruity and exoticism (Figure 4.29). It is tempting in isolation to draw a topical association between the sitar and the Lydian dominant collection (A–B–C#–D#–E–F#–G) as an agent of exoticism, but the same collection is explored before at several transpositions starting in the postchorus (on D), then bridge a (on A and C), and finally bridge b (on B), so its occurrence in bridge c is not unique.

Figure 4.29. Haken, “Streams” (*Aquarius*, 2010); bridge c.



Bridge e features a synthesized choir and a major tritone progression (MTTP). The large choral sound, quarter-note hits on the China cymbal, and the MTTP give the impression of immensity and being transported to another world—though perhaps more for the audience’s benefit than for the protagonist, as she returned to the familiar sea at the beginning of the song.²⁵⁵

The second hypersection, “Veins,” depicts the mermaid’s guilt and inner conflict, underscored with a penitential pipe organ playing a sequence of suspension figures. Bridge g introduces the death metal topic by way of harsh vocals. The deep, guttural singing, being projected from the throat, suggests interiority, which, together with the deeply personal and reflective lyrics, marks the entry to the intimate proxemic zone.²⁵⁶

It suddenly hits me
In the heat of the sun

²⁵⁵ Scott Murphy writes that the major tritone topic, rather than depicting locations themselves (usually outer space), symbolize characters’ journeys and relationships with the temporal “long long ago” and special “far far away.” Scott Murphy, “The Major Tritone Progression in Recent Hollywood Science Fiction Films,” *Music Theory Online* 12, no. 2 (2006), <https://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.06.12.2/mto.06.12.2.murphy.html>.

²⁵⁶ Allan F. Moore, *Song Means: Analysing and Interpreting Recorded Popular Song* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 187.

A product of fear
Far from human

It suddenly hits me
And crushes my world
Like a tidal wave
Trapped in my shell

It suddenly hits me
What I have become
Searching for answers
In my aquarium

It suddenly bites me
And poisons my veins
Lost and unable to find my way

The heavy sound of pipe organ and death growls evaporates, giving way to a light texture in bridge f. The organ and death metal topics are canceled by clean guitar tone with a delay effect and Ross Jennings' now-melodious singing voice, with the EQ cutting the high frequencies to make it sound like it is coming from a distance (as through a telephone or radio).

Topic bridges produce sharp contrasts and ruptures in musical flow. In compositions where architectonic organization is difficult to discern, reified stylistic content can contribute to the sense of structure by providing topical steppingstones. For instance, a listener familiar with the sprawling, largely though-composed thirteen-minute composition, "Ants of the Sky" by Between the Buried and Me, could not help but to anticipate the arrival of the "bluegrass" section (11:46).

4.4.5. Fluid Framing Functions (Fp)

Framing functions are used to create smooth transitions or mark the passage between supersections. The variety of fluid framing functions will only be mentioned in passing here, as such sections are best considered by their relation to higher levels of form, to be discussed in the next chapter.

Bridge introductions mark the separation between a bridge supersection and preceding material and often reduce the texture or reduce melodic activity by vamping a riff. Introductory material from earlier in the song may be recycled to provide a contextual basis for the bridge introduction.

Retransitions end bridge supersections and prepare the arrival of a new supersection. In William Caplin's definition of classical retransition sections, the retransition occurs toward the end of a contrasting middle section (in sonata form or rounded binary/small ternary, for instance) and precedes the home-key dominant in anticipation of the recapitulation of earlier material.²⁵⁷ Retransition sections in metal may operate similarly, but due to form-functional substitution, the material following the retransition may be entirely new. Or, as is often the case, the retransition will be articulated through facets other than harmony or modulation, such as a buildup of texture, rhythmic activity, or a directed melodic line.

A **reintroduction** is a special type of retransition that recycles material from the song's introduction.²⁵⁸ In so doing, the reintroduction indexes the formal function of the earlier section. It is not only because the earlier section was used as an introduction that makes it possible to use it as a *reintroduction* though: introductions often begin from a relatively reduced texture and build up to the beginning of a presentational cycle, and so are already suited to their task to begin with.

4.4.6. Interludes: Instrumental and Vocal (Ff)

The bridge types discussed so far represent especially salient moments in a composition, but I would be remiss not to mention that some of the most commonly occurring bridge types do not fall into the above categories and are not given special designations by fans or practitioners

²⁵⁷ Caplin 1998, 157.

²⁵⁸ Hudson 2021.

except with the most general language. These are the equivalent of presentational riff-sections in that they present material, usually a riff, without advancing the narrative or a teleological progression. Such sections are perceived as passive or neutral in comparison to the markedness of solos, breakdowns, hyperchoruses and the like. They may invite the description “break” (distinct from *breakdown*) or “interlude” and may be texted or not. Although transliterated into English as two separate terms— “bridge” and “interlude”—Dietmar Elflein distinguishes between the two section types as different kinds of interludes (*Zwischenspielen*):

Bridge: Interlude with vocals, a sequence of at least one riff with vocals that follows a chorus and differs musically and lyrically from the verse.²⁵⁹ (Bridge: *Zwischenspiel mit Gesang, eine Abfolge von mindestens einem Riff mit Gesang, die auf einen Chorus folgt und sich musikalisch und textlich vom Vers unterscheidet*; my translation.)

Interlude: instrumental interlude, sequence of at least one riff without vocals.²⁶⁰ (Interlude: *instrumentales Zwischenspiel, Abfolge von mindestens einem Riff ohne Gesang*; my translation.)

At first glance, these categories would appear to duplicate Endrinal’s (texted) interverse and (instrumental) interlude functions, but contra Endrinal, Elflein distinguishes solos from interludes, indicating that not all instrumental bridge types are equivalent. Elflein also does not interrogate the functional implication of the bridge. Because interludes appear as stylistically unmarked and form-functionally neutral in Elflein’s system, I choose to adopt the “interlude” nomenclature to describe general, non-teleological bridge functions.

²⁵⁹ Dietmar Elflein, *Schwermetallanalysen: Die musikalische Sprache des Heavy Metal* (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2010), 348.

²⁶⁰ Ibid.

5. SUPERSECTION FUNCTIONS

As described in the previous chapter, sections can be divided into two basic form-functional tendencies: presentational functions and fluid functions. Implicit in this assumption is the structural role played by supersections to act as containers, grouping sections with similar functional characteristics. The type of supersection that includes verses and choruses, what I call a *presentational supersection*, has been the main focus of pop-rock scholars. The *fluid supersection*, which hosts numerous bridge functions, has received less attention. In metal, fluid supersections can fulfill traditional functions such as contrast and projecting toward presentational supersections, but can also modify form by providing alternatives to the teleology of the presentational supersection.

The behaviors that organize such supersection functions can be found at multiple levels of a composition. Therefore, we can speak of *presentational and fluid characteristic tendencies* (Table 5.1).

Table 5.1. Presentational and fluid characteristic tendencies.

Presentational Tendencies	Fluid Tendencies
Sounds precomposed	Sounds extemporaneous
Fosters repetition and recapitulation	Resists repetition and recapitulation
Typically vocal-dominated	Typically instrumental-dominated
“Tight” organization	“Loose” organization
Oriented toward a single goal	Oriented toward any number of goals

Broadly speaking, presentational materials present ideas that *could* become the basis for a rotational supersection. They sound precomposed, foster repetition and recapitulation, typically back up vocal passages, have tight thematic organization, and are oriented toward a single goal. Fluid tendencies, on the other hand, sound extemporaneous, resist repetition and recapitulation,

tend more towards instrumental passages, can be more loosely organized, and can be oriented toward any number of goals or no goal at all.

5.2 Presentational Supersections

In the context of pop and rock, Trevor de Clercq remarks that “verse and chorus sections are seen to be segments of music that reappear more than once in a song,” and “can be seen to group into larger units (or ‘supersections’).”²⁶¹ These supersections behave as a rotational unit, introducing or recapitulating thematic material.²⁶² In pop/rock, the thematic material of the presentational supersection is usually the same in every rotation, but metal is slightly different: there may be multiple unique presentational supersections, or, as we shall see later, sections may be substituted in subsequent rotations.

Presentational supersections culminate in a section that focuses the composition, such as the chorus or a main riff. Traditionally, this teleological goal sits at the end of a cycle of sections beginning with a verse. Verses in rock initiate a functional T–PD–D–T²⁶³ harmonic circuit, and choruses conclude them.²⁶⁴ Medial functions, like prechoruses, can outline a functional PD–D progression in preparation for the arrival of the chorus.²⁶⁵ In other words, there is a correlation between harmonic progression and the progression of formal functions in rock’s presentational supersections.

Metal, having its roots in rock, can possess identical formal-harmonic syntax, occasionally with flavors cultivated and imbued with meaning within the genre. In Metallica’s “Wherever I

²⁶¹ de Clercq 2012, 41.

²⁶² Hudson 2021.

²⁶³ Tonic–Predominant–Dominant–Tonic.

²⁶⁴ Nobile 2020, 109.

²⁶⁵ Ibid, 139–145.

May Roam” (Table 5.2), harmonic processes unite the elements of supersection A into a teleological cycle.

Table 5.2. Metallica, “Wherever I May Roam” (*Metallica*, 1991)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction a	Tattoo
	0:30	Introduction b	Tattoo
	0:47	Introduction c	Tattoo
	1:10	Introduction d	
A	1:24	Verse	
	1:58	Chorus	
	2:21	Tattoo	
A	2:44	Verse	
	3:17	Chorus	
B	3:41	Bridge a	Interlude, chorus riff
	3:55	Bridge b	False recapitulation of chorus
	4:13	Bridge c	Guitar solo, chorus riff
	4:30	Bridge d	Guitar solo, verse riff
	4:48	Bridge e	Guitar solo, chorus riff
A (abbr.)	4:55	Chorus’	
Coda	5:21	Coda	Chorus material
	5:42	Coda’	Guitar solo

Figure 5.1. Metallica, “Wherever I May Roam” (*Metallica*, 1991); voice-leading graph of verse-chorus cycle (1:22).

The verse-chorus cycle is built upon a $i-\flat V-i$ (T-D-T) progression, wherein the verse outlines a $i-\flat V$ progression and the chorus provides the cadential tonic, with a close-ended, prolongational $i-\flat V-i$ progression all its own (Figure 5.1). The tattoo section, which follows the chorus in the first rotation, also prolongs the tonic through a $i-iv-\flat vii-i$ (T-PD-D-T) progression.

Coming from the standpoint of common-practice harmony or even pop/rock, these harmonies may appear strange or at least a little unorthodox. Although pop and rock allow a wide variety of harmonic materials,²⁶⁶ $\flat\hat{2}$ and $\flat\hat{5}$ are relatively rare as functional scale degrees.²⁶⁷ In metal, both $\flat\hat{2}$ and $\flat\hat{5}$ are common in riffs.²⁶⁸ Harris Berger suggests that while scale degree $\flat\hat{5}$ is regarded as unstable in much of Western tonality, in metal it is “neither a chromatic neighbour note nor a weak scalar note, but a structural note in its own right.”²⁶⁹ The above example lends credence to this claim. In “Wherever I May Roam,” $\flat\hat{5}$ is not only instrumentalized as a surface-level feature of riffs but is involved in long-range voice-leading, prolongation, harmonic progression, and the formation of set-class motives.

As Figure 5.1 demonstrates, $B\flat$ occurs on a local level as part of an inflected arpeggiation of the E-minor tonic triad, in a half cadence as part of an interruption in coordination with a structural $\flat\hat{2}$ in the verse melody, and in the closure of the tonal structure as $\flat V$ elides into i at the beginning of the chorus section. $\flat V$ is also implicated in a post-cadential $\flat V-iv-i$ progression in the chorus, an inflected version of the $V-IV-I$ “softened” cadence ubiquitous in the blues.²⁷⁰

²⁶⁶ Walter Everett, “Making Sense of Rock’s Tonal Systems,” *Music Theory Online* 10, no. 4 (2004), https://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.04.10.4/mto.04.10.4.w_everett.html.

²⁶⁷ David Temperley, “Scalar Shift in Popular Music,” *Music Theory Online* 17, no. 4 (2011), <https://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.11.17.4/mto.11.17.4.temperley.html>.

²⁶⁸ Nicole Biamonte, “Modal Function in Rock and Heavy Metal,” trans. from *L’analyse musicale aujourd’hui*, edited by Jean-Michel Bardez, Ayari and Xavier Hascher Mondher (Strasbourg: Éditions Delatour – France, 2012), 9.

²⁶⁹ Harris M. Berger, “Death Metal Tonality and the Act of Listening,” *Popular Music* 18, no. 2 (1999): 166.

Although chromatically altered scale degrees in Schenkerian theory are conceived in relation to a diatonic pitch structure, I disregard reference to major/minor tonality in this instance to acknowledge the consistent scale degree content. The E-Phrygian/E-Locrian supermode, as Ciro Scotto notes for other Metallica songs, accounts for 3-5 (016) set-classes in riffs and melodic motives.²⁷¹ During the verse, the vocal line contains the set-class motive E–B–B \flat (T $_t$ 3-5 <te4>) arising from the intersection of E and B from the principal E Phrygian mode with B \flat from a tritone progression, implying E Locrian. Meanwhile, the guitars accompany the verse with the power chord progression E 5 B \flat^5 A 5 B \flat^5 . The roots of these chords themselves form a T $_9$ I 3-5 set, which is the same set class contextually inverted around the pitch-class B \flat (Figure 5.2).

Figure 5.2. Metallica, “Wherever I May Roam” (*Metallica*, 1991); beginning of verse (1:24).

The image displays a musical score for the beginning of the verse of Metallica's "Wherever I May Roam". It consists of two systems of music. The first system shows the vocal line and the guitar accompaniment. The vocal line has the lyrics: "And the road be-comes my bride. I have stripped of all but pride, so in". The guitar accompaniment features power chords. A dashed box highlights the vocal line from the second measure to the fifth measure, with the annotation "T $_t$ 3-5 (016)" above it. Another dashed box highlights the guitar accompaniment from the second measure to the fifth measure, with the annotation "T $_9$ I 3-5 (016)" below it. The second system shows the vocal line and guitar accompaniment. The vocal line has the lyrics: "her I do con-fide and she keeps me sat-is-fied, gives me all I need." The guitar accompaniment features power chords. A dashed box highlights the guitar accompaniment from the first measure to the fourth measure, with the annotation "T $_9$ I 3-5 (016)" below it.

B \flat is determined in the passage by multiple vectors: voice-leading, harmonic progression, motivic structure and collectional content. Although it may seem counter-intuitive, even acoustics arguably play a role in the determination of the $\flat\hat{5}$ not because of consonance measures (as is usually the justification for the perfect fifth) but *because of its dissonance*. While Schenkerian theory may

²⁷¹ Ciro Scotto, “System 7” in *The Routledge Companion to Popular Music Analysis: Expanding Approaches*, edited by Ciro Scotto, Kenneth Smith and John Brackett (New York and London: Routledge, 2019), 258–261.

motivate us to see the $\flat V$ *Stufe* as an alteration of a background diatonic V, the near-complete absence of $B\sharp$ in the bass and the over-determination of $B\flat$ denies an interpretation that assumes the ideal of a *Bassbrechung* based on an acoustic consonance. Instead, this analysis foregrounds the composing-out of tonal syntactic set-class relationships observed elsewhere in Metallica’s music and other quarters of heavy metal.²⁷² Tritone motivic relationships go back to the genre’s beginnings, for instance, with the main riff from Black Sabbath’s eponymous song (Figure 5.3). A pc-centric tonal analysis that incorporates set-class motives can illuminate the structural elements of metal style “by showing their relationship to and dependency on the syntax of traditional tonality.”²⁷³

Figure 5.3. Black Sabbath, “Black Sabbath” (*Black Sabbath*, 1970); main riff.

The image shows a musical score for the main riff of Black Sabbath's 'Black Sabbath'. It consists of a treble clef staff in 4/4 time, a bass clef staff, and a guitar tablature staff. The treble staff contains a melodic line starting on G4, moving to A4, then B4, and finally C5. The bass staff contains a bass line starting on G2, moving to A2, then B2, and finally C3. The guitar tablature staff shows the fret numbers for the guitar: 5, 5, 4 (5), 5, 4. The key signature is one flat (Bb) and the time signature is 4/4.

Presentational supersections do tend to execute their materials in a rational, integrated fashion, wherein each element has a more-or-less specific function dedicated to advancing the progression of musical drama. But, as mentioned in the previous chapter, functions in the riff-section family come and go as they please, potentially causing interruptions and deformations of the functional circuit. Dark Tranquility’s “Edenspring” (Table 5.3) contains a break between the verse and prechorus sections in the first rotation of supersection A that is absent in the final rotation, suggesting that the section is extraneous to the form-functional cycle. Curiously, the break

²⁷² Ibid, 257.

²⁷³ Henry Martin, “Charlie Parker and ‘Honeysuckle Rose’: Voice Leading, Formula, and Motive,” *Music Theory Online* 18, no. 3 (2012), <https://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.12.18.3/mto.12.18.3.martin.html>.

provides a transitional role between the C#-minor verse to the D#-minor prechorus, so its later omission causes a sharp tonal contrast.

Table 5.3. Dark Tranquility, “Edenspring” (*The Gallery*, 1995)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction a	Buildup
	0:19		– Guitar enters
	0:34	Introduction b	
A	0:49	Verse	
	1:03	Break	
	1:10	Prechorus	Untexted
	1:24	Chorus	
A	1:49	Verse	
B	2:03	Bridge a	Bridge introduction
	2:21	Bridge b	Topic: Piano, guitar solo
	3:00	Bridge c	Bridge verse
	3:07	Bridge d	Guitar lead
	3:20	Bridge e	Vocal interlude
	3:26	Bridge f	Guitar lead
	3:40	Bridge g	Vocal interlude
A	3:48	Verse	
	3:55	Prechorus	Untexted
	4:02	Chorus	

The verse outlines a repeated $i-\flat VI$ progression in C#-minor (Figure 5.4). The break begins with a similar melody and harmonic progression as the verse, but is sequenced down a step, concluding with a stepwise progression $\flat III-II^5$ (Figure 5.5).

Figure 5.4. Dark Tranquility, “Edenspring” (*The Gallery*, 1995); verse (0:49).

The figure displays a musical score for the verse of "Edenspring" in C#-minor. It is written in 4/4 time and includes a guitar tablature. The score is divided into two systems. The first system covers measures 1 through 6, and the second system covers measures 7 through 10. Chord symbols are placed above the staff: C#: i and C#5 for measures 1-2, bVI A5 for measures 3-4, and i C#5 for measures 5-6. The guitar tablature below the staff shows fret numbers: 6 and 5 for measures 1-2, 5 and 7 for measures 3-4, 5 and 6 for measures 5-6, 7 and 5 for measures 7-8, and 10 and 9 for measures 9-10. A first ending bracket spans measures 7-8, and a second ending bracket spans measures 9-10.

Figure 5.5. Dark Tranquility, “Edenspring” (*The Gallery*, 1995); break (1:03).

Roman numeral analysis captures the harmony imperfectly. Because power chords flatten the space of harmony and melody, the $\flat\text{III}-\text{II}^5$ progression behaves contrapuntally as a scalar descent, meaning the next logical note would be the tonic, C#. Although the entire passage is harmonized with power chords, I have assigned numerals based on their implied harmonic function as triads. Labeling a specific triad in the case of $\text{D}\#^5$ is problematic because of the artificial perfect fifth made by the power chord and the sonority’s contrapuntal function. Not truly major, minor, or diminished, I find that it is best to call this chord what it is: a power chord built on $\hat{2}$. Another argument for acknowledging this convention appears with the arrival of the prechorus (Figure 5.6). The power chord $\text{D}\#^5$ is repeated, mediating a common-chord modulation into the key of D#-minor. The progression of the prechorus is $\text{D}\#^5-\text{C}\#^5-\text{B}^5-\text{A}\#^5$ ($i-\flat\text{VII}-\flat\text{VI}-\text{V}$), the so-called “Andalusian cadence,” an open-ended stock progression. The lead guitar does continue to project toward C#, however, outlining a C#-major triad (locally, $\flat\text{VII}$) with a pedal-tone figure. The lead guitar’s riff terminates each iteration with a prolonged A# that only comes into agreement with the harmony upon the riff’s repetition, in the sixth measure, creating a moment of melodic-harmonic divorce and loosening the voice-leading syntax.²⁷⁴

²⁷⁴ David Temperley, “The Melodic-Harmonic ‘Divorce’ in Rock,” *Popular Music* 26, no. 2 (2007), 323–342.

Figure 5.6. Dark Tranquility, “Edenspring” (*The Gallery*, 1995); prechorus (1:10).

The musical score for the prechorus of "Edenspring" by Dark Tranquility is presented in two systems. Each system consists of a treble clef staff and a guitar tablature staff. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The first system is labeled with chords D#: i (D#5) and bVII (C#5). The second system is labeled with chords bVI (B5) and V (A#5). The tablature shows various fret numbers and techniques like bends and slides.

Beginning on a $D\#^5$ power chord, the chorus appears to continue the tonality of the prechorus though the rhythm is markedly different, beginning with isolated attacks on the downbeats of the quarter-note tresillo timeline (4:332). The progression descends, $D\#^5-E^5-C\#^5-B^5-A\#^5$, nearly identical to the Andalusian cadence of the prechorus (Figure 5.7). But the presence of E instead of E# changes the collection, suggesting G#-minor. The linear descent to A# promises a G# tonic that never emerges, an analytical situation called an *absent tonic*.²⁷⁵

In the final iteration of supersection A, the verse is only played for eight measures instead of sixteen, skipping the repeat, and the break is omitted (Figure 5.8). Whereas before, a common chord smoothed over the modulation from C#-minor to D#-minor, now the A^5 power chord at the end of the verse links to the $D\#^5$ at the beginning of the prechorus, a tritone root relation. Normally, tritone progressions are not unusual in metal, but the progression is out of place among the other root movements based on seconds, thirds, and perfect fourths, and the lack of a stepwise descent also eliminates another avenue for preparation previously fulfilled by the break.

²⁷⁵ Mark Spicer, “Fragile, Emergent, and Absent Tonics in Pop and Rock Songs,” *Music Theory Online* 23, no. 2 (2017), <https://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.17.23.2/mto.17.23.2.spicer.html>.

Figure 5.7. Dark Tranquility, “Edenspring” (*The Gallery*, 1995); chorus (1:24).

G#: V 3 3 2 VI 3 3 2

5 iv 3 3 III II⁵ 3 3 2

9 P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M.

13 P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M.

Figure 5.8. Dark Tranquility, “Edenspring” (*The Gallery*, 1995); truncated verse to prechorus (3:48).

The musical score is divided into two sections: Verse and Prechorus. The Verse section (measures 1-6) is in 4/4 time and features a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The chords are C#: i, C#5, bVI A5, bVI A5, i C#5, and i C#5. The guitar TAB below shows fret numbers 6, 5, 7, 5, 6, and 5. The Prechorus section (measures 7-9) starts with a tritone shift from A5 to D#5. The chords are bVI A5, D#: i, and D#5. The guitar TAB below shows fret numbers 7, 5, 7, 5, 6, 9, 6, 7, 6, 6, 7, 6, 9, 6, 7, 6, 6, 7, 6, 7.

One can only speculate about the reason behind the omission of the break. The answer may be because there are fewer lyrical lines in the final rotation. The verse is also shortened after all, so a full presentation of the supersection would have required more lyrics, which may have prolonged the narrative just for the sake of appeasing a musical formula. The song follows the day in the life of an alcoholic who drinks to ignore their problems. The break contains the line, “Tomorrow is no friend of mine.” By the end of the bridge supersection, tomorrow has come and the protagonist sees the damage caused by their behavior: “He cried into nothing with the voice of his soul / New logic brought upon the remains of his land.” But addiction gets the best of protagonist again and they decide that “The land deceives,” turning to the metaphoric Edenspring to forget their problems once more. The final verse consists of a single line, recapitulated from the bridge introduction, signifying the protagonist’s recourse to alcohol: “Bacchi gates, bid me welcome.” Since the tragedy is cyclical by nature, there could be nothing new left to say. It follows that a summary of the verse-chorus cycle was the appropriate musical decision to get to the distilled essence of the chorus sooner, disregarding, like the serially inebriated protagonist, the consequences on temporal flow:

Drench logic, drench judgement
 Awake, every sense is new
 For we know no tomorrow
 And yesterday appears in fragmentary form

Frequently, the harmonic and voice-leading aspects of metal songs do not lend to long-range harmonic trajectory. Nevertheless, teleological processes can manifest in other ways apart from harmony. Glenn Pillsbury states that metal temporality is based on “cycles of energy,” an idea that resonates with energeticist theories like those of August Halm, Ernst Kurth, and Viktor Zuckerkandl, especially in its conception of rhythm and motion. According to Pillsbury, the intensity of a given passage is mimetically received, especially in live performance, into bodily experience. “The effect of the changes from section to section,” Pillsbury writes, “is also phenomenological” such that gradients of energy/intensity propel the temporal experience of form.²⁷⁶ Similarly, Nicole Biamonte observes²⁷⁷ that differences in rhythm can mark some sections as dissonant and unstable, motivating passage through to metric consonance.²⁷⁷ Jose Garza’s typologies of time feel and riff types, summarized in Table 5.4, provide a useful index of stylistic markers as they relate to relative intensity.

Table 5.4. Summary of riff types and associated time feels.²⁷⁸

Riff Type	Description	Associated Time Feel(s)
Straight, open divisions	Chords or single notes played open (not palm-muted), constantly articulating the beat division	Normal
Breakdown	Short and/or palm-muted notes on single or barely moving notes or chords; bass does not palm-mute	Quarter, half
Long durations	Incorporation of durations longer than a beat played as single notes or chords	Quarter, half
Pedal-tone	Alternation between fretted/unfretted and palm-muted/open notes; bass does not palm-mute	Double/triple, normal
Weak-beat syncopation	Chords or single notes in rhythms syncopated over weak beats by ties or rests	Double
Tremolo	Quick alternation of up- and down-picking	Quadruple/sextuple

²⁷⁶ Glenn Pillsbury. *Damage Incorporated: Metallica and the Production of Musical Identity* (New York: Routledge, 2006), xx.

²⁷⁷ Nicole Biamonte, “Formal Functions of Metric Dissonance in Rock Music,” *Music Theory Online* 20, no. 2 (2014).

²⁷⁸ Reproduced from Garza 2021, Example 2. Note that the associated time feels are derived from the repertoire covered in the original article and do not necessarily align with the application of these riff types in all styles, as demonstrated in my analysis of “Voracious Souls.”

In “Voracious Souls” by Death Angel (Table 5.5), each part of the verse-chorus cycle (which makes up the presentational supersection) prolongs the F# tonic, preventing a successful mapping of a functional harmonic circuit. Instead, a progression of time feels and riff types drives the song’s telos. Interspersed between rotations of the A supersection are two fluid supersections consisting of bridge sections.

Table 5.5. Death Angel, “Voracious Souls” (*The Ultra-Violence*, 1987): form graph.

Supersection/Type	Time	Section	Description	Time feel
Introduction	0:00	Introduction a		–
	0:18	Introduction b	Main riff	$\frac{1}{2}x \Rightarrow 1x$
A <i>Presentational</i>	0:45	Verse		1x
	1:09	Chorus		$1x \Rightarrow OpB$ snare
	1:32	Main riff	Postchorus-like	$\frac{1}{2}x \Rightarrow 1x$
B <i>Fluid</i>	1:46	Bridge a	Bridge introduction	–
	1:55	Bridge a’	Guitar solo	2x
	2:14	Reintroduction	Main riff	$\frac{1}{2}x \Rightarrow 1x$
A <i>Presentational</i>	2:28	Verse		1x
	2:52	Chorus		1x
C <i>Fluid</i>	3:15	Bridge c	Bridge introduction	–
	3:23	Bridge c’	Guitar solo	2x
	4:08	Bridge d	Interlude	–
	4:18	Reintroduction	Main riff	$\frac{1}{2}x \Rightarrow 1x$
A <i>Presentational</i>	4:32	Verse		1x
	4:55	Chorus		1x
Coda	5:19	Main riff \Rightarrow Coda	Postchorus-like	$\frac{1}{2}x$

The verse’s high-energy pedal-tone riff is rhythmically dense and therefore affectively dissonant compared to the contextually lower energy of the longer rhythmic durations in the chorus’ first riff (Figure 5.9). Then, the chorus undergoes a transformation of both time feel and riff type as the snare drum hits once-per-beat (OpB), abandoning the bass-snare alternation of the backbeat, and the guitar uses the same pitch content to become a pedal-tone riff, increasing the intensity level (Figure 5.10).

The entry of the main riff marks another change, with a half-time feel coupled by irregular accents in the guitar, producing a weak-beat syncopation riff. The transition to relative metric consonance in the main riff is a secondary (post-cadential) resolution after the chorus, dissipating

the cycle's energy in the manner of a postchorus. Time-feel progression also organizes the whole-song form: the presentational rotations are characterized by normal- and half-time feels, and the fluid supersections have a higher energy level based on double-time.

Figure 5.9. Death Angel, "Voracious Souls" (*The Ultra-Violence*, 1987): verse and chorus (riff 1).

Verse: Pedal-tone
 0:45 High energy, dissonant

Chorus (riff 1): Long durations
 1:09 Low energy, consonant

Figure 5.10. Death Angel, “Voracious Souls” (*The Ultra-Violence*, 1987): chorus (riff 2) and main riff.

Chorus (riff 2): Pedal-tone
 1:27 Time-feel transformation, gains energy, becomes dissonant

Main riff: Weak-beat syncopation
 1:32 Low energy, consonant

Regular metric accents, fragmentation, energy gain

So far, we have seen presentational supersections based on verse-chorus family functions, occasionally incorporating riff-sections. Riff-sections can also function independently of traditional section roles, creating the basis for presentational supersections that operate without reference to verse-chorus teleology. “Siberian Winter” by Running Wild (Table 5.6) is an instrumental composition and thus does not contain the usual lyrical markers of verse and chorus sections, nor do the sections behave similarly to verses and choruses. At the same time, the piece is not focused on any single, specific riff, but the periodic repetition and interaction of many riffs. Thematic identity is conveyed by recurrent materials, use of large-scale repetition and distinct melodic profiles.

Table 5.6. Running Wild, “Siberian Winter” (*The Brotherhood*, 2002)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction a	Based on riff-section a
A (Presentational)	0:20	Main riff a	$i > \flat VII \parallel i > v$
	0:40	Break a	$i > \flat VII$
	0:50	Main riff a	$i > \flat VII \parallel i > v$
	1:00	Break a	$i > \flat VII$
	1:10	Break b	$v > iv$
	1:20	Main riff a	$i > \flat VII \parallel i > v$
B (Presentational)	1:30	Introduction b	$i > \flat VII$
	1:35	Break c	$i > \flat VII$
	1:49	Main riff b	$i > \flat VII$
	2:04	Break d	$i > \flat VII$
	2:18	Main riff b	$i > \flat VII$
	2:32	Codetta	$i \rightarrow \flat VI \rightarrow \flat VII - v \rightarrow \flat VI - iv - v - i$
C (Fluid)	2:46	Bridge a	Buildup; solo mandolin; $i \rightarrow \flat VII \rightarrow \flat VI - v$
	3:08		– Mandolin harmonized
	3:31		– Distorted guitar
	4:02	Bridge b	Guitar solo; $i \rightarrow \flat III \rightarrow \flat VII - i \rightarrow \flat VI \rightarrow \flat VII$
A (Presentational)	4:30	Main riff a	$i > \flat VII \parallel i > v$
	4:50	Break a	$i > \flat VII$
	5:00	Main riff a	$i > \flat VII \parallel i > v$
	5:11	Break a	$i > \flat VII$
	5:21	Break b	$v > iv$
	5:31	Main riff a	$i > \flat VII \parallel i > v$
Coda	5:41	Coda a	Same as introduction a
	5:51	Coda a'	$I > \flat VII - i$

Each presentational supersection contains three riff-sections. In supersection A, main riff a, break a and break b (all in 12/8; Figure 5.11) are arranged in an *ababca* pattern. The main riff is asserted three times, behaving like a ritornello in a rondo form. Because they are all riff-section functions, the sections can arrange into patterns not typical for forward-moving verse-chorus cycles. The order is not arbitrary but outlines a functional harmonic progression beginning with a prolongation of the D minor tonic through main riff a and break a, followed by a departure outlining the progression from v to iv in break b, and a return to tonic in the final statement of main riff a. All three sections end on a non-tonic chord, driving the harmony forward.

Figure 5.11. Running Wild, “Siberian Winter” (*The Brotherhood*, 2002); supersection A riffs.

Main riff a

0:20

i D5 C5 B♭5 C5 D5 C5 B♭5 A5 | 1. D5 C5 B♭5 C5 ♭III F5 ♭VII C5 | 2. D5 C5 B♭5 C5 ♭VII C5 *v* A5

Break a

0:40

*♭*VI B♭5 *♭*VII C5 *i* D5 *♭*III F5 *♭*VII C5

Break b

1:10

v A5 B♭5 C5 B♭5 G5 | 1. A5 B♭5 A5 *iv* G5 F5 G5 | 2. A5 C5 B♭5 *v* A5 *iv* G5 *♭*III F5 *iv* G5

Introduction b (Figure 5.12) introduces supersection B, maintaining the D-Aeolian tonality of supersection A but setting the meter to 4/4. Break c, main riff b, and break d (Figure 5.13) appear in an *abcb* pattern. Each section begins on tonic and ends on *♭*VII, a syntactical dominant harmony.²⁷⁹ The codetta (Figure 5.14) provides, at last, a close-ended phrase with a sequential progression. Because the composition contains two presentational supersections, each with a prominent, memorable, and returning riff, I label two main riffs instead of interpreting one as simply another break. Although riff-section functions are relatively fluid, presentational supersections still need a focal point.

²⁷⁹ Nobile 2016.

Figure 5.12. Running Wild, “Siberian Winter” (*The Brotherhood*, 2002); introduction b (1:30).

Chords: i D5, C5 D5, $\flat VII$ C5, i D5, C5 D5, $\flat VII$ C5

T: 7 7 5 7 7 5

B: 5 5 3 5 5 3

Figure 5.13. Running Wild, “Siberian Winter” (*The Brotherhood*, 2002); supersection B riffs.

Break c

1:35

Chords: i D5, $\flat III$ F5, $\flat VII$ C5, i D5, $\flat III$ F5, $\flat VII$ C, $\flat VI$ B \flat 5, $\flat VII$ C5

T: 7 7 7 7 10 10 10 10 10 8 8 8 8 9 10 7 9 5

B: 7 7 7 7 10 10 10 10 10 8 8 8 8 9 10 9

Main riff b

1:49

Chords: i D5, $\flat III$ F5, $\flat VII$ C5, i D5, $\flat VII$ C5

T: 7 10 8 6 10 13 11 10 5 8 6 5 7 10 8 6 9 5

B: 7 10 8 6 10 13 11 10 5 8 6 5 7 10 8 6 9 5

Break d

2:04

Chords: i D5, $\flat VII$ C5, $\flat III$ F5, v A5, $\flat VII$ C5, i D5, $\flat VII$ C5, $\flat III$ F5, v A5, $\flat III$ F5, $\flat VII$ C5

T: 7 10 10 8 9 6 9 9 10 8 10 9 7 10 10 8 9 6 9 9 6 5 3 1

B: 7 10 10 8 9 6 9 9 10 8 10 9 7 10 10 8 9 6 9 9 6 5 3 1

Figure 5.14. Running Wild, “Siberian Winter” (*The Brotherhood*, 2002); codetta (2:32).

Chords: i D5, $\flat VI$ B \flat 5, $\flat VII$ C5, v A5, $\flat VI$ B \flat 5, iv G5, v A5, i D5

T: 14 10 12 9 10 7 9 7

B: 14 10 12 9 10 7 9 7

5.2.1. Form-Functional Substitution

While repetition is seen as a positive in pop songs that aim for memorability and concision, in some situations it can be undesirable. One strategy for overcoming tautological repetition while preserving a functional progression is *form-functional substitution*, a situation wherein a new theme is exchanged for an old one between presentational rotations. The new section is identical or comparable in function to the one it is replacing.

Narrative can provide a motivation for form-functional substitution. In Adagio's "Seven Lands of Sin" (Table 5.7), the verse is substituted between the second rotation of supersection A. In the first rotation of supersection A (Figure 5.15), verse a and the chorus share the same A Phrygian dominant pitch collection,²⁸⁰ 4/4 meter, and the singer is singing at full voice. In the second rotation, the verse is substituted for verse b (Figure 5.16). Not only is the melodic material different between verse a and b, but so is the relationship to the chorus: verse b is in F# Phrygian dominant, 7/4 meter, and the first phrase is sung in a breathy *sotto voce*, illustrating the lyric, "The breath of air gets heavier and heavier." The two verses differ in tonality, meter, dynamics, and vocal production, so the substitution conveys a change in the narrative situation. Although incomparable at a thematic level, the functional parallel between the two verses is clear, especially since they both lead into the same chorus material. The final chorus statement injects variety into the presentational material, being transposed down a major second from the original and having a softer dynamic and sparser instrumentation. The final supersection A is also abbreviated, a

²⁸⁰ This is a non-standardized name for a mode based on the harmonic minor scale. The collection is referred to by several other titles, including "Spanish Phrygian" and "Hijaz," derived from Arabic maqams. "Phrygian dominant" is well-known by metal guitarists and appears elsewhere in the literature on pitch systems in metal and modernist classical music (Vaughn 2015, 51; Susanni and Antokoletz 2012, 99). If a collection does not have a concise name or one that is widely agreed upon among metal guitarists yet has an analog in Arabic maqamat, I prefer to call it after the maqam: "Dorian #4" (Kadmon 1995, 64) becomes "Nikriz," and "double harmonic" (Ibid, 108) becomes "Hijazkar." For a system using equal-tempered Turkish makams, see Kalin Kirilov, *Harmony in Bulgarian Music*, Ph.D. diss. (University of Oregon, 2007), 35.

condition that occurs when a regular part of the functional cycle (in this case, a verse) is omitted from the rotation.

Table 5.7. Adagio, “Seven Lands of Sin” (*Sanctus Ignis*, 2001)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description	Pitch Collection
Introduction	0:00	Introduction a	Buildup	E minor
	0:52	Introduction b		
	1:06	Introduction c		
	1:17	Introduction d		
A	1:32	Verse a		A Phrygian dominant*
	2:02	Chorus		
	2:32	Break	Lead break	D minor
A'	3:05	Verse b	Substitute	F# Phrygian dominant
	3:31	Chorus		A Phrygian dominant
B	4:00	Bridge a	Bridge introduction	E Phrygian dominant
	4:20	Bridge b	Buildup; low strings only	E \flat Nikriz**
	4:42		– High strings, piano	
	4:59		– Piano chords	
	5:14		– Choir, guitar	
	5:29		– Bells; choir, guitar tacet	G Hijazkar***
	5:43		– Choir, guitar	
	5:58	Bridge e	Synthesizer solo	G Phrygian dominant
	6:27	Bridge f	Guitar solo	A# Phrygian dominant
	6:43	Bridge g	Guitar solo	F# minor
	6:58	Bridge h	Guitar solo	G# Nikriz
	7:13	Bridge i	Guitar solo	G# Phrygian dominant
	7:20	Bridge j	Guitar duet	A Lydian
	7:26	Bridge k	Interlude	A \flat Lydian
	7:54	Bridge l	Bridge verse	G minor
	8:24	Bridge m	Retransition	E H/W octatonic → E whole tone
A (abbr.)	8:42	Chorus'		G Phrygian dominant
	9:12	Chorus extension		
	9:32	Postchorus	Verse-like	C Phrygian dominant
Coda	9:50	Coda a		B minor → F# minor
	10:05	Coda b	Guitar duet	F# minor
	10:19	Coda c	Coda verse	
	11:04	Coda d	Synthesizer solo	

* A–B \flat –C#–D–E–F–G

** E \flat –F–G \flat –A–B \flat –C–D \flat

***G–A \flat –B–C–D–E \flat –F#

Figure 5.15. Adagio, “Seven Lands of Sin” (*Sanctus Ignis*, 2001); verse a and chorus.

1:32 Verse a *f* A: I A5 \flat vii G5 \flat VI F5 I A5 B \flat 5

Gold - en tears form from my eyes. The blast of sand on my face

I A5 \flat vii G5 I A5

marks the be-gin - ning of my pun - ish-ment, but now it's too late to re-gret.

2:02 Chorus \flat vii G5 I A5 \flat II B \flat 5 I A5

Wand'-ring the la - byr-inth of tears, sca-ling the pyr - a - mids of de - spair.

\flat vii G5 I A5 D: \flat VI B \flat V A5 *Lead break* i D5

The gods have now de-cid-ed my fate, I have to go through the sev - en lands of sin.

2:32

Figure 5.16. Adagio, “Seven Lands of Sin” (*Sanctus Ignis*, 2001); verse b.

3:05 Verse b *p* *sotto voce* F#: I F#5 \flat II G5 I F#5 \flat II G5 I F#5 \flat II G5

The breath of air gets heav-i - er and heav-i - er, my bo - dy and soul are

I F#5 *f* *port.* I F#5 \flat II G5

torn a - part in turn. Whoa, Be - hol - ding the in - fer - nal bal-let of the roar - ing el - e - ments, I'm

\flat II G5 I F#5 3:31 Chorus A: \flat vii G5

left fa - cing my fate like a help - less slave. Wand'-ring the la - byr-inth

Entire presentational supersections may also be substituted, complicating the notion of a rotational form. In such instances, the progression of formal functions is totally abstracted. In “Telos” by Between the Buried and Me (Table 5.8), the song begins with three rotations of verse-chorus material in supersection A (Figure 5.17; the prechorus is omitted).

Table 5.8. Between the Buried and Me, “Telos” (*The Parallax II: Future Sequence*, 2012)

Supersection/Type	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:07	Verse a	
	0:21	Prechorus	
	0:25	Chorus a	
A (abbr.)	0:41	Prechorus	
	0:44	Chorus a	
A	0:52	Verse a	
	0:58	Prechorus	
	1:03	Chorus a	
	1:18	Codetta	
B	1:22	Bridge a	Bridge introduction
	1:48	Bridge b	Interlude
	2:12	Bridge d	Breakdown
	2:38	Bridge d'	Interlude
	3:03	Bridge e	Interlude
	3:09	Bridge f	Interlude
	3:23	Bridge g	Guitar solo
	4:25	Bridge h	Interlude
	4:38	Bridge i (h')	Bridge verse
	5:32	Bridge i	Bridge verse
	6:12	Bridge h	Guitar lead
	6:25	Bridge i'	Bridge verse, climax
	6:47	Bridge k	Retransition
C Substitute	7:02	Verse b	
	7:20	Chorus b	
D Substitute	7:51	Verse c	
	8:25	Chorus c	
E Substitute Coda	8:38	Verse d	
	8:53	Break	Guitar lead
	9:11	Chorus d	Climactic
	9:22	Codetta	
	9:38	Coda b	

After a lengthy compound bridge, we return to presentational material, as is the norm in compound AABA form. However, this is not the recapitulation of supersection A, but a wholly new supersection C, containing a new verse (Figure 5.18) and chorus (Figure 5.19). We have already seen an example of a substitute verse, but a substitute chorus is something different. Normally, one could rely on discursive repetition to discern a chorus by attending to invariant lyrics. Supersection C only happens once, so this test is not possible. However, the section does repeat musematically (in succession) with the same text:

Start from scratch
 Patch the uniform and let the galaxy form a comfortable replacement
 We will not be missed
 Goodbye to everything

Figure 5.17. Between the Buried and Me, “Telos” (*The Parallax II: Future Sequence*, 2012); verse a and chorus a.

Tuning: C#-F#-B-E-G#-C#

0:07 Verse a

0:44 Chorus a

Detailed description: This figure shows the musical notation for Verse a and Chorus a of the song 'Telos'. The score is written for guitar in standard notation (treble clef) and tablature (TAB). The key signature is C#-F#-B-E-G#-C# and the time signature is 3/4. Verse a consists of two systems of music. The first system has a first ending (1.) and the second system has a second ending (2.). Chorus a also consists of two systems, each with a first ending (1.) and a second ending (2.). The notation includes notes, rests, and phrasing slurs. The tablature includes fret numbers (e.g., 11-12-11, 9-9-9-9) and techniques like palm muting (P.M.), palm harmonics (P.H.), and a half-step bend (1 1/2). The first ending of the chorus ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Figure 5.18. Between the Buried and Me, “Telos” (*The Parallax II: Future Sequence*, 2012); verse b (7:02).

Tuning: C#-F#-B-E-G#-C#

Detailed description: This figure shows the musical notation for Verse b of the song 'Telos'. The score is written for guitar in standard notation (treble clef) and tablature (TAB). The key signature is C#-F#-B-E-G#-C# and the time signature is 4/4. The notation includes notes, rests, and phrasing slurs. The tablature includes fret numbers (e.g., 2-6-2-6, 5-6, 9-8, 0-0-0-0, 2, 3-7-6-4, 9-8-10-9-5-4-7-6-7-6-4-3-0-6) and techniques like palm muting (P.M.), palm harmonics (P.H.), and a half-step bend (1 1/2). The score is divided into three systems of music.

Figure 5.19. Between the Buried and Me, “Telos” (*The Parallax II: Future Sequence*, 2012); chorus b (7:20).
Tuning: C#-F#-B-E-G#-C#

The image displays a musical score for the chorus b of the song "Telos" by Between the Buried and Me. The score is written for guitar and bass in a 4/4 time signature, with a key signature of three flats (B-flat major). The guitar part is in standard tuning (C#-F#-B-E-G#-C#) and features a complex, rhythmic riff with triplets and sixteenth notes. The bass part provides a steady accompaniment with a similar rhythmic pattern. The score is divided into two systems, each with a first and second ending. The first ending leads back to the beginning of the chorus, while the second ending concludes the phrase. The guitar part includes various techniques such as palm muting (P.M.) and a vibrato (V) effect. The bass part includes fret numbers and a 5-7 interval.

Other features help distinguish chorus b, including an OpB China cymbal, regular phrasing, and longer rhythmic values at even intervals in the vocals.

After supersection C, there is a second substitution: supersection D, containing verse and chorus c (Figure 5.20). Again, the chorus would be undistinguishable as such were it not for repeated text: “Why can’t we step back?” Chorus c is also highly periodic, consisting of two alternating motives. Motive α stays the same throughout the passage, but motive β gradually expands through the addition of one eighth note at a time until it “overflows” and into a second entry of motive β . The processual development of the riff from smaller motivic components resembles the phenomenon of “prime riffs” Matthieu Metzger recognizes in Meshuggah’s riffs:

The main difference between the common notion of the word *riff* and Meshuggah’s broader notion of the word is that, while maintaining a traditional rock framework, most of their riffs are made up of smaller entities. They are a kind of “prime riff” within the riff, or a *mise en abyme* of the idea of riff within the riff.²⁸¹ (La principale différence entre la notion commune du mot *riff* et celle, élargie, de Meshuggah, tient dans le fait que, tout en conservant un cadre rock traditionnel, la plupart de leurs riffs sont constitués d’entités plus petites. Ils sont une sorte de « riffs premiers » dans le riff, ou de mise en abyme de l’idée de riff dans celui-là même ; my translation.)

²⁸¹ Matthieu Metzger, *Meshuggah: Une formation de Métal atypique*, Master’s thesis (Université de Poitiers, 2003), 39.

Figure 5.20. Between the Buried and Me, “Telos” (*The Parallax II: Future Sequence*, 2012); verse c and chorus c.

Tuning: C#-F#-B-E-G#-C#

7:51 Verse c

8:25 Chorus c

A final supersection substitution provides yet another verse-chorus pair. In supersection E (Figure 5.21), chorus c also uses a Meshuggah-like rhythmic process with the guitar creating grouping dissonance by playing a three-generated rhythm over the 4/4 meter. The eighth-note 48-cycle (8:33333333333333222) could reach the downbeat of the six-measure phrase again with nothing but groupings of 3, but band elects for three groupings of 2 at the end of the cycle instead of two groupings of 3. The entire cycle sounds twice. Again, the chorus quality is conveyed by the repeated text (“You won’t see me coming”), clear and regular vocal rhythms with relatively long durations, periodic organization of motives within the phrase, and the repetition of the entire phrase. The simple materials of both the verse and chorus—arguably the simplest riffs in the entire song—are energetic and insistent, and the insertion of a lead break between the two sections contributes to an overall climactic quality across the supersection.

bridge, transforming a liminal formal function into the main event through displays of virtuosity and stimulating participants to dance.

Trevor de Clercq observes that the formal taxonomy of John Covach (2005) implies that a single bridge section in a compound AABA form occupies the same level of grouping structure as verse-chorus supersections.²⁸² He resolves this incongruity by suggesting that ‘bridge’ does not describe a specific section but rather a prototypical role (similar to my fluid function). Giving Deep Purple’s “Smoke on the Water” as an example, de Clercq shows that a guitar solo played over verse and chorus material allows these non-bridge sections to take on the bridge role through by making a “bridge blend” that indexes characteristics of bridge sections.²⁸³ While this strategy is clearly insightful for many rock songs, I have argued that metal’s formal vocabulary encompasses a wide variety of bridge section types that fall outside of traditional bridge sections and blends, and there is no disparity in the grouping level of compound bridges and presentational supersections. Consequently, I reanimate the category of bridge supersections.

Another argument for the viability of compound bridges is that metal composers write new music for their bridge sections and piece them together successively. This successive style of composition is not only concerned with providing a momentary respite from the “main part,” consisting of presentational material, but also extending songs and shaping musical drama so that the compound bridge becomes the main event, or at least comparable to the other material. More sections can always be added to a compound bridge, making the composition more substantial. As an example, between the demo recording and studio version of Death’s “Zero Tolerance,” three new sections were added to the B supersection to show off more leads and solos (Table 5.9).

²⁸² De Clercq 2012, 89.

²⁸³ Ibid, 221–222.

Table 5.9. Death, “Zero Tolerance” (*Symbolic*, 1995); comparison to demo.²⁸⁴

Supersection	Time	Demo	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:05	0:05	Verse	
	0:30	0:28	Lead break	
	0:42	0:40	Prechorus	
	1:05	1:03	Chorus	
B	1:29	1:26	Bridge a	Decoy chorus
	2:05	2:04	Bridge b	Guitar lead
	2:29	2:28	Bridge b'	Guitar lead
	2:49	X	Bridge c	Guitar lead
	2:52		Bridge d	Guitar solo
	3:04		Bridge e	Guitar solo
A	3:26	2:48	Verse	
	3:48	3:11	Lead break	
	4:00	3:22	Prechorus	
	4:23	3:46	Chorus	

The question of scale is not trivial either. Caplin writes that there is an affinity between the contrasting middle of smaller, simpler forms such as the small ternary and the development section of the larger sonata form. Yet, the difference is decisive on structure:

Normally, however, a development is distinguished from a contrasting middle by its greater length and complexity of organization. Whereas a contrasting middle is a relatively short unit, a development can sometimes exceed the size of the entire exposition. A contrasting middle rarely consists of more than a single thematic unit (i.e., a set of intrathematic functions expressing a beginning, middle, and end). Conversely, a development usually contains multiple themelike units. A contrasting middle often remains entirely in the home key or else brings a brief modulation to the dominant region. A development section, however, regularly explores other tonal regions in the home key.²⁸⁵

While it would be inaccurate to describe a compound bridge as a sonata development section, the two sometimes share analogous rhetorical and functional roles. Being composed of fluid section types, the compound bridge is relatively loose knit when compared to presentational supersections. Many compound bridges terminate in a retransitional passage anticipating the return to presentational material. And, as the supersection most given to additive expansion and

²⁸⁴ Refer to the 2008 expanded edition (Roadrunner Records – 1686-179462).

²⁸⁵ William Caplin. *Classical Form: A Theory of Formal Function for the Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 139.

compositional virtuosity, the compound bridge is to “be taken as an indication of the intended seriousness of purpose, depth of thought, or connoisseur appeal of [the] work.”²⁸⁶ Unlike a classical development though, a compound bridge may or may not modulate, and the development of earlier thematic material is the exception rather than the rule. Nevertheless, with a few minor adjustments, metal’s compound AABA form can even approximate (Type-3) sonata form, with the B supersection corresponding to the sonata development. “Antebellum” by The Human Abstract does just this (Table 5.10).

Table 5.10. The Human Abstract, “Antebellum” (*Digital Veil*, 2011); interpreted as Type-3 sonata form.

Time	Sonata Form		Compound AABA Form		Key
0:00	Exposition	Introduction	A	Introduction	c
0:13		P		Verse	
0:44		TR		Transition	
1:41		S		Chorus	g
2:11	Exposition repeat	Introduction	A	Introduction	c
2:25		P		Verse	
2:54		TR		Transition	
3:32		S		Chorus	g
4:01	Development		B Compound bridge	Bridge a	f
4:16				Bridge b	d
4:22				Bridge c	e
5:24				Bridge d	g
5:31				Bridge e	c#
5:40		Standing on V		Retransition	c:HC
5:49	Recapitulation	P	A	Verse	c
6:16		TR		Transition	
6:45		S		Chorus	

The features that straddle sonata form and song form include the harmonic scheme, which modulates from the tonic in the verse/P to the dominant in the chorus/S, and then brings the chorus into the tonic key in the recapitulation, and the modulatory compound bridge/development which recycles earlier thematic material. The parallel is by design. Composer A.J. Minette attended

²⁸⁶ James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy. *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late-Eighteenth Century Sonata* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 196.

Loyola Marymount University and the University of Southern California for guitar performance.

He deliberately applied his classical music education to the writing of “Antebellum”:

This song is written in Sonata form. I wanted to write a piece of music that was lengthy, but did not collapse under the weight of having too many parts. I wanted to limit the amount of “thematic” material and create variations on each theme. For instance, the acoustic section of this track is repeated but instead uses electric guitar, has a registral change and incorporates different harmonies.²⁸⁷

Several authors have written on the appropriation of “classical prestige” into heavy metal, beginning with Robert Walser’s 1992 article, “Eruptions: Heavy Metal Appropriations of Classical Virtuosity,” which argues that metal’s construction of masculinity and discourse of power is woven into the cultural prestige afforded by elite music. “Heavy metal guitarists, like all other innovative musicians,” Walser writes, “create new sounds by drawing power from the old, and by fusing together their semiotic resources into compelling new combinations.”²⁸⁸ More recently, Eric Smialek and Méi-Ra St-Laurent have viewed metal appropriations of classical music through a Bourdieusian analysis of middle-class habitus. Here, the relevant comparison is with Luc Lemay, the guitarist and vocalist for Gorguts, who studied composition at the Conservatoire de musique de Québec à Montréal. Smialek and St-Laurent make the connection that “formal, conservatory-style training provided a social precedent for the members of Gorguts to work out their ideas on sheets of paper and speak about those ideas with detailed, technical vocabulary” as opposed to composing strictly at one’s instrument without deliberation.²⁸⁹ A.J. Minette discussed the transformative effect a school assignment had on his compositional thinking:

²⁸⁷ A.J. Minette, and Tim Karan. “Track By Track: The Human Abstract,” Alternative Press, May 3, 2011. https://web.archive.org/web/20110509071101/http://www.altpress.com/features/entry/track_by_track_the_human_abstract/.

²⁸⁸ Robert Walser, “Eruptions: Heavy Metal Appropriations of Classical Virtuosity,” *Popular Music* 11, no. 3 (1992), 301.

²⁸⁹ Eric T. Smialek and Méi-Ra St-Laurent, “Unending Eruptions: White-Collar Metal Appropriations of Classical Complexity, Experimentation, Elitism, and Cultural Legitimization” in *The Routledge Companion to Popular Music Analysis: Expanding Approaches*, edited by Ciro Scotto, Kenneth Smith and John Brackett (New York and London: Routledge, 2019), 384.

While I was studying composition in school, I was given an assignment to write a short piano piece. I was given instructions to choose a few “limitations” from a list. The list included rhythms (ex. tango, mazurka) and meters (7/8, 5/8, Changing meter), scales (octatonic, whole tone, hybrids) etc. I chose to write a piece using the octatonic scale in 7/8 with exaggerated register changes. This forced me to think differently about music. I was not able to rely on my tendencies to write tonal music with chromatic harmony and traditional melodies. It really forced me out of my comfort zone. Instead of concentrating most of my attention on melody and harmony, I began to consider the rhythms, tone colors, textures, and register of the piece in new ways. If nothing else, the assignment helped me to explore different scales, meters, rhythms, and sonorities.²⁹⁰

Even the limitations described in this passage are evident in Minette’s contemporaneous compositions for The Human Abstract. “Holographic Sight,” for example, uses a whole-tone collection with alternating meter (Figure 5.22).

Figure 5.22. The Human Abstract, “Holographic Sight” (*Digital Veil*, 2011); whole-tone scale riff (0:33).
Tuning: D–G–C–F–A–D

The image displays a musical score for a guitar riff. It consists of two systems of music. Each system has a treble clef staff with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a series of five measures. The meters alternate between 7/8, 3/4, 7/8, 6/8, and 7/8. Below the staff is a guitar tablature with two lines labeled 'T' (treble) and 'B' (bass). The tablature uses numbers 0-5 to indicate fret positions and includes triplets and other rhythmic markings. The notes in the treble staff correspond to the fret numbers in the tablature.

However, even with institutional interventions, the elaborate compositional schemes of metal could not have been possible without sufficiently developed material conditions. The freedom of form and stylistic experimentation characteristic of metal songs relied on recording formats developed between the United States (the 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ LP record) and Germany (magnetic tape recording) in the first half of the twentieth century, and a consumer base for mass-produced goods

²⁹⁰ A.J. Minette, “Abstract Theory with the Human Abstract’s A.J. Minette: Creative Limitation, Part I,” *Metal Sucks*, December 23, 2010, <https://www.metalsucks.net/2010/12/23/abstract-theory-with-the-human-abstracts-a-j-minette-creative-limitation-part-i/>.

in the core of the capitalist world-system built through postwar domestic and international economic policy (as addressed in Part 1).

It was not until the 1960s that rock recordings began to be distributed on LPs.²⁹¹ The LP afforded recording artists the opportunity to create “concept albums” addressing a unitary theme across multiple tracks, changing albums “from a collection of heterogeneous songs into a narrative work with a single theme.”²⁹² Frank Sinatra’s *In the Wee Small Hours* (1955) and The Beatles’ *Rubber Soul* (1965) are significant early examples. “At this moment, for rock musicians who were pursuing the underground and developmental possibilities of the music,” Bill Martin observes, “the *album* rather than the song became the basic unit of artistic production.”²⁹³

“Second wave” progressive rock artists specifically used the extra breathing room of the LP record to explore compositions in extended forms to make their songs “more monumental and more complex on virtually every level” than their predecessors.²⁹⁴ These “sidelong” songs included suites²⁹⁵ and extended rotational forms to a lesser extent,²⁹⁶ but shorter verse-chorus-bridge forms were also suffused with the same commitment to greater compositional scope and complexity.

For example, Rush’s “The Trees” is a compound AABA song with a runtime under five minutes, two of which comprise a compound bridge (Table 5.11). The standard rock band

²⁹¹ Chong Hyun Christie Byun, *The Economics of the Popular Music Industry* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2016), 4–5.

²⁹² Roy Shuker, *Popular Music: The Key Concepts* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 7–8.

²⁹³ Bill Martin, *Listening to the Future: The Time of Progressive Rock, 1968-1978* (Chicago and La Salle: Open Court, 2015) 41.

²⁹⁴ Edward Macan, *Rocking the Classics: English Progressive Rock and the Counterculture* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 27.

²⁹⁵ The Collectors: “What Love” (1968); King Crimson: “Lizard” (1970) Genesis: “Supper’s Ready” (1972); Rush: “The Fountain of Lamneth” (1975), “2112” (1976), “Cygnus X-1, Part II: Hemispheres” (1978); Van Der Graaf Generator: “A Plague of Lighthouse Keepers” (1971) “Meurglys III: The Songwriters Guild” (1976); Yes: “The Gates of Delirium” (1974).

²⁹⁶ Iron Butterfly: “In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida” (1968); Genesis: “Firth of Fifth” (1973); Rush: “Xanadu” (1977); Yes: “Close to the Edge” (1972), “The Revealing Science of God” (1973), “Awaken” (1977).

instrumentation (guitar, bass, drums, and vocals) that pervade the beginning of the song give way to a wider selection of timbres beginning in bridge a with a solo on a Minimoog synthesizer and temple blocks and a bell tree replacing the drums. In bridge b, the ensemble gradually builds up, reintroducing the drumkit in a 5/4 normal-time backbeat pattern. The texture blooms into a guitar solo in bridge b' before cutting to an interlude (bridge c) that exchanges the ensemble with licks from the guitar in a call-and-response manner. Finally, the band comes together for a simple riff-based interlude before recapitulating the verse.

Table 5.11 Rush, “The Trees” (*Hemispheres*, 1978)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction a	
A (abbr.)	0:10	Chorus	
A	0:40	Introduction b	Buildup
	0:46	Verse	
	1:20	Chorus	
B	1:44	Bridge a	Synth solo, percussion
	2:17	Bridge b	Buildup
	2:53		– 5/4 backbeat
	3:10	Bridge b'	Guitar solo
	3:28	Bridge c	Interlude, call and response
	3:49	Bridge d	Interlude
A (abbr.)	3:57	Verse	

Brian Tatler, guitarist for Diamond Head, cited ambitious works from the hard rock, progressive rock and earlier heavy metal styles as influences on his writing, but claimed that his musicianship was not adequate to reproduce them. Also noticing that audiences liked fast-paced, energetic songs, he combined the two sensibilities.

I couldn't play jazz and blues is old-fashioned to me, boring. I didn't like rock'n'roll really, I wanted to do something different, I wanted to do something riffy. I wanted to play, say like Ritchie Blackmore or something but there was no way, it was lightyears ahead of me. So, I took quite a bit from punk rock, the fact that it's all simple chords and it had a lot of energy and that was mixed in with things like Black Sabbath and Zeppelin and we just kind of forged this style. We liked epic songs, you know, “Kashmir” (Led Zeppelin,) and “Xanadu” (Rush, 1978) and “Stargazer” (Rainbow, 1976), we liked the big songs but we also liked some excitement. We wanted to go down well live so even though we didn't have a record album we would play to an audience and we would want that audience to respond.

We realised slow songs didn't really work, fast songs seemed to get them excited and get them jumping about so, we focused and tried to write faster, bigger songs.²⁹⁷

Although I have not undertaken an extensive study of Diamond Head's albums, Tatler seems to be implicating a compound bridge when he refers to his "epic" style. "The Prince" (Table 5.12) is an illustrative example. Supersection A contains a riff-section to expand the presentational materials beyond verses and choruses, and supersection B includes several solo and lead sections.

Table 5.12. Diamond Head, "The Prince" (*Lightning to the Nations*, 1980)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	Buildup
	0:14		Lead guitar enters
	0:21		Guitar solo
	0:47		Solo ends
	1:01	Introduction b	Verse riff
A	1:08	Verse	Whole band in
	1:44	Chorus	
	1:57	Break	
A	2:02	Verse	
	2:38	Chorus	
	2:51	Break	
B	2:56	Bridge a	Interlude, verse riff
	3:10	Bridge b	Interlude
	3:25	Bridge c	Guitar solo, verse riff
	3:46	Bridge d	Guitar lead, verse riff
	4:15	Bridge d'	Guitar solo
	4:43	Bridge e	Retransition
	4:46	Reintroduction	Introduction b
A	4:59	Verse	
	5:28	Chorus	
Coda	5:40	Coda	

Although spontaneity characterizes fluid supersections, I do not mean to suggest that no principle governs their composition or that all parts are interchangeable. Rather, meaning is constructed through the conscious application of section types. Similar to development sections in sonata form, certain arrangements of materials are more statistically common than others, and the

²⁹⁷ Wojtek Gabriel, "Diamond Head: Interview with Brian Tatler," Noizz Eater, December 2017, <https://web.archive.org/web/20190818130132/http://www.noizz eater.net/int/diamond-head-interview-brian-tatler-2017.php>.

placement of bridge functions affects discursive meaning and subsequently audiences’ reception.²⁹⁸

The choice of which bridge function to use when may be influenced by style. In “Caught in a Mosh” (Table 5.13), supersection B contains three distinct phases aligned with genre-specific bridge functions—including breakdown and mosh sections (Gamble 2019) and a virtuosic showcase of solo and duet passages—terminating with an authentic cadence in advance of the retransition into supersection A.

Table 5.13. Anthrax, “Caught in a Mosh” (*Among the Living*, 1987): form graph.

Supersection	Time	Section	Tempo	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction a	94	
	0:21	Introduction b	204	
A	0:44	Verse	220	
	1:02	Prechorus	212	
	1:11	Chorus		
A	1:34	Verse	220	
	1:51	Prechorus	212	
	2:01	Chorus		
B	2:23	Bridge a	170	Breakdown introduction
	2:30	Bridge b		Breakdown
	2:52	Bridge c		Mosh section introduction
	2:56	Bridge d	230	Mosh section
	3:06	Bridge d’		– Guitar solo
	3:15	Bridge e	212	Guitar solo
	3:24	Bridge f		Dual lead
	3:42	Reintroduction		Introduction b; elision
A	4:00	Verse	220	
	4:18	Prechorus	212	
	4:28	Chorus		
Coda	4:51	Coda		

The presentational sections are all above 200 BPM. The first bridge section introduces a breakdown, identified by its slower tempo (ca. 170 BPM) and half-time backbeat. After the breakdown, the speed picks up considerably accompanying by an energetic rising tone in the voice

²⁹⁸ James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy. *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late-Eighteenth Century Sonata* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 205.

Figure 5.24. Death Angel, “Kill as One” (*The Ultra-Violence*, 1987); break (0:29).



Table 5.14. Death Angel, “Kill as One” (*The Ultra-Violence*, 1987)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Main riff	Introduction-like
A	0:29	Break	
	0:39	Verse	
	0:57	Main riff	Vox, chorus-like
A	1:16	Break	
	1:25	Verse	
	1:43	Main riff	Vox, chorus-like
	2:02	Break	Codetta-like
B	2:19	Main riff	
	2:37	Bridge a	Interlude
	2:42	Main riff	Reintroduction-like
A ⇒ C	3:05	Break ⇒ Bridge b	Bridge introduction
	3:14	Bridge c	Guitar solo, main riff
	4:14	Bridge c'	Guitar solo, main riff

Recycling materials for a bridge section is common in some styles. Death Angel comes from the San Francisco Bay Area thrash scene that produced Metallica, Megadeth, Testament, Exodus, and other bands in the early 1980s that fused elements of hardcore with speed metal and NWOBHM. David Easley writes that a bridge section in hardcore “may present entirely new music with vocals, or it may be an instrumental presentation of the verse or the chorus.”²⁹⁹ The multiple functions of the riffs in this case raise the question though about the providence of bridge b: does it derive from a chorus (presented without a verse) or the introduction, or should these incidental formal functions be considered secondary to the main riff that binds them? Analyzing a formal function with such strong chorus characteristics in the second way draws attention to the way a single riff binds a large part of the composition.

²⁹⁹ David Easley, “*It’s Not My Imagination, I’ve Got a Gun on My Back!*”: *Style and Sound in Early American Hardcore Punk, 1978-1983*, Ph.D. diss. (Florida State University, 2012), 132.

PART 3: WHOLE-SONG FORMS

6. ROTATIONAL FORM WITH (COMPOUND) BRIDGE

Supplemental examples for each category in this chapter are given in Appendix E.

Compound AABA form is the most pervasive whole-song form in rock and metal music, but metal also hosts a wide range of variations. Stephen Hudson supplies a flexible category to describe the family of forms derived from the compound AABA verse-chorus-bridge form: rotational form with bridge, which is “based on a verse or verse/chorus rotation cycle, but has a bridge interrupting this cycle at some point.”³⁰⁰ As we have seen in the two preceding chapters, the rotational unit is not necessarily a verse-chorus pair but may include riff-sections as well. Hudson’s usage of *bridge* “slips between section (bridge) and supersection (B) because the individual sections within the B supersection are often unified by a prolonged bridge section function.”³⁰¹ My own view is that a supersection is a kind of container, a set that includes individual sections.³⁰² According to this definition, a bridge supersection is not simply an “expansive” bridge function but a collection of bridge functions. Consequently, I am more explicit about the use of bridge supersections, called compound bridges. Compound AABA forms featuring a compound bridge are the norm in metal songs, and, in this chapter, I will offer a non-exhaustive list of other supersection configurations.

“Under the Blade” by Twisted Sister (Table 6.1) illustrates a straightforward compound AABA form containing a compound bridge in supersection B. Each rotation of supersection A contains a verse-chorus pair, and supersection B contains several bridge functions.

³⁰⁰ Hudson 2021.

³⁰¹ Ibid.

³⁰² I allow that a set can contain one element, resolving the grouping level conundrum (de Clercq 2012, 85).

Table 6.1. Twisted Sister, “Under the Blade” (*Under the Blade*, 1982)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction a	Buildup
	0:19	Introduction a'	Intro verse
	0:36	Introduction b	Buildup
A	0:56	Verse	
	1:20	Chorus	
A	1:33	Verse	
	1:58	Chorus	
B	2:10	Bridge a	Guitar solo, verse riff
	2:30	Bridge b	Interlude
	2:40	Bridge c	Interlude, based on chorus
	2:48	Reintroduction	Introduction a, guitar solo
	2:57		– Texted
A	3:15	Verse	
	3:40	Chorus	
Coda	3:52	Coda a	
	4:02	Coda a'	Coda verse, guitar solo
	4:22	Coda b	

Despite associations with pop formulas, compound AABA form is used in extreme metal as well. Alex Webster and Chris Barnes of the Florida death metal outfit, Cannibal Corpse, imply that they deliberately constructed some of their songs after the compound AABA model in order to make their songs catchier. However, memorability comes not only from verse-chorus structure, but also breakdowns—which they call *groove tangents*—located in the compound bridge.

Webster: [...] We had some pretty obscure stuff early on. “Living Dissection” on *Butchered at Birth* goes all over the place. More unorthodox. On [*Tomb of the Mutilated*], things started [to] get more song-like. For sure “Hammer Smashed Face” is a song. I wouldn’t call *Tomb* catchy by mainstream standards, but it definitely was put together in a way you could remember the songs.

Barnes: It is very catchy and heavy. We were inspired. We were just trying to make it interesting for ourselves while making things as heavy as possible. It just worked out that way, the way those guys wrote. They’re talented musicians. It’s orchestrated and echoes back to bands we listened to growing up. More verse-chorus-type stuff. We put that whole idea into hyper-motion, with a thousand things going on at once. We wanted to have it rhythm-based, though—a catchy-type of groove going on, especially in the middle parts of songs. *Tomb of the Mutilated* is filled with groove tangents.³⁰³

³⁰³ Albert Mudrian, *Precious Metal: Decibel Presents the Stories Behind 25 Extreme Metal Masterpieces* (Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 2009), 146.

“Hammer Smashed Face,” one of the songs they mention by name, sounds much more chaotic than the Twisted Sister song given above, and certainly more than the average radio pop tune (Table 6.2). The meaning of Barnes’ comment that they put the idea of “verse-chorus type stuff” into “hyper-motion, with a thousand things going on at once” become clear when examining each rotation of supersection A.

Table 6.2. Cannibal Corpse, “Hammer Smashed Face” (*Tomb of the Mutilated*, 1992)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description	Time Feel
Introduction	0:00	Introduction a	Based on codetta	
	0:05		– Double kick	Blast beat
	0:14		– Kick drops out	
	0:18	Introduction b	Bass lead	
A	0:23	Verse a		2x Blast beat
	0:37	Prechorus		1x OpB snare
	0:47	Chorus		½x
	1:17	Postchorus		½x OpB snare
	1:25	Codetta		
A’	1:29	Verse b	Substitute	2x Blast beat
	1:48	Break		2x
	1:53	Verse c	Substitute	Blast beat
	1:58	Prechorus		1x OpB snare
	2:07	Chorus		½x
	2:27	Chorus ext.		½x
	2:38	Postchorus		½x
2:46	Codetta			
B	2:49	Bridge a	Breakdown	½x
	2:58		– Vocals	
	3:16	Bridge b	Interlude	2x
	3:23	Bridge c	Vocal interlude	2x
A (abbr.)	3:33	Bridge b	Interlude	2x
	3:41	Chorus		½x
Coda	3:51	Postchorus		½x
	4:00	Coda	Based on codetta	

The first A rotation contains a verse-prechorus-chorus-postchorus cycle, the chorus and postchorus being identifiable by their half-time beat. With the codetta, the first rotation numbers five sections. The second rotation immediately begins with a substituted verse, a break, and another substituted verse before returning to familiar ground with the prechorus, chorus, and postchorus. Supersection B is a compound bridge, beginning with a slow half-time breakdown. The only sections with a half-time feel are the chorus, postchorus and breakdown, in contrast to the frenetic double time

and blast beats throughout the rest of the song. In absence of traditional harmonic structure or a clear vocal melody, time feel regulates the flow of formal functions here, and marks certain sections to make them more ‘memorable’ or at least danceable.

A common variation on compound AABA form places additional presentational rotations before the bridge. “Fast as a Shark” by Accept is a compound AAABA form. The first A supersection is abbreviated, withholding the chorus from the verse-chorus cycle until the second rotation.

Table 6.3. Accept, “Fast as a Shark” (*Restless and Wild*, 1982)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	“Ein Heller und ein Batzen”
	0:21		Recording ends, scream
A (abbr.)	0:23	Preverse	
	0:33	Verse	
	0:42	Prechorus	
A	0:49	Preverse	
	0:56	Verse	
	1:04	Prechorus	
	1:11	Chorus	
A	1:23	Preverse	
	1:30	Verse	
	1:38	Prechorus	
	1:45	Chorus	
B	1:57	Bridge a	Bridge introduction
	2:01	Bridge b	Interlude
	2:14	Bridge b	Interlude
	2:25	Bridge c	Lead
	2:38	Bridge d	Dual lead
	3:01	Bridge e	Retransition
A (abbr.)	3:07	Chorus	
Coda	3:31	Coda	

Hudson records this pattern as “three verses before the bridge,” but remarks that “it clearly employs the same structuring processes as compound AABA,” an assessment with which I agree.³⁰⁴ But some variations in the repertoire at large are worth commenting upon. I divide these into expansions and truncations of compound AABA form.

³⁰⁴ Hudson 2021, Example 8.

6.2 Expansions of Compound AABA Form

An increased focus on the bridge section can lead to an expansion of compound AABA form. There may be many reasons for doing so, such as setting multiple virtuosic passages, special bridge types, or to accommodate the song’s narrative by interleaving presentational and fluid supersections. “War Ensemble” by Slayer is in AABACA form, with the B and C sections being fluid supersections (Table 6.4). Supersection B consists of a single guitar solo section. After another chorus, a longer compound bridge begins, featuring two bridge verses and a breakdown.

Table 6.4. Slayer, “War Ensemble” (*Seasons in the Abyss*, 1990), formal diagram

Supersection	Time	Section	
Introduction	0:00	Introduction a	
	0:18	Introduction b	
A	0:28	Verse	
	0:46	Introduction a’	
A	0:58	Verse	
	1:16	Chorus	
B	1:35	Bridge a	Guitar solo
A (abbr.)	1:53	Chorus	
C	2:12	Bridge b	Interlude
	2:35	Bridge c	Bridge verse
	2:55	Bridge b	Interlude
	3:06	Bridge c	Bridge verse
	3:27	Bridge d	Breakdown, guitar solo
	3:56	Bridge e	Guitar solo
A	4:05	Verse	
	4:24	Chorus	
Coda	4:43	Coda	

“What You Became” by Anacrusis takes a creative approach, exploiting the normative boundaries of compound AABA form to mislead the listener with false endings. A false coda follows the compound AABA part of the song, but another verse-chorus pair enters to raise the momentum. The chorus is followed by a codetta, which is another false ending. Supersection C ramps up the energy one last time. The arrival of the coda at the end is sudden, and, given the pattern so far, the listener would be forgiven if they expected the song to start up again.

Table 6.5. Anacrusis, “What You Became” (*Manic Impressions*, 1991)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	Guitar lead
A	0:16	Verse	
	0:45	Prechorus	
	1:00	Chorus	
A	1:15	Verse	
	1:45	Prechorus	
	2:00	Chorus	
B	2:15	Bridge a	Breakdown
	2:23		– Band enters, guitar solo
	2:38	Bridge b	Guitar lead
A (abbr.)	2:53	Chorus	
	3:07	Codetta	False ending
False Coda	3:11	Coda?	Introduction, guitar lead
A	3:23	Verse	
	3:53	Chorus	
	4:05	Codetta	False ending
C	4:18	Bridge a	Interlude
	4:32	Bridge c	Interlude
	4:47	Bridge a'	Interlude
Coda	4:57	Coda	

6.3 Type 1 Truncation: Single Presentational Rotation Before Bridge

In addition to expanded rotational forms, truncated compound AABA forms are also common. The first type I will address subtracts the first A rotation, making a compound ABA form. Compound ABA songs reduce the number of presentational rotations between the beginning of the song and the compound bridge, eliminating what may be seen as excessive repetition of presentational material. Compound ABA forms are effectively through-composed until after the B supersection—a feature that composers can exploit to affect the temporality of functional progression.

In Iron Maiden’s “Aces High” (Table 6.6), each A supersection consists of verse-prechorus-chorus cycle. The B supersection is entirely instrumental, consisting of two guitar solos (bridges b and c) bound by some framing functions (bridge a).

Table 6.6. Iron Maiden, “Aces High” (*Powerslave*, 1984)

Compound Section	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction a	
	0:25	Introduction b	
A	0:40	Verse	
	1:09	Prechorus	
	1:24	Chorus	
B	1:53	Bridge a	Bridge introduction
	2:08	Bridge b	Guitar solo
	2:22	Bridge c	Guitar solo
	2:36	Bridge a	Retransition
A	2:50	Verse	
	3:18	Prechorus	
	3:32	Chorus	
Coda	4:01	Coda	Introduction b

The story of the song concerns a flying ace during the Battle of Britain in World War II who has to repel an enemy attack. The arrangement of sections aids the narrative by dividing it into two parts. In the first verse, an air raid siren sounds and the protagonist races to their airplane:

There goes the siren that warns of the air raid
 There comes the sound of the guns sending flak
 Out for the scramble we've got to get airborne
 Got to get up for the coming attack
 Jump in the cockpit and start up the engines
 Remove all the wheelblocks there's no time to waste
 Gathering speed as we head down the runway
 Gotta get airborne before it's too late

The prechorus depicts an airborne battle and the modulating chorus (Figure 6.1), harmonized in soaring thirds (with a few parallel fifths too), sings the narrator-protagonist's determination, and the danger and excitement of the dogfight.

Figure 6.1. Iron Maiden, “Aces High” (*Powerslave*, 1984); chorus.

The musical score for the chorus of "Aces High" by Iron Maiden is presented in four staves. The first two staves are in the key of E major (one sharp), and the last two are in the key of E minor (two flats). The time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "Run, live to fly, fly to live, do or die. Won't you run, live to fly, fly to live, Aces High". The score includes chord symbols (E5, C5, D5, G5, Eb5, F5) and rests for the vocal line.

In supersection B, the listener is left to imagine the battle through the multi-stage drama of the instrumental bridge sections. When we return to the protagonist in the second presentational rotation, they have been successful in their run.

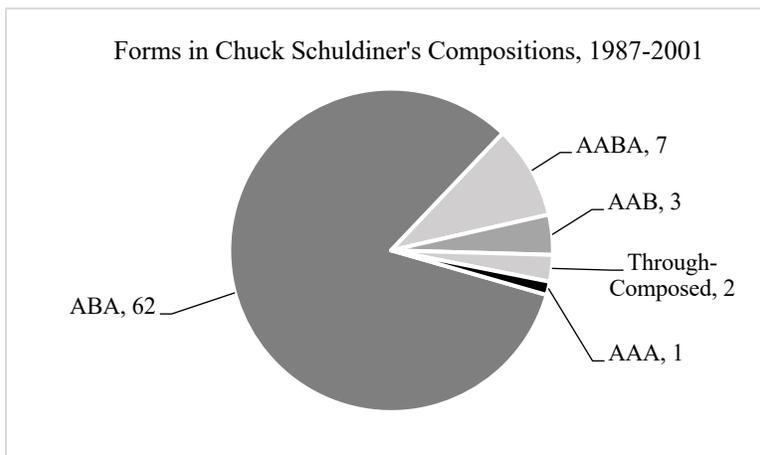
Move in to fire at the mainstream of bombers
 Let off a sharp burst and then turn away
 Roll over, spin ‘round and come in behind them
 Move to their blindsides and firing again
 Bandits at 8 O’clock move in behind us
 Ten ME-109’s out of the sun
 Ascending and turning our spitfires to face them
 Heading straight for them I press down my guns

The urgency of the story arguably does not fit the format of a three-verse AABA song: the plane needs to get off the ground (and into the fray of the compound bridge section) as soon as possible.

Many metal composers have written songs in compound ABA form, but perhaps none have done so as consistently or thoroughly as Chuck Schuldiner, one of the early innovators of the death

metal style. Out of Schuldiner’s seventy-four songs, sixty-one are in compound ABA form. (Figure 6.2).³⁰⁵

Figure 6.2. Summary of formal schemes by album in seventy-four songs spanning Chuck Schuldiner’s career. An initially diverse array of formal types gives way to a high concentration of compound ABA forms. Dates refer to year of album releases.



Form	1987	1988	1990	1991	1993	1995	1998	1999	2004	Total
Compound ABA	1	7	8	7	10	9	8	8	4	61 (82.4%)
Compound AABA	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7 (9.4%)
Compound AAB	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3 (4%)
Through-Composed	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	2 (2.7%)
Compound AAA	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 (1.4%)

Schuldiner’s compound ABA songs can be straightforward in design, but as mentioned in the discussion on decoy choruses in Chapter 4, the ternary design can be disorienting depending on how and which section functions are used.

“Spiritual Healing” (Table 6.7) uses two compositional devices to disorienting effect: a decoy chorus, and an *overloaded supersection*. An overloaded supersection occurs when many competing formal functions populate the same presentational supersection, diffusing momentum. In this case, supersection A contains eight events in total. Immediately, two different verses are presented. Break a introduces a riff and is then followed by break b. Break b proceeds to the prechorus, but then the break b–prechorus pair repeats, confusing the flow of functions. After the

³⁰⁵ The entire data set is given in Appendix D.

prechorus sounds the second time, the chorus arrives, but then it is followed by a decoy chorus in the compound bridge. Because of the ternary design, the listener has no point of reference before supersection B. It is not until hearing the second A supersection go through that the boundaries of the supersections becomes clearer.

Table 6.7. Death, “Spiritual Healing” (*Spiritual Healing*, 1990)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:19	Verse a	
	1:17	Verse b	
	1:52	Break a	
	2:12	Break b	
	2:22	Prechorus	
	2:33	Break b	
	2:43	Prechorus	
	3:02	Chorus	
B	3:30	Bridge a	Decoy chorus
	3:49	Bridge b	Guitar solo
	4:09	Bridge c	Guitar solo
A	4:29	Verse a	
	5:27	Verse b	
	6:02	Break a	
	6:22	Break b	
	6:31	Prechorus	
	6:43	Break b	
	6:52	Prechorus	
	7:03	Chorus	

Lastly, as a point of clarification, by “type 1 truncation” I mean that this pattern can apply to expanded versions of compound AABA form too. An expanded form like AABACA, under type 1 truncation, becomes ABACA. See, for instance “Voracious Souls” by Death Angel (Table 5.5), or “MK Ultra” by Periphery (Table 6.8).

Table 6.8. Periphery, “MK Ultra” (*Juggernaut: Alpha*, 2015)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:16	Verse	Harsh vox
	0:31	Chorus	
B	0:45	Bridge a	Interlude
	1:03	Bridge b	Bridge verse
A	1:18	Verse	Harsh vox
	1:24	Chorus	
	1:39	Chorus extension	
C ⇒ Coda	2:00	Bridge c ⇒ Coda	Topic: Jazz, guitar solo

6.4 Type 2 Truncation: Terminal Bridge

A second type of truncation removes the final A rotation from compound AABA form, producing compound AAB form. Though compound AAB form is the main scheme under discussion, AAAB or similar patterns operate on the same logic. Such forms challenge the “bridge” nomenclature since the B supersection does not link to another presentational rotation. Hudson writes that AAB is “incomplete” compared to a “perfect” AABA form.³⁰⁶ I agree with Hudson that compound AAB forms are in dialogue with their AABA cousins, but at the same time I propose that the “completeness” of AABA form is purely conceptual. In practice, metal AAB songs have little problem with closure.

Compound AAB songs sometimes use a “terminal climax” strategy, placing an energetic high point late in the composition.³⁰⁷ Pantera’s “Domination” (Table 6.9) provides an archetypal example. The bridge contains its own procession of formal functions, including an introduction, an instrumental interlude, a guitar solo, and finally a breakdown that is regarded by many fans as the centerpiece of the song.

Table 6.9. Pantera, “Domination” (*Cowboys from Hell*, 1990)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:30	Verse	
	1:04	Prechorus	
	1:24	Chorus	
A	1:42	Verse	
	2:16	Prechorus	
	2:36	Chorus	
B	2:50	Bridge a	Bridge introduction
	2:56	Bridge b	Interlude, verse riff
	3:17	Bridge c	Guitar solo
	3:51	Bridge d	Breakdown, guitar solo

³⁰⁶ Hudson 2021, Example 8.

³⁰⁷ For an extensive list of compositions using terminal climaxes, see Garrett Schumann, “Terminally Climactic Forms in Heavy Metal Music” in *Modern Heavy Metal: Markets, Practices and Cultures* (Helsinki: Aalto University, 2015).

Brad Osborn describes “terminally climactic form” as offering an alternative to normative song forms “by restructuring two pivotal formal elements: climaxes and endings.”³⁰⁸ But there are numerous songs with nearly identical forms—featuring compound bridges that end with a hyperchorus or climactic breakdown—that also include a terminal verse-chorus cycle (such as Metallica’s “Creeping Death”, Table 6.10).

Table 6.10. Metallica, “Creeping Death” (Ride the Lightning, 1984),

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction a	
A	0:19	Introduction b	Verse riff
	0:56	Verse	
	1:25	Chorus	
A	1:44	Introduction b	Verse riff
	1:53	Verse	
	2:21	Chorus	
B	2:40	Bridge a	Bridge introduction, introduction b
	2:45	Bridge a	Guitar solo, verse riff
	3:19	Bridge b	Guitar solo, chorus riff
	3:39	Bridge c	Breakdown
A	4:19	Introduction b’	Verse riff
	4:26	Verse	
	4:55	Chorus	
Coda	5:14	Coda a	
	5:24	Coda a’	
	5:43	Coda a’’	
	6:03	Coda b	Introduction a

Rather than a revolution of formal telos, terminally climatic AAB forms seem incidental in the scheme of metal rotational forms. Instead, I argue that the potential for terminal bridges exists in metal’s formal grammar because chorus teleology is but one option among the many proffered by metal’s inventory of section functions. A terminal bridge does not even need to be markedly more climactic than any other section. “Black Funeral” by Mercyful Fate (Table 6.11) ends not with a hyperchorus or a breakdown, but with a run-of-the-mill guitar solo, a bridge type that has been in rock music from its beginnings.

³⁰⁸ Osborn 2013, 24.

Table 6.11. Mercyful Fate, “Black Funeral” (*Melissa*, 1984)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:10	Verse	
	0:24	Prechorus	
	0:38	Chorus	
	0:56	Postchorus	
A	1:12	Introduction	
	1:20	Verse	
	1:34	Prechorus	
	1:48	Chorus	
	2:07	Postchorus	
B	2:10	Bridge a	Interlude
	2:19	Bridge b	Guitar solo
	2:33	Bridge c	Guitar solo

6.5 Hypersections and Hypercompound Form

Lastly, I will address forms made up of hypersections. If compound form is made from sections combined into supersections, then hypercompound form is made from supersections combined into hypersections. Hypercompound forms are rare because they require at least three distinct supersections to begin with: two to be consistently paired as a hypersection, and one more to facilitate rotational behavior.

In “Flesh and the Power It Holds” by Death (Table 6.12), three supersection rotations are combined (AAB) into a hypersection. Supersection C, a compound bridge, provides the contrast necessary to perceive hypersectional grouping. The overall form, on the supersection level, is AAB–C–AAB. At the hypersection level, these groupings become A–B–A, or a hypercompound ABA form.

Table 6.12. Death, “Flesh and the Power It Holds” (*The Sound of Perseverance*, 1998)

Hypersection	Supersection	Time	Section	Description	
Introduction	Introduction	0:00	Introduction a		
		0:31	Introduction b		
		1:04	Introduction c		
A	A	1:18	Verse a		
		1:39	Chorus		
	A	2:01	Verse		
		2:11	Chorus a		
	B	B	2:22	Chorus b	
			3:02	Postchorus	Verse-like
			3:11	Postchorus	Verse-like
B	C	3:22	Postchorus	Verse-like	
		3:42	Bridge a	Interlude	
		4:14	Bridge b	Guitar solo	
A	A	5:23	Bridge c	Bass lead, point of furthest remove	
		6:01	Verse		
	A	6:22	Chorus		
		6:42	Verse		
	B	B	6:53	Chorus a	
			7:05	Chorus b	
			7:44	Postchorus	Verse-like
B	B	8:03	Postchorus	Verse-like	
		8:14	Postchorus	Verse-like	

Like Chuck Schuldiner’s other ABA compositions, the organizational principle is that all the presentational materials repeat verbatim after a central compound bridge. Each A supersection contains a verse-chorus cycle, then supersection B begins with a new chorus followed by three verse-like postchorus sections. Since there are two rotations of supersection A, one might hear supersections B and C as one single supersection (Table 6.13). However, the boundary between supersections B and C becomes clearer after the recapitulation of the presentational materials.

Table 6.13. Death, “Flesh and the Power It Holds” (*The Sound of Perseverance*, 1998). Initial and retrospective interpretation, showcasing hypercompound ABA form.

Time	Initial Hearing		Retrospective Reinterpretation			Description	
	Supersection	Section	Hypersection	Supersection	Section		
0:00	Introduction	Introduction a	Introduction	Introduction	Introduction a		
0:31		Introduction b			Introduction b		
1:04		Introduction c			Introduction c		
1:18	A	Verse a	A	A	Verse a		
1:39		Chorus			Chorus		
2:01	A	Verse		A	Verse		
2:11		Chorus			Chorus a		
2:22	B	Bridge a		B	Chorus b		
3:02		Bridge b			Postchorus	Verse-like	
3:11		Bridge b			Postchorus	Verse-like	
3:22		Bridge b			Postchorus	Verse-like	
3:42		Bridge c			Bridge a	Interlude	
4:14	B	Bridge d		B	C	Bridge b	Guitar solo
5:23		Bridge e	Bridge c			Bass lead, PoFR	
6:01		Verse	A			A	Verse
6:22	Chorus	Chorus					
6:42	Verse	A		Verse			
6:53	Chorus			Chorus a			
7:05	B'?	Bridge a		B	Chorus b		
7:44		Bridge b			Postchorus	Verse-like	
8:03		Bridge b			Postchorus	Verse-like	
8:14		Bridge b			Postchorus	Postchorus	Verse-like

Supersection C is also unified by texture (being entirely instrumental) and a metric process. The riff from bridge a (Figure 6.3) divides into even sets of four eighth notes (8:44 or 8:2222). In bridge b, the eighth note groupings are uneven but still periodic. First, each grouping of 12 eighth notes is divided into a group of 5 (8:32) and a group of 7 (8:322). Then, the after a change of meter to 4/4, each 16-note group of eighth notes is divided into a double tresillo scheme (8:333322).

Figure 6.3. Death, “Flesh and the Power It Holds” (*The Sound of Perseverance*, 1998); bridges a and b

Bridge a
3:42 4 4 etc.

Bridge b
4:15 5 (3+2) 7 (3+2+2) etc.

3 3 3 3 2 2 etc.

In bridge c (Figure 6.4), the gradual loosening of metric regularity arrives at the point of furthest remove.³⁰⁹ The bass sounds alone without any accompaniment to provide a metric reference point. The bass enters with an anacrusis, and the pitch contour divides the meter aperiodically into groups of 5, 3, and 1, making the downbeat difficult to discern. The tritone-laden melody also obscures the tonality. To reverse direction in preparation for the recapitulation, the guitars enter with a $\flat II^5-I^5$ progression in D with onsets on the downbeat, dispelling the ambiguities of the bass line by clarifying its relation to the meter and tonality.

³⁰⁹ Leonard Ratner, *Classic Music: Expression, Form, and Style* (New York and London: Schirmer Books, 1980), 225–226.

7. ANTI-PRESENTATIONAL TENDENCIES

Up to this point, I have described songs with periodic structure based on the interaction of presentational and fluid supersections. I will now turn my attention toward forms that circumvent periodicity based on rotations of presentational functions. As I have argued throughout this dissertation, different compositional methods can result in different modes of musical organization. Vocally-oriented composition favors presentational tendencies, while the logic of instrumentally-oriented composition leaves more room for fluid tendencies. In this chapter, I examine mainly instrumental pieces in through-composed forms and theorize a special type of form based entirely on fluid supersections called a “free-standing bridge.”

7.2 Through-Composition

Brad Osborn has built a typology of through-composition based on “the existence or non-existence of thematic unity, and the existence or non-existence of large multi-sectional units” called *section groups*. Thematic unity here is defined as the condition when two sections “are based on the same melodic, harmonic, and/or rhythmic materials.” Section groups are “congregations of sections displaying shared musical characteristics” such as tonality, texture, rhythmic feel, and presumably any other measure of similarity one can imagine. Osborn neatly summarizes the four types of through-composition derived by this scheme:

If all sections exist within a single section group, or within no section group at all, the form can be described as “One-Part” (O); if divided into multiple section groups, the form can be described as “Multi-Part” (G). (The letter G may serve to remind us that the multi-part form is partitioned as such by section groups.) Whether the piece is divided into one part or multiple parts, the sections comprising those divisions will either exhibit thematic unity or thematic diversity. If thematically unified, the section group or piece can be described as “monothematic” (M); if thematically diverse, the section group or piece can be

described as “polythematic” (P). The resulting combinations yield four distinct formal types: <O, M>, <G, M>, <O, P>, and <G, P>. ³¹⁰

To illustrate, these are possible configurations for each of Osborn’s four types:

- Type I <O,M> {A A’ A’’ A...}
- Type II <G,M> {I: A A’ A’’} {II: B B’} {III: C C’ C’’ C’’’ C}...
- Type III <O,P> {A B C D E F G...} (all in one group or no group)
- Type IV <G,P> {I: A B C} {II: D E} {III: F G}

These form types concern only the arrangement of sections and not their formal function, but Osborn approximates formal functions with “independent verses” and “independent choruses,” or other apparent section roles. To fuse Osborn’s approach with my own, I attempt to classify quantitative section groups into qualitative supersections, placing greater emphasis on section roles.

“Cosmic Sea” by Death (Table 7.1) fits Osborn’s multi-part polythematic form, broken up into two supersections. Supersection A contains several sections with material that could become the basis for periodic repetition, so the overall character of the supersection is presentational. Section D creates a separation between the two supersections with an ambient synthesizer texture. Then, supersection B contains several soloistic sections, sounding more fluid than presentational.

Table 7.1. Death, “Cosmic Sea” (*Human*, 1991)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A <i>Presentational</i>	0:10	A	
	0:29	A’	Lead break; solo
	1:05	B	Lead break
	1:23	C	Lead break
	1:41	C	Lead break
Transition	2:03	D	Synthesizer ambience
B <i>Fluid</i>	2:32	E	Bridge introduction, bass lead
	2:49	E’	Guitar solo
	3:19	F	Guitar solo
	3:40	F’	Synthesizer solo

³¹⁰ Brad Osborn, “Understanding Through-Composition in Post-Rock, Math-Metal, and other Post-Millennial Rock Genres,” *Music Theory Online* 17, no. 3 (2011), <https://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.11.17.3/mto.11.17.3.osborn.html>.

“Voice of the Soul” (Table 7.2), also by Death, is a multi-part monothematic form, with each supersection built on a single riff while different melodies are articulated through the lead instruments. The melodies are clear and coordinated with the meter in supersection A, so I label it as presentational. In supersection B, the lead guitars are less coordinated to each other and the ensemble and are more frenetic in character, so they initially sound like fluid functions. However, section D emerges as a singable and memorable melody, like a chorus. In fact, section D reappears in refrain-like manner after a buildup at the end of supersection C, meaning the piece is not entirely through-composed by Osborn’s definition. Here, an analysis based on formal function at least explains why the through-composed pattern was disrupted: to facilitate the musematic repetition of a presentational section.

Table 7.2. Death, “Voice of the Soul” (*The Sound of Perseverance*, 1998)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description	Bars
A <i>Presentational</i>	0:00	Introduction a	Main riff	8
	0:12	A	Main riff, lead break	8
	0:24	A	Main riff, lead break	8
	0:36	B (A')	Main riff, lead break	8
	0:48	B' (A'')	Main riff, lead break	8
B <i>Fluid?</i>	1:02	Introduction b	Dual lead, C riff	8
	1:18	C	Dual lead	8
	1:33	C'	Dual lead	8
	1:50	D (C'')	Dual lead; chorus-like	8
C <i>Presentational</i>	2:05	Introduction c	E riff, guitar lead	8+1
	2:31	E	Lead break	8
	2:49	E	Lead break	8
	3:02	Transition	Buildup	2
B (abbr.)	3:07	D	Dual lead; chorus-like	8
Coda	3:31	Coda		8

Obscura’s “The Origin of Primal Expression” (Table 7.3) combines the strategies of “Cosmic Sea” and “Voice of the Soul,” and may arguably be modeled after them. The composer, Stephen Kummerer, edited a guitar tablature collection of Death’s music, so he is undoubtedly

aware and probably intimately familiar with them.³¹¹ The progressive repetition and textural stratification into an acoustic rhythm guitar and multiple electric lead guitars in imitative and free counterpoint are all features from “Voice of the Soul,” and the split into two polythematic supersections of differing functional quality is similar to that of Cosmic Sea. (The D section also quotes Death’s “Without Judgement,” *Symbolic*, 1995.)

Table 7.3. Obscura, “The Origin of Primal Expression” (*Akróasis*, 2016)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
A <i>Presentational</i>	0:00	A	
	0:30	A'	Lead break
	1:00	B	Triple lead break
	1:32	C	Lead break
B <i>Fluid</i>	1:43	D	Interlude or bridge introduction, quotes “Without Judgement”
	2:18	E	Guitar solo
	2:46	E'	Dual lead
	3:01	E	Guitar solo
	3:22	D	Interlude ⇒ Coda

Almost every section in Zonata’s eponymously titled “Zonata” (Table 7.4) could be the basis for repetition. The piece could be a one-part polythematic form (up to a point), but the tonal and metrical groupings and surface features not represented in the table suggest it is multi-part.

Table 7.4. Zonata, “Zonata” (*Tunes of Steel*, 1999)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description	Meter	Tonality
Introduction	0:00	Introduction		4/4	A minor
A <i>Presentational</i>	0:16	A		12/8	A minor
	0:26	B		12/8	D minor
	0:37	C	Based on B	12/8	F minor
	0:48	D		12/8	D minor
B <i>Presentational</i>	1:04	E	Topic: Piano, waltz	3/4	C minor
	1:33	F		3/4	B♭ major
	1:50	G		6/4	B♭ minor
C <i>Presentational</i>	2:06	H	Unstable	3/4	Am–C#m
	2:13	H'	Main riff a	3/4	F major
	2:21	I	Main riff b	4/4	G minor
	2:36	J	Break	4/4	C minor
	2:44	I	Main riff b	4/4	G minor
	2:59	H'	Main riff a	3/4	F major
Coda	3:13	Coda		4/4	F minor

³¹¹ Chuck Schuldiner. *Best of Death: Selected Tablature 1987–1998*, edited by Steffen Kummerer and Danny Tunker (Upper Darby: Relapse Records, 2015).

The composition is devoid of any obviously fluid functions, except perhaps section H. The piece initially seems like through-composed form, but in supersection C, sections H' and I both return, creating a pseudo-binary between alternating main riffs.³¹²

7.3 Free-Standing Bridges

A tacit assumption of the theoretical model introduced in this dissertation is that bridge functions are able to function autonomously. We have seen, in the case of compound AAB form and other examples with terminal bridge sections, that a bridge supersection not need to be followed by a presentational one. However, the opposite, a bridge supersection that is not preceded by a presentational supersection—a free-standing bridge—has yet to be observed. I will present some potential candidates for this type of form.

A free-standing bridge is a compositional strategy based on the rhetoric of metal formal functions rather than a dedicated approach to through-composition, but due to how bridge functions resist periodic repetition, they automatically tend toward through-composition.

“Beyond the Ice” by Blind Guardian (Table 7.5) is a multi-part polythematic form. Each supersection ends with the same codetta material, neatly splitting it into two parts. No material is recapitulated except for a single section (bridge b, and even then, it is transposed) and the codettas. Both supersections contain several solo and lead sections occurring at the beginnings of the supersections, evoking bridge functions early on.

³¹² A pseudo-binary involves two sections that are consistently juxtaposed against one another but which do not have a clear form-functional relationship as a verse-chorus pair does. Gabrielle Vanek, “Classical Idiom and Compositional Structure in Gorguts’ ‘Pleiades’ Dust’,” *Metal Music Studies* 4, no. 3 (2018), 576.

Table 7.5. Blind Guardian, “Beyond the Ice” (*Follow the Blind*, 1989)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction a	
	0:20	Introduction b	
A	0:27	A	Guitar solo
	0:38	B	Guitar lead; C# minor
	0:50	C	Interlude
	1:02	D	Interlude
	1:13	D'	Dual lead
	1:36	Codetta	Fragmentation
	1:47		
B	1:58	E	Interlude
	2:04	F	Guitar solos
	2:22	G	Guitar lead
	2:33	B'	Guitar lead; F minor
	2:57	H	Interlude
	3:09	Codetta	
Coda	3:20	Coda	

“Spastic” by Revocation (Table 7.6) is also a multi-part polythematic piece, with the same framing material providing the introduction and codetta for supersection A. Solo and lead sections are present in each supersection, and supersection B begins with a breakdown, drawing from a wider range of bridge functions. I have tentatively labeled the description for each section according to the nearest equivalent in bridge types.

Table 7.6. Revocation, “Spastic” (*Revocation*, 2013)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
A	0:00	Introduction	
	0:30	A	Guitar solo
	0:46	B	Interlude
	1:24	C	Guitar lead
	1:39	C'	Guitar solo
	1:56	Codetta	Introduction
B	2:12	D	Breakdown
	2:27	E	Interlude
	2:42	E'	Guitar lead
	2:58	F	Interlude
	3:25	G	Interlude
Coda	3:40	Coda	

Elegy’s “All Systems Go” (Table 7.7) is a showcase of virtuosic guitar playing. Following an introduction, it begins with a guitar solo and features numerous lead sections. No section emerges as a candidate for a main theme or a chorus-adjacent function, so the form lacks periodicity and foregrounds spontaneity. The form presents as a one-part polythematic form without supersectional divisions, each section leading straight into the next.

Table 7.7. Elegy, “All Systems Go” (*Labyrinth of Dreams*, 1992)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction a	Fade in
	0:28	Introduction b	A riff
A	0:39	A	Guitar solo
	1:02	B	Guitar lead
	1:14	C	Interlude
	1:39	D	Interlude
	1:52	E	Dual guitar lead
	2:07	F	Dual guitar lead
	2:17	G	Interlude
	2:28	H	Dual guitar lead
	2:40	I	Interlude
Coda	2:47	Coda	

All examples in this section thus far are instrumental tracks. This is due to the heuristic method used to discover them: reasoning that fluid supersections favor instrumental composition, there is a higher likelihood that instrumental works will consist solely of bridge sections. The hypothetical existence of free-standing bridges remains an open problem, but characteristic functional tendencies can still help to describe the disposition of sections in through-composed forms and other non-traditional modes of musical organization.

CONCLUSION

In this dissertation, I have argued that compositional patterns in heavy metal music are best understood as a product of capitalism's historical processes and demonstrated, through a taxonomy of form, metal's role in innovating cultural production. Such a view seeks to move beyond the conception of musical style as happenstance, a stream of events and coincidences motivated by individual or community ambitions, toward an understanding based upon overarching economic and social relations. As I have demonstrated, metal music is uniquely reliant on technologies and institutions of its era: the ensemble consists of (usually) mass-produced instruments with components from faraway places, powered by electrical infrastructure that did not exist for the majority of humanity's tenure on Earth.

The first part of this dissertation explores the technological developments and economic circumstances that moved the American industry toward studio recordings and compound AABA form, and then heavy metal's role in capitalist political economy. For example, I show that vocally-oriented recorded pop music was promoted by the recording and broadcasting industries to maximize their profits and undercut the American Federation of Musicians in the 1940s. Concurrent developments in mass instrument production and electrification provided the sonic blueprint for metal, and record disks the basic compositional scheme of popular music. Although heavy metal is a style played around the world, I demonstrate that its mediatization is tied to the capitalist world-system, and even its presence in the Soviet Union and its satellite states can be traced back to Western foreign policy. This, along with my other claims toward metal as a capitalist art form, adds geopolitical context to Cameron DeHart's conclusion that "Economic and political conditions that relate to a country's capacity to record and consume music appear to be better

predictors of metal bands per capita than social factors like religion, young males and legal history.”³¹³ Specifically, the relation a country has to the global capitalist world-system determines its economic and political conditions. I conclude with a framework, based on Habermas’ theory of communicative action, to explain how value enhancement operates in the aesthetic-practical sphere, framing avant-gardism as a form of “research and development” for cultural production.

The second part of this dissertation provides a taxonomy of formal components that metal composers use to shape their compositions. I show how verse-chorus-bridge form provides the basis for metal songs, but the instrumental focus of metal, imported from the blues, motivates a parallel system based on riff-sections and highly diverse bridge types. I introduce two functional tendencies—*presentational* and *fluid*—to account for a section’s capacity for repetition and goal-directedness (or lack thereof). I then demonstrate how sections with similar functional tendencies bind together into presentational and fluid supersections.

The third part presents how formal components can be put together to achieve aesthetic-practical aims, appealing to audiences’ sensibilities and adding value to compositions. Using compound AABA form as a reference point, I derive a taxonomy of whole-song forms, which can be compound AABA, an expansion of compound AABA, or one of two types of truncations of compound AABA. Finally, I present compositional strategies that attempt to undermine presentational rotations, producing compositions without repetition (through-composition) or consisting entirely of fluid functions. In this way, I locate a specific variety of through-composition in the section functions developed for metal’s verse-chorus-bridge forms.

Among fans of rock and metal music, there is a persistent mythology of the ‘underground’ scene as being authentic and external to the world of commerce—that is, capitalist market

³¹³ Cameron DeHart, "Metal by Numbers: Revisiting the Uneven Distribution of Heavy Metal Music." *Metal Music Studies* 4, no. 3 (2018), 567.

relations. Habermas' theory of the public sphere supports this. The public sphere is "a realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed,"³¹⁴ un intimidated by the state. But private interests have a monopoly on media (the mass communication of the public sphere) and distort public opinion with advertising and the like.

The narrative of authenticity, by this realization, conceals the fundamental relation between rock and metal's romanticism and capital.³¹⁵ The music business has always been ready to absorb and amplify aesthetic innovations coming from less-than-commercially-minded quarters, even if only to bolster consumption of the underground scene (see the discussion of Sumerian Records in Chapter 2). It would be wrong to conclude that metal music is external to capitalist processes; record labels and concert promoters have always embraced metal artists. In 2019, following the 2018 acquisition of Nuclear Blast Records by Believe Digital, the major digital music distributor TuneCore (a subsidiary of Believe) announced that metal became their fastest-growing streaming genre.³¹⁶ In live music, Metallica alone sold 22.1 million tickets grossing \$1.4 billion between 1982 and 2019,³¹⁷ and was the twelfth highest grossing live act of the 2010s (at \$661,907,247).³¹⁸ Although experimental rock and metal artists may "subvert the verse-chorus paradigm"³¹⁹ on occasion, they live within and communicate with the means given to them by the very force that destroys authenticity by the measure of 'selling out' or simply making music too expensive of a hobby.

³¹⁴ Jürgen Habermas, "The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article," *New German Critique* 3 (1974), 49.

³¹⁵ Salli Anttonen, "'Hypocritical Bullshit Performed through Gritted Teeth': Authenticity Discourses in Nickelback's Album Reviews in Finnish Media," *Metal Music Studies* 2, no. 1 (2016), 50–51.

³¹⁶ "TuneCore Reaches Record of \$1.5 Billion in Artist Revenue," *Billboard*, April 29, 2019, <https://www.billboard.com/pro/tunecore-reaches-record-artist-revenue/>.

³¹⁷ Ryan Borba, "Tour & Destroy: The Case For Metallica As The World's Biggest Touring Act," *Pollstar*, September 17, 2019, <https://news.pollstar.com/2019/09/17/tour-destroy-the-case-for-metallica-as-the-worlds-biggest-touring-act/>.

³¹⁸ "Top Touring Artists of the Decade." *Pollstar*, December 5, 2019, <https://www.pollstar.com/top-touring-artists/top-touring-artists-hub-142785>.

³¹⁹ Osborn 2013.

By writing this dissertation, I hope to have demystified some of metal music's more confounding formal properties while demonstrating their tangible connections to capitalist cultural production writ large. In future research, I aim to expand my survey with further economic, cultural, and ethnographic detail, and to augment my formal methodology with harmonic and rhythmic analysis. Since heavy metal is but a small corner of popular music, there also exists the potential to apply some of the questions and methods I have outlined to a wider variety of music and draw connections to a materialist framework of music theory.

APPENDIX A. TRANSLATION OF PÉTER CSELŐTEI'S POKOLGÉP CONCERT REVIEW

Péter Cselőtei, "Pokolgép, Attila, Beast of Prey: Pokoli színjáték show, 87. aug. 21. Petőfi Csarnok," *Metallica Hungarica* 4, 1987, 10.

A fesztivál helyszínére már 18 órakor megérkeztem, mégis fontolóra kellett vennem, milyen útvonalon közelítsem meg csarnokot. Ugyanis – előrevetítve az este sikerének szintjét – hatalmas csoportokban várazkodtak a rajongók. Kiragadtak egy-egy sort kedvenceik szövegeiből és ezeket énekelve cirkáltak az épület körül.

A koncert különleges eseménynek ígérkezett, hiszen két nyugati – holland és nyugatnémet – banda is meghívást kapott.

A BEAST OF PREY nyitotta a sort. Első gondolatom az volt, hogy a fiúk hideghez szoktak és erre készültek nálunk is. Erre utaltak a hátukon levő vastag prémek. Már a láttukra is folyt a víz a hátamon. Öltözkükön a MANOWAR hatás egyértelműnek tűnt, reménykedtem hátha a zene is ilyen lesz. Tévedni emberi dolog! A 4. szám után már meg sem lepődtem, hogy ismét egy régi sémára épülő rock'n'rollt hallok. De rock'n'rollt is lehet úgy játszani, mint például a MÖTLEY CRÛE. Itt ez nem sikerült. A srácok – talán izgalmukban – még a gitárt is elfelejtették behangolni. A fél koncertet így játszották el. Persze meg lehetett volna állni behangolni, de nem tették! Ez az együttes sem fog ebben az életben az ACCEPT nyomdokaiba lépni. Még hajhosszban sem!

A bemelegítés után a közönség várakozó álláspontra helyezkedett. A lelkesedés kissé alábbhagyott. Ekkor lépett a dobogóra az ATTILA. Az előző öttagú csoporthoz képest ők szerényebb létszámban, hárman jöttek. Azonban tízszer olyan jól zenéltek. Nem csoda, hiszen a fiúk már 84-es svéd magazinok oldalain szerepeltek. Fiatal korukra való tekintettel ez nagyon szép teljesítmény.

A felállásból következően is, de a számok jellegét illetően is MOTÖRHEAD befolyást éreztem.

Nagyon dinamikus volt ez a trió. A basszusgitáros Arjan MICHELS örökmozgóként lépdelt, rohangu a színpadon. Ton HOLTEWES dobos kétlábgepess cuccán mozdony erejű alapot adott a zenének. A gitáros pedig – egy élő COVERDALE másolat – egyszerre nyűtte gitárját és hangszálait.

I arrived at the festival venue at 6pm, but I had to consider my route to the hall because, anticipating the evening's success, there were huge groups of fans waiting. They were picking out lines from their favorite lyrics and singing them as they circled the building.

The concert promised to be a special event, as two bands from the West - Dutch and West German - were invited.

BEAST OF PREY opened the show. My first thought was that these boys are used to the cold and that's what they were preparing for here, as indicated by the thick fur on their backs. They made my back sweat just by looking at them. The MANOWAR effect was obvious on their clothes, I hoped the music would be the same. To err is human! After the 4th song I wasn't surprised to hear another rock'n'roll song based on an old pattern. But rock'n'roll can be played like MÖTLEY CRÛE. The guys - maybe in their excitement - even forgot to tune the guitar. They played half the concert like that. Of course, they could have stopped to tune it, but they didn't! This band will not follow in the footsteps of ACCEPT in this lifetime. Not even by a hair's length!

After the warmup the audience took a waiting position. The enthusiasm had died down a little.

Then ATTILA took to the podium. Compared to the previous group of five, they came in a more modest three. But they played ten times as well. No wonder, as they had already been featured in the pages of Swedish magazines in '84. Considering their young age, this is quite an achievement.

I felt a MOTÖRHEAD influence in the lineup, but also in the nature of the songs.

It was a very dynamic trio. Bass player Arjan MICHELS was a perpetual motion machine, running around the stage. Drummer Ton HOLTEWES gave the music a locomotive foundation on his two-footed stuff. And the

Határozottan jó a zenekar. Esélyesek a rockerek kegyeinek elnyerésére, csupán idő és propaganda kérdése az ügy. (Egy énekest azért nem ártott volna újítani, akkor Herbie WANDERLOO jobban tudott volna koncentrálni a gitárjátékra!)

Sötétedett, közeledett az idő, a Pokoli színjáték ideje. A közönség hosszú várakoztatása után – a technika ördöge? – még egy kis sokkolás, a Carmina Burana képében. A feszültség a tetőfokára hágott... aztán TUS! És beindult a GÉP!

Hihetetlen, de KALAPÁCS Józsinak nem is volt dolga! A közönség egy emberként üvöltötte a JEL szövegét. Tökéletes hangulatban indult a show! Következett a POKOLI SZÍNJÁTÉK majd a gyors és mulatságos TÖKFEJ. Kissé hosszú bevezető után az ATKOZOTT NEMZEDÉK szólt. Átkozottul profi előadásban. A háttérben lézerfények villódtak, megszegyénítve sok külföldi kollega show-ját. Állíthatom, ez volt az első igazán nyugati színvonalú koncert a magyar HM történelmében.

Józsi ismét beszélt. Jó ötlet a számok szövegéből idézni, főleg, ha újak a dalok. Az ÉJFÉLI HARANGOK ismerős riffjei döngtek ezután. Lángszórók perzselő csóvái jelezték; mindjárt lobog a TŰZ. A hangulat is továbblendült a régi, kellemes dalok hallatán. A következő nótákból, pl. a VALLOMÁS-ból is kitűnt, ezúttal a fiúk nagyobb súlyt fektettek a vokális hangzásra. (Jó irányú törekvés!) Egyébként a VALLOMAS újabb, azelőtt soha nem látott látvánnyal lepett meg bennünket. TARCZA Laci feje felett leereszkedett egy monumentális kereszt a szám szövegének megfelelően lefele fordítva. A B.S. EMLÉKÉRE frenetikus hatást váltott ki a közönségből. Egyként térdelt le és gondolt az örökéletű énekesre több ezer ember. A GÉP egyik telitalálat száma ez.

Az ÍTÉLET HELYETT merengős témái után a MINDHALÁLIG ROCK'N'ROLL örvendeztette meg a rajongótábort. NAGYFI Laci nem kimondottan bársonyos hangját élvezhettük a TOTÁLIS METAL Gyors riffjei alatt. A HALÁLRA SZERETLEK előtt, alatt és után a

guitarist - a live COVERDALE replica - strummed his guitar and vocal cords at the same time.

Definitely a good band. They have a chance to win the favor of the rockers, it's just a matter of time and publicity. (It would have been nice to recruit a singer, then Herbie WANDERLOO could have concentrated more on playing guitar!)

It was getting dark, the time was approaching, the time for the *Infernal Play (Pokoli színjáték)*. After a long wait for the audience - a devil of technology (technical mishap)? - another shocker, in the form of Carmina Burana. The tension was at its peak... and then BANG! And the MACHINE started!³²⁰

Amazingly, [vocalist] KALAPÁCS Józsi had nothing to do! The audience was screaming the lyrics of A JEL as one. The show started in a perfect atmosphere! Next came POKOLI SZÍNJÁTÉK followed by the fast and funny TÖKFEJ. After a somewhat long introduction, ATKOZOTT NEMZEDÉK was on. A damn professional performance. Laser lights flashed in the background, putting to shame the shows of many foreign colleagues. I can say that this was the first truly Western concert in the history of Hungarian heavy metal.

Józsi spoke again. It's a good idea to quote from the lyrics of the songs, especially if they are new. The familiar riffs of ÉJFÉLI HARANGOK were blasting afterwards. The scorching waves of flame-throwers signaled that the fire was about to burst. The mood continued to swing as the old, pleasant songs played. The following songs, such as VALLOMÁS, showed that this time the boys had put more emphasis on the vocal sound. (A good effort!) Otherwise, VALLOMAS surprised us with something never seen before. A monumental cross descended over Laci TARCZA's head, turned downwards according to the lyrics of the song. B.S. EMLÉKÉRE (Bon Scott in Memoriam) had a frenetic effect on the audience. Thousands of people knelt as one and thought of the immortal singer. This is one of the hit songs of the MACHINE.

After the pensive themes of ÍTÉLET HELYETT, MINDHALÁLIG ROCK'N'ROLL delighted the fanbase. The not-so-velvety voice of [guitarist] Laci NAGYFI was enjoyed during the fast riffs of TOTÁLIS METAL. Before, during and after HALÁLRA SZERETLEK, the audience was

³²⁰ Pokolgép translates to *Infernal Machine*.

nagyérdemű szexuális felvilágosítást hallhatott KALÁCS-tól. A nóta is szuper, az egyik jövőbeli sláger. Egy új és egy régi kedvenc jött, a 666 és a VÉRSZÍVÓ ASSZONY alakjában. Egy óriási NAGYFI-közönség együttüvöltés után néhány ismert POKOLGÉP nóta hangjaival búcsúzott a csapat. Huh, ez kemény, nagyon kemény volt! Vérbeli HEAVY METAL!

90 perc. 17 szám, minden elképzelhető és Magyarországon színpad és nagy siker. Ez volt a POKOLGÉP 87 augusztusában. Egyedülálló és fejlődőképes, talán egy csipetnyivel több trágársággal, mint kellett volna.

A második nagylemez biztosan siker lesz. Ha a szövegek annyit javulnának, mint a zene változott az elsőhöz képest, akkor a harmadik elsőpör mindent. Addig is találkozunk Karácsonykor!

treated to sexual education from KALÁCS. The song is also great, one of the future hits. A new and an old favorite came in the form of 666 and VÉRSZÍVÓ ASSZONY. After a huge roar from the audience, the team said goodbye with some well-known POKOLGÉP songs. Huh, that was tough, very tough! Bloody HEAVY METAL!

90 minutes. 17 songs, everything you can imagine and a big success on a Hungarian stage. That was POKOLGÉP in August 87. Unique and evolving, with maybe a touch more profanity than it should have had.

The second album is sure to be a success. If the lyrics improve as much as the music has changed from the first, the third will sweep it all away. Until then, see you at Christmas!

APPENDIX B. TRANSLATION OF MICHAEL WEIKATH'S REVIEW OF POKOLGÉP'S
POKOLI SZÍNJÁTÉK

László Cselőtei and László Lénard, "Friss Füllel: Michael Weikath (Helloween) a Pokolgép 'Pokoli színjáték' c. új albumáról," *Metallica Hungarica* 4, 1987, 15.

Friss Füllel: Michael Weikath (Helloween) a Pokolgép "Pokoli színjáték" c. új albumáról

Új rovatunkban híres HEAVY METAL zenészeket és szakértőket kérdezzük majd arról, mi a véleményük egy-egy új magyar HM lemezről, demo-kazettáról. Megállapításaik talán jó alapot nyújtanak arra, hogy a magyar együttesek megtudják, milyenek a kilátásaik a hazai és külföldi sikerre.

Első alkalommal a POKOLGÉP együttes új albuma került a mérlegre.

Lénard Laci mindig tette kész agyából pattant ki a szikra, hogy az éppen zajló HELLOWEEN turné unalmas perceinek elűzése végett Michael WEIKATH fejére tegye a walkmant és végighallgattassa vele a kazettát. A HELLOWEEN együttes szólógitárosa a többiektől külön, a turnébusz végében elhelyezkedve rágta át magát a 40 perces anyagon. A szalagot több helyen is visszakérte és újra hallgatta a lemez egyes részleteit.

„Nos, először azt mondanám el, melyik számok tetszettek. Az első nóta (Tökfő) jó kezdés a lemezen. Tetszett még a negyedik dal (Vallomás) és az utolsó (Újra születnék). Ezek a számok megoldásaikban, hangszerelésükben is utak, frissek. Még az sem zavart, hogy néhol magamra ismertem. Úgy értem, a HELLOWEEN hatása érezhető a szerzeményeken. Ennek ellenére kellemes volt hallgatni lemezt. Az énekes nagyon érdekes. Néha úgy éreztem, több különböző hang éneklé a szövegeket. Azt hiszem ez szintén előny, mert nem válik unalmassá tőle a zene.

A többi számról külön-külön nem beszélek, mert körülbelül egy szinten állnak.

A dalok így első hallgatásra egy kissé bonyolultnak tűnnek, de hogy őszinte legyek ezt is pozitívumnak tartom. Nem baj, ha egy számban több téma váltakozik. Ez ugyan kissé nehezzé teszi a megértést, a megjegyezhetőséget, de például mi

Fresh Ears: Michael Weikath (Helloween) on the new album "Pokoli színjáték" by Pokolgép

In our new column we will ask famous HEAVY METAL musicians and experts about their opinion on a new Hungarian HM album or demo cassette. Their findings might be a good basis for Hungarian bands to find out what their prospects are for success at home and abroad.

For the first time, the new album of the band POKOLGÉP was on the scales.

Laci Lénard, always willing to take chances, put a walkman on Michael WEIKATH's head and listened to the tape with him, to take the boredom out of the tedious moments of the HELLOWEEN tour. HELLOWEEN's lead guitarist sat at the back of the tour bus, separate from the others, and chewed his way through the 40 minutes of material. He rewound the tape in several places and listened to parts of the album again.

"Well, first I'll tell you which tracks I liked. The first track (Tökfő) is a good start to the record. I also liked the fourth song (Vallomás) and the last one (Újra születnék). These songs are innovative in their composition and arrangement. Even the fact that I recognized myself in some of them didn't bother me. I mean, the influence of HELLOWEEN can be felt in the compositions. Nevertheless, it was a pleasant listening experience. The singer is very interesting. Sometimes it felt like there were several different voices singing the lyrics. I think this is another advantage because it keeps the music from becoming monotonous.

I won't talk about the other songs individually because they are at about the same level.

The songs seem a bit complicated at first listen, but to be honest I think that's a plus. It's okay to have several themes in one song. This makes it a bit difficult to understand and remember, but for example we (HELLOWEEN) also prefer to write more complex material.

(HELLOWEEN) is szívesebben írunk összetettebb dolgokat.

A lemez jól is szól, tehát itt Magyarországon nem hiszem, hogy sikertelen lesz. Ugyanakkor külföldre már bizonytalanabb jövőt jósolok. Két okból is. Az egyik a szövegben keresendő. Nem a tartalomról, hanem a nyelvről van szó. A Rock'n'Roll nyelve az angol. Sajnos ezt mindenkinek be kell látnia. Egy alakultak ki a dolgok és nehezen változtathatók meg. Sem a német, sem a francia nyelv nem hoz sikert nemzetközi szinten.

A másik ok pedig, hogy elég sok együttestől bukkantak fel dolgok a lemezen. Szóval néhol elég erős a hasonlóság. Gondolok itt az MSG-re, az ACCEPT, JUDAS PRIEST, HELLOWEEN, WASP, DOKKEN és METALLICA együttesekre. Tudjátok, kinn elég kemény a verseny, kemények az újságírók, kritikusok, és ezért nem érdemes a közzéadásra alkalmat adni. Az ilyesmi könnyen az ember karrierjébe kerülhet.

De ha konkrétan erre a kazettára nincs szükségetek, adjátok nekem és a lemezből is küldjétek, mert kellene a gyűjteményembe.”

The album sounds good enough, so I don't think it will be unsuccessful here in Hungary. However, I predict a more uncertain future abroad for two reasons. One is the lyrics. It's not about the content, it's about the language. The language of rock'n'roll is English. Unfortunately, everyone has to admit that. It is the way things are and it is difficult to change. Nor does German or French bring success at international level.

The other reason is that things from quite a few bands appeared on the album, so there are quite strong similarities in some places. I'm thinking of MSG, ACCEPT, JUDAS PRIEST, HELLOWEEN, WASP, DOKKEN and METALLICA. You know, it's very competitive out there, the journalists and critics are tough, so it's not worth getting into a fight. That kind of thing can easily cost you your career.

But if you don't need this cassette specifically, give it to me and send me some copies of the LP, because I want it for my collection.”

APPENDIX C. TRANSLATION OF ENDRE BALATÓN INTERVIEW

Endre Balaton, VASMACSKA interjú – Balaton Endre (gitár). Metal Ör Die Records, 2010:
<https://nativeprideprod.gportal.hu/gindex.php?pg=32282236>.

VASMACSKA interjú – Balaton Endre (gitár)

VAS MACSKA interview - Endre Balaton (guitar)

Endre, egy eredményes nyomozás után sikerült rád bukkannom, meglepődöttél a megkeresésem miatt?

Endre, I managed to find you after a thorough investigation, were you surprised to hear from me?

Bevallom, meglepődtem, és nagyon jól is esett, azt hittem, régen elfeledett név már a Vas Macska (így, külön írva!), és senki nem emlékszik már rá, és senkit nem is érdekel.

I must admit I was surprised, and I was very pleased. I thought Vas Macska was a long-forgotten name (spelled separately!), that nobody remembered it, and nobody cared.³²¹

Hogy vagy mostanság? Kapcsolatban vagy még a metal zenével, a metal színtéren bekövetkezett változásokkal?

How are you these days? Are you still in touch with metal music and developments in the metal scene?

Mit mondhatnék? Aki arra számít, hogy megszállott metálusként bőrbe-szegecsbe öltözve seggig érő hajjal hajtom buli után a benzintyúkokat, annak csalódnia kell... Joviális, kétgyermekes családapa vagyok, a tollazatom is erősen „megkopott” már, és igaz, hogy a farmer-bördzseki összeállítás nem idegen tőlem, ránézésre senki nem mondana rockernek. A külső változások persze ugyanazt az embert takarják- mai napig is metálzenét hallgatok, de nem az új előadókat, ezeket a Nightwish kivételével nem is ismerem... Udo, Gamma Ray, Saxon, Def Leppard, Annihilator, Helloween, Accept még mindig, ezeket nem tudom megenni. Néhány évvel ezelőtt elkezdődött valami folyamat, ami nekem nem igazán tetszett. Vegyük például a régi nagy kedvencet: Metallica! Számomra az utolsó Metallica album a „fekete” lemez volt, aztán levágatták a hajukat, és valami újhullámos metált kezdtek nyomni (Load, Reload...), ami lehet, hogy művészileg nagyon zsír, de nekem innentől a Metallica érdektelenné vált. Megosztotta a rajongótábort ez a változás, nálam a negatív előjel játszott... A metál-rap házasságával operáló NU-metal bandák sem hagytak mély nyomot bennem, így maradtak a régi, megbízható nevek- az AC/DC-ben nem csalódik az ember.

What can I say? Anyone who expects me to be an obsessive metalhead, dressed in leather and studs with hair down to my ass, chasing petrolheads after a party, will be disappointed... I'm a young father of two, my feathers are already very "worn", and although I'm no stranger to jeans and leather jackets, no one would call me a rocker. Of course, appearances change but I'm the same on the inside—I still listen to metal music, but not the new artists, I don't even know them except Nightwish... Udo, Gamma Ray, Saxon, Def Leppard, Annihilator, Helloween, Accept, still, I can't get tired of them. A few years ago, a process started that I didn't really like. Take for example the old favorite Metallica! For me, the last Metallica album was the "black" album, then they cut their hair and started to push some new wave metal (Load, Reload...), which may be artistically very cool, but from there Metallica became uninteresting for me. The fanbase was divided by this change, for me it was a bad omen... The nu-metal bands that operated with the metal-rap marriage didn't leave a deep impression on me either, so I was left with the old, reliable names - AC/DC never disappoints.

Kezdjük a legelején, mikor, hogyan kerültél kapcsolatba a metal zenével? Könnyen lehetett metal hanghordozókhoz jutni akkoriban?

Let's start at the beginning, when and how did you get involved with metal music? Was it easy to get hold of metal recordings back then?

³²¹ Vasmacska is the name of a different band founded in 2009 by Ilona Mónika Koós, Anita Balog, Ágnes Kelemen and Viktória Tóth.

Én az akkori Leninvárosban laktam (ma Tiszaújváros), itt működött egy ifjúsági klub, ahová szívesen jártam. Itt találkoztam először rockzenei albumokkal, itt láttam-hallottam először embert elektromos gitáron játszani, 12-13 évesen itt fertőződtem meg a rockzene (ide sorolom én a metalt is) szeretetével. Az első hanghordozó az AC/DC: Dirty Deeds Done Dirt Cheap c. albuma volt, amit hosszas könyörgésemre a klubvezető kazettára másolt nekem, és otthon ezt hallgattam szinte mindig. Később a klub beszerzett más rockalbumokat is, nem győztem a kazettákat vásárolni a zsebpénzemből. Így lettek nekem Black Sabbath, Nazareth, Iron Maiden, Deep Purple vagy Rainbow felvételeim, ennek köszönhetem, hogy igényes zenén nőtem fel, és a zenei ízlésem eszerint formálódott. Mikor a klub megszűnt, sokáig csak a rádióból lehetett felvételeket rögzíteni Komjáti György műsoraiból. Lemezekre, lemezjátszóra nem volt pénzünk, kazettákat másoltunk, és szartunk rá, hogy zúg-sistereg a felvétel, ha jó zene szól rajta. Mai napig is több mint száz kazettát őrzök, bár lejátszani nincs min...

Mikor döntötted el, hogy neki állsz gitározni? Hány éves voltál akkoriban? Egyáltalán hogyan esett a választásod erre a hangszerre?

Az említett klubba járt egy tőlem 3-4 évvel idősebb srác, neki volt egy Musima de luxe (Made in NDK!) elektromos gitárja, amit néha lehozott a klubba. Előfordult még, hogy valaki dobozgitárt hozott, akkor azon játszott, aki tudott 4-5 akkordot, kézről kézre járt a gitár, én meg tátott szájjal figyeltem, hogyan kell lefogni a hangokat. Aztán mikor megunták, és elmentek csocsózni, vagy sörözni, elsompolyogtam a gitárral egy sarokba, és próbálgattam a technikákat. Egész jól ment, úgyhogy fájó szívvel egy időre lemondtam a kazetták vásárlásáról, és elkezdtem gitárra gyűjteni. Anyámék persze iszonyúan tiltakoztak, akkoriban a gitáros, zenész maga volt a lázadó kapitalista ördög... aztán mégis meglett a gitár, (egy nylonhúros klasszikusgitár) és onnantól nem volt megállás. Ez 13-14 éves koromban lehetett, és gyorsan rájöttem, hogy nem olyan hangszeret vettem, amit akartam, mert ezen nem úgy szóltak a hangok, mint a kedvenc felvételeimen. A középiskolában ösztöndíjas voltam, ebből gyűjtöttem össze egy igazi elektromos gitárra (Jolana Galaxis, Made in Czechoslovakia!), és egy Vermona gitárerősítőre. Egy barátommal torzítót is szerkesztettünk, kábeleket, mindent, és együtt

I was living in Leninváros (now Tiszaújváros), there was a youth club where I liked to go. It was here that I first came across rock music albums, where I saw and heard people playing electric guitars for the first time, and where I was infected with the love of rock music (including metal) at the age of 12 or 13. The first record was AC/DC's Dirty Deeds Done Dirt Cheap, which the club manager copied onto a cassette for me at my endless begging, and I listened to it at home almost all the time. Later, the club bought other rock albums, and I couldn't resist buying the tapes with my pocket money. That's how I got Black Sabbath, Nazareth, Iron Maiden, Deep Purple and Rainbow, and that's how I grew up with ambitious music and my musical taste was formed. When the club closed down, for a long time the only way to record György Komjáti's shows was from the radio. We didn't have money for records or turntables, we copied cassettes and didn't give a shit that the recording was humming and hissing if it had good music on it. To this day I still have over a hundred cassettes, although I have nothing to play them on...

When did you decide to start playing guitar? How old were you at the time? How did you choose to play this instrument in the first place?

A guy 3-4 years older than me used to go to the club, he had a Musima de luxe (Made in the GDR!) electric guitar that he used to bring down to the club sometimes. And sometimes someone would bring a box guitar, then someone who knew 4 or 5 chords would play it, the guitar would pass from hand to hand, and I would watch with my mouth open, trying to get the notes down. Then when they got bored and went out for a game of foosball or a beer, I'd sneak off to a corner with the guitar and try out some techniques. It went quite well, so with a heavy heart I gave up buying cassettes for a while and started saving up for a guitar. My mum and dad protested terribly, of course, in those days guitarists and musicians were the rebellious capitalist devil... but then I got the guitar (a nylon-stringed classical guitar) and from then on there was no stopping me. I was about 13 or 14 years old, and I quickly realized that I hadn't bought the instrument I wanted, because it didn't sound like my favorite recordings. I was on scholarship in high school, and from that I saved up for a real electric guitar (Jolana Galaxis, Made in Czechoslovakia!) and a Vermona amplifier.³²² A friend and I also built a distortion unit, cables,

³²² Vermona was made in East Germany.

játszottunk a kedvenc zenekarainkkal! Hosszú órákig gyakoroltuk a szólókat, riffeket, próbáltuk kitalálni, hogyan játsszák ezt és ezt, és szépen lassan észrevétlenül megtanultunk nemcsak gitározni, de zenélni. Jöttek új barátok, és egyszer csak valaki kimondta: csináljunk zenekart! Csináltunk. Persze nagyon gyengék voltunk technikailag, vacak, szedett-vedett hangfalak, házi készítésű erősítők (30 W!), de már szólt a zene! Szép idők voltak...

Más hangszeren is játszol?

Ma már más szelek fújnak, egy olyan zenekarom van, amivel bálokon, rendezvényeken, lagzikban (NEM RÖHÖG!!!) nyomjuk, itt több dologhoz kell érteni, az ember óhatatlanul is megtanulja, hogyan kell billentyűzni, most már ez a hangszer sem idegen számomra, és hát a hangtechnika fortélyait is el kellett sajátítani, így keverőpulton is „játszom”. Mióta nem dobossal zenélünk, azóta nem ültem dob mögött, de régebben sokszor vettem kézbe a verőket is, mivel Pidi barátom megmutatott néhány jól hangzó technikát, és amíg ő pihent-sörözött-stb., addig én ütöttem egy-két dalt a bulikban. Az ének hangszernek számít? Azt is művelem.

Kik voltak a példaképeid, hatásaid, hogy gitáros lettél?

Lehet, hogy megint csalódot okozok, de a legjelentősebb hatással Hank Marvin volt rám. Ő a Shadows szólógitárosa! Olyan érzéssel játszik/játszott, hogy sokat tanultam tőle a felvételeit hallgatva. De tetszett még az akkori „gitáristenek”: Richie Blackmore (sic), Toni Iommi, Bryan May fazonja is. Nagy jelentőségű volt a Pink Floyd: *The Wall* c. albuma is, David Gilmour egyszerű, tiszta akkordokból építette fel a gitárjátékát: semmi virga, mégis frenetikus élmény! Mivel én sosem voltam gyors kezű gitáros, ezt nagyon megjegyeztem... Később valaki azt mondta, hogy a stílusom a Gary Moore-éhoz hasonló (még a Thin Lizzy-s időszakból), ezt óriási dícséretnek vettem...

Emlékszel még az első gitárodra illetve komplett felszerelésedre, hangszerparkodra?

Az első egy Cremona klasszikus gitár volt (1300.- Ft). Mint említettem, ez nem fedte az elképzeléseimet, így követte egy Jolana Galaxis elektromos gitár (ára 5000.- Ft). Ehhez vettem egy Vermona Regent K300 típusú gitárcombo-t (9000.- Ft-ért), és egy torzítót építettünk 741-es

everything, and played together with our favorite bands! We spent long hours practicing solos, riffs, trying to figure out how to play this and that, and slowly, slowly, imperceptibly, we learned not only to play guitar, but to make music. New friends came along and suddenly someone said: let's make a band! We did. Of course, we were technically very poor, with shoddy, raggedy speakers and homemade amplifiers (30W!), but we could make music! Good times...

Do you play any other instruments?

Nowadays, the winds blow differently, I have an orchestra that we play with at balls, events, weddings (NO LAUGHING!!!), you have to be able to do more things, you learn how to play the keyboard, now the instrument is not foreign to me, and I had to learn the tricks of sound engineering, so I also “play” on a mixing desk. Since we don't play with a drummer, I haven't sat behind the drums since, but I used to take the drumsticks in my hands a lot, because my friend Pidi showed me some good sounding techniques, and while he was resting, drinking beer, etc., I was banging out a song or two at parties. Is singing an instrument? I do that too.

Who were some of your role models, influences, for becoming a guitarist?

I may disappoint again, but Hank Marvin was the most significant influence on me. He's the lead guitarist for the Shadows! He plays/played with such feeling that I learned a lot from listening to his recordings. But I also liked the “guitar gods” of the time: Richie Blackmore, Toni Iommi, Bryan May. Also, the album by Pink Floyd: *The Wall* was a big deal, David Gilmour built his guitar playing on simple, clean chords: no frills, but a frenetic experience! As I was never a fast guitar player, I took this to heart... Later someone said that my style was similar to Gary Moore's (from the Thin Lizzy days), which I took as a huge compliment...

Do you remember your first guitar or your complete set of equipment and instruments?

The first one was a Cremona classical guitar (1300 Ft). As I mentioned, it didn't meet my expectations, so I bought a Jolana Galaxis electric guitar (price 5000 Ft). For that I bought a Vermona Regent K300 guitar combo (9000 Ft) and built a distortion unit using 741 ICs. It

IC-k felhasználásával. Ez már rockosan szólt! Később ezt egy Fender Wah-Dist pedállal váltottam fel (4000.- Ft, használtan vettem), ez simán hozta a kívánt hangzást, bár a torzítója kicsit szolidabb volt, viszont cserébe nem gerjedt úgy. Mikor behívtak katonának, (ott kezdődött a vendéglátós zenélési korszak), ez a cucc jól kiszolgált egy ideig, aztán megismertem néhány helyi zenészt, és betették a bogarat a fülembé, így tovább fejlesztettem. A Jolana gitárt egy használt Gibson (15000.- Ft volt, akkoriban egy havi fizetés!), a Vermona erősítőt egy Marlboro (20000.- Ft volt, minden pénzem ráment, még kölcsön is kértem a zenésztársaimtól, és vettem mellé 3500.-ért egy KORG hangológépet is, több hónapra eladósodva...) váltotta fel. A Fender pedállal minden úgy szólt, ahogyan kellett, sokáig a Vas Macskában is ezt az összeállítást használtam megtoldva egy Ibanez Compressorról, meg egy Cry Baby Wah-pedállal. Aztán a Gibsont eladtam, kis ideig egy Ibanez Road Staron játszottam, de kényelmetlennek találtam, így visszatértem a Gibsonhoz, ám ezt már újonnan vettem, és kis átalakítás után annyira bevált, hogy azóta is ezen játszom. A Vas Macska idejében a Marlboro teljesítménye (30W) kevés volt, vettem egy 160W-os Laney ládát egy Simms-Watts 100W-os fejfel, ez már tudta azt, amit kellett. Aztán a Simms leégett, a Laney ládát eladtam, és vettem egy Roland Cube-ot. Ez sokáig szépen kiszolgált a kisebb bulikban, de nagyobb színpadokon a teljesítménye elmaradt a kívánttól, így eladtam, vettem egy 40W-os Stagg combot és egy 60W-os Powerstate basszuscombot. Ma a Gibson mellett két ZOOM effektprocesszort (505 és 9002) és az említett Stagg-Powerstate összeállítást használom, teljes elégedettséggel - a KFT-s flanger-es hangzástól a Bikinis Daczi Zsolt-soundon át a legdögevőbb Annihilator-os metal hangzásig mindent tud a cucc.

Ami a zenekarosdit illeti, a Vasmacska volt az első bandád vagy előtte már bontogattad a szárnyaidat valamilyen formációkban?

Első zenekaromat Detonatornak hívták, de a pincéből nem jutott ki, csak a haverok tudtak róla. Aztán a seregben a Helyőrségi Művelődési Otthon házi zenekarában játszottam, a zenekart erről HEMO-Globin-nak neveztük el. Ez már komoly csapat volt, itt ismerkedtem meg Pídivel (polgári nevén Markó György, dobos, a Vas Macska egyik alapító tagja), aki valami Vas Macska nevű miskolci metálbanda dobosa volt, és miután kezdetben igencsak utáltak egymást, rövid idő alatt országos barátok lettünk. Zenei téren, és emberileg is kitűnő összhang alakult ki közöttünk,

sounded rock solid! Later I replaced this with a Fender Wah-Dist pedal (4000 Ft, bought secondhand), which gave the desired sound, although the distortion was a bit more solid, but it didn't get as aggressive. When I was drafted into the army, (that's when my catering music days started), this stuff served me well for a while, then I met some local musicians and they put the bug in my ear, so I improved it further. The Jolana guitar was replaced by a second-hand Gibson (15000 Ft, a month's salary at that time!), the Vermona amp by a Marlboro (20000 Ft, all my money was spent on it, I even had to borrow some money from my fellow bandmates, and I bought a KORG electronic tuner for 3500 Ft, several months in debt...). With the Fender pedal everything sounded as it should, I used this setup in Vas Macska for a long time, augmented with an Ibanez Compressor and a Cry Baby Wah pedal. Then I sold the Gibson and played an Ibanez Road Star for a while, but found it uncomfortable, so I returned to the Gibson, but I bought this one new and after a little modification it worked so well that I've been playing it ever since. In the days of Vas Macska, the Marlboro's power (30W) was insufficient, I bought a 160W Laney cabinet with a Simms-Watts 100W head, it did what it needed to do. Then the Simms burned out, I sold the Laney cabinet and bought a Roland Cube. It served me nicely for a long time at smaller parties, but on bigger stages the power was not what I wanted, so I sold it, bought a 40W Stagg combo and a 60W Powerstate bass combo. Today, I use two ZOOM effects processors (505 and 9002) and the aforementioned Stagg-Powerstate combo alongside the Gibson, to my complete satisfaction - from a KFT flanger sound to a Zsolt Daczi sound in Bikini to the most visceral Annihilator metal sound, this rig can do it all.

As far as the band thing goes, was Vas Macska your first band or did you start out in some groups before that?

My first band was called Detonator, but it never made it out of the basement, only my mates knew about it. Then in the army I played in the house band at the Helyőrségi Cultural Home (HEMO), so we called the band HEMO-Globin. It was a serious group, and that's where I met Pidi (his real name is György Markó, drummer, one of the founding members of Vas Macska), who was the drummer of a metal band called Vas Macska in Miskolc, and although we hated each other at first, we became lifelong friends. We had a great musical and personal rapport, and he told me that

így elmondta, hogy a zenekarának a gitáros a külföldre távozott, tehát leszerelés után szükség lesz egy gitárosra, hogy a csapat ismét működjön. Örömmel mondtam igent, és nem is bántam meg. A feloszlás után nem is akartam másik zenekarba beszállni, mondhatom, hogy az első és utolsó metálzenekarom volt.

Ami a Vasmacska-t illeti, hogyan, mikor jött össze a zenekar? Korábban ismertétek már egymást? Mit kell tudni a többi tag zenei múltjáról?

Mint említettem, én a katonaság után szálltam be, előtte a többiek már letettek valamit az asztalra, Boros Zsolt „Bőri” (gitár, ének), Kovács Péter „Pojec” (basszusgitár), Novák Attila (vele én nem is találkoztam, gitáros volt), és Markó György „Pidi” (dob) felállításban. Két évig működtek, aztán a sereg kib.szott velük, addigra nevet szereztek Miskolcon, rajongótáboruk volt, és jól hangzó repertoár ütős, gyors és kemény dalokkal, dallamos, fülbemászó énekkel. Pidi ismertetett meg velük, ők meghallgatták a játékomat, beszélgettünk az elképzeléseinkről, és befogadtak gitárosként, és barátként is. Zenei múltjuk lényegében nincs, mindenki autodidakta módon, rengeteg kitaró gyakorlás útján magától tanulta meg, amit tudott, akárcsak én, így jól össze tudunk hangolódni. Amúgy Bőri és Pidi egy suliba jártak, Pojec és Attila pedig a baráti körbe tartozott.

Kik voltak a legnagyobb kedvenceitek akkoriban?

Tudatosan próbáltuk például az Accept: Russian Roulette c. albumának a hangzását utolérni—akkoriban az volt a legdögösebb hangzású germán metál album, és mi kifejezetten ehhez a stílushoz álltunk közel. Vokált írtunk (Pidi és én már rendelkezünk egy év vendéglátós tapasztalattal ezen a téren, alkalmaztuk is szorgalmasan), páros szólókat tercben, kiállításokat, mint az Iron Maiden, ritmusriffeket, mint a Metallica vagy a Testament. Mégis az említett germán metal hatás volt a legerősebb, az ehhez a stílushoz tartozó zenekarok (Helloween, Running Wilde (sic), Accept, később Udo, Gamma Ray) hangzását próbáltuk utolérni.

Szerinted profi zenészek voltatok vagy lelkes amatőrök? Értem ezalatt, hogy magatoktól tanultatok meg játszani a hangszereiteken vagy jártatok zeneiskolába, tanárhoz stb.?

the guitarist of his band had left for abroad, so after his decommissioning he would need a guitarist to get the band going again. I was happy to say yes, and I don't regret it. After the breakup I didn't want to join another band, it was my first and last metal band.

Regarding Vas Macska, how and when did the band come together? Did you know each other before? What do you need to know about the musical background of the other members?

As I mentioned, I joined after the military, before that the others had already put some stuff on the table, Zsolt Boros “Bőri” (guitar, vocals), Péter Kovács “Pojec” (bass), Attila Novák (I never met him, he was a guitarist), and György Markó “Pidi” (drums). They worked for two years, then the army dropped them, by then they had made a name for themselves in Miskolc, had a fan base, and a strong sounding repertoire of hard-hitting, fast and heavy songs with melodic, catchy vocals. I was introduced to them by Pidi, they listened to my playing, we talked about our ideas, and they accepted me as a guitarist and as a friend. They had no musical background at all, everyone was self-taught and learned what they knew through a lot of persistent practice, just like me, so we were able to blend well. By the way, Bőri and Pidi went to the same school, and Pojec and Attila were friends.

Who were your favorite artists at the time?

We were consciously trying to catch up with the sound of Accept's Russian Roulette, for example—at the time it was the hottest sounding German metal album, and we were very close to that style. We wrote vocals (Pidi and I already had a year of guest vocal experience in this field, and we applied it diligently), paired solos in thirds, standouts (lead melodies) like Iron Maiden, rhythmic riffs like Metallica or Testament. But it was the Germanic metal influence that was the strongest, trying to catch up with the sound of bands of that style (Helloween, Running Wild, Accept, later Udo, Gamma Ray).

Do you think you were professional musicians or enthusiastic amateurs? By that I mean did you learn to play your instruments on your own or did you go to music school, teachers etc.?

Senki nem járt zeneiskolába, sőt, a magyar zeneoktatás akkoriban a könnyűzenét valami mostohagyermekként kezelte, gitár, vagy basszusgitár oktatás gyakorlatilag sehol nem volt, a Kodály-módszer Magyarországot a „képzetlen” rockzenészek országává tette. Egymástól tanultunk, rengeteg otthoni gyakorlás útján fejlesztettük a technikánkat. Engem kifejezetten érdekeltek a zenei témájú szakkönyvek, folyóiratok. Hangszerelési, összhangzattani dolgokról sokat olvastam, így ragadt rám némi zenei elméleti tudás, ezt aztán jól tudtuk kamatoztatni.

A zenekar nevét ki hozta? Nem tartottátok komolytalannak?

Bőri volt a zenekar motorja, fő alapítója, a név is az övé. Mikor én megismertem a zenekart, már jól csengő név volt a Vas Macska, meg sem fordult a fejemben, hogy komolytalan lenne. Aztán, mikor először hallottam koncerten több száz embert egyszerre skandálni: VAS-MACS-KA! VAS-MACS-KA! tudtam, hogy ez a névválasztás nagyon jól sikerült!

Miskolcról indultatok, hogyan emlékszel a város akkori színterére? Olyan legendás bandák voltak ott, mint a Rotor, az Atomic vagy az Almighty?

Visszagondolva, büszkeséggel tölt el, hogy ilyen zenekarok között jegyezték a Vas Macskát is. Sajnos nagyon kevés lehetőség volt akkoriban a szerényebb anyagi helyzetben levő bandák előtt. Kevés buli, ritkán. Felszerelése csak a Rotornak volt, ha ők koncerteztek, mindig lehetőséget kapott valaki a bemutatkozásra. Amúgy csak várhattuk, hogy valamelyik művelődési ház szervezzen egy-egy koncertet, ilyenkor aztán öt-hat zenekar is fellépett, idegen hangtechnikával, ingyen, lelkesedéstől hajtottan. Ilyen bandákra emlékszem még az említetteken kívül, hogy: Megtorlás, Marylin, Vivien, Marathon, nem is tudom...

Szerinted a Rotor révén indult el Miskolcon a heavy metal mozgalom?

Egyértelműen sokat segített, hogy ők léteztek, bár szerintem az EDDA volt az első igazán „őszinte, kőkemény” rockzenekar Miskolcon. A város hangulatát először nekik sikerült megragadni, és zenébe önteni. Amit ők itt hagytak, azt vette át a Rotor, és sokan már nekik köszönhetik, hogy metal koncertet láthattak. Jani mai napig is

Nobody went to music school, in fact, Hungarian music education at that time treated popular music as a sort of stepchild, guitar or bass guitar education was practically non-existent, the Kodály method made Hungary a country of 'untrained' rock musicians. We learnt from each other, we developed our technique through lots of practice at home. I was particularly interested in music books and magazines. I read a lot about orchestration and harmony, so I had some theoretical knowledge about music, and we were able to put that to good use.

Who gave you the name for the band? Did you think it was flippant?

Bőri was the driving force behind the band, the main founder, the name was his. When I first met the band, Vas Macska was already a household name, and it never occurred to me that it was flippant. Then, the first time I heard hundreds of people chanting at the same time: VAS-MACS-KA! VAS-MACS-KA!, I knew that this was a very well-chosen name!

You started from Miskolc, how do you remember the scene in the city at that time? Were legendary bands like Rotor, Atomic or Almighty there?

Thinking back, it makes me proud that Vas Macska was one of those bands. Unfortunately, there were very few opportunities for bands in a more modest financial situation at the time. There were rarely any parties. Rotor was the only band that had equipment, and whenever they played a gig, there was always a chance for someone to introduce themselves. Otherwise, we could only wait for one of the cultural homes to organize a concert, and then five or six bands would play, with foreign sound equipment, for free, bursting with enthusiasm. I remember bands like these, apart from the ones I mentioned: Retaliation, Marylin, Vivien, Marathon, I don't know...

Do you think Rotor started the heavy metal movement in Miskolc?

It definitely helped a lot that they existed, although I think EDDA was the first really “true, hard” rock band in Miskolc. They were the first to capture the atmosphere of the city and put it into music. What they left behind was taken over by Rotor, and many people now have them to thank for the metal

megszállottként hajt, minden tisztelem az övé, és a csapatáé.

A rivalizálás vagy az összetartás, összefogás, az egészséges underground színtér létrehozása volt jellemző a miskolci bandákra?

Azt hiszem, mindezekből egy egészséges keverék adta a miskolci zenekarok igazi sokrétűségét. Nem nagyon tudnék egyforma stílusú bandákat mondani. A Rotor a klasszikus heavy metalt, az Atomic a thrash-t, a Marilyn a glam metalt, a Vas Macska a germán-speed-et nyomta. Már csak „szakmai büszkeségből” is igyekeztünk egyedi hangzásvilágot kialakítani, nehogy még az árnyéka is rávetüljön valakire, hogy lenyúlt valami riffet vagy egyebet a másiktól. A rockfesztivál jellegű közös bulikra is „összedobtuk” a cuccot, kinek mije van, például a dobosok egyvalaki dobján játszottak, hogy ne kelljen folyton átépíteni a dobszerkót. Csak a pergőt hozta mindenki magának, meg a cineket, ezt cserélték, nehogy valami „dobgyilkos” szétverje a cuccot, aztán a következő zenekarnak ne legyen mivel zúzni. Erősítőt, gitáralapot is egyvalaki hozott, aztán azon játszott mindenki. Mai szemmel nézve kaotikus állapotok voltak, de mindig mindenki segített a másikon.

Szerinted Miskolc egyfajta metal fellegvárnak volt tekinthető a '80-as években? Emlékszel az 1987 augusztusában, az Akropolisz moziban lebonyolított metal fesztiválra?

Biztos, hogy akkoriban sok metálzenekar működött a városban, de az is biztos, hogy kevesen voltak, akik kijutottak a próbahelyről, és be is mutathatták a zenéjüket. Én '87 augusztusában szereltem le, ez az említett rockfesztivál kimaradt az életemből...

Egyetértesz azzal, hogy azokban az időkben nem Budapest centrikus volt az underground színtér, hanem vidéken is komoly pezsgés bontakozott ki?

Sajnos nem. Akkor is az volt, előtte is, utána is, hogy ha valaki el akart érni valamit, akkor vagy komolyan villantani kellett a korpát, vagy fel kellett költözni Budapestre. A vidéki „pezsgés” csak a vidékieket érdekelte, de a legnagyobb megmozdulások mindig a fővárosban voltak. Hány olyan csapat volt az elmúlt 30 évben, amelyik vidékről ért el jelentősebb sikert? Tankcsapda, Lord, korai Edda, többet nem is tudok... A többi

concert. Jani still pushes like a maniac to this day, all respect to him and his crew.

Was it rivalry or solidarity, togetherness, creating a healthy underground scene that characterized the Miskolc bands?

I think it was a healthy mix of both that gave Miskolc bands their real diversity. I can't really think of any bands with the same style. Rotor was classic heavy metal, Atomic was thrash, Marilyn was glam metal, Vas Macska was Germanic-speed. If only out of 'professional pride,' we tried to create a unique sound, so as not to cast a shadow of someone stealing a riff or something from another. We also "threw together" our gear for rock festival-style joint parties, who had what, for example, the drummers played on someone else's drum kit so that they didn't have to keep rebuilding the drum kit. Everybody just brought their own drum kit and cymbals, which they swapped so that some "drum killer" wouldn't smash the stuff and then the next band wouldn't have anything to smash. Someone also brought an amplifier and a guitar, and everyone played on them. It was chaotic from today's point of view, but everyone always helped each other.

Do you think Miskolc was a kind of metal capital in the '80s? Do you remember the metal festival in Akropolis cinema in August 1987?

I'm sure there were a lot of metal bands in the city at that time, but I'm also sure there were few bands that could get out of the rehearsal room and show their music. I retired in August '87, so this rock festival was out of my lifetime...

Do you agree that the underground scene was not Budapest-centric in those days, but that there was a real buzz in the countryside?

Unfortunately not. It was still the case, before and after, that if you wanted to make it, you either had to cough up some dough or move to Budapest. Only the provincials were interested in the rural "buzz," but the biggest movements were always in the capital. How many groups in the last 30 years have achieved major success from the countryside? Tankcsapda, Lord, early Edda, I don't even know more... The other bands were

zenekar hiába „pezsgett”, ha senki nem állt melléjük.

Milyenek voltak a próbáitok, a próbahelyetek? Önálló próbateremmel rendelkeztek vagy béreltéltek?

Rendszeresen, és fegyelmezetten próbáltunk. A basszusgitárosunk, Kovács Péter, Pojec a szüleivel Szirmabesenyőn, egy családi házban lakott. Itt a pincében alakítottuk ki a próbatermet, tojásosdobozokkal szigetelve, ahogy kell. Még felvételeket is készítettünk itt, hogy így kielemezhesük a dalokat. Nagyon jó helyünk volt ott, és minden tisztelem a Pojec szüleié, hogy lehetőséget adtak erre, és túrték az ezzel járó zajt, és kényelmetlenséget. Az egyetlen hátránya volt a dolognak, hogy Miskolcra még ki kellett buszozni oda, és ha lekéstük a buszt, borult az időbeosztás akár oda, akár vissza. Én Tiszaújvárosból pl. 50 km-t buszoztam oda, ugyanennyit vissza, hogy próbálni tudjunk- ez sok időmet és pénzemet felemésztette, bár ekkor még ez nem játszott szerepet- vállaltam, csináltam. Megérte!

Milyen rendszerességgel próbáltatok?

Mikor leginkább fénylett a zenekar csillaga, heti 2-3 próba is volt. Jól összeszoktunk, és nagyon élveztük is.

A másodikgitáros Boros Zsolt volt, aki egyben énekelt is, az ő feladata csak a vokálozásra redukálódott vagy konkrét dalokat is énekelt?

Itt némi félreértés van: Boros Zsolt, Bóri a zenekarvezető, szólógitáros, énekes, mindenek, szövegíró, zeneszerző, frontember, mókamester és remek barát volt a zenekar motorja! Szó sem volt „másodgitáros” szerepről! Ha ilyen megkülönböztetést akarunk, akkor az inkább én voltam, bár én is írtam szövegeket, és zenét. Leginkább úgy működött a dolog, hogy Bóri hozta az ötleteket, aztán közösen gyúrtunk belőle dögös Vas Macska dalt. Mindenki hozzátette az ötleteit, megcsináltuk, eljátszottuk, aztán, ha mindenkinek tetszett, akkor megtartottuk, ha nem sikerült elég húzósra, akkor átformáltuk. Az én szerepem inkább ott volt jelentősebb, ahol hangszerelési-harmonizálási kérdések merültek fel, ezekben én voltam otthon, Zsolti inkább ösztönös tehetség volt. Nagyon jól nyomta.

Mindösszesen egy háromszámos demót tudhattok magatokénak, mikor éreztétek, hogy eljött az ideje egy hangzóanyag rögzítésének?

“buzzing” in vain if nobody was there to support them.

What were your rehearsals like, your rehearsal space? Did you have your own rehearsal room or did you rent one?

We rehearsed regularly and with discipline. Our bass player, Péter Kovács, “Pojec,” lived with his parents in a family house in Szirmabesenyő. We set up the rehearsal room in the basement, insulated with egg cartons as needed. We even made recordings here so that we could analyze the songs. We had a very good space there, and all my respect goes to Pojec's parents for giving us the opportunity and putting up with the noise and inconvenience. The only downside was that we had to take a bus from Miskolc, and if we missed the bus, our schedule got messed up. I had to take a bus 50km from Tiszaújváros to get there and the same back, to try and get there - it took up a lot of my time and money, although at that time it didn't matter - I took it on, I did it. It was worth it!

How often did you rehearse?

When the band's star was shining the brightest, there were 2-3 rehearsals a week. We got on well together and we enjoyed it a lot.

The second guitarist was Zsolt Boros, who also sang, was his duty limited to vocals or did he sing specific songs?

There is a misunderstanding here. There was no question of a “second guitar” role! If we want to make such a distinction, it was more me, although I also wrote lyrics and music. The way it mostly worked was that Bóri would come up with the ideas, and then together we'd make a killer Vas Macska song. Everyone added their ideas, we put it together, played it, and if everyone liked it, we kept it. If it wasn't cool enough, we changed it. My role was more significant where instrumentation and harmonization issues arose, I was at home with that, Zsolti was more of an instinctive talent. He was very good.

With only a three-song demo to your name, when did you feel it was time to record material? How did you start recording in the

Egyáltalán, hogy álltatok neki a felvételeknek? Volt valamilyen tapasztalatotok, hogyan kell egy demót elkészíteni?

Igen, mai füllel meghallgatva még mindig jól szól az a felvétel... Egyszerűen hallani akartuk, hogy igazi stúdióban felvéve hogyan is szólnak a dalaink. Sok pénzbe került, de megérte, nagyon büszkék voltunk rá, és a Metal Hammer Hungarica is jó kritikát hozott róla. Sok házi felvételt készítettünk bemikrofonozott hangfalakról, deckkel, de sosem voltunk elégedettek az eredménnyel, lévén a technikai dolgoknak igen híján voltunk, még egy keverőpultunk sem volt.

Milyen felszerelés állt rendelkezésükre a demo elkészítéséhez?

Technikai érdekltségű ember lévén, jól körülnéztem, a dobot egy Yamaha DX7-es segítségével ütötte fel Pidi, tehát nem élő dob hallható a felvételen. A saját gitárjainkat használtuk, Bóri egy Winner, én egy Gibson gitárt használtam, mindketten ugyanazt a Rockman torzítót kaptuk hozzá. A bőgő egy általam ismeretlen márkájú, de precíz és szép hangú cucc volt, Pojec saját hangszere. 16 csatorna állt rendelkezésünkre, ha jól emlékszem, egy Tascam szalagos magnóra rögzítették a hangot.

Stúdióban vagy a próbateremben vették fel? Mennyi idő állt rendelkezésükre?

Egy miskolci stúdióban dolgoztunk, Detvai Gyula és Heinzler István volt a hangmérnök. Három napig dolgozhattunk, az első napon felvettük a dobprogramot, a másodikon a zenét, a harmadik napon már csak az éneksávok rögzítése, és a végső keverés volt hátra. Elégedettek voltunk. Ide tartozik, hogy kb. egy évvel később rögzítettünk még egy demót, ez a ROTOR próbatermében történt, Ferenczi Laci és Szentesi Jani volt a felvételvezető. Itt már Kohán Attila volt a gitáros, és Veres Csabi alias „Náci” énekelt. Őt dal került a szalagra, és nem szólt rosszul, de ezt már nem publikáltuk sehol. Nem sokkal később a zenekar megszűnt.

Beszélnél nekünk a demóról bővebben? Milyen volt a minősége, hogyan születtek a számok, ki írta a dalokat, a szövegeket, milyen témák inspirálták a szövegeket stb.?

Maga a demo a már említett *Russian Roulette* hangzását igyekezett utolérni, és mint említettem, elégedettek voltunk vele. Dalok és szövegek?...

first place? Did you have any experience of how to make a demo?

Yeah, to listen to it today, it still sounds good... We just wanted to hear how our songs sound when recorded in a real studio. It cost a lot of money, but it was worth it, we were very proud of it and Metal Hammer Hungarica gave it a good review. We made a lot of home recordings with a deck and microphones, but we were never satisfied with the result, as we were very lacking in technical equipment, not even a mixing console.

What equipment did you have to make the demo?

Being a technically minded person, I had a good look around, the drums were recorded by Pidi using a Yamaha DX7, so it's not live drums. We used our own guitars, Bóri used a Winner and I used a Gibson, both with the same Rockman distortion. The bass was a brand I didn't know, but it was precise and nice sounding, Pojec's own instrument. We had 16 channels, if I remember correctly, recorded on a Tascam tape recorder.

Did you record in a studio or in the rehearsal room? How much time did you have?

We worked in a studio in Miskolc, Gyula Detvai and István Heinzler were the sound engineers. We had three days to work, the first day we recorded the drum program, the second day the music, and the third day was just for recording the vocal tracks and the final mixing. We were satisfied. We also recorded another demo about a year later, in the rehearsal room of ROTOR, with Laci Ferenczi and Jani Szentesi as the engineers. Attila Kohán was the guitarist and Csabi Veres, AKA “Náci,” was the singer. Five songs were recorded, and they didn't sound bad, but we didn't publish them anywhere. Shortly afterwards the band broke up.

Can you tell us more about the demo? What was the quality like, how were the songs written, who wrote the songs, the lyrics, what themes inspired the lyrics, etc.?

The demo itself was trying to emulate the sound of the aforementioned *Russian Roulette*, and as I mentioned, we were happy with it. Songs and

Mikor összeállt a csapat, és beszélgettünk a jövőről, megkértem a fiúkat, hogy ha elkezdenek dolgozni, a néhány meglévő „sátáni” motívumokat felvonulatotó dalt töröljük a programból. Úgy éreztem, hogy sokkal többre vagyunk képesek, és igazam is lett. A szövegekben továbbra is felbukkant „Öfelsége” és a „lakhelye”, de már nem funkciótlan rémként, hanem művészi kellékként. Egyre inkább a fantasy és a misztikum felé fordultunk, de azért némi „társadalomkritika” is belefért a műfajba. A három dal mindegyikből tartalmaz: a „Bűn” egy látomás egy ember próbálkozásairól, hogy megküzdjön a tisztesség és a könnyebb, de becstelenebb előrelépésre csábítás közötti választás problémájával. Útmutatást jelent az ilyesmire fogékony fiataloknak, azt remélem. A szöveg és a zene alapvetően Bőri munkája, de az alkotás mindig közösen haladt az ötlettől a megvalósításig, így mindenki hozzátette a maga dolgait. A „Villámlovas” egy gyönyörű mese, tiszta fantasy stílusban. Adott egy jelenség, a villámlás-mennydörgés. Ehhez szőttük a történetet az égen szilajul vágató lovasról, aki rémítő lódobogás kíséretében villogtatja kardját a rettegő emberek feje fölött. A zene és szöveg az én ötletem volt, aztán a szokott módon kidolgoztuk együtt. Az „Aranyásó” megint Bőri agyából pattant ki, párhuzamot vonva az éjjel-nappal gürcölő, mégis megélhetési gondokkal küszködő melós, és egy mindenre elszánt aranyásó között, aki tíz körmével kaparja az aranyat a földből, ha kell, de nem nyugszik, míg a szegénységből ki nem tör. Közben észre sem veszi, hogy eltelik az egész élete úgy, hogy nem is élvezte a munkája gyümölcsét, és rongyosan, fázva, és elfelejtve hal meg egy küzdelmekkel teli élet végén. A másik, öt tételt tartalmazó felvételtől is hadd ejtsek pár szót. Ezen a „Dög”, „Felirat egy új-fundlandi kutya sírjára”, „A halott”, „A Féreg”, és „A Halál” kapott helyet, utólag visszagondolva mind egy-egy epikus mű, amiről oldalakat lehetne írni. Bőri kitűnő érzékkel nyúlt a témákhoz, az ötleteit pedig Edgar Ellen Poe verseiből, vagy (kapaszkodj meg) japán rajzfilmekből merítette, persze ne hagyjuk ki a roppant színes és élénk fantáziáját sem!

Zeneileg hogyan jellemeznéd a Vasmacska stílusát?

Akkoriban ezt hívták Germán metálak: gyors és középtempós dalok, nagyívű dallamok, páros

lyrics?... When we got the team together and talked about the future, I asked the guys that when we started working, we would delete the few existing songs with “satanic” motifs from the project. I felt we could do much more, and I was right. “His Majesty” and his “dwelling place” continued to pop up in the lyrics, but no longer as a functionless monster, but as an artistic prop. There was an increasing tendency towards fantasy and mysticism, but there was also some ‘social criticism’. The three songs include each of these: “Bűn” (Sin) is a vision of one man's attempts to grapple with the challenge of choosing between integrity and the easier but more dishonest temptation to get ahead. A guide for young people susceptible to such things, I hope. The lyrics and music are essentially Bőri's work, but the creation has always been a collaborative process from conception to realization, with everyone adding their own touches. “Villámlovas” (The Lightning Rider) is a beautiful tale in pure fantasy style. The theme is the phenomenon of thunder and lightning. To this we wove the story of a rider galloping through the sky, waving his sword over the heads of frightened men to the sound of a terrifying horse. The music and lyrics were my idea, then we worked it out together in the usual way. “Aranyásó” (The Prospector) again sprang from Bőri's brain, drawing a parallel between the day and night toiling worker, struggling to make a living, and the ever-determined prospector who scrapes gold from the ground with his ten fingernails if necessary, but never rests until he breaks out of poverty. Meanwhile, he doesn't even realize that his whole life has passed without him enjoying the fruits of his labor, and he dies ragged, cold and forgotten at the end of a life of struggle. Let me say a few words about the other recording, which contains five movements. This one contains “Dög” (The Carcass), “Felirat egy új-fundlandi kutya sírjára” (Inscription on the Grave of a Newfoundland Dog), “A halott” (The Dead), “A Féreg” (The Worm), and “A Halál” (Death), all of which, in retrospect, are epic works that one could write pages about. Bőri has an excellent sense of subject matter, and his ideas are drawn from the poems of Edgar Ellen Poe or (get this) Japanese cartoons, not to mention his colorful and vivid imagination!

Musically, how would you describe the style of Vas Macska?

At that time it was called German Metal: fast and mid-tempo songs, big melodies, even solos in

szólók tereben á la Helloween, Accept, Iron Maiden vagy Stormwitch.

A demóra felkerült három nótánál többel nem is rendelkeztek vagy esetleg a többit nem tartottátok méltónak arra, hogy megjelenjenek, mert a minőségével elégedetlenek voltatok?

Termékeny zenekar voltunk, jó néhány dalt megtartottunk a régiemből (a katonaság előttről), és sok újat is írtunk. Bármelyik megállta volna a helyét felvételeken is, de nem volt rá pénzünk, hogy a stúdióidőt kifizessük.

Elégedettek voltatok a végeredménnyel vagy lehetett volna jobb is?

Elégedettek voltunk, a felvételek jól sikerültek. Persze utólag sokat beszélgettünk arról, hogy ha több idő állt volna rendelkezésre, még jobbat is tudtunk volna, de hát pont ezért csinál egy zenekar demót: hogy visszahallgassa, kielemezze a felvételeket, és tanuljon belőle.

Terjesztették a felvételt?

A Metal Hammer Hungarica részére elküldtük. Írtak róla, és a címünk is megjelent. 15-20 darabot küldtünk szét a levélíróknak, és a művelődési házak népművelőinek is vittem néhányat.

Milyen kritikákat kaptatok rá és mennyi ment el belőle?

Az említett magazin 1991/9. számában jelent meg a kritika, idézem szó szerint: „A miskolci Vas Macska nem tegnap és nem is tegnapelőtt alakult. Jónéhány éve küzdenek Miskolcon a srácok. De megrogyasztotta őket a katonaság. Sőt, a posta is kibabrált velük, hiszen '89 óta most harmadszorra küldték '89-es keltezésű szalagjukat. Mi most kaptuk meg először. A két év nem hallatszik a nótákon. Heavy metal a legjobb jelző erre a muzsikára. Részleteit tekintve, néha speedbe hajló, de gondosan kidolgozott ének dallamokkal operáló zene. A Bűn riffjei és tempója King Diamond lemezeit idézi. A Villámlovás a jó öreg Iron Maiden nyomdokain indul el. Később német heavy metal szokások szerint meghangszerelt, szinte folyamatosan zakatoló két lábdobokkal alátámasztott, harcidal jellegű dallamok zengenek benne. A harmadik, Aranyás című tétel, szintén germán hatásokat tükröz. Vidáman, hetykén pattog a speed metal, amit csak néha szakít meg egy-egy középtempós riffelés vagy némi keringő a nóta

thirds á la Helloween, Accept, Iron Maiden or Stormwitch.

Did you only have three songs for the demo, or did you consider the rest not worthy of being released because you were dissatisfied with the quality?

We were a prolific band, we kept quite a few of the old songs (from before the military) and wrote a lot of new ones. Any of them would have been worth recording, but we didn't have the money to pay for the studio time.

Were you happy with the end result or could it have been better?

We were satisfied, the recording was good. Of course, afterwards we talked a lot about how we could have done better if we had had more time, but that's why a band makes a demo: to listen back, analyze the recordings and learn from them.

Did you distribute the recording?

We sent it to Metal Hammer Hungarica. They wrote about it and our title was published. We sent out 15-20 copies to people who wrote letters, and I also took some to the public culture cultivators in the cultural homes.

What kind of reviews did you get and how many went out?

The review was published in the magazine's 1991/9 issue, and I quote verbatim: “Vas Macska of Miskolc was not founded yesterday, nor the day before yesterday. The guys have been struggling in Miskolc for several years. But they were broken by the military. And the post office has also messed with them, as this is the third time since '89 that they have sent out their '89-dated ribbon. This was the first time we received it. You can't hear the two years in the songs. Heavy metal is the best description for this music. In terms of details, it's music that sometimes leans towards speed, but with carefully crafted vocal melodies. “Bűn's” riffs and tempo are reminiscent of King Diamond's records. “Villámlovás” follows in the footsteps of good old Iron Maiden. Later, it features battle songs arranged in the style of German heavy metal, backed by almost constantly pounding double kick drums. The third track, “Aranyás,” also reflects Germanic influences. The speed metal is upbeat and snappy, interrupted only

közepén. A két gitáros kiválóan dolgozik együtt. A dalok hangszerelése is a két gityóra épül. A Boros Zsolt- énekes/szólógitáros, Kovács Péter- basszusgitáros, Markó György- dobos és Balaton Endre- szólógitáros alkotta Vas Macska jelenleg gőzerővel dolgozik. Ha a '91-es demo csak egy kicsit is túlmutat majd a '89-es anyagon, akkor a Vas Macska bizonyára nem tűnik el a süllyesztőben.” A kritikát Cselő írta, és mi pozitívként fogadtuk.

1989-ben a miskolci Stár Kiszövetkezet megjelentetett egy mára már kultikussá, klasszikussá nemesedett kiadványt a „Black and speed metal” válogatást, nem volt esélyetek arra, hogy szerepeljetez ezen a kiadványon? Egyáltalán megkerestek benneteket a kazettán való szereplés lehetőségével?

Akkoriban sok kisebb-nagyobb zenekar nyomult Miskolcon és környékén. Volt kiből válogatni. Mi azért maradtunk le erről a felvételtől, mert a készítő meg sem kerestek minket. Akkoriban ez úgy működött –szerintem ma sincs másképp-, hogy ha el akartál érne valamit, akkor a megfelelő emberekkel kellett eljárni sörözni, jópofizni, mindig mindenhol ott lenni, mutatni magad, szóval benne kellett lenni a „vérkeringésben”. Itt mutatkozott meg az egyik gyenge pontja a zenekarnak, hogy nem volt igazi kapcsolattartó ember nálunk. Eljártunk a próbákra, aztán hazamentünk, és mindenki élte a kis életét tovább. Néha egy-egy buli, koncert, aztán megint csend. Így nem lehet előre jutni, ma már tudjuk.

A korabeli fanzine-ek tudomást vettek a csapatról? Támogattak benneteket?

Nyilván ugyanezen okokból a MHH és egyéb underground kiadványok sem igazán tudtak velünk kapcsolatot találni, ha egyáltalán akartak. Támogatásról meg ne is beszéljünk, az senkinek sem járt, sem nekünk, sem másoknak. Akkoriban tudtam volna olyan neveket mondani, akik vastagon nyaltak a tűz közelében levő embereknek, aztán mégsem jutottak szinte sehova. Mi kipróbáltuk, hogy pusztán a zenével meddig tudunk haladni. Jelentem, nem sokra...

Gyakran adtatok interjúkat a különböző fanzine-eknek?

Gyakorlatilag Te vagy az első, aki megkérdezte, mi van velünk.

occasionally by mid-tempo riffing or some waltzing in the middle of the song. The two guitarists work well together. The instrumentation of the songs is also based on the two guitarists. Vas Macska, consisting of Zsolt Boros - singer/solo guitarist, Péter Kovács - bass guitarist, György Markó - drummer and Endre Balaton - lead guitarist, is currently working hard. If the '91 demo is even a little bit better than the '89 material, Vas Macska will certainly not disappear into obscurity.” The review was written by Cselő and we received it positively.

In 1989, Miskolc's Stár Kiszövetkezet released a selection of “Black and speed metal”, which has become a cult classic, did you have a chance to be included on this release? Were you even approached with the opportunity to appear on the cassette?

At that time there were a lot of small and big bands in and around Miskolc. There was a lot to choose from. We missed this recording because the producers didn't even contact us. The way it worked back then - and I think it's the same today - if you wanted to get somewhere, you had to go out with the right people, drink beer, have fun, be everywhere, show yourself, so you had to be in the “bloodstream.” That's where one of the weaknesses of the band was that we didn't have a real contact person. We would go to rehearsals and then go home and everyone would go on with their little lives. Sometimes a party, a gig, and then silence again. That's no way to get ahead, we know that now.

Were the fanzines of the time aware of the group? Did they support you?

Probably for the same reasons, MHH and other underground publications couldn't really get in touch with us, even if they wanted to. And let's not even talk about support, it didn't benefit anybody, us or others. At the time I could have given you names of people who sucked up to people near the fire and then got almost nowhere. We were testing how far we could go with music alone. I can tell you, not very far...

Did you frequently give interviews to various fanzines?

You're practically the first person to ask us how we're doing.

Szerintem nemcsak a metal élet, de a fanzine-ek is aranykorukat élték azokban az időkben, te ezt hogy látod? Mely fanzine-ek jutnak kapásból eszedbe?

A Metallica Hungarica, és később a Metal Hammer Hungarica. Mászt nem ismertem/ismerek. Ezek is komoly pénzekbe kerültek, nekünk meg abból volt igen kevés...

A fanzine-ek szerinted az underground fontos támogatói?

Ebben nem tudok állást foglalni, a mi pályafutásunk egy két alkalomtól eltekintve kimaradt a korabeli fanzine-ekből.

Milyen gyakran léptetek fel élőben a Vasmacskával? Hogyan emlékszel vissza a koncertjeitekre?

Évi két-három koncertet nyomtunk. Ez nagyon kevés, de néha lejöttek a cimbi a próbákra, segítettek, kritizáltak (jó értelemben), mi is lejártunk az ő gyakorlóhelyeikre, és innen ismertük egymás zenéjét. A fellépési lehetőség nagyon kevés volt. A műv. házak nem szívesen engedték be a metálzenekeket, mert féltek a közönségtől, a balhétől, a rendbontástól. Saját szervezésű koncertet senki nem mert vállalni, mert a terembérlés, a hangtechnika bérlése, a világítás stb. óriási pénzeket emésztett fel. A legjobb az volt, ha valahol fellépett a Rotor, ők rendszeresen biztosítottak előzenekarként fellépési lehetőséget a kisebb bandáknak. Ezúton is köszönet érte!

Mikor és miért oszlott fel a Vasmacska? Netán személyi és zenei ellentétek merültek fel vagy esetleg közbeszólt a katonaság?

A katonaság akkoriban sok zenekart taccsra tett, de a Vas Macska a sereg után újult erővel látott munkához. Ekkor csatlakoztam én is, és 2-3 év sikeres de nehéz munka után kellett belátnunk, hogy innen már nincs tovább. 1992-ben fejeztük be, a búcsúkoncert a Vörösmarty Műv. Házban volt. Semmilyen ellentét nem volt a zenekaron belül, nagyon sajnáltuk, de az anyagi dolgok, a pénztelenség volt a feloszlás oka. Kezdte magát olyan mértékben kinőni a zenekar, amit már nem tudtunk anyagilag vállalni. Utazás, felszerelés, mind-mind rettentő sokba került. Pidi, Pojec és Bőri friss házásokként érthetően nem elsősorban a zenélésre akarták költeni a kemény melóval megkeresett pénzüket, hanem a családjukra. Így

I think that not only the metal scene but also the fanzines were in their golden age at that time, how do you see it? Which fanzines spring to mind?

Metallica Hungarica, and later Metal Hammer Hungarica. I didn't know/do know any other. They also cost a lot of money, and we had very little of that...

Do you think fanzines are important supporters of the underground?

I can't comment on that, our career was not covered by the fanzines of the time, except for one or two occasions.

How often did you perform live with Vas Macska? How do you remember your gigs?

We did two or three gigs a year. It was very little, but sometimes our buddies would come down to rehearsals, help us, critique us (in a good way), we would go down to their practice places and that's how we knew each other's music. The opportunities to perform were very few. The concert halls were reluctant to admit metal bands for fear of the audience, of trouble and disorder. Nobody dared to organize their own concerts because the cost of hiring the hall, sound equipment, lighting, etc. was enormous. The best was when Rotor played somewhere, and they regularly opened for smaller bands. Thanks again for that!

When and why did Vas Macska disband? Was it because of personal and musical differences, or did the military get in the way?

The military had put many bands out of business at the time, but Vas Macska was back in action after the army. That's when I joined and after 2-3 years of successful but hard work, we had to realize that there was nowhere else to go. We finished in 1992, with a farewell concert at the Vörösmarty Műv. It was in 1992. There was no conflict within the band, we were very sorry, but financial matters and lack of money were the reason for the dissolution. The group had grown to such an extent that we could no longer afford it financially. Travel, equipment, it was all terribly expensive. As newlyweds, Pidi, Pojec and Bőri understandably wanted to spend their hard-earned money on their families, not primarily on music. So it became

egyre nehezebb volt összeegyeztetni a zenekar költséges dolgait a fészekrakással.

A korabeli interjúkból emlékszem, hogy a magyar underground zenekarok pályafutását, létezését nagyban befolyásolta a sereg, ez mennyiben, mennyire érintett benneteket?

A katonáskodás előtt a Vas Macska már szép sikereket ért el, kezdték a zenekart ismerni a rajongók. Én pont a katonaságban ismerkedtem meg Pdivel, és innen számíthatjuk az én tagságomat. Nyilván nem tett jót a zenekar ismertségének, hogy másfél évre kivonták a forgalomból, de mikor újra összeállt a csapat, és a régi dalok új hangszerelésben újra megszólaltak, a közönség rögtön elfogadta a bandát újra. Az új dalok is jól szóltak, ráadásul kicsit „hiánypótló” volt a Vas Macska akkoriban, hiszen ezt a fajta speed-power metált szinte senki nem játszotta erre felé. Sokan képviselték a thrash irányzatot, kevesebben a klasszikus heavy metált, de páros szólókkal és dallamos énekkel senki nem foglalkozott. Ráadásul, mikor mi leszereltünk és visszatértünk a színpadra, a többi zenekar akkor vonult be, tehát volt kereslet a zenére.

Lemezszerződésig nem is volt esélyetek eljutni? Kaptatok egyáltalán ajánlatot, hogy kiadhassatok egy lemezt?

Lemezről csak a „nagyok” álmodhattak. A Rotor lényegesen jobban állt, közönségbázissal, ismertséggel, cuccal és pénzzel rendelkeztek, mégis csak úgy tudtak lemezt kiadni (*Tépj szét minden láncot!*), hogy mindent ők fizettek. A Lord annak idején ugyanígy. A kisebb zenekaroknak maradt a próbatermi felvétel, a tehetősebbeknek stúdióban készült demókazetta, a csóróknak meg a nagy nulla...

A demo után is születtek Vasmacska dalok? Azok milyen irányt képviseltek illetve mi lett a sorsuk?

Jó néhány dalt írtunk még, a végén már egész epikus műveket, 6-8 perces darabokat, költői szövegekkel. Imádtam azt a szövegvilágot, amit Bőri meghonosított a zenekarnál. Ezt a misztikus, fantasyba hajló témaválasztást és szövegkezelést megint csak a Vas Macska használta. A többiek (bocsi, de így van) megmaradtak a „kiszegecseltem lelkem” és a „krómozott halál” kliséinél.

increasingly difficult to reconcile the costly business of the band with nesting.

I remember from the interviews of the time that the career and existence of Hungarian underground bands was greatly influenced by the army, how much did this affect you?

Before the military, Vas Macska had already achieved a lot of success and the band was becoming known to fans. It was in the army that I met Pidi, and that's where my membership came from. Obviously, it didn't help the band's popularity when they were taken out of circulation for a year and a half, but when the band got back together and played the old songs again with new instrumentation, the audience immediately accepted the band. The new songs sounded good too, and Vas Macska was a bit of a “niche” band at the time, as there was hardly anyone playing this kind of speed-power metal around. A lot of people represented the thrash tendency, a few others the classic heavy metal, but nobody was dealing with double solos and melodic vocals. Plus, when we got out and came back on stage, the other bands had just moved in, so there was a demand for the music.

Did you ever get a chance to get a record deal? Did you even get an offer to release a record?

Only the “big guys” could dream of a record. Rotor were in a much better position, they had the audience, the name recognition, the gear and the money, yet they could only release a record (*Tépj szét minden láncot!*) by paying for everything. Lord did the same thing back in the day. The smaller bands were left with the rehearsal room recordings, the more wealthy with the studio demo tapes, and the poorer ones with a big zero...

Were there any Vas Macska songs after the demo? What direction did the band take and what was their fate?

We wrote quite a few more songs, in fact we ended up writing epic songs, 6-8 minute pieces with poetic lyrics. I loved the lyrical world that Bőri introduced to the ensemble. Again, Vas Macska used this mystical, fantasy-like choice of themes and lyrics. The others (sorry, but that's the way it is) stuck to the clichés of “my soul is riveted” and “death in chrome.”

A budapesti zenekarok könnyebben jutottak lemezszerződéshez mint a vidéki csapatok?

Alapvetően több lehetőségük volt megismertetni magukat a közönséggel, a koncertszervezőkkel és a lemezkiadókkal is. Magyarország Budapestből és a Vidékből állt régen is és ma is. Ha valaki komolyan gondolta a zenélést felköltözött a fővárosba. Vidékről nem hallatszottak fel a hangok Budapestig... A Ramses-nek is pop-rockot játszó Hooligans-ként sikerült, heavy metálos Ramses-ként nem. Azóta is hány olyan zenekar van, amelyik vidéki székhelyű, és jegyzik valahol? Tankcsapda, Lord, mondj még kettőt!...

Mit csináltak a zenekar feloszlása után? Folytattátok a zenélést vagy teljesen felhagytatok vele?

Gyakorlatilag Pidivel egy lagzis-vendéglátós zenekarban folytattuk, a többiek kiszálltak a zenei életből. Aztán pár év múlva Pidi is kiszállt, és ma már csak én vagyok a pályán, igaz, én is zenei „prostituáltként”, lagzikban, bálokon, rendezvényeken hang-fény-színpadtechnikával. Mindenki élte a kis életét, nevelte a gyereke(ke)t, és tojt a rockzenére. Egészen mostanáig...

Mi a helyzet a többiekkel manapság? Kapcsolatban vagytok még?

Mostanában vettük fel újra a kapcsolatot, ugyanis Bőrinek az a gondolata támadt, hogy esetleg fel kellene éleszteni ezt a bizonyos Vas Macskát. Gyorsan körbekérdezte a tagokat, ki mit szól hozzá, és mindenki benne van! Valami megmozdult, és bár anyagilag most sem állunk sokkal stabilabban, azért megpróbáljuk.

Össze szoktatok még jönni még egy kis nosztalgázásra, zenélésre vagy akár sörözésre?

Évekig szinte nem is tudtunk egymásról semmit, legalábbis én. Most, hogy elindult ez a szervezkedés, rendszeresen fogunk találkozni.

Szerinted a Vasmacska egy kultikus banda lett az évek folyamán? A mai rajongóknak mond-e még valamit a zenekar neve?

Én azt hittem, régen elfelejtett dolog már ez, erre Te is megkerestél... Nemrégem egy miskolci

Did the bands from Budapest have an easier time getting a record deal than the bands from the countryside?

Basically, they had more opportunities to introduce themselves to the public, to concert promoters and to record labels. Hungary was and is made up of Budapest and the countryside. If you were serious about making music you moved to the capital. The sounds of the countryside did not reach Budapest... Ramses succeeded as pop-rock Hooligans, but not as heavy metal Ramses.³²³ Even since then, how many bands are still based in the countryside and recorded elsewhere? Tankcsapda, Lord, to name a couple more!...

What did you do after the band split up? Did you continue playing or did you stop playing altogether?

Technically, Pidi and I continued in a wedding catering band, the others dropped out of the music scene. Then after a few years Pidi left the scene and now it's just me, although I'm also a musical 'prostitute', playing at weddings, balls and events with sound-light-stage equipment. Everyone was living their little lives, raising their kid(s) and getting into rock music. Until now...

What about the rest of the guys these days? Are you still in touch?

We've recently got back in touch, because Bőri had the idea that we could maybe revive Vas Macska. He popped around asking members what they thought, and everyone's on board! Something has moved, and although we are not much more financially stable now, we will try.

Do you guys ever get together for more nostalgia, music or even a beer?

For years we hardly knew anything about each other, at least I didn't. Now that we've started this project, we're going to meet regularly.

Do you think Vas Macska has become a cult band over the years? Does the name of the band still mean anything to today's fans?

I thought it was a long-forgotten thing, and then you contacted me... Recently, people from a

³²³ Tibor Ördög, Tibor Tóth, Norbert Mórítz, Endre Kiss founded Ramses in 1986, but started using the name Hooligans in 1996.

redőny-reluxa készítő cég emberei jártak nálam. Egyikük meglátta a gitárt, és kérdezősködni kezdett. Á, úgysem ismered, mondtam, egy miskolci zenekarban játszottam, Vas Macska volt a neve. Erre a figura kikerekedett szemmel sorolni kezdte a tagok nevét, a koncertek helyszínét, idézett a dalszövegekből, én meg paff voltam... Az üzletet ezek után természetesen megkötöttük.

Ha a Vasmacska demót valaki megjelentetné cd-n örömmel töltene el, beleegyeznél?

Mindenképpen! Bár nyilván most akkor lennék igazán boldog, ha egy stúdióban újra felvehetnénk azokat a dalokat, amiket akkoriban olyan szívesen játszottunk. Talán erre is sor kerülhet majd valamikor...

Endre, köszönöm szépen a válaszaidat, remélem nem untattalak, kérlek fejezd be az interjút, ahogy neked tetszik.

Nagyon köszönöm, hogy megkerestél, és, hogy lehetőséget adtál rá, hogy mindezt elmondjam. Remélem, nemsokára találkozunk egy Vas Macska koncerten!

company that makes Venetian blinds in Miskolc came to visit me. One of them saw the guitar and started asking questions. Ah, you don't know them anyway, I said, I played in a band in Miskolc called Vas Macska. Then the guy started to list the names of the members, the venues of the concerts, quoted the lyrics, and I was speechless... The deal was done, of course.

If someone released the Vas Macska demo on CD, would that make you happy?

Absolutely! Although obviously I'd be really happy now if we could go into a studio and re-record the songs we were so happy to play back then. Maybe that will happen at some point...

Endre, thank you very much for your answers, I hope I didn't bore you, please finish the interview as you like.

Thank you very much for contacting me and for giving me the opportunity to tell you all this. Hope to see you soon at a Vas Macska concert!

APPENDIX D. FORM TABLES OF CHUCK SCHULDINER'S ALBUMS

All items are organized by album release date and order of track listing.

Index

Track	Title	Form	Composer (if not Schuldiner)
1987 – Death, <i>Scream Bloody Gore</i>			
D1	1	Infernal Death	AABA
D2	2	Zombie Ritual	AABA
D3	3	Denial Of Life	AAB
D4	4	Sacrificial	AABA
D5	5	Mutilation	AABA
D6	6	Regurgitated Guts	AAB
D7	7	Baptized in Blood	AABA
D8	8	Torn to Pieces	AABA
D9	9	Evil Dead	ABA
D10	10	Scream Bloody Gore	AAB
D11	11	Beyond The Unholy Grave	AAA
D12	12	Land Of No Return	AABA
1988 – Death, <i>Leprosy</i>			
D13	1	Leprosy	ABA
D14	2	Born Dead	ABA Schuldiner/Rozz
D15	3	Forgotten Past	ABA Schuldiner/Rozz
D16	4	Left To Die	ABA Schuldiner/Rozz
D17	5	Pull The Plug	ABA
D18	6	Open Casket	ABA Schuldiner/Rozz
D19	7	Primitive Ways	AAB Rozz
D20	8	Choke On It	ABA Schuldiner/Rozz
1990 – Death, <i>Spiritual Healing</i>			
D21	1	Living Monstrosity	ABA
D22	2	Altering The Future	ABA Schuldiner/Butler
D23	3	Defensive Personalities	ABA Schuldiner/Butler
D24	4	Within The Mind	ABA Schuldiner/Murphy
D25	5	Spiritual Healing	ABA
D26			
D27	6	Low Life	ABA Schuldiner/Butler/Murphy
D28	7	Genetic Reconstruction	ABA Schuldiner/Butler/Murphy
D29	8	Killing Spree	ABA Schuldiner/Murphy

1991 – Death, <i>Human</i>			
D30	1	Flattening of Emotions	ABA
D31	2	Suicide Machine	ABA
D32	3	Together As One	ABA
D33	4	Secret Face	ABA
D34	5	Lack of Comprehension	ABA
D35	6	See Through Dreams	ABA
D36	7	Cosmic Sea	Through-Composed AB
D37	8	Vacant Planets	ABA

1993 – Death, <i>Individual Thought Patterns</i>			
D38	1	Overactive Imagination	ABA
D39	2	In Human Form	ABA
D40	3	Jealousy	ABA
D41	4	Trapped In a Corner	ABA
D42	5	Nothing Is Everything	ABA
D43	6	Mentally Blind	ABA
D44	7	Individual Thought Patterns	ABA
D45			
D46	8	Destiny	ABA
D47	9	Out Of Touch	ABA
D48	10	The Philosopher	ABA

1995 – Death, <i>Symbolic</i>			
D49	1	Symbolic	ABA
D50	2	Zero Tolerance	ABA
D51			
D52	3	Empty Words	ABA
D53	4	Sacred Serenity	ABA
D54	5	1,000 Eyes	ABA
D55	6	Without Judgment	ABA
D56	7	Crystal Mountain	ABA
D57	8	Misanthrope	ABA
D58	9	Perennial Quest	ABA

1998 – Death, <i>The Sound of Perseverance</i>			
D59	1	Scavenger of Human Sorrow	ABA
D60	2	Bite the Pain	ABA
D61	3	Spirit Crusher	ABA
D62	4	Story to Tell	ABA

D63	5	Flesh and the Power It Holds	ABA (AAB–C–AAB)	
D64				
D65	6	Voice of the Soul	Through-Composed ABCB'	
D66	7	To Forgive Is to Suffer	ABA	
D67	8	A Moment of Clarity	ABA	
N/A	9	Painkiller	AABA	Tipton/Halford/Downing
<hr/>				
1999 – Control Denied, <i>The Fragile Art of Existence</i>				
D68	1	Consumed	ABA	
D69	2	Breaking the Broken	ABA	
D70	3	Expect the Unexpected	ABA	
D71	4	What If....?	ABA	
D72	5	When the Link Becomes Missing	ABA	
D73	6	Believe	ABA	
D74	7	Cut Down	ABA	
D75	8	The Fragile Art of Existence	ABA	
<hr/>				
2004 – Control Denied, <i>Zero Tolerance</i>				
D76	1	Track 1	ABA	
D77	2	Track 2	ABA	
D78	3	Track 3	ABA	
D79	4	Track 4	ABA	

D.1. Death, “Infernal Death” (*Scream Bloody Gore*, 1987)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:42	Verse	
	1:00	Chorus	
A	1:19	Verse	
	1:27	Chorus	
B (A')	1:37	Bridge a	Guitar solo, verse riff
	1:54	Bridge b	Guitar solo, chorus riff
A	2:12	Verse	
	2:30	Chorus	

D.2. Death, “Zombie Ritual” (*Scream Bloody Gore*, 1987)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:38	Verse	
	1:05	Prechorus	
	1:15	Transition	
	1:30	Chorus a	
	2:01	Chorus b	
A	2:17	Verse	
	2:43	Prechorus	
	2:52	Transition	
	3:01	Chorus a	
	3:30	Chorus b	
B	3:47	Bridge a	Guitar solo
	4:03	Bridge a'	Interlude
A (abbr.)	4:12	Chorus b	

D.3. Death, “Denial of Life” (*Scream Bloody Gore*, 1987)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:12	Verse	
	0:37	Prechorus	
	0:48	Chorus	
A	1:16	Verse	
	1:44	Prechorus	
	1:54	Chorus	
B	2:22	Bridge a	Breakdown
	2:42	Bridge b	Interlude
	2:51	Bridge b'	Guitar solo
	3:11	Bridge c	Interlude

D.4. Death, “Sacrificial” (*Scream Bloody Gore*, 1987)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:17	Verse	
	0:34	Prechorus	
	0:54	Chorus	
A	1:13	Verse	
	1:48	Prechorus	
	2:08	Chorus	
B	2:26	Bridge a	Guitar solo
	2:44	Bridge a'	Interlude
	2:53	Bridge b	Breakdown
A (abbr.)	3:19	Chorus	

D.5. Death, "Mutilation" (*Scream Bloody Gore*, 1987)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:05	Verse	
	0:26	Prechorus	
	0:36	Chorus	
A	0:55	Verse	
	1:21	Prechorus	
	1:30	Chorus	
B	1:51	Bridge a	Breakdown
	2:07	Bridge b	Interlude
	2:29	Bridge c	Guitar solo
A	2:46	Verse'	
	2:54	Prechorus	
	3:03	Chorus	

D.6. Death, "Regurgitated Guts" (*Scream Bloody Gore*, 1987)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:09	Verse	
	0:39	Verse	
	1:06	Transition	
	1:16	Chorus	
A	1:25	Verse	
	1:54	Verse	
	2:22	Transition	
	2:30	Chorus	
B	2:41	Bridge a	Interlude
	2:57	Bridge a'	Guitar solo
	3:06	Bridge b	Interlude
	3:24	Bridge c	Interlude

D.7. Death, "Baptized in Blood" (*Scream Bloody Gore*, 1987)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:19	Verse	
	0:36	Prechorus	
	0:45	Verse	
	1:07	Chorus	
A	1:25	Verse	
	1:54	Prechorus	
	2:13	Verse	
	2:20	Chorus	
	2:43	Codetta	
B	2:54	Bridge a	Interlude
	3:09	Bridge b	Guitar solo
A (abbr.)	3:25	Chorus	
	3:51	Codetta	
Coda	3:59	Coda a	Bridge a
	4:09	Coda b	

D.8. Death, "Torn to Pieces" (*Scream Bloody Gore*, 1987)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:14	Verse	
	0:30	Prechorus	
	1:00	Chorus	
A	1:18	Verse	
	1:50	Prechorus	
	2:21	Chorus	
B	2:39	Bridge a	Buildiup
	2:56	Bridge a'	Guitar solo
A (abbr.)	3:14	Chorus	

D.9. Death, "Evil Dead" (*Scream Bloody Gore*, 1987)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:32	Chorus	
	0:51	Verse	
	1:01	Chorus	
	1:10	Verse	
	1:19	Chorus	
B (A')	1:29	Bridge a	Guitar solo, verse riff
	1:37	Bridge b	Guitar solo, chorus riff
	1:46	Bridge a'	Guitar solo, verse riff
	1:55	Bridge b'	Chorus riff
A	2:07	Chorus	
	2:27	Verse	
	2:35	Chorus	
	2:44	Verse	

D.10. Death, "Scream Bloody Gore" (*Scream Bloody Gore*, 1987)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:09	Verse	
	0:46	Prechorus	
	1:11	Chorus	
A	1:29	Verse	
	2:04	Prechorus	
	2:31	Chorus	
B	2:49	Bridge a	Breakdown
	3:06	Bridge b	Breakdown
	3:43	Bridge c	Interlude
	4:00	Bridge c'	Guitar solo
	4:19	Bridge d	Interlude

D.11. Death, "Beyond the Unholy Grave" (*Scream Bloody Gore*, 1987)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:12	Verse	
	0:38	Prechorus	
	0:58	Chorus	
A	1:15	Verse	
	1:33	Prechorus	
	1:53	Chorus	
A	2:18	Verse'	Guitar solo
	2:27	Prechorus'	Guitar solo
	3:36	Chorus	

D.12. Death, "Land of No Return" (*Scream Bloody Gore*, 1987)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:19	Verse	
	0:48	Prechorus	
	0:58	Chorus	
Introduction	1:07	Introduction	
A	1:16	Verse	
	1:44	Prechorus	
	1:53	Chorus	
B	2:04	Bridge a	Interlude
	2:28	Bridge b	Guitar solo
A (abbr.)	2:46	Chorus	

D.13. Death, "Leprosy" (*Leprosy*, 1988)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:34	Verse	
	1:17	Prechorus	
	1:55	Break	
	2:18	Chorus	
B	2:45	Bridge a	Guitar lead
	3:01	Bridge b	Interlude
	3:32	Bridge c	Guitar solo
A	4:07	Verse	
	4:49	Prechorus	
	5:21	Break	
	5:50	Chorus	

D.14. Death, “Born Dead” (*Leprosy*, 1988) (Schuldiner/Rozz)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:25	Verse	
	0:51	Prechorus	
	1:10	Lead break	Guitar lead
	1:29	Chorus	
B	2:00	Bridge a	Guitar solo
	2:24	Bridge b	Interlude
A	2:39	Verse	
	3:05	Prechorus	
	3:10	Chorus	

D.15. Death, “Forgotten Past” (*Leprosy*, 1988) (Schuldiner/Rozz)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:14	Verse	
	0:39	Prechorus	
	0:58	Chorus	
B	1:24	Bridge a	Interlude
	1:51	Bridge b	Interlude
	2:08	Bridge c	Interlude
	2:27	Bridge d	Guitar solo
	2:54	Bridge e	Guitar solo
A	3:10	Verse	
	3:49	Prechorus	
	4:08	Chorus	

D.16. Death, “Left to Die” (*Leprosy*, 1988) (Schuldiner/Rozz)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:22	Verse	
	0:42	Prechorus	
	1:09	Chorus	
B	1:26	Bridge a	Breakdown
	1:50		Vocals added
	2:02	Bridge b	Guitar solo
	2:35	Bridge c	Interlude
	2:55	Bridge c'	Interlude
A	3:12	Verse	
	3:32	Prechorus	
	3:52	Chorus	
Coda	4:17	Coda	

D.17. Death, "Pull the Plug" (*Leprosy*, 1988)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:13	Verse	
	0:27	Prechorus	
	0:51	Chorus	
B	1:12	Bridge a	Interlude
	1:26	Bridge b	Interlude
	1:40	Bridge c	Interlude
	1:54	Bridge d	Bridge verse
	2:03	Bridge e	Interlude
	2:12	Bridge f	Interlude
	2:32	Bridge f'	Guitar solo
A	2:52	Bridge g	Guitar solo
	3:13	Verse	
	3:38	Prechorus	
	4:02	Chorus	

D.18. Death, "Open Casket" (*Leprosy*, 1988) (Schuldiner/Rozz)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:36	Verse	
	0:53	Prechorus	
	1:25	Chorus	
	1:45	Verse	
B	2:01	Bridge a	Guitar solo
	2:18	Bridge b	Guitar solo
	2:27	Bridge a'	Guitar lead
	2:44	Bridge c	Interlude
	3:09	Bridge d	Bridge verse
	3:39	Bridge e	Hyperchorus
A (abbr.)	4:16	Verse a	
	4:33	Chorus a	

D.19. Death, "Primitive Ways" (*Leprosy*, 1988) (Rozz)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Verse	
A	0:28	Prechorus a	
	0:47	Prechorus b	
	1:05	Chorus a	
	1:34	Chorus b	
A	1:53	Verse	
	2:20	Prechorus a	
	2:39	Prechorus b	
	2:57	Chorus	
B	3:26	Bridge a	Guitar solo
	3:44	Bridge b	Guitar solo
	4:02	Bridge c	Guitar solo
	4:20	Bridge d	Interlude, verse riff

D.20. Death, “Choke on It” (*Leprosy*, 1988) (Schuldiner/Rozz)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:28	Verse	
	1:03	Prechorus	Introduction
	1:20		– Groove established
	1:35		– Vocals added
	1:51	Lead break	Guitar lead
	2:05	Chorus	
B	2:33	Bridge a	Interlude
	2:46	Bridge b	Interlude
	3:18	Bridge c	Guitar solo
	3:41	Bridge d	Guitar solo
A	3:58	Verse	
	4:24	Prechorus	Introduction
	4:41		– Groove established
	4:56		– Vocals added
	5:12	Lead break	Guitar lead
	5:25	Chorus	
Coda	5:38	Coda	

D.21. Death, “Living Monstrosity” (*Spiritual Healing*, 1990)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:11	Verse	
	0:51	Prechorus	
	1:33	Chorus	
B	1:51	Bridge a	
	2:04	Bridge b	Guitar lead
	2:28	Bridge c	Guitar solo
	2:38	Bridge d	Guitar solo
	2:57	Bridge e	Guitar solo
	3:07	Bridge f	Guitar solo
	3:11	Bridge g	Interlude
	3:36	Bridge g	Vocals added
A	3:56	Verse	
	4:24	Prechorus	
	4:44	Chorus	

D.22. Death, “Altering the Future” (*Spiritual Healing*, 1990) (Schuldiner/Butler)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction a	
	0:30	Introduction b	
A	0:44	Verse	
	1:07	Verse	
	1:20	Prechorus	
	1:44	Chorus	
B	2:06	Bridge a	Guitar solo
	2:27	Bridge b	Guitar solo
	2:53	Bridge b'	Interlude
	3:17	Bridge c	Hyperchorus
	3:28	Bridge d	Bridge verse
A	3:51	Verse	
	4:27	Verse	
	4:39	Prechorus	
	5:04	Chorus	

D.23. Death, “Defensive Personalities” (*Spiritual Healing*, 1990) (Schuldiner/Butler)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:04	Verse	
	0:42	Prechorus	
	1:11	Chorus	
B	1:53	Bridge a	Guitar lead
	2:04	Bridge a'	Dual guitar lead
	2:15	Bridge b	Guitar solo
	2:34	Bridge c	Guitar solo
A	2:53	Verse	
	3:31	Prechorus	
	3:59	Chorus	

D.24. Death, “Within the Mind” (*Spiritual Healing*, 1990) (Schuldiner/Murphy)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	Guitar lead
A	0:07	Verse a	
	0:41	Verse b	
	1:00	Break a	
	1:18	Break b	
	1:30	Chorus	
B	1:52	Bridge a	Guitar solo
	2:18	Bridge b	Guitar lead
	2:40	Bridge c	Interlude
A	3:05	Verse a	
	3:37	Verse b	
	3:56	Break a	
	4:14	Break b	
	4:25	Chorus	
Coda	4:47	Coda	Guitar solo

D.25. Death, “Spiritual Healing” (*Spiritual Healing*, 1990)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:19	Verse a	
	1:17	Verse b	
	1:52	Break a	
	2:12	Break b	
	2:22	Prechorus	
	2:33	Break b	
	2:43	Prechorus	
	3:02	Chorus	
B	3:30	Bridge a	Decoy chorus
	3:49	Bridge b (solo)	Guitar solo
	4:09	Bridge c (solo)	Guitar solo
A	4:29	Verse a	
	5:27	Verse b	
	6:02	Break a	
	6:22	Break b	
	6:31	Prechorus	
	6:43	Break b	
	6:52	Prechorus	
	7:03	Chorus	

D.26. Two temporalities of form in “Spiritual Healing” (*Spiritual Healing*, 1990).

Time	Initial Hearing		Retrospective Reinterpretation	
0:00	Introduction		Introduction	
0:19	A	Verse a	A	Verse a
1:17		Verse b		Verse b
1:52		Break a		Break a
2:12		Break b		Break b
2:22		Prechorus		Prechorus
2:33		Break b		Break b
2:43		Prechorus		Prechorus
3:02		Chorus (a)		Chorus
3:30		Chorus b?	Bridge a	
3:49	B	Bridge a (solo)	B	Bridge b (solo)
4:09		Bridge b (solo)		Bridge c (solo)
4:29	A	Verse a	A	Verse a
5:27		Verse b		Verse b
6:02		Break a		Break a
6:22		Break b		Break b
6:31		Prechorus		Prechorus
6:43		Break b		Break b
6:52		Prechorus		Prechorus
7:03		Chorus		Chorus

D.27. Death, “Low Life” (*Spiritual Healing*, 1990) (Schuldiner/Butler/Murphy)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	Verse riff
A	0:08	Verse	
	0:24	Transition a	
	0:43	Transition b	
	0:53	Prechorus	
	1:13	Chorus	
	1:41	Postchorus	Verse-like
B	2:05	Bridge a	Guitar solo
	2:15	Bridge b	Guitar solo
	2:24	Bridge a'	Guitar solo
	2:34	Bridge b'	Guitar lead
	2:43	Bridge a''	Guitar solo
	2:52	Bridge b''	Guitar solo
	3:02	Bridge c	Breakdown
	3:27		– Vocals added
A	3:35	Verse	
	3:58	Transition a	
	4:18	Transition b	
	4:28	Prechorus	
	4:48	Chorus	
Coda	5:16	Postchorus ⇒ Coda	Verse-like

D.28. Death, “Genetic Reconstruction” (*Spiritual Healing*, 1990) (Schuldiner/Butler/Murphy)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:16	Verse	
	0:30	Prechorus a	
	0:57	Prechorus b	
	1:20	Chorus	
B	1:40	Bridge a	Guitar solo
	2:08	Bridge b	Guitar solo
	2:28	Bridge c	Interlude
	2:47	Bridge d	Interlude
A	3:11	Verse	
	3:41	Prechorus a	
	4:06	Prechorus b	
	4:29	Chorus	

D.29. Death, “Killing Spree” (*Spiritual Healing*, 1990) (Schuldiner/Murphy)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:24	Verse	
	0:43	Prechorus	
	1:06	Chorus	
B	1:26	Bridge a	Bridge verse
	1:50	Bridge b	Guitar solo
	2:15	Bridge c	Guitar lead
	2:40	Bridge d	Buildup
A	3:11	Verse	
	3:30	Prechorus	
	3:53	Chorus	

D.30. Death, “Flattening of Emotions” (*Human*, 1991)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:45	Verse	
	1:03	Prechorus a	
	1:22	Transition	
	1:35	Prechorus b	
	1:55	Chorus	
B	2:13	Bridge a	Guitar solo
	2:32	Bridge b	Guitar solo
	2:45	Bridge b'	Guitar solo
A	2:58	Verse	
	3:16	Prechorus a	
	3:34	Transition	
	3:48	Prechorus b	
	4:07	Chorus	

D.31. Death, “Suicide Machine” (*Human*, 1991)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:18	Verse	
	0:39	Prechorus a	
	0:54	Transition a	
	1:07	Transition b	
	1:17	Prechorus b	
	1:27	Chorus	
B	1:55	Bridge a	Vocal interlude
	2:22	Bridge b	Guitar solo
A	2:43	Verse	
	3:03	Prechorus a	
	3:18	Transition a	
	3:31	Transition b	
	3:40	Prechorus b	
	3:49	Chorus	

D.32. Death, “Together as One” (*Human*, 1991)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:10	Verse	
	0:19	Prechorus a	
	0:46	Prechorus b	
	1:04	Chorus	
B	1:29	Bridge a	Guitar solo
	1:56	Bridge b	Breakdown
	2:23		– Vocals added
A	2:31	Verse	
	2:51	Prechorus a	
	3:16	Prechorus b	
	3:34	Chorus	
Coda	3:58	Coda	

D.33. Death, "Secret Face" (*Human*, 1991)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:08	Verse	
	0:32	Prechorus	
	0:49	Chorus	
	1:10	Riff-section	
B	1:33	Bridge a	Guitar lead
	1:57	Bridge b	Guitar solo
	2:18	Bridge c	Guitar lead
	2:30	Bridge d	Vocal interlude
A	3:00	Verse	
	3:25	Prechorus	
	3:42	Chorus	
	4:03	Riff-section	

D.34. Death, "Lack of Comprehension" (*Human*, 1991)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:36	Verse	
	0:53	Verse	
	1:09	Prechorus	
	1:24	Chorus	
B	1:43	Bridge a	Guitar solo
	2:12	Bridge b	Interlude
A	2:30	Verse	
	2:47	Verse	
	3:02	Prechorus	
	3:18	Chorus	
Coda	3:33	Coda	Based on chorus

D.35. Death, "See Through Dreams" (*Human*, 1991)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:10	Verse	
	0:22	Prechorus a	
	0:43	Prechorus b	
	1:02	Chorus	
B	1:31	Bridge a	Guitar lead
	1:45	Bridge a'	Guitar solo
	1:55	Bridge a''	Guitar solo
	2:07	Bridge b	Breakdown
A	2:33	Verse	
	2:50	Prechorus a	
	3:11	Prechorus b	
	3:31	Chorus	

D.36. Death, "Cosmic Sea" (*Human*, 1991)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A Compound Bridge	0:10	A	
	0:29	A'	Guitar solo
	1:05	B	Guitar solo
	1:23	C	Guitar duet
	1:41	C	Guitar duet
Interlude	2:03	D	Synthesizer ambience
B Compound Bridge	2:32	E	Bass solo
	2:49	E'	Guitar solo
	3:19	F	Guitar solo
	3:40	F'	Synthesizer solo

D.37. Death, "Vacant Planets" (*Human*, 1991)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:10	Verse	
	0:30	Prechorus	
	0:52	Chorus	
B	1:34	Bridge a	Interlude
	2:00	Bridge b	Guitar solo
	2:19	Bridge c	Guitar solo
A	2:37	Verse	
	2:57	Prechorus a	
	3:32	Chorus	

D.38. Death, "Overactive Imagination" (*Individual Thought Patterns*, 1993)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:10	Verse	
	0:30	Prechorus	
	0:48	Chorus	
B	1:03	Bridge a	Guitar solo
	1:37	Bridge b	Vocal interlude
	2:08	Bridge c	Guitar solo
	2:23	Bridge d	Interlude
A	2:34	Verse	
	2:54	Prechorus	
	3:13	Chorus	

D.39. Death, “In Human Form” (*Individual Thought Patterns*, 1993)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:15	Verse	
	0:36	Prechorus a	
	0:58	Prechorus b	
	1:19	Chorus	
B	1:37	Bridge a	Guitar solo
	2:03	Bridge b	Breakdown; guitar alone
	2:06		– Drums added
	2:18		– Vocals added
A	2:32	Verse	
	2:52	Prechorus a	
	3:14	Prechorus b	
	3:34	Chorus	

D.40. Death, “Jealousy” (*Individual Thought Patterns*, 1993)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:11	Verse	
	0:21	Prechorus a	
	0:37	Prechorus b	
	0:54	Chorus	
B	1:12	Bridge a	Vocal interlude
	1:35	Bridge b	Guitar solo
	1:47	Bridge b'	Guitar solo
	1:59	Bridge c	Guitar solo
A	2:23	Verse	
	2:44	Prechorus a	
	3:00	Prechorus b	
	3:18	Chorus	

D.41. Death, “Trapped in a Corner” (*Individual Thought Patterns*, 1993)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:20	Verse	
	0:43	Chorus	
B	1:20	Bridge a	Interlude
	1:36	Bridge b	Hyperchorus
	2:01	Bridge c	Guitar solo
	2:13	Bridge d	Guitar solo
	2:26	Bridge e	Guitar solo
	2:37	Bridge d'	Guitar solo
	2:50	Bridge f	Guitar solo
A	3:11	Verse	
	3:34	Chorus	

D.42. Death, “Nothing is Everything” (*Individual Thought Patterns*, 1993)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:14	Verse	
	0:46	Chorus	
B	1:14	Bridge a	Decoy chorus
	1:52	Bridge b	Guitar solo
A	2:09	Verse	
	2:26	Chorus	
Coda	2:52	Coda	

D.43. Death, “Mentally Blind” (*Individual Thought Patterns*, 1993)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:01	Verse	
	0:22	Prechorus a	
	0:35	Prechorus b	
	0:52	Chorus	
B	1:11	Bridge a	Guitar solo, chorus riff
	1:42	Bridge b	Vocal interlude
	2:25	Bridge c	Interlude
A	2:53	Verse	
	3:13	Prechorus a	
	3:26	Prechorus b	
	3:44	Chorus	
Coda	4:19	Coda	

D.44. Death, “Individual Thought Patterns” (*Individual Thought Patterns*, 1993)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:10	Verse	
	0:28	Verse	
	0:44	Prechorus	
	1:01	Chorus	
B	1:29	Bridge a	Decoy chorus
	1:53	Bridge b	Guitar solo
	2:18	Bridge c	Interlude
A	2:41	Verse	
	2:58	Verse	
	3:15	Prechorus	
	3:34	Chorus	

D.45. Two temporalities of form in “Individual Thought Patterns” (*Individual Thought Patterns*, 1993).

Time	Initial Hearing		Retrospective Reinterpretation	
0:00	Introduction		Introduction	
0:10	A	Verse	A	Verse
0:28		Verse		Verse
0:44		Prechorus a		Prechorus
1:01		Prechorus b		Chorus
1:29		Chorus		B
1:53	Bridge a	Bridge b		
2:18	Bridge b	Bridge c		
2:41	A	Verse	A	Verse
2:58		Verse		Verse
3:15		Prechorus a		Prechorus
3:34		Prechorus b		Chorus

D.46. Death, “Destiny” (*Individual Thought Patterns*, 1993)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:36	Verse	
	1:02	Prechorus	
	1:28	Chorus	
B	1:46	Bridge a	Guitar solo
	2:29	Bridge b	Interlude
	2:41	Bridge c	Bridge verse
A	2:53	Verse	
	3:18	Prechorus	
	3:45	Chorus	

D.47. Death, “Out of Touch” (*Individual Thought Patterns*, 1993)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:41	Verse	
	1:05	Chorus	
B	1:44	Bridge a	Breakdown; guitar alone
	1:55		– Full band
	2:12		– Vocals added
	2:21	Bridge b	Guitar solo
	2:49	Bridge c	Guitar lead
	2:59		– Vocals added
	3:08	Codetta	
A	3:13	Verse	
	3:37	Chorus	

D.48. Death, "The Philosopher" (*Individual Thought Patterns*, 1993)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:15	Verse	
	0:47	Prechorus	
	0:59	Chorus	
B	1:15	Bridge a	Guitar solo
	1:44	Bridge b	Interlude
A	2:05	Verse	
	2:37	Prechorus	
	2:39	Chorus	
Coda	3:05	Coda	

D.49. Death, "Symbolic" (*Symbolic*, 1995)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:25	Verse	
	0:46	Prechorus a	
	1:14	Prechorus b	
	1:45	Prechorus c	
	2:07	Chorus	
B	2:28	Bridge a	Guitar solo
	3:04	Bridge b	Guitar solo
	3:23	Bridge b'	Vocal interlude
A	4:14	Verse	
	4:42	Prechorus a	
	5:14	Prechorus b	
	5:32	Prechorus c	
	5:59	Chorus	

D.50. Death, "Zero Tolerance" (*Symbolic*, 1995)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:05	Verse	
	0:30	Lead break	
	0:42	Prechorus	
	1:05	Chorus	
B	1:29	Bridge a	Decoy chorus
	2:05	Bridge b	Guitar lead
	2:29	Bridge b'	Guitar lead
	2:49	Bridge c	Guitar lead
	2:52	Bridge d	Guitar solo
	3:04	Bridge e	Guitar solo
A	3:26	Verse	
	3:48	Lead break	
	4:00	Prechorus	
	4:23	Chorus	

D.51. Two temporalities of form in “Zero Tolerance” (*Symbolic*, 1995).

Time	Initial Hearing		Retrospective Reinterpretation	
0:00	Introduction		Introduction	
0:05	A	Verse	A	Verse
0:30		Lead break		Lead break
0:42		Prechorus		Prechorus
1:05		Prechorus b		Chorus
1:29		Chorus		B
2:05	Bridge a	Bridge b		
2:29	Bridge a'	Bridge b'		
2:49	Bridge b	Bridge c		
2:52	Bridge c	Bridge d		
3:04	Bridge d	Bridge e	A	Verse
3:26	Verse	Lead break		Lead break
3:48	Lead break	Prechorus		Prechorus
4:00	Prechorus	Chorus		Chorus
4:23	Chorus			

D.52. Death, “Empty Words” (*Symbolic*, 1995)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:38	Verse	
	1:02	Prechorus a	
	1:34	Prechorus b	
	2:07	Tattoo	
	2:20	Chorus	
B	2:44	Bridge a	Guitar Solo
	3:08	Bridge b	Guitar lead
	3:32	Bridge b'	Interlude
A	3:43	Verse	
	4:08	Prechorus a	
	4:40	Prechorus b	
	5:13	Tattoo	
	5:25	Chorus	
Coda	5:56	Coda	Chorus extension

D.53. Death, “Sacred Serenity” (*Symbolic*, 1995)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction a	
	0:25	Introduction b	
A	0:39	Verse	
	1:06	Prechorus a	
	1:20	Prechorus b	
	1:48	Chorus	
B	2:03	Bridge a	Guitar solo
	2:31	Bridge b	Guitar solo
A	2:58	Verse	
	3:26	Prechorus a	
	3:39	Prechorus b	
	4:07	Chorus	

D.54. Death, “1,000 Eyes” (*Symbolic*, 1995)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:16	Verse	
	0:35	Prechorus a	
	1:00	Tattoo	
	1:09	Prechorus b	
	1:27	Chorus	
B	1:48	Bridge a	Breakdown
	2:14	Bridge b	Guitar solo
A	2:39	Verse	
	2:58	Prechorus a	
	3:23	Tattoo	
	3:32	Prechorus b	
	3:49	Chorus	
Coda	4:08	Coda	

D.55. Death, “Without Judgement” (*Symbolic*, 1995)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	Cumulative
A	0:24	Verse	
	0:45	Prechorus a	
	1:11	Prechorus b	Guitar lead
	1:46	Chorus	
B	2:13	Bridge a	Guitar solo
	2:48	Bridge b	Guitar lead, cumulative
	3:04		– Bass, backbeat added
	3:20		– Guitar 2 added
A	3:36	Verse	
	3:57	Prechorus a	
	4:25	Prechorus b	Guitar lead
	4:59	Chorus	

D.56. Death, “Crystal Mountain” (*Symbolic*, 1995)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
A	0:00	Verse	
	0:21	Prechorus	
	0:43	Prechorus	
	0:54	Chorus	
B	1:27	Bridge a	Breakdown introduction
	1:35	Bridge b	Breakdown
	2:06	Bridge c	Guitar lead
	2:25	Bridge d	Guitar solo
A	2:44	Verse	
	3:05	Prechorus	
	3:26	Prechorus	
	3:37	Chorus	
Coda	4:15	Coda	Acoustic lead, chorus riff

D.57. Death, "Misanthrope" (*Symbolic*, 1995)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:10	Verse	
	0:29	Prechorus a	
	1:02	Prechorus b	
	1:20	Chorus	
B	1:59	Bridge a	Guitar lead
	2:24	Bridge b	Guitar solo
	2:49	Bridge c	Guitar solo
A	3:00	Verse	
	3:29	Prechorus a	
	4:02	Prechorus b	
	4:20	Chorus	

D.58. Death, "Perennial Quest" (*Symbolic*, 1995)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:20	Verse	
	0:40	Tattoo	
	0:59	Prechorus a	
	1:33	Prechorus b	
	1:53	Chorus	
B	2:21	Bridge a	Bridge verse
	2:44	Bridge b	Interlude
	2:58	Bridge a	Bridge verse
	3:20	Bridge c	Guitar solo
	3:35	Bridge c'	Guitar solo
	3:43	Bridge c''	Guitar solo
	3:50	Bridge d	Guitar solo
A	4:17	Verse	
	4:38	Tattoo	
	4:56	Prechorus a	
	5:30	Prechorus b	
	5:49	Chorus	
Coda	6:18	Coda a	
	6:35	Coda b	Guitar lead

D.59. Death, "Scavenger of Human Sorrow" (*The Sound of Perseverance*, 1998)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:10	Verse	
	0:48	Prechorus a	
	1:23	Prechorus b	
	2:01	Chorus	
B	2:52	Bridge a	Interlude
	3:03	Bridge a'	Interlude
	3:27	Bridge b	Guitar solo
	3:51	Bridge c	Guitar lead
A	4:11	Verse	
	4:49	Prechorus a	
	5:25	Prechorus b	
	6:03	Chorus	

D.60. Death, "Bite the Pain" (*The Sound of Perseverance*, 1998)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
	0:16	Introduction'	
A	0:41	Verse	
	1:04	Prechorus	
	1:26	Tattoo	
	1:31	Chorus	
	1:54	Tattoo	
B	2:00	Bridge a	
	2:12	Bridge b	Guitar solo
	2:39	Bridge c	Guitar solo
	3:02	Bridge d	Retransition
A	3:05	Verse	
	3:28	Prechorus	
	3:51	Tattoo	
	3:57	Chorus	
	4:20	Tattoo	

D.61. Death, "Spirit Crusher" (*The Sound of Perseverance*, 1998)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:17	Verse	
	0:42	Break a	
	1:05	Prechorus	
	1:20	Chorus	
	2:01	Break b	
	2:22	Break c	
	2:32	Postchorus	Chorus-like
B	2:51	Bridge d	Guitar solo
	3:21	Bridge e	Guitar solo, climax
	3:35	Bridge f	Interlude
A	4:08	Verse	
	4:33	Break a	
	4:55	Prechorus	
	5:10	Chorus	
	5:52	Break b	
	6:12	Break c	
	6:22	Postchorus	Chorus-like

D.62. Death, "Story to Tell" (*The Sound of Perseverance*, 1998)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:26	Verse a	
	0:43	Verse b	
	1:06	Verse b'	
	1:17	Prechorus a	
	1:40	Prechorus b	
	2:03	Chorus	
B	2:34	Bridge a	Guitar solo
	3:01	Bridge b	Guitar solo
	3:19	Bridge c	Breakdown
	3:41	Bridge d	Buildup; guitar and drums
	3:48		– 2 nd guitar
	3:56		– Double kick drum
	4:04		– High guitar
	4:12	Bridge c	Breakdown
A	4:23	Verse a	
	4:41	Verse b	
	5:03	Verse b'	
	5:14	Prechorus a	
	5:37	Prechorus b	
	6:00	Chorus	

D.63. Death, "Flesh and the Power It Holds" (*The Sound of Perseverance*, 1998). Hypercompound ABA form

Hypersection	Supersection	Time	Section	Description	
Introduction	Introduction	0:00	Introduction a		
		0:31	Introduction b		
		1:04	Introduction c		
A	A	1:18	Verse a		
		1:39	Chorus		
	A	2:01	Verse		
		2:11	Chorus		
	B	B	2:22	Postchorus a	Chorus-like
			3:02	Postchorus b	Verse-like
			3:11	Postchorus b	Verse-like
			3:22	Postchorus b	Verse-like
B	C	3:42	Bridge a		
		4:14	Bridge b	Guitar solo	
		5:23	Bridge c	Bass lead, point of furthest remove	
A	A	6:01	Verse		
		6:22	Chorus		
	A	6:42	Verse		
		6:53	Chorus		
	B	B	7:05	Postchorus a	Chorus-like
			7:44	Postchorus b	Verse-like
			8:03	Postchorus b	Verse-like
			8:14	Postchorus b	Verse-like

D.64. Death, “Flesh and the Power It Holds” (*The Sound of Perseverance*, 1998). Initial and retrospective interpretation, showcasing hypercompound ABA form.

Time	Initial Hearing		Retrospective Reinterpretation			Description
	Supersection	Section	Hypersection	Supersection	Section	
0:00	Introduction	Introduction a	Introduction	Introduction	Introduction a	
0:31		Introduction b			Introduction b	
1:04		Introduction c			Introduction c	
1:18	A	Verse a	A	A	Verse a	
1:39		Chorus			Chorus	
2:01	A	Verse		A	Verse	
2:11		Chorus			Chorus	
2:22	B	Bridge a		B	Postchorus a	Chorus-like
3:02		Bridge b			Postchorus b	Verse-like
3:11		Bridge b			Postchorus b	Verse-like
3:22		Bridge b			Postchorus b	Verse-like
3:42		Bridge c			B	C
4:14	Bridge d	Bridge b		Guitar solo		
5:23	Bridge e	Bridge c	Bass lead, PoFR			
6:01	A	Verse	A	A	Verse	
6:22		Chorus			Chorus	
6:42	A	Verse		A	Verse	
6:53		Chorus			Chorus	
7:05	B'?	Bridge a		B	Postchorus a	Chorus-like
7:44		Bridge b			Postchorus b	Verse-like
8:03		Bridge b			Postchorus b	Verse-like
8:14		Bridge b			Postchorus b	Verse-like

D.65. Death, “Voice of the Soul” (*The Sound of Perseverance*, 1998)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description	Bars
A	0:00	Introduction a	Main riff	8
	0:12	A	Main riff, lead break	8
	0:24	A	Main riff, lead break	8
	0:36	B (A')	Main riff, lead break	8
	0:48	B' (A'')	Main riff, lead break	8
B	1:02	Introduction b	Dual lead, C riff	8
	1:18	C	Dual lead	8
	1:33	C'	Dual lead	8
	1:50	D (C'')	Dual lead, chorus-like	8
C	2:05	Introduction c	E riff, guitar lead	8+1
	2:31	E	Lead break	8
	2:49	E'	Lead break	8
	3:02	Transition	Buildup	2
B (abbr.)	3:07	D	Dual lead; chorus-like	8
Coda	3:31	Coda		8

D.66. Death, "To Forgive is to Suffer" (*The Sound of Perseverance*, 1998)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	Based on chorus riff
	0:29	Introduction'	
A	0:43	Verse	
	1:16	Prechorus a	
	1:38	Prechorus b	
	2:05	Chorus	
B	2:44	Bridge	Guitar solo
A	3:20	Verse	
	3:54	Prechorus a	
	4:15	Prechorus b	
	4:42	Chorus	
Coda	5:21	Coda	Lead
	5:36	Coda'	

D.67. Death, "A Moment of Clarity" (*The Sound of Perseverance*, 1998)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction a	
	0:15	Introduction b	
A	0:46	Verse	
	1:03	Prechorus a	
	1:17	Prechorus b	
	1:36	Prechorus b	
	1:49	Chorus	
B	2:19	Bridge a	Guitar solo
	2:58	Bridge b	Guitar lead, 4 bars x 2
	3:21	Bridge b'	Guitar lead, 4 bars
	3:13	Bridge c (b'')	Guitar solo, 12 bars
	3:45	Bridge b	Guitar lead, 4 bars
A	3:53	Verse	
	4:09	Prechorus a	
	4:23	Prechorus b	
	4:29	Prechorus b	
	4:55	Chorus	
Coda	5:27	Coda a	Chorus extension
	5:42	Coda a'	
	5:58	Coda a''	
	6:14	Coda a'''	
	6:30	Coda a''''	Fadeout

D.68. Control Denied, “Consumed” (*The Fragile Art of Existence*, 1999)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:25	Verse	
	1:06	Prechorus a	
	1:34	Prechorus b	Guitar lead
	2:26	Chorus	
B	2:52	Bridge a	Buildup; guitar alone
	3:03		– Vocals enter
	3:24	Bridge b	Interlude
	3:43	Bridge c	Retransition
A	4:04	Verse	
	4:47	Prechorus a	
	5:15	Prechorus b	Guitar lead
	6:09	Chorus	
Coda	6:41	Coda	Guitar solo, based on chorus

D.69. Control Denied, “Breaking the Broken” (*The Fragile Art of Existence*, 1999)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:34	Verse	
	1:12	Chorus	Bass lead
	1:41	Transition	
	2:03	Postchorus	Chorus-like
B	2:37	Bridge a	Bass lead
	2:54	Bridge b	Guitar solo
	3:18	Bridge c	Interlude
A	3:35	Verse	
	4:13	Chorus	Bass lead
	4:42	Transition	
	5:04	Postchorus	Chorus-like

D.70. Control Denied, “Expect the Unexpected” (*The Fragile Art of Existence*, 1999)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:22	Verse	
	0:55	Prechorus	
	1:31	Chorus	
B	2:07	Bridge a	
	2:41	Bridge b	Guitar solo
	3:17	Bridge c	Interlude
	3:32	Bridge d	Bridge verse
	3:49	Bridge e	Guitar solo
A	4:21	Verse	
	4:54	Prechorus	
	5:30	Chorus	
Coda	6:05	Coda	

D.71. Control Denied, “What If...?” (*The Fragile Art of Existence*, 1999)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:20	Verse	
	1:03	Chorus	
B	1:33	Bridge a	Guitar solo
	2:14	Bridge b	Interlude
	2:23	Bridge c	Guitar solo
	2:43	Bridge d	Bridge verse
A	3:13	Verse	
	3:56	Chorus	

D.72. Control Denied, “When the Link Becomes Missing” (*The Fragile Art of Existence*, 1999)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	Verse riff
A	0:12	Verse	
	0:36	Prechorus a	
	1:01	Prechorus b	
	1:37	Chorus	
B	1:59	Bridge a	Topic: acoustic guitar
	2:18		– Guitar solo
	2:47	Bridge b	Guitar solo
A	3:26	Verse	
	3:51	Prechorus a	
	4:15	Prechorus b	
	4:51	Chorus	

D.73. Control Denied, “Believe” (*The Fragile Art of Existence*, 1999)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:28	Verse	
	0:53	Prechorus a	
	1:13	Prechorus b	
	1:52	Chorus	
	2:22	Postchorus	Chorus-like
B	2:46	Bridge a	Interlude
	3:05	Bridge b	Guitar solo
	3:37	Bridge c	Interlude
A	4:02	Verse	
	4:27	Prechorus a	
	4:46	Prechorus b	
	5:25	Chorus	
	5:55	Postchorus	Chorus-like

D.74. Control Denied, "Cut Down" (*The Fragile Art of Existence*, 1999)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
	0:14	Introduction b	Guitar lead
A	0:21	Verse	
	0:42	Prechorus	
	1:09	Chorus	
B	1:36	Bridge a	Guitar solo
	1:54	Bridge a'	Guitar lead
	2:14	Bridge b	Interlude
	2:34		Vocals added
	2:55	Bridge c	
	3:01	Bridge d	Guitar solo
3:25	Bridge e		
A	3:32	Verse	
	3:53	Prechorus	
	4:20	Chorus	

D.75. Control Denied, "The Fragile Art of Existence" (*The Fragile Art of Existence*, 1999)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	Verse riff
A	0:18	Verse	
	0:36	Prechorus a	
	1:06	Prechorus b	
	1:45	Chorus	
	2:22	Codetta	
B	3:42	Bridge a	Guitar lead
	4:33	Bridge b	Guitar lead
	5:05	Bridge c	Guitar solo
	5:33		Bass lead
A	5:43	Verse	
	6:11	Prechorus a	
	6:41	Prechorus b	
	7:19	Chorus	
	7:57	Codetta	
Coda	9:94	Coda	

The following tracks are from the unfinished Control Denied album, *When Man and Machine Collide*. They appeared on a 2004 compilation album released by Karmageddon Media titled *Zero Tolerance*. As the tracks are presented as incomplete instrumental demos, I have only made the bare minimum of speculation as to the presence and location of formal functions.

D.76. Control Denied, “Track 01” (*Zero Tolerance*, 2004)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:43	a	
	1:12	b	
	1:34	c	
	1:49	d	
	1:56	e	
	2:04	c	
	2:19	f	
	2:26	g	
	2:34	h	
	3:24	i	
	3:27	j	
B	4:14	k	Guitar solo
	4:45	l	
A	5:15	a	
	5:35	b	
	6:06	c	
	6:20	d	
	6:28	e	
	6:36	c	
	6:51	f	
	6:58	g	
	7:05	h	
	7:56	i	
	7:59	j	

D.77. Control Denied, “Track 02” (*Zero Tolerance*, 2004)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:32	a	
	1:24	b	
	2:06	c	
	2:16	d	
B	3:00	e	Guitar solo
	3:36	f	Guitar solo
	3:46	g	
A	4:13	a	
	5:05	b	
	5:59	c	
	6:09	d	

D.78. Control Denied, "Track 03" (*Zero Tolerance*, 2004)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:29	a	
	1:02	b	
	1:46	c	
	2:11	d	
B	3:00	e	Guitar solo
	3:25	f	
	3:52	g	
A	4:12	a	
	4:46	b	
	5:29	c	
	5:55	d	
Coda	6:45	Coda	d riff

D.79. Control Denied, "Track 04" (*Zero Tolerance*, 2004)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction a	
	1:14	Introduction b	
A	1:29	a	
	2:14	b	Guitar solo
	2:26	c	
	2:50	d	
	3:08	e	
B	3:28	f	Decoy chorus?
	4:24	g	
	4:43	h	
A	5:08	a	
	5:51	b	
	6:03	c	
	6:26	d	
	6:45	e	

APPENDIX E. SUPPLEMENTARY FORM CHARTS FOR CHAPTER 6

AABA

E.1. Animals as Leaders, “Red Miso” (*Parrhesia*, 2022)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:13	Break	
	0:42	Main riff	
A'	0:54	Break	Guitar solo
	1:23	Main riff	
B	1:36	Bridge a	Interlude
	2:10	Bridge b	Interlude
	2:41	Bridge c	Breakdown
	3:10	Bridge d	Guitar solo
	3:32	Bridge e	Guitar lead
A (abbr.)	3:54	Main riff	
Coda	4:07	Coda	

E.2. Carcass, “Exhume to Consume” (*Symphonies of Sickness*, 1989)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction a	
A	0:03	Verse a	
	00:21	Verse a	
	0:39	Prechorus	
	0:48	Chorus	
A'	1:05	Verse b	
	1:13	Chorus	
B	1:30	Bridge a	Breakdown, synth solo
	1:52	Bridge b	Bridge verse
	2:09	Bridge c	Bridge verse
	2:19	Bridge d	Buildup
	2:28	Bridge e	Breakdown
	2:40	Bridge f	Interlude
A	3:10	Chorus	
	3:26	Chorus extension	
Coda	3:44	Coda	Verse a riff

E.3. Iron Maiden, “2 Minutes to Midnight” (*Powerslave*, 1984)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction a	
	0:31	Verse	
A	0:52	Prechorus	
	1:12	Chorus	
A	1:32	Verse	
	2:03	Prechorus	
	2:23	Chorus	
B	2:44	Bridge a	Dual lead
	3:04	Bridge b	Guitar solo
	3:25	Bridge c	Interlude
	3:44	Bridge c'	Dual lead
A	4:09	Verse	
	4:40	Prechorus	
	4:59	Chorus	
Coda	5:20	Coda	

E.4. Sarcófago, “Midnight Queen” (*The Laws of Scourge*, 1991)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction a	
	0:28	Introduction b	
	1:05	Introduction c	
A (abbr.)	1:22	Verse	
	2:02	Transition a	
A	2:10	Verse	
	2:47	Transition b	
	2:55	Chorus	
B Compound Bridge	3:28	Bridge a	Breakdown
	3:49	Bridge b	Guitar solo
	4:18	Bridge a	Breakdown
A	4:37	Verse	
	5:26	Chorus	
Coda	5:56	Coda	

Expanded AABA

E.5. Azarath, “Anti-Human, Anti-God” (*Diabolic Impious Evil*, 2006)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
A	0:00	Preverse	
	0:23	Verse	
A	0:34	Preverse	Chorus-like; Title text
	0:57	Verse	
B	1:08	Bridge a	Bridge introduction
	1:25	Bridge b	Intrlude
	1:41	Bridge c	Guitar solo
	2:03	Bridge a	Codetta
C (A continued?)	2:13	Chorus	
D	2:36	Bridge b	Buildup
	2:52	Bridge d	Guitar solo
	3:15	Bridge a	Interlude
C	3:23	Chorus	
Coda	3:47	Coda	
	4:10	Coda'	

E.6. Diamond Head, “Don’t You Ever Leave Me” (*Borrowed Time*, 1982)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	Buildup, verse riff
A	0:15	Verse	
	0:43	Chorus	
A	1:11	Introduction	
	1:25	Verse	
	1:52	Chorus	
B	2:21	Bridge a	Guitar solo
	2:42		– Backbeat enters
	3:11	Bridge b	Interlude
	3:27	Bridge c	Guitar solo
	3:55	Bridge c'	Guitar solo
A (abbr.)	4:09	Chorus	
C	5:12	Bridge d	Guitar solo
	6:01	Bridge d'	Hyperchorus
	6:39	Bridge d''	Guitar solo
Coda	7:01	Bridge d' ⇒ Coda	Hyperchorus

E.7. Gorephilia, “Ouroboran Labyrinth” (*In the Eye of Nothing*, 2020)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
	0:07		Verse
A	0:21	Main riff	Untexted
	0:34	Verse	
A	0:48	Main riff	Untexted
	1:02	Main rif	Chorus-like
	1:16	Bridge a	Interlude
B	1:42	Bridge b	Interlude
	1:59	Reintroduction	
A	2:07	Verse	
	2:16	Main riff	Untexted
C	2:32	Bridge c	Guitar solo
A (abbr.)	2:46	Main-riff	Verse-like
B	3:00	Bridge a	Interlude
	3:20	Bridge b	Interlude
Coda	3:36	Coda	

E.8. Necromantia, “Devilskin” (*Scarlet Evil Witching Black*, 1995)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction a	Wind sound effects
	0:17		– “Auld Lang Syne”
	0:45		Introduction b
A	0:58	Verse	
	1:26	Chorus	
A	1:37	Verse	
	2:00	Chorus	
B	2:11	Bridge a	Breakdown; guitar alone
	2:20		– Drums added
	2:25		– Half-time, band joins
	2:37	Bridge b	Guitar lead
	2:49	Bridge a	Breakdown riff
	2:59	Bridge b	Guitar lead
A	3:11	Bridge a	Breakdown riff
	3:22	Verse	
A	3:50	Chorus	
	4:02	Verse	
C	4:24	Chorus	
	4:36	Bridge c	
	4:47	Bridge d	Hyperchorus
Coda	4:58	Bridge e (bridge d')	Guitar solo
	5:32	Coda	

E.9. Sarcófago, “The Laws of Scourge” (*The Laws of Scourge*, 1991)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:20	Verse	
	0:34	Chorus	
A	0:49	Verse	
	1:03	Chorus	
B	1:18	Bridge a	Breakdown
	1:51	Bridge b	
	1:59	Bridge c	
	2:05	Bridge d	
A	2:15	Verse	
	2:29	Chorus	
B (abbr.)	2:45	Bridge a	
A (abbr.)	3:01	Verse	
Coda	3:09	Coda	

Type 1 Truncation (ABA type)

E.10. Sarcófago, “Screeches from the Silence” (*The Laws of Scourge*, 1991)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:18	Verse	
	0:36	Prechorus	
	1:03	Chorus	
B Compound Bridge	1:50	Bridge a	Mosh Section
	2:06	Bridge b	
	2:24	Bridge a	
	2:32	Bridge c	
	2:41	Bridge d	
	3:16	Retransition	
A (abbr.)	3:19	Chorus	

E.11. Unearth, “Crow Killer” (*The March*, 2008)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:23	Verse	
	0:46	Chorus	
B	1:00	Bridge a	Breakdown introduction
	1:12	Bridge b	Breakdown
	1:41	Bridge c	Guitar solo
A (abbr.)	2:04	Chorus	
Coda	2:31	Coda	

Type 2 Truncation (AAB type)

E.12. Archspire, “Golden Mouth of Ruin” (*Bleed the Future*, 2021)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction	
A	0:12	Verse a	
	0:23	Prechorus	
	0:35	Chorus	
A	0:57	Verse b	
	1:19	Chorus	
B	1:42	Bridge a	Bridge verse
	2:03	Bridge b	Guitar lead
	2:15	Bridge c	Bridge verse
	2:26	Bridge b	Guitar lead
	2:37	Bridge d	Breakdown introduction
			Breakdown
	3:04	Bridge f	Bridge verse
	3:14	Bridge f'	Bridge verse
	3:24	Bridge g	Terminal climax: Buildup
	3:29	Bridge h	Breakdown
	3:40	Bridge h'	Hyperchorus

E.13. The Faceless, “(Instru)mental Illness” (*In Becoming a Ghost*, 2017)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction a	
	0:08	Introduction b	
A	0:17	A	
	0:33	B	
	0:55	Transition	
A	0:59	A	
	1:14	B	
B	1:36	Bridge	Guitar solo
Coda	2:02	Coda	Based on Introduction a

E.14. Forbidden, “Infinite” (*Twisted into Form*, 1990)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction a	
	0:20	Introduction b	
	0:52	Introduction c	
A	1:14	Verse	
	1:34	Prechorus	
	1:49	Chorus	
A	2:12	Verse	
	2:32	Prechorus	
	2:47	Chorus	
B	3:09	Bridge a	Breakdown
	3:19	Bridge b	Guitar solo
	3:58	Bridge c	Guitar lead
	4:07	Bridge d	Guitar lead
	4:17	Bridge c	Guitar solo
	4:27	Bridge d	Bridge verse
	4:46	Bridge e	Buildup
	5:06	Bridge f	Guitar lead
Coda	5:47	Coda	

E.15. Opeth, “Moonlapse Vertigo” (*Still Life*, 1999)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction a	
	0:46	Introduction b	
A	1:55	Verse a	Clean
	2:36	Verse b	Harsh
A	3:21	Verse a	Clean
	3:44	Verse b	Harsh
B	4:29	Bridge a	Bridge introduction
	4:54	Bridge b	Guitar solo
	5:15	Bridge c	Interlude
	5:39	Bridge d	Guitar solo
	6:04	Bridge e	Bridge verse; harsh
	6:28	Bridge f	Interlude
	7:15	Bridge g	Bridge verse
Coda	8:02	Coda	Based on bridge g

E.16. Sepultura, “Propaganda” (*Chaos A.D.*, 1993)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction a	
	0:14	Introduction	
A (abbr.)	0:27	Verse	
	0:40	Link	
A	0:46	Verse	
	0:58	Chorus	
A	1:17	Verse	
	1:30	Chorus	
B Compound Bridge	1:42	Bridge a	Guitar solo
	2:06	Bridge b	Guitar solo
	2:19	Bridge c	Breakdown
	2:38	Bridge d	Buildup
	2:42	Bridge e	Breakdown
	2:55	Bridge e’	Breakdown
	3:08	Bridge e’’	Breakdown

E.17. YOB, “Adrift in the Ocean” (*Atma*, 2011)

Supersection	Time	Section	Description
Introduction	0:00	Introduction a	
	2:34	Introduction b	
	4:05	Introduction c	
	4:15	Introduction d	
	5:00	Introduction e	
	5:38	Introduction f	Buildup
A (abbr.)	6:02	Verse	Untexted
	6:37	Break	
A	6:45	Verse	Texted
	7:25	Prechorus	
	7:31	Chorus	
	7:52	Break	
A	8:08	Verse	
	8:45	Transition/Prechorus	
	8:50	Chorus	
B	9:22	Bridge a	Interlude
	10:49	Bridge b	Guitar lead
	11:11	Bridge b’	Guitar lead
	11:32	Bridge c	Breakdown (1/3 tempo)

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