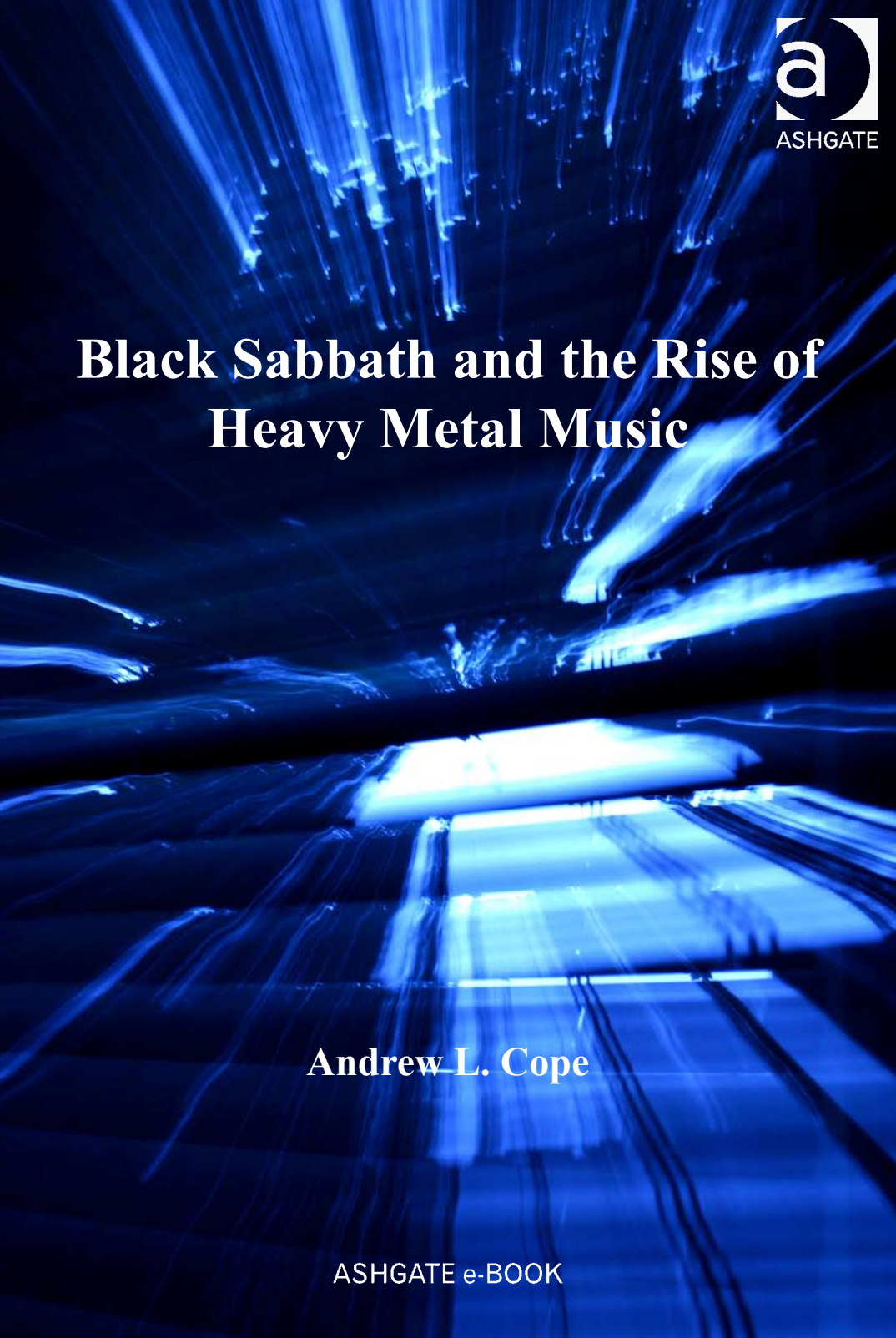
ASHGATE
Black Sabbath and the Rise of Heavy Metal Music
Andrew L. Cope
ASHGATE e-BOOK

BLACK SABBATH AND THE RISE OF HEAVY METAL MUSIC

This book is lovingly dedicated to my late Mother –
Christina Jean Cope (1927–2003)

Black Sabbath and the Rise of Heavy Metal Music

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ASHGATE

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Foreword

At last! A book about heavy metal as *music*.

For many years popular music studies has been dominated by texts which fail to address the unique combination of musical sounds, timbres and structures that distinguishes heavy metal from hard rock. *Black Sabbath and the Rise of Heavy Metal Music* fills that gap and offers researchers and students alike the opportunity to explore and enjoy an engaging musical investigation into the birth and development of the heavy metal *sound*. Taking Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin as his starting point, Andy Cope identifies significant differences in their musical syntax: the angular and modal riffs, sequences of power chords, and down-tuned guitar riffs of Black Sabbath; the more conventional blues, rock and roll syntax of Led Zeppelin. As his analysis shows, Black Sabbath formulated the radical and extensive transgressions of the blues and rock and roll context of their origins and established metal as a distinctive genre; in contrast, Led Zeppelin faithfully retained blues and rock and roll stylisations, albeit with moderate modifications, so instigating the sound of hard rock.

As Andy Cope notes, while the purpose of his research has been to analyse the syntactical design of heavy metal and relate it to hard rock, this is contextualised with reference to their social context. He begins with an interrogation of why Birmingham provided a particular geographical space for the evolution and early development of metal and hard rock. As both an academic and a performing guitarist in rock and metal bands, his choice of musical examples reflects personal insight and an ear for detail, providing the reader with a thoughtful textual analysis of key tracks by Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin.

The focus on metal's musical evolution is developed in a detailed discussion of second generation British bands (the so called New Wave of British Heavy Metal including Motörhead, Judas Priest, Diamond Head, Venom and Iron Maiden) and the ways in which they amplified the dark and aggressive coding established by Black Sabbath. In turn, NWOBHM shaped and influenced subsequent developments in heavy metal, and these are discussed with reference to Metallica, Slayer, Napalm Death, Carcass, Cradle of Filth, Arch Enemy, Drowning Pool and Machine Head. Attention is also drawn to the rapidly growing proliferation of women in modern metal, including such major performers as Angela Gossow and Tarja Turunen. Then, again, it's not that surprising when front page and central articles in mainstream metal periodicals are as much about female musicians as male. It's rock, not metal that is misogynistic, as fans of Arch Enemy, Cradle of Filth, Lacuna Coil and Nightwish are all too aware.

This is an exciting book and one which will open up new avenues of investigation for researchers and students alike. It is warmly recommended.

Sheila Whiteley
Emeritus Professor of Popular Music
University of Salford

General Editor's Preface

The upheaval that occurred in musicology during the last two decades of the twentieth century has created a new urgency for the study of popular music alongside the development of new critical and theoretical models. A relativistic outlook has replaced the universal perspective of modernism (the international ambitions of the 12-note style); the grand narrative of the evolution and dissolution of tonality has been challenged, and emphasis has shifted to cultural context, reception and subject position. Together, these have conspired to eat away at the status of canonical composers and categories of high and low in music. A need has arisen, also, to recognize and address the emergence of crossovers, mixed and new genres, to engage in debates concerning the vexed problem of what constitutes authenticity in music and to offer a critique of musical practice as the product of free, individual expression.

Popular musicology is now a vital and exciting area of scholarship, and the *Ashgate Popular and Folk Music Series* presents some of the best research in the field. Authors are concerned with locating musical practices, values and meanings in cultural context, and draw upon methodologies and theories developed in cultural studies, semiotics, poststructuralism, psychology and sociology. The series focuses on popular musics of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. It is designed to embrace the world's popular musics from Acid Jazz to Zydeco, whether high tech or low tech, commercial or non-commercial, contemporary or traditional.

Professor Derek B. Scott
Professor of Critical Musicology
University of Leeds

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Firstly, I would like to especially thank my good friend and mentor Professor Sheila Whiteley. I am indebted and extremely grateful to Sheila for her inspiration, belief and constant encouragement throughout the writing of this book and the PhD thesis that preceded it.

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I would like to say a big thank you my inspirational elder brother Maurice Cope who played a significant role in encouraging me to submit the thesis proposal that ultimately led to the publication of this work. Furthermore, Maurice not only shared his first-hand experience of the 1960s and 70s rock touring circuits but also gave considerable time to reading drafts and discussing/sharing ideas.

I would like to thank other family members and close friends for their various contributions: to Ed and Kath Steele, my aunt and late uncle, and my brother David Cope, for their enthusiastic encouragement and pride in my work; to Shaun and Heather Gillespie for their untiring love, support and encouragement; to my son Ben Cope for sharing his insight into the techniques and culture of the extreme metal scene; to my daughter Hannah Cope, particularly for all the conversations we shared concerning the role and status of women in rock and metal; to my step-son David Powell who showed constant enthusiastic interest in my work and for the reading of numerous drafts; to my step-daughter Lisa Powell for sharing her knowledge of rock, metal and the Goth culture; and to Colleen and Brian Pearson for their friendship, the reading of drafts and the many hours spent discussing the issues presented in this book. A special thank you goes to Brian for his skilful editing of the photo used on the book front cover.

My final thank you is an extra special one and goes to my wife, Lesley Cope, who has been utterly brilliant throughout – a perpetual source of love, support and encouragement and without whom this book would never have been written.

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Introduction

This book is about heavy metal as *music*. Much has been written about heavy metal from a sociological or ethnological perspective (that is, cultural/sub-cultural issues, dress codes, lyrics and so on) but very little in terms of the actual musical sounds, timbres and structures that uniquely combine to generate the identifiable fingerprint that listeners recognise as the heavy metal *sound*.

Furthermore, academic discourse surrounding heavy metal as a genre of twentieth-century music appears to be marked by a substantial degree of ambiguity, promoting heavy metal as a monolithic force that encompasses many different styles and practices. For example, 'As heavy metal embraces styles from the heaviest to the lightest, from the growled and snarled to the sweetly melodious, from themes of evil and mayhem to those of love …' (Weinstein 2000: 98).

This paradox has formed, it would seem, without extensive, rigorous or detailed musicological analysis to interrogate the significant differences in musical syntax between bands considered to be heavy metal, and that would include, importantly, those considered to be progenitors of heavy metal such as Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin (for example, Weinstein 2000, Walser 1993 and Shuker 2002). The central concern throughout this work, then, is to address the need for such analysis and to offer a re-evaluation of the rules that define heavy metal as a genre and its distinction from heavy rock.

Naturally, much of the discussion will be presented in the context of genre(s) and in order to clarify the importance, meaning and relevance of genre, I have included, below, a summary of the concepts established by Fabbri which reflect my own interpretation of the term throughout this work. In 'A Theory of Musical Genres: Two Applications' (1981), Fabbri defined musical genre as 'a set of musical events (real or possible) whose course is governed by a definite set of socially acceptable rules' (p. 52). Those rules, therefore, collocate the compositional, performative (including communicative), social and aesthetic codes into a synthesised whole. Nevertheless, the 'formal and technical rules, on a compositional level, play a major role in all musical genres' (p. 55) and therefore an interrogation of the musical syntax of heavy metal is considered not only relevant but necessary.

Fabbri has also argued that genres do not form, as it were, in a vacuum but originate from musical systems that are already established. Here, stable systems are 'transgressed' to form new genres from existing ones. This process is, by varying degrees, a mutational one where, in the early formative stages of a new genre, evidence of both the old and the new co-exist within the given musical set.

The significance of my own research in this respect is found in the way that Black Sabbath formulated radical and extensive transgressions of the blues and rock and roll context of their origins whilst Led Zeppelin's more moderate

transgressions of that same context faithfully retained blues and rock and roll stylisations; thus a clear dichotomy emerged between the two bands. The unique coding established by both Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin has been perpetuated through the engendering of those contrasting sets of coding by subsequent bands and this process has significantly contributed to the stability of the genres through frequent re-emphasising of the key codes. Nevertheless, the evolutionary progress of heavy metal and hard rock has been marked by a constant flow of new transgressions (more specifically reflecting the progress of technology) which have become a synchronised and diachronic part of that evolutionary process.

Fabbri asserts that this state of flux contributes to a process where genres are 'fuelled by relationships between various laws, by transgressions against them and above all by ambiguities' (p. 63). Thus, the ambiguities that I drew attention to above start to make some sense in the light of Fabbri's theories. For example, he highlights the somewhat subjective nature of this topic by pointing out that even the definition of 'music' itself has been the subject of scholarly debate for some considerable time and as a result the 'excessive broadness' that allows the term 'music' to cover any types of events based on sound, has also allowed theorists to call 'genre' any 'set of genres' (pp. 52–3). It seems to me that it is this concept that has informed the established works on heavy metal to date.

Fabbri does, however, maintain the validity of genre as a necessary means of understanding music and offers a solution to such 'excessive broadness' through the evaluation of specific sets of musical events in relation to other opposing sets (p. 53). Here, there is a clear implication that genres become apparent by their sense of 'otherness' within the wider amalgam of related forms and it is this concept that has informed my own methodology. I have, therefore, sought to offer a more defined identity for heavy metal by such comparative means and thus the central chapters of this book, Chapters 2 and 3, focus on a comparative analysis of the formative works of Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin. Additionally, there are many places throughout other chapters where similar comparisons are made.

Such comparative methodology appears to have been largely overlooked by established authors. For example, whilst Shuker has rightly highlighted the difficulties inherent in establishing a generic identity for hard rock and heavy metal ('… heavy metal cannot be comfortably reduced to formulaic terms' (2002: 160), it would seem that there has been little attempt to recognise the distinctly contrasting musical codes in any attempt to define the genre. His references to Black Sabbath and AC/DC as examples of heavy metal are clear evidence of this problem; the syntax of AC/DC is formed from a balance of tonal based harmony, open chords and established blues/rock and roll conventions but such conventions are absent from the syntax of Black Sabbath's early output where key numbers are based, instead, on modal lines, angular riffs, down-tuned guitars and episodic structures. Thus the syntax of Black Sabbath and the emerging heavy metal genre become apparent by their 'otherness' in relation to the contrasting coding displayed by AC/DC. This concept is discussed in detail throughout Chapter 2.

Simon Frith called for a 'renewed genre analysis of popular music' as early as 1987, asserting that 'we still do not know nearly enough about the musical language of pop and rock' (Leppert and McClary (eds) 1987: 145). Yet, to date, the major academic works on heavy metal have not addressed the need to interrogate the musical syntax of heavy metal in a sufficiently detailed way. Deena Weinstein, for example, in her book *Heavy Metal* (2000), attempts to explain heavy metal as a genre through sociological methods and the adoption of a 'chaos' theme. Her argument is very much about the verbal, visual and social practices associated with heavy metal. However, even though Weinstein has little to say about the music, she does nevertheless recognise the potential for a clear codification of heavy metal noting that heavy metal 'is a musical genre' with a 'code or set of codes' that is 'sufficiently coherent to demarcate a core of music that is undeniably heavy metal' (p. 6).

The need for establishing such a set of codes based on musical elements has been suggested by Allan Moore. In his work *Rock: the Primary Text* (2001), Moore highlights the need for detailed syntactical and systematic deconstruction of heavy metal and hard rock texts. In a discussion of style and genre in rock and metal, Moore draws attention to what he describes as the inadequacy of the 'single label heavy metal' and the way in which the application of this all inclusive term has tended to minimise the differences of style that can be found. He goes on to advocate the need to distinguish between hard rock and heavy metal suggesting that 'there is both room and cause for a great deal of research' in order to develop more defined models that distinguish between rock and metal (pp. 147–51).

Richard Middleton also supports the value of using musical coding in the identification of genre within rock and metal. In Chapter 6 of his seminal work, *Studying Popular Music* (1990), he discusses communication and codes, arguing that the coding of popular music is marked by variables. The emphasising or removal of specific codes gives character and identity to musical forms (Middleton 2002: 176–83). He also suggests that the musical syntax, which is formed when bands create and reiterate certain shapes and figures, becomes the signifier of musical style.

Furthermore, Middleton has argued that whilst, in some instances, genres privilege the musical codes, in other cases 'a piece may be so tightly bound to socialised conventions as to be "about" its code' (2002: 173). The permutations inherent in this theory reflect those established by Fabbri and re-affirm the importance of social context in generic coding. Therefore, an equally important part of my research and the presentation of this work has been to offer a balanced consideration of the aesthetics which drive, and the social conditions which favour, the creation of the music that I have analysed.

The reluctance of authors such as Deena Weinstein to engage with musical syntax in any kind of detailed manner is understandable and explained by David Bracket (Hesmondhalgh and Negus (eds) 2002: 66). In this passage Bracket suggests that non-musicologists often feel somewhat inhibited when discussing the elements of popular music because they are unfamiliar with its technical

terminology, or are intimidated by its abstract, non-representational quality. Equally, other 'non musician' writers of popular music resist the need for textual description and analysis on account of the 'opacity of analytical meta-language' that is used in musicology. For Bracket, the 'sonic level is crucial to conveying meaning', a point that few would dispute.

The purpose of my research, then, has been to analyse the syntactical design of heavy metal and relate it to hard rock, keeping my analyses at all times within the social context of their origins in order to offer some new, provisional theories as to the generic identity of heavy metal.

In this work I propose, therefore, that (1) the origins of heavy metal began with Black Sabbath in Birmingham during the late 1960s, (2) Led Zeppelin (also part of the Birmingham story) were of pivotal importance in establishing the generic fingerprints of hard rock and, most important, (3) that there is a clear musical and aesthetic dichotomy between these two bands, thus contradicting the work of major academic authors on heavy metal such as Deena Weinstein and Robert Walser, who would each consider both Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath to be heavy metal (Walser 1993: 120, Weinstein 2000: 12).

In order to clarify my argument I have illustrated the recurrent features of heavy metal through the core and periphery model, identifying and situating 'key' codes that appear to be present in all forms of metal (the core) and the peripheral codes that become important in the formation of sub-genres; for example, the use of synthesisers in black metal and symphonic metal. Through this method I have not only identified major syntactical and aesthetic differences between Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin, (for example, the angular and modal based, down-tuned guitar riffs of Black Sabbath compared with the conventional blues/rock and roll syntax of Led Zeppelin) but also recognised the work of Black Sabbath as being of vital significance to the evolution of heavy metal. Furthermore, this method has allowed me to explain the stability of heavy metal and hard rock by recognising the perpetuation of those codes in the work of subsequent bands who have also contributed to the enlarging of the core and periphery.

In order to establish the core and periphery of heavy metal coding I have analysed the musical syntax not only of Black Sabbath but also of many other significant heavy metal and heavy rock bands from all decades. My methodology included extensive listening, detailed observations, transcriptions of the music (especially the guitar parts) and systematic logging of the results. In this way I was able to chronologically identify recurrent key components as the generic stylisations and coding of rock and metal gradually stabilised. Furthermore, by examining recurrent lyrical themes and aesthetic codes it became apparent that those bands who embraced the angular and modal based, down-tuned guitar riffs of Black Sabbath also, in the main, embraced the same anti-hegemonic aesthetic that marked the work of Black Sabbath, thus suggesting a contextualised cohesion of musical syntax and aesthetic coding that is exclusive to heavy metal.

This book is divided into chapters that reflect the chronological development of heavy metal but within the chapters I have adopted a thematic approach to

the various elements and strands that collocate to form the syntax of metal and also taken into account the circumstances that have influenced and shaped that evolutionary process. Chapter 1 considers why Birmingham, England seemed to provide a particular geographical space for the emergence of heavy metal. Here, I highlight the importance of Fabbri's argument that genres do not form in an empty space but as transgressions of already established forms. Therefore, I will pose a number of pertinent questions intended to develop an interrogation of those early influential factors.

These questions will be theorised through the concept of music, space and place; in particular my methodology, here, is founded on the concept of 'musical milieu', a method that emerged in Peter Webb's discussion of the Bristol music scene (in Whiteley et al. (eds), 2004). I will adopt a similar technique to research why specific events and particular people local to the Birmingham region seemed to influence the emergence of heavy metal. The salient points here will centre on (1) the new motorway connections to Birmingham and its geographically central position midway between London and Liverpool, (2) the possible impact of the grey and desolate landscape of Aston, (3) the working-class day-to-day monotony of school and factory and (4) the significant implications of Tony Iommi losing the ends of two of his fretting fingers in a machine shop accident. Threaded throughout this same discussion will be constant references to the way in which a distinct and unique musical form emerged out of those Birmingham influences, one marked by down-tuned guitars, angular and modal riffs, sequences of power-chords[1] and music that was dark, angry and Gothic, promoting themes of anti-patriarchy. This very form became, I argue, the starting point for heavy metal at the hands of Black Sabbath and divergent from the blues-based and eclectic work of Led Zeppelin. Nevertheless, the influence of Birmingham was pronounced in their work too, not least in the muscular and aggressive performance style of John Bonham.

Chapter 2 will interrogate points arising from Chapter 1 with specific reference to the musical development of both Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin. Here, I detail the fundamental points of my argument which will suggest that Black Sabbath, through radical transgressions of their origins, initiated the evolution of heavy metal whilst Led Zeppelin, through a re-working of blues conventions significantly contributed to the evolution of hard rock.

Chapter 3 will be related to Chapter 2 in that it will examine and contrast the aesthetics of each band to discover whether the same dichotomy found in the musical syntax is mirrored in the verbal, visual and ideological strands.

Chapter 2 (and Chapter 4) contain key musicological arguments and also a small number of pertinent transcriptions to pinpoint the specifics of musical discourse. My illustrations here will often be explained in terms of the Western tonal system even though metal extensively draws on modal forms. Therefore, where necessary I make use of the standard analytical tools and meta-language of Western tonal music so that the contrasting contexts of the tonal and modal

[1] These concepts will be explained in full within Chapters 1 and 2.

systems may be both enhanced and clarified. I recognise that some readers may not be familiar with such language but I have tried to keep such analysis within the more general context of the discussion. Hopefully, for the non-musician, the gist of the argument will remain in focus even when the musicology is at its most complex.

Chapter 4 will discuss the extent to which the second generation of British heavy metal bands (the so called New Wave of British Heavy Metal or NWOBHM) contributed to the evolution and stability of the genre. This will involve analysing the music of Motörhead, Judas Priest, Diamond Head, Venom and Iron Maiden to illustrate how new techniques were developed in order to amplify the dark and aggressive coding established by Black Sabbath. Those new techniques include double-kicks and the blast-beat, trem-picking and rabid vocalisations (all these terms fully explained in due course). Chapter 4 will illustrate how such new techniques were arrived at and the way in which these shaped and influenced subsequent developments in heavy metal represented by such bands such as Metallica, Slayer, Napalm Death, Carcass, Cradle of Filth, Arch Enemy, Drowning Pool and Machine Head.

Chapter 4 will also further examine the theories of Walser and Weinstein in relation to the concept of heavy metal being driven by dress codes and other aspects of imagery. This particularly relates to the studs and leather image of Judas Priest but will also interrogate Walser's identification of androgyny as an identifying feature of heavy metal.

Chapter 5, the final chapter, will contain a number of detailed illustrations designed to demonstrate the way in which the combined coding of Black Sabbath and the NWOBHM has become ubiquitous as the established coding of heavy metal. Those illustrations will be drawn from the repertoire of Machine Head, Arch Enemy, Trivium, Cradle of Filth and Nightwish. This chapter will also further examine Walser's concept of classical assimilation by heavy metal bands but will broaden and re-evaluate that concept in the context of modern metal.

Finally, Chapter 5 will further examine the way in which heavy metal seems to have opened up a space for women. Here, I will draw attention to the establishment of a male/female solidarity and the rapidly growing proliferation of important women in modern metal. At the same time, I will highlight the need for much further, detailed research combined with a re-evaluation of the dominant trends, identified earlier, that present heavy metal as 'no girls allowed' and misogynistic.

Chapter 1
Birmingham: The Cradle of All Things Heavy

There appears to be a strong consensus amongst academics and established journalists that heavy metal and hard rock emerged during the late 1960s/early 1970s in the industrial Midlands of England (for example, Walser 1993: 10, Weinstein 2000: 4 and Christie 2003: 1). The Birmingham/West Midlands bands at the centre of that evolutionary process were Black Sabbath, (half of) Led Zeppelin and Judas Priest.[1] Such developments invite an interrogation of why Birmingham seemed to provide a particular geographical space for the evolution and early development of metal and hard rock and this chapter begins that interrogation.

The significance of 'Music, Space and Place', in this respect, emerges in Peter Webb's article 'Interrogating the Production of Sound and Place: the Bristol Phenomenon, from Lunatic Fringe to Worldwide Massive' (Whiteley et al. (eds) 2004: 66–88) that investigates the reasons behind the growth of the 'Bristol Sound'. Webb's discussion centres on the way in which musical forms are shaped by the geographical environment in which they evolve and his methodology is founded on the concept of 'musical milieu'. He suggests a process in which various influences combine to form particular constellations and trajectories at given points of time to affect the 'sounds of the city'. The milieu, within and around a particular location, influences the music that becomes dominant for a period of time and this conceptualisation has particular relevance to my research into heavy metal and heavy rock. Not least, the theory of 'musical milieu' provides a useful methodology for the interrogation of the early Birmingham metal scene.

An interview with Black Sabbath drummer Bill Ward, found on page 33 of Steven Rosen's biography of Black Sabbath, *Black Sabbath* (2002; originally published as *Wheels of Confusion* in 1996), provided me with a relevant point of departure in searching for some of the influential factors that led to the emergence of heavy metal and hard rock in late-1960s Birmingham:

> There was a boom going on that was created from everything that was coming out of Liverpool. Liverpool had opened up this enormous market, so most of

[1] Although not discussed in any detail within the scope of this book, I acknowledge the significance of other Birmingham/West Midlands bands who were central to the inception of later developments of heavy metal and include Bolt Thrower who contributed to the emergence of death metal, and Napalm Death who, during the mid to late 1980s, pioneered the most extreme form of metal, grindcore.

> the cities – Birmingham, London, Newcastle, Manchester, all had bumper crops during the '60s. There were a lot of clubs opening up that had never before existed. Everybody was getting involved. There was the general theme of revolution and moving into new directions in a way that had never quite had the strength. (Rosen 2002: 33)

Bill Ward's reflections certainly point to a process of influence where copy or pastiche is followed by transgression. Moreover, that same process illustrates Fabbri's argument (discussed in the Introduction to this book) that new genres do not form in an empty space but form as transgressions of already established genres. For example, 'moving in new directions' and the importance of Liverpool summarises the way in which the starting point for the members of Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin (along with many other hopefuls) was to form a rock and roll band but then, after time and some success, to look for ways to be different. It is important then, in relation to both bands, to look at the starting point and the influences, particularly from Liverpool (beat/rock and roll) and the London blues scene, and relate the musical coding of those dominant trends to developments in Birmingham. This process also includes identifying key musicians, managers and promoters, new venues and socio-geographic influences that collocate to shape the new forms of music. This chapter, therefore, is presented in the form of three inter-related topics: 'Outside Influences', 'Birmingham: The Sound of the City' and 'Liverpool, London, Manchester and Newcastle – Why Not Here? Dominant Musical Trends in Other Cities'

In 'Outside Influences', I examine the extent and impact of the Beatles and Merseybeat (with its associated American rock and roll influence) and the London-based British blues revival and its impact on Birmingham during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Additionally, I seek to highlight the extensive and vital influences of managers and promoters, namely, Giorgio Gomelski, Mike Vernon and Jim Simpson, who not only encouraged experimentation and revolution but also provided new venues to showcase new styles.

In 'Birmingham: The Sound of the City', there is a focus on socio-geographic influences such as the idiomatic characteristics of the industrial Midlands and the personal attributes, background and interests of the Birmingham musicians who forged the hard rock and heavy metal sounds from that period. Finally, 'Liverpool, London, Manchester and Newcastle – Why Not Here? Dominant Musical Trends in Other Cities' picks up on the reference made by Bill Ward (above) that identifies the significance of other cities in the UK during the 1960s. This comment formed an interesting challenge and led me to an interrogation of the dominant musical trends in London, Liverpool (besides the blues and rock and roll influences discussed in 'Outside Influences'), Manchester and Newcastle. After all, these cities also had, as Ward explains, 'bumper crops' in the 1960s and this raised the question of why the origins of heavy metal did not form in London, Liverpool, Manchester or Newcastle. This final part of my discussion will offer some brief suggestions and provisional answers to this question.

Outside Influences

It would seem that the geographical positioning of Birmingham was crucial to the emergence of specific musical innovations during the 1960s and early 1970s. In particular, the introduction and expansion of the motorway network in England meant that Birmingham's location, mid-way between London and Liverpool, was especially significant. The opening of the M62 in 1958, the M1 between London and Birmingham in 1959 and the section of the M6 linking Birmingham to the M62 in 1963 meant that England's second city became easily accessible from the two most important musical centres in the UK during the 1960s, London and Liverpool. This allowed musical developments happening in Liverpool and London, such as the rock and roll based Merseybeat pop and the British blues revival to reach and affect Birmingham in a unique way. The resultant ebb and flow of musical concept and style spun a web of vibrant activity that not only shaped the 'Birmingham sound' but also directly influenced the musical and aesthetic direction of influential bands such as Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin.

Liverpool's Influence on Birmingham

Birmingham, like other cities across the UK, was gripped by the rock and roll craze that began in America during the 1950s. Being England's second city it was natural that rock and roll cover bands multiplied profusely in Birmingham. An article written in 1974, which appeared in *New Musical Express*, highlights the extent of Birmingham's unique absorption of the rock and roll phenomenon:

> Birmingham is a natch for rock and roll. It is dour and grubby, the biggest industrial city in Britain. Birmingham is flanked by coalfields, steel mills and car and engineering plants. Sometimes a little like Detroit, in fact. And, Birmingham is also the pivotal centre of the country – to the north lies Manchester, Liverpool and Sheffield, to the south, a hundred miles or so down the M1 is London. But most of all Birmingham is a strong working class community producing a culture, which has found contemporary substance in high-energy rock and roll. Too close, perhaps, to form its own unique identity but situated just right to catch whatever happens to the north or south.[2]

As the 1960s progressed the number of rock and roll groups in Birmingham multiplied and this local phenomenon came to be known as the Brumbeat, an adaptation of the term that identified events in Liverpool as the Merseybeat. The Merseybeat was rooted in rock and roll and was initiated partially by the Beatles who themselves were motivated significantly by the music of Chuck Berry, Little Richard and Goffin

[2] http://www.theelonetwork.com/Brumbeat.htm

and King.[3,4] The Brumbeat and Merseybeat phenomena, then, were both, in turn, directly inspired by the early musical developments of the Beatles.

Charlie Gillett identifies five styles of rock and roll: Bill Haley, New Orleans dance band blues, rockabilly, Chicago rhythm and blues, and vocal rock and roll (1994: 23–35). It was a combination of the hard-edged rhythm and blues style of Berry, the effervescent and melodic tenor style from New Orleans and a good measure of vocal rock and roll that marked the early work of the Beatles. It was a highly fuelled cocktail of music, youth, sexual energy and Liverpool humour. The Beatles' early career (for example, the Hamburg days) is well documented, they played mostly covers of the above artists and similar songs, for example, 'Roll Over Beethoven' (Chuck Berry) and 'Long Tall Sally' (Little Richard). The raucous and effervescent rock and roll that fired the formation and initial repertoire of the Beatles clearly inspired their early original work, evidence of which is such numbers as 'Love Me Do' (1963), 'I Saw Her Standing There' (1963), 'I Want to Hold Your Hand' (1963), 'Eight Days a Week' (1964), 'A Hard Day's Night' (1964), 'Can't Buy Me Love' (1964) and 'I Feel Fine' (1964).

The significance of this is found in the way that the Beatles took rock and roll and reshaped it into original forms of music, which was a revelation to cover bands across the country. By originality I am suggesting that the music developed by the Beatles was something that moved beyond a copy, parody or pastiche of style,[5] highlighting rather an addition of new elements, in terms of not only rhythm, melody and harmony but also the sound. For example, the centrality of 'sound' in the production and aesthetics of popular music was to become as much a part of the agenda as new tunes and rhythms (for example, *Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* [1967]). It is this that musicians, producers and companies have come to focus on, so enlarging the genre. Importantly, it seems to be the novel sonic details of particular records that drives listeners' responses, evaluations and memories (for example, the Beatles' 'Yeah Yeah Yeah' in 'She Loves You' [1963]). These examples very much illustrate the way in which the centre/periphery model works, from inside one musical style to elements of another, thence to the genre in which the second style becomes a part, a style indicator that is found in the compositional/structural norm.

A brief listen to any of the early Beatles songs would illustrate the way in which they developed their unique syntax by the reshaping, blending and re-contextualisation of established conventions. For example, the rock and roll/blues

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[3] There were, of course, other influences in their mid to late career, but it is their original rock and roll inspiration that is significant to this discussion.

[4] Gerry Goffin and Carole King were an American song writing partnership noted particularly for their work with girl vocal groups such as the Shirelles. Goffin and King were also heroes to the Beatles who recorded 'Chains' and McCartney was quoted as saying he wished he could write as well as Goffin and King: http://www.history-of-rock.com/carole_king_and_gerry_goffin.htm

[5] Which is how they started out – as a covers band.

influenced 12-bar[6] format of the verse in 'Can't Buy Me Love' (1964) and the blues inflexions in the vocal part are blended with the minor key pop chorus which also doubles as the intro. The key here is the mediant minor (Em) moving through the dominant (G) to the tonic of the verse (C). Significant here, is the way in which Lennon and McCartney transform the conventional falling minor 3rd of the blues (in the vocal part). They do this by elongating the minor 3rd of the opening Em chord on the first syllable of the word 'love'. The expected fall to the tonic note E, on the second syllable, brings a surprise when it becomes the 5th of the chord Am. In 'I Want to Hold Your Hand' (1963), the 12-bar guitar riff[7] (as frequently used, for example, by Chuck Berry) and vocal harmonies (as used, for example, by Goffin and King) typically retain links with rock and roll whilst the variety of chords, including a minor 7th in the middle 8, again show the Beatles' experimentations at incorporating new ideas.

In 'From Me to You' (1963) the Beatles combine the influence of Roy Orbison (the oscillating tonic to submediant[8] [A major to F♯ minor] chords that feature in 'Oh, Pretty Woman' [1964], for example) with fresh ideas of their own design. In 'From Me to You', the tonic to submediant oscillation of 'Oh, Pretty Woman' is parodied (C to Am in this case) but becomes a point of ambiguity, unsettling the listener as first the intro then the verse suggests one tonal centre and then the other. As the song proceeds, C major seems to be established as the tonal centre as it reaches the end of the verse. However, as the song draws to a close, Lennon and McCartney throw in further surprises: first the sudden appearance of the flat submediant in its major form (A♭ major), followed by the chord of C major (tonic resolution) but, at the last, ending on the relative minor (Am) and thus concluding with the same tonal ambiguity that was established at the start.

This important development by the Beatles seems to be related to what Cawelti (cited in Shuker 2002: 17) describes as the 'rise of rock auteurship' whereby rock and pop musicians become 'artists' creating individual works that are driven by

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[6] I will use '12-bar' (hyphenated) with reference to specific devices such as 12-bar riff, 12-bar blues, etc., as opposed to the general way of describing a number of bars, that is, a 12 bar sequence, 12 bar phrase, etc.

[7] On the guitar, a riff produced by constant repetitions of the tonic, synchronised with a second figure that alternates between the dominant and submediant. The same riff is also frequently played on a piano in rock and roll and blues.

[8] Harmonic sequence (the order in which one chord follows another) can be represented either by the use of Roman Numerals or their equivalent technical names; out of necessity I occasionally refer to these names. They are: I = tonic, II = supertonic, III = mediant, IV = subdominant, V = dominant, VI = submediant and VII = leading note. The chords are formed by building on each degree of a common scale – a chord built on the first degree of the scale (the first note or starting note) is therefore chord I, the second degree chord II, etc. Chord sequences, when described in Roman form, will be shown with hyphens separating the chord changes (I-V-I, etc.).

the creators' own initiatives and freedom of expression as much as they are by the record companies' and managers' financial interests.

Whereas this phenomenon makes most sense in the light of *Revolver* (1966), *Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967) and later albums, the metamorphosing of rock and roll at the hands of the Beatles into beat-pop is, arguably, grounded in the first stages of auteurship. This is significantly important because the evolution of both hard rock and heavy metal was founded on the freedom to take the rock and roll and blues syntax and reshape those elements (the process of transgression) into new forms. Led Zeppelin, for example, in contributing significantly to the evolution of hard rock, seemed to amplify the rock and roll/blues roots and eclectic work of the Beatles[9] and this process was less a transgression of their roots than that of Black Sabbath who formed radical transgressions of rock and roll, evolving a syntax that stepped out of the periphery entirely to establish the fundamental coding of what would become heavy metal. Rock and roll remains important, however, because without it there would have been nothing to transgress.

Unpicking the stylistic elements of rock and roll from the work of the Beatles is important because the Chuck Berry style rock and roll, which was a key element of the early Beatles' sound, embodies particularly strong features that were maintained as key codes in the work of Led Zeppelin and subsequent inheritors of their generic innovations. This is significant in that half of Led Zeppelin were from the Birmingham beat and blues circuit and those influences had a bearing on the new music that Zeppelin produced. I would like to illustrate, therefore, a number of features which I discovered by much listening and playing, from the Chuck Berry style of rock and roll, which seemed to provide some of the musical language of subsequent rock and hard rock styles.

Significantly, Berry borrowed ideas from electric blues (thus intensifying the synthesis of blues and rock and roll), transforming the swing rhythms[10] of the blues into straight fours[11] and the downcast[12] lyrical themes of the blues into cheeky, romantic and lustful ones. Other dominant features inherited from the blues include the 12-bar riff, the 12-bar blues structure and a number of guitar-based features. These include (what I have termed) the 'transient 3rd' (where a change from a minor to a major 3rd is effected by a hammer-on,[13] a slide or a bend) and double-stopping. Double-stopping (within a rock and roll/blues guitar context)

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[9] In that they were eclectic in their output and that their rock-based output was founded on the syntax of blues and Chuck Berry style rock and roll. This theory will be expounded later in the chapter.

[10] Triplet sub-divisions of the main beat.

[11] Evenly spaced sub-divisions of the main beat.

[12] I acknowledge that not *all* blues themes are 'downcast'.

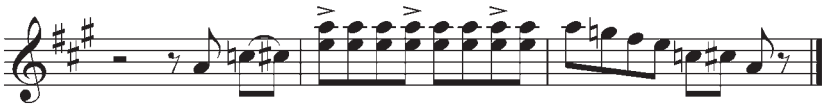
[13] This is a common technique used by string players. The first note is played with the usual right hand technique and the second is sounded by 'hammering down' a left hand finger. The opposite is achieved by playing a note with the usual right hand technique and then the second note with a pull of the left hand finger (and *vice versa* for left hand players).

is an idiomatic feature that seemed to influence further evolutionary developments in rock music. For example, the vocal harmonies of rock and roll, which are often based on 3rds and 6ths, are transformed in their instrumental version into 4ths because of the natural string spacing/tuning of the guitar. This had a significant implication for subsequent rock styles where riffs are based on 4ths and 5ths (which are inverted 4ths).

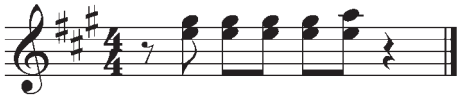
A further idiomatic feature to emerge from the double-stopped guitar style of Berry was a specific intervallic combination of 5th and flat 7th degrees and this feature I will refer to as a half-dominant 7th. This is often used in combination with a glissando slide. The following examples are provided to illustrate these features.

Example 1.1 illustrates the transient 3rd, which is a hammer-on. The transient 3rd is heard in the anacrusis and beat 2:3. Bar 1 illustrates a typical double-stopping technique. The 4ths are a natural outcome of forming a barre across the first two strings (in this case at fret 5). Example 1.2 illustrates a typical half-dominant 7th as used by Chuck Berry. This figure would serve as a fill (in a 'call and response' manner) and sound against an A pedal.[14]

Example 1.1 Typical Chuck Berry style intro



Example 1.2 Typical Chuck Berry-type guitar fill



Significantly then, such stylisations were to form an important part in the evolutionary development of rock through first the Beatles and then Led Zeppelin. For example, the main riff to 'Rock and Roll' (1971) illustrates the way in which the syntax of Led Zeppelin retains clear links with electric blues and Chuck Berry rock and roll. The key of A provides a number of idiomatic and timbral possibilities inherent in the use of open to stopped strings. The riff starts by outlining a dominant 6th chord where the presence of the F♯ submediant note (the 6th) provides a subtle

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In classical music these are called slurs but in rock guitar they are known, respectively, as hammer-on(s) and pull-off(s). Collectively they are known as ligados.

[14] A pedal is a long or repeated single note in the bass register (it could be played, in the rock/metal context, on the lower guitar strings, the bass guitar or lower range of a keyboard). An inverted pedal is the same effect but using a treble or higher pitched note.

reference to a 12-bar riff. A transient 3rd is also evident in the pitch inflexions of the string bends.

Importantly, the hard rock sound developed by Led Zeppelin was a synthesis of, not only riffs formed from transgressions of blues and rock and roll syntax, but also of other sonic elements such as loud volume, a driving and powerful back-beat and overdriven open chords that contribute to the sound as a whole. This context of musical events inspired a number of bands from early on to privilege the rock aspect of Zeppelin's sound as the entirety of their set, AC/DC[15] being a prime example.

The music of AC/DC, who formed in the mid 1970s, constructed their musical identity, like Led Zeppelin, out of the building blocks of electric blues and Chuck Berry style rock and roll. However, where Led Zeppelin developed an eclectic repertoire, AC/DC wholly privileged the elements found in Zeppelin's rock output. Therefore, whilst AC/DC naturally formulated their own unique context, the main elements of their set are clearly related to the work of Led Zeppelin. The use of simple, open chords played at high volume and combined with rock and roll/blues devices such as transient 3rds, 12-bar riffs and sliding half-dominant 7ths seem to be inspired by such numbers as Zeppelin's 'Living Loving Maid' (1969), 'Communication Breakdown' (1969), 'Heartbreaker' (1969) and 'Rock and Roll' (1971).

'Riff Raff' (1978), for example, is typical of AC/DC's output and illustrates some of the points made above. This number is based on open string chords and power-chords[16] that are clearly formed from standard open chords. The three opening chords, for example, fulfil the criteria for a power-chord, in that there is a focus on the lowest two notes (a perfect 5th formed from the notes A and E of the A chord) but aurally there is a real sense of A major tonality that comes from both the general context of the piece and the overtones[17] of the fretted but non-picked notes of the open A major chord.

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[15] Although considered an Australian band, it is significant that the main core of the band, Bon Scott, Angus Young and Malcolm Young were born and raised in Glasgow. They were taken to Australia, whilst young teenagers, by their parents who emigrated to escape the hardships of working-class life on the Glasgow docklands.

[16] Power-chords are formed using only two adjacent strings, normally the sixth and fifth or the fifth and fourth. The spacing of the power-chord shape forms the interval of a perfect 5th – and thus a chord with no sense of major/minor tonality (hence the power-chord is also known as a 5th chord). The point here is that heavy metal, unlike rock music, tends to avoid (as a general rule) the use of major/minor based chords in the construction of riffs and focuses, instead, on the use of true power-chords. The significance of this (along with the origins of the power-chord) is fully discussed in Chapter 2.

[17] The non-picked notes of the chord are still faintly audible due to the percussive nature of using a pick to sound the strings and this is exacerbated on the electric guitar when amplifiers are turned up loud.

'Have a Drink on Me' (1980) illustrates the way in which AC/DC adopted the half-dominant 7th along with transient 3rds, wrapped together in the idiomatic key of A with open to stopped string concepts. The opening of the main riff has a transient 3rd hammer-on and the end of the phrase contains a transient 3rd string bend. The sliding, half-dominant 7th is heard at the half way point of the phrase.

The work of the Beatles proved to be of further significance by 1967. By this time they had developed an eclectic style that seemed to retain rock as the core stylistic element, whilst at the same time venturing into a variety of other styles. This seemed to provide a second blueprint for the work of Led Zeppelin who not only inherited and then magnified the rock fundamentals of the Beatles' sound and built on their auteurship but also wholly embraced their eclecticism. This is entirely significant in that Led Zeppelin's output, overall, took in many influences including acoustic and folk music and the full relevance of this to the debate of codifying hard rock and heavy metal is discussed throughout Chapters 2 and 3.

By contrast, Black Sabbath, although starting life as a blues/rock and roll covers band, did not, in the main, utilise the coding of rock and roll in their sound after they became Black Sabbath in 1969. However, the auteurship of the Beatles that influenced Birmingham was of prime importance in the emergence of heavy metal at their hands because such auteuristic vision, arguably, emboldened them to indulge in the extensive transgressions (of both music and aesthetics) which became the launching pad for their new developments.

London's Influence on Birmingham

My discussion of Liverpool and its influence on the emerging Birmingham metal scene, has, so far, provided only partial answers to the 'why Birmingham' question. The following discussion of the London blues scene of the 1960s, and its impact, will provide a more complete picture and, significantly, links neatly with the discussion of Liverpool's and rock and roll's influence and this is drawn together in a short summary at the end of the chapter.

The London British blues revival and the extent of its influence on Birmingham is clear from the plethora of bands and performers who emerged out of the 1960s Birmingham blues and rock and roll scene. Some of these acts began as blues bands but later developed other styles; others maintained their affiliation with the blues and made significant contributions to the genre. Such acts included: Band of Joy (including Robert Plant and John Bonham), the Ace Kefford Stand, Chicken Shack (including Stan Webb and Christine Perfect [McVie]), Cozy Powell, the Spencer Davies Group (including Spencer Davies and Stevie Winwood), the Diplomats (including Denny Laine and Bev Bevan), the Uglies (including Trevor Burton and Steve Gibbons), El Riot and The Rebels (including John Lodge and Mike Pinder), the Monopoly (including Raymond Froggatt), the Idle Race (including Jeff Lynne), the Krewcats (including Ray Thomas and Mike Pinder), Gerry Lavene and the Avengers (including Roy Wood and Graeme Edge), Listen (including Robert Plant), Mike Sheridan and the Night Riders (including Roy Wood

and Jeff Lynne), Traffic (including Jim Capaldi and Stevie Winwood), the Everglades (including Trevor Burton), the Rockin' Chevrolets (including Tony Iommi), the Rest (including Tony Iommi and Bill Ward), Rare Breed (including Ozzy Osbourne), Bitta Sweet (including Al Atkins and Bruno Stapenhill), Blue Condition (including Al Atkins, Pete Boot and Bruno Stapenhill), the Moody Blues, Earth (later Black Sabbath), the Move, (one half of) Led Zeppelin and Judas Priest.

The British blues revival of the 1960s is a phenomenon that has been well documented (for example, Brunning 2002). The interest in both rural/acoustic and electric blues emerged as a Bohemian, middle-class interest in London during the late 1950s and early 1960s and was promoted by a small number of enthusiasts, not least, Mike Vernon and Giorgio Gomelski. Vernon and Gomelski were not band members or musical writers but their influence was, nonetheless, significant in shaping the direction of musical trends. Their contribution, therefore, illustrates something of the wider musical milieu that impacted on Birmingham. So, although their influence on the emergence of significant developments in the evolution of hard rock and metal in Birmingham is possibly a little indirect, I propose that it was a crucial one nevertheless.

My discussion here recognises the following three points as significant: (1) heavy metal and hard rock partially emerged as transgressions of the British blues revival; (2) new developments in artistic freedom and timbre emerged at Decca under Vernon, centred on the rise of the 'guitarist auteur';[18] and (3) Vernon influenced a more direct association between Birmingham-based blues and the development of hard rock via Chicken Shack.

Mike Vernon was a passionate advocate of Afro-American blues during the 1960s. Tenaciously working in collaboration with other enthusiasts, he was partly responsible for the British blues boom of the 1960s that spread across the UK from its central hub in London. Vernon was a producer at Decca studios in London from 1963. It was here that the first signs of his influence were apparent, not least his role in producing the *Blues Breakers with Eric Clapton* album of 1966. John Mayall's Bluesbreakers were one of Vernon's discoveries and reflect his insight, adept powers of persuasion and sense of timing. Featuring John Mayall, the newly enlisted Eric Clapton, John McVie and Hughie Flint, this album forged the way for the future not only of British blues but of a particular type of guitar soloing from Clapton that would send repercussions well beyond the realm of the blues. In this respect, these innovations put the guitarist centre stage, with Clapton's improvised solos played at full volume through a Marshall JTM 45 (nicknamed the Bluesbreaker).

Clapton's stubbornness in the studio to conform to normal practice was vital to the history of the rock guitar sound. During the recording of the *Blues Breakers*

[18] See earlier discussion. Also, Shuker (2002) recognises auteurship within popular music as a concept that emphasises the 'intentions of the creator of the music (usually the musician) …' (p. 17). The case in question refers more particularly to Eric Clapton.

album, Vernon was in despair at Clapton's refusal to 'direct inject' (plugging the guitar directly into the mixing desk to achieve perfect separation). Instead, Clapton insisted on playing at stage volume in the studio in order to achieve the richness of sound produced by the overdriven valve sound that only comes from amplifiers played at full or near full volume. He would have seen his artistic freedom compromised by playing in any other way. Vernon did eventually accommodate Clapton's desire to record as though live and in so doing paved the way for rock and metal recording to come (Brunning 2002: 45).

One other significant achievement of Vernon's was the founding of the Blue Horizon record label, a label devoted purely to the blues and the launching pad for some of the most influential of the British blues bands. Over its four-year history during the latter half of the 1960s, Vernon, through Blue Horizon, produced 60 singles and over 100 albums, 95 per cent of which were pure blues records (Brunning 2002: 150–65). Whilst the biggest name to be signed to the label was Fleetwood Mac, the most significant band to be signed with regard to this chapter was the Birmingham blues outfit Chicken Shack. Whilst Clapton's use of the JTM 45 combo magnified the timbral qualities of amplified blues guitar music initiated by guitarists such as Elmore James and Freddie King, Chicken Shack's employment of the newly designed, more powerful Marshall[19] stacks[20] pushed the boundaries of loud and aggressive blues to new extremes. In fact, Chicken Shack are cited as being one of the first bands to use Marshall stacks and to turn them up full:

> The band were beginning to build a reputation for their powerful, loud playing, and as Stan [Webb, Chicken Shack's guitarist/vocalist] describes, 'We were one of the first bands with great stacks of Marshall amp's behind us. We were so bloody loud, we could (and did) get away with murder!' (Brunning 2002: 139)

The way in which Chicken Shack pushed up the volume, creating a kind of blues-rock, was important to developments on the British scene.[21] The tendency for those

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[19] Marshall amplifiers were created by Jim Marshall (UK) and became the industry standard amplifiers used by rock guitarists from the late 1960 through the 1970s. Jim Marshall collaborated closely with guitarists such as Pete Townshend (the Who) to develop a loud and robust unit. It should be noted that Black Sabbath favoured the Laney units produced at Cradley Heath.

[20] The 'stack' was developed for much greater stage volume and projection than the combo. It consisted of a separate (usually) 100w or 200w amplifier 'head' and (normally at that time) two 4×12 speaker cabinets (4×12 meaning four twelve-inch speakers). These were then 'stacked' with the speaker cabinets at the bottom and the head on the top.

[21] Whereas the recordings of American bands such as Blue Cheer and Iron Butterfly were important in the development of loud blues-rock, bands such as Chicken Shack were, arguably, a more immediate and tangible influence in the UK due to regular live gigs on the British club circuit.

at the forefront of the British blues revival during the 1960s was to emphasise the electric aspect of electric rhythm and blues. The essence of Chicken Shack was just that, straight 12-bar blues played loud. There were naturally exceptions such as 'I'd Rather Go Blind' (1969), an Etta James cover, but they mainly played covers of Stan Webb's heroes John Lee Hooker and Freddie King. The output of King and Hooker provide ample illustrations of the standard electric blues forms and devices that were adopted by the British blues bands. For example, Table 1.1 illustrates a typical chord sequence used in blues. The format uses a cyclic 12 bar sequence, often featuring a shuffle or swing rhythm, and would provide the harmonic backdrop for the vocals and instrumental improvisations. The lyrics follow an 'A A B' pattern that synchronises with the 3×4 chord structure (illustrated in Table 1.1) and frequently present themes of hardship such as poverty and infidelity.

Table 1.1 Typical chord sequence as used by Freddie King

E (I)	A (IV)	E (I)	E (I)
A (IV)	A (IV)	E (I)	E (I)
B (V)	A (IV)	E (I)	B (V)

Furthermore, many of the melodic features that were embraced by Chuck Berry from electric blues and remoulded into the rock and roll forms discussed earlier are evident in their original swing form throughout the music of King and Hooker. Example 1.3 illustrates the syntax of a typical turnaround in a blues solo as adopted/developed by blues guitarists such as King and Hooker. A close inspection reveals much about the melodic syntax of standard blues and the way the idiomatic nature of the guitar informed many of those features.

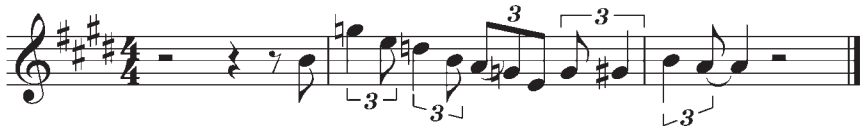
For example, the opening (from the first full bar) uses the first string fret 3 to an open first string. The G♮ creates a tension against the G♯ that is present in the accompaniment and such false relations[22] are typical blues stylisations. The second two notes of bar 1 form an idiomatic sequence of the first two notes of bar 1. The fret 3 to open string move on the second string not only forms a flat 7th (one of the 'blue' notes that characterise the blues sound) but the aural affect of the two features in succession forms one of the most distinguishing blues guitar sounds. The last two notes of bar 2 feature a transient 3rd formed by a hammer-on from the open third string to fret 1.

The half-dominant 7th discussed earlier in the chapter frequently appears in blues syntax and was, like the transient 3rd, absorbed from earlier blues conventions. This is clearly evident in John Lee Hooker's 'Boom Boom'. Released in 1962, it is not one of the earliest examples but is nevertheless a good one. This track also

[22] Where there are contradictions of tonality with a single chord or phrase.

highlights other points of blues syntax, for example, the 'call and response' effect evident in the dialogue between guitar and bass. Also, the flat 5th heard in the main riff is another example of a 'blue' note. In blues syntax the flat 5th blue note is used as a chromatic 'colouring' of the move between the 4th and 5th degrees and it is this that partly characterises the blues as 'blues'. 'Too Tired' (1955), by Johnny Guitar Watson, combines transient 3rds, flat 5th blue notes, and call and response in the opening main hook, which, in the cover version by Gary Moore (1990), is a duel between two guitars. The echoing phrase starts on the root note A, descends through the blues scale and ends with a transient 3rd.

Example 1.3 Typical E blues turnaround



The origins of both Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin, then, relate to such blues and blues-based rock and roll. Black Sabbath, originally called Earth, were formed as a blues/rock and roll covers band on the Brumbeat circuit and Led Zeppelin formed as the New Yardbirds from two London (Jimmy Page and John Paul Jones) and two Birmingham (Robert Plant and John Bonham) blues musicians; furthermore, the work of these bands was marked by the coding described above. The significance of what Bill Ward saw as 'revolution' and 'moving in new directions' is illustrated by the way in which managers and promoters such as Jim Simpson and Giorgio Gomelski encouraged these two bands to be different. Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin seemed to respond to such opportunities with aplomb, the resultant transgressions leading to the evolution of intrinsically different and original forms of music.

For example, Led Zeppelin's response, as noted earlier, was to build a set that maintained blues and rock and roll conventions as key elements whilst blending those elements with eclectic stylisations, extreme loudness and developments in production. On the other hand, Black Sabbath formulated radical transgressions of the blues that marked their pre-1969 career resulting in a unique set of codes. For example, when writing 'Black Sabbath' (1970) Iommi did not draw on any of the blues devices of their earlier period but, rather, drew on a unique synthesis of multi-sectional design, unresolved tritones[23] and Aeolian riffs.[24]

Regardless of this radical break from traditional devices, Black Sabbath's eponymous debut album does contain some musical references to their early days as a blues band (for example, the cover version of 'Evil Woman'). This album

[23] Another name for the flat 5th (there is a more detailed explanation below and in Chapter 2).

[24] A riff based on the Aeolian mode.

also contains a number of blues figurations woven into the more original sounds of their repertoire. 'Warning', for example, has part of a standard 12-bar blues chord structure, that is, it starts with the usual I-IV-I sequence but is weakened by omitting the standard V-IV-I third line. Additionally, these brief references to the blues are sparse, being found only in the first and last sections of a collage of semi-improvisatory sections. The final track, 'Wicked World', is based on the same sort of improvisatory collage and features occasional blues inflexions, for example, the transient 3rd of the opening guitar riff. It is, therefore, the original devices that Black Sabbath formulated that are significant to the evolution of heavy metal, and it is those devices that dominate their work as a whole.

The blues fingerprints in this transitional phase, therefore, when present, become somewhat insignificant within the whole context. The falling shapes, short motifs and repetitive phrases in both guitar and vocals, for example, are reminiscent of Delta blues (Middleton 2002: 29) and these abound in *Black Sabbath*. However, this does not make Black Sabbath a blues band or even blues based. Sheila Whiteley, in discussing Jimi Hendrix's version of 'Hey Joe', identifies blue notes, pitch inflexion, vocalised guitar tone, triplet beats, off beat accenting, and call and response; the same could be applied to much of the music produced by Hendrix and whilst these are all major constituent parts of the blues, Whiteley recognises that Hendrix has developed his own musical identity noting that 'it's the way these elements are pulled together that are typically Hendrix' (Whiteley 1992: 17).

In a similar way, when Black Sabbath utilise blues related devices, the context is so far removed from the blues that the emergent result, grounded in down-tuned guitars,[25] angular riffs[26] and modes, has clearly taken on a completely new identity, that is, one subsumed within the unique sound of Black Sabbath's creativity. In fact, Bill Ward claimed a substantial difference in style between Zeppelin and Sabbath noting that 'Zeppelin were a blues-rock band … they were a whole different ball game' (Rosen 2002: 56) and Tony Iommi can be heard voicing a similar opinion during an interview on the DVD *The Black Sabbath Story Part 1* (2002).

The 'Sabbath/Zeppelin', 'heavy metal/hard rock' dichotomy will be explored in full throughout Chapters 2 and 3; however, it would be useful to offer one or two preliminary illustrations at this point. I suggest that Sabbath, in the main, based their riffs on modal rather than blues forms, made extensive use of sequences of (true) power-chords rather than standard chords (implicit or explicit), ignored the I, IV, V conventions of the blues and other popular forms and developed lyrics that ignored the misogynistic traditions found in the blues and much of Zeppelin's output. Judas Priest built on this model although they did not maintain certain aspects of coding developed by Sabbath but mixed metal and rock syntax as in, for example, their album *Sad Wings of Destiny* (1976). Later bands, such as Metallica,

[25] Lowering the pitch of the guitar strings whilst retaining the standard tuning/spacing between the strings (this is explained below and further still in Chapter 2).

[26] Riffs based on a high percentage of wide melodic intervals (this is explained in full in Chapter 2).

Slayer, Machine Head and Arch Enemy, established the homogenised elements of Black Sabbath and (metal elements of) Judas Priest as the standard format of heavy metal. By contrast, Led Zeppelin, in the main, retained the use of blues/Chuck Berry devices (for example, 'Dazed and Confused' [1969] and 'Rock and Roll' [1971]), wrote music using conventional chords (for example, 'What Is and What Should Never Be' [1970]) and wrote lyrics largely concerned with gender anxieties[27] (for example, 'Heartbreaker' [1970]). Furthermore, most of the power-chord work they employed implied standard chords (for example, 'Living Loving Maid' [1970]).

The blues foundation that Zeppelin maintained, nurtured and shaped into their own unique musical identity, was, therefore, not so much a transgression of the blues (and rock and rock and roll) but, rather, more of a natural and measured progression of blues into the hard rock idiom. This evolutionary process was formulated in the chronological development of the Yardbirds. The milder experimental blues of the Yardbirds, with first Eric Clapton, then Jeff Beck and ultimately Jimmy Page at the helm was brought to full fruition under the New Yardbirds line up that came to be named Led Zeppelin and significant to this discussion was the impact of blues musicians Plant and Bonham on that new line up.

The Yardbirds were part of the 1960s British blues revival along with bands such as John Mayall's Bluesbreakers and Fleetwood Mac. These bands, in the main, covered numbers written by earlier blues artists such as Willie Dixon, B.B. King, Muddy Waters, Robert Johnson, Memphis Minnie, Elmore James and also some Chuck Berry type rock and roll numbers. Whilst Chicken Shack were pushing the limits of decibel output and paving the way for blues-rock, the Yardbirds, even though many of their numbers were straight covers (for example, 'Good Morning Little School Girl' by Sonny Boy Williamson [1938]), were somewhat more experimental. For example, in a number of songs they extended the instrumental sections of their standard blues covers into complex 'heavy jams'.[28] This is particularly evident in numbers with a more repetitive structure such as Howling Wolf's 'Smokestack Lightning' (1956) and Bo Diddley's 'I'm a Man' (1955).

In the original versions of these songs the singing and lyrics are central but the Yardbirds completely reverse this emphasis in their covers. For example, in the original version of Howling Wolf's 'Smokestack Lightning' the ten-second instrumentals serve as short breaks from the repetition of the verses and have no significant or prominent role in the number. In fact, the instrumental solos account for only 17 per cent of the recording time. By contrast, on the Yardbirds' live recording from 1965 (*Five Live Yardbirds*), the vocals seem to appear only as a

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[27] Whereas 'heterosexual relations' may be a better way of describing gender anxieties, it was Walser who introduced this term in relation to his concept of excription. Therefore, I shall use Walser's term 'gender anxieties' to refer to what is, essentially, heterosexual relations.

[28] Extensive improvising based on loud music and related to the psychedelic sound world of bands such as Pink Floyd.

token gesture. Here, the instrumental solo episodes are substantial and account for 78 per cent of the recording time, which is typical of the way in which the band would redistribute the weighting of the number from vocal to instrumental, such episodes being marked by carefully detailed textures and a highly pulsating immersion of the senses where musicians and audience alike lost themselves in the sound. Sheila Whiteley (1992) observed a similar effect resulting from the drug induced 'muscle and crunch' music of Jimi Hendrix: 'The repetitive figures and loud distorted music add up to the drowning of personal consciousness associated with an hallucinogenic trip, further heightened by the incantory and mesmeric effects of the recurring motifs' (p. 20).

Whilst the focus on instrumental textures within a blues-rock context emerged with bands such as the Yardbirds, this was, nevertheless, extending the principle of improvisation established in the chorus-based instrumental breaks of the blues, the instrumentals acting as extended jamming sessions based around the chord structure of the song.

Significantly, after the New Yardbirds became Led Zeppelin, they maintained this very principle but at the same time re-emphasised the importance of the vocal sections. Thus, their chorus-based extended improvisations became intersections of the centralised vocal parts. In this respect then, Zeppelin initiated a re-balancing of the vocal and instrumental elements, the verse and chorus structure allowing for a sharing of vocal and instrumental importance. This same principle seems to inform the more extensive works of Led Zeppelin too but even here the instrumental sections are, nevertheless, built on varying episodes of improvisation and where the vocal and instrumental sections are shared in equal measure between instrumental and vocal dexterity (for example, 'Whole Lotta Love' and 'Heartbreaker' [1969]).

Black Sabbath, on the other hand, seemed to re-contextualise the Yardbirds' privileging of complex instrumental textures. For example, the early music of Black Sabbath is structured using a multi-sectional form; here the episodic patterning not only allocates sections for vocals and improvising but, most importantly, sections that have a fixed syntax and thematic design. This contrasts with the principles of improvisation. With Black Sabbath, subsequent performances of their own 'thematic sections', though not written down, are memorised so that each performance is a replication of the recording. This concept is explained in detail in the next chapter through case studies of 'War Pigs' (1970) and 'Killing Yourself to Live' (1974).

Whilst this same concept applies to certain Led Zeppelin numbers such as 'Stairway to Heaven' (1971), with Black Sabbath and subsequent heavy metal bands this principle informs the majority of songs and thus becomes a style indicator. Therefore, heavy metal, in this way, has come to focus on the instrumental 'sound' and it seems that this is a main attraction for fans. This argument aligns with a concept noted by Hicks (1999) who argues that the tendency for rock music to obfuscate the lyrics is an indication of music that is 'neither constructed nor conceived around a text' and *that* becomes the attraction (p. 108). Hicks quotes

David Byrne of Talking Heads who says 'when I first started hearing rock music it was the sound that really struck me … it was the musical texture that outweighed the words' (p. 108). The Yardbirds, therefore, were of significant importance to the development of compositional structuring in heavy metal in the way that they focused on the instrumental sound and developed episodic structures.

Furthermore, the New Yardbirds' employment of John Bonham seems to have been highly influential to the emerging hard rock scene, thus highlighting the importance of Birmingham once more. Following the demise of the Yardbirds, Jimmy Page, the guitarist at the time, was looking for a line up to complete remaining tour dates. Page, manager Peter Grant and fellow Yardbird Chris Dreja were looking to reform the Yardbirds as the New Yardbirds and it was at this point that Plant and Bonham were recruited. Bonham, however, was not the first choice of drummer, Grant, Page and Dreja were actively trying to engage the interest of B.J. Wilson of Procul Harum and more particularly the better known and former member of John Mayall's Bluesbreakers, Aynsley Dunbar. '"We definitely approached Aynsley Dunbar", says Dreja. "I knew him well and he was a great drummer, but he went off to Frank Zappa's band"' (Welsh 2001: 55).

In fact, it was the connection with newly recruited vocalist Robert Plant from the Birmingham blues/beat circuit that brought Bonham into the drummer's seat.[29] Had Zeppelin been successful in recruiting Dunbar they would have had a very different sound, certainly much less 'heavy'. It is hard to imagine them being lauded as 'the founders of heavy metal' or hard rock without the sonic power of Bonham. The significance of this is twofold: (1) the origins of Led Zeppelin were grounded in a desire to create experimental blues-based music and this is evident in their attempts to form from the best blues musicians around; and (2) the aggressive drumming style of John Bonham forced a harder edge to Led Zeppelin.[30] In fact, a study of Zeppelin's music, particularly the earlier albums, reveals an overstated, muscular drum sound in relation to the more refined sound provided by John Paul Jones on bass (for example, 'You Shook Me' [1969]).

The experimental blues of the Yardbirds could never have developed in the same way without promotion and encouragement from strong management and they found that in Giorgio Gomelski. Gomelski was a blues enthusiast who, like Vernon, turned manager and promoter during the 1960s. Not only was he was instrumental in promoting early rock music but his work may be seen as a vital linking factor in the transition between blues and rock forms.

Richard Yorke, in his Led Zeppelin biography *From the Early Days to Plant and Page* (1999: 44), clearly identifies Gomelski as important in advancing the development of loud amplified and experimental blues and argues that his influence was crucial, not only in encouraging the growth of the British blues revival but also in steering established blues bands into new directions. This was achieved through the promotion of such influential artists as Jimmy Page (Yardbirds),

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[29] It was Plant, a friend of Bonham, who made the suggestion to employ him.

[30] See discussion of angry performance styles below.

Eric Clapton (the Bluesbreakers and Cream) and Alvin Lee (Ten Years After). His vision and ambition led to the opening of new venues to showcase the new types of music he was encouraging. Gomelski, therefore, generated an environment for experimental and loud blues to flourish and this significantly contributed to the subsequent emergence of hard rock and heavy metal.

The most significant venture of Gomelski in this respect was the opening of the Crawdaddy Club in Richmond in 1962. Initially, he promoted both Cyril Davis and the Rolling Stones but, sensing the need to take R&B on to a new, experimental level he searched for an appropriate act to promote and he found it in the Yardbirds. 'What I wanted for the Crawdaddy, and what I saw in the Yardbirds was the basis of an experimental blues band' (Gomelski, cited in Yorke 1999: 45). It was here then, that the Yardbirds were able to develop freely the coding (described earlier) that impacted so significantly on the emerging heavy metal and hard rock scene.

The 'harder' blues sound developing at the Crawdaddy was noted by Barry May, reporting for the *Richmond and Twickenham Times* (Strausburgh 2001: 41–3), and described as a 'deep earthy sound'. Similarly, Patrick Doncaster, reporting on a Rolling Stones gig for the *Daily Mirror* (Strausburgh 2001: 41–3), reveals the way in which certain visual codes that have come to be associated with rock and metal were witnessed at the Crawdaddy. The description of 'shaking heads', for example, paints a clear picture of 'head banging' and this is conflated with black leather, a context that becomes synonymous with hard rock and certain factions of heavy metal.

Whilst the Rolling Stones are the most obvious link with the Crawdaddy Club, it is arguably the case that the Yardbirds were more influential on the emerging Birmingham metal scene through the alignment of London and Birmingham blues musicians (that is, Page/Jones with Plant/Bonham) and this formed a unique combination resulting in a distinct form of experimental blues, one that forged blues and rock and roll coding into a much harder or heavier sound. The emergent qualities became the foundation of Led Zeppelin's distinct form of hard rock.

Black Sabbath, on the other hand, seem to have taken in wider influences than just the Yardbirds. For example, the more extensive instrumental and jazz influenced work of Cream and Ten Years After appear to have been significantly influential on Sabbath. Cream christened themselves, maybe rather arrogantly, according to their perceived pedigree – Eric Clapton was at the time widely known on the circuits as 'God', and Jack Bruce (bass) and Ginger Baker (drums), both formally of the Graham Bond Organisation (a blues/jazz combo), were considered of equal status on their respective instruments. On this basis they agreed to work together, billing themselves as the world's first 'super group', each of them being the *cream* of their profession.

Cream developed experimental blues into much more complex forms of improvisation than the Yardbirds had. Long instrumental improvisations where each of the musicians vied for supremacy were a dominant feature of their music. Cream were conceived as a live performing band and, therefore, are arguably best illustrated by the numerous live recordings they made (for example, *Wheels of Fire*

part 2 [1968], recorded live at the Fillmore East, New York). The opening track of *Wheels of Fire part 2*, 'Crossroads', is a cover of 'Standing at the Crossroads' or 'Crossroads Blues' by Robert Johnson (1936).

The 1968 version by Cream is a good illustration, not only of Cream's particular style, but also of specific points of timbre and texture that were of significant influence on Black Sabbath. For example, Cream's version is not only much faster than the original but reveals new levels of urgency and aggression (aspects that emerge as important style indicators of metal) and these are evident immediately in the opening riff. Notably, the original swing beat is replaced with straight fours and the improvised slide fills are replaced with the main hook.

When the first solo arrives it is like a rock version of a jazz jam where all instrumental members are improvising simultaneously. The bass line in the first solo section is very busy with much stepwise motion between the triadic/harmony notes and marked by a variety of smooth rounded bends that produces a fluid style of playing (heard at 1:49 min.). The opening of Black Sabbath's 'N.I.B.' (1970) illustrates the way in which Sabbath's bassist Terry (Geezer) Butler adopted a similar performance style.

Cream's jazz influenced contrapuntal style, exemplified in the instrumental sections of 'Crossroads', became an important part of the fabric of Sabbath's early sound, evident in specific numbers such as 'Fairies Wear Boots' (1970) and 'Sweet Leaf' (1971). Furthermore, it was natural for Sabbath to draw on such jazz influences as they had worked as a jazz outfit in their early days and Tony Iommi had a healthy interest in jazz guitar (Django Reinhardt was one of his early influences).

In Chapter 2, I discuss the way in which the jazz influenced soloing of Alvin Lee (Ten Years After) impacted on the adoption of modal contours in the work of Black Sabbath and subsequent metal. Additionally, this phenomenon illustrates something of the more specific musical milieu that impacted on the emergence of heavy metal and hard rock in 1960s Birmingham, and therefore has relevance to this chapter also. For example, Henry's Blues Club in Birmingham was run by Jim Simpson and showcased the best in both traditional and new, experimental blues. Ten Years After had a regular slot there and Tony Iommi, as a young man, was a regular attendee at Henry's where he found great inspiration in the work of the band, especially the guitar work of Alvin Lee. Moreover, it was Jim Simpson, who became the manger of Earth, who fired the imagination of Terry (Geezer) Butler and the other members of Earth to find a new direction in compositional style and image so as to stand out from the many blues/rock and roll bands of the time. The result was a change of name and image from Earth to Black Sabbath, and Henry's Blues Club was able to showcase the early unveilings of this new style.

Birmingham: The Sound of the City

The more specific details of the emergent stylisations seem to have evolved in reaction to particular influences found in the more immediate surroundings of the individual(s) that created those stylisations. For example, there have been suggestions during my discussion so far that the Midlands bands of the 1960s and 70s seemed to be particularly aggressive. This is evident in the excessive volume of Chicken Shack, the wild and destructive stage shows of the Move[31] and the extreme aggression found in the drumming of Bill Ward and John Bonham. Furthermore, it is arguably such anger and aggression that are central to both the performative and compositional elements of heavy metal. Bill Ward himself describes the music of Black Sabbath as being centred on 'rage' (Ward, in Rosen 2002: 52). It would seem then, that there were circumstantial and regional influences common to each of these Birmingham musicians that led to the emergence of such angry music.

Performance style is itself part of the compositional process and the aggressive techniques that have come to mark heavy metal first emerged in the work of Black Sabbath. This is evident more specifically in (1) the violent way in which Ward attacks the drum kit, (2) the volume and distortion of Iommi's power-chord riffs, (3) the level of attack in Iommi's guitar work overall, and (4) the frequent violent, vocal outbursts of Osbourne. As subsequent metal bands built on these precepts, the anger and violence within the performative and compositional styles is very much amplified. The vocals of Motörhead and Venom (which is discussed in Chapter 4) took on what I describe as a 'rabid' style where the vocal lines are built more on monotone outbursts. This style gradually evolved into the violent screams and growling of thrash, death metal and grindcore. All of these characteristics seem to be grounded in the emotional insurgence of the anti-patriarchal content of the lyrics of heavy metal. This topic is explored in detail throughout Chapter 3.

The industrial Midlands of the 1960s, as mentioned earlier, are frequently referred to by music journalists, who seem to make connections between the dark and angry music that emerged there and the austerity of the city. For example, Gull, interviewing Tony Iommi for *Guitar Magazine*,[32] notes, 'For rock and roll fans, the Midlands of England, which includes the industrial darkness of Birmingham and its surrounding environs, holds a storied place among geographical landmarks in rock music.' Others have also attempted to recognise a distinct aggressive

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[31] Although remembered more for a string of catchy pop singles during the 1960s, the Move, in fact, developed a reputation at the time for their frenzied, destructive stage shows. The official website of the Move (www.themoveonline.com), for example, notes that when supporting the Who (on one occasion, at London's Roundhouse [date not supplied]), the Who were delayed whilst the stage was rebuilt after the Move had destroyed it. The writer of the website's biography also states, 'So shocking and fiery were the Move live, that for a while, the group were banned from every theatre in the UK and Europe, a decade before the Sex Pistols' similar punk rock antics.'

[32] http://www.guitarmag.com

attitude and particularly high level of energy found in Midlanders and relate it to the environment of 'industrial darkness'. This is clear from the article referred to earlier, written in 1974, in the *New Musical Express*.

Furthermore, such sentiments are echoed by Paul Du Noyer,[33] who, writing about the music scene in Liverpool, draws attention to that same 'dour and determined attitude of Midlanders'. He does this by contextualising the 'dour and determined attitude' against 'the desperate and self-conscious style of the Southerner' and 'the robust celebration of the laugh today for tomorrow we die sort' of Liverpool (2002: 2).

Whilst such observations are difficult to support objectively, analogies between musical sounds and specific environments are also found in Hebidge's discussion of the punk movement and British culture. Here, he reminds the reader that the punk movement could be expressed as the 'sound of the Westway' or 'the theme of bondage reflecting the narrow options of the working class' (Frith and Goodwin (eds) 1990: 58). Whilst he admits that 'such readings are both too literal and conjectural' (not least the implied homology between bondage and the options of the working class), the relationship between music, space and place is recognised, not least in that musical processes take place within a particular space and place and are shaped both by specific musical practices and by the pressures and dynamics of political and economic circumstances (cover, Whiteley et al. (eds), 2004). As such, I suggest that one cannot dismiss simply as coincidence that the dark, angry and serious forms of music evident in the early work of Black Sabbath seem to correlate to the darkness, depression, boring school and dead end, working-class factory life of the industrial Midlands.

The testimonies of the Birmingham musicians who grew up in that environment certainly suggest such correlations. For example, Ozzy Osbourne made such connections in an interview published in *Sounds* on 21 October 1978 (and re-published in *Q Classic* 533 (April 2005): 46):

> Everybody builds aggression, it's the system that gets aggression into you. You don't like somebody going – 'you will be there at eight o'clock, you will push that button, you feed that machine, you will sell that'. You must have a job where you think I'd love to push my fist down that cunt's throat. But you can't because if you do, you're out of a job, you starve, so you've got to swallow that shit …

Whilst, again, there is no empirical evidence to substantiate the relationship between environment and music, some writers on rock and metal have been more objective, attempting to make more tangible connections with the way in which cities influence musicians and the style(s) of music they produce. For example, Charlie Gillett goes so far as to say '… rock and roll was perhaps the first form of popular culture to celebrate without reservation the characteristics of city life

[33] Born and bred in Liverpool, Du Noyer has been a music journalist for over 20 years working for such journals as *NME*, *Q*, *Mojo* and *Kerrang!*.

that had been amongst the most criticized. In rock and roll, the strident repetitive sounds of city life were, in effect, reproduced as melody and rhythm' (1994: viii).

This principle suggests an explanation for certain, important aspects of the heavy metal timbre that emerged from Birmingham during the late 1960s and early 1970s – volume combined with metallic, percussive rhythms[34] – and this is clearly in evidence in an interview with Bill Ward in the BBC series *Seven Ages of Rock* (broadcast on 9 June 2007). In the interview, Ward explained how the hard and aggressive style of drumming he developed and many of the rhythm patterns he used in Black Sabbath were certainly influenced by the pulsating sounds of machinery in the nearby metalwork factories. Ward described how he would lie awake at night in the formative days of Black Sabbath listening to the repetitive sounds of the machinery and adding fills to the factory sounds by drumming with his fingers on the headboard of the bed. Furthermore, in an interview with *Metal Hammer* Deputy Editor (at the time) Daniel Lane (October 2004: 50), K.K. Downing and Glen Tipton, guitarists in Judas Priest, spoke about their factory workdays in Dudley insisting that their music was inspired by the numerous foundries and steelworks of their home town.

In addition to the importance of the sounds of the city, there appear to be other specific influences that have contributed to the shaping of the 'dour and determined' that are more to do with the physical features and social conditions of Birmingham. Paul Rosen, in his biography of Black Sabbath (2002), also notices the same determined and aggressive attitude of Midlanders identified earlier and he accredits this, to a certain extent, to a psychological and cultural conditioning that resulted from the extensive and incessant wartime bombing of Aston where the community 'persevered with a salt-of-the-earth, never-say-die philosophy, creating a fertile and inviting hotbed for the musically adventurous' (pp. 24–5). The musicians who grew up in this area, all members of Black Sabbath and Judas Priest, would have played as young boys in and around the demolished and devastated landscape that remained for years. As such, it is not too unlikely that there is some correlation between the grey and desolate landscapes of post-war Aston and the dark and desolate soundscapes often found in Sabbath's early work.

An interesting and related point emerged in a conversation with Professor Derek Scott of (in 2004) the University of Salford who also grew up near Aston at the same time. Professor Scott relayed interesting anecdotes that amusingly referred to the way in which locals gave directions by particular bombed out buildings; such memories may be significant in that it emerged during our conversation that many of the memorable sights were in fact of burned out churches.

The resonance of the burned out churches with Black Sabbath's anti-Christian and quasi-religious imagery, not least their strong anti-war stance, does suggest a certain homology between their aesthetic, their music and the influence of post-war,

[34] A feature of heavy metal style produced by combining a high gain sound with the EQ set to full treble and bass with the mid range switched off and the guitarist using palm muting. The riff would be played with a strong pulse.

bomb-scarred Birmingham. Some of the more literal translations of war are found in a number of Sabbath's early songs and an example of this can be heard in 'War Pigs' from the 1970 album *Paranoid*. The sirens and long sustained power-chords in the opening of 'War Pigs', oscillating between E and D, combined with the slow, spacious and measured back-beat of the percussion part create a feeling of eerie space, as if surveying a landscape of devastation. In the second part of the song (theme 2) the same two power-chords (D–E) are played in quick succession with long gaps and hi-hat fills. The vocal line that fits between the riffs is a lament for the destruction and shame of war; the climb and descent between top and bottom notes of an octave, where each of those octave sounds is sustained, creates an impression of monotony that seems to suggest the mind-numbing bewilderment of such scenes of desolation.

The third section is angry and has a faster tempo with each instrumental part seeming to jam around an E5 chord creating an impression of rage and chaos. The fourth section is based around an E Mixolydian melodic line, almost victorious, slightly mysterious and leading to a psychedelic jam around the E and D centres before returning to theme 2 and on to a closing coda. Significantly, such themes have subsequently become a central code of the heavy metal aesthetic (for example, Judas Priest, Venom, Metallica, Slayer, Megadeth and Lamb of God).

A relevant opinion on this subject is found in one of the *Rock File* articles written in 1973 by Andrew Weiner and entitled 'Doom Patrol'. Even though the article is essentially written about Black Sabbath at the Rainbow in London, Weiner also draws a comparison between early British heavy music (Black Sabbath) and early American heavy music (Grand Funk Railroad). He suggests that the US heavy music was an acid driven expression bound up with war and manifested as a 'teenage wasteland'; whereas, Black Sabbath, by contrast, were simply an expression of factory and high-school boredom (quoted in Gillett and Frith (eds) 1996: 23).

The suggestion, here, is that the monotony of the landscape found in the bombed out remains of war, endless factories and grey smoky skies of Birmingham was mirrored by the dead-end prospects and high-school boredom of Birmingham's youth of the 1960s. This certainly would have been the experience of the members of Black Sabbath, John Bonham of Led Zeppelin and the original members of Judas Priest. It is no surprise that both Bonham and Ward were virtually alcoholic and Osbourne had spent time in prison.[35] These problems did not occur, as is often the case, because of the pressures of touring, but because of the social difficulties of their lifestyle.

Lawrence Grossberg, writing in 1988, suggests that such backgrounds generate new levels of creativity. He argues that the politics of youth celebrate change, risk and instability; the very structures of boredom become the sites of new forms of

[35] In 1966 Osbourne served six weeks of a three month sentence in Winson Green prison for non-payment of a £25.00 fine incurred for an act of burglary (Tangye and Wright 2004: 2).

empowerment. The powerlessness of youth is rearticulated into an apparatus in which it becomes the site of pleasure. He goes on to say 'the rock and roll culture transforms many of the structures of contemporary boredom (repetition and noise) into the structures and pleasures of its musical and listening practices' (Frith and Goodwin (eds) 1990: 116–17). This seems to be borne out in the words of Ozzy Osbourne: 'We lived in a dreary, polluted, dismal town and we were angry about it. For us the whole hippy thing was bullshit. The only flower you saw in Aston was on a gravestone. So we thought, let's scare the whole fucking planet with music' (*Q Classic* 533 (April 2005): 12).

The environment, then, within which Black Sabbath developed musically, seems to have been influential in determining a specific form of music that emerged from Birmingham at the turn of the decade into 1970, music that was angry, excessively loud, morbid, serious and heavy. This section now shifts the attention to the personal attributes (which were shaped by events in Birmingham) of the individuals who created the sounds of the city.

The personal attributes of musicians contribute significantly to the coding of a given band, they are like a personal stamp on the music and give the band its signature. In the case of Black Sabbath this concept is particularly important as will be seen. The main writers and developers of Sabbath's early style were Tony Iommi (lead guitar and main riff writer) and Geezer Butler (bassist and main lyricist). Iommi was responsible for introducing many of the features now associated with the sonic aspects of heavy metal. For example, the unique timbral guitar sound that results from a combination of down-tuning and turning up powerful amps to overdrive. He also made significant use of modal melodic lines and developed a new context for use of the power-chord.

Most of these aspects resulted from Iommi's accident with a sheet-metal cutting machine in which he lost the ends of the middle and ring fingers of his right hand. Being a left-handed player, this meant that his playing of chords and melodic lines would be drastically affected. Encouraged by his mother and the success of the jazz guitarist Django Reinhardt, who also lost fingers but re-learnt to play the guitar, Iommi fought his way back to playing again but the measures he took to cope with that, arguably, influenced the sound of heavy metal. For example, the emergence of the power-chord within the heavy metal context seems to be directly associated with Iommi's accident. Therefore, in order to underline the significance and relevance of Iommi's innovations, I would like to discuss the chronological development of the rock guitar chord and its evolution from rock and roll.

Initially, rock and roll guitar chords were characterised by a clean sound similar to that of the acoustic guitar. As bands got louder the sound of the chords became slightly 'fuzzy' as the sound from the overdriven valves began to break up. This sort of semi-overdrive is sometimes called 'crunch' and is a feature of standard rock (for example, the Faces 'Stay With Me' [1971] and Oasis 'Roll With It' [1995]). In heavy rock, the use of open chords and barre chords are coloured by extremely loud and overdriven amplifiers (for example, Deep Purple 'Burn' [1974] and AC/DC 'Highway to Hell' [1979]). After the invention of the fuzz box

in the 1960s extreme levels of distortion could be artificially applied. The addition of a pre-amp within the amplifier's circuitry was another way of delivering an artificial distortion by changing the shape or value of the incoming signal from the guitar before routing it through the main amplifier section. Often, the performer using barre chords in heavy rock will emphasise the bottom end of the chord, giving the feel of a power-chord but clearly suggesting the tonal nature of the chord (for example, AC/DC 'Riff Raff', discussed earlier).

As a teenager I was fortunate to make close observations, being at the stage front, of several Black Sabbath gigs in the early to mid 1970s. These observations revealed an interesting aspect of Iommi's guitar sound and playing technique. What he did to overcome the problem of the missing middle fingers was to play his chords with the index and little finger resulting in a chord with no 3rd, a kind of mutant chord with no major/minor tonality but having a new, unique character marked by a certain starkness when combined with the timbre of down-tuned guitars.

For example, an A major chord played as a standard barre chord at fret 5 would, from the sixth string, follow this order: A (1st finger barre), E (3rd finger), A (4th finger), C♯ (2nd finger), E (1st finger barre) and A (1st finger barre). Iommi, finding the 3rd and 2nd fingers difficult, would play the chord by forming a second barre with the 4th or, as he did later on, by forming a second barre with the 3rd finger thus: A (1st finger barre), E (4th finger barre or 3rd finger barre), A (4th finger barre or 3rd finger barre). The resultant three-note chord, formed from only the first and fifth, was born out of necessity as Iommi himself confirmed in a discussion of the origins of the power-chord with Lisa Sharken for *Vintage Guitar* magazine in January 1999: 'My technique is different. I was already playing the guitar for three years when the accident happened, but I had to completely re-learn. I was playing with two fingers for a long time and that's how the fifth chord came about. I can't feel a thing, so I just have to do it by ear.'[36]

A further development influenced by Iommi's accident was the down-tuning of the strings. The concept of down-tuned strings was not original to Iommi, some of the early Afro-American blues players down-tuned their acoustic guitars to obtain a thicker sound but, once again, it is the context that is important in the resultant signifier. For example, in heavy metal, pitch is vital to the overall sound where the tendency is towards a low tessitura and those thicker sounds are combined with high gain output and distortion. The extreme end of this is exemplified in the music of modern metal bands such as Machine Head who frequently tune to C or B as opposed to the standard tuning of E. Here, the strings are so slack it is difficult to play in tune and heavy gauge strings need to be used to compensate.

Of course, during the development of metal, E♭, D, C♯ and C down-tunings have all been used. This is an area avoided by rock (as opposed to metal) musicians and writers where the tendency is towards standard pitch and a higher and more balanced range of keys. A is a particular favourite followed by G, E and D with

[36] http://www.vintageguitar.com

C and F in there too. By contrast, metal bands use mainly E or the down-tuned equivalent.

It appears, then, that Iommi originated this technique in its metal context and, again, it was born out of necessity; tuning down was a means of easing the discomfort that came from losing his fingers as Iommi himself confirmed in an interview with John Stix that was published in the May 1994 edition of *Guitar for the Practising Musician*: 'Originally for me the whole concept of using lighter gauge strings and tuning down a lot was that when I cut the end of me fingers off I couldn't bend a lot of the strings 'cause it hurt.'[37] Down-tuning is, in effect, slackening the strings, and slack strings are very easy to push around. Seeing that an essential element of blues/rock lead guitar playing is the string bending technique, this was a logical way forward for Iommi. The inadvertent result was the production of a unique timbre that became one of the key fingerprints of Sabbath's sound and ultimately of heavy metal too.

Tuning down also changes the guitar's tone, as discussed earlier, and that change is further shaped by the type of guitar played. The shorter the scale length of the instrument[38] the 'darker' it will sound. Thus, a Gibson SG (used by Iommi) with a scale length of 24.75 inches tuned to E♭ would sound darker than a Fender Stratocaster (used, for example, by Jimi Hendrix) in the same key with its scale length of 25.5 inches. Therefore, even Iommi's choice of guitar made a difference to the sonic evolution of heavy metal.

Iommi's experiments in timbre and texture were further enhanced by his experimentation with the use of modes. In guitar terms, this included riffs (power-chords and monophonic riffs) and lead guitar work. One of Iommi's main influences in relation to his lead guitar style was Alvin Lee, who was the singer and guitarist with the blues band Ten Years After. Ten Years After, as mentioned earlier, were a big name on the British blues scene of the 1960s. They played all of the major venues in the UK and also made a worldwide name for themselves with their acclaimed set at Woodstock. Alvin Lee developed a very distinct style of blues soloing, not only in terms of speed and virtuosity, but also in the shaping of melodic lines and extensive use of the pentatonic minor scale. The pentatonic minor fits neatly under the fingers when played on the guitar. It is like the blues scale but without the flat 5th blue note. So, technically it is almost the same but musically it is very different because the missing blue note is the one that gives the blues scale (and blues overall) its character. Lee used the pentatonic minor in eclectic ways. He not only mixed in blue notes and transient 3rds, as many other players were doing at the time, but, more significant to this discussion, he played the pentatonic minor scale in its pure form and with occasional flashes of Dorian and Aeolian modality. Ten Years After's live album, recorded at London's Klooks Kleek and titled *Undead* (1968), amply illustrates Lee's style.

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[37] http://www.black-sabbath.com/interviews/tonygeez_0594.html

[38] The scale length of a guitar is a measurement of the string length taken from the pivotal point of the bridge to the entry point at the nut.

The pure form of pentatonic-minor-centred soloing adapted by Lee was a natural style for Iommi to adopt, particularly with having the middle fingers missing, the reason being that the pentatonic minor, from the sixth string root, can be easily played with just the first and fourth fingers. The juxtaposition of pentatonic minor and modality demonstrated by Alvin Lee may have been influential but Iommi would have already heard a similar style in the recordings of his hero Django Reinhardt. The significance of Iommi's work in this respect, on the emerging metal scene, was the introduction of a specific and contextualised use of modes, in particular the Aeolian but also the Dorian and Mixolydian. The following point will be fully illustrated in the next chapter but the obvious omission of blue notes from Iommi's early solos in the work of Black Sabbath is highly significant. Thus, Black Sabbath made no substantial use of the blues scale in their early work and later metal bands would build on this highly transgressive adoption of modally centred lines and would also extend the number and types of modes employed. This concept is detailed throughout Chapters 2, 4 and 5.

What Terry (Geezer) Butler brought to Black Sabbath was equally important to the evolution of heavy metal. In addition to his particular style of bass playing (as discussed earlier), Butler was the main lyricist and was responsible for introducing a new type of lyric and image, in particular themes related to B-class horror movies, anti-Christian non-conformity, religious imagery and war. In the same way that Iommi set aside the blues conventions he had used prior to Black Sabbath, in favour of new sounds and techniques, Butler likewise moved away from the conventional gender anxiety and misogynistic themes of blues and hard rock.

Most importantly, with Iommi and Butler the music and lyrics interact. For example, in the track 'Black Sabbath'[39] Butler's lyrics aim to generate the kind of demonic fear frequently found in Hammer horror movies and also seem to relate to the ghostly figure in black depicted on the album cover of the same name. Such un-godly terror was arguably established by the early Christian church to deter believers from sin and his lyrics, here, seem to draw on those precepts. Iommi's contribution to this number is an ostinato tritone figure, an interval that carries established connotations of tension and evil (as will be discussed later). This concept, of combining dark lyrics with dark sounds, became a main feature of Black Sabbath's output and ultimately of heavy metal too and is represented in the work of subsequent bands such as Judas Priest, Venom, Metallica, Slayer, Immortal, Arch Enemy, Deicide and Lamb of God. A full discussion and illustration of this is contained within Chapters 2 and 4.

[39] I acknowledge that some articles suggest that this was the one track in Sabbath's early career where Osbourne and Ward made a significant contribution to lyrics. The main point I am attempting to illustrate, however, is the way in which the music and lyrics in Black Sabbath's works are combined programmatically and, in the main, it was Butler and Iommi who were responsible.

Butler had a general (and fairly detailed) interest in dark culture (as did Osbourne and Iommi). He was an avid reader of Dennis Wheatley[40] and knew the work of Anton LaVey.[41] Having seen an advertising poster for the movie *The Three Faces of Fear* (1963, starring Boris Karloff), he decided that if people would pay money to be scared by a film, then there was a similar potential for their music. He accordingly suggested that the band should be called Black Sabbath (taken from one of the three parts of *The Three Faces of Fear*), and the first album provides an initial indication of the themes of darkness and fantasy, not only on its cover sleeve which, as mentioned, has a woman dressed in black, face whitened, standing in the rain in the grounds of a desolate medieval building,[42] but also in its thematic content. Track one describes a 'figure in black' pointing the finger of doom at the 'chosen one'; track two describes a wizard, 'casting his shadow and weaving his spell'; track three, 'Behind the Wall of Sleep', is a song about a chilling death, 'vision cupped within a flower, deadly petals with strange power … chill that numbs from head to toe, icy sun with frosty glow'.

Ozzy Osbourne was drafted into the band after the other three had been working together for some time. His time in prison and working in an abattoir, combined with his background of poverty and the kind of anger described earlier, meant that the aggressive performance techniques that were emerging in the riffs of Iommi and drumming of Bill Ward (see below) were amplified in the vocal style of Osbourne.

Bill Ward came from a difficult working-class background. Escape from the hardships of life is often found in alcohol and Ward sought this option. Ward was the drinking partner and close friend of fellow Brummie John Bonham (Led Zeppelin drummer) and considers himself fortunate that he did not end up dying young as a result of alcohol as Bonham had (Rosen 2002: 53).

Musically, the important point resulting from this is found in the rage and force of Ward's and Bonham's drumming where excessive aggression and power become one of the hallmarks of heavy metal. Furthermore, it was this element of Led Zeppelin that contributed significantly to their hard rock sound. For example, Ward was quoted as saying 'John Bonham and I played really aggressively and really loud, but we'd been doing that for a long time' (Rosen 2002: 53).

The attributes, therefore, of the Birmingham musicians who significantly and crucially contributed to the emergence of heavy metal and hard rock was of pivotal importance. For example, the impact of Bill Ward's muscular and angry drumming, the necessity of down-tuning the strings on Tony Iommi's guitar with the resultant

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[40] Dennis Wheatley (1897–1977) was a popular author of fictional horror and a practising occultist.

[41] Anton LaVey (1930–97), in the late 1960s, founded the Church of Satan, the first organised church in modern times promulgating a religious philosophy that championed Satan as the symbol of personal freedom and individualism. This is discussed at some length in Chapter 3.

[42] It is, in fact, Mapledurham Watermill in Berkshire.

heavy, power-chord sound, the use of modes in his writing and improvisations, the conflation of Butler's malevolent lyrics with Iommi's intervallic structures all contributed in a unique way to form the initial syntax and timbre of heavy metal. Moreover, these techniques married with the socio-geographic influences of Birmingham in the 1960s to provide, arguably, some answers as to why Birmingham seems to provide a particular geographical space for the emergence of heavy metal and hard rock.

Liverpool, London, Manchester and Newcastle – Why Not Here? Dominant Musical Trends in Other Cities

The final part of this chapter briefly considers some of the possible reasons why the other major cities mentioned by Bill Ward did not have the right conditions to spark the beginnings of heavy metal. Having researched the musical developments in the above cities it was discovered that each of them had overriding cultural and musical traditions that precluded the development of the dark and aggressive musical forms that developed in Birmingham during the 1960s and early 1970s.

London

The dominant musical trends in London during this period were found in the British blues revival discussed earlier and in the development of progressive rock. Both forms of music were artistic expressions produced mainly at the hands of middle-class college and university students or graduates. For example, Paul Jones (Manfred Mann and the Blues Band) was an Oxford graduate, Brian Jones (the Rolling Stones) was an Oxford graduate, Mick Jagger (the Rolling Stones) went to grammar school followed by the London School of Economics, Keith Richards (the Rolling Stones) went to grammar school and then Sidcup Art College, Bob Brunning, Colin Jordan and Bob Hall (various major bands) all trained and qualified to be school teachers, Eric Clapton (the Bluesbreakers, Yardbirds, Cream and solo artist) and Keith Relf (the Yardbirds) studied at Kingston Art College and John Mayall (the Bluesbreakers and solo artist) studied at Manchester Regional College of Art.

Progressive rock was the other dominant musical form centred in London and the South during the 1960s and early 1970s. Significant bands included Yes, Genesis, Emerson, Lake and Palmer (ELP), Pink Floyd, King Crimson and Gentle Giant. Many of the important movers were from white, middle-class backgrounds and showed high levels of intelligence and musical training. Many of the musicians were university drop-outs: for example, Bill Bruford (Yes and King Crimson) dropped out of Leeds University, Tony Banks (Genesis) abandoned

Sussex University, Tony Kaye (Yes) and Rick Wakeman (Yes) dropped out of The Royal Academy of Music.[43]

Greg Lake (ELP) once commented that it was as natural for the progressive rock musicians to draw on their European classical heritage as it was for American popular musicians to draw on their native blues, jazz and gospel heritage.[44] This is evident, most notably, in ELP's 1972 live recording *Pictures at an Exhibition*, which is an arrangement of the famous work for piano by Modest Mussorgsky (and later most famously orchestrated by Maurice Ravel). Here, ELP literally draw on their classical heritage. Similar works appeared on *Trilogy* (1972) (Aaron Copland's 'Hoedown'), *Brain Salad Surgery* (1973) (Hubert Parry's 'Jerusalem') and *Works Vol. 1* (1977) (Copland's 'Fanfare for the Common Man'). Not only did ELP record many rock arrangements of classical pieces, they also wrote much music inspired by classical forms and concepts, for example, 'Fugue' and 'Abaddon's Bolero' from *Trilogy* (1972).

Whilst groups such as Yes and Genesis found similar inspiration in classical music, it was Deep Purple who attempted the rock/classical synthesis in a more tangible way when they combined a heavy rock band with a classical orchestra for the 1970 album *Concerto for Group and Orchestra*. Other bands recruited classical musicians into the line up; for example, Roxy Music, at the outset, brought in classical percussionist Dexter Lloyd along with Andy Mackay, who had previously played oboe and saxophone with the London Symphony Orchestra.

Bands such as Pink Floyd made connections with the *avant garde* experimental movement of the 1950s and 60s. That movement was driven by composers such as John Cage and Pierre Schaeffer. Those composers questioned the established and accepted concepts of 'what music is' in an esoteric way; Cage with works such as '4′33″' (1952), 'Water Music' (for pianist with a variety of non-standard equipment) (1952), 'Imaginary Landscape no. 5' (for randomly mixed recordings) (1952) and 'Cartridge Music' (for small sounds amplified in live performance) (1960), and Schaffer with his electronic effects and experiments (which came to be called *musique concrète*).

Other composers included Karlheinz Stockhausen, who worked for many years as part of Cologne's Studio for Electronic Music combining electronically generated sounds with conventional orchestras to generate unusual soundscapes, and Steve Reich whose minimalist compositions, based on repeated interlocking phrases (for example, the soundtrack to *Oh Dem Watermelons* [1965]), seemed to be a rich source of inspiration to British art rock bands such as Pink Floyd.

The early works of Pink Floyd also seem to combine elements of twentieth-century art music with their own compositional devices in such tracks as 'Interstellar Overdrive' (*The Piper at the Gates of Dawn* [1967]), 'A Saucerful of Secrets' (*A Saucerful of Secrets* [1968]) and 'Several Species of Small Furry Animals Gathered Together in a Cave and Grooving With a Pict'

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[43] http://www.angelfire.com/indie/bbblux/PR_PPL.HTM

[44] http://www.angelfire.com/indie/bbblux/PR_PPL.HTM

(*Ummagumma* [1969]). The title track of *Atom Heart Mother* (1970), is a twenty-three minute merging of symphonic orchestration and sound effects fully representing the esoteric and psychedelic sound world that Pink Floyd moulded into an epitome of 1960s/70s British art rock.

London, then, in the 1960s and 70s seemed to be dominated by middle-class art forms such as the classically inspired progressive/art rock and the British blues revival, which as described earlier, grew out of the beatnik movement and was originally centred in wealthy South London environs such as Richmond (for example, the Crawdaddy Club).

Liverpool

Liverpool is recognised as one of the most important musical centres in relation to the evolution of pop music. There has been much written about the subject and one such work, mentioned earlier, is Paul Du Noyer's *Liverpool: Wondrous Place: Music from Cavern to Cream* (2002). It is worth a reminder, here, of Du Noyer's reference to a *Melody Maker* article from 1976 by Geoff Brown which praises Liverpool as an entertainment city and points to a difference in attitude between various parts of the country where he describes the southerner as 'disparate and self conscious' compared to the 'dour and determined' Brummie and the 'exuberant robust celebration of laugh today for tomorrow we die sort' of Liverpool (p. 3). Du Noyer then suggests a brightness and openness about Liverpool's natural residents that is significant. This attitude may have contributed to a different type of dominant musical trend, one marked by brightness and melody. Certainly, the natural and dominant musical expression to have emerged from Liverpool has been in melodic pop forms.

For example, Liverpool is an entertainment city like no other. Thousands of high-spirited revellers descend on the Cavern quarter every weekend where several live bands, all in one street (Mathew Street), perform predominantly melodic pop. One of the main entertainment pubs on Mathew Street is Flanagan's Apple. This Irish pub, with its three floors of music, is indicative of the large numbers of Irish immigrants who, in the past, established communities within Liverpool via its ferry links to Dublin and following such events as the potato famine of 1845–50.

The Irish connection must have had a considerable influence on the shaping of popular music within Liverpool. The lively jigs, reels and melodies of Irish folk blended perfectly with the natural demeanour of the indigenous population. Du Noyer claims that there has always been a natural and dominant trend towards melody in Liverpool: 'The dominant fondness, as we will see, is for melody and a populist surrealism' (p. 4). This strong melodic content was not only evident in the early skiffle bands but has followed through all decades of popular music development. The Beatles, the Searchers, Gerry and the Pacemakers, Cilla Black and on through later bands such as Echo and the Bunnymen, Frankie Goes to Hollywood, Elvis Costello, the Lightning Seeds, Cast and Atomic Kitten.

In fact, this passion for melody can be traced to a time well before the skiffle bands of the 1950s. Du Noyer suggests that the British passion for music hall 'singalongs' remained strong in Liverpool long after those trends faded elsewhere: 'British people used to sing everywhere … but the people of Liverpool just went on singing after the rest of the country lost the habit' (p. 3). The songwriting of Paul McCartney reveals a love of earlier popular song forms such as music hall (for example, 'When I'm 64' [1967]) and Broadway (for example, 'Till There Was You' [1963]). McCartney's affection for melodic pop also took inspiration from overseas, particularly (as cited earlier) the songwriting partnership of Gerry Goffin and Carole King where group singing and part harmonies were the *raison d'être* of the sound.

The idiomatic Liverpool accent, which is restricted to a ten-mile radius of the city centre, is claimed in itself to be somewhat musical in nature with Du Noyer (2002: 7) suggesting a musicality in the 'dead pan' speaking voices of the Beatles that carried a lilt and sense of metronomic precision. Whilst this claim maybe somewhat subjective, the evidence of melodic pop as a dominant musical force in Liverpool remains clear and that, I argue, is a significant factor in the 'why not here' question.

Manchester

In an interview written for *NME* during the 1980s, Ian McCulloch (Echo and the Bunnymen) was quoted as saying: 'probably the main difference [between the Manchester and Liverpool music scenes] is that Liverpool bands have always written songs, whereas Manchester has always been the place that's gone for grooves' (Du Noyer 2002: 167). This distinction points to an important aspect of the comparison between Liverpool and Manchester; they are similar in many ways but have some clear differences in terms of dominant musical trends during the period under discussion.

One of those similarities was a strong music hall tradition. In fact, it is claimed that Manchester had been Britain's biggest provincial centre for music hall for over a century.[45] The legacy of strong, melodic-based pop, therefore, that had been inherited from such genres as music hall affected Manchester in much the same way as Liverpool. Manchester was represented in the 1960s and 70s by such bands as Herman's Hermits, the Hollies, Wayne Fontana and the Mindbenders, Freddie and the Dreamers and 10CC.

Dave Haslam is a former DJ of what he calls the most famous nightclub in the world, the Hacienda. Haslam is also something of an indigenous authority on the city, and he strongly supports the notion of Manchester being a world centre of pop music and dance, which he contrasts with gabba techno in Berlin, heavy metal in Birmingham or hip hop in New York (1999: xxxi). Haslam also contends that the tendency towards melodic based pop has continued through to the present day.

[45] www.manchester.com.

Whilst Haslam's discussion refers to the last 15 years of Manchester's pop history, it nevertheless has relevance to key developments over the last 40 years, and bands such as New Order, Simply Red, the Smiths, M People, Oasis, Take That, the Buzzcocks and the club-centred pioneers 808 State can be considered as both building on and developing the traditions earlier established by bands such as Herman's Hermits.

The main difference between the two cities, referred to at the start of this section, was the way in which Manchester developed the dance scene. Manchester is recognised by the current dance scene as being an important centre, not only for clubs but for forward thinking and innovative producers and DJs. The dance scene can be traced back to the development of the famous Northern Soul phenomenon that began when ex-beat venues such as the Twisted Wheel in Manchester became national centres for the enjoyment and sustenance of Motown soul. In this respect, Manchester held a central (geographical and hierarchical) position at this time with Wigan (Casino) to the north and Stoke-on-Trent (the Torch) to the south forming the club scene hotbed of the 1960s and '70s. So, overall, the dominant musical trend in Manchester could be described as a working-class expression of melody and dance groove.

Newcastle upon Tyne

Newcastle upon Tyne, like everywhere else in the country, had a huge plethora of would be rock and roll bands. The main musical trends though, evident in the major artists and most successful and lasting styles, are to be found in folk and blues. Often, there is a merging of these styles. The dominance of folk trends, found in the largely working-class dockland and fishing communities, is not surprising considering its Northumberland heritage, rural surroundings and proximity to the Scottish border.

One of the most successful bands to come out of Newcastle was the Animals. The British blues scene here was not likely to go down the same route as in Birmingham because those producing successful blues records and performing at the best venues were, as in London, college students. It is also apparent that the inherent taste for folk surfaced sooner or later with most of these bands. For example 'House of the Rising Sun' (1967) was the Animals' biggest hit and was a reworking of a traditional American folk song.

Of their particular members, Alan Price went on to a solo career with music influenced by British music hall ('The House that Jack Built' [1967], 'Simon Smith and His Amazing Dancing Bear' [1967] and 'Don't Stop the Carnival' [1968]). His childhood piano lessons reveal something of his advantaged background. John Steele and fellow founding member Eric Burdon both met at Newcastle College of Art. Steele had a classical music background where he learnt to play the trumpet.

Lindisfarne, another high profile Newcastle band from the 1960s and '70s, started life as a blues band in 1962 (the Chosen Few) and went on to become one of the top folk-rock bands in Europe. The individual members of Lindisfarne were

Alan Hull (Rutherford Grammar School), Rod Clements (Durham University), Ray Jackson (Newcastle College of Art), Ray Laidlaw (Newcastle College of Art) and Simon Cowe (Fette's College, Edinburgh). Alan Hull and entrepreneur Dave Wood formed and ran a folk club in the Rex Hotel, Whitley Bay which was just a small part of a very lively folk scene in the area. It was here that Lindisfarne emerged from their blues roots to become folk-rock legends.

Once again the cultural heritage and social conditions of the city shaped and moulded the dominant musical forms into a phenomenon that is peculiar to the region. In this case, the dominance of folk bound up in the culture of Newcastle was not conducive to the emergence of a dark and brutal musical form such as heavy metal.

Summary

This chapter has interrogated possible reasons for the emergence of heavy metal in Birmingham during the late 1960s and early 1970s. I have argued that there were several important factors that combined in a unique way to generate the conditions that influenced Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin into a way of composing music that was groundbreaking and seminal.

This chapter started with a quote from Bill Ward who identified the Liverpool beat scene as an important starting point and that there was a sense of revolution and moving forward, shared by Birmingham musicians, that was important to the development of new forms of music that evolved in Birmingham at that time. The realisation of these concepts emerged in Led Zeppelin's fusion of Liverpool beat (with its rock and roll based syntax) and London blues (with its instrumentally focused sound) to contribute significantly to the evolution of the hard rock idiom, the music of hard rock being based on a combination of rock and roll/blues coding, loud, amplified sound and a balance of instrumental and vocal sections. This homology materialised in this way because Jimmy Page and John Paul Jones, in looking for two new members to form the New Yardbirds chose Robert Plant and John Bonham from the Birmingham blues/beat circuit.

Furthermore, the revolution and moving forward identified by Ward that allowed Zeppelin the freedom to reshape rock and roll and electric blues into a distinct form of hard rock also unlocked the blues/rock and roll shackles that bound Earth (later to become Black Sabbath) to the anonymity of the Birmingham beat/blues circuit. Although it was their manager, Jim Simpson, who held and turned that key by suggesting that they try something completely new, it was the personal attributes of the members themselves that realised the unique way in which that change was accomplished.

The environment of the industrial Midlands in which they grew up influenced the development of those personal attributes that were central to the creation of Black Sabbath's distinct sound which was a synthesis of dark and angry elements that found form in a specific, contextualised syntax of modes, and privileging of

intervals such as the tritone and flat 2nd. Furthermore, the apparent anger and violence that emerged in the music of Black Sabbath (and Bonham's drumming) seemed to bear some correlation to the cultural and environmental circumstances of their upbringing. Therefore, the combination of aggression, rock and roll and auteurship that was present in Birmingham during that time was just the right permutation of elements to generate the formation of aggressive musical sets, such as heavy metal and hard rock.

Finally, the question of 'why not other cities?' was addressed briefly, resulting in the conclusion that other sites such as Manchester, Newcastle, Liverpool and London, whilst having strong working-class communities, did not have the same geographical ease of access to both Liverpool and London and therefore were not subject to the same saturation level of Merseybeat and blues that combined uniquely in Birmingham. Moreover and most significantly, where the absence of any dominant musical trends in Birmingham easily accommodated the growth of new trends, the idiomatic regional cultures of other cities mitigated against the emergence of heavy metal and hard rock because other dominant forms of music were too strong to be significantly displaced by newer influences. In particular, that would include the music hall traditions of Liverpool and Manchester, the dance traditions of Manchester, the folk music of Northumbria and the more artistic southern forms such as progressive rock and blues.

Having established some of the possible reasons for why Birmingham seemed to provide the right geographic location for the emergence of hard rock and heavy metal, and also having suggested the dichotomy evident in the music of Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin, the next stage in my argument will be to examine in detail that dichotomy. Equally important, here, will be to make connections with the development of heavy metal to the present day, recognising Black Sabbath's vital significance in the initiation/evolution of heavy metal and the establishment of the core syntactical and aesthetic coding of heavy metal as a genre. Chapters 2 and 3, the nucleus of my argument, will, therefore, take the form of a detailed analysis of the first six studio albums of both Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin and make connections with the issues raised so far in the Introduction and Chapter 1.

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Chapter 2
The Dichotomy of Syntax in the Music of Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin

In Chapter 1 I presented some possible reasons why Birmingham seemed to provide the right geographic and cultural conditions to initiate the evolution of heavy metal. One of the major issues arising from that interrogation concerned the dichotomy evident in the musical syntax of Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin. The dichotomy that emerged reflects the very different extent to which each transgressed the blues context of their starting point. Interrogating the details of those transgressions and highlighting not only the ensuing dichotomy but also the way in which each band significantly influenced the generic evolution of heavy metal (Sabbath) and hard rock (Zeppelin), will form the substance of the next two chapters. I discussed earlier the way in which Fabbri suggested a means of clarifying any specific genre by its 'otherness' when compared to other similar, but clearly differentiated forms, and the thrust of my argument throughout the next two chapters is driven by this concept.

An article featured in *Kerrang!* 593 (May 2003) provided me with a point of departure for this next chapter.[1] In *Kerrang!* 593, a number of music journalists were given the task of compiling a list of the 50 'most influential albums of all time' (pp. 26–33). They introduced the article thus: 'How do you define influence? Well the answer is, you can't, but how often, when you put on a record, can you instantly hear a couple of key bands that have shaped that band's sound? Almost every time' (p. 26).

It is interesting to note that the writers of this *Kerrang!* article describe the influence of Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath as being considerably different. For example, Zeppelin's 1975 album *Physical Graffiti* is cited as influencing such bands and musicians as Audioslave, the White Stripes and Dave Grohl of Foo Fighters (all of whom are rock bands/artists) whilst Black Sabbath (in *Black Sabbath* [1970]) are cited as influencing Pantera, Slayer and Cradle of Filth (all of whom are heavy metal bands). The focus, in this piece, on Black Sabbath's Birmingham roots, their heavy riffs, and engagement with horror movies is significant in

[1] The importance of rock/metal journalism is highlighted by Brackett who suggests that 'media discourse gives important clues as to the role of power in establishing the genre constellations at a given time' (Hesmondhalgh and Negus (eds) 2002: 69). Therefore, whilst it is not my intention to theorise the role of media discourse, I consider that consumer magazines such as *Kerrang!*, as Brackett suggests, remain valuable as a point of reference in discussions of style and genre.

highlighting some of the stylistic features of heavy metal and Sabbath's influence on the contemporary metal scene.

For example, in 2001, Drowning Pool[2] released their debut album *Sinner*; the first two tracks, 'Sinner' and 'Bodies' (the latter written specifically as a moshing anthem), are representative of the musical content of the whole album and are founded on key elements that first emerged in the early work of Black Sabbath. Those key features include specific textural and timbral elements that result from the use of down-tuned and seven string guitars,[3] guitars heavily laden with distortion, palm-muting and aggressive performance techniques. Crucial key intervals, such as the tritone and flat 2nd, are combined with the privileging of monophonic and power-chord riffs. For instance, 'Sinner' (2001) features a main riff constructed from the first and second degrees of the Phrygian mode combined with a descending chromatic figure whilst 'Bodies' (2001) features a repeated unresolved tritone figure.

It would seem, then, that bands such as Drowning Pool, along with (for example) Pantera, Slayer and Cradle of Filth (as suggested by the *Kerrang!* article), clearly share common codes, codes that first emerged with Black Sabbath and that are foreign to the output of Led Zeppelin and the bands and musicians who have followed in their wake, for example Audioslave, the White Stripes and Dave Grohl (as also suggested by the *Kerrang!* article).

In *Kerrang!* there are, naturally, no musicological references to explain the way in which musical devices combine to create the musical identity recognised by the listener. The main thrust of this chapter, then, is concerned with deconstructing the musical building blocks that give identity (the finger print) to bands considered to be heavy metal (or not). This will apply not only to the music of Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath, but also to the bands who have perpetuated and developed their innovations.

Making connections that link bands from Black Sabbath to the current heavy metal scene and highlighting the distinction between hard rock and metal is an important step in coming to an understanding of the mechanics of heavy metal, and I begin my interrogation of this topic, therefore, with a detailed study of the first six albums of Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath. Both bands were fully formed by 1969 and by 1975 both had completed six studio albums representative of their distinctive sound.

Rather than chronologically working through each album and cross-referencing points arising, I have constructed a thematic approach under the following

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[2] Hailing from Dallas, TX, Drowning Pool appeared in the early 2000s. 'Their debut album, *Sinner*, was certified platinum within six weeks of its release while their first single, 'Bodies', was one of the most frequently aired videos on MTV by a new band' (Craig Harris, http://www.allmusic.com, *s.v.* Drowning Pool).

[3] The seven string guitar was designed to allow metal guitarists to access low B without the problem of sloppy strings. It is a guitar in standard tuning but with a B string added at the bottom.

headings: Tessitura and Timbre; Modes, Riffs and Intervals 1: Riff Constructions; Modes, Riffs and Intervals 2: Melodic Constructions; Texture and Structure.

Tessitura and Timbre

Timbre is one of the most difficult aspects of heavy metal coding to convey and yet it is one of the most important. The crucial timbres that so characterise heavy metal cannot in any way be represented on paper, only listening to the music will fully illustrate my argument (I have included reference to many examples, especially in this chapter and in Chapter 4, to direct the reader to significant examples).

Journalistic writers have often struggled to define the timbres of heavy metal, recognising the sound as unique yet only able to describe it in adjectives such as 'dark and stark'. For example, in discussing the importance of Black Sabbath's *Master of Reality* (1971), an article in *Classic Rock* (Issue 86 November 2005: 23) remarked that 'every song just leaves you stunned at the musicianship and heaviness. It's very dark, very stark, yet also uplifting.'

The 'darkness and starkness' that comes from the combination of a low-tessitura timbre, 5th chords/power-chords and distortion that Sabbath had tapped into, finds its precedent in film scores and classical music. A notable example is found in the work of Dmitri Shostakovich. Shostakovich was, by all accounts, immensely unhappy for much of his life. This seems to have been due to a combination of factors including, significantly, his dismay at the Russian Communist restrictions on his music, his criticism of the regime and the ultimate shame and embarrassment at reluctantly joining the party in 1960. In the same year he wrote his *String Quartet No. 8 Op. 110*; this is considered a 'dark' work and one that reflects his immense unhappiness.[4] There appears to be a correlation between the musical devices employed by Shostakovich in this work and those employed by Black Sabbath in their early works. For example, for over half of the piece Shostakovich employs long sustained chords in the combined 'cello, viola and second violin parts. These notes are played on the lowest open strings of each instrument which are 'cello C, viola C and violin G. Additionally, this low string tessitura is combined with an emphasis on the interval of a perfect 5th (heard naturally in the C-G of the open strings). The significance of this is found in the way Shostakovich omits the 3rd of the chord (here E♭ in chord/key of C minor) creating a double pedal based on the interval of a bare 5th and thus contributing to the establishment of this interval as a tension builder.[5]

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[4] See, for example, Bowman (2002b).

[5] Standard harmony text books have consistently promoted the prohibition of consecutive 5ths and the omission of the 3rd. The effect produced by consecutive 5ths and omitted 3rds are considered 'ugly' (for example, Keighley in his *Harmony*, 1914, Chapter 2: 10).

It would thus appear that Black Sabbath were drawing on such established techniques in the development of their own sound. Furthermore, the alignment of the 5th chord/power-chord by Black Sabbath with their Satanic/occult aesthetic takes on further significance when considering its implicit association with the medieval compositional method of 'organum'[6] which, arguably, further contributes to the distinctly Gothic character of Black Sabbath's sound world.

The way in which Black Sabbath then developed their own adaptation of down tuning (which in turn influenced the heavy metal sound) is best described by looking firstly at the standard tuning used in guitar playing. The standard tuning of the guitar, from the sixth string upwards is E, A, D, G, B, E. Lowering all six strings by one semitone gives the tuning E♭, A♭, D♭, G♭, B♭, E♭ and the guitar is then said to be in 'E♭ standard'. Lowering the pitch in this way gives an exact transposition of standard tuning and therefore, although the instrument is played in the same way, the drop in pitch and slacker strings change the timbre which becomes 'darker'. As already discussed, Black Sabbath, in their early days, adopted this tuning for all their live performances. This was suggested initially by Tony Iommi to ease the pain experienced after he lost the ends of two of his fretting fingers in a machine shop accident; the slacker strings are easier to push around, making playing more comfortable for him. This coincidently resulted in a unique timbre, somewhat 'darker' and 'thicker' than that of standard tuning when played on six string power-chords at high volume.

Although this tuning was used occasionally in a rock context during the 1960s (for example, by Jimi Hendrix) it was, however, Black Sabbath who established the heavy metal connotations associated with down-tuning by combining such timbre with overdriven amplifier sounds, sequences of power-chords, tritones, flat 2nds and occasional palm-muting and thus creating a re-contextualisation for down-tuned guitars. Furthermore, as explained in Chapter 1, Iommi's Gibson SG, with a shorter scale length than a Fender Stratocaster (as used by Hendrix, for example), contributed further to the dark sounds of the E♭ tuning.

Once Sabbath had discovered the impact of the E♭ tuning, they began to experiment with new possibilities inherent in other, lower, standard tunings. For example, the 1971 album *Master of Reality* contains a number of tracks in which the guitars were down-tuned by three semitones to C♯, F♯, B, E, G♯, C♯. The resultant sound, when combined with the other elements described above, produced a nuance and timbre that was not only unique but one that has become a ubiquitous signifier of heavy metal.

Tracks on *Master of Reality* featuring guitars in C♯ include 'Lord of This World', 'Children of the Grave' and 'Into the Void'. The open string trill that occurs in the middle of the main riff to 'Into the Void', is formed from the notes A-B♭ (real pitch names F♯-G) and clearly suggest a fifth string open to first fret figure followed by

[6] A method of composing that allows for the free movement of parallel 5ths and precedes the tonal system.

a comfortable location onto sixth string G (real pitch E) and the ligado heard in the trill figure clearly suggests a guitar in C♯ playing as though in E.

In a second example from Black Sabbath's *Master of Reality* album, a live performance of 'Children of the Grave', released on the DVD *The Black Sabbath Story, Volume 1* (Sanctuary 2002), shows Iommi playing this piece as if in E, using standard tuning shapes but the pitch is in C♯ (therefore C♯ standard). This provides a clear indication of the way that Iommi played it on the original album. I offer this as further evidence that Sabbath were using C♯ tuning by at least 1971. Certainly, the opening C♯ triplet pedal could not be played any other way than on a C♯ tuned sixth string.

On the first three albums Iommi had discovered the 'dark' timbres of the C♯ tuning but he had restricted himself to riffs rooted in E (C♯) or built from the open sixth string for their darkest sounding tracks. Further developments to emerge from his adoption of C♯ tunings saw Iommi experiment with the use of alternative open strings to that of E. Such concepts were first heard in tracks such as 'After Forever' from *Master of Reality*. Here, the main riff of the intro features an open fifth string pedal against which oblique motion is created by flowing melodic lines on, first the fourth string, and then the sixth. The guitar, however, is in D standard tuning and although it is played as if in A it sounds in G, thus creating an original timbre.

The Mixolydian nature of 'After Forever', nevertheless, produced a somewhat brighter effect than other, darker sounding numbers found on *Master of Reality*[7] through which Sabbath had established their signature sound. It is evident, however, from tracks on their fourth album, *Vol 4* (1972), that Iommi had found darker sounding timbres in the idiomatic possibilities of other open strings. The fourth riff of 'Wheels of Confusion', for example, is notated and played as though it is in A but it sounds in F♯. This riff, heard in the third section at around 3:32 min., has a fanfare of 5ths and tritones and seems to be more in keeping with the darker moods established in earlier numbers which focus on down-tuned open sixth string roots.

Black Sabbath's next two albums, *Sabbath Bloody Sabbath* (1973) and *Sabotage* (1975) strengthen the focus on down-tuned open sixth string roots and even suggest occasional use of a 'dropped C♯ tuning'. Certainly, dropped tunings have become fairly ubiquitous in modern metal and the potential for riffing using a dropped sixth string was evident in the aforementioned albums of Black Sabbath. In order to explain the significance of this I must first introduce the 'dropped D tuning' which is a common tuning in folk and classical guitar music. It utilises the conventional tuning system (E standard) but drops the sixth string by one tone to D giving a tuning of D, A, D, G, B, E. In the same way, by lowering the sixth string by one tone whilst in E♭ standard, the guitar is said to be in dropped C♯ and

[7] Such as 'Children of the Grave'.

the tuning would be (using the enharmonic equivalents' names[8]) C♯, G♯, C♯, F♯, A♯, D♯.

Many heavy metal bands have adopted this tuning convention into the syntax of metal by introducing a new way of playing power-chord riffs. Because the dropped sixth string alters the intervallic value between the bottom two strings from a perfect 4th to a perfect 5th, power-chords can be played using just one finger by barring across the bottom two strings (for example, Pantera 'Walk' [1992]). With distortion and a little palm-muting applied, quicker movement between power-chords becomes comfortable due to the single barre nature.

There is a suggestion that Iommi may have adopted this technique on occasional tracks such as 'Sabbath Bloody Sabbath' (1973). Here, the tightly formed semitonal chords of the central main riff starting at 3:19 min. are comfortably played when using a dropped C♯, and it is played with neat ligados, something that would be very difficult to achieve when using standard power-chords. In modern metal the sixth string is frequently dropped to either D, C♯, C or B. Examples are heard in the work of Carcass[9] (dropped B in 'Room 101' from *Swansong* [1995]), Drowning Pool (dropped C in the earlier mentioned 'Bodies') and Lamb of God (dropped D in 'Ruin' [2003]).

By the fifth and sixth albums Iommi had fully incorporated the numerous possibilities discovered in the down-tuned idiomatic riffs of earlier numbers into the sonic palette of Black Sabbath. It is apparent by listening to and indeed playing along with these albums, that Iommi was now making extensive use of idiomatic ideas related to other open strings and fully exploiting the possibility to produce thick textures from root notes on all the lower strings.

Black Sabbath's 'Killing Yourself to Live' from *Sabbath Bloody Sabbath* (1973) illustrates this point but there are many tracks scattered throughout the fourth, fifth and sixth albums that draw on the same principles. 'Killing Yourself to Live' has five main themes that move between open A (real pitch F♯) and D (real pitch B) related figures. The tuning here is C♯ (with a dropped B) and theme 1 focuses on an open fifth string power-chord figure embellished by other open string sounds. Theme 2 is a monophonic D related theme that draws on the open sixth string. Theme 3 remains D based but features power-chords and flat 2nds. Theme 4 is A based with open fifth string notes and various pull-offs to the open third string. Theme 5 has an open fifth string pedal whilst the moving chords above are formed from a simple half-barre that moves between different fret positions. Theme 6 extends that same idea.

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[8] 'Enharmonic' meaning that any one note may have different names. So, for example E♭ and D♯ are the same note but with different names. The way in which names are applied is much to do with fairly complex issues of theory. For no apparent reason it is accepted amongst guitarists that when the instrument is in E♭ standard the flat names are used and when the sixth string is dropped, the sharp names are applied.

[9] Liverpool band Carcass, along with Napalm Death, were important in pioneering the grindcore movement but later albums are more resonant with death metal.

When Tony Iommi slackened the strings on his guitar to ease the pain of playing following his accident he could not have foreseen the significant influence this would have on a whole genre of music. From the early days of E♭ tunings Black Sabbath discovered that those slacker strings when combined with distortion and sequences of power-chords created a rich and dark timbre that was unique, one that set them apart from other bands. Furthermore, that timbre somehow seemed to enhance the subject of their lyrics. As the albums progressed so too did the experimentations with tunings, this time, though, not for any practical benefit but solely in the creation of an original form of music. These experiments significantly contributed to the evolution of heavy metal where such contextualised ownership of down-tuned guitars have become ubiquitous. Moreover, the emphasis on a low tessitura contrasted sharply with that of Led Zeppelin who preferred a wide variety of keys, timbres and textures.

This in itself highlights a certain paradox in that many academics (for example, Walser, Shuker, Weinstein, Fast) consistently align Led Zeppelin with the formation of heavy metal and yet their output clearly privileged the incorporation and promotion of many non-metal related stylisations such as folk and pure blues. For example, the total output of what may be considered rock and blues-rock tracks (excluding three slow 12-bar blues) found on the first six albums of Led Zeppelin amount to 53 per cent of the whole, a significant statistic given such widely perceived opinion. Acoustic and folk-based numbers account for much of the remaining 47 per cent along with the occasional ballads, slow 12-bar blues and funk rock and reggae numbers. Furthermore, of the 53 per cent rock tracks, 27 per cent were either blues covers or directly informed by the stock-in-trade features of blues and/or rock and roll. This, arguably, leaves a total of 26 per cent of Led Zeppelin's studio album output, between 1969 and 1975, that could be considered original rock songs.

An examination of these tracks reveals that the key ranges were limited to mostly A, E, D and G and usually in standard tuning. The only exception to this being two of the three songs that are in D utilising a dropped D and two of the numerous songs in E using an open E tuning to facilitate bottleneck/slide playing. The majority of songs are in the open keys of A and E. This is natural as it easily facilitates open chords and idiomatic figures. Other keys (more specifically) include three songs in D, one in G (both D and G are also open keys), one in F and two in F♯.

The following list highlights the rock numbers found on each of Led Zeppelin's first six albums and the key of each number:

- *Led Zeppelin* (1969): 'Good Times Bad Times' E, 'Communication Breakdown' E, 'How Many More Times' E, 'Dazed and Confused' E;
- *Led Zeppelin II* (1969): 'Whole Lotta Love' E, 'What Is and What Should Never Be' (part 2) A, 'The Lemon Song' E, 'Heartbreaker' A, 'Living Loving Maid' A, 'Moby Dick' D (with dropped D), 'Bring it On Home' E;

- *Led Zeppelin III* (1970): 'Immigrant Song' F♯, 'Celebration Day' A, 'Since I've Been Loving You' Cm, 'Out on the Tiles' F♯.
- *Led Zeppelin IV* (1971): 'Black Dog' A, 'Rock and Roll' A, 'Misty Mountain Hop' A, 'Four Sticks' A/E, 'When the Levee Breaks' F;
- *Houses of the Holy* (1973); 'The Song Remains the Same' D, 'The Ocean' A;
- *Physical Graffiti* (1975): 'Custard Pie' A, 'The Rover' E, 'In My Time of Dying' A, 'Houses of the Holy' A, 'Kashmir' (ethnic focus here but included as rock) D (open D tuning), 'Ten Years Gone' A, 'Night Flight' A, 'The Wanton Song' G, 'Boogie with Stu' A, 'Sick Again' E.

I have already mentioned something of the prevalence of arcane references and acoustic guitar music found in the repertoire and early albums of Zeppelin and many of those examples move away from standard tunings and use a number of the open tunings frequently used by folk and acoustic blues artists. There is a tentative correlation here with Black Sabbath in that many of these open tunings also feature down-tuned guitars. However, the context and means by which the down-tunings are employed is completely different.

The dropped D tuning was introduced earlier and, as mentioned, is a favourite with folk and classical players. A second technique, 'open tuning', involves re-tuning the strings so that playing across the six open strings gives a complete chord and this opens up a whole new world of sounds including standard pitch and up-tuning concepts (for example, open E) and much down-tuning (for example, open C). This is particularly useful for solo playing as the guitarist is able to combine chords and melody in a much more accessible and sonorous way. In addition, these tunings allow some very interesting and engaging combinations of sounds.

The following illustrates some of the standard open tunings employed by Led Zeppelin.

- C standard tuning – C, F, B♭, E♭, G, C, used, for example, in 'Bron-Y-Aur', *Physical Graffiti* (1975);
- dropped B♭ tuning – B♭, F, B♭, E, G, C, used, for example, in 'Hats off (to Roy Harper)', *Led Zeppelin III* (1970);
- open G tuning – D, G, D, G, B, D, used, for example, in 'Going to California', *Led Zeppelin IV* (1971);
- open F♯ tuning – C♯, F♯, C♯, F♯, A♯, C♯, used, for example, in 'That's the Way', *Led Zeppelin III* (1970);
- open F tuning – C, F, C, F, A, C, used, for example, in 'Bron-Y-Aur Stomp', *Led Zeppelin III* (1970);
- dropped C tuning – C, G, C, F, A, D, used, for example, in 'Dancing Days', *Houses of the Holy* (1973).

It was natural that Zeppelin experimented and utilised these sounds so much, both Page and Plant were great admirers and performers of folk music, as was Jones. From the outset the band decided to feature acoustic music as much as rock; Page

wanted the band to 'comprise both light and shade' (Fast 2001: 80) and this was reflected not only in the recordings but also by the inclusion of an acoustic element in each live set. Also, the fact that both Page and Jones were educated session musicians meant that they were bound to accommodate those multi-skills into the brief of the band.

Of the remaining numbers there is little to say in terms of Led Zeppelin's use of tessitura and timbre that is relevant to this discussion. There are one or two keys that go beyond what has been discussed already, the reggae number 'D'yer Mak'er' in C and the D♭ keyboard based piece 'No Quarter', both from *Houses of the Holy*, are no more than curiosities in the context of this discussion.

It is clear, therefore, that the developments and experimental work of Black Sabbath, which focused on a specific collocation of down-tunings, distortion and sequences of power-chords contrasted sharply with that of Led Zeppelin who used down-tunings only in an acoustic guitar and folk context. Led Zeppelin's rock tracks are all in standard pitch, most frequently in the open keys of A and E and, most significantly, hardly use power-chords at all. This later point will be highlighted in the next section which is concerned with riff constructions.

Modes, Riffs and Intervals 1: Riff Constructions

Central to this discussion is the specific way in which certain modes, scales and intervals are adopted, contextualised and manipulated in the composition of riffs. This is an important concept because the privileging and reiteration of specific figures and contours contributes significantly to the coding and, therefore, the defining of genre in both heavy metal and hard rock.

The research work that I have undertaken in examining the intervallic nature of riffs found in the work of Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath has produced, I believe, significant results. I introduced this topic briefly in the Introduction but here it will be more fully expounded. For this part of the research I spent much time listening to the first six albums of Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin, working out[10] many tracks and then transcribing appropriate parts to illustrate my argument. Established data has not been referred to as, largely, it does not exist, except to an extent in Susan Fast's book on Led Zeppelin (*In the Houses of the Holy: Led Zeppelin and the Power of Rock Music* [2001]). The following concepts are purely my own observations of music performed and analysed for over 30 years and in a much more rigorous way during the course of preparing this book.

Riff Construction: Black Sabbath

Black Sabbath appear to have adopted and contextualised certain key intervals in ways that Led Zeppelin did not. Those intervals, namely the flat 2nd and the tritone,

[10] Learning how to play the guitar/bass/vocal/drum parts by listening and copying.

were the cornerstones of the guitar riff output of Black Sabbath from 1969 to 1975. Not only do such intervals feature in numerous of the band's key album tracks but the effect of these intervals contributed to and related significantly to their musical, lyrical and visual image. Moreover, the originality of this sound was one that contributed to the evolution of heavy metal, as a genre, by the establishment of a whole new set of musical conventions.

The tritone is one such interval and has played a key role in establishing the fingerprint of heavy metal from Black Sabbath to the present day. The tritone finds its equivalent in both the diminished 5th and augmented 4th interval.[11] Furthermore, the established connotations associated with this interval fitted snugly with Black Sabbath's thematic schemata and image. In this respect, Black Sabbath seem to have been influenced by the crime TV/film themes of the 1950s and 60s, a concept that links with the work of Philip Tagg in 'Tritonal Crime and "Music as Music"' (1991).[12] In that text, Tagg draws attention to the way in which crime film and TV music builds on already established conventions to reinforce, by frequent repetition, the use of tritones as tension builders. Examples from the world of film and TV, according to Tagg, include the theme music from *Perry Mason* (1955) and *Mission Impossible* (1966) and the Norman/Barry *James Bond Theme* (written and arranged for the first Bond film *Dr. No* [1962] and used regularly thereafter), where the tritone becomes associated with the ambience of malevolence, fear and danger.

In a similar way, established composers of previous centuries and decades seem to have 'demonised' the tritone and established a set of connotations that builds on the concept of 'Diabolus in Musica'. In this original context early theorists seemed to inadvertently suggest notions of ungodliness in the tritone by widely propagating and practising its avoidance in sacred music (through the development of *Musica Ficta*) on the grounds that it contravened the *Causa Pulchritudinis* or 'pathway of beauty' (*Oxford Companion to Music*, 10th edition, 1984: 1042). Notable examples of this 'demonising' process are found in the work of Wagner, Berlioz, Liszt, Holst and Richard Rodney Bennett.

For example, there are scenes in Wagner's *Götterdämmerung* (1876) marked by significant use of tritones that establish links between the tritone and the powers of darkness. One of those scenes is described by Professor John Deathridge in an article titled 'The Devils Music' published in the *BBC News Magazine* in June 2006: 'Gotterdammerung has one of the most exciting scenes – a "pagan", evil scene, the drums and the timpani. It is absolutely terrifying, it is like a black mass'.[13] Further tritonal associations with the devil are formulated in *La damnation de Faust* by Berlioz (1846) and Liszt's *Dante Symphony* (1855), whilst the evils of war are suggested in the 'Mars' theme of *The Planets Suite* by Holst (1916). During the 1950s and 60s, Hammer horror further contributed to the alignment

[11] These are enharmonic equivalents.

[12] http://www.tagg.org

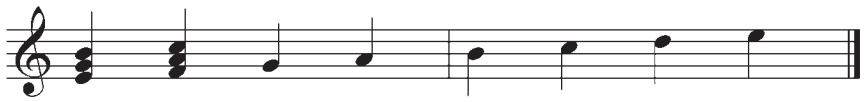
[13] http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/magazine/4952646.stm.

of the tritone with supernatural evil (for example, *The Witches* [USA *The Devils Own*] [1966], with a score by Richard Rodney Bennett). Furthermore, it was, of course, the Hammer and other horror movies that inspired both the name and musical direction of Black Sabbath (as discussed in Chapter 1).

Within the context of heavy metal, when combined with extreme loudness, distortion and down-tuning, both the tension cue associations and 'devil in the music' connotations of the tritone seem to be heightened to the point of it becoming a clear signifier of style in its own right. Significantly, also, the angular nature of this interval seemed to point the way towards a specific style of writing riffs where consecutive wide, discordant intervals such as the tritone combine with flat 2nd figures and modal contours to create a dominant signifier in the syntax of heavy metal riffs (what I refer to as 'angular riffs'). This process began with Black Sabbath and was adopted/developed by all major contributors to the evolution of the heavy metal genre (for example, Metallica and Machine Head). This concept is discussed in detail throughout the remainder of this section and also throughout Chapters 4 and 5.

Besides the tritone, one of the most ubiquitous intervals in modern heavy metal is the flat 2nd. This interval seems to relate significantly to the Phrygian mode and the riffs based on this privileged interval may be power-chord or monophonic. The relevance of the flat 2nd in relation to the Phrygian mode is found in the natural propensities of this mode to the guitar. For example, taking the lowest note of the guitar in natural tuning and following the (unaltered) letter names in order, the Phrygian mode emerges (see Example 2.1). Furthermore, the first two degrees of the Phrygian mode constitute the interval of a flat 2nd and it is this very feature that gives the Phrygian mode its unique character.

Example 2.1 Phrygian mode with the first two degrees harmonised



The contextualised, visceral effect of this interval is noted by Smirnov, who relates the flat 2nd to emotions such as sorrow, grief, sadness, unhappiness, languor, dolour, misery, woe, anguish, distress, suffering, torment, pain, bitterness, torture, desolation and agony.[14] Smirnov's descriptions are relevant to the themes found within Black Sabbath's output and suggest a clear correlation between lyrical/visual themes and musical sounds; that is, the frequent use of these intervals gives musical enhancement to such themes and is one of the main characteristics of heavy metal.

Importantly, the observations of Smirnov reflect the way that Black Sabbath seem to be homing in on established tension cues that have become associated

[14] http://homepage.ntlworld.com/dmitrismirnov/Intervals.html

with the flat 2nd in a similar way to the tritone. Significantly, the establishment of the flat 2nd as a tension builder, as with the tritone, was first established in earlier music. For example, the 'dragon motif' in *Siegfried* by Wagner creates tension and conflict by use of the tritone and flat 2nds and similar devices were used by Holst in 'Mars' from *The Planets Suite*. A further example is found in Grieg's 'Abduction of the Bride' (*Peer Gynt* [1891]).

The TV and film crime themes of the 1950s and '60s (as noted earlier, in the work of Tagg) are equally relevant here too where scores such as the *James Bond Theme* (1962) and *Mission Impossible* (1966) promote flat 2nds as tension builders. Film music composers continued to espouse and reinforce the cultural associations of malevolence, fear and distress associated with the flat 2nd into the 1970s and thus to a time span contemporary with Black Sabbath: for example, the 'shark theme' in *Jaws* (Williams [1975]). It is interesting too that Williams employs this interval combined with a low string tessitura, the same as heavy metal.

I would now like to examine the way in which Black Sabbath used these intervals to construct their riffs. Black Sabbath created their unique sound world in songs written during 1969 whilst playing extensive gigs in Hamburg. Upon returning to England they set about recording their first album *Black Sabbath*, produced by Rodger Baine, and released on Friday, 13 February 1970. Sabbath had great difficulty in securing a record deal with such bizarre sounding music, but Baine was convinced by the originality of their sound, and the album was cut using much of their live gigging material albeit with the extensive improvised sections of their live performances cut down. It is clear upon listening to the first album that much of this early original material was still in a developmental stage. For example, some of the numbers appear as improvisatory jams (for example, 'Wicked World') and there were also two covers ('Evil Woman' and 'Warning'). However, there were a number of key tracks on this album that were ground breaking. The first two tracks (on both the British and American releases) were particularly significant.

Track one, 'Black Sabbath', features the interval of a tritone in the main guitar riff. It appears in mostly monophonic form and starts from the sixth string G (although in live performances this would have been F♯), then moving up one octave and settling on D♭ to create the tritone. This figure is constantly repeated throughout the first section of the track with alternating dynamics that create a dramatic effect. The music is visceral and conveys the overwhelming sense of fear evident in the story of impending doom being delivered by the ghostly 'figure in black'. The quiet sections are marked by a clean tone and considerable reverb. The louder sections are marked by 'full on' natural distortion, a power-chord on the lower octave part of the motif and a flat 2nd trill figure on the tritone.

The first recorded instance where Black Sabbath feature a flat 2nd is in 'The Wizard', the second track from the same album. This track has three main themes. Theme 1 features a harmonica and guitar riff based on I-♭VII-I which is an instrumental section. Theme 2 is the main riff that accompanies the vocals; it features the flat 2nd and emphasises the Phrygian propensities of the interval.

In the track 'N.I.B.' from the same album, Sabbath further develop this interval and begin to emphasise the privileged use of the flat 2nd. Here, the flat 2nd occurs between the second to third degrees of the Aeolian mode but the positioning of this, on a brief pause in the centre of the phrase, clearly heightens the flat 2nd nature and its visceral associations of tension. The second riff has the descending sequence I-♭VII-♭VI-V, the latter two chords forming a further development of the flat 2nd where the effect is emphasised by a series of repetitions at the end of the verse. Here, the interval appears to suggest the Phrygian and may be considered therefore as a 'Phrygian inflexion'.

Black Sabbath's second album, *Paranoid* (1970), reveals both continuity and development of the flat 2nd. The third section (starting at 3:38 min.) of 'Hand of Doom' features a stopped ♭II-I against a pulsating root note bass line. In 'War Pigs', Sabbath approach a ♭II-I via a chromatic descent. The longer note values on the cadence points emphasise the Phrygian propensities of the interval. Later metal bands frequently drew on this idea, for example, Drowning Pool's 'Sinner' from *Sinner* (2001) and System of a Down's 'Sugar' from *System of a Down* (1998).

In the track 'Electric Funeral', Sabbath further developed the privileged use of the flat 2nd by combining two versions of this interval within the complete phrase of the riff. The first is based on the move I-V-♭VI-V-I. The riff phrase concludes with a second version of this interval: II-♭III-II. Again, attention is drawn to the flat 2nd by both its approach (as a leap) and the longer note values that sustain the effect. The riff, as a whole, is built on the Aeolian mode but the emergent wide leaps and semitone figures that result are, as introduced earlier, significant precursers of modern metal writing and embody a new style of 'angular' writing in 1969 and 1970 that further set Black Sabbath apart. In one further example from *Paranoid*, 'Iron Man', the flat 2nd found in the downward pull of the sixth to fifth degrees of the Aeolian mode is privileged in a new way and is emphasised by trill-like repetition.

Throughout their third album, *Master of Reality* (1971), Black Sabbath continued their sustained development of these key intervals. The main riff of 'Into the Void' resonates somewhat with the blues with its chromatic colouring of the augmented 4th between the subdominant and dominant notes but the second riff includes a flat 2nd by means of a semitone bend between IV-♭V-IV. Again, both the longer note values and change of technique that coincide with the appearance of this key interval draw attention to its privileged status.

Both 'Children of the Grave' (track 4) and 'Lord of This World' (track 6) are linked by the use of similar devices. Both are rooted in C♯ (the notated version would be in E therefore it makes sense to discuss the pieces as if in E) and both combine the tritone with privileged flat 2nds and the, by now, familiar angular nature of leaps and semitones. Riff 1 in 'Children of the Grave' very much emphasises the ♭VI-V downward pull found in both Aeolian and Phrygian modes. The second riff features a tritone combined with flat 2nds based on ♭VII-VI and V-♭V and the same intervals are combined in 'Lord of This World'.

By the fourth album, *Vol 4* (1972) (as discussed, under timbre, earlier) Sabbath began to experiment with other possibilities inherent in the radically down-tuned guitars of the C♯ tuning. The fourth section of 'Wheels of Confusion' (track 1) is based on a riff that is played in A on the guitar but the down-tuning means that it sounds in F♯. This unique timbral effect allowed Black Sabbath to regenerate their fascination with the tritone and flat 2nd. The tritone is heard in the I-♭V which then falls one semitone followed by several repeats of the same flat 2nd and thus creating, once more, emphasis on this key interval.

In 'Cornucopia' (track 7) (Example 2.2), the same progression (but in E) from the root leads to an oscillation of V and ♭V thus creating a colourful mixture of tritone and flat 2nd intervals. This figure, ending on the dominant note B (real pitch F♯), slides up to the note F creating a second tritone figure. The final part of this move involves a side stepping motion that encompasses a pair of flat 2nds and a double tritone. The flat 2nds are found in the move E-F and B♭-B. The E-F figure, being played at fret 11–12, means that when the sequence is repeated at fret 6–7, one hears clearly the move from E to B♭ and F to B which is the double tritone.

Example 2.2 Black Sabbath, 'Cornucopia' from *Vol 4* (1972)

In 'Under the Sun' (*Vol 4*, track 10), Iommi presents a series of flat 2nds, including a tritone, approached thus: I-V-♭V / ♭VII-VI / ♭VI-V. The final part of this track uses the same sequence as used in 'N.I.B.' from the first album (discussed earlier) but the altered nuance of timbre means it is heard with new effect.

In 1973 Black Sabbath released their fifth album *Sabbath Bloody Sabbath*. The opening track has an interesting use of the flat 2nd. This occurs during the central section or third riff. Several repeats of ♭III-II are culminated in the move ♭III-III. The constant repetition of the flat 2nd in this riff endows this interval with fresh and renewed importance. The longer note value on III draws attention to the importance of this interval and thus confirm the consistent privileging of the flat 2nd throughout the first five albums and a time span of four years. In 'Who Are You' the familiar tritones and flat 2nds are heard in a very unfamiliar setting, a synthesiser part played by Rick Wakeman.

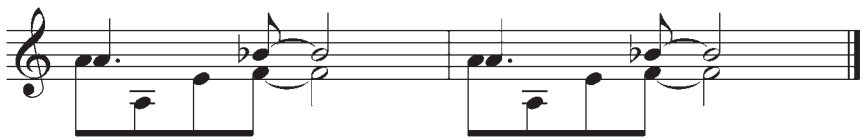
On The album *Sabotage* (1975), Sabbath further developed their manipulation of the tritone and flat 2nd. In 'Symptom of the Universe' they unfold a series of tritones step by step. The first half of riff 1 is a simple tritone, I-♭V. The second half of the same phrase extends the interval downwards by one semitone juxtaposing the tritone and flat 2nd, I-V-♭V. The second riff, which serves as a bridge between repeats of the main riff, uses (♭V-) ♭VII-♭V-IV. Once again, Black Sabbath write

angular riffs, thus re-affirming the fingerprint of their sound and evolving what will become a major code of heavy metal syntax.

In 'Megalomania' from *Sabotage*, the concept of a repeated motif moving in and out of dynamic contrasts, as first used in 'Black Sabbath' (1970), was repeated but this time based on the flat 2nd. The verse being split into two has an acoustic first half that reflects 'silent symphonies' and 'dreams of the soul'. It is particularly interesting that the move from the first chord, based on the notes A and E (the interval of a 5th), to the second chord, based on the notes F and B♭ (an inverted 5th), form an intriguing juxtaposition of tritone and flat 2nd. The distance from E to F (heard in the move from first chord to second chord) creates a flat 2nd whilst the distance between E and B♭ (also heard in the move from first chord to second chord) simultaneously creates a tritone which is a new way of combining the two effects (Example 2.3).

The second half of the verse reflects 'out of control' and 'insanity' through a sustained power-chord riff. Here the move is simply I-♭II-I, the same as used in 'The Wizard' (discussed earlier) from the first album, and using the exact same chord positions but this time sounding in the much lower timbre of F♯ due to the down-tuned guitar (C♯ tuning with the sixth string down to B).

Example 2.3 Black Sabbath, 'Megalomania' from *Sabotage* (1975): outline of part 1 chord sequence



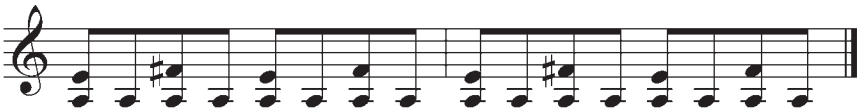
'Megalomania' highlights once more the way in which an angular style of riff writing, where discordant leaps are combined with Phrygian inflexions, are developed in the early work of Black Sabbath. The ubiquity of their influence in this respect is demonstrated throughout Chapter 5 but for a more immediate illustration I would refer the reader to tracks such as Arch Enemy, 'Leader of the Rats' from *Anthems of Rebellion* (2003); Metallica, 'Of Wolf and Man' from *Metallica* (1990); System of a Down, 'Suite Pee' from *System of a Down* (1998); and Machine Head, 'Bulldozer' from *Supercharger* (2001).

It is clear, therefore, that one of the major contributing factors in shaping Black Sabbath's unique sound was the way in which they constructed power-chord riffs based on a combination of angular intervals, such as the tritone and privileged use of flat 2nds (including chromatic lines). These riff constructions subsequently became a major building block in heavy metal. By contrast, the guitar riffs found within the rock numbers of Led Zeppelin are consistently linear and also founded on 'stock-in-trade' techniques/devices borrowed from the repertoire of blues and rock and roll. Harmony remains related to tonality (including the 12-bar blues) and true power-chords are seldom employed.

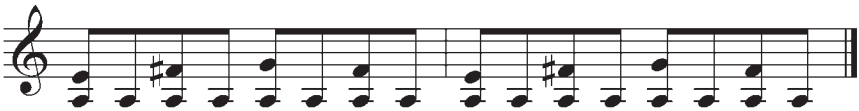
Riff Construction: Led Zeppelin

In Chapter 1 I introduced some of the stock-in-trade devices of blues and rock and roll including the transient 3rd and half-dominant 7th and 12-bar riff. This latter technique, which was only briefly mentioned in Chapter 1, is so called because of its extensive use in 12-bar boogie blues. This riff combines a pedal tonic with a rocking motion between the dominant and submediant notes (see Example 2.4). Often this riff will also include the flattened 7th (see Example 2.5).

Example 2.4 Typical 12-bar riff as used by Chuck Berry



Example 2.5 Alternative 12-bar riff



At this point I would like to offer a pertinent reminder of what is meant by the term power-chord as this forms a very important aspect in this argument. A power-chord is not, strictly speaking, simply a chord played with an overdriven sound. There is a clue in the other name assigned to the power-chord, the 5th chord. This second name describes the nature of the chord very aptly in that the guitarist plays just the bottom two (sometimes three) strings of a standard barre chord. Most rock guitarists from the 1980s onwards would not bother to shape the full chord but just simply fret the two strings necessary for the power-chord sound. The standard tuning of guitar strings in fourths means that standard barre chords played from both the sixth and fifth strings contain notes of the triad in this order:

- sixth string barre (from sixth to first) 1st, 5th, 1st, 3rd, 5th, 1st
- fifth string barre (from fifth to first) 1st, 5th, 1st, 3rd, 5th

So, playing the bottom two or three strings gives a chord that contains no 3rd, the note that gives the chord its major or minor character. A 5th chord is therefore a kind of ‘mutant’ chord because it has no 3rd, only a 1st and 5th. The origins of this method of playing chords are found in the early days of Black Sabbath (then known as Earth) following Iommi’s loss of some of his fretting fingers and the great difficulty he had thereafter in playing full barre chords.

Therefore, whereas the power-chord became a mighty weapon in the armoury of Black Sabbath riffs it only made limited appearances in the hands of Jimmy Page; this, of course, is rather contrary to popular opinion, although there are instances found within the repertoire of Led Zeppelin where power-chords are used. One such example is found in 'Whole Lotta Love' (1969). Significantly though, there are no angular intervals, nor Phrygian inflexions, thus setting it apart from the sound world of Black Sabbath.

There are other occasions where Page uses power-chords but often the intention seems to be to drive major triads in a full-on rock context. There are several examples of such. In 'Communication Breakdown' from *Led Zeppelin* (1969), the chords D and A are played as open string power-chords but it is clear from the timbral sound of the chord that Page is fretting the full chord even though only playing part of it. In any event, there is a clear implication that the riff is based on a linear progression using the chords E, D and A. Furthermore, the chorus combines a 12-bar riff with the dominant 7th chords.

The 12-bar riff used in 'Communication Breakdown' was a technique that Page maintained from his days as a blues guitarist and he used this same technique consistently across the first six albums. For example, 'Bring It on Home', from *Led Zeppelin II* (1969) uses a stock-in-trade 12-bar riff and 'Custard Pie', from *Physical Graffiti* (1975), features a variation of the 12-bar riff.

A number of Zeppelin's rock numbers are based on fully fretted open chords with no hint of power-chords at all. Track 1 of *Houses of the Holy* (1973), 'The Song Remains the Same', is one such example. In this number the riffs are composed from open D and A based chords featuring suspensions. Other songs mix monophonic and open chord riffs. 'Living Loving Maid' from the second album, for example, has a sixth and fifth string riff containing a transient 3rd and concluding on an A-A$^{sus\,4}$-A sequence. The chorus of this song is based on the three primary chords[15] in their dominant 7th form – A7, D7 and E7.

Monophonic riffs, based on blue notes and transient 3rds, were frequently employed by Zeppelin for numerous of their rock based riffs. 'Heartbreaker', from *Led Zeppelin II* (1969), further exemplifies my earlier discussion of the flat 5th blue note to colour the move from subdominant to dominant notes. The inclusion of the flat 3rd and flat 7th endows this riff with a full set of blues notes. Use of the transient 3rd is equally common in the riffs of Led Zeppelin and exemplified in tracks such as 'Rock and Roll' from their fourth untitled album of 1972 and 'Houses of the Holy' from *Physical Graffiti* (1975). Furthermore, the ambivalent nature of 'Black Dog' from the fourth album, as it moves between E and A, (theme 1) allows Page to play with the transient 3rd from both chords, that is, the G-G♯ from the key of E and the C-C♯ (heard in the bend) from the key of A. In theme 2, similar movement between the chords of B and E allows further development of the same idea.

[15] In western music chords I, IV and V are collectively known as the primary triads or chords.

'Immigrant Song', from *Led Zeppelin III* (1970), is based on a repeated octave motif and this number is a single example by Led Zeppelin that features unresolved tritone and flat 2nd figures in a similar way to 'Black Sabbath'. However, there is no down-tuning and the singularity of it, in context, is of little significance to the argument that I am presenting, that is, Black Sabbath use such figurations consistently across a number of albums to establish such collocations as core elements of their coding. With Led Zeppelin the core elements remain related to blues and folk stylisations and these same stylisations dominate the majority of their numbers.

The adaptation and manipulation of intervals in the construction of rock and metal therefore, is one of the crucial factors in shaping the fingerprint of a band's sound. As I have demonstrated, in the case of Led Zeppelin, their measured and consistent manipulation of stock-in-trade techniques borrowed from rock and roll and blues in the creation of riffs clearly sets them apart from Black Sabbath whose riffs are angular and modal and emphasise intervals such as the tritone and flat 2nd. Also significant, was the way in which Black Sabbath composed, not only monophonic riffs, but also riffs in sequences of power-chords. This is in contrast to Led Zeppelin who made some use of power-chords but rarely in sequences and mostly combined with monophonic lines and standard open chords.

Modes, Riffs and Intervals 2: Melodic Constructions

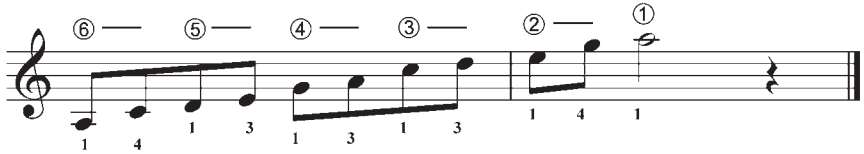
The next section makes tangible connections with the previous section; indeed at times there is some overlap. This is because the next topic explores the use of melodic constructions in the works of Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin. This also must take into account the use of intervals, although there is a different emphasis in that consideration is now given more specifically to lead guitar breaks and instrumental sections where the guitar provides significant melodic elements to the compositional form.

I have made a conscious decision to avoid detailed analysis of the vocal parts. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, this in itself is a huge topic worthy of independent research. Secondly, I do not feel that including such a discussion will contribute significantly to my argument as the melodic lines of the vocals, in the works of both Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath, generally mirror the melodic lines of the instrumental parts, for example, where the riffs and instrumental sections are based on the Aeolian mode, so too are the vocals. In fact, in the case of Black Sabbath this can be literally so. For example, Osbourne frequently constructs his vocal lines following, *colla voce*, the underlying riff. Examples of this may be heard in tracks such as 'Electric Funeral' and 'Iron Man' (both from *Paranoid* [1970]). In the case of Led Zeppelin, Plant, being a blues singer, used his blues techniques in the vocal parts of Led Zeppelin's work as much as Page did in the instrumental parts. Therefore, even though I have much to say on this topic, I feel

I must restrict myself to the instrumental parts for this method seems to provide the clearest indication of the generic style of these two bands.

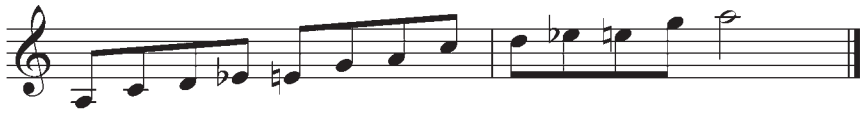
There is one thing that Jimmy Page and Tony Iommi have in common (and the same is true for probably the majority of rock guitarists of the late 1960s to mid 1970s) and that is the espousal of the pentatonic minor as the basic form from which solos are constructed. This is a natural pattern on the guitar, fitting neatly under the fingers with the widest interval being four frets (which is the number of fingers available for fretting, one finger per fret). The scale, starting on the sixth string (at any fret, this is a transposable pattern) steps across the strings, two notes per string: (string six) 1-4, (string five) 1-3, (string four) 1-3, (string three) 1-3, (string two) 1-4, (string one) 1. Guitarists can also voice this scale in different ways but this is the usual starting point (Example 2.6). Bends fall naturally under the third finger on string three and fourth finger on strings one and two, and this is illustrated in Example 2.6.

Example 2.6 A pentatonic minor fretted in fifth position



The pentatonic minor has been used by guitarists as a ‘base colour’ to which new colours are added to give new character. The early blues guitarists embellished the pentatonic minor with transient 3rds and half-dominant 7ths; they also merged the pentatonic minor and blues scale together. These two scales are very similar under the fingers: string six 1-4, string five 1-2-3, string four 1-3, string three 1-3-4, string two 1-4 and string one 1 (see Example 2.7).

Example 2.7 A blues scale



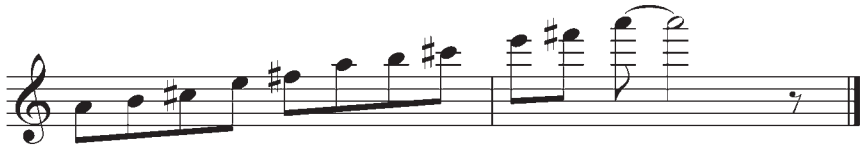
The difference between Page and Iommi, and this relates in particular to the period 1969–73 (the most formative period of these styles), is found in the way in which the guitarist embellishes the pentatonic minor scale. Page freely makes use of all the techniques developed by the 1940s and 50s blues musicians whereas Iommi consistently disregards such blues embellishments. Certainly, one reason for this may have been to do with his damaged fingers; the pentatonic minor would have been much more manageable. Having said that, Iommi clearly was able to play these embellishments and certainly did so before the transformation of

Earth to Black Sabbath (the pre-Sabbath line up, Earth, was a blues covers band). Furthermore, such embellishments surface occasionally within the early works of Black Sabbath. It is significant, however, that Iommi chose not to feature such embellishments in the key works of Black Sabbath, creating instead a distinct and unique modal sound. This laid the foundation for later mutations of metal where pure modal soloing became a key element of the metal genre.

Jimmy Page, however, made copious use of blues embellishments with few exceptions (one such example being 'Stairway to Heaven' [1972]), and the solos in Led Zeppelin, be it rock or blues, are distinguished by frequent use of such idiomatic blues stylisations. This also relates significantly to the construction of their guitar riffs (as discussed earlier). 'Whole Lotta Love' (*Led Zeppelin II* [1969]) for example, typifies the soloing style of Page. The short solo section is played against powerfully punched out 'stop' chords (another technique borrowed from blues and rock and roll) and is centred on the E blues scale. The solo also contains snatches of Chuck Berry type double-stopping, blue notes and transient 3rds. The instrumental coda to 'Black Dog' (*Led Zeppelin IV* [1972]) further exemplifies the way in which Page frequently improvises figurations drawn from his wealth of blues licks and bolts them seamlessly together, such techniques firmly aligning the music with blues and rock and roll.

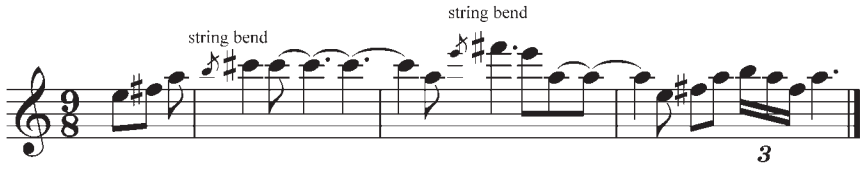
Furthermore, Page's adoption of the pentatonic major scale (Example 2.8) is also significant. Pentatonic major soloing, within a blues context, has been firmly established in the work of prominent blues guitarists such as Freddie King and B.B. King, and Page strengthens his association with blues stylisations by the adoption of their techniques. The solo to 'Living Loving Maid' (*Led Zeppelin II*), for example, seems to find its inspiration in the pentatonic major world of B.B. King and Freddie King. B.B. King has acknowledged his debt to Little Willie John,[16] and a similar style is evident in Little Willie John's 1956 single 'Need Your Love So Bad'. Example 2.9 illustrates something of the typical pentatonic syntax of those players.

Example 2.8 A pentatonic major scale



[16] John Floyd, http://www.allmusic.com, *s.v.* Little Willie John.

Example 2.9 Opening bars of a pentatonic major solo in style of Little Willie John



The soloing of Jimmy Page, then, contributed to the overall soundscape of Led Zeppelin; in particular, his engagement with idiomatic blues stylisations significantly contributed to their blues-rock identity. In the same way, the style that Tony Iommi adopted not only contributed to Black Sabbath's soundscape (which was very different to that of Led Zeppelin) but, in adopting solos that were more influenced by Medieval modes, he paved the way for the development of heavy metal sub-genres that would wholly embrace the adoption of modes and eschew idiomatic blues forms. Such sub-genres would include thrash metal, death metal, black metal, grindcore and nu metal. Significant here, then, was Iommi's distinct use of the Aeolian, Dorian and Mixolydian modes (more particularly within the first two albums).

Whereas Black Sabbath's consistent use of the tritone, outside of any blues context, was one of their signature themes, there were, as discussed earlier, occasions when Iommi did show his knowledge of idiomatic blues figuring and made use of it in constructing riffs. It must be said, however, that on the occasions when such blues figures were used, the overall context dissipates any association with the blues and, rather, becomes a synchronous part of the transgression of their blues roots.

For example, in the track 'Rat Salad' from *Paranoid* (1970), the initial riff draws openly on a blues figure. However, that opening riff, although significant, is only brief; a new section, influenced by jazz and based on the Dorian mode, immediately follows and dissipates the blues impact. 'Into the Void' (*Master of Reality* [1971]), as discussed earlier, clearly draws on idiomatic blues features. At the same time, those features are tempered by chromatics that are clearly unrelated to blues figuring and more in line with Sabbath's unique handling of chromatics. Regardless of Iommi's occasional use of the blues scale in riffs, he made no significant use of the blues scale in his soloing (in the Black Sabbath period 1969–75) and this is highly significant. The same is true of transient 3rds (apart from one instance in the multi-sectional 'Wicked World' from *Black Sabbath*). It is the pure pentatonic and modal stylisations, then, that are significant to Black Sabbath's melodic syntax.

Iommi would have been very familiar with modes from his days as a jazz guitarist playing in local Birmingham bands. Before they were famous Sabbath played a certain amount of jazz. They can be briefly heard on the DVD *The Black Sabbath Story, Volume 1* (Sanctuary 2002) playing a number composed for their manager, jazz trumpeter Jim Simpson, called 'Song for Jim'. This number reveals

the influence of jazz and Django Reinhardt.[17] Iommi was influenced by Reinhardt not only musically but also in respect of re-learning to play after losing fretting fingers, as this too had befallen Reinhardt.

Often, the way in which Iommi used modal ideas in his solos was rather subtle. The opening figure from the solo to 'Paranoid', for example, is quite ambiguous. Bending the first note of the solo from the root note, the second note ends somewhere between a full tone (giving the first two notes of the Aeolian mode) and a tone and a half (giving the first two notes of the pentatonic minor). This microtonal nuance is one of the features of Iommi's lead guitar style and most likely developed as a natural outcome of playing on the slack strings of his down-tuned guitar. It is certain, however, that the overall impression of the opening is clearly Aeolian and this is notable as it seems to influence the character of the entire solo even though the lines forming the rest of the solo are based purely on the pentatonic minor scale. A more substantial use of the Aeolian mode is heard in the first part of the solo to 'N.I.B.' found on the band's eponymous debut album.

Iommi made some use of the Dorian mode in a number of solos. 'Rat Salad' (*Paranoid* [1970]), for example, is much more solidly based on modal lines than the brief hint of modality found in 'Paranoid' and features the G Dorian mode. A similar solo, based on the C Dorian mode is heard in 'Hand of Doom' from the same album.

One significant use of the Mixolydian mode (see Example 2.10) is heard in 'War Pigs' from *Paranoid* (1970). Here, the Mixolydian mode is used extensively;[18] firstly in the opening instrumental, which features Mixolydian fills, secondly in the main vocal lines[19] and thirdly in an instrumental link that comes before the guitar solo where Iommi develops the figures introduced earlier in the number (see Example 2.11).

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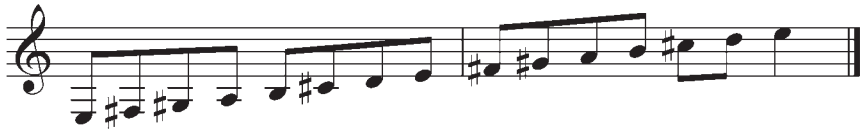
[17] When referring to jazz in relation to Black Sabbath and, more specifically Tony Iommi, it is important to distinguish the particular style in question as there are considerable differences between sub-genres of jazz such as 'traditional jazz', 'big band'/'swing', 'cool jazz' and 'be-bop'. Although much of Reinhardt's output may be considered 'gypsy jazz' (that is, guitar and violin where modes are freely mixed with blue notes), his work is equally associated with that of Charlie Christian and Coleman Hawkins. Equally so, I would suggest that the emergence of 'Latin jazz' during the 1960s, headed by Stan Getz and the guitarist Baden Powell, was influential. Here, 'cool' chords (for example, M7th, m7th 6th, 9th, 11th, 13th, etc.) are combined with Medieval modes to create a distinct mild dissonance. For a specific example of Reinhardt's work in this respect listen to 'Brazil' from *Retrospective 1934–53* (2003).

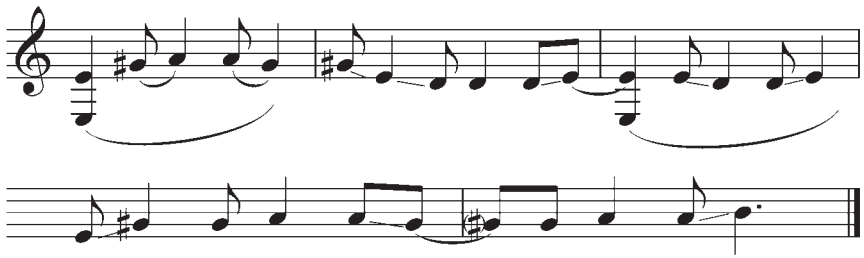
[18] See analytical table of 'War Pigs' below.

[19] Although this is a discussion of guitar rather than vocals, I suggest that the vocal lines are an extension of the guitar based themes and that Iommi, as composer of the music, is thinking in 'modal guitar' terms when suggesting vocal lines for Osbourne to sing. This is quite obvious in most of Sabbath's early compositions.

Example 2.10 E Mixolydian mode

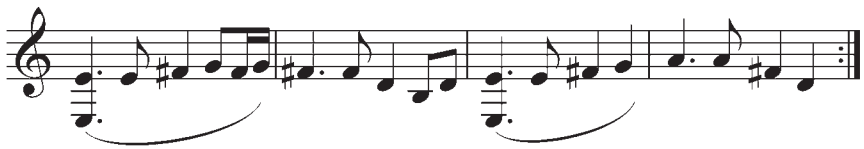


Example 2.11 Black Sabbath, 'War Pigs' from *Paranoid* (1970): pre-solo link (starting at 3:30)



If the use of the Aeolian mode in Sabbath's early to mid studio album output was subtly restricted, there was another aspect of modality that was much more overt and measured. This is related to certain instrumental writing where there is a strong melodic content carried in the guitar part. This differs from the improvised guitar solos in Sabbath's work in that the lines are compositional elements integral to the shape of the number. Many Black Sabbath numbers feature instrumental sections with a strong Aeolian content and those episodes contribute significantly to both the coding of Black Sabbath and the subsequent heavy metal genre. They often come in the form of an instrumental coda (for example, 'Black Sabbath', 'Iron Man' and 'War Pigs' [all 1970]) (see Example 2.12).

Example 2.12 Black Sabbath, 'War Pigs' from *Paranoid* (1970): coda figure



Sabbath's use of the Aeolian mode in their riff writing is extensive and to list all examples would be superfluous, but other significant instances include 'N.I.B.' (*Black Sabbath* [1970]), 'Iron Man' (*Paranoid* [1970]), 'Children of the Grave' (*Master of Reality* [1971]) and 'Under the Sun' (*Vol 4* [1972]). In 'A National Acrobat' (1973) there is an Aeolian instrumental section that doubles as

an introduction and link between sections and there is a singular example where an Aeolian riff is combined, *colla voce*, with a choral, wordless vocal line, 'Supertzar' from *Sabotage* (1975).

It is clear, therefore, that although the pentatonic minor scale formed the basis of many solos in the work of both Page and Iommi, the very different way in which each embellished the pentatonic minor was crucial in developing highly contrasting and dichotomous styles that contributed directly to the evolution of heavy metal and hard rock. Page, for example, embellished his solos with idiomatic blues techniques and frequently made use of the pentatonic major scale, thus maintaining clear links with the blues and rock and roll and so contributing significantly to the emergence of the hard rock genre. Iommi, in the main, disregarded blues licks in favour of a pure pentatonic minor approach that was sometimes embellished and sometimes merged with Dorian, Aeolian and Mixolydian modal lines. In some cases a purely modal approach was favoured. The extensive use of the Aeolian mode in the riff writing of Black Sabbath distinguished them from Led Zeppelin and thus contributed significantly to the coding of the heavy metal genre.

The discussion above concerning Black Sabbath's use of instrumental writing within their multi-sectional structures provides a link to the next part of this chapter, which examines the structural forms of Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin and their relevance.

Texture and Structure

In Chapter 1 I suggested, from research done into the 'why Birmingham?' question, that Black Sabbath inherited and extended the concept of instrumentally-focused structuring from bands such as the Yardbirds and Cream. These bands took the blues songs of artists such as Muddy Waters, Howling Wolf and Robert Johnson and instead of simply covering the songs, brought about a new emphasis, one that re-centred the function of the music from the vocals to instrumental timbre and textures.

Black Sabbath broadened this principle through the development of multi-sectional or episodic numbers that frequently contained a high percentage of instrumental music. In this respect they borrowed from both the structured instrumentals of progressive rock[20] and also from Cream's long improvised solos but made it their own by means of their signature style of writing, using the specific intervallic and modal forms discussed earlier. This provided a blueprint for later bands such as Iron Maiden, Judas Priest, Slayer, Metallica, Cradle of Filth and Arch Enemy who not only built on the multi-sectional concepts developed by

[20] I suggest such influence came from bands such as Pink Floyd, Genesis and Gentle Giant. It is probable that the recordings of some American bands such as Iron Butterfly, Blue Cheer, the Grateful Dead, the Mothers of Invention and Mountain were also influential.

Sabbath but also affirmed this compositional device as a central code of heavy metal.

The multi-sectional design of heavy metal becomes a point of departure for bands such as Napalm Death and Carcass who in their early careers reacted to such forms in the extreme by evolving grindcore. Grindcore, at its most radical, offers brief blasts of frenetic and chaotic sound exemplified in such tracks as 'The Kill' (20 seconds) and 'You Suffer' (6 seconds) (both from Napalm Death's debut album *Scum* [1987]). Nu metal bands such as Drowning Pool have departed from the multi-sectional work of mainstream metal, death metal and thrash to formulate shorter works that combine the extremes of metal timbre and thrash screams with structures that relate more to a verse/chorus/middle 8 format (for example, 'Bodies' [2001]). Such transgressions relate to Middleton's concept of variable coding (discussed in the Introduction) and represent a playing down of one strand of the generic coding whilst continuing to re-affirm the others and thus the overall impact remains distinctly heavy metal. Significantly, the only time that Black Sabbath espoused a simpler design (instrumental trifles and novel sound effect tracks excluded) was in the form of early single releases such as 'Paranoid'. Even here they avoid the verse, chorus, middle 8 format of other popular forms of the time.

Many of Black Sabbath's metal tracks, however, (as discussed above) were complex constructions made up of numerous sections, often contrasting sharply, but also often containing thematic development. I would like to refer the reader back to a multi-sectional number illustrated earlier: 'Killing Yourself to Live' from the 1973 album *Sabbath Bloody Sabbath*. There, the contrasting sections combine with thematic development in a way that is entirely representative of Black Sabbath's approach to structuring their music. My analysis of 1970's 'War Pigs' is included (Table 2.1) to further illustrate this argument.

Table 2.1 Black Sabbath, 'War Pigs' from *Paranoid* (1970): table of events

A (intro)	The intro is marked by slow moving power-chords alternating between I and ♭VII in E (this would have been E♭ in all live performances). There is prominent use of the Mixolydian mode. There is also a siren.
B (vocal theme 1)	This may be seen as a development of the previous section. It begins instrumentally with the same two power-chords but much faster with an emphasis on the power chords ♭VII-I. There is a quiet hi-hat rhythm that keeps time between the chords which are widely spaced out. The Mixolydian vocal fits between the chord gaps.
C (instrumental link)	This features a chromatic power-chord sequence emphasising a flat 2nd interval.
D (instrumental then vocal theme 2)	This is a restless but fluid section featuring a guitar figure that moves incessantly between different octaves of the root note and embellished with various auxiliary notes.
C	As earlier.

E (modal instrumental)	A short instrumental section based on the E Mixolydian mode which is a further development of ideas first presented in the introduction and vocal 1.
F	Pentatonic minor and Mixolydian guitar solo.
E	As earlier.
A1	As A but with some development.
B	As earlier.
C	As earlier.
G (coda part 1)	This is based on a new figure which concludes with the descending sequence I-♭VII-♭VI and culminates with a V-♭VI-V power-chord cadence.
H (coda part 2) modal	An Aeolian mode instrumental melodic section.
I (coda part 3)	Pentatonic minor guitar solo.
H	As earlier.
G	As earlier.

The compositions of Black Sabbath therefore clearly privilege instrumental textures and this concept first emerges in the experimental blues of the Yardbirds and Cream. Whilst Led Zeppelin also built on the achievements of the Yardbirds, theirs was a truer reflection of original context. For example, as mentioned earlier, Led Zeppelin emerged from the New Yardbirds; therefore, the experimental blues concepts of the Yardbirds and then the New Yardbirds naturally culminated in the work of Led Zeppelin. In terms of structure, however, Led Zeppelin, in contrast to Black Sabbath, established a dual focus on vocal and instrumental aspects. In this respect they reversed the trend established by the Yardbirds by re-focusing the centrality of the vocals whilst at the same time retaining the importance of instrumental sections, a mutual sharing of the vocal and instrumental front man where vocal dexterity alternates with instrumental dexterity.

At the centre of this two-way *tour de force* are the dual figures of Robert Plant and Jimmy Page. The vocal dexterity of Robert Plant provided the launching pad and inspiration for front line vocalists such as Rob Halford (Judas Priest) and Bruce Dickinson (Iron Maiden).[21] These vocalists took Plant's dexterous but mild theatrics as the starting point to engineer a new level of performer status where the singer becomes the central figure in the band. This is in contrast to Black Sabbath who for a number of years positioned Ozzy Osbourne to the side of the stage whilst Iommi took centre stage as if to re-affirm the central importance of the music and the guitarist.

Considering, then, Led Zeppelin as a continuation of the Yardbirds' experimental blues and dual vocal/instrumental focus, it is natural that the compositional structures of Zeppelin's work should reflect this. By equal measure,

[21] Also important is this respect was the inspirational vocal dexterity of Ian Gillan of Deep Purple.

in developing an eclectic style of composing, they of necessity adopted a wide variety of compositional styles. That variety is summarised Table 2.2.

Table 2.2 Structure types found within the recordings of Led Zeppelin

Structural Type	**Example**
Instrumentally-focused blues	'Dazed and Confused', *Led Zeppelin* (1969)
Progressive/sound effects	'Whole Lotta Love', *Led Zeppelin II* (1969)
Verse and chorus songs	'Living Loving Maid', *Led Zeppelin II* (1969)
12-bar blues	'Rock and Roll', *Led Zeppelin IV* (1971)
Multi-sectional with vocal focus	'Stairway to Heaven', *Led Zeppelin IV* (1971)
Multi-sectional with instrumental focus	'Heartbreaker', *Led Zeppelin II* (1969)
Structured with contrasting modulations	'Kashmir', *Physical Graffiti* (1975)

There appears to be, therefore, a dichotomy in the compositional structuring of Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin. The verse/chorus and 12-bar blues formats maintained by Zeppelin clearly contrast with the work of Black Sabbath and subsequent heavy metal where such forms have been consistently eschewed. Moreover, the multi-sectional works of Black Sabbath have, in the main, provided a blueprint for many important and stable developments of heavy metal such as death, black and thrash metal, which continue to espouse these forms as a key element of coding (for example, Arch Enemy, Cradle of Filth and Metallica). In Chapter 5 I examine in detail the way in which modern heavy metal has adopted the episodic structuring introduced by Black Sabbath through a number of cases studies.

In this chapter I have sought to define the origins and core syntax of heavy metal and its distinction from hard rock. I have also highlighted some of the difficulties evident in current academic literature where heavy metal seems to be defined by cultural theory and sociological methods and, most importantly, without due regard for musical syntax. I have done this by offering musicological arguments to position Black Sabbath as the founders of a unique set of codes that evolved into heavy metal and Led Zeppelin (often considered to be the progenitors of heavy metal) as developing a distinct form of hard rock. As such, there appears to be a clear dichotomy in musical syntax between these two bands and their legacy.

The *Kerrang!* article referred to at the beginning of this chapter stated that every major band has influenced whole movements of music; in the case of Black Sabbath, they influenced a whole genre of music, heavy metal. The article rightly makes connections between the music of Black Sabbath and bands such as Pantera, Slayer and Cradle of Filth and, also, connections between Led Zeppelin and bands and musicians such as Audioslave, the White Stripes and Dave Grohl, but does not say why. The reviewer hears sounds in the music that are connected by syntactical design but is unable to elucidate the coding that shapes those musical similarities and differences. Of course, it would be wrong for the reviewer to include such musical elucidations in a consumer magazine such as *Kerrang!* as his skills lie in

journalism and writing, not in musicology. I hope, therefore, that this chapter has gone some way to resolving that gap in knowledge. This is particularly important because, as implied earlier, this very topic is also one that has been skimmed over by the major academic writers in the field of heavy metal.

I propose, therefore, that Black Sabbath, in a radical transgression of their blues roots, evolved a new and original form of music based on sequences of power-chords, down-tuned guitars coloured with distortion, riffs and melodic concepts based on privileged intervals such as the tritone and flat 2nd, modal contours (and judicious omission of blues and rock and roll conventions), episodic structuring and, finally, as will be demonstrated, anti-patriarchal lyrics that deal with sinister and other-worldly topics. That collocation of events became the foundation of heavy metal and as later bands reiterated that synthesis they maintained, re-emphasised and developed those generic details. Although the genre has mutated, through the adoption of techniques such as double-kicks and more complex forms of presenting angular riffs, this evolutionary development of the genre may thus be seen as an amplification of the transgressions initiated by Black Sabbath. Examples of this process are found in the emergence of thrash, death, black metal, grindcore and nu metal and this concept will be more thoroughly explored in Chapters 4 and 5.

Led Zeppelin, by contrast, were as much a folk group as they were a rock band and the rock music they produced was steeped in the blues devices and conventions inherited from their days as the New Yardbirds. Such devices included the 12-bar blues, the 12-bar riff, the transient 3rd, blues scale and pentatonic major scale. This blues-based and eclectic style of rock is clearly evident in the bands (cited in the *Kerrang!* article) who were influenced by Zeppelin, for example, Foo Fighters, the White Stripes and Audioslave. Dave Grohl, since the demise of Nirvana, has worked on many projects including Foo Fighters and Queens of the Stone Age, and the work of Foo Fighters is as eclectic as Led Zeppelin's (for example, 'All My Life' [2002], 'Learn to Fly' [1999]). The White Stripes maintain close links with the raw ethos of blues and rock and roll (for example, 'Seven Nation Army' [2003]), whilst Audioslave maintain the power-injected blues riffs evolved at the hands of Led Zeppelin (for example, 'Cochise' [2002]).

The next chapter develops this argument further by an interrogation of the aesthetic aspects of each band to see if the dichotomy present in the sonic elements is mirrored by equal measure.

Chapter 3
The Dichotomy of Aesthetics in Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin

The previous chapter detailed my interrogation of the musical syntax of Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin from 1969 to 1975 and exposed a clear and extensive dichotomy in the musical coding of both bands. This chapter is a continuation of the previous one and interrogates the 'non-sonic' content for evidence of a similar dichotomy in the verbal, visual and aesthetic coding of each band.

In order to structure this chapter, I returned to a theory proposed by Robert Walser in Chapter 4 of *Running with the Devil* (1993: 108–36). His discussion relates to concepts described as 'aesthetics', the forces that drive heavy metal (p. 110). More specifically, he cites three strategies that dominated the aesthetics of heavy metal up until the mid-1980s, misogyny, androgyny and excription[1] and, from the mid-1980s onwards, a fourth strategy that 'softens' heavy metal with songs about romance (p. 111). My concern here is not to theorise the discourses surrounding misogyny, androgyny, excription and romance; rather, my primary aim remains that of distinguishing such themes, as identified and defined by Walser, within the comparative repertoires of Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath, to determine the extent to which they provide further examples of the distinctions already identified between heavy rock and heavy metal. This is considered appropriate as Walser continues to include both bands as progenitors of metal in his identification of the underlying aesthetics of androgyny, misogyny and excription.

I have, therefore, presented this chapter under the headings 'Androgyny', 'Misogyny', 'Excription' and 'Romance' with, additionally, a longer section, 'Black Sabbath: Occult, Anti-Patriarchy and Anti-War', that looks more specifically at the way in which Black Sabbath evolved a very distinct style of lyric writing that was unique and divergent from the norms of rock at the time. There is also a final section to further illustrate and draw these threads together – 'Summary/Further Thoughts'.

Androgyny

Walser (1993: 124–36) argues that androgyny is one of the identifying markers that characterise heavy metal performers. His discussion refers primarily to the

[1] 'Excription of the feminine, that is, total denial of gender anxieties through the articulation of fantastic worlds without women' (Walser 1993: 110–11).

long hair and subtly-feminised self-presentation that was founded in the seemingly contradictory aesthetics of 1960s and 1970s rock bands. Much of the 1960s counter-cultural movement represented a feminising of the 'normative' male image, for example, in political gestures such as anti-conscription and the Vietnam War, and visual symbolic statements such as long hair, which was adopted by heavy rock and heavy metal as a signifier of non-conforming masculinity, and evident in such bands as Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath. During the 1980s the visual presentation of, for example, Bon Jovi and Van Halen further developed the theatricality associated with hard rock/heavy metal. Mascara, spandex, black leather and bondage dress codes, and synchronised swishy-hair movements by such bands as Judas Priest, drew increasing attention to the face and body, suggesting a performative image that attracted the scopophilic gaze. Not least, hips, groin and buttocks become the mesmerising centre of attraction.

While scopophilia (the desire for pleasurable looking; the practice of obtaining sexual pleasure from things seen) was originally associated with the female as object of the gaze (Mulvey 1975) there is, nevertheless, an implication that the male body in metal culture is marked as a source of pleasure and strength, as a cultural 'sex possessor'. Signifying sexual invitation, the gaze suggests that the performers' bodies are purposely displayed for the spectator, an open invitation to 'take a good look'. The exhibitionist stance, the connotations of eliciting the voyeuristic gaze, is integral to the dynamics of 'looking' where the tease of sexual desire relies, to a large extent, on constantly shifting attention to different parts of the anatomy, and where the genitals highlight the ultimate mark of difference. Walser develops his argument further by aligning long hair and dress codes with performance gestures where singers and guitarists further court the gaze of both male and female fans by creating macho and phallocentric gestures (with the guitar, microphone or microphone stand for example).

However, whilst Walser associates the long hair and performance codes with androgyneity, this does not imply that the singer/guitarist are necessarily androgynous (as having the characteristics of both male and female, as implied in the image of, for example, Marilyn Manson). Rather, his focus on androgyneity incorporates both feminisation of the image and an often hyper-masculine stance. As such, feminisation (the long hair) is aligned with masculinity (the phallocentric emphasis on the genitals, for example) to produce the androgynous. This is exemplified, I suggest, in the image of Kid Rock where the long hair of Kid Rock is balanced by his indulgence in cigars, fast machines and the company of scantily clad, buxom, blonde girls. Also, the 'good looks, long hair' hyper-vanity of David Lee Roth, when fronting Van Halen, was combined with a muscular body and macho gestures of dismissal (such as the trousers cut to expose the buttocks) and this was further heightened by the notoriety of the band (partying, womanising and so on). This same image seems to be consistent with a number of rock bands from the Rolling Stones to Mötley Crüe and relates to Frith and McRobbie's earlier identification of cock rock:

> … an explicit, crude and often aggressive expression of male sexuality – it's the style and presentation that links a rock 'n' roller like Elvis to rock stars like Mick Jagger, Roger Daltrey and Robert Plant … Cock rock performers are aggressive, dominating and boastful and they constantly seek to remind the audience of their prowess, their control. (in Frith and Goodwin (eds) 1990: 375)

It is also apparent that the presence of long hair and a 'feminised' image are not the sole domain of heavy metal. For example, an androgynous image was as much a part of 1970s glam rock (for example, David Bowie and the Sweet) and 1980s new romanticism (for example, Culture Club) as it is in rock and metal (for example, Kiss and Marilyn Manson). Moreover, many current heavy metal musicians, for example Phil Anselmo (ex Pantera) and Shavo Odadjian (System of a Down), reflect the penchant for shaved heads and excessive tattooing that has become as much a part of the mainstream metal image as the traditional long-haired look.

Therefore, whilst androgyny and its relationship to scopophilia and performance gestures are relevant to both Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin, I would suggest that this should be contextualised with reference to the music. For example, with Black Sabbath it is the music and lyrics that drive the band. Their visual representations, which focus on the colour black and quasi-religious imagery, support that musical aesthetic. Ozzy Osbourne's long hair and black robes, for example, seem less a feminisation and more resonant with Gothic representations of the occult.

The album cover for *New York Dolls* (1973), in contrast, clearly privileges image over the music. Androgyny here is central to the band's *raison d'être*. I also suggest that whilst the visual presentations of Led Zeppelin's stage performances[2] were integral to their live set, their studio work suggests that the music remains of central importance. The album sleeves of Led Zeppelin, for example, are not in any way focused on the band's androgynous image but, rather, are designed to reflect the artistry and esoteric principles that drive their music.

Therefore, whilst androgyny is important to discussions of pop and rock, not least in exploring discourses surrounding gender and masquerade and how different masculinities are performed and constructed, it is problematic to conflate androgyneity exclusively with heavy metal. Clearly, there are tensions in the interface between sexual difference (the performer's real maleness, the androgynous performer and so on), but as these are not confined to metal it would be misleading to suggest that androgyny is a defining strategy. Rather, the significance of the androgynous image, and its relationship to gender politics, should be determined by its relevance to the overall aesthetics of the music; that is, whether the music's 'meaning' is dependent and/or supported by image as in glam rock, where the star became part of the musician's creative presentation and where elements of androgyny and bisexuality were integral to its appeal, or whether the feminisation of the image (the long hair, feminised clothing and makeup) is secondary to the

[2] For example, as recorded in the film *The Song Remains the Same: In Concert and Beyond* (1976).

musical cogency (and also the emphasis on the phallic connotations of the guitar and general muscularity of metal).

It is also clear that in addition to the current penchant for shaved heads, tattooing and excessive masculinity associated with contemporary metal, the increasing number of key women in metal further undermines the relevance of androgyny as a 'dominant aesthetic'. Evidence of this is provided by such important figures as Angela Gossow (vocalist, Arch Enemy), Cristina Scabbia (vocalist, Lacuna Coil), Tarja Turunen (ex vocalist of Nightwish), Anette Olzon (current vocalist of Nightwish), Joanne Bench (bass, Bolt Thrower) and Liv Kristine (vocalist, Leaves' Eyes and Cradle of Filth collaborations).

There is a challenge then to the dominant assumption that has emerged in the writings on heavy metal over the last 25 years or so (for example, the earlier identified text in Walser 1993). Such texts have clearly upheld metal as a genre of music performed primarily by white males wearing long hair and subtly feminised clothing. However, this generalised view does not apply in the same way to the contemporary scene and this becomes clear when looking at the finer details of the metal population and image.

Misogyny

Walser identifies the misogynistic representations of heavy metal and hard rock as being found mainly in song lyrics and music videos (1993: 117–20). Whilst Walser clearly recognises in this passage that 'blatant abuse of women in heavy metal is uncommon', he does nevertheless highlight a number of key bands and the way in which their work 'reproduces rather directly the hegemonic strategies of control and repression of women that permeate Western Culture through non-violent fantasies of dominance'. The discourse here is somewhat problematic in that, as with androgyny, misogyny is not found solely in the domain of heavy metal. For example, it is difficult to find misogyny as blatant as that found in the work of the white hip-hop artist Eminem, and Walser himself has observed and highlighted the same point referring to the work of Michael Jackson (1993: 117).

My own theories challenge the assumption that heavy metal is misogynistic and argue, rather, that it is rock/hard rock that represents the conflation of power and patriarchy observed by Walser. Rock music, for example, has borrowed extensively from the musical (as argued in Chapter 2) and verbal legacy of blues and rock and roll. In terms of rock music common examples of misogyny seem to be grounded in male sexual dominance. In her book *Too Much Too Young* (2005) Sheila Whiteley draws attention to the cruder, sexual aspects of misogyny that exist within the framework of what she terms heavy metal. However, the bands cited as examples of this process align, arguably, more with the hard rock trajectory as identified earlier:

> The most common portrayal of girls in sex-oriented heavy metal is that of sex toys, with the inference that girls want men to control their sexuality and that their role is simply to please. Mötley Crüe's 'Tonight We Need a Lover' (1985), asks 'will you please us all night long?' and the woman, 'honey dripping from her pot', serves all four band members, so linking the aphrodisiac of the star (the band's literal and symbolic fame) to that of the groupie who is at the bottom of the babe food chain. (Whiteley 2005: 67)

Such examples seem to fit with the view of many feminists who would argue that men value women not as unique individuals but as members of a class who serve them sexually and reproductively and where they are not given the opportunity to represent themselves politically, socially or culturally (Tong 1992: 1–9). Whereas Led Zeppelin were never as extreme as some later rock bands (Skid Row and Jackyl, for example), their work, nevertheless, does include many instances of the misogyny identified by Tong, for example, 'The Lemon Song'[3] from *Led Zeppelin II* (1969), in which Plant invites his baby to squeeze his lemon until the juice runs down his leg.

There appears to be a certain ironic humour evident in 'The Lemon Song' and Steven G. Smith has observed a similar detached irony in a number of blues songs (1992: 50). This demonstrates something of the way in which Plant drew on established conventions inherent in the blues, thus strengthening the intersection of hard rock with the blues. In other places, the lyrics of Led Zeppelin, in further drawing on the blues, frequently reflect the 'cheating woman' themes found within much rural and electric blues. There are many such instances within the first six albums produced by Led Zeppelin that illustrate this form of misogyny. In 'Your Time is Gonna Come' (*Led Zeppelin* [1969]) and 'Black Country Woman' (*Physical Graffiti* [1975]) the woman is portrayed as a liar, a cheat, unfaithful, uncaring and disrespectful. There is also a sense in which both of these songs appear to patronise women, implying the role of the woman is simply to comfort and nurture her man. Such lyrics thus draw on the established connotations of femininity inherent in Freud's biological determinism, a concept that emerges in the work of Tong:

> What both feminists and phallocentrists see as a hegemony based on masculine precepts of domination, performance, hierarchy, abstraction, and rationality, finds its antipode in a woman's community proclaiming itself as naturally nurturant, receptive, cooperative, intimate and exulting in the emotions … [feminists]

[3] Although Zeppelin took credit for the writing of this song, it borrows significantly from a number of earlier blues songs including Howlin' Wolf's 'Killing Floor' (1966), Albert King's 'Cross-cut Saw' (1967) and, most significantly, in relation to the 'squeeze my lemon' lyric, from Robert Johnson's 'Riverside Blues' (1937), which in turn seems to reference Arthur McKay's 'She Squeezed My Lemon' (1937).

> assume that such principles exist and that they have been fixed and dichotomous since the dawn of patriarchal history. (1992: 131)

The idea of the woman as 'lyin', cheatin', hurtin'', as heard in the opening line of 'Your Time is Gonna Come', draws on these established precepts by upholding the woman as 'un-natural', as challenging the subordinated aspects of patriarchal dualities – man/woman, dominance/nurturance. Sheila Whiteley has argued along similar lines with reference to the Beatles' patriarchal portrayal of women (as in, for example, 'She's a Woman' [B side to 'I Feel Fine' (1964)]) as caring and nurturant (2000: 40).

Jonathan Epstein has noted the way in which gender-identification conflict has been identified by some researchers as the root of misogyny in heavy metal. For example, by indulging in heavy metal practices, young white males are able to combat insecurity by 'guaranteeing a place within the male-dominated power structures of American culture where social, economic and physical power are prime determinants of achievement'. Intimacy with a woman is seen as threatening masculinity and male independence (unlike male bonding intimacy which focuses on goals) and, as such, 'mistreatment is interpreted as self-defence' (Epstein in Whiteley et al. (eds) 2004: 20).

Excription

Epstein's vision also suggests a new line of thought that helps to rationalise a number of Led Zeppelin songs that appear to be more concerned with male bonding and where women are not a central focus; that is, by not being present, women are no longer a threat to the male. 'Immigrant Song' (*Led Zeppelin III* [1970]) for example, presents a machismo fantasy where male empowerment is represented in the form of Viking warriors who 'come from the land of the ice and snow' and are the 'overlords' with tales of how they 'calmed the tides of war'. This song clearly fits Epstein's description of patriarchal empowerment through male bonding, not least the concept of male intimacy/bonding and the excription of women as threatening male independence.

The main thrust of Walser's argument for the validity of his excription theory is centred on the production of the heavy metal video where, he argues, heavy metal bands have used the medium of the music video to reinforce the aspects of male bonding that heavy metal has (allegedly) already promoted in the studio and on the stage. He argues that many heavy metal videos feature bands either in live footage or in a studio 'mock-up' of a live performance, thus extending the opportunity to indulge in androgynous display and the excription of women. Even when there is no specific performance situation, the video is still, he argues, ultimately about excription: 'Even in many non performance metal videos, where narratives and images are placed not on a stage but elsewhere, the point is the same: to represent

and reproduce spectacles that depend for their appeal on the excription of women' (Walser 1993: 115).

Robert Walser's section on the heavy metal video as a tool of excription (1993: 115–28) centres mainly on a number of case studies. Those case studies include references to the work of Dokken and Judas Priest (excription), Bon Jovi (romance) and Poison (androgyny). Additionally, he cites Mötley Crüe and Guns n' Roses as being particularly misogynistic. In seeking to deconstruct the seemingly contradictory thematic complexities that exist within the meta-generic world of rock and metal, I attempted to look beyond Walser's vision of early- to mid-1980s rock and metal to see if his assertions were consistent across a wider spectrum and beyond the confines of his carefully chosen examples.

Certainly, prior to the launch of MTV in 1981, many rock and pop films *were* all about capturing a live performance (for example, ELP, *Pictures at an Exhibition* [1972]). Early MTV videos seemed to build on the established concepts of rock and pop films enabling fans to see their favourite band more frequently via the cinema or television. Consequently, many of the first videos created in the studio specifically for a television audience featured bands in a mock performance setting. Many rock and metal videos from the early to mid 1980s fulfil this criterion and it is this same era that Walser focuses on when discussing the heavy metal video as a means of male bonding. I would suggest that this was rather more simply a fashion of the time and a means of reproducing the live show in the new video format. Nevertheless, such performances were often male dominated.

However, as the 1980s progressed, particularly with the introduction of MTV, the narrow concepts that drove the development of earlier music video (seen simply as an extension of stage performance) was challenged and the music video became an art form in its own right. Artists such as Godley and Creme and Peter Gabriel paved the way for such developments. The video to Gabriel's 'Sledgehammer' (dir. Stephen R. Johnson, 1986), for example, took 100 hours to shoot over eight days in Bristol in April of the same year. It features the artist in constantly metamorphosing poses within time frames. 'Sledgehammer' breaks with the 'video as performance' convention completely; it is not at all about live performance, nor male bonding. Fleeting images of male and female, old and young, human and inanimate objects are all treated equally and used as parts of the collage of moving images.

Importantly, such videos arguably opened the door for heavy metal bands to apply the same creative spirit and develop new dimensions to the fantastic and non-conformist critiques that already dominated their lyrical themes. For example, the video to 'One' (1988) by Metallica, although featuring some footage of the band performing in a mock rehearsal set up, focuses on the horrors and pointless meaning of war. The footage is taken from the film *Johnny Got His Gun* directed by Dalton Trumbo (McIver 2004: 197) and shows a soldier from the First World War laid out on a hospital bed and surrounded by officers and medics. He has no limbs, no face and yet they keep him alive as a spectacle of wonder. Furthermore,

the spectators are unaware of his inner self screaming to die; he eventually communicates this desire by Morse code.

The video to 'One' may 'excript' the woman but that, arguably, is not its function. The lyrical subject – frontline, world war soldiers – is already male dominated by its very nature and is simply representative of the power of patriarchy to order the lives of the working class and the video is centred on a critique of that system. The album from which it is taken has a title that carefully broadcasts its critical intentions – …*And Justice for All* (1988). The cover features the American Statue of Liberty bound and blindfold, about to be pulled down from its prominent position. This song, therefore, as with others from the same album, are to do with anti-patriarchy and are not intentionally concerned with excription of the female.

The 1988 video to 'Can I Play with Madness' by Iron Maiden features a school art class in the ruins of an ancient monastery. This video gave Iron Maiden the opportunity to give visual form to both the fantastic imagery and patriarchal criticism that have been evident in their lyrics since forming during the late 1970s. The class, a mixture of boys and girls, are sketching parts of the ruins under the watchful eye of their austere schoolmaster. The stereotyping is not concerned with gender divisions (the boys and girls are equal, they wear the same clothes and perform the same tasks) but with the patriarchal role of the 'school master' who lords it over his pupils. One boy, an Iron Maiden fan, is not performing the set task but drawing a scene from an Iron Maiden album cover that is featured in a magazine that sits on his lap. The schoolmaster is displeased when he sees the work and magazine. As he confiscates the magazine and walks away from the boy, the Iron maiden figure that was being sketched by the pupil appears ominously in the sky above. A hole in the ground opens up and the schoolmaster falls into a deep chamber where he finds himself surrounded by a Satanic ritual of which he becomes the victim.

Although the point of this story may be interpreted as adolescent fantasy, there is also a strong sense of patriarchal criticism present that is consistent with the emerging heavy metal aesthetic. As with Black Sabbath in Birmingham, the members of Iron Maiden experienced (in the East End of London) a curtailment of their natural interests by the narrow options of state education. The video appears to substantiate a fantasy shared by band members and fans alike whereby the oppressor is scorned and removed from power and the oppressed are dealt justice. Black Sabbath initiated the alignment of heavy metal syntax and themes of anti-patriarchy/non-conformity and here Iron Maiden, rather than creating a stage to promote patriarchy and misogyny, judiciously promote anti-patriarchy in music, lyrics and the visual.

In fact, video shoots from the 1990s onwards reflect the increasing importance of females in metal. In the video to 'We Will Rise' (Arch Enemy [2003]) the anti-conformist theme is strengthened by the obvious empowerment of women in heavy metal as Angela Gossow, Arch Enemy's vocalist, controls and takes centre stage, not as a woman trying to be a man, nor in any kind of traditional patriarchal role (for example, as an object of the gaze) but in complete solidarity with the men.

There are many more examples that stand testament to the centrality of the female figure in heavy metal videos; these include 'I Wish I Had an Angel' (Nightwish [2004]), 'Nymphetamine' (Cradle of Filth [2004]) and 'Swamped' (Lacuna Coil [2002]). Performances by Tarja Turunen and Angela Gossow highlight the way in which heavy metal has opened up a space for women in metal. Moreover, it is one where the male centred androgyny recognised by Walser (and thus relating to issues of male dominance) is both challenged and reversed. For example, Gossow, in performance, blends the masculine and feminine in dress code; she frequently wears stereotypical female attire such as skinny t-shirts but combined with army boots and studded accessories, items that have come to be associated with the masculine. The traditional female role is further challenged in her mastery of and uncompromising dedication to death growl vocals. Such gross violations of patriarchal values further contribute to the established aesthetics of heavy metal.

Tarja Turunen is a trained classical singer who, when with Nightwish for a number of years, wore feminine clothing on stage but denied the traditional female singer role in a number of ways. The classical vocals of Nightwish are merged with heavy metal syntactical devices such as down-tuned guitars, high levels of distortion, modes and angular intervals. Furthermore, her flowing gowns collocate with heavy metal stage behaviour such as 'stage strutting',[4] playing air guitar, head banging, making the sign known as the 'devil's horns' and 'windmilling'.[5] In the live performances of both Arch Enemy and Nightwish (I have attended major London concerts of both bands) there was a clear sense of solidarity between male and female members of the band. In fact, the original founding members of each band specifically sought a male/female alliance (in the case of Arch Enemy they sacked their original male vocalist after three studio albums in favour of forming such an alliance) that would promote a gender balanced heavy metal act. The visual evidence of this is not only seen in the sharing of stage and musical roles but also in the contradictory feminine/masculine dress codes and stage behaviour.

This issue, then, does not sit comfortably with the earlier discussion of androgyny in which Walser conflates androgyny with male domination, cock rock and the need to control the woman. This phenomenon, as noted, synchronises with the patriarchal centred 'normalisation' and traditionalising of male and female roles in that the hijack of female identity, seen in androgynous male displays, are an expression of the male's need to control the woman. The adoption of a subtle 'masculinising' of the female image in the case of (for example) Gossow and Turunen represents the antipode of such theories. This, combined with the vitality of their musical contribution, reflects the way in which heavy metal has brought about a clear sense of empowerment to women within the genre. This concept will be further illustrated in Chapter 5.

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[4] Stalking the stage area – as guitarists do.

[5] A form of head banging where the head is spun whilst stooping low, thus creating a gyration of long hair.

Therefore, whereas Walser is correct, in that many rock and metal videos are performance based, I suggest it may be misleading to imply that all heavy metal video shoots promote ideals of patriarchy, misogyny and androgyny.

Romance

Walser's claim that 'themes of romance' become an important strategy in heavy metal is particularly contentious. For example, themes found in the works of Black Sabbath, Judas Priest, Iron Maiden, Metallica, Machine Head and Arch Enemy are linked by both musical syntax and an eschewing of romantic themes. Walser justifies his alignment of heavy metal and romantic themes by situating this development within a wider strategy, one concerned with heavy metal's deliberate cultivation of a more popular image during the 1980s. Thus heavy metal, he argues, was able, during the 1980s, to appeal to a wider fan base.

However, I suggest that the combining of power-chords[6] and romance is a collocation more related to rock and hard rock rather than heavy metal. This view is further supported by Frith and McRobbie who point out that 'even the most macho rockers have in their repertoires some suitably soppy songs with which to celebrate true (lustless) love', where there are 'messages of male self-doubt and self-pity' (in Frith and Goodwin (eds) 1990: 382). It is also interesting to note that they include Robert Plant as one of their prime examples of a 'macho rocker' (p. 375).

There are, in fact, many examples of such romantic themes found in the works of Led Zeppelin; for example, 'Thank You' (*Led Zeppelin II* [1969]) and 'Going to California' (*Led Zeppelin IV* [1971]). Such references are clearly problematic for Walser as he aligns Led Zeppelin with the formation of heavy metal (1993: 10, 13, 14) and yet his identification of romance as a constituent of heavy metal from the mid-1980s onwards occurred 15 years or so after Led Zeppelin recorded their first love songs. Furthermore, Epstein's alignment of the jealous and self-defensive masculinity, discussed above, with heavy metal is clearly at odds with a heavy metal that embraces romance.

This indicates something of the numerous complexities that exist within Led Zeppelin's varied portrayals of romance. For example, their identification with the 'courtly' (as in 'Stairway to Heaven') relates to Western culture's ideal of romantic love. Here, the personal relationship between a man and a woman can lift them into a transcendent dimension, an ethereal paradise, whereby the status of love is elevated to a spiritual plane. At the same time, such spirituality points, arguably, to a subtle form of misogyny where the woman is put on a pedestal and worshipped so she can be kept in place. Up there she cannot move and thus offers no threat to the male ego.

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[6] Walser suggests that for a piece to qualify as heavy metal the music should be based on power-chords and excessive volume (1993: 2).

In contrast, the 'unkind' woman of 'Going to California' wants something far more than the subject's masculine desire and the song explores the subject's uncertainty and a recognition that he needs the more traditional nurturant woman ('a girl … with love in her eyes and flowers in her hair') if his ego is to remain intact. It would thus seem that Led Zeppelin, here, are drawing on the 'romantic' associations of 'flower power' (1966–67) and are thus both contributing to, and continuing the hippie legacy and its associations with California (Scott McKenzie) and its emphasis on 'Love, love, love'.

There are difficulties, too, in relating Walser's concept of excription to Led Zeppelin's frequent use of 'gender anxiety' themes within their studio album tracks 1969–75. Walser's theory of excription is founded on the concept of 'total denial of gender anxieties' and yet Led Zeppelin indulged in themes of gender anxiety many times. These themes took on varying forms, for example, romance, unrequited love, heartbreak and sexual conquest. Moreover, these are the themes that drive most blues, rock and roll and pop songs and as such appear at odds with Walser's definitions. On the other hand, many of the gender anxiety themes in Led Zeppelin's work become embroiled in the arguments identified above that relate to discussions of misogyny.

The main argument in this section so far, then, has been concerned with relating the syntactical design espoused by Led Zeppelin (as illustrated in Chapter 2) to their eclectic lyrical forms and measuring such against Walser's heavy metal strategies of misogyny, excription and romance. Led Zeppelin certainly wrote songs that could be construed as misogynistic. Their songs were often founded on philosophies that are anathema to feminists and this is evident in songs that portray women as necessarily nurturant and sexually available. The unkind women in their songs are represented as somehow unnatural and this feeds into the theories of biological determinism. Equally, they wrote songs that excript women and this too, being a form of misogyny, adds to the misogynistic content of their work. Whilst these observations seem to relate to Walser's strategies, Led Zeppelin nevertheless constantly indulged in lyrics that focussed on gender anxieties therefore placing them outside of Walser's paradigm of heavy metal, which of necessity must lay aside gender anxieties.

Furthermore, although they wrote songs that were misogynistic, such misogyny is more associated with blues and the lineage of blues rock bands such as AC/DC, Mötley Crüe, Jackyl, Guns n' Roses, Skid Row, Thunder, the Black Crowes and Hurricane Party, rather than heavy metal (Black Sabbath, Metallica, Judas Priest, Machine Head, Arch Enemy and Nightwish, for example). Still further, themes of misogyny are important to other styles of music, for example, black street music (rap, R&B, hip hop) and Eminem. Finally, Led Zeppelin wrote songs about love and romance, which abound in many forms of music, but have no place in the work of the heavy metal bands illustrated above.

I would suggest then, that Led Zeppelin's lyrical content, overall, is clearly rooted in the world of hard rock (derived from blues rock) and in this respect, both aligns with and (therefore) contributes to the musical syntax of their blues/

hard rock identity. Furthermore, Led Zeppelin's (particularly Jimmy Page's[7]) well publicised flirtations with occult culture were, as Gavin Baddeley argues, part of their preoccupation with maintaining the traditions of the blues and clearly linked to their 'primal emotional intensity, phallic guitar worship and uninhibited sexuality' (Baddeley 1999: 94). More particularly, this aspect of the occult relates to the voodoo style magical charms, black cat bones and mojos of the pre-Christian religions that informed the blues. The incorporation of those charms and superstitions into the blues subsequently fuelled that music's associated legends (such as Robert Johnson dealing his soul with the Devil at the crossroads) and such legends gave rise to the notion of the blues as 'the Devil's music' (Baddeley 1999: 94–5).[8] Therefore, Led Zeppelin's associations with contemporary occult culture appear to clearly consolidate their alignment with the blues. This position should be balanced against an interrogation of Black Sabbath's lyrical world where, as argued, the concern is with issues altogether different.

Black Sabbath: Occult, Anti-Patriarchy and Anti-War

In studying the albums of Black Sabbath from the period 1969–75, I found no significant adoption of gender anxiety or romantic themes.[9] Rather, my research has identified subject matter based on sinister, malevolent or otherworldly phenomena and these themes collocate with an aesthetic driven by anti-patriarchal rage. Such aesthetics mark the work of bands like Judas Priest, Metallica, Slayer, Napalm Death, Slipknot, Arch Enemy and Lamb of God, who arguably represent the wider community of core heavy metal bands from Black Sabbath onwards, and stand testament, therefore, to the significance of Black Sabbath's lyrical innovations. This originated, as discussed in Chapter 1, with Geezer Butler's interest in Satanism, the occult, Dennis Wheatley novels and 1960s horror flicks.

Also discussed in Chapter 1 was the unique writing partnership of Tony Iommi and Geezer Butler. Their distinct contribution to the evolution of heavy metal emerged in the contextualisation and collocation of key intervals such as the tritone and flat 2nd, modal riffs and melodies, down-tuned guitars, sequences of power-chords and lyrics about Satan, the occult, the supernatural and related phenomena such as suffering and death, the horrors of war, good versus evil, nightmares

[7] Page was obsessed by the work of Aleister Crowley: he amassed the second largest collection of Crowleian books in the world and purchased Crowley's former home, Boleskine House on the banks of Loch Ness in Scotland. Further, Kenneth Anger, a disciple of Crowley, asked Page to compose the soundtrack for his magic ritual film *Lucifer Rising* (1972); however, Anger was disappointed with the results (Baddeley 1999: 96) and eventually used a soundtrack by Bobby Beausoleil (http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0066019/).

[8] Gavin Baddeley is a British journalist specialising in the occult, rock music and trash culture. He is also an ordained priest of the Church of Satan.

[9] The most notable being two cover songs on the first album, 'Changes' on *Vol 4* and 'Sabbra Cadabra' on *Sabbath Bloody Sabbath*.

and fantastic monsters/creatures. Such themes were enhanced by the adoption of a quasi-religious imagery that suggests an anti-Christian (and therefore anti-hegemonic) ethos. Significantly, the adoption of this model further distinguishes Black Sabbath from Led Zeppelin and their subsequent inheritors.

My research of occult philosophies and the music of Black Sabbath therefore, has led me to conclude that the lyrics and philosophical world of Black Sabbath appear to contradict some of the more common theories concerning heavy metal's non sonic or aesthetic values such as Walser's concept of heavy metal as a 'social conflation of power and patriarchy' (1993: 1). My reasoning for this is based on the theory that (1) Satanism is anti-Christian (and therefore anti-patriarchal by default) and non-conformist, and (2) much of Wiccan and pagan philosophy is overtly matriarchal. Therefore, by buying into these philosophies Black Sabbath centre themselves in a world that largely supports female empowerment. Whilst I agree that the majority of Sabbath's songs exclude women and that this in itself (as mentioned in the Introduction) could be considered to be misogynistic/excriptive, this, rather, reflected their concern with other lyrical topics and allowed them to play with the type of transgressive subject matter referred to above.

The time period in which Black Sabbath came into existence was one marked by a significant growth of interest in the occult. 1969–75 encompasses the period of Sabbath's innovative musical developments, coinciding with a number of important events in the world of the occult. These included, for example, the 1969 Manson murders, which were shrouded in highly publicised Satanic myth (Baddeley 1999: 54–60), the founding of the Church of Satan in 1966 by Anton LaVey followed by the subsequent publication of his contentious and highly publicised works (that went on to form the core of modern Satanic philosophy) – *The Satanic Bible* (1969), *The Compleat Witch* (1970) and *The Satanic Rituals* (1972) – and the cinematic release of *Rosemary's Baby* (1968) and *The Exorcist* (1973).

Those events were preceded by other well publicised renewals of occult practices during the 1950s and 1960s and included the development of modern Wicca, the establishment of the Process Church and 1960s rock icons' (for example, Jimmy Page and the Rolling Stones) flirtations with Crowleian Satanic philosophy (Baddeley 1999: 48–64).

Thus the world of Black Sabbath was created out of the combined influence of these, albeit often conflicting, occult philosophies and in order to understand the full impact and extent of Black Sabbath's underlying aesthetic I would like to briefly explore the context and background against which it was created.

Much of society's gendered ideologies have their roots in the Christian church. The doctrine and dogma of the Judaeo-Christian religion is fundamentally centred on patriarchy. Its monotheistic centre is represented by a male gendered figure, 'God the Father'. In the creation story, God created *man* and then from man he created his helper, wo*man*. New Testament doctrine (Ephesians 5:23) teaches that the man is the head of the wife and so on. Additionally, many Christian denominations allow only men to be ordained. A major support for this decision is found in

1 Timothy 2:11–15 where St Paul instructs the Church to 'not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent'. Furthermore, 1 Timothy 3:2 specifies that overseers and deacons must be men. Finally, 1 Corinthians 14:34–5 states that women must be silent and in submission when in church. If they want to clarify some theological point they should wait and approach their husband at home. The development of Christianity from its inception has used these biblical principles to build a religious empire based on patriarchy.

Caplan (1987), in *The Cultural Construction of Sexuality*, observes that prior to the rise of Christendom, the woman possessed an elevated status that is unfamiliar to us today, one where she was revered for her sexuality. It was during the evangelical revivals between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries that this view was transformed, leading to the 'mutation of the Eve myth into the Mary myth' (Basch 1974: 9, quoted in Caplan 1987: 3).

Harley, writing on the website of the University of Notre Dame, Indiana, about witchcraft and gender[10] further supports the idea that that the modern day patriarchal society of Western culture has its roots in ancient Christianity and suggests something of the way in which occult groups have striven to reverse the process whereby the Church has constructed distorted views of sexuality, gender and other life issues.

> There was a Judaeo-Christian tradition of misogyny, perpetuated by religious zeal and popular superstition and combined in the Renaissance, by authors such as Kramer, with classical beliefs in the powers of sorcery … Romantic historians, feminists in the 1970s, and a few anthropologists have been attracted to the idea that witches were participating in a folk religion that harked back to a golden age of pre-Christian nature worship and female power. This has been seen as a religion of balance and harmony, fighting against Church and State.

It was his knowledge and firsthand experience of such Christian-based patriarchy and austerity that inspired Aleister Crowley (1875–1947) to develop a modern take on Satanism. The Satanic doctrine developed by Crowley was grounded in anti-Christian philosophy and the desire to reassert the philosophies of the pre-Christian world described above. The Satanic world of Crowley pivots on a fulcrum of anti-Christian doctrine and behaviour that derives from, and mocks both the language of the Bible and the sacramental terminology of the Christian church. Thus, Satanists adopt titles such as High Priest and High Priestess, take part in the 'Black Mass' (where the altar takes the form of a naked woman) and boast a Satanic Bible. As Baddeley said, 'remove Christianity – or anti-Christianity – and Crowley stops making sense' (1999: 29).

[10] www.nd.edu/~dharley/witchcraft/gender.html.

The Crowleian philosophy both exaggerates and mocks the dominant image of Satanism created by the Christian church. The Christian, particularly the evangelical, image is one of evil demons conjuring evil deeds in their fight against good, God is light and goodness, the Devil is evil and darkness. Baddeley describes it as 'full of half truths and straight bullshit, to massage the faith of the pious' (1999: 7). The Crowleian image delights in pitching godly fear against the powers of darkness and turning the victory round to one where evil is victorious over good. It is one that revels in the rebellion against church and the state ideologies that promote patriarchy and hypocrisy.

It was these same philosophies that informed much of Black Sabbath's work and other popular cultures of the period. The 1973 film *The Exorcist* for example, excites the fears of the public with a satirical tale of demonic possession that is drawn directly from the 'hell fire and damnation' propaganda of both charismatic evangelicalism and the Roman pulpit.

The 1968 Roman Polanski film *Rosemary's Baby* similarly mocks Christian doctrine. Rosemary and her husband move into a new apartment; living next door are the Head Witches of a local coven. Rosemary's husband makes a pact with the Devil for success in his career leading to Rosemary experiencing a nightmare during which she is raped by the Devil during a black mass and in which she is the altar. She unknowingly carries his child which is taken from her following a home birth. When she eventually finds her way into a meeting of the Satanists in the next-door apartment during the final scene of the film, the child is discovered in a black crib, the scene of a black nativity. The look of the child's eyes causes Rosemary to scream 'what have you done to his eyes?' to which the Head Witch replies, 'he has his father's eyes'. The Head Witch announces that the Devil 'begat a son of mortal woman' and they claim the child as their Anti-Christ. The whole film is based on a mockery of the Christian nativity with Christian demonic imagery thrown in.

Black Sabbath's most potent adoption of this imagery is found on their first two albums, *Black Sabbath* (1970, recorded 1969) and *Paranoid* (1970). The first track on *Black Sabbath* ('Black Sabbath') is based on the subject of ghostly fear and an imminent death dictated by Satanic will. The lyrics are mirrored musically by the repeated tritone figure which, as discussed earlier, was exploited by Black Sabbath as Diabolus in Musica and were, as such, drawing on pre-established connotations. The third verse was not released on either the European or US albums but it was frequently included in live performances, confirmed by its appearance on many bootlegs. In that alternative verse Butler pens lyrics that are very much influenced by Hammer horror and confirms that the pointing figure of verse one is in fact Satan. Here, he has taken the theme 'the devil in the music' and combined both musical and lyrical representations of the concept.

The title 'N.I.B.' has been claimed to be an acronym for Nativity in Black. Geezer Butler denies this (*The Black Sabbath Story, Volume 1* DVD Sanctuary 2002) as does Baddeley (1999: 94). Butler insists that 'N.I.B.' refers to Bill Ward's (Black Sabbath's drummer) beard which resembled a pen nib. As this song is a

plaintive love song sung by Lucifer (confirmed by the final line) to his greatest creation and fellow sufferers, mankind it is difficult to accept that it has no Satanic reference.

There is a tendency for members of Black Sabbath in later, more mature life, to dismiss the early lyrics as anything other than Satanic; nevertheless, it seems that much of what they were doing was reasonably well informed. Butler was well versed in Crowley and Wheatley, Osbourne too, had read occult books, and they were undoubtedly influenced by the occult revivals of the 1960s and 1970s. Furthermore, bootlegs reveal that the lyrics sung on stage were sometimes completely different from the album lyrics and overtly Satanic. It would seem therefore that 'N.I.B.', regardless of the claims in reference to Bill Ward's beard, further contributes to the anti-Christian and anti-patriarchal stance evident in Sabbath's early work.

Other songs are, however, somewhat ambivalent. For example, 'Sweet Leaf' is said to be referring to cannabis and the coughing at the start was included as a subtle reference to smoking joints. In another, secondary, sense the lyrics could equally be interpreted as an ode to the possessive power of Satan. In the context of any other band such a reading may be somewhat preposterous, but given the consistent manner in which Sabbath clothed their lyrics with a sense of otherworldly and Satanic mystery, such a reading fits with the overall ethos of the band's image schemata. Certainly during the early to mid 1970s I can confidently say (having been there) that this interpretation of the lyrics was the one generally accepted amongst all of the many fans that I knew at that time.

Either way the relationship between drugs and mystical overtones, trance and its associated visions and hallucinations, are well established. As I.M. Lewis notes, trance states can be readily induced through the inhalation of smoke and vapours, music and dancing (1971: 34), but it is mainly in the context of trance states ascribed to the work of the Devil that we meet most official ecclesiastical recognition of possession (p. 35). As such the relationship between cannabis and Lucifer, as introducing 'me to my mind', the metaphysical of possession, is not improbable.

There are some, of course, who would consider the lyrics of Black Sabbath as anything but anti-Christian. The reverend Matt Paradise (an ordained priest in the Church of Satan) for example, is quite scathing of Black Sabbath asserting that their lyrics are essentially evangelical Xtian[11] propaganda aligning them with Christianity rather than Satanism. In an essay entitled 'Satanism and Heavy Metal' he asserts that many of Black Sabbath's songs, misunderstood within the comparatively restrictive social condition of the time, were indeed pulled straight from the values, ideals and principles of the Xtian religion. He even goes as far

[11] Xtian being a derogatory term used by Satanists to create a paradigm for Christian denominations.

as to say that Ozzy Osbourne, then lead singer for the band, could have very well been the first Xtian rocker![12]

This seems to be a rather narrow-minded approach given that Black Sabbath's anti-patriarchal overtones are clearly synchronous with other modern developments in the occult that occurred between the early 1960s and mid 1970s. Paradise's primary concern seems to be that the popular image of Satanism, found within the lyrics of Black Sabbath, are naïve and do not equate with the doctrine of modern Satanic philosophies, that is, the LaVeyan perspective, which in fact bears no resemblance to the image generated by the church. In modern Satanism for example, there are no evil demons, human sacrifice, hell-fire and damnation, and so on.

This concept is evident in Baddeley's discourse on modern Satanic principles, *Lucifer Rising* (1999), which describes the origins of LaVey's *Satanic Bible* as 'a deliberate affront – not just to Christianity and Liberalism, but also to wilfully obscure practitioners of the occult'. In fact, *The Satanic Bible*, according to Baddeley, reads more like an early self-improvement manual, much closer to a philosophy of pragmatism than any religious dogma. Furthermore, according to LaVey himself, it means 'the opposition' and epitomises all symbols of non-conformity (Baddeley 1999: 73).

This point of view, in fact, summaries the aesthetic of Black Sabbath and all subsequent heavy metal bands who have perpetuated those thematic threads, that is, the epitome of opposition and non-conformity, realised within a specific context, are the lyrical markers of heavy metal and this contrasts with hard rock where themes of misogyny synchronise with patriarchy.

In fact, such aspects of non-conformity abound in the early works of Black Sabbath and form a clear alignment with the ideologies of modern Satanism. For example, the lyrics to 'War Pigs' from Sabbath's 1970 album *Paranoid* play with aspects of Satanism that very much support the non-conformist language and position of both Crowley and LaVey. The main thrust is clearly a censure of patriarchy and war where generals with power make war just for fun and treat people like pawns in chess. Furthermore, it was common practice for Black Sabbath to generate two versions of many songs, the alternative versions evident on the many bootlegs made of their live recordings. For example, whilst the studio-recorded version of 'War Pigs' reveals only subtle (albeit significant) references to Satanic and occult themes ('witches and black masses'/'Satan laughing spreads his wings'), in a version of this song that I have not only heard when watching live performances during the early 1970s but also seen on two separate occasions (once on a video recording shown on satellite TV and several times on a video bootleg recording that I possess), the alignment of non-conformity and the occult was more crudely and explicitly demonstrated with Satan casting a priest into the fire and bad sinners eating dead rats' innards.

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[12] www.purgingtalon.com/nlm/article1.htm.

Furthermore, according to information included on the official Black Sabbath website,[13] this verse was part of a completely different version of the same song used for their early live shows and was then called 'Walpurgis'.[14] It should be remembered that in 1969 and 1970 Black Sabbath were gigging all the material from both first albums. At that time audiences became familiar with a band's music through live performances and this observation highlights the significance of such lyrics in their original context. It is clear, then, that Black Sabbath, in collocating non-conformist themes such as censure of war, occult and patriarchy were laying the foundation for later developments in metal to mutate into sub-generic forms such as black metal and death metal.

Aspects of LaVeyan Satanism also seem to resonate with the, earlier noted, emergence of important female performers in heavy metal. For example, the reinstatement of the sexual powers of the pre-Christian woman is proclaimed in LaVey's second publication *The Compleat Witch* (published 1970, the same year as 'War Pigs' was released on *Paranoid*). This work,[15] arguably more a self-empowerment manual for women, contradicts and challenges the popular vision of the witch created by the church,[16] (that is, a nasty and sinister creature). Baddeley interviewed Blanch Barton (LaVey's wife and a practising witch) in 1994 and one of the points he raised was that 'One of the criticisms levelled at Satanism, particularly in the pagan community, is that it is some how anti-woman' (Baddeley 1999: 219). Barton's response reveals something of the pro-woman philosophy of LaVeyan Satanism which, she argues, 'is not about dressing like a man, competing with men on their level, wearing Daddy's clothes that never quite fit … it celebrates feminine power … women *as* women' (p. 219).

The sight of Arch Enemy's Angela Gossow sporting a pentagram on her skinny t-shirt and the sound of her screaming 'I spit in your face, preachers and leaders; spewing false dogma to their believers' ('Despicable Heroes' [2003]) clearly aligns with such anti-patriarchal ideologies and starkly contrasts with the coding of Led Zeppelin where ideologies consistently synchronise with the forms of misogyny identified earlier.

One significant example of Black Sabbath's lyrics that suggest a sharing of male and female power is the song 'Symptom of the Universe' from the album *Sabotage* (1975). The track pays homage to aspects of the male/female solidarity found within Wiccan and pagan beliefs and rites. The second verse, which references

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[13] www.black-sabbath.com/discog/paranoid.html#warpigs.

[14] Walpurgis is an ancient pagan spring festival originating in Bavaria, *Walpurgisnacht*. 1 May marks the final victory of spring over winter, but before departing, the witches and their cohorts have one last fling. The night from 30 April to 1 May is called *Walpurgisnacht*, the night of Walpurgis or Walpurga. The festival is marked by numerous rituals to ward off evil. The *Walpurgisnacht* scene in Goethe's Faust probably contributed to a wider knowledge of its existence.

[15] The 1980s edition of the *Compleat Witch* was published as *The Satanic Witch*.

[16] See, for example, *The Witchcraft Reader* (Oldridge 2002: 357).

and highlights the duality of Mother Moon and Father of Creation is a succinct statement that reveals the extent of Sabbath's knowledge of such matters.

Wicca is a religion of witchcraft and magick[17] and has strong affiliations with pagan culture. Like most religions it has factions and variety but there are a number of key beliefs that bind these factions together and they are embodied in the lyrics of this song. The basics of those beliefs are centred on a philosophy that embraces concepts of spiritual balance and harmony provided by the equilibrium of a female centred spiritual power (Mother Moon) and male centred spiritual power (Father of Creation). This is in complete contrast to Judaeo-Christian religious doctrine that is centred on patriarchy (God the creator and sustainer of life, the man as the head of the house, and so on). Some aspects of Wicca and paganism in fact, conversely, practice beliefs that uphold a matriarchal system governed by the Goddess or Mother Earth.

Dr Scott Baldwin, himself a Wiccan, writing on *The Occult Library* website highlights that whilst some within Wicca and paganism (or as he calls it 'the old religion') only worship the God, others only worship the Goddess and many actually worship both the God and the Goddess, recognising the duality aspect.[18] The Celtic Connection website contains a broad description of Wiccan beliefs that support the concept of the female empowerment present within Wiccan culture as represented in 'Symptom of the Universe'. Information on the site describes Wicca as a nature-based religion that developed from pre-Christian European folklore and mythology. Wicca recognises the ancient Mother Goddesses (Mother Earth, Mother Nature) and dates from the Palaeolithic age when a god of hunting and a goddess of fertility were worshiped; women made life, and that was magickal.[19] More specifically, 'Moon Mother' is a reference to an ancient pagan rite of passage that honours the coming of age of the female, the initiation into womanhood. This is a glorification of the female and her attributes.

'Mother Moon' and 'Father of Creation' in 'Symptom of the Universe', then, reference Wiccan philosophy where they appear as representational images of non-conformity and anti-patriarchy. As such, these lyrics compliment Black Sabbath's overall schema which clearly buys into the eclectic world of the occult and recognise the non-conformist power of Satanism, Wicca and paganism. Themes of anti-patriarchy emerge in other ways within the works of Black Sabbath and become equally significant to the coding of heavy metal. Here, lyrics extend to other related themes such as malevolent supernatural entities and themes of death, destruction and war. In this respect Black Sabbath set a precedent that has been perpetuated by subsequent high-profile bands.

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[17] The Wiccan culture spell 'magick' as opposed to the more commonly used (in the English language) magic.

[18] www.realmagick.com/articles/42/2042.html.

[19] http://www.wicca.com/celtic/wicca/wicca.htm

For example, Black Sabbath's 'Iron Man' (*Paranoid* [1970]), connects with the concept of comic book superheroes as a fantastic way of dealing with the suppressive power of authority. Furthermore, the concept of 'Iron Man' arguably pre-empted many of the themes found within the work of Judas Priest (for example, 'Exciter' [1979]) and concepts such as Iron Maiden's adoption of 'Eddie' as the mascot who would adorn all of their album sleeves.[20]

More importantly, themes of war, in particular the suffering and misery of war, are frequently adopted by heavy metal bands from Black Sabbath onwards as a means of anti-hegemonic and anti-patriarchal dissent (war being the ultimate demonstration of power within patriarchy). Whereas themes of war are also found within a wider spectrum, for example the folk and folk-rock of Bob Dylan, in the context of heavy metal the images may be somewhat more graphic, emphasising the associated misery, suffering, torment and death. Indeed, when combined with the musical elements described earlier in Chapter 2, a unique contextualisation is formed, one that only exists in relation to heavy metal. The homology of heavy metal syntax and war-related themes can be found in the work of many bands inspired by Black Sabbath. For example, Metallica, Megadeth, Machine Head, System of a Down and Arch Enemy all depend on the horrors and pointlessness of war as central themes and tracks such as 'Electric Funeral' (*Paranoid* [1970]), with its censure of nuclear war, were significant precursors.

The subjects identified above are representational of the output of Black Sabbath up until 1971. Examples of those themes can be found throughout the sequel albums (*Vol 4* [1972], *Sabbath Bloody Sabbath* [1973] and *Sabotage* [1975]). I have not included extensive references from those albums as it would constitute mere repetition of the points I am attempting to make. Significantly, the themes of Satanism, witches, corpses, vermin, antichrist, war and the supernatural and so on, present in the lyrics of Black Sabbath, set a precedent for the development and perpetuation of such subject matter and this very phenomenon became a vital part of the evolutionary process of heavy metal as subsequent inheritors of their innovations magnified those themes. In this respect, the horror movie-inspired lyrics of Venom and Slayer, the anti-Christian/pro-occult and pagan themes of Deicide and Cradle of Filth, the anatomical obsessions of Carcass and war critiques of Metallica, Megadeth, Arch Enemy and Machine Head represent the various threads of anti-patriarchal and anti-hegemonic, semiotic posturing that has come to underline the aesthetics of heavy metal.

Summary/Further Thoughts

In this chapter I have examined the aesthetic facets (the non-musical contributing factors) of Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin to ascertain whether or not those

[20] Eddie, Eddie the Head or Edward the Head is Iron Maiden's mascot. He is a perennial fixture of their album cover art and ever present on stage at their live shows.

aesthetics mirror the dichotomy already identified in the musical syntax of each band. I have done this by relating Walser's identification of the politics of gender (androgyny, misogyny, excription and romance) as vital codes of heavy metal, to the output and visual identities of both bands in the time frame 1969–75.

Androgyny for Walser is interpreted through an analysis that situates metal as a fantasy solution to the tensions that exist in a society characterised as patriarchal and a rock culture underpinned by counter-cultural values. In this respect there appears to be a mixed message as there is the one suggestion that androgyny is anti-patriarchal and another that it is synchronous with patriarchy and thus conforming to the ideologies of misogyny (Walser 1993: 134).

Whilst Walser's interpretative analysis is relevant to the problems associated with discussions of gender in rock and metal, it is problematic in its direct association of androgyny as a key code of metal. As noted earlier, both Black Sabbath (heavy metal) and Led Zeppelin (hard rock) exhibited a certain feminisation of image (for example, their long hair) as well as hyper-masculinity in their performative gestures (for example, using the microphone or guitar as a phallic signifier), thus conforming to Walser's identification of androgyneity. As such, it cannot be argued that the 'bricolage of male power and female spectacle and its play of real and unreal' (Walser 1993: 134) are confined to metal as a key signifier; they are also relevant to rock culture generally and, more specifically, the hard rock of Led Zeppelin. It was also argued that the presence and significance of androgyny in glam rock (David Bowie, for example) and new romanticism (Culture Club, for example) are far more dependent on the androgynous image as a key signifier of gender politics than heavy metal. The 'free play of androgynous fantasy' cannot therefore, be confined to the performance characteristics of heavy metal. Rather, as Mikhail Bakhtin has argued, genres not only define and influence each other through constant interplay (as, for example, in the adoption of rock techniques in pop music) but individual genres are themselves the product of an ever-mutating dialogue between historically contingent features (Bakhtin cited in Whiteley, 2005: 125).

Walser's identification of misogyny as an underlying aesthetic of heavy metal is also problematic as there appears to be clear distinctions, in this respect, between the work of Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath and therefore, ultimately, of hard rock and heavy metal. Also, as with androgyny, misogyny is not an aesthetic found solely within the domain of rock. In fact, some of the strongest examples are found in the hip hop world of, for example, Eminem. With regards to rock, however, I have demonstrated the way in which Led Zeppelin clearly displayed forms of misogyny in their lyrics and cited a number of examples to illustrate this. Such examples included the situating of the woman as a sex object, as nurturant, as devious, as an irritant and, conversely, as being unearthly, and placed on a pedestal. In essence, many of Led Zeppelin's lyrics relate to sexual oppression, male sexual domination and female sexual submission, and situating the woman as 'other', the object whose meaning is determined for her (de Beauvoir cited in Tong 1989: 6).

Excription, as a form of misogyny, is evident occasionally in the works of Led Zeppelin, a good example being the male-dominated/masculine world of 'Immigrant Song'. Walser's identification of excription is founded on the concept of total denial of gender anxieties. However, themes of sexual tension, unrequited love and misunderstanding (expressions of gender anxiety), frequently appear in the works of Led Zeppelin, and the presence of such themes significantly calls into question the heavy metal status assigned to them by many authors.

Significantly, all of the above forms of misogyny seem to align with a musical syntax that is blues rock/hard rock based. For example, AC/DC's 'The Jack' (1975) combines the 'devious and irritant' with blues syntax and structuring, 'Gimme All Your Lovin'' (1983) by ZZ Top collocates the 'woman as sex object' with guitar riffs and vocals that are based on blues syntax, and the 'nurturant' girl portrayed in Guns n' Roses' 'Sweet Child o' Mine' (1987) is expressed musically not only with vocal lines that feature blues inflexions but also with a clear indication of major tonality in the harmony. Furthermore, the verse and chorus format and the ballad stylisations of the last of these, position it firmly in the world of rock.

Other notable examples of the rock ballad include songs such as 'Bed of Roses' (1992) by Bon Jovi and 'Crazy' (1993) by Aerosmith and these bands, like Led Zeppelin, are included, unproblematically, by Walser within the genre of heavy metal. It would thus follow that his identification of 'gender anxiety' (reflected in lyrics that explore the tensions inherent in boy/girl relationships) represents a significant element of rock music's output but not of heavy metal.

As previously discussed, Black Sabbath's denial of any form of gender anxiety is apparent by reading the lyrics to their songs. This was never on their agenda and, as such, positions them in direct contrast with Zeppelin's espousal of, and frequent references to such. Most importantly, Black Sabbath's exclusive adoption of occult- and war-related themes resonate with non-conformist and anti-patriarchal sentiments where excription is relevant, in that there is 'total denial of gender anxieties', but not as an indication of misogyny.

On the contrary, moving away from the gendered norms of rock/blues lyrics allowed Black Sabbath to develop anti-patriarchal themes such as Satanism and war and thus challenge, in unreal ways, the social conflation of male-centred power and patriarchy. As such, there is a conflict with the concept of metal as patriarchal and misogynistic. Furthermore, the presence of important female performers in contemporary forms of heavy metal (for example, Angela Gossow and Tarja Turunen) highlights important aspects of female empowerment in the current heavy metal scene.

The dichotomy evident in the music of Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin seems, then, to be mirrored in the bands' visual, verbal and aesthetic worlds. Led Zeppelin situated themselves, in the main, within Walser's identification of patriarchal male empowerment; Black Sabbath situated themselves, by association with the occult and paganism, in a world that is largely anti-patriarchal. As such, it is suggested that Walser's identification of androgyny, misogyny, excription and romance as central to metal's gender politics is problematic. More specifically, it relates to

his assumption that Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath were both progenitors of heavy metal when, as my research argues, both contribute to the coding of highly distinctive and unique forms that represent significant initial stages in the formation and evolution of two distinct genres, hard rock and heavy metal.

The next chapter takes another journalistically coined phrase that has come into standard circulation, New Wave of British Heavy Metal (NWOBHM), as the starting point for an interrogation of the extent to which the concepts introduced by Black Sabbath were maintained by the next generation of bands who continued to evolve the heavy metal genre. The NWOBHM also saw the evolution of new concepts that were combined, during the 1980s, with the syntax developed by Black Sabbath to bring a completeness of musical identity and formulate the major sub-genres of metal (for example, thrash, death metal, black metal, grindcore and nu metal). The evolution and assimilation of these new developments will be at the centre of a discussion that highlights the relevance, function and importance of key NWOBHM bands.

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Chapter 4
Continuity, Development and the New Wave of British Heavy Metal

The last two chapters presented my argument for Black Sabbath being the progenitors of heavy metal through the evolutionary formulation of a specific set of musical and aesthetic concepts that set them apart (by their 'otherness') from any other style of music at that time. Moreover, the singularity and uniqueness of that set has been preserved and reinterpreted by a specific number of subsequent bands to become recognised as a genre in its own right, that of heavy metal.

This next chapter, therefore, details that process and considers the continuity and development of heavy metal by interrogating a second stage of evolutionary development that was vital to the establishment of heavy metal as a genre. I argue that the 1980s saw heavy metal integrate new concepts marked by the augmentation of the down-tuned, distorted guitar sounds, sequenced power-chords, angular riffs, modal lines, multi-sectional structures and Gothic/anti-patriarchal aesthetic first developed by Black Sabbath. These new concepts first emerged during the late 1970s and were contributed to by a number of key New Wave of British Heavy Metal (NWOBHM) bands. Such concepts included the enhancement of angry performative styles through techniques such as double-kicks,[1] blast-beats,[2] rapid-16th[3] guitar rhythms and rabid vocalisations.[4] Thus the progress of heavy metal as a genre is marked by both stability and the process of mutation where the core elements remain but are influenced by technological innovation. Therefore, the essential characteristic features remain intact and identifiable as heavy metal whilst at the same time the genre expands. Most importantly, the distinction of Black Sabbath's unique coding is perpetuated, thus contributing to the establishment of the genre.

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[1] Fast rhythmic patterns played on the bass drum using both feet. This technique is described in detail below.

[2] A fast alternation of snare and bass drum hits. This technique is described in detail below.

[3] For example, semiquaver (American – 16th note) patterns produced on the kit with double-kicks and on the guitar by rapid 'trem-picking' (alternating down and back motion with the pick on one string at a time). This technique is described in detail further on in the chapter.

[4] This vocal technique is introduced below in the section on Lemmy and Motörhead and then described in further detail later in the chapter.

The bands that I have noted as particularly important are:

- Motörhead
- Venom
- Diamond Head
- Judas Priest
- Iron Maiden

It is interesting to note that a number of the NWOBHM bands, such as Judas Priest, were contemporaries of Black Sabbath but did not establish themselves until later. Three of the five bands were also from the Midlands of England and thus maintained a geographical link with Black Sabbath. I have organised this chapter into sections that examine each of the above bands and their specific contributions to the development and continuity of heavy metal.

Lemmy and Motörhead

Lemmy, whose real name is Ian Kilmister, was born in Stoke-on-Trent on Christmas Eve 1945. His generation was the same as Black Sabbath's and Led Zeppelin's but it was not until 1975 (the year of both Black Sabbath's and Led Zeppelin's sixth albums), with the formation of Motörhead, that Lemmy began to establish fully his unique contribution to rock and metal. Motörhead struggled with two years of press criticisms before the release of Motörhead's eponymous debut album in 1979. However, it was the release of *Overkill* in 1979 and *Ace of Spades* in 1980 that demonstrated the full significance of Lemmy's important influence on post-Sabbathian metal.

If heavy metal is understood in terms of Sabbathian coding, then much of Motörhead's output is, arguably, not heavy metal at all but seems to be more related to the hard rock genre. For example, 'Motörhead' (1977) has elements of rock and roll such as 12-bar riffs and Chuck Berry-type double-stopping and 'Bomber' (1979) has a riff based on transient 3rds. However, significant developments also emerged in the work of Motörhead that would considerably influence the evolution of heavy metal. One such development was the espousal of frenetic and ferocious devices. By this I mean that the music of Motörhead often displays extremes in tempo and rhythm (hence frenetic) and extremes in angry performative styles (hence ferocious). More specifically, my research has identified a set of stylisations such as extreme volume at live concerts, 'thrashing' the drum kit, and new performance techniques such as double-kicks, early forms of the blast-beat, rapid-16th rhythms, and rabid vocalisations. Moreover, the adoption of these musical devices seems to have been driven by the use of speed[5] and anger at life

[5] An amphetamine used to induce hyperactivity. See www.worldiq.com.

circumstances. I have therefore described the combination of these elements in terms of a 'frenetic ferocity'.

One of the arguments I presented in Chapter 1 for the origins of heavy metal was related to Black Sabbath's Birmingham roots. The war-torn desolation of Aston, dead end prospects and boring school seemed to inspire a music that was steeped in rage. It is not insignificant, then, that the rabid ferocity evident in much of Motörhead's style seems to mirror, at least in part, similar circumstances and evoke the same angry response to patriarchal based hegemony.

Burslem (Lemmy's actual birth place), is one of the five Potteries towns that make up the city of Stoke-on-Trent. Burslem in 1945 was a grim and extremely depressing place, a community of factory workers and miners eking out a living in the nearby pot banks and coalfields whilst living in cramped back-to-back terraced housing. There were few prospects and the poor quality of life seemed to mirror the almost perpetual darkness created by smoke from the pot banks. Lemmy describes his memories of that time in his autobiography, *Lemmy: White Line Fever* (2003). He recalls how the air was dirty from the chimney smoke and the countryside, wherever you looked, used to be black with slag from the coal used in the kilns (Kilmister 2003: 5).

Burslem is a town only 12 miles from where I was born and grew up and I have heard many firsthand accounts (I was born a little later, in 1958) of Burslem, Tunstall and Longton that all paint a picture of grim circumstances and difficult living for the residents. Interestingly, as I was in the process of researching this chapter, a BBC TV series following the course of Britain from the formation of the planet to modern times (*The British Isles: A Natural History*, 3 November 2004, BBC2) showed footage of the Potteries during this time. The presenter, Alan Titchmarsh, informed the viewer, as these pictures were being broadcast, that Stoke-on-Trent became the centre of the Potteries industry because of rich sources of clay and coal in the Trent Valley and that Stoke-on-Trent burnt more coal and caused more pollution than any other part of the industrial Midlands. In fact, it was not until the discovery of coke that industry in the Midlands significantly expanded. Titchmarsh stated that subsequently 'Stoke-on-Trent became the darkest and blackest place in Britain'. The impact of the industrial Midlands on the formation of angry and dark music explored in Chapter 1, then, seems similarly relevant here also.

Furthermore, in the case of Lemmy, much of his anger seemed to be directed not only at these circumstances but also at what he saw as the hypocrisy of the clergy exemplified in the actions of his father, a Royal Air Force padre who left his mother when Lemmy was born. This venomous attitude surfaces each time he talks about his father in retrospect; he describes him in angry insults as 'son-of-a-bitch' and 'two faced bastard' (Kilmister 2003: 2–3).

Lemmy's experience of school was (as mentioned earlier) similar to that of John Bonham and the four members of Black Sabbath, boredom and dead end prospects. Being already fuelled with anger he was soon expelled. The schools that Lemmy attended in the early to mid 1950s still have a reputation for difficult children, violence and crime. Lemmy's mother remarried and her new husband,

a professional footballer, moved them out of the Potteries, eventually settling in Wales on the Isle of Anglesey; this is where he acquired the name Lemmy. He continued to be troublesome at school and vented his anger in increasingly violent forms, most notably by stealing dynamite from the local quarries and blowing up (over a period of time) parts of the Anglesey coastline (Kilmister 2003: 9).

This venomous rage expressed by involvement in such antics was, it seems, eventually channelled into his music. The driving force of Motörhead was a combination of speed abuse ('motorhead' is a term used to describe a person who excessively indulges in speed) and anger. This was expressed, as introduced earlier, in the form of Motörhead's high-speed drumming, rabid vocalisations, fuzz bass and sheer volume.

Rabid vocalising is a term that I have created to describe a vocal style that moves away from traditional singing to one that is more akin to angry shouting. From the mid 1980s onwards this style of vocalising became increasingly important to certain strands of the emerging heavy metal genre. Such vocal stylisations are produced by a variety of techniques, that is, sneering, bawling, screaming, shouting, growling or roaring, with considerable ferocity and rage. Most bands in the current heavy metal scene have been influenced to some extent by rabid vocalising and this highlights the significance of Motörhead.

Lemmy's vocalisations by 1980, although mild in comparison to those of Cradle of Filth (for example, *Nymphetamine* [2004]), Machine Head (for example, *Through the Ashes of Empires* [2003]), or even Slayer (for example, *Show No Mercy* [1983]), were a clear departure from the norm. Building on the style developed by punk rock, exemplified in the Sex Pistols' 1977 album *Never Mind the Bollocks*, Lemmy's distorted vocals were constructed in phrases of pained monotone often concluding with snatches of pitch inflexion, a good example being 'Jailbait' from *Ace of Spades* (1980).

'Jailbait' reveals an initial/transitional stage in the development of rabid vocalising where there is a mixture of the old and the new. For example, the vocal line, even though fairly rabid, is centred on the note F♯ maintaining a link with pitch intonation. Additionally, there are inflexions of the flat 7th and flat 3rd at the end of the phrases linking the music to blues/rock. This contrasts with later rabid vocalisations that disregard any notion of intonation at all (for example, 'Divine Intervention' Machine Head [1994] and 'Gilded Cunt' Cradle of Filth [2004]). The rapid triplet bass line, complete with distortion and F♯ based guitar riff, augments the anger of the vocal line. Importantly then, Lemmy laid the foundation for a rabid vocal style that was subsequently enlarged to become a key marker in much of the heavy metal genre.

Although the lyrics to 'Jailbait' seem to align more with blues and hard rock (in their clearly misogynistic content and connotations of underage sex), such lyrics form something of a paradox in the light of Lemmy's philosophy on gendering within rock music. The gendered constructions that inform much of rock music's aesthetic (as discussed in the previous chapter) are very much criticised by Lemmy

in his autobiography. His close allegiance with the all girl rock band Girlschool[6] is founded on the belief that female rock bands are on an equal footing with male rock bands. He likened Girlschool guitarist Kelly Johnson to Jeff Beck for ability, and fiercely criticised those within the male dominated rock world who deprecate female rock musicians:

> … I liked the idea of girls being a band … I wanted to stick it up those pompous bastard guitarists' asses because Girlschool guitarist, Kelly Johnson, was as good as any guitarist I've ever seen in my life. The nights she was really on, she was as good as Jeff Beck. (Kilmister 2003: 126)

Motörhead frequently shared the stage with Girlschool and made a number of joint recordings with them, one of which charted (the joint band was called Headgirl, a combination of Motör*head* and *Girl*school. The song was a 1950s rock and roll cover called 'Please Don't Touch').

There were, in fact, many instances where Lemmy actively promoted female rock bands including (besides Girlschool) Speed Queen, Skew Siskin and the Plasmatics (Kilmister 2003: 160–61). Lemmy speaks highly of the musicianship and performative qualities of the female artists of these bands. In fact, there are times when Lemmy argues for a solidarity of male and female that goes beyond rock music. In discussing a joint, one-off recording[7] that included the Nolan Sisters, Cozy Powell (drums, famous rock drummer of various bands), Micky Moody (guitar, Whitesnake) and Bob Young (harmonica and backing vocals, Status Quo road manager/co-writer of songs), Lemmy praised the individuality, toughness, humour, sexuality and musicianship of the Nolans, placing them on an equal footing with the rest of the band (Kilmister 2003: 151–3).

One other respect in which Motörhead were influential on the evolutionary process of heavy metal is found in their adoption and re-contextualisation of fast tempos and specific drum techniques. By the mid 1980s the blast-beat and double-kicks had emerged as significant indicators of the heavy metal genre. Furthermore, by the 1990s these techniques had become highly complex and ubiquitous performative stylisations of heavy metal. The initial stages, then, in the emerging

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[6] 'Although the Runaways preceded them by several years, Girlschool was one of the first all-female outfits to emerge in the male-dominated world of heavy metal/hard rock, helping to pave the way for similar groups of the future. Originally formed in South London during 1977 by bassist Enid Williams and vocalist/guitarist Kim McAuliffe (along with a few other members), the group was first known as Painted Lady. Eventually the pair came across permanent members Kelly Johnson (guitar, vocals) and Denise Dufort (drums), and switched their name to Girlschool by 1978' (Greg Prato, http://www.allmusic.com, *s.v.* Girlschool).

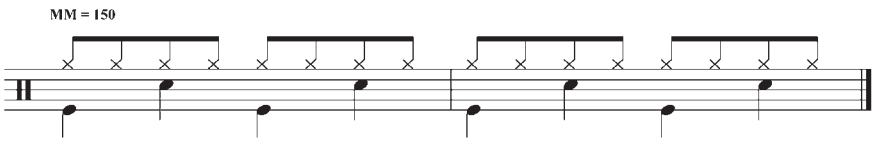
[7] The band was called The Young and Moody Band. The record was called 'Don't Do That' (1981).

heavy metal contextualisation of these techniques, are, arguably, found in the early work of Motörhead.

The blast-beat is essentially a rapid back-beat rhythm and requires high levels of stamina, fitness and technique on the part of the drummer. The music of Slayer, early or late Metallica, Arch Enemy, Machine Head, Cradle of Filth and System of a Down contains examples of blast-beats and represents the way in which this technique has become ubiquitous in the syntax of heavy metal from the mid 1980s to 2008.

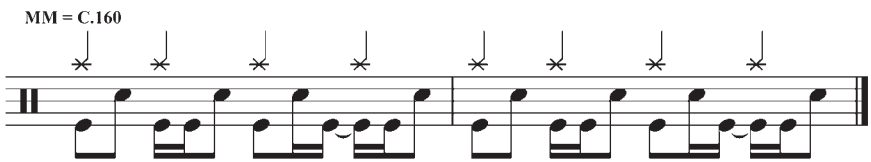
The blast-beat is best understood by considering its metamorphic emergence from the 'back-beat'. The back-beat is a pattern created out of a bass-snare alternation falling on the main beats of quadruple time; more specifically, the bass drum is hit on beats 1 and 3 and snare drum on beats 2 and 4. The back-beat is the main drum pattern found in all forms of rock music and is illustrated in Example 4.1.

Example 4.1 Typical back-beat pattern



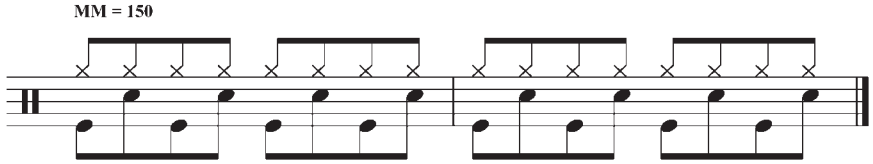
The roots of the blast-beat may found in the work of Motörhead. 'Ace of Spades' (1980) features a fast bass-snare pattern that is leading towards the blast-beats of the mid 1980s (see Example 4.2).

Example 4.2 Motörhead, 'Ace of Spades' from *Ace of Spades* (1980): drum pattern



Evidence of a transitional phase was apparent in 1983, with the release of Slayer's first album *Hell Awaits*. Here, the back-beat, seemingly, had metamorphosed into a rapid bass-snare pattern (for example, 'Evil Has No Boundaries'). Example 4.3 illustrates a typical example of such; the 150 BPM tempo remains, as in Example 4.1, but the bass-snare pattern has moved from crotchet beats to quaver beats.

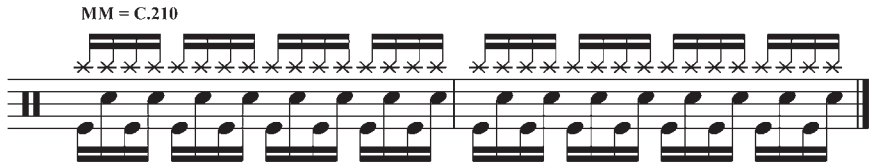
Example 4.3 Rapid back-beat in the style of early Slayer



By 1994, Slayer were performing back-beats at around 200 BPM (for example, 'Dittohead' from *Divine Intervention*) (the same pattern as Example 4.3 but at 200 BPM instead of 100 BPM). This, in effect, transforms the aural impact of this drum pattern and may now be considered to be a (slow) 'blast-beat'.

However, the most extreme in terms of blast-beats was, arguably, founded in the work of Napalm Death. The seminal album *Scum* (1987) contains tracks that amount to little more than a blur of sound. The track 'The Kill' is only 23 seconds long and utilises a blast-beat in semiquavers at 210 BPM (see Example 4.4). Example 4.4 illustrates just one of numerous blast-beat patterns that have been developed by heavy metal bands from the late 1980s onwards. For example, the format sometimes appears inversely as a snare-bass pattern, the hi-hat may be performed in quavers, the ride cymbal may substitute the hi-hat and there are numerous possible configurations of these elements including a variety of tempos.

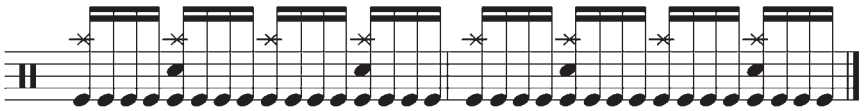
Example 4.4 210 BPM semiquaver blast-beat



Equally important to the development of heavy metal drum patterns was the emergence of double-kicks, especially combined with rapid-16th guitar rhythms. In this respect both Motörhead and Judas Priest were of vital importance; therefore, it is important to also include some discussion of Judas Priest and their contribution to the development of double-kicks within this section.

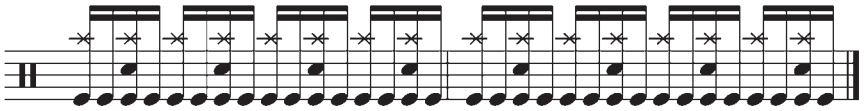
Double-kicks are used extensively in heavy metal from the early 1980s onwards. This technique appears in various forms and may provide either a driving beat (for example, Arch Enemy 'Dead Bury Their Dead' from *Wages of Sin* [2002]) or emphasis to a riff (for example, Metallica 'One' from … *And Justice for All* [1988] [starting 4:43 min.]). Example 4.5 illustrates a typical driving double-kick beat as used by, for example, Arch Enemy.

Example 4.5 Double-kick pattern in the style of Arch Enemy



The combined double-kick and rapid-16th rhythms exemplified in the work of Arch Enemy is representative of an important generic detail found within much mainstream metal from 1977 onwards and first found within the albums *Sin after Sin* (1977), *Stained Class* (1978) (Judas Priest) and *Overkill* (1979) (Motörhead). Judas Priest and Motörhead were not the first to make use of this concept, Ian Paice of Deep Purple seems to be the first one to have developed and recorded this technique within a rock context. With Ritchie Blackmore adding the rapid-16th riff, this significant combination of musical events is evident in the 1971 track 'Fireball'. The double-kick drum pattern used in 'Fireball' has been frequently adopted (with numerous minor variations) but the basic pattern is illustrated in Example 4.6.

Example 4.6 Deep Purple, 'Fireball' from *Fireball* (1971): drum pattern



Nazareth seemed to be the next to make significant use of this concept. Drawing heavily on the work of Deep Purple,[8] the title track from Nazareth's 1973 album *Razamanaz* combines double-kicks with overdriven power-chords.

The opening track from Judas Priest's 1978 album *Stained Class*, 'Exciter', has an almost identical feel to that of 'Fireball' with the exact same patterning in the drum part, rapid-16th guitar riff, rhythmic patterns and phrasing. There is, nevertheless, a new level of pace and technical prowess evident in 'Exciter'. However, I would argue that the more significant contribution of Judas Priest in this respect is found on the 1977 album *Sin after Sin*.[9] This album seems to promote the use of double-kicks to a new level of importance and integration. 'Sinner', 'Diamonds and Rust', 'Raw Deal', 'Let Us Prey/Call for the Priest' and 'Dissident Aggressor' provide examples of the way in which this technique became incorporated as an important signifier of style. Furthermore, *Hell Bent*

[8] Nazareth's bassist, Pete Agnew, openly admits 'stealing' the riff for 'Razamanaz' from 'Speed King' (*Deep Purple in Rock* [1970]) (*Classic Rock*, June 2004: 46). This seems to be have been with Deep Purple's blessing as Roger Glover (Deep Purple's bass player at the time) was producing the album *Razamanaz* for Nazareth. It is very likely, therefore, that the double-bass-drum technique used for 'Razamanaz' came from 'Fireball'.

[9] Interestingly, Roger Glover (of Deep Purple) also produced *Sin after Sin*.

for Leather (1978) (the UK pressing was released as *Killing Machine* but is now referred to as *Hell Bent for Leather*) reinforces this same trend in numbers such as 'Rock Forever', 'Hell Bent for Leather', 'Killing Machine' and 'Running Wild'.

Whilst the double-kicks used by Judas Priest are, on the whole, technical and measured, 'Dissident Aggressor' (*Sin after Sin* [1977]), with its marked increase in tempo and aggression, seems to pave the way for the harder-edged approach taken up by Motörhead. It was the release, then, of Motörhead's 'Overkill' in 1979 that indicated a significant move away from the more refined and measured approach evident in 'Fireball'. The combination of fury, overdrive and down-tuned guitars in 'Overkill' takes double-kick patterning (with its attendant 'trem-picked' riffing) into new territory and begins to pave the way for the world of post-Motörhead metal.

The musical world of Motörhead, therefore, was one imbued with the first signs of many devices that would subsequently become vital components of the heavy metal syntax, thus enlarging the core established by Black Sabbath. Metallica, for example, were clearly influenced by the work of both Motörhead and Black Sabbath and a merging of those stylisations and devices became the basis of their sound. Speaking in 1984 Lars Ulrich (Metallica's drummer) discussed the way in which they 'took the power and energy of Motörhead … and mixed it with more traditional arrangements and riffing' (Putterford 2004: 16).

Although he does not mention them by name, Ulrich's reference to 'traditional arrangements and riffing' suggests the more specific influence of Black Sabbath. For example, an examination of Metallica's music reveals compositional devices that are clearly influenced by the syntax and structure of Black Sabbath songs. Numbers such as '…And Justice for All', 'The Shortest Straw', 'To Live Is To Die' and 'The Frayed Ends of Sanity', from the 1988 album *...And Justice for All* are based on angular riffs (including the privileging of tritones and flat 2nds), the use of palm-muting and a balance of monophonic and power-chord texture. Also, the orchestral and multi-sectional arrangements of Metallica equally reference the work of Black Sabbath (as in, for example, tracks such as 'War Pigs' [1970]). These Sabbathian syntactical devices, in the work of Metallica, when merged with the semi-rabid vocals, speed, double-kicks and ferocity of Motörhead provided Metallica with a unique context of musical events and performative stylisations that became the foundation on which subsequent metal bands would build.

Venom

Venom, too, were highly influential on the sound of Metallica. They formed in Newcastle upon Tyne in 1979. The founders, Conrad Lant, Jeff Dunn and Tony Bray developed a new level of extremity in heavy metal. For example, they merged certain aspects of Sabbathian syntax such as angular power-chord sequences and programmatic writing, with the frenetic pace and rhythms of Motörhead. This collocation of elements contributed significantly to the evolutionary process of heavy metal, particularly in the emergence of thrash through Metallica and

Slayer. In this respect, down-tuned, grinding riffs and rabid vocals are performed with frenetic tempos, thus magnifying the aggression of earlier developments. Furthermore, the theatricality found in earlier heavy metal numbers such as 'Black Sabbath', is significantly heightened[10] and so pre-empting the more extreme musical theatrics of bands such as Cradle of Filth.

Additionally, Venom seemed to build on Black Sabbath's lyrical flirtations with biblical Satanism and the occult and thus they significantly contributed to the perpetuation of such themes as heavy metal coding. Although this process seems to take on greater significance in the work of later bands such as Slayer and Cradle of Filth, Venom nevertheless remain important in that they pushed the boundaries of what was acceptable. For example, where Black Sabbath's recordings were fairly subtle in their portrayal of Satanic and occult related themes, Venom openly, blatantly and controversially engaged with Satanic subject matter. Where Black Sabbath projected an image of biblical Satanism (of frightening evil to be feared and shunned), Venom made Satan their hero, adopting stage names taken from demons invoked in LaVey's Satanic Bible, Lant becomes 'Cronos', Dunn becomes 'Mantas' and Bray, 'Abaddon'. Moreover, their adoption of The Church of Satan's Baphomet pentagram (Baddeley 1999: 124–5) on numerous album sleeves was equally provocative and indicated a more extreme level of non-conformist posturing.

It is apparent, however, from interviews with Conrad Lant (*Classic Rock*, June 2004: 57–61, for example), that the members of Venom were not as serious about their adoption of Satanism as they may have had the public believe but, rather, they simply used the shock factor of Satanism to express new levels anger and non-conformity.[11] Moreover, Moynihan and Søderlind, in their 1998 *tour de force* of underground metal, *Lords of Chaos*, contend that such posturing was assumed for no other reason than to gain infamy:

> Early interviews with the members of Venom make it clear they themselves were beer swilling rock and rollers out to have a good time. The Satanism projected in their presentation and lyrics was primarily an image they stumbled upon, guaranteed to assure them attention and notoriety. There is no real philosophy behind it, behind the juvenile rebellion of presenting anti-Christian blasphemy in the most lurid manner one's imagination can muster. (Moynihan and Søderlind 2003: 13)

Further still, whilst it is acknowledged that the impact of Venom's music was significant to the syntax of heavy metal, their anti-Christian aesthetic is weakened

[10] Such as the pseudo tolling bell and screams in 'Witching Hour' (1981) and the sound of earth falling on a coffin, as heard from inside the casket (suggesting the fear of being buried alive) in 'Buried Alive' (1982).

[11] I acknowledge that this was exactly what Black Sabbath did. However, in the case of Venom it appears to be much more deliberately antagonistic.

further by the inclusion of lyrics that are occasionally overtly misogynistic (for example, 'Teacher's Pet' [1982], 'Angel Dust' [1981] and 'Red Light Fever' [1981]) and in this respect (once again) relate to Moynihan and Søderlind's identification of the band as attention seeking. Therefore, whereas Black Sabbath consistently disengaged with the themes of misogyny and gender anxieties found in blues and rock, Venom's lyrics freely embrace blatant misogyny within a framework of Satanic expression that is, arguably, both lurid and philosophically immature.

The more significant contribution of Venom, then, is found in a merging of the earlier identified innovations of Black Sabbath and Motörhead, and this is evident in specific tracks found on their first two albums, *Welcome to Hell* (1981) and *Black Metal* (1982). For example, 'Witching Hour' (1981) takes the speed, rabid vocalisations, fuzz bass and drum patterns of Motörhead and combines those elements with the Satanic lyrics, down-tuned guitars and programmatic elements of Black Sabbath. The lyrics play on biblical Satanism in a similar way to Black Sabbath's 'War Pigs' and 'Walpurgis' (1970) but in a more juvenile manner.

The final verse, 'All hell rejoices at the child that she will bear and Satan's only son, shall be the world's despair', is redolent of the black nativity witnessed in *Rosemary's Baby* (1969).[12] Here, the blasphemy and anti-Christian posturing of Venom seem to pour scorn on ecclesiastical dogma and all it stands for. Musically, these themes are represented in a variety of ways. For example, the opening theatrics seem to be inspired by Black Sabbath's 'Black Sabbath' (1970) (discussed earlier, in Chapter 2), which opens with a tolling bell and falling rain effect, followed later by a fearful, tortured cry for mercy from Osbourne. The opening of 'Witching Hour' employs a similar sinister tolling effect produced this time by an open D (Venom use D standard tuning on this track) power-chord laden with distortion. There are agonising screams heard behind the incessant tolling, the combined musical and verbal effects merging with and intensifying the impact of the lyrics.

Within the ensuing main theme, Sabbathian theatrics, down-tuned, distorted guitars and Satanic lyrics are merged with elements that clearly relate to the work of Motörhead. The latter includes the synthesis of rapid-16th rhythms, rabid vocalisations, fuzz bass and high-speed drumming patterns. The influence of Black Sabbath is also somewhat evident in the use of a tritone interval in the vocal part. Although there are hints of blues stylisations in this vocal part, such as the clipped phrases and falling minor 3rd, the use of the unresolved tritone seems to relate more to Black Sabbath and the established connotations of Diabolus in Musica.

The closing chord sequence to 'Witching Hour', I-♭VI-♭VII-I, has been one of the most used sequences in both rock and metal and this device also relates to the work of Black Sabbath. As such, within its heavy metal context, Black Sabbath seem to have been the first to suggest its plaintive power when used as the bridge in 'Paranoid' (1970). Metal bands such as Judas Priest have made continued use

[12] In this movie, Satan takes a human bride who then bears his son. The birth is celebrated by rejoicing Satanists (as discussed in the previous chapter).

of this figure and Iron Maiden seem, almost, to have built an entire career from it. Evidence of the importance of this device and its ubiquity within subsequent metal is found in the work of bands from Lacuna Coil to Arch Enemy and this theory is expounded more fully in both my discussion of Iron Maiden (below) and also in case studies presented in Chapter 5. For ease of use I would like to refer to the metal contextualised version of this chord sequence as the 'Aeolian Trichord' as it seems to formulate the final three (power-)chords of the Aeolian mode into a ground bass pattern.

The significance of 'Witching Hour' is seen in the way in which Venom contextualised the Aeolian Trichord within the homogenised sound world of Sabbath and Motörhead, thus contributing to its subsequent ubiquity within the world of heavy metal. Further examples found within the first two albums by Venom include 'Sacrifice' (1982), 'Don't Burn the Witch' (1982) and 'Countess Bathory' (1982).

The following section provides an analysis of what I consider to be the key tracks from Venom's second album of 1982, *Black Metal*, and the way in which these tracks resonate with the work of Black Sabbath and Motörhead. Here, I hope to highlight some of the specific stylistic features developed by Venom that contributed significantly, thereafter, to the generic evolution of heavy metal.

The opening, eponymous, track of *Black Metal* is of particular significance. Encapsulated within the musical syntax of this number is a seminal blending of new and old elements. For example, links with Black Sabbath are maintained in the down-tuned (in this case D standard) distortion-laden guitars and intervallic structures of the guitar phrases. The verse features a sequence of power-chord phrases in a 'Sabbathian-style' chromatic descent from flat 3rd to the root, forcing an emphasis on the flat 2nd. This is combined with a rapid-16th tremolo-picking style that pre-empts thrash, death and black metal where the adoption of this technique has become a key stylisation.

The chorus is striking in two respects. Firstly, in the combination of the above mentioned rapid-16th rhythm with double-kicks – an element that soon became a major signifier of heavy metal. Secondly, in the use of a specific, idiomatic, oblique motion chord pattern. This chord pattern is played as though in A and has moving chord shapes played against an open fifth string pedal. This idea, within a down-tuned heavy metal context, was first used by Tony Iommi (for example in 'Wheels of Confusion' as discussed in Chapter 2) and forms a further link with Black Sabbath.

Furthermore, the guitar riffs found within 'Countess Bathory' also align with the syntax of Black Sabbath and the structure seems to follow three distinct, guitar driven themes. The first of these is heard in the main chorus riff which features an Aeolian Trichord and concludes with a tritone. The second is a chordal section, first heard at 1:29 min. and centred on the dominant (V). This section contains a flat 2nd Phrygian inflexion and chromatic descent (from a flat 3rd above it). The third is a palm-muted Aeolian monophonic riff that starts at 1:56 min.

'Don't Burn the Witch' was an equally significant track in its re-formulation of the syntactical designs established by Black Sabbath and Motörhead. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, that context of events provided a blueprint for the thrash metal developed by Metallica and Slayer during the mid 1980s. This is exemplified in the music of early Metallica which is marked by intricate high-speed palm-muted riffs combined with angular intervals and it was Venom who seemed to provide the inspiration.

For example, the influence of 'Don't Burn the Witch' can be clearly heard in Metallica's 1986 'Master of Puppets'. Both are marked by a cascading sixth string power-chord/monophonic figure which is punctuated by an open sixth string pedal. Monophonic palm-muted riffs are interspersed between these events where the juxtaposition of Aeolian and Phrygian shapes furnish the riffs with a distinct character. Although 'Don't Burn the Witch' is not as technically accomplished or detailed as 'Master of Puppets, it does, nevertheless, depend upon the same syntactical devices and stands as a clear precedent for the work of Metallica.

Metallica's 'Master of Puppets' also aligns with the syntax of Black Sabbath by its heavy metal contextualised chromatic details, flat 2nds, and tritones. The modal based, palm-muted monophonic riffs further relate to Black Sabbath (for example, the coda to 'Black Sabbath' [1970]), whilst the power, speed (drumming, guitars and tempo), vocalisations and juxtaposition of Aeolian and Phrygian inflexions, are clearly related to Venom as discussed above.

Venom's musical developments, then, form a significant link between Black Sabbath and Metallica/Slayer. This is evident in a syntax which merges the down-tunings, intervallic structures, riffing and theatricality of Black Sabbath with new developments in rabid vocalising, speed drumming and trem-picking. Although the lyrics were often juvenile in the extreme, used simply to draw attention, the occult-related themes did seem to go some way towards maintaining the anti-Christian ethos established by Sabbath, enough to inform later bands such as Slayer and Cradle of Filth as to its potential as a means of anti-patriarchal thrust.

Diamond Head

It is interesting that Diamond Head form a further link to Birmingham (Stourbridge, to be exact). Formed by school leavers Brian Tattler (guitar) and Duncan Scott (drums) in 1976, they soon recruited Sean Harris (vocals) and Colin Kimberley (bass). By 1978 they were supporting the likes of Iron Maiden and AC/DC. By 1980 they had released their first album (*Untitled*, often referred to as *The White Album* or *Lightning to the Nations* after the opening track). This album was highly influential on Metallica, as will be discussed further on. The fact that Diamond Head were supporting bands such as AC/DC (mainstream heavy rock) and Iron Maiden (heavy metal) reveals something of their musical make up. Ed Rivadavia

notes that Diamond Head displayed the 'perfect synthesis of un-godly, Sabbath-sized riffing and Zeppelin's epic musicality'.[13]

An analysis of *The White Album* reveals, in actual fact, that only one track, 'Am I Evil', significantly references the work of Black Sabbath. That one track, nevertheless, is arguably the single most important album track between 1975 and 1982 in maintaining the complete musical syntax established by Black Sabbath. It is the impression of this number, then, that Rivadavia is most likely referring to when he talks about 'un-godly, Sabbath-sized riffing'. Whereas the lyrics of 'Am I Evil' deprecate the witch and matriarchy, the musical syntax is very Sabbathian. The discussion earlier, in Chapter 2, focused on Black Sabbath's use of the tritone and flat 2nd within the first album and how those intervals were used as the building blocks of their unique sound. This one track by Diamond Head is a reconfigured synthesis of all of those elements, thus contributing to the perpetuation of that distinct and vital heavy metal syntax.

'Am I Evil' reflects the influence of Black Sabbath in a number of ways. The first of these is seen in the long, multi-sectional design with contrasting sections bolted together. More, specifically, after opening with the same dramatic triplet rhythm that closes Black Sabbath's 'Black Sabbath', theme 1 utilises and combines the Sabbathian cornerstone intervals of the tritone and flat 2nd and, in so doing, Diamond Head re-create Black Sabbath's connotations of the sinister in a new and enhanced way. 'Am I Evil', is much more expansive in texture than, for example, 'Black Sabbath' and is reminiscent of Holst's 'Mars' (*The Planets* [1914–16]).

After a bridge, theme 2 is presented, which is very much in the style of Tony Iommi; it has palm-muted, sixth string power-chords and features a tritone, a privileged flat 2nd and an incessant pounding sixth string E fill. Furthermore, the very distinct vocal style of Sean Harris seems to have provided James Hetfield (Metallica) with the stylistic fingerprints that mark many of Metallica's vocal lines. This is particularly apparent in the way in which Harris ends numerous of his vocal phrases with a falling, glissando, flattened 7th. There are also many similarities in the inflexions that can be heard when comparing tracks such as 'The Prince', 'Sucking My Love' and 'Lightning to the Nations' (Diamond Head, *The White Album* [1980]) with 'Ride The Lightning', 'For Whom the Bell Tolls' and 'Creeping Death' (Metallica, *Ride the Lightning* [1984]). Interestingly, Hetfield also seems to combine the stylistic finger prints found in the vocal lines of Sean Harris with those of Ozzy Osbourne (for example, Metallica 'Ride The Lightning' [1984] and Black Sabbath 'Snowblind' [1972]). It is significant that although the next stage of development in heavy metal arguably grew out of the American West Coast, it was the Midlands of England that seemed to provide the musical language for those developments.

The episodic numbers that Diamond Head produced, such as 'Am I Evil', 'Sucking My Love' and 'The Prince' (*The White Album* [1980]) tapped into that one particular aspect of Black Sabbath's musical aesthetic. It was, however, two

[13] http://www.allmusic.com, *s.v.* Diamond Head.

other bands from the NWOBHM that were fully to exploit this characteristic of Black Sabbath's sound world, namely Judas Priest and Iron Maiden.

Judas Priest

Judas Priest are lauded by many writers as being of pivotal importance (for example, Christie 2003: 20, Lane, *Metal Hammer*, October 2004: 50) in the evolution of heavy metal. My own research supports this view, particularly in that Judas Priest's originality and contribution to heavy metal was one found in a particular synthesis of rock and metal practices. In this respect, they are similar to Led Zeppelin, whose innovation was not in the specific musical details (such as riffs, vocal phrases, and so on) but in the synthesis of those (blues and rock) elements.

Christie (2003: 20) identifies the work of Black Sabbath, Thin Lizzy, Deep Purple and Led Zeppelin as of particular significance in the formation of Judas Priest's sound and image. What Christie does not do in his journalistic account is analyse the musical syntax of Judas Priest and make direct connections to the musical practices of Thin Lizzy, Deep Purple, et al. This following section attempts to fill that gap and make connections not only with Black Sabbath, but also the later forms of heavy metal that emerged during the 1980s. Thus I seek to establish the *musical* contribution that Judas Priest made to the world of heavy metal and contextualise the importance of other aspects such as their image.

I mentioned earlier that Judas Priest were contemporary with Black Sabbath and from Birmingham but did not find their feet, so to speak, until the demise of the original Black Sabbath line up in 1978. I recall seeing Judas Priest during 1976 at a rock club called the Highwayman situated in a country village called Threapwood near to Cheadle (where I then lived), Stoke-on-Trent. They were a well respected hard rock band at that time with no sign of the leather image that was to come; rather, they were dressed according to the norms of mid-1970s rock culture, that is, jeans, flares, velvets, platforms, full sleeves, tassels, and so on.

They were gigging material from their 1974 debut album *Rocka Rolla* and some material that would emerge on their second album, of 1976, *Sad Wings of Destiny*. By this time the band was established with Rob Halford on vocals and K.K. Downing and Glenn Tipton sharing lead guitar. There is *Old Grey Whistle Test* footage of the band from this time found on the DVD *Electric Eye* (2004). I recall from 1976 that discussions held with friends about Judas Priest centred on comparisons with Black Sabbath, that there were areas of similarity but at the same time they seemed to be forging a new path. Those similarities may be heard in 'Deceiver' and 'Island of Domination' from *Sad Wings of Destiny* (1976), where Sabbath-type riffing dominates the song. Equally influential however, were Deep Purple, with 'Genocide' from the same album bearing more than a passing resemblance to Deep Purple's 'Woman from Tokyo' (1973) and 'Burn' (1974).

Additionally, tracks such as 'The Ripper' show that Priest were already beginning to reshape these elements into original material.

The importance of Judas Priest is arguably summarised in the 1978 album *Stained Class*. Lane considers this album to be a seminal moment in the history of heavy metal and having listed the album as the most influential heavy metal album of all time (*Metal Hammer*, October 2004: 50), he describes his reasons for highlighting this album as so influential. Of particular interest to this discussion is the way in which, firstly, Lane identifies *Sad Wings of Destiny* as an album where 'the group were experimenting with more heavy and complex arrangements – which guitarists K.K. Downing and Glen Tipton insist were inspired by the numerous foundries and steelworks of the band's hometown'. Secondly, the way in which 'Rob Halford unknowingly defined the genre's image, with the next generation of bands, both European and American, adopting his penchant for studded wrist bands, studded leather biker jackets and peaked leather caps' (Lane, *Metal Hammer*, October 2004: 50).

Lane's description of the way in which, somehow, Judas Priest influenced the *sound* of NWOBHM with a studs and leather image, seems to overlook the significance of their musical influence. What is needed here, arguably, is a focus on the musical syntax of Judas Priest and relating that to the wider social context and aesthetics of the band. In fact, Lane's description invites a more detailed analysis of the musical influence and inheritance of Judas Priest. The 'heavy and complex arrangements' noted by Lane seem to be the key to Priest's contribution to heavy metal. When looking closely at the sonic design of Judas Priest a more specific picture emerges as to the details of that heavy complexity. Judas Priest display little of the core syntactical devices initiated by Black Sabbath such as down-tuned guitars, tritones, flat 2nds, and so on. Riffs in the work of Judas Priest tend to be linear rather that angular, and many riffs and leads utilise blues devices (blue notes, and so on). In this respect, they maintain one foot firmly in the world of mainstream rock music rather than heavy metal.

However, there are aspects of the music of Judas Priest that relate to the inheritance and evolution of heavy metal. Power-chords, although not angular, are nevertheless often in sequences (as opposed to the mix of power-chords and open chords in mainstream rock and exemplified in Led Zeppelin and AC/DC) and the lyrics of their earlier work are driven by anti-patriarchal themes in a similar way to Black Sabbath.

The most significant aspect of Judas Priest's development, returning to Lane's identification of heavy complexities, was arguably the way in which they seemed to take the pseudo-orchestral elements of Black Sabbath's work (discussed here in the Introduction and Chapter 2) as a blueprint for the development of a highly technical and rhetorical[14] approach to structuring and presenting heavy metal.

[14] Walser's usage of the term 'rhetoric', here, seems to relate to aspects of display/extravagance/impression and the syntactical articulation of Baroque structure and patterning. For example, 'heavy metal has recycled the rhetoric of Bach and Vivaldi for their own

My research here has noted the influence of Deep Purple (themselves influenced by classical music) and Thin Lizzy. More specifically, the development of twin-lead guitars and operatic vocals were a central feature of Judas Priest and although neither was originated at the hands of Priest, it was the way in which they synthesised these elements that shaped their sonic and aesthetic world.

Robert Walser, in *Running with the Devil* (1993), discusses at length classical rhetoric within rock and metal and whilst it is not my intention to critique that portion of the book I do feel it is important to briefly refer to Walser's research in this field. After a section in which he argues for the concept of classical music as a construct of the Victorians that had become elitist and stripped of its original contextual meanings, he moves on to consider the way in which rock musicians have experimented with using classical means within a rock context; he briefly refers to the Beatles (*Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* [1967], for example) before a more detailed study of Ritchie Blackmore (Deep Purple) and an extensive section on Eddie Van Halen, Randy Rhoads and Yngwie Malmsteen (pp. 57–107).

Walser's brief section on Deep Purple is relevant here as it highlights an aspect of Judas Priest's eclectic syntax. However, Walser seems to overlook just how early on the classical devices and dimensions of Deep Purple's work influenced Judas Priest. Mentioning the work of Priest guitarists K.K. Downing and Glen Tipton, he points out that having little formal training to inform their writing, it was not until the late 1980s that 'classical influences became pronounced in their playing' (p. 66). Although Walser draws attention to the guitarists in the band, the other members too seemed to make important contributions. I have already mentioned the quasi-operatic and multi-sectional performance of 'Dreamer Deceiver/Deceiver', that was being performed during 1976, that is clearly motivated by classical influences and the same could be said for much of the material found on *Sad Wings of Destiny* (1976). In fact, the instrumental 'Prelude' features a unique blending of piano and guitars that resonate with orchestral brass. Similarly, the tom toms of the drum kit seem to mimic orchestral timpani. The harmonic structure, although very much Aeolian, contains clear classical influences in its pivoting between the tonic (E♭ minor) and dominant (B♭ minor). Furthermore, there are a number of tracks from 1977 and 1978 ('Sinner', 'Let Us Prey/Call for the Priest' all from *Sin after Sin* [1977] and 'Exciter', *Stained Class* [1978]) that show Judas Priest had both fully mastered and developed the kind of rhetorical devices found in the work of Deep Purple (for example, 'Highway Star', *Machine Head* [1972]). Each of these numbers feature sequenced harmonic progressions blended with twin-lead guitar harmonies, double-kicks, operatic vocals and episodic structures. Such numbers fit snugly with Walser's descriptions of Deep Purple:

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purposes' (1993: 63). When using the term rhetoric, rhetorical and so on, in relation to other heavy metal bands such as Judas Priest and Iron maiden I use it with reference to Walser's usage.

> The members of Deep Purple abstracted and adapted a particular set of classical features: repetitious melodic patterns (such as arpeggios), square phrase structures, virtuosic soloing and characteristic harmonic progressions such as descending through a tetrachord by half steps or cycling through the circle of 5ths … The harmonic cycles set up rational articulation of time and direction, enabling us to predict what will come next and the guitar solo energises these patterns with virtuosic exhibitionism. (1993: 64–5)

Walser continues (on p. 65) with an example of the way in which 'Highway Star' freely adopts such techniques; he does this by comparing transcribed extracts of the guitar solo from 'Highway Star' to extracts from Vivaldi's *Concerto in D minor*. Along with many other aspects of Deep Purple's work (as discussed earlier in this chapter), these distinct stylistic elements were a major influence on Judas Priest and, despite Walser's observations, were clearly mastered by 1977. Furthermore, they were being assimilated into the kind of new context described above that would become a major influence on certain trends in heavy metal during the next 25 years or more.

It was noted earlier how Judas Priest's 1978 album *Stained Class* seemed to be a particularly significant album, encapsulating many examples of the kind of developments under discussion. The opening track 'Exciter' serves well as a summary of these techniques and developments. The track opens with a rapid double-kick pattern and this is of particular importance in that it signifies an allegiance with heavy metal even before this technique became synonymous with the genre. The development of double-kicks and its significance to heavy metal was discussed earlier in this chapter, and the opening, here, indicates the noteworthy intentions of the track. I think it worth reminding the reader of the clear relation of this to Deep Purple's 'Fireball' from 1971.

The next event (theme A1) features a monophonic guitar riff that joins in with the frenetic double-bass-drum pattern. This guitar riff clearly identifies with blues coding but the juxtaposition of the two parts cleverly disguises the 'bluesness' of the guitar riff. I was quite surprised when conducting my analysis of this track; the actual guitar part on the recording seems to utilise a dropped G (lowering the fifth string to G to give an open G tuning across the four middle strings – G, D, G, B). This was (and is) a favourite technique of blues slide players (who would also drop the first and sixth strings to D); the series of minor 3rd pull-offs from fret three to the open third and fourth strings (B♭ – G and F – D) intensifies an interval already associated with blues. The frequent use of this tuning (and its associated specific blues-related idiomatic techniques) have made it synonymous with blues (for example, Muddy Waters, 'Louisiana Blues' [1950][15]).

This is indeed an unusual juxtaposition; the riff is synonymous with pure blues and the double-kicks anticipate (and are, by implication, synonymous with) heavy

[15] Muddy Waters often tuned the whole guitar down one step and then dropped the fifth string by a further tone. He would, of course, view the song as being played in G.

metal. The stylisation of the guitar part builds further layers of complexity by the presence of a 'phase' effect that is added to the guitar signal. Moreover, the attack of this blues-based riff aligns it with the mainstream rock of Led Zeppelin (for example, 'Heartbreaker' [1970]) and Deep Purple (for example, 'Smoke on the Water' [1972], 'Lazy' [1972], 'Strange Kind of Woman' [1971] and 'Woman from Tokyo' [1973]), each of which displays an aggressive makeover of blues conventions.

The second theme (theme B) acts as a song verse. The drum pattern reverts to a (fairly rapid) back-beat and the guitar part features a (mostly) monophonic rapid-16th pattern. The vocals are featured for the first time and it is significant that the vocals are highly melodic and central to the coding. This contrasts with the approach taken by Venom and Motörhead where the vocals seem to be incidental to, or an extension of, the rawness of the guitar parts.

For example, Halford adopts an operatic approach to heavy metal vocals and it is interesting to see and hear how early on this was developed in the sound of Judas Priest; 'Dreamer Deceiver/Deceiver' (*Sad Wings of Destiny* [1976] and live footage on *Electric Eye* [2004]) illustrate this concept well. The album *Sin after Sin* (1977) displays Halford's range and eclectic style, 'Here Come the Tears' contains deep vocal chants double-tracked with high-tessitura lines, whilst 'Dissident Aggressor' features banshee wails. This was, arguably, important in providing a blueprint for the theatrical vocal parts of bands as widely ranging as Cradle of Filth and Nightwish.

Such vocal dexterity becomes more apparent in the third theme (theme C). Here, the music modulates up two steps to A. This adds intensity to the chorus and is further heightened by Halford's soaring, high-tessitura vocal lines and the return of the double-kicks. The guitar part features a monophonic rapid-16th riff that works in tandem with the double-kicks. The pitch is dominated by the single note A (apart from the phrase ends) and acts almost like a pedal. It is this that propels the music with rhythmic drive. Theme D (starting at 1:47 min.) is polyphonic in nature with layered guitar parts in counterpoint with the vocal line. There is a chromatic rise leading to a homophonic section featuring a collocation of sequenced block chords and vocal sounds.

The concept of sequenced harmonic progressions is further extended in theme E1 (starting 3:38 min.). An idiomatic oblique-motion guitar figure precedes this (theme E starting 3:27 min.). This guitar solo is created by a series of stopped to open string notes constructed entirely on the G (third) string. A chromatic ascent leads to theme E2 where the sequenced harmony is further enriched by twin-guitar harmonies. The twin-guitar harmonies are centred on triadic figures making it entirely tonal in nature; this seems to create a dichotomy by adding both technical shine to heavy metal coding whilst at the same time transgressing the precedent established by Black Sabbath for dark, down-tuned power-chord riffs (bearing in mind, from earlier discussions, that the power-chord is a rhythmic force constructed from 5ths and 4ths, the absence of a 3rd being significant).

Whilst such functional harmonic devices had been used before within mainstream rock (for example, Deep Purple 'Highway Star' [1972]), they had been largely absent from within the global context of heavy metal. Although Judas Priest did not frequently indulge in twin-guitar harmonies, sequenced harmonic progressions became a feature of their work and such developments were highly significant in that they opened the door for later heavy metal bands to freely combine twin-guitar harmonies, technical polish and rhetorical devices with the more standard techniques of heavy metal such as down-tuned guitars, power-chords, angular intervals, double-kicks, rabid vocals, and so on. There are many examples to cite but I would direct the reader to the work of the death metal band, Arch Enemy whose work stands testament to the importance of Judas Priest's developments in this field. Examples may be heard in such tracks as 'Ravenous', 'Heart of Darkness' and 'Burning Angel' all from *Wages of Sin* (2002).

Given that Judas Priest seemed to pave the way for bands such as Arch Enemy, my own conclusions, from the research that I have conducted here, is that *Sin after Sin* was much more of a seminal album than *Stained Class*. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, when discussing double-kicks, *Sin after Sin* abounds with examples of this technique, it is an important feature of the album and this becomes one of the fingerprints of metal bands such as Arch Enemy and Trivium. The combinations of sequenced chord progressions, twin-guitar work, vocal techniques and sheer aggression also position it as a very important album in the evolution of heavy metal.

Although the twin-lead guitar harmonies featured occasionally by Judas Priest were partly inspired by the twin guitar/organ harmonies of Deep Purple (for example, 'Highway Star' [1972]), a greater influence seems to have been the sound world of Thin Lizzy. Twin-guitar bands that were utilising harmonies as opposed to sharing solos were few in the early days of rock. Wishbone Ash were an early notable example who combined sword and sorcery legends with rock music and harmonic twin-lead guitar syntax. However, it seems to have been the hard rock/twin-guitar harmony of Thin Lizzy that was the bigger influence on Judas Priest.

Also of significance here is the biker and leather image of Thin Lizzy. Several paragraphs back I questioned Lane's theory of Judas Priest influencing heavy metal with a 'studs and leather image'. My own argument proposes that although Priest were undoubtedly influenced by studs and leather, the real value of this image in relation to heavy metal is at best questionable, and that furthermore, such an image was ephemeral. By contrast, the musical achievements and influence of Judas Priest are clear and measurable (as already seen from earlier discussions).

The associated images of 'macho, machines and boys' does intersect the paths of Judas Priest, Deep Purple and Thin Lizzy. Deep Purple, although never visually embracing the biker image, frequently dealt with themes of fast machines as much as they did women ('Speed King' [1970], 'Space Truckin'' [1972], 'Highway Star' [1972]) and were a favourite band of the biker culture, confirmed by my own

observations as part of the 1970s Midlands rock culture. Thin Lizzy significantly espoused the macho biker image and this is evident in photographic records and songs such as 'The Boys Are Back in Town' (1976), 'The Rocker' (1973), 'Fighting My Way Back' (1975) and 'Fight or Fall' (1976), all of which are tough, brothers-in-gangs fighting songs.

By 1978, Judas Priest, in particular Rob Halford, had made the transition from 1970s platforms and flares to the studs and leather biker image. The follow up album to *Stained Class*, *Hell Bent for Leather* (1978) bears testament to a new direction as suggested in the very title. The album has much more commercially contrived numbers such as the anthemic 'Evening Star' and 'Take on the World' and lyrics start to deal with fast machines, women and lawlessness. In a 1978 *Top of the Pops* appearance screened on BBC TV (DVD *Electric Eye* [2004]), Rob Halford appears dressed extensively in leathers and studs complete with an SAS style cap. This was to become an important part of their image; for many years Halford performed a trademark Harley Davidson stage entry during live gigs.

Deena Weinstein, like Lane, has argued for the vital importance of dress code in heavy metal. Her full-page photo of Rob Halford at the beginning of her seminal work on heavy metal, *Heavy Metal* (2000), is indicative of the importance she places on Halford and this image to the ensuing genre. She sees this development as relating to a crystallisation period in the evolution of heavy metal. That crystallisation was the sequel to an earlier period of formation itself marked by bell-bottoms, tee-shirts and long hair (pp. 29–30). Whilst this in itself may be explained as part of the mutational process of heavy metal, there is a level of generalisation highlighted in her discussion that seems to draw undue importance to the dress codes of heavy metal.

For example, comparing the photo of Halford in Weinstein's book with any photo of Lemmy reveals the way in which Halford's clean and groomed appearance is at odds with Lemmy's 'greasy, unkempt biker look'. Furthermore, the studs and leather image adopted by Halford was clearly a masked expression of his gay identity (Christie 2003: 310) There can be no doubt, from reading his autobiography, of Lemmy's heterosexuality and that his own adoption of the biker look is one intended to project a macho image. Therefore, one seems to belong to the world of gay culture and S&M, the other to the straight and masculine biker culture.

Further to this, the biker look was an important part of the rock culture (for example, Steppenwolf, Thin Lizzy and Motörhead) before Halford influenced this trend within certain factions of heavy metal. In fact, as I mentioned in an earlier paragraph, Halford, first espoused his leather clad image late in 1978 (when performing 'Take on the World' on *Top of the Pops*). This, significantly, coincided with a shift in the musical direction of the band to a more mainstream rock sound.

The important point here, in terms of Halford's influence, is that whilst certain metal bands throughout the 1980s were strongly influenced by the leather and studs image of Judas Priest, others were only moderately influenced or not influenced at

all. In fact, a simple survey of the dress codes of metal bands from 1980 to 2000 would certainly clarify that point.

I do not wish to underestimate the role of dress codes in heavy metal for it is an important aspect; rather, I wish to assign the right level of significance to it. Thus, whilst Metallica, Celtic Frost, Pantera and Machine Head (for example) embraced differing visual images, their musical identities were consistently similar in that they were rooted in the synthesis of Sabbathian and NWOBHM syntactical elements. Thus, whilst the visual image of Judas Priest was ephemeral and of marginal importance to the development of heavy metal, their use of devices and techniques was of prime importance.

In a similar way, the lyrical themes espoused by Judas Priest significantly resonate with Black Sabbath and the world of heavy metal in that the lyrics deal with dark and anti-Christian themes and the associated non-conformist censure of patriarchal and hierarchal systems. The language of the lyrics is often couched in religious terminology and imagery similar to Sabbath. The lyrics to 'Exciter' for example, have religious overtones in their portrayal of a fire-branding presence of power akin to the Devil himself, bringing salvation to mankind. 'Stained Class' and 'Saints in Hell' (both *Stained Class* [1978]) further exemplify the broad adoption of anti-hegemonic themes and religious terminology.

Judas Priest's use of structure reveals further Sabbathian influence in that much of Priest's work is multi-sectional. However, Judas Priest often seemed to retain an essence of the verse and chorus structures that dominated their formative years as a blues band. The multi-sectional nature of 'Exciter', for example, never strays far from the safety of that tried and tested format. Although there are contrasting sections, the whole is centred on returns of the B (verse) and C (chorus) themes (see Table 4.1).

Despite the mild resonance with verse and chorus formatting, the structuring of Judas Priest, nevertheless, significantly builds on the work of Black Sabbath. Furthermore, the synthesis of twin-guitar work, double-kicks, operatic vocals and harmonic sequences formulated by Judas Priest paved the way for later bands such as Arch Enemy, Trivium and Megadeth to combine the syntax of Black Sabbath with such rhetorical devices and thus redefine the genre.

Table 4.1 Judas Priest, 'Exciter' from *Stained Class* (1978): table of events

Time	Theme	Section	Features
00:00	A	Intro	Drum solo featuring double-kicks.
00:08	A1	Intro	Monophonic guitar riff joins in featuring blues techniques but with a fierce attack and phase effect added.
00:18	B	Verse 1	This has a G root. It features a rapid-16th monophonic riff but with power-chords at the cadence points. The drums use a fast back-beat. Vocals enter.
00:32	C	Chorus 1	This section modulates up one tone to A and the double-kicks (Intro) return. The vocal pitch rises and the overall sound intensifies.
00:48	B	Verse 2	As above.
	C	Chorus 2	But with a modified ending to lead into the guitar solo.
01:19	B1	Guitar solo	This is based on an extended version of the B section.
01:47	D	Link	Here, there are multi-layered guitar parts in counterpoint with the vocal lines. There is then a chromatic rise that links with the sequenced harmonic progression. In this final part the vocals and guitars combine in a homophonic sequence of block chords.
02:16	A	Intro	Modified/shortened.
	B	Verse 3	As above.
	C	Chorus 3	As above.
02:56	B	Verse 4	As above.
	C	Chorus 4	As above.
03:27	E1	Second guitar solo	Here, there is an idiomatic stopped string to open string chromatic run linking to E2.
03:38	E2	Twin lead	This features twin-lead guitar harmonies with a sequenced harmonic chord progression.
04:08	D		As above.
04:37	B	Verse 5	As above.
04:52	F	Outro	Here, the chorus is modified and stays in A for the final chord.

It would seem, therefore, that the real influence of Judas Priest (on heavy metal) lies in their musical contributions rather that the ephemeral 'studs and leather' visual image as suggested by the world of journalism (for example, Lane) and sociology (for example, Weinstein). The legacy of aural theatricality (for example, in the operatic vocals and gestures of Halford), rhetorical devices, (chordal sequencing, twin-leads and double-kicks), multi-sectional arrangements and anti-patriarchal themes is heard across the spectrum of modern metal bands from Arch Enemy, through Nightwish and Trivium, to Cradle of Filth. The visual image associated with Judas Priest and therefore of heavy metal generally, seems much less important in the light of their crucial and substantial musical influence.

Iron Maiden

A more thorough development of the rhetorical devices and complex arrangements initiated by Judas Priest was developed in the work of Iron Maiden. Formed in 1976 in the East End of London by bassist Steve Harris, Iron Maiden went through numerous changes of personnel before the release of their first, eponymous, album in 1980. By 1982, with the release of their third album, *Number of the Beast*, the line up had stabilised with the addition of front man/vocalist Bruce Dickinson. From the early days it was evident that the band wished to combine the dark forces of Black Sabbath with the musical refinement of Wishbone Ash (interviews with numerous early band members recorded and released on *The History of Iron Maiden, Part 1: The Early Days* DVD [2004]).

This unique synthesis resulted in a highly technical approach to heavy metal that built upon the work of Judas Priest and developed the twin-harmony guitar technique to new levels of dexterity and intricacy. Additionally, the frequent inclusion of melodious bass lines working in counterpoint or harmony with the guitars creates a distinctive and often complex three-part texture in much of their instrumental writing. The inspiration for this seems to have come not only from Wishbone Ash but also Thin Lizzy in numbers such as 'The Boys Are Back in Town', 'Emerald' and 'Cowboy Song' (all 1976). The influence of Black Sabbath may be heard in their dark, anti-hegemonic lyrical themes, their sequences of power-chords and frequent use of the Aeolian-based riffs.

In fact, Iron Maiden's adoption of modal writing is of particular significance and this is evident in the way that blues and rock and roll devices become virtually obsolete within the world of heavy metal from Iron Maiden onwards. Therefore, where blues conventions inform the work of Judas Priest and occasionally Venom, Iron Maiden revive the Sabbathian penchant for pure modal riff writing and as such form a vital link in the evolution of heavy metal. In fact, the music of Metallica (up to and including 1990's *Metallica*),[16] Slayer, Celtic Frost, Napalm Death, Carcass, Morbid Angel, Pantera, Arch Enemy, Machine Head, System of a Down, Nightwish, Cradle of Filth and Lamb of God all represent various developments in post-Iron Maiden heavy metal and all represent both an eschewal of blues and rock and roll conventions and a devotion to modal riff writing.

One of the most important aspects of this is Iron Maiden's extensive use of the Aeolian Trichord. I introduced the Aeolian Trichord, including a reference to Iron Maiden, earlier on in the chapter when discussing Venom. By way of reminder, my argument stated that the Aeolian Trichord is an often-used harmonic or power-chord sequence used in rock and metal. It is formed from the upper three notes of the Aeolian mode or, in Western harmonic terms, ♭VI-♭VII-I. My argument also

[16] During the 1990s Metallica, although maintaining elements from their earlier style, developed a more mainstream rock sound that included the espousal of blue notes and blues scales.

stated that although this sequence is not specifically one confined to heavy metal, its heavy metal context is significant.

Black Sabbath were the first to use the Aeolian Trichord within the context of heavy metal when it made a brief but significant appearance in 'Paranoid' (1970). In this song this sequence is combined with power-chords (as opposed to harmonised chords, for example, the Am-G-F of the rock section to 'Stairway to Heaven' [1972] by Led Zeppelin or the F-G-Am of the middle section to 'Wishing Well' [1973] by Free), down-tuned guitars (in live performance), and is part of a wider Aeolian syntax. The plaintive nature of this chord sequence, with its whole tone construction, conveys a vagueness that fits well with the theme of paranoia contained within the lyrics.

This plaintive and ethereal quality, born out of the synthesis of power-chords (with their medieval overtones, and lack of 3rds), whole tones and Aeolian syntax has been exploited by much of heavy metal as it provides a satisfactory musical embellishment for the 'other-worldly' nature of its aesthetic. For example, Arch Enemy have utilised this device on many occasions. 'Enemy Within' (*Wages of Sin* [2002]) has a main theme based on an Aeolian Trichord blended with down-tuned guitars, twin-lead harmonies and double-kicks. Similarly, 'Enter the Machine' (*Doomsday Machine* [2005]) utilises the same but at a slower tempo and without the double-kicks. 'Heart of Darkness' (*Wages of Sin* [2002]) develops the sequence by the addition of a chromatic link between two of the chords (B-A-A♭-G-A-B). Again, there are twin-harmonies in the guitar parts and the pace and sequence are reminiscent of Black Sabbath (for example, the central theme to 'Snowblind' [1972]).

Lacuna Coil also seem to draw on similar Sabbathian syntax in 'Swamped' (*Comalies* [2002]). For example, the Aeolian Trichord, featured between verse and chorus, is reminiscent of 'Paranoid', the chorus features E power-chords and a flat 2nd, Phrygian inflexion whilst the verse uses very similar Mixolydian figures as those used by Tony Iommi in 'War Pigs' (1970) (discussed in Chapter 2). Iron Maiden's development of such devices is succinctly exemplified in 'The Trooper' from their 1983 album *Piece of Mind*.

The frenetic opening of 'The Trooper' features an Aeolian riff in E. The guitars start in unison then split to 3rds to create a sense of build and power and this technique is reminiscent of Thin Lizzy (for example, 'Don't Believe a Word' [1976]). The second part of the opening/intro forms the main guitar hook of the number and again it features twin-guitar harmonies. Whereas in the first part of the intro the guitar harmonies were based simply on 3rds, here they are a little more harmonically contrived and work in tandem with the chord sequence (played by the bass and double-tracked rhythm guitar) which is a cyclic Aeolian Trichord.

The Aeolian Trichord here appears in its pure form E-D-C-D-E. The twin-harmony guitar figure is itself Aeolian-based and remains static as the chord sequence shifts, giving an overall effect of oblique motion. Again, Iron Maiden seem to be drawing on the work of Thin Lizzy (for example, 'Waiting for an Alibi' [1979]). The vocals of both verse and chorus are based on the Aeolian mode and the Aeolian Trichord structure that underpins the main guitar hook is also used as

the basis for the verse (the first verse is in stop time) whilst the oscillating D and E power-chords of the chorus provide a simple backdrop for the Aeolian chant in the vocal part.

The guitar solos in the central section of the work represent the way in which Iron Maiden frequently developed the Aeolian Trichord figure by variation. The first solo is based on the power-chord pattern E-D-B-C-D-E (I-♭VII-V-♭VI-♭VII-I). The opening of this section leads the listener to anticipate a standard Aeolian Trichord pattern, which would be, in this case, E-D-C-D-E (I-♭VII-♭VI-♭VII-I) but springs a surprise by substituting a B (V) for the expected C (♭VI) before a standard conclusion to the sequence The second solo abruptly modulates to A but follows an exact transposition of the preceding sequence, (giving A-G-E-F-G-A).

The aesthetic world of Iron Maiden also seems to follow, in outline, Black Sabbath's anti-patriarchal, non-conformist and polemical statements. 'The Trooper', for example, is a more pragmatic example of the anti-war sentiments found within Black Sabbath's 'War Pigs' (1970) or 'Electric Funeral' (1970). Iron Maiden's frequent excursions into the realms of biblical Satanism are also a clear sign of Black Sabbath's influence and are evident in such songs as 'Number of the Beast' (1982).

Summary

The NWOBHM bands studied in this chapter recognised in the work of Black Sabbath not only a unique set of musical and aesthetic codes, but also the potential to build and expand those conceptual devices. From this point of view, the work of those bands may be seen to represent a second evolutionary stage in heavy metal marked by a conflation of Sabbathian and NWOBHM concepts. This is entirely significant in that heavy metal from the early 1980s onwards is marked by a re-alignment of that same conflation of elements (as initiated by the NWOBHM) into a more defined model (in the work of, for example, Slayer, Metallica). In this respect, the 1980s saw a crystallising of the heavy metal genre based on a specific homology of musical and aesthetic terms.

Musically, the NWOBHM bands were important in magnifying the angry performative styles and devices initiated by Black Sabbath (such as fierce drumming and loud power-chord sequences) through their contribution of such techniques and devices as rabid vocalisations, frenetic tempos and new drum patterns (such as double-kicks). The NWOBHM bands, therefore, not only recognised the rabid power of Black Sabbath's musical syntax to express their anti-Christian and anti-war themes, they also found new ways of increasing the intensity of that rage. Thus the early rabid vocals of Venom and Motörhead combined with speed and musical aggression (trem-picking, blast-beats and double-kicks), together with the rhetorical devices, arrangements and twin-guitar harmonies of Judas Priest and Iron Maiden, provided a whole new set of syntactical devices and techniques that married with those established by Black Sabbath.

The importance of the NWOBHM bands, therefore, was highly significant, not only in musical terms, but also in the continued promotion of the contextualised anti-patriarchal aesthetic established by Black Sabbath. For example, the anti-patriarchal sentiments found in the lyrics of Black Sabbath are embraced in the work of Judas Priest and Iron Maiden where anti-Christian and anti-war posturing remains dominant. Such themes, when merged with the musical syntax, have formed the distinct context of metal from the NWOBHM onwards.

This unique blending of syntax and aesthetic is illustrated in a number by Arch Enemy called 'We Will Rise' (2003). In 2004 Arch Enemy released an EP called *Dead Eyes See No Future*, on which they included a live performance, recorded in Paris, of 'We Will Rise'. Angela Gossow, Arch Enemy's vocalist, announced the song by telling the audience, '… the next one is for you; it is about you, it is called We-Will-Fucking-Rise'. By aligning the song with the French Revolution[17] Gossow gives a clear indication of the intent of the song (and the whole aesthetic of Arch Enemy). Musically, the number is constructed from a collective set of techniques, devices and stylisations that have their roots in Black Sabbath and NWOBHM. For example, there is prominent use of the Phrygian mode, and flat 2nd intervals (Black Sabbath and NWOBHM), double-kicks and trem-picking (Venom and Judas Priest), down-tuned guitars (Black Sabbath and Venom), sequences of power-chords (Black Sabbath and NWOBHM) and death growls (initiated in the rabid vocals of Motörhead and Venom).[18]

This chapter, then, has been an interesting and enlightening journey that started out with the intention of making connections between Black Sabbath and the generic forms that they initiated, with the seemingly (and arguably) most important bands (in retrospect) who followed in their wake. Whilst neither Motörhead, Venom, Diamond Head, Judas Priest nor Iron Maiden were in complete imitation of Black Sabbath's syntax and aesthetic, they all developed some musical aspect of Black Sabbath's design and all of them, in some way, amplified the anti-patriarchal rage initiated by Sabbath. This is found in both lyrical and musical codes such as rabid vocalisations, frenetic pace, and double-kicks and early forms of the blast-beat.

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[17] The French Revolution was widely seen as a major turning point in continental European history, from the age of absolutism to that of the citizenry, and even of the masses, as the dominant political force. The slogan 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity', that became the inspiration and driving force for the French Revolution, is highly relevant to the philosophies that drive the heavy metal aesthetic. The absolutism of the French monarchy has certain parallels with the patriarchal hegemony of state, religion, law, the military and so forth, perceived by many of the early heavy metal musicians as constraining their life options. Also, heavy metal, arguably, promotes equality on a number of levels. For example, in the representational images of fraternity ('Can I Play with Madness', Iron Maiden [1988], for example) and a male/female solidarity which is evident in both song lyrics ('Symptom of the Universe', Black Sabbath [1975], for example) and in band line ups (Arch Enemy, Lacuna Coil, Nightwish, Cradle of Filth, for example).

[18] It was another Birmingham band, Napalm Death, who fully developed this technique.

Additionally, whilst Venom and Motörhead steered heavy metal into new levels of raw and base aggression, Judas Priest, Diamond Head and Iron Maiden developed a more polished rhetoric in guitar techniques and structuring, all of which provided the raw material for the maturing process that has marked the 1980s to the present day.

Chapter 5
Assimilation and Stability

This final chapter seeks to highlight the ubiquity and perpetuation of the coding established in the works of Black Sabbath and the NWOBHM which has become the core of heavy metal syntax. Evidence is presented by reference to representative tracks from a cross-section of metal bands and also a small number of minor case studies. I have combined these illustrations with brief references to earlier discussions in order to (1) amplify my arguments, (2) more fully illustrate connections with earlier developments, and (3) briefly summarise the salient points of the research.

Earlier chapters highlighted the way in which Black Sabbath, by 1969, had devised a distinct and unique sound that was based on not only key intervals, modal lines and episodic structures but, significantly, angry performative styles and techniques that included riffs based on sequences of 5th/power-chords and down-tuned guitars. Having discovered the rich sonority of this new timbre, Tony Iommi soon began to experiment with radical down-tunings, moving on increasingly from the initial E♭ tuning of their early live gigs to even darker sounding metal. By the third album, *Master of Reality* (1971), Sabbath were tuning their guitars three semitones lower than standard pitch to C♯. This was highly significant and exemplified in tracks such as 'Children of the Grave', 'Lord of This World' and 'Into the Void' (all 1971). *Vol 4* (1972) sees Iommi beginning to use idiomatic chord shapes normally constructed from other open string roots such as A but with the C♯ tuning, producing an original timbre rooted in F♯ (for example, 'Wheels of Confusion'). By 1973 (*Sabbath Bloody Sabbath*) Iommi had taken the concept one step further by lowering the sixth string by one tone, when in C♯, to give the lowest note as B (for example, 'Killing Yourself to Live'). This was a highly significant moment as it set the precedent for much modern metal.

In fact, a survey of some of the common tunings used by modern metal bands reveals the ubiquitous influence of those early developments by Black Sabbath. The following list is representative of the various factions of metal and is given only as an indication of that ubiquity: Napalm Death – C♯ standard, System of a Down – C standard and dropped C, Arch Enemy – mostly C standard and some B tunings, Machine Head – dropped C, B standard and dropped B, Linkin Park – mostly C♯ standard and dropped C♯ and some E♭ standard, Sepultura – B standard and dropped B, Carcass – dropped C and B standard, At the Gates – dropped C, Rammstein – C, C♯ and E♭ standard, Killswitch Engage – dropped C, Chimera – dropped C, Slayer – E♭ standard, Slipknot – B, C and C♯ standard, Pantera – (some) dropped D.

Black Sabbath's adoption and manipulation of specific intervals was of equal importance in moulding a musical syntax to enhance and mirror the Satanic/Gothic image of Butler's lyrics. The combining of angry performative techniques with such intervals, arguably, contributed significantly to their objective of 'scaring the whole planet with music'. Of particular importance were the tritone and flat 2nd.

Black Sabbath initiated this process when they featured an unresolved tritone as the main riff to 'Black Sabbath' (the first track on their debut album *Black Sabbath* [1970]) where both the ostinato repetitions of this interval and subject matter leave the listener in no doubt about the musical and lyrical intentions of the band. The early Satanic connotations of this interval, as used in 'Black Sabbath', is balanced by a more conservative approach in 1975's 'Symptom of the Universe', in which the tritone is representative of the tense and mystical world where those suffering under the fear of a futuristic 'electrifying enemy' find hope in the pre-Christian Wiccan world of 'Mother Moon, [who's] calling me back to her silver womb'. A more prominent association with war is found in 'Children of the Grave' (1971).

It is important not to underestimate the importance of this interval to the syntax of heavy metal riffing. Heavy metal bands across all decades have adopted the tritone as a key element in the structuring of riffs and in so doing have contributed to the establishment of heavy metal coding by the perpetuation of its appearance. Only wider listening can fully illustrate this but the following examples (of songs that contain significant use of an unresolved tritone) indicate something of that ubiquity: Slayer – 'Epidemic' (1986), 'Killing Fields' and 'Divine Intervention' (1994), Metallica – 'The Frayed Ends of Sanity' (1988), Napalm Death – 'Deceiver' (1987), Celtic Frost – 'Dethroned Emperor' (1984), Linkin Park – 'Lying from You' (2003) and 'One Step Closer' (2000), Nightwish – 'The Pharaoh Sails to Orion' (1998), 'Bless This Child' (2002) and 'Slaying the Dreamer' (2002), Lamb of God – 'Remorse Is for the Dead', 'Ashes of the Wake' (2004) and 'Ruin' (2003), the Haunted – 'Abysmal', 'Liquid Burns' and 'My Shadow' (2004), Cradle of Filth – 'The Promise of Fever' (2003) and 'Filthy Little Secret' (2004), Machine Head – 'Davidian', 'Old' and 'A Thousand Lies' (all 1994), 'Ten Ton Hammer' (1997) and 'Imperium' (2003), Carcass – 'Embodiment' (1993) and 'Polarized' (1996), Arch Enemy – 'My Apocalypse' and 'Out for Blood' (central riff) (both 2005), Megadeth – 'Take No Prisoners' (1990), Bolt Thrower – 'Cenotaph' (central riff) (1991), Chimera – 'Pictures in the Gold Room' (2003), Lacuna Coil – '1.19' (heard in the riff voicing) (2001) and At the Gates – 'Nausea' (1995).

In the same way, the flat 2nd has been consistently adopted by heavy metal bands as a key element in the writing of guitar riffs to become a major signifier of heavy metal syntax. This interval, like the tritone, is also important to the syntax of heavy metal riff writing where tritones and other leaps are followed by flat 2nds in the creation of a distinct form of angular riff construction found in many factions of metal from Black Sabbath to Lamb of God. Significantly, the heavy metal adoption of this interval is also frequently strongly associated with the Phrygian mode where the flat 2nd forms the first two notes of the mode. Therefore, the flat

2nd frequently gives the impression of a Phrygian inflexion whenever it is utilised within the phrase structure of a riff.

The established associations of the flat 2nd as a tension builder, like the tritone, was exploited by Black Sabbath in the merging of Gothic imagery with musical sound. Furthermore, the development of the flat 2nd as a major building block in heavy metal is one that has been perpetuated and extensively explored by subsequent metal bands of all decades. Whilst earlier discussions noted the work of Venom and Metallica, it is clear that throughout the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s, combinations of flat 2nds, within the context of down-tuning, sequences of power-chords and so on remain an important feature of the heavy metal syntax and the evidence to support this is substantial.

Below I have listed several examples of numbers that contain significant use of the flat 2nd. This list, again, is provided as an indication of the ubiquity of this vital building block. Although examples abound throughout the whole repertoire of the heavy metal genre, illustrations here refer to the bands most frequently exemplified in this book: Nightwish – 'Slaying the Dreamer' (2002), Cradle of Filth – 'Gilded Cunt' and 'Nemesis' (2004), Lamb of God – 'One Gun' (2004) and 'Blood Junkie' (central riff) (2003), Trivium – 'Rain' and 'Pull Harder on the Strings of Your Martyr' (both 2005), the Haunted – 'Liquid Burns' (2004), System of a Down – 'This Cocaine Makes Me Feel Like I'm on this Song' (2005), Linkin Park – 'Points of Authority' (2000), Arch Enemy – 'Heart of Darkness' (2002), Machine Head – 'Ten Ton Hammer' (1997) and 'Davidian' (1994), Napalm Death – 'Scum' (1987), Chimera – 'Implements of Destruction' (2003), Sepultura – 'Roots Bloody Roots' (1996), Carcass – 'Heartwork' and 'Embodiment' (both 1993) and 'Corporal Jigsore Quandary' (1991), Slayer – 'Angel of Death' (1986), 'Fictional Reality' and 'Dittohead' (both 1994), Megadeth – 'Symphony of Destruction' (1992).

The development of riffs based on combinations of tritones and flat 2nds in the hands of Black Sabbath not only inform the construction of riffs from sequences of power-chords, but also the complex monophonic riff writing that has become an important feature in heavy metal syntax. Metallica's 'Master of Puppets' has already been cited, but other examples include: Slayer – 'Altar of Sacrifice' (central section) (1986), Megadeth – 'Take no Prisoners' (1990), the Haunted – 'Liquid Burns' (2004), Lamb of God – 'Now You've Got Something to Die For' (2004) and Arch Enemy – 'Silent Wars' (2003).

A further marker of the heavy metal syntax, highlighted in earlier discussions, is the use of modes. Where rock and hard rock bands have maintained clear links with the blues and rock and roll through frequent use of devices derived from the blues scale, heavy metal, post Black Sabbath, privileges the use of modes in both melodic and riff constructions. Black Sabbath initiated this trend by largely abstaining from the standard use of blues devices and pentatonic major scales. Instead, they frequently utilised modes and the pentatonic minor in its pure form in both riff writing and soloing. This included frequent use of the Aeolian mode, occasional (albeit significant) use of the Dorian and Mixolydian mode, and whilst

the Phrygian mode was not used, the emphasis on the flat 2nd interval (being the first two degrees of the Phrygian mode) used in many Sabbath numbers provided more than a hint of that mode and arguably led to its extensive use by later metal bands.

The way in which Black Sabbath toyed with the flat 2nd and Aeolian lines was highly significant in pointing the way towards a style of riff writing that freely juxtaposes various modes. For example, 'Enter Sandman' (1991) by Metallica combines various riffs all originally suggested in the work of Black Sabbath. The main hook features a tritone figure followed by an Aeolian power-chord riff, whilst the verse riff combines the same Aeolian power-chord figure with a flat 2nd Phrygian inflexion. 'Dead Eyes See No Future' (2004) by Arch Enemy begins with fast moving flat 2nd figures and Phrygian mode riffs which are balanced against the Dorian mode guitar hook of the 'dead eyes see no future' section.

The use of modes, particularly the Phrygian mode, in riff writing becomes a vital feature of the heavy metal syntax. For example, 'Silent Wars' (2003) by Arch Enemy has an opening Phrygian riff that leads to a chromatic bridge. The initial riff returns for the vocals and this is followed by theme 2 which has sustained power-chords. This has an angular shape that covers over an octave of the Phrygian mode passing through a flattened 5th on the way to create a tritone within the Phrygian whole.

'Dark Chest of Wonders' (2004) by Nightwish features a constant shift of contrasting modes that is typical of their style (which is discussed in further detail later in this chapter). The opening Phrygian mode guitar riff is both idiomatic and grounded in extreme metal stylisations such as down-tuned guitars and angular intervals. Other sections within the same number contrast orchestral keyboard sounds and operatic vocal timbres with Aeolian and Mixolydian figures. In fact, it would appear that the multi-sectional work of heavy metal relies on the shifting of modal centres and types to maintain colour and contrast.

Furthermore, episodic structuring in itself has become an important aspect of heavy metal coding and, once again, this concept was founded in the work of Black Sabbath. From the outset Black Sabbath established pseudo-orchestral arrangements as the framework around which they organised and presented their contrasting and shifting themes. Those themes, as discussed earlier, were designed to be theatrical and give musical colour to their anti-Christian and anti-hegemonic lyrics. For example, the tritone ostinato figure of 'Black Sabbath' is followed by a second section that completely contrasts with the ponderous, doom-laden first section.

This was a highly significant track in that it broke with the verse/chorus and 12-bar conventions of most other rock and pop music of the 1950s and 60s. Furthermore, this concept was not a one off peculiarity, it became a standard method of structuring numbers in heavy metal. Black Sabbath themselves were to develop and radically extend this concept; 'War Pigs' (1970), for example (as discussed in Chapter 2), is highly programmatic and contains as many as nine

contrasting themes. Those themes feature both instrumental and vocal sections and a variety of riffs and modes.

Whilst Black Sabbath were not the first to utilise multi-sectional forms of structuring (for example, 1960s progressive rock), they nevertheless seemed to provide a new context for such as a means to convey the drama and theatre suggested in their Gothic and anti-war aesthetic, and also one that could accommodate the dramatic mood changes demanded by the text and syntax of their themes. It is easy to trace the significant influence of Black Sabbath in this respect. For example, evidence abounds across the spectrum of heavy metal and a number of key examples are included below.

So, whereas there are exceptions to the extended structures and programmatic writing of heavy metal (the verse/chorus/middle 8 structures of much nu metal and the short blasts of white noise found in early, experimental grindcore, both discussed earlier), most forms of metal do use such arrangements as the normal template for structuring music. The work of Black Sabbath, in this respect, is first developed in the New Wave of British Heavy Metal. Judas Priest[1] and Iron Maiden not only maintained aspects of extended structuring but also adopted and incorporated classical and rhetorical devices into their writing such as twin-guitar harmonies and pseudo-operatic vocals. The vocal dexterity and range of Rob Halford, for example, provided a new means of expressing the drama of heavy metal's themes and so contributed to the development of programmatic writing and virtuoso performance in heavy metal.

Where Judas Priest and Iron Maiden developed heavy metal through new levels of complex structuring and the use of rhetorical devices, Venom used the multi-sectional format to amplify the Gothic horror and theatrical sound of Black Sabbath and this is exemplified in 'Countess Bathory' (1982). 'Countess Bathory' is based on a well-known, partly factual, partly mythological, sixteenth-century story about Elizabeth Bathory, a Hungarian serial killer, who purportedly bathed in the blood of virgin girls. The three main themes strongly contrast and mirror the Gothic drama of the story and are represented musically by a syntax constructed from Sabbathian devices such as tritones, flat 2nd and modal riffs.

The structural and programmatic legacy of Black Sabbath continues through the following decades up until the present day. Metallica (for example, 'Master of Puppets' [1986]) and Machine Head (for example, 'Imperium' [2003]) represent the way in which the mainstream of heavy metal has maintained the importance of multi-sectional structuring and strongly contrasting programmatic elements. Other bands have magnified the drama within those structures.

For example, Cradle of Filth have established a tradition of producing thematically based albums that are Gothic and dark in the extreme. Their image

[1] It should be noted, as discussed in Chapter 4, that Judas Priest developed a more mainstream rock sound around 1979 marked by such anthemic singles as 'Take on the World' and 'Evening Star' (both 1979).

(leather, studs, spikes, New Rock boots[2] and corpse paint) reflects this same extreme Gothic aesthetic, and musically the drama is created by a mix of virtuosic techniques such as double-kicks, blast-beats, trem-picked riffs and an extensive range of vocal techniques employed by Dani (Davey) Filth. These elements are merged with those established by Black Sabbath (that is, tritones, flat 2nds, angular intervals, down-tuned guitars, exclusive use of modes and so on) with the controlled use of Gothic keyboard timbres (for example, icy synth pads, orchestral timbre, heavily reverbed choral sounds). The latter keyboard timbres add an important element of mystery and other-worldliness to the syntax. Further contrasts in the work of Cradle of Filth are established by the inclusion of traditionally sung female vocals for certain sections of their numbers (for example, 'Nymphetamine' [2004] sung by Leaves' Eyes' Liv Kristina).

A representative example of Cradle of Filth's output is found in *Cruelty and the Beast* (1998). The album as a whole divides into sections and tells the story of Elizabeth Bathory in fine detail through a musical representation that is highly programmatic. Part VIII, 'Bathory Aria', is divided into sub-sections, 'Benighted Like Usher', 'A Murder of Ravens in Fugue' and 'Eyes that Witnessed Madness'. These sub-sections demonstrate a plethora of extreme metal techniques that contribute to the ever-changing mood and programmatic detail.

Other bands, such as Nightwish, have sought to build on the pseudo-orchestral work of Black Sabbath and Judas Priest by developing a style that may be termed 'symphonic metal'. This label seems to make sense in a number of ways. For example, the pseudo-orchestral and multi-sectional structures established by Black Sabbath are merged with dominant orchestral and keyboard sounds that are similar to those heard in Cradle of Filth. Their original choice of Tarja Turunen,[3] a trained classical singer, as vocalist, builds on the ersatz classical vocals of Robert Halford by introducing a true operatic voice into heavy metal. When all of these elements are combined with the musical syntax and drama of Black Sabbath, Nightwish display their very unique sound world.

For example, 'Stargazers' (1998) has sections that contain orchestral sounds from the keyboard, angular intervals, twin-sequenced instrumental harmonies, sequenced power-chords, double-kicks and operatic vocals, all of which are testament to the founding importance of Black Sabbath and Judas Priest. 'The Pharaoh Sails to Orion' (1998) clearly pays homage to the atmospheric opening of Black Sabbath's 'Black Sabbath' (1970): the tolling bell and slow paced tritone of the opening develops into a frenetic-paced metal extravaganza featuring double-kicks, (further) tritones, angular intervals and sequences of power-chords. The changes of metre contribute to the tense atmosphere of the music whilst the deep

[2] New Rock are a Spanish alternative shoe and clothing manufacturer. New Rock boots are notable for their extremely thick rubber soles, metal spikes, skull adorned buckles and flames, and so on. The brand is widely associated with the metal and Goth communities.

[3] Turunen was sacked by the band in 2005 to be replaced in 2007 by Anette Olzon. Turunen was the current vocalist when originally writing this chapter.

Gothic chants of the male voice contrast vividly with the alternating operatic vocals of Turunen.

There has been a tendency in modern metal, developed by bands such as Fear Factory, Machine Head and Trivium, to highlight the mood changes from one section to another by stark contrasts in vocal timbre where death growls and screams suddenly change to traditional singing. This appears to be a new way in which metal bands are attempting to combine mainstream and extreme metal techniques. Examples are found in 'Pull Harder on the Strings of Your Martyr' (2005) by Trivium and 'Breath Life' (2004) by Killswitch Engage.

The importance of the NWOBHM bands to such developments was also crucial in bringing about new, technological transformations to the central codes of heavy metal. It is significant that the bands at the centre of those developments, Judas Priest, Venom, Iron Maiden, Motörhead, Diamond Head, were, like Black Sabbath, from working-class, industrial areas of the country who clearly empathised with the anti-Christian/anti-patriarchal backlash embodied in the music and aesthetic of Black Sabbath. The same narrow life options that drove Black Sabbath to develop angry performative styles of music and lyrics that combine to censure the hegemony imposed by state and church, seemed to similarly drive the aesthetics of the NWOBHM.

The NWOBHM bands, then, who shared that same background and disposition, found more ferocious ways of expressing those sentiments, not least through their development of new percussive devices such as double-kicks and rapid back-beats (significant in being a precursor to the blast-beat). The trem-picking technique, associated with extreme metal, works in tandem with those drumming techniques and represents a more aggressive style of guitar playing. Additionally, rabid vocalisations were introduced as new and relevant ways of expressing the rage contained within the lyrical themes.

This sense of aggression allied to musical techniques is also evident in Venom, Motörhead and Judas Priest. Earlier discussions highlighted tracks such as 'Dissident Aggressor' (1977) by Judas Priest, 'Overkill' (1979) by Motörhead and 'Black Metal' (1982) by Venom, as representing major developments in double-kicks. Building on the work of Deep Purple and Nazareth, these three bands brought new levels of not only aggression but also technical polish to this practice, culminating in innovative levels of technical accomplishment as most factions of metal embraced double-kicks as a central feature of their sound. Examples abound in the work of bands such as Arch Enemy, Lamb of God, Chimera, Cradle of Filth, Trivium, Slayer and Machine Head. Double-kick work in bands such Nightwish, Metallica and Lacuna Coil (for example) is not as ubiquitous but still rely on this technique as a major element of their sound.

An equally important drum technique that has extensively informed the work of heavy metal is the blast-beat. Both Motörhead and Judas Priest pushed the speed of the standard rock back-beat to new levels of tempo and laid the foundation, during the late 1970s, for the emergence of the blast-beat at the hands of bands such as Slayer and Metallica. The blast-beat evolved as a new means of intensifying

the angry performative practice initiated by Black Sabbath. Examples, in addition to those given in Chapter 4, may be heard in the work of Dark Tranquillity – 'The New Build' (2005), Lamb of God – 'Blood of the Scribe' (2004), the Haunted – 'Liquid Burns' (2004), Arch Enemy – 'Bury Me an Angel' (1996), System of a Down – 'Jet Pilot' (2001), Cradle of Filth – 'The Promise of Fever' (2003), Napalm Death – 'Deceiver' (1987), Trivium – 'Departure' (2005), Slayer – 'Sex, Murder, Art' (1994) and Chimera – 'Overlooked' (2003).

The development of double-kicks and blast-beats has broadened the concept initiated by Walser (1993: 57–107) where he discusses, in Chapter 3 of *Running with the Devil*, heavy metal appropriations of classical virtuosity. Walser's discussion of this topic highlights the way in which heavy metal guitarists, starting with Eddie Van Halen, developed new virtuosic performative techniques that became subsumed within the heavy metal genre. In fact, the drumming techniques introduced by Judas Priest, Motörhead and Venom have become, arguably, much more ubiquitous to heavy metal than virtuoso guitar solos. Furthermore, the virtuoso guitar in heavy metal is not simply confined to soloing, from Metallica onwards I suggest that both trem-picking and the complexity of the riffs themselves represent new forms of guitar virtuosity which have equalled the importance of the improvised solo within the world of heavy metal.

In fact, I would argue that the improvised guitar solo has almost become superfluous to heavy metal. Whereas virtuosic soloing remains important to bands such as Arch Enemy and Trivium, it is the timbre, syntax and aesthetic that remain as the core elements of their sound. Bands such as System of a Down, Cradle of Filth and Machine Head are testament to the unessential nature of virtuosic solos to metal; here the same syntax that marks the core sound of, for example, Arch Enemy clearly identifies those bands (for example) as belonging to the heavy metal genre with only minimal or no soloing. This is not the case with complex riff writing and high-speed drumming techniques however. Black metal (for example, Dimmu Borgir, Immortal and Cradle of Filth), death metal (for example, Arch Enemy, Bolt Thrower and Lamb of God) and the various factions of mainstream metal (for example, Machine Head, System of a Down and Trivium) all depend upon double-kicks and blast-beats. In fact, a hypothetical removal of all bands that now use these extreme drumming techniques would result in a very sparse heavy metal population.

Additionally, Walser suggests in his chapter that heavy metal musicians/composers find inspiration in classical music beyond that of virtuosic showmanship, noting specifically such things as semiotics, virtuosity, theory and prestige (1993: 59). The influence of classical music extends also to the legacy of Black Sabbath's pseudo-orchestral structuring. As discussed earlier, this phenomenon has influenced the work of many subsequent metal bands, underlining the extent to which heavy metal has assumed this practice. Here, the highly contrasting episodic structural forms frequently employed by classical composers have become a dominant feature of heavy metal. In my earlier discussion I highlighted the work of Cradle of Filth and Trivium (amongst others) and in order to further illustrate this point

I offer two more examples from these bands. From these illustrations, I hope to suggest the much wider relevance and influence of classical music, which extends beyond the rhetoric and harmonic sequencing illustrated by Walser.

The musical drama and vocal dialogue of Cradle of Filth, for example, resemble classical opera where the music is dramatised to fit a story line. 'Nymphetamine' (2004) illustrates well the way in which vocalist Dani Filth uses a variety of vocal timbres to create widely contrasting moods to fit the lyrics. This is mirrored musically by equally contrasting instrumental parts where tempo, metre, riffs and drumming techniques play with contrasting emphases of keyboard and guitars. This is similar to the techniques used in many Romantic operas where the dialogue constantly shifts from character to character and musical devices, such as key and tempo changes, rhythmic and melodic variation, develop along with the changing mood of the plot and characters (for example, *Rigoletto* by Verdi [1851]). The difference with 'Nymphetamine', and Cradle of Filth generally, is that Dani Filth alone creates all of the contrasting (pseudo) characters by moving from death growls to banshee wails and many other timbres between those two extremes. Additionally, a further variety of vocal timbre is achieved by the inclusion of a female vocalist.

Additionally, the overarching A-B-A framework of 'Nymphetamine' is also of significance in having certain connections with the way in which Romantic composers exploited ternary form as a vehicle with which they could play with extremes of contrast. The basic principle, in this context, is the creation of contrasting moods between the A and B themes followed by a return of the A theme. This was particularly popular with composers of piano miniatures from the Romantic period. For example, Grieg's 'Waltz in G' from *New Lyric Pieces Op. 38* (1883) has highly contrasting sections. The *poco allegro* of the A theme (bars 1–16) features a mournful Aeolian melody, whilst the *presto* of the B theme expresses a more flighty sensibility which is enhanced by the use of chromaticism and cross rhythms.

The same principle is also found in many orchestral works of the same period. For example, the second movement of Dvořák's *Symphony no. 9* (1893) features a plaintive cor anglais melody, slow tempo, wide intervals and overall gentle sound in the A section which contrasts vividly with the faster tempo and swirling string melodies of the B section before returning to a curtailed recapitulation of the A theme.

With 'Nymphetamine' the A section is sub-divided into episodes featuring all of the metal devices discussed above, constantly changing riffs and a wide variety of drumming techniques and vocal timbre. The B section too is sub-divided but has a slower tempo and softer approach enhanced by the mystical and melodic vocals of Liv Kristina. Here the ethereal female vocals play out a dialogue with the more restrained rabid vocals of Dani Filth whilst changes of tempo and counter melodies from the guitars add touches of contrapuntal complexity to the arrangement. Finally, there is a return to the A theme (albeit curtailed by the omission of some of the sub-themes).

A further example of classical structuring is found in the track 'Gunshot to the Head of Trepidation' (2005) by Trivium. Here, the music is framed by a binary form structure and within those two highly contrasting themes are sub-themes that progress by variational development. Although not in the same textbook format, such structuring and development is mildly redolent of the Baroque dances of Bach and Scarlatti where the binary form structure allowed the development of thematic and tonal variation to weave the dynamics of the piece.

'Gunshot to the Head of Trepidation' is build around an A section that features rabid vocals and episodes that are variants of the opening riff. This opening riff is first heard as a twin-guitar theme that is presented in slow sustained semibreve values. The second episode of the A theme (which returns numerous times in the manner of a rondo theme) utilises the same notation but with dotted crotched/quaver rhythms; the riff is punched out with double-kick fills from the kit. A third episode (that links with the first) is based, again, on twin-guitar harmonies but presented at a faster tempo. Here, an Aeolian Trichord, played by bass and guitar power-chords, pre-empts the thematic material of the B section. A fourth episode has fast-moving twin-guitar harmonies played against sustained semibreve note values and is related to the opening.

The B section is marked by an increase in tempo and a sudden switch to melodic vocals, thus creating a vivid contrast to the A section. The B section also features a power-chord driven Aeolian Trichord sequence with subsequent variations that alternate with other contrasting episodes. Variations include halving the back-beat values and playing the riff in a power-chord outline while the audience (at a live gig) chant 'hey' in time to the back-beat. A second episode features an extended guitar solo played over a two-part riff. The first part of this riff is Phrygian with a tail that is redolent of blues-rock, the second part is a chromatic figure that becomes a riff in its own right as the solo proceeds.

The rabid vocals of the A section in 'Gunshot to the Head of Trepidation' is indicative of the way in which the introduction of rabid vocalisations added new levels of baseness to the heavy metal palette. By the development of this technique, heavy metal vocalists were also now able to contribute to the angry performative techniques already established by guitarists and drummers. The resultant mix of rabid vocals, down-tuned and heavily distorted sequences of power-chords and high-speed drumming techniques created a new level of intensity with which heavy metal bands were able to fire the broadside of their anti-hegemonic messages.

From their origins in the pained monotone, punk-influenced vocals of Lemmy (Motörhead) and Cronos (Venom), rabid vocals transformed, eventually leaving behind any traces of melody or pitch but intensifying the anger and brutality of delivery. A natural part of the process in this transformation was the varied timbre that developed as it influenced and informed, by the 2000s, the work of most forms of metal.

The low tessitura death growls of Deicide's Glen Benton (for example, 'Conquered by Sodom' [2004]), are frequently exaggerated by the use of double-tracking some of which combines deep growls with high screams (for example,

'Fuck Your God' [2004]). The roots of low tessitura death growls remain unclear but could be related to Black Sabbath's use of the 'Iron Man' voice at the beginning of 'Iron Man' (1970) or even the voice of the possessed child 'Regan' in the horror film *The Exorcist* (1973). Certainly, UK Birmingham bands Napalm Death and Bolt Thrower, in the mid 1980s, appear to be the first to have extensively developed this technique.

Other metal bands such as Lamb of God (Southern States metal scene) favour a more mid-range approach that moves away from the redolent horror style of Benton and focuses instead on strained, tortured and venomous rap. Swedish death metal allows some shaping of the growls by undulation of the lines (for example, Arch Enemy 'Savage Messiah' [2002] and the Haunted 'Bloodletting' [2003]). Black metal band Cradle of Filth, as discussed earlier, use a wide range of rabid vocals from deep growls to high pitched shrieks in order to magnify the dramatics of their music.

There has been a sweeping move in recent years by a number of high-profile metal bands (as noted above) to develop a more eclectic style and mix rabid vocals with traditional singing. Notable bands who figured in the initiation of that process were System of a Down (for example, 'Prison Song' [2001]), Machine Head (for example, 'Imperium' [2003]) Trivium (for example, 'Gunshot to the Head of Trepidation' [2005]) and Opeth (for example, 'Demon of the Fall' [1998]).

The coding of modern metal therefore is a collage of syntactical devices and techniques formed from varying combinations and syntheses of those devices and techniques and can be identified as originating with either Black Sabbath or the NWOBHM bands featured in this discussion. For example, the track 'Imperium', mentioned above, from Machine Head's 2003 album *Through the Ashes of Empires*, is a heavyweight, multi-sectional number lasting just under seven minutes in duration. The episodic structuring of this piece has its origins in the work of Black Sabbath in numbers such as 'War Pigs' (1970), and the extreme complexities of inner detail within those episodes seem to have their roots in the works Iron Maiden (for example, 'Aces High' [1984]). The angry performative techniques (rabid vocals, double-kicks and so on) that dominate the number as a whole are clearly first heard in the work of Venom (for example, 'Black Metal' [1982]). The angular riffs of the second section, and triplet punches of the third section are clearly influenced by the work of Black Sabbath. Furthermore, the modal lines and frequent flat 2nds, down-tuned guitars and anti-hegemonic lyrics were the building blocks that Black Sabbath used to create their inimitable sound during the first half of the 1970s. Here, Machine Head bring their own unique style to these elements and refashion those building blocks into a modern edifice and yet it was Black Sabbath and the NWOBHM that fashioned the tools with which Machine Head and all other subsequent metal bands constructed the world of heavy metal as we have come to know it.

Machine Head, arguably, represent the mainstream in metal because their sound is one that balances an even mix of the core syntactical devices that have come to identify the heavy metal genre. With other forms, such as black metal, death metal,

thrash metal and nu metal, the process may be seen as somewhat mutational, although, the concept of variable coding may be a more relevant way of explaining variations in the genre. Here, the emphasising and privileging of some devices or events over others refines the sonic fingerprint. For example, all devices, that is, modal lines, down-tuned guitars, angular riffs, sequences of power-chords, high-speed drumming techniques, rabid vocals, are present but bands emphasise certain of those devices and play down others in the creation of sub-genre. At other times, new sounds are imported from the periphery such as keyboards (black metal), electronica (industrial metal), and orchestral timbre (symphonic metal) but the dominant sound remains that of metal due to the dominant presence of the key, core codes.

Whilst my analysis does not support Led Zeppelin as progenitors of heavy metal, I do not underestimate the importance of Led Zeppelin to the development of rock music. Their importance, I suggest, is two-fold; firstly, the way in which they re-moulded the blues into an aggressive form of blues-based rock (hard rock) and secondly, through the development of an eclectic repertoire (that reflected the members' various interests), they laid the foundation for the way that rock music as a whole would develop over the following decades. The influence of Led Zeppelin, therefore, in this respect, has been highly significant. For example, a significant number of bands across all decades have developed and maintained the hard rock coding founded by Led Zeppelin, bands whose style depends on the strategic inclusion of blues/rock and roll devices in their key compositions. The ubiquity of this style and the profusion of high profile names who have espoused blues-based hard rock is a reflection of the importance of Led Zeppelin.

AC/DC were one of the earliest and are one of the most enduring bands to have exemplified this genre. For example, key works such as 'High Voltage' and 'The Jack' (both 1976), 'Whole Lotta Rosie' (1977), 'Rock and Roll Ain't Noise Pollution' and 'Back in Black' (both 1980) utilise precisely the same combination of volume, blues/rock and roll devices and idiomatic keys as those found in the key works of Led Zeppelin. The following list of bands and songs is representative of the perpetuation of such blues based rock: Queen – 'Tie Your Mother Down' (1976) and 'Keep Yourself Alive' (1973), Bad Company – 'Can't Get Enough' (1974), Aerosmith – 'Dude Looks Like a Lady' (1987) and 'Walk This Way' (1975), Thunder – 'Stand Up' (1995), Guns n' Roses – 'Paradise City' (1987) and 'Welcome to the Jungle' (1987), Mötley Crüe – 'Girls, Girls, Girls' (1987), the White Stripes – 'Seven Nation Army' (2003), Velvet Revolver – 'Slither' (2004) and 'Sucker Train Blues' (2004), Rage against the Machine – 'Killing in the Name' (1992) and 'Bomb Track' (1992), Electric Six – 'Gay Bar' (2003) and Billy Idol – 'Scream' (2005), which is analysed below.

The October 2005 issue of *Classic Rock* magazine included a DVD celebrating the legacy and the best in current hard rock. The DVD included a copy of the latest release by Billy Idol, 'Scream' (2005), a number heavily coded with traditional hard rock devices. Such devices, which were significantly developed by Led Zeppelin during the period 1969–76, are given a 2005 makeover. For example, modern

production techniques and Idol's own personal stylisations seem to imbue the song with a certain amount of pop sentiment and thus represent the way I which hard rock has developed through mutational process. The traditional rock devices are heard in the opening guitar riff which is built from double-stopped, repeated upper string notes and feature a flat 5th blue note in its chromatic, blues context. This type of double-stopping figure is typical of the Chuck Berry stylisations adopted by Jimmy Page in Led Zeppelin (for example, 'Communication Breakdown' [1969]) and Angus Young in AC/DC (for example, 'Highway to Hell' [1979]). The attack of the riff is powerful and aligns the song with hard rock; the vocals feature pitch inflexions derived from blues repertoire (for example, the ambiguous major/minor 3rd play on the word 'scream') and the verse-chorus format is constructed around a linear harmony (main riffs are based on I, IV and ♭VII). Thus, the driving pulse, attack, linear riffs, harmonic simplicity and blues/rock and roll devices that give 'Scream' its character clearly hark back to key numbers from the early Led Zeppelin repertoire.

The blues or rock and roll devices heard in the other examples listed earlier vary in the extent to which they influence the work as a whole. For example, 'Tie Your Mother Down' (1976) by Queen is built almost entirely from such devices. The main riff is in standard tuning and the idiomatic key of A allows for the exploitation of conventional blues figuring. For example, there is a repetitive minor 3rd pull-off produced by pulling the fifth string 3rd fret to the open string and concluding on the octave A above (third string fret 2). The conclusion of this riff, after six repetitions, is based on a series of open string chords (G, D, C9 and G/B). The falling minor 3rd and major/minor ambiguity (heard in the juxtaposition of the minor 3rd of the riff and the major tonality of the chords) are typical of the blues. The emphasis on I, IV, V harmony and 12-bar riffs (that feature in both bridge and chorus) when coupled with the Chuck Berry-type double-stopping and blues bottle-neck work (heard in the solo), further heighten the overall hard rock impression.

However, other tracks reveal a mixture of influences where the blues/rock and roll devices that are central to the piece often need to be unpicked from other influences found within the same track. For example, in 'Walk This Way' (1975) by Aerosmith, the verse vocals are rapped over the main guitar hook which is based on the blues scale. In 'Dude Looks Like a Lady' (1987) by Aerosmith, the vocals have blues inflexions and the alternating tonic/subdominant chords use 12-bar riffs. The bluesness of the number, however, is weakened by the inclusion of 'brass stabs' (typically used by the horn section in a soul band) and these stabs form an important part of the main hook. In 'Paradise City' (1987) by Guns n' Roses, the heavily chorused, clean, open chords of the intro support the almost 'gospel sounding' vocal harmonies where flattened 7ths add a blues feel to the overall sound, thus forming a link with the main riff which is clearly based on the blues scale. In 'Killing in the Name' (1992) by Rage Against the Machine, the rabid vocals and dropped D distorted guitar riffs clearly resonate with heavy metal but the main guitar riff includes significant use of a transient 3rd and flattened 7th

making clear links with the blues and therefore generating a rather ambiguous style.

The ambiguity of style heard in 'Killing in the Name' is typical of Rage Against the Machine and stems from their position as an eclectic band who have freely borrowed from established and highly contrasting genres, that is, rap, funk, metal and blues rock. There have always been bands who have developed a unique identity in this way but Led Zeppelin were notable for the way in which they successfully blended and balanced their blues and hard rock developments with other forms of music. In this respect, they were not only highly significant to the development of rock music, but also, in so doing, reflect the distinction between rock and heavy metal which tends to be jealously exclusive.

Bands such as Foo Fighters reflect the wider rock influence of Led Zeppelin. For example, 'All My Life' (2002) has blues inflexions in the vocal part, a driving heavy rock sound, interplay between the tonic and minor 3rd in the main riff and even some rabid vocal moments. This contrasts sharply with the pop influenced 'Learn to Fly' (1999) which features melodic vocals, clean, chorused guitar chords and verse/chorus format. Whitesnake developed a similar approach during the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s. For example, 'Fool for Your Loving' (1980) is a hard rock number that mixes blues devices in both guitar and vocal lines but also includes the use of minor 7th chords. 'Still of the Night' (1987), with its repeated split octave figure and soaring blues vocals, is redolent of Led Zeppelin's 'Immigrant Song' (1970). These two Whitesnake numbers contrast sharply with their 1987 release 'Is This Love' where the chorused, ethereal guitar chords, slow tempo, gentle dynamic and pleading vocals imbue the song with the qualities of a ballad.

The precedent for establishing a rock-based eclectic style, therefore, was first heard in Led Zeppelin where numbers such as 'What Is and What Should Never Be' (1969) allowed Zeppelin to contrast, within a single song, various stylistic elements and yet still retain a sense of them being a rock band. This concept was enlarged in 1971's 'Stairway to Heaven' where the episodic structuring allowed for highly contrasting sections that range from the gentle recorder harmonies and picked 12-string guitar chords of the opening, through the moderate beat and minor 7th chords of the central sections, to the concluding driving rock episode. Not only did Zeppelin establish their rock identity through the merging of styles within individual numbers, they also freely indulged in varying the style of the individual numbers in their set. For example, folk and acoustic numbers were just as important to Led Zeppelin as were their blues and rock numbers. In fact, it should be remembered from my research, that 47 per cent of Zeppelin's output was folk/acoustic based (Chapter 2).

There is, therefore, strong evidence to support the argument that proposes a dichotomy between Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin when considering the musical syntax and repertoire of each band. This is highly significant when considering their distinct and unique contributions to the evolution of specific, ubiquitous and clear forms of music. One becomes heavy metal and is marked by down-tuned guitars,

sequences of power-chords, angular intervals, modes and episodic structures and this genre was initiated by Black Sabbath. The legacy of such is heard in the works of bands from Venom through Metallica to Cradle of Filth. The other, to which Led Zeppelin made a distinct and significant contribution, becomes hard rock and is marked by use of blues/rock and roll devices, melodic vocals, open, major/minor chords and standard tuned guitars. Their legacy is equally clear and evident in the work of bands from AC/DC to Velvet Revolver. Furthermore, Led Zeppelin enlarged the periphery of their work to allow for an eclectic repertoire and this too has been of enormous influence and evident in the works of bands such as Whitesnake, Foo Fighters and Aerosmith.

In addition to a comparative analysis of the music of Black Sabbath and Led Zeppelin, I also examined attendant issues such as the groups' social and philosophical influences and the extent to which these contributed towards their musical aesthetic. It was recognised that whilst the music (riff structures, use of modes, guitar styles and so on) was central to my research, genres are, as Fabbri observed, governed by socially accepted rules. The aesthetic set, therefore, of a given genre is also significant to an analysis of genre.

Academic discussions concerning the social, verbal and visual aspects of heavy metal and hard rock, as discussed earlier, seem to be shrouded in ambiguity. My own research, by contrast, has suggested more specific terms for the coding of heavy metal. For example, in Chapter 3 I analysed the thematic/aesthetic (lyrics, image and so on) trends that marked the work of Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath to see if there was a clear correlation between music and aesthetics that mirrored the musical dichotomy that had emerged during my research of the musical coding. What became clear is that such correlations did exist and, furthermore, those correlations have been perpetuated by subsequent inheritors of both genres and the recurrent nature of these aesthetic themes have, over time, become incorporated into the respective coding of heavy metal and hard rock.

In fact, my argument, in the main, aligns hard rock with the blues' central concerns of gender anxieties and misogyny and therefore buying into patriarchy. Heavy metal, however, is anti-patriarchal and, by implication, not concerned with the themes of gender anxiety that inform much of rock music's misogynistic frame.

Anti-patriarchal sentiment is pronounced in the work of Black Sabbath and expressed in a number of ways. Firstly, in its relation to Christian belief; God is presented as a male figure, God subsequently created man in his image and the woman was created as a helper for the man from one of Adam's ribs (according to the book of Genesis, Adam was the first man). The organisation of the church reflects this male-dominated hierarchy with church leaders being designated into pastoral leadership roles from the Pope to the parish priest and although this hierarchy has been challenged in recent years, the long tradition of male-centred control of religion has imbued the fabric of Western society with notions of male supremacy over the female.

This same patriarchal configuration aligns with a hierarchy that privileges the male sex of the educated classes. This is evident in the close coalition of state and religion in both the UK and the United States. For example, in the UK the monarch remains the head of the church and those males graduating from public school and traditional universities take up commanding positions in the defence organisations (army, air force, navy) that are maintained to protect the monarchy and the state. Thus patriarchy is seen to be at the helm of a hegemonic capitalist society that lords over the weak (the female and working classes).

Black Sabbath, arguably, established a lyrical form of dissent that was levelled at such hegemony and expressed through the same aggressive performative techniques and devices as identified earlier. The lyrical output found throughout their initial six albums centres on themes of (a) Satanism and the occult and (b) war, death and destruction. Thus, Black Sabbath's espousal of occult and Gothic centred themes allowed them the opportunity to create a musical form that both vented anger and challenged the state and religious authorities that operate the puppetry.

It should be remembered, however, that the criticism of hegemony found within the lyrics of Black Sabbath, and heavy metal in general, amounts to nothing more than 'posturing' and is rarely expressed through physical manifestations and transgressions of the law. The most cited aberrations in this respect surround the Norwegian black metal scene where infamous accounts of murder and church burnings are perceived by the outside world as representative of the evils of heavy metal music.[4]

The author Keith Kahn-Harris, a sociologist, has studied black metal to interrogate 'the failure of youth culture' (2004: 95–111); more specifically, why music such as black metal appears to be a violent censure of hegemony and yet never moves beyond the violence of the lyrics and performance techniques where there is a tendency to 'make practice mundane and uncontroversial as a way of disengaging from the extremity of texts produced within the scene'. According to Kahn-Harris, this is due to a 'measure of insulation' within the black metal scene, where members are able to play freely with a range of highly transgressive themes (p. 105).

Thus, the lyrics of black metal (and heavy metal generally) rather than being dangerous, allow a hypothetical removal from the social structure at the heart of that censure and as such provide a means for the survival of individual subjects within the complex and difficult world in which they exist (p. 96). Importantly, Kahn-Harris also reminds the reader that ultimately 'within extreme metal, *nothing* matters as much as the music' (p. 103) and therefore the lyrical themes of heavy

[4] There have been numerous suggestions that the infamous events cited were perpetrated by individuals who would have committed these crimes regardless of the music and that the black metal scene was adopted by these individuals as a means to justify the end (for example, the BBC 2 programme *Death Metal Murders*, broadcast on Thursday, 24 November 2005).

metal exist, as an integral part of the musical scheme and not as the propaganda of revolutionary evangelists.

Themes concerning the pointless horror and destruction of war merge with occult and anti-patriarchal topics to form the core thematic threads in heavy metal lyrics. Furthermore, the merging of such themes with the musical coding described earlier combines in a unique way to contribute to the distinct coding of the genre. The continued development of this unique homology of syntax and lyrics has become ubiquitous to heavy metal and is represented throughout the genre.

For example, criticism of war has continued to be central to heavy metal; in Chapter 3, examples were given from the work of Metallica ('One' [1988]) and Arch Enemy ('We Will Rise' [2003]) but many examples may be found to substantiate the argument. 'Symphony of Destruction' (1992) by Megadeth, for example, has anti-patriarchal lyrics aligned with a main riff that punches out constant flat 2nds. There are also Phrygian inflexions and chromatic figures. Lamb of God write and perform extreme metal with rabid vocals, angular riffs, down-tuned guitars, double-kicks, blast-beats and lyrics that are predominately anti-patriarchal and anti-war. In 'Now You've Got Something to Die For' (2004), for example, they align such extreme metal syntax and aggressive performance techniques with lyrics that vividly pour scorn on the perceived hypocrisy of American/Western leaders that sanction 'bombs to set the people free' and 'blood to feed the dollar tree'.

Machine Head, as previously discussed, represent the mainstream in metal, that is, musical syntax that is based on down-tuned guitars, angular riffs and Phrygian lines but with a mix of rabid and melodic vocals. Their lyrics deal with anti-patriarchy in a number of ways. For example, in 'Death Church' (1994) they criticise hypocrisy within the Christian church. The profanities of the lyrics are heightened by the use of a tritone in the main riff and the chorus also features the use of a repeated flat 2nd. The centrality of both tritone and flat 2nd within the musical syntax serve as a reminder of the importance of Black Sabbath from 1970 with numbers such as 'Black Sabbath' and 'The Wizard'.

The same combination of tritones and flat 2nds mark the syntax of other Machine Head songs such as 'A Nation on Fire' (1994), but here the lyrics deal with war games in a similar way to Black Sabbath's 'War Pigs' (1970) where generals play with the lives of the common man 'just like pawns in chess'. Similar sentiments and syntax are also combined in 'Imperium' (2003) where insurgence dominates the lyrical scheme and the 'middle finger' is raised in defiance of the (perceived) prejudices of governmental policies.

Themes of Satanism, occult practice and Gothic horror also continue to represent heavy metal's expression of anti-patriarchal sentiment. Here, there is less of an obvious political statement but, nevertheless, the acknowledgement of religious hypocrisy and the perceived, false vested interests of the state drive the

delivery of dark and aggressive music combined with offensive lyrics, a trend initiated by Black Sabbath.[5]

Although their studio album lyrics were never as graphic or extensive as their live sets, the wearing of black and crucifixes, combined with the obvious lyrical references to Satan and occult practice imbued Black Sabbath with a sense of darkness, mystery and other-worldliness. In this sense, the quasi-religious imagery that the band adopted at that time appeared as a pale reflection of the Satanist religion where Christian terminology and symbolism are adopted as a means of profanity. Two examples illustrated in Chapter 3 were from the tracks 'Black Sabbath' and 'War Pigs' (originally called 'Walpurgis') (both 1970).

Again, there are numerous examples to add to those illustrated earlier in this book, which are represented by the work of bands such as Slayer from the mid 1980s and Cradle of Filth in the present time. There is a clear sense that Black Sabbath shied away from the publicity aroused by their Satanic associations; this is evident in the fact that they had different sets of lyrics for their live sets than those that appeared on the albums. Additionally, the question of their occult-inspired early work remains a journalistic fascination and when directly probed about it (for example, *The Black Sabbath Story, Volume 1*, Sanctuary 2002), despite Satanic references in their early work being glaringly obvious, the members of Black Sabbath consistently deny any association.

Although Venom took Sabbath's often masked references to Satanism and the occult as the starting point for their flagrant adoption of such themes, they nevertheless remained somewhat juvenile in their approach. It was the work of Slayer, then, that seemed to be the natural inheritor of the style proposed by Black Sabbath and in tracks such as 'Hell Awaits' (1985), Slayer present more serious representations of such. Here, the lyrics glorify Satanic rule and the down-throwing of the Christian God using profane and quasi-religious language where Satan calls to 'crucify the so called Lord – he will soon fall to me' and that 'your God has fell to slave for me eternally'.

The mention of 'zombies' in the final verse of 'Hell Awaits' points toward an expansion of the classic Gothic horror themes first suggested by Black Sabbath. For example, in 'At Dawn They Sleep' (1985) the suggestion of vampires is clearly evident as the 'blood sucking creatures of the night' plague the streets in which they dwell with death. The lyrics are awash with the language of classic horror such as, 'apparitions from the pits of hell', 'nocturnal spectres', 'addiction to blood', 'demented lust', and so on.

The work of bands such as Cradle of Filth have developed a more esoteric approach to combining themes of Satanism, occult and the traditional horror movie. In 'Gabriel' (2004) Satan is represented in biblical terms as the serpent

[5] I acknowledge the work of Black Widow (formed 1969 in the East Midlands of the UK) whose first album and early live set was much more occult-centred than Black Sabbath. However, Black Widow did not embrace the identified syntax of Black Sabbath in any way. In fact, their musical style was much closer to the folk-rock syntax of Jethro Tull.

in the Garden of Eden but in a veiled and poetic way; for example, 'where once you darkened gardens, another coils there'. Such references are combined with suggestions of vampires in lines such as 'hilt your dripping fangs that range, skywards to rend apart'.

In 'English Fire' (2004), Cradle of Filth appear to combine the various strands of anti-patriarchal themes. The song seems to denounce the bloody legacy of the Christian church and celebrate the pre-Christian world of paganism. For example, the opening lines refer to seven seas, seven sins and seven brides; this is redolent of language in the Holy Bible (Book of Revelations) and this multiple use of the holy figure seven reveals Cradle of Filth's irreverent adoption of Christian terminology. This is followed by references to mythological places such as 'R'lyeh', a fictional city that first appeared in the writings of H.P. Lovecraft.[6] R'lyeh is a sunken city deep under the Pacific Ocean where the godlike being Cthulhu resides. The line 'for I yearn to return to woodland ferns where Herne and his wild huntress lay' celebrates the pre-Christian pagan era as Herne is related to 'Cernunnos' (who appears in Celtic polytheism and is the deified spirit of horned male animals and a nature god associated with produce and fertility). As a 'Horned God', Cernunnos was one of a number of similar deities found in many ancient cultures including English paganism.

The argument, then, that proposes heavy metal lyrics are grounded in themes relating to the social conflation of power and patriarchy (which includes the assumption that heavy metal is misogynistic) is clearly misguided and has overlooked the overwhelming evidence that suggests otherwise. There undoubtedly exists a whole body of rock-based music that *is* driven by and celebrates misogynistic tendencies. However, such music, arguably, aligns with blues-based rock music, identified by Frith and McRobbie as 'cock rock' (in Frith and Goodwin 1990: 375–85). Such music was first expressed in the work of bands such as the Rolling Stones (for example, 'Honky Tonk Woman' [1969] and 'Brown Sugar' [1971]) and developed/maintained in the work of bands such as Led Zeppelin (for example, 'The Lemon Song' [1969]), AC/DC, (for example, 'Girls Got Rhythm' [1979]) and Guns n' Roses (for example, 'Back off Bitch' [1991]). Furthermore, the unification of these bands by their cock rock identity is also mirrored in the musical syntax espoused by those same bands.

The 2005 single by Billy Idol ('Scream'), the sonic coding of which was analysed earlier, illustrates well the clear homology of syntax, lyric and aesthetic that has come to classify rock music. The rock/blues-influenced musical elements, here, typically align with lyrics that portray the woman (the 'chick') as a sexual object who (for example) 'ain't too proud to beg' whilst he has 'juice running down his leg'. Significantly, the gendered representation of the woman in this song

[6] Howard Phillips Lovecraft (1890–1937) was an American author of fantasy and horror fiction, noted for giving horror stories a science fiction framework. Lovecraft's readership was limited during his life, but his works have become quite important and influential among writers and fans of horror fiction (http://www.hplovecraft.com).

is characteristic of cock rock and hard rock and supports the general perception that women have no place within rock or metal.

For example, Shuker (2002: 44), when discussing of the work of Cohen (1991: 203), highlights the way in which women are excluded from performative roles in rock and metal. His observations build on the notion of rock sexuality being predominately masculine and a consequent lack of encouragement given to girls to learn rock instruments. This has given rise to a situation where there are few women in rock bands and where most women rock performers are 'packaged as traditional stereotyped, male images of women'.

Whilst this theory squares with formative developments in rock and metal, it does not reflect the more recent developments in metal. My own research highlights the way in which metal has opened up a space for women in heavy metal, reflected in a significant growth in female performers at the forefront of heavy metal in 2007. This has steadily grown since the mid 1990s to a point where women performers in metal have now gained considerable solidarity with the male. I do not wish to over-emphasise the situation, heavy metal remains a male dominant population but, nevertheless, key women performers in key bands are testament to the fact the heavy metal world is as relevant and open to women as it is to men.

There is an abundance of evidence to support the status and recognition of female performers within the modern world of heavy metal. I have attended several live heavy metal gigs in recent times, not obscure bands but those consistently highlighted in the cover stories of major music periodicals such as *Metal Hammer*, *Classical Rock*, *Terrorizer* and *Kerrang!* that reflect the growing importance of women in heavy metal. For example, In September 2005 I attended a gig at the Carling Apollo, Hammersmith to see Nightwish. There, Tarja Turunen, the (then) lead singer displayed her unique appropriation of classical singing into the heavy metal genre. Visually, her femininity is displayed through the wearing of flowing gowns and other traditionally feminine clothes but this is balanced by her frequent indulgence of traditional heavy metal visual codes such as head banging, windmilling and gesticulations such as the devils horns. Nightwish share vocal duties between Tarja and Marco Hietala, sometimes Tarja solos, sometimes Marco, and often they share an interweaving of counterpoint. The male/female solidarity in Nightwish, then, works at varying levels from the sharing of vocal duties between Tarja and Marco to the levelling of male/female visual coding in Tarja's outfits and gesticulations. Nightwish have continued to espouse their championing of male/female solidarity since appointing Anette Olzon as their new female vocalist in 2007.

Lacuna Coil, although not as extreme as some metal bands, nevertheless build their work around the core syntax of heavy metal that I have identified. I attended a Lacuna Coil gig in October 2005 (Wolverhampton Civic). Here again, the male/female solidarity in heavy metal was in evidence, represented in the dual vocal duties of Cristina Scabbia and Andrea Ferro. The band opened with the number 'Tight Rope' (2002) and the pulsating flat 2nd and low E riff that dominates the instrumental opening saw the five front-line members shaking their long hair low

to the stage in synchronised time; a true heavy metal spectacle in which Scabbia was an equal. As with Tarja Turunen, Scabbia seamlessly blends the feminine with heavy metal attributes in that frequent head banging is as important to her personae as her melodic vocals and feminine attire.

In December 2005 I attended a gig by Cradle of Filth at the Blank Canvas in Leeds. One of the support acts for this gig was Octavia, an up-and-coming all-female metal band from Norway who received a warm and encouraging reception from the audience. Octavia also receive regular features and reviews in the mainstream music periodicals. Similarly, the support band for Cradle of Filth's gig at Rock City, Nottingham in April 2007 was Hanzel und Gretyl, an American metal band with dual vocalists, Kaizer Von Loopy (male) and Vas Kallas (female). Vas Kallas performed with typical extreme metal aggression, complete with rabid vocals, and the audience were equally enthusiastic and appreciative of her contribution as they would be of any other metal act.

Cradle of Filth clearly support the male/female solidarity of heavy metal. For instance, they always include a female vocalist in their line up and the vocal timbres of female melodic vocals add a striking contrast to the rabid screeches and growls of Dani Filth. Their regular female vocalist is Sarah Jezebel Deva (real name, Sarah Jane Ferridge) who also sings in the band Angtoria. Furthermore, she has worked with many other artists and bands including Therion, Kovenant, Mortiis and Graveworm. In 2006 Rosie Smith joined Cradle of Filth replacing Martin Powell on keyboards.

Cradle of Filth have also established significant collaborations with other notable women in heavy metal. For example, Dirty Harry (real name Victoria Harrison) featured prominently on the release of 'Temptation' (2006) and Liv Kristina (of Leaves' Eyes) featured prominently on 'Nymphetamine'. Furthermore, both releases received extensive coverage on Scuzz and other music television stations.

In December 2004 I attended a gig by Arch Enemy at the London Forum and saw the band again in December 2005 at the Wolverhampton Civic. I have already highlighted the contribution of Angela Gossow (vocalist) to heavy metal. When the Ammot brothers (Michael and Christopher – founders of Arch Enemy) made the decision to replace original vocalist Johan Liva with a woman, they were taking a risk as no woman had ever before fronted a mainstream death metal band. However, since her appointment, Gossow has not only proved that women can do the growling as well as any man but also Arch Enemy have grown in stature and popularity since her arrival. Her front woman style has been fully accepted by fans and the music press alike and her position in Arch Enemy and as a heavy metal musician is on naturally equal terms.

In 2005 Roadrunner Records (a major heavy metal label) undertook a project to assemble a number of heavy metal 'supergroups' for a double album that would feature new music and interesting configurations of some of the best heavy metal musicians currently on the scene. The musicians included Rob Flynn (Machine Head), Matt Heafy (Trivium), Max Cavalera (Soulfly/ex-Sepultura), Dino Cazares

(Fear Factory) and Nadja Puelen (formally of Coal Chamber). The video for the main single release from the *Roadrunner United* album (also known colloquially as 'The All Star Sessions Album'), 'The End', which regularly screened on the Scuzz television channel throughout November and December, clearly showed female bass player Nadja (one of the 'all stars') playing alongside Matt Heafy and Dino Cazares. Coal Chamber, although recently split at the time, were an important and recognised band on the extreme metal circuit and the inclusion of their female bass player on the Roadrunner team should not be seen as a novelty but rather as recognition of her position as one of the top metal bassists on the current scene. This, again, is indicative of the way in which women are becoming an integral part of the heavy metal population.

Nadja Puelen's position as a key (female) bass player in a successful metal band builds on the significant work of Joanne Bench who has held the bass player role in Birmingham death metal band Bolt Thrower for many years. Bolt Thrower hold an important position in the development of death metal, being one of first bands to develop this style when they formed back in 1986. Importantly, then, Joanne has represented heavy metal's acceptance of female musicians for 20 years.

Even in the late 1970s and early 1980s, as discussed earlier, when heavy metal was in its second major formative stage, Lemmy and Motörhead were showing allegiance with female performers. Moreover, Lemmy publicly criticised those who deprecated women's involvement in rock and metal (Kilmister 2003: 126) and showed his solidarity with women rock and metal performers in collaborations such as Headgirl (the combination of two bands, the all-female Girlschool and Motörhead). Metallica, too, showed their own solidarity with female musicians when they invited Marianne Faithful to feature on the track 'The Memory Remains' (1997).

The performative and compositional contribution of women to heavy metal and the solidarity shown to women in heavy metal has gone on behind the scenes for most of heavy metal's history; it has, however, been somewhat underplayed and underdeveloped until now, when women are beginning to make significant contributions to frontline heavy metal bands. The mainstream periodicals now seem to feature front page and central articles as much about female musicians as male. For example, *Metal Hammer* (December 2005), article on Arch Enemy (including front page mention); *Terrorizer* (Xmas [*sic*] 2005), article on Lacuna Coil (including front page mention); *Terrorizer* (December 2005) (different to Xmas edition), major article on Bolt Thrower (including front page mention) and Arch Enemy poster; *Terrorizer* (November 2005), article on Within Temptation (including front page mention); *Classic Rock* (November 2005), article on Nightwish (including front page mention); *Metal Hammer* (November 2005), article on Arch Enemy; *Terrorizer* (October 2005), major cover story on Arch Enemy, and feature on Angela Gossow; *Terrorizer* (September 2005), features on Arch Enemy and Walls of Jericho (both on front page). The list could be continued, and tracing these major periodicals in reverse chronological order reveals month by month features on female bands or bands that include females. There is, therefore,

consistent evidence in the major metal and rock periodicals of a clear male/female solidarity which runs contrary to Walser's arguments.

Further to this, particular focus has been given to the increased contribution of females to metal articles, concerts and audio/visual releases that celebrate women in metal. For example, in 2004 *Metal Hammer* ran a 'Halloween Special' featuring the combined forces (also main cover photo) of Cristina Scabbia, Tarja Turunen and Dani Filth, a visual and verbal solidarity of the male and female in heavy metal that was adorning the shelves of newsagents across the country. In May 2005 *Terrorizer* ran several articles covering female metal bands and musicians and included major features on Jarboe, Lydia Lunch, Kylesa and Octavia. The 'Female Voices of Metal Festival' (Belgium) has been well established for a number of years and this too is evidence of the growing population of female metal bands. The line up for 2005 included Lacuna Coil, Leaves' Eyes, After Forever, Asrai, Epica, Mercury Rain, Midnattsol, Skeptical Minds, Elis, Legions of Hetheria, Autumn and Anachronia.

In 2005, the heavy metal label Nuclear Blast released a compilation DVD/CD called *Beautiful Voices* that featured a line up of female fronted bands and solo metal artists on their label. This album shows the extent to which heavy metal record labels are promoting women in metal. The album features the following list of bands and artists: Nightwish, Guano Apes, Angelzoom, Die Happy, L'âme Immortelle, Exilia, Lacuna Coil, Tristania, Xandria, Nina Hagen, Leaves' Eyes, Blutengel, Epica, After Forever, Imperia, Theatre of Tragedy, Elis, Mortal Love, Doro, Sinergy, Arch Enemy, Mandragora Scream, Tapping the Vein, Flowing Tears, Edenbridge, Nemesea, Sirenia and Midnattsol. It should be remembered that this is just one record label and provides just a hint of the extent of female heavy metal available on record, CD and DVD.

The positive representation of women in metal is evident in the adoption of anti-patriarchal sentiments, women-fronted bands in death metal to mainstream metal, female instrumentalists in key bands and all-female metal bands. That same positivity is evident in the signings and releases of record labels, in the live gigs of concert promoters, and in the current writings of journalists. My own research, then, has not only identified misogyny as being predominantly associated with hard rock but, controversially, something that is not, as a general rule, identified with heavy metal.

Heavy metal, then, appears to be clearly defined as a genre of music. Furthermore, it was Black Sabbath who made a significant contribution to the unique set of musical and aesthetic codes that evolved into the heavy metal genre. Whereas there may be variations in the contour of that fingerprint, the collocation of (all or some) aggressive performance techniques (including specific techniques such as double-kicks, blast-beats, trem-picking and so on), down-tuned guitars, extensive use of power-chords, the privileging of specific intervals with malevolent connotations, modal contours, episodic structures and anti-patriarchal lyrical themes, does identify a specific generic line.

The presence of this line is clearly defined and there is every justification in labelling this set of stylisations as 'metal'. All forms that have adopted that specific collocation of codes invariably have 'metal' appended to their identity. For example, heavy metal, black metal, death metal, nu metal, industrial metal, symphonic metal and so on.

This contrasts with another generic line, often confused with metal, that has both evolved and perpetuated in a similar way but with a different set of codes Here, the strong presence of blues stylisations such as blue notes, transient 3rds, falling 7ths, double-stopping, 12-bar and verse/chorus structure, are combined with standard tuned guitars, use of open and tonal chords, high volume, a driving beat and lyrics that centre on themes of gender anxiety and/or misogyny. Significantly, music marked by the adoption of these codes has been identified by the appendage 'rock' (for example, hard rock, blues rock, cock rock, punk rock and so on). It seems to make sense, then, that one set of codes be identified as metal and the other rock; this has really always been the case but, maybe, just needs highlighting.

Writing this book has been an enlightening journey. My playing experience of rock and metal initially convinced me of the clear dichotomy that existed in the syntax of heavy metal and hard rock and therefore the need to present a case for the definition of these two genres. The resultant research, transcriptions and discussions that have formed the substance of my interrogations have illuminated the enormity of this subject area and confirmed my initial convictions in a way I could never have imagined. I hope that this publication proves to be a relevant and discussion-worthy addition to the established works on heavy metal and opens the door, not only to the need of continued, detailed research into heavy metal topics, but also to a greater understanding of the value, role, complexities and relevance of this important genre of music.

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