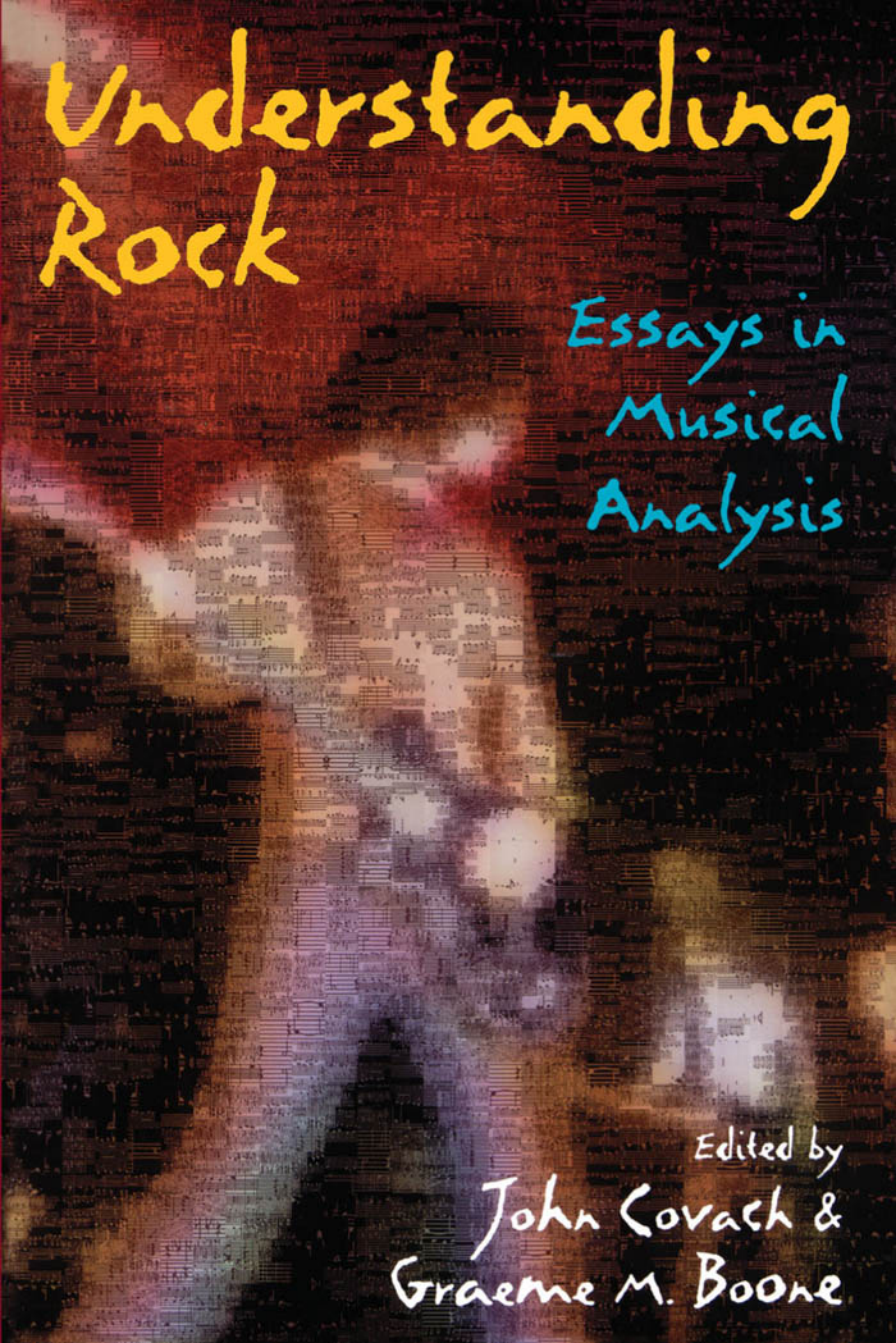
Understanding Rock
Essays in Musical Analysis
Edited by
John Covach &
Graeme M. Boone

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Preface

In the summer of 1974, the rock critic Lester Bangs was invited to type a review of a J. Geils Band concert onstage as part of the band's show. Jumping at the chance to jam with a favorite band and, at the same time, to storm the ultimate barrier between music and meaning, Bangs set up his typewriter next to the musicians as if it were another instrument. As he typed away in rhythmic and mental counterpoint to the music, he became more excited and frustrated until, at the song's climax, he smashed the table and finally stomped the typewriter itself in a fit of ecstatic rage.[1]

Is this the way it is, or should be, between rock music and the critical mind? Since the beginning of rock 'n' roll, opponents of the music, and some fans too, would have us think so. The plaint of rock's enemies is familiar: loud, raucous, drug ridden, and narcissistic, if not nihilistic, rock music causes degeneration in youth, transmitting social evils and subverting rational thought and responsibility; even worse, it is boring, annoying, bad music. The same, of course, was thought about earlier musical crazes that now seem tame and stodgy by comparison: swing, ragtime, the waltz, the minuet, the sarabande. Each of these did in fact threaten some perceived element of social order, and rock has posed its own distinct threats: arising in a time of social upheaval, it has reflected, accompanied, enabled, and at times even constituted the rumblings of that upheaval.

Partly for that very reason, however, a generation has grown up for whom this music is fundamental and necessary; partly also because it has simply been there, a

central part of American life. It hardly seems coincidental that the election of 1992 should have climaxed with a sax-toting president and a rock anthem. In this and innumerable other ways, rock music has come of age: not in itself, for it sprang fully fledged from the bosom of postwar America, but rather as a cultural force internalized by the broadest spectrum of American society. In 1968, a *Star Trek* episode could shock us with a scene from after the year 2000, showing a rock band composed of elderly hippies (yipes!) whose wrinkles and gray hair clashed disturbingly with their peace symbols and bellbottoms. In 1997 such an image is no longer shocking at all: we see it on record covers all the time, a natural (no matter how ironic) course of events. In precise contrast to the *Star Trek* hippies, today's old rockers look happy, well adjusted, successful, rich. The counterculture is the culture.

Rock's social stigmata remain, of course, but they are integrated into an increasingly complicated status quo. In a time of unprecedented social and cultural eclecticism, the enduring American preoccupation with distinctions of highbrow versus lowbrow is greeted with ambivalence by a society for which it has lost its clarity and, for many, its relevance. In that respect, the doomsayers are right. Allan Bloom's call to America, to "grow up" beyond childish, blaring popular music, falls on the deaf ears of a public crowned with Walkmen.[2] In other respects, however, the doomsayers are wrong, as they always have been. Each younger generation grows up into, and through, its popular music, in pursuit of its own maturity. That music is a part of the American environment, and the music's changes will continue to reflect broader social changes, as they always have in the past. As American culture drifts inevitably further from its traditional Western European slant, it cannot but redefine and reinvent itself; but this does not mean that its diverse roots will be lost. Instead, they take on a new, and newly specific, relevance. Rock, country, jazz, hip-hop, classical, and other musics continue to influence each other and intertwine in smooth or rough combinations, just as their audiences do; and writers about music continue to absorb and reflect upon these developments.

Lester Bangs's essay offers a classic example of such reflection. Is it a violation of his experience that, following his J. Geils bacchanal, he should have sat himself down again, presumably at another typewriter, to write a story, and a parable, of it? It is that second act of writing, not the first, that brought his story into existence for us, the public who knows him only through reading him. His personal rock apocalypse was, after all, only a passing delirium whose darknesses proved compatible with, even essential to, his goals and responsibilities as a critic and a person. The same is true of the vast majority of rock experience. Writings about rock music profit from the opportunity to relate, and reflect on, remarkably broad and fresh varieties of musical and social activities, ranging from the most Dionysian and in-the-moment to the most Apollonian and coolheaded; to make sense of them through language; and to bring them into relationship with other aspects of personal and social life. To the extent that there remains a challenging, or even conflictual, relationship between rock music and traditional social values, the paradox of creation and destruction that Bangs sets down is likely to form an essential part of the best rock writing. As those values change, so will the music change, and so will the writing.

Seven years ago, at the time when this book was first conceived, academic attention to rock music was in a period of tremendous growth, the results of which now

surround us clamorously. In bookshops throughout the country, the proportion of popular in relation to classical titles is expanding, and now includes academic studies as well as detailed transcriptions, histories, and biographies.[3] Meanwhile, academic job listings around the country show an unprecedented demand for popular specializations. These developments result in a new kind of irony, for there is, as yet, no clear "discipline" of rock studies, no consensus on what might constitute its focus or its limits, as a field of study or set of approaches; and it is not clear that there ever will or should be.[4] It is not that scholars have failed to attempt to address such questions. On the contrary, the interested reader is no longer lacking in stylistic overviews, encyclopedic histories, theoretical treatises, and college textbooks. But these manifold projects are beset from the outset by ideological and methodological controversies, while still lacking the solid underpinning of serious, close musical analysis that is needed if clear musicological understanding is to be obtained.

Conservatives doubt that rock music should be taught in universities at all, since the traditional focus of the humanities has been on canonical works in the European art tradition. Radicals doubt that analytical methods developed to describe such art music can appropriately be employed to address what is most meaningful in rock, since such analyses reinforce the musical work as an autonomous aesthetic object and produce interpretations foreign to the proper nature of the music. Such debates have their value and are, in any event, inevitable. But while some will see fit to pursue them to logical or extreme conclusions, others will continue, more quietly, to lay the groundwork that the field of rock musicology needs, if it is to find compatibility with the goals and assumptions of existing pedagogy. For it is the firm conviction of the writers in this book that that pedagogy, while in need of further reflection and modification (as it always is), provides strong and useful tools for analysis of rock music as it does for other music, and that, through such analysis, a better understanding of the music—not just the conditions surrounding it, but the music itself—can be gained. Like Lester Bangs, we have been through the music and have faith in its integrability, just as we have no doubt about the positive impact rock analysis can and will have on other musical analysis.[5]

Work on *Understanding Rock Music* began in 1990, after five of its contributors (Boone, Brown, Covach, Everett, and Headlam), all active in musicological and theoretical circles of academia, gave papers at a special session devoted to the analysis of rock music at the joint national meeting of the Society for Music Theory and the American Musicological Society in Oakland, California. The session was scheduled at 8:00 P.M. on Friday night, a time that seemed ironically appropriate: close to the heart of any rocker's schedule while, in academic conference terms, as dead as possible. To our knowledge, it was the first session ever devoted to rock music in either society; still today, sessions on the subject remain rare at the mainstream meetings.

The essays in the finished book are linked, and also opposed, by a number of themes. Beyond the avoidance of replication in subject matter and methodology, the editors have not found it necessary to ensure the presence of specific styles or approaches, nor of any particularly broad or "representative" variety. Instead, we have encouraged the authors to concentrate on music about which they feel strongly and to use whatever analytical materials seem most appropriate to their ideas about that music. As it happens, in the subject matter there is a focus on the era of the

1960s and '70s, a time when many of us were young and impressionable; every essay gives prominent attention to recordings made in that period. But the actual discussion ranges from early acoustic blues recordings to the '90s country rock of k. d. lang, and from the Beach Boys' a cappella doo-wop spinoffs to the psychedelic instrumental jamming of the Grateful Dead. In the process, a number of analytical issues germane to the study of rock are raised, and a breadth of analytical approaches comes into play.

In "Progressive Rock, 'Close to the Edge,' and the Boundaries of Style," John Covach explores the ways in which this Yes song, a landmark in the progressive-rock movement, fuses aspects of Western art music and early '70s rock. Heard by contemporaries as evoking an "alternative classical music," it is revealed through analysis as mixing features of both traditions, not only on a surface level but, more unexpectedly, on deeper structural levels as well.

Daniel Harrison, in "After Sundown: The Beach Boys' Experimental Music," is also concerned with the "art" boundaries of pop, which he explores through analysis of the tonal language of the Beach Boys. Discussing recordings from the period of "Good Vibrations," Harrison compares alternate versions and outtakes of songs in order to explain how the Beach Boys' music developed up through the unfinished landmark *Smile* LP and speculates on why that legendary album was never completed in the way group leader and composer Brian Wilson intended.

Both Walter Everett and Lori Burns employ Schenkerian techniques in their analyses, demonstrating in the process how features of musical structure can be seen to reflect issues addressed in the lyrics. At the same time, their approaches are directly opposed, since Everett's essay takes on a broad survey of music in order to make points about one songwriter's stylistic evolution, while Burns's focuses more closely on two songs in order to make connections between musical and social commentary. Everett's "Swallowed by a Song: Paul Simon's Crisis of Chromaticism" investigates the 1970s period in Paul Simon's songwriting, a time when Simon concentrated on chromatic techniques. Everett approaches Simon's music with particular attention to the composer's own commentary on it and frames his analysis of the 1970s songs by a telling consideration of Simon's preceding and following styles, both of which are marked by a predominant diatonicism. In Burns's essay, "'Joanie' Get Angry: k.d. lang's Feminist Revision," she presents an analysis of lang's 1991 cover version of Joanie Sommers's 1962 "Johnny Get Angry." The changes that lang makes in covering the tune provide a pointed commentary on the social assumptions contained in the original, a commentary made explicit in the video for lang's song. Burns's study reveals how transformations of the musical structure contribute to the song's effect, constituting a level of purely musical critique as well as a foil to its lyrics.

Matthew Brown also relies on Schenkerian theory to account for musical structure in his essay, "'Little Wing': A Study in Music Cognition." But he does so in a distinct way and to a different end. Brown's topic is the role that hierarchical tonal structures can play in a musical composition by Jimi Hendrix, as well as in its improvisations. But his point of departure is recent work in cognition, including the information-processing model and the idea of problem solving. By these means, Brown offers a new model for explaining how Hendrix approached tonal and motivic organization.

One of Brown's analytical concerns is the question of blues adaptation in rock style; in Dave Headlam's essay, "Blues Transformations in the Music of Cream," this becomes the central issue. Headlam approaches the blues-rock interface through one of its most important manifestations, the late-1960s British power trio Cream. Tracing its versions of such blues classics as "Cross Road Blues" and "Rollin' and Tumblin'" back to the original sources in Delta and Chicago blues, he illuminates the stylistic transformations in analytical terms and assesses their significance. With these analyses in mind, he then turns to consider the style of Cream's own blues compositions.

Graeme Boone, finally, takes a song by the Grateful Dead as the focus of his essay, "Tonal and Expressive Ambiguity in 'Dark Star.'" Countering a common perception of the Dead's music as aimless or disorganized, he uses harmonic, contrapuntal, and melodic analysis to reveal the means by which the Dead achieve musical and expressive cohesion, even as they incorporate extended and, to some extent, unpredictable improvisations into their music. The Dead's approach is, in conclusion, measured against the broader context and significance of the Deadhead movement.

Ultimately, the justification for any analytical program stems from one's own experiences. Like many now in the fields of musicology and music theory, the authors in this book were born in the decade of the birth of rock 'n' roll and grew up with it. Introduced to the serious study of organizing structures in art music, we naturally asked similar questions of popular music. Of what materials is it made? What makes it the way it is? Today's climate of heightened self-consciousness discourages scholars from taking their likes and dislikes for granted; but these are also times when people are making new and important discoveries simply by turning things around inside their own minds and connecting different parts of their own fragmented experience. This book is precisely the result of such a personal, interior movement, and for each author, it has yielded a different discovery. Ultimately, we find no better justification for analyzing rock music than this: it is part of us, and we like it.

Cambridge, Mass. G. M. B.
Chapel Hill, N.C. J. C.
January 1997

Notes

1. Lester Bangs, "My Night of Ecstasy with the J. Geils Band," in his *Psychotic Reactions and Carburetor Dung*, ed. Greil Marcus (New York: Vintage, 1988), 142–45. This review originally appeared in *Creem* (Aug. 1974).

2. Allan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), 68–81.

3. According to a subject search in *Books in Print*, the percentage of books devoted to popular music in the years 1980–89 represented 4% of the total of books on music. In the years 1990–96, this figure has risen to 7%.

4. Among recent arguments for the importance of the study of popular music, see Susan McClary and Robert Walser, "Start Making Sense! Musicology Wrestles with Rock," in *On Record: Pop, Rock, and the Written Word*, ed. Simon Frith and Andrew Goodwin (New York: Pantheon, 1990), 277–92; Susan McClary, "Terminal Prestige: The Case of the Avant-Garde

in Music Composition," *Cultural Critique* 12 (Spring 1989): 57–81; Richard Middleton, "'Change Gonna Come'? Popular Music and Musicology," in his *Studying Popular Music* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1990), 102–26; and John Shepherd, "Musicology and Popular Music Studies," in his *Music as Social Text* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 189–223.

5. For a more detailed discussion of issues that arise in the analysis and music-historical assessment of popular music, see John Covach, "We Won't Get Fooled Again: Rock Music and Musical Analysis," *In Theory Only* 13, nos. 1–4 (1997): 119–36, reprinted in *Keeping Score: Music, Interdisciplinarity, Culture*, ed. Anahid Kassabian, David Schwarz, and Lawrence Siegel (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1997), 75–89; "Popular Music, Unpopular Musicology," in *Redefining Music*, ed. Nicholas Cook and Mark Everist (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

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Understanding Rock

1

Progressive Rock, "Close to the Edge," and the Boundaries of Style

JOHN COVACH

1

"Progressive rock," "classical rock," "art rock," "symphonic rock"—these labels have been used over the last twenty-five years by various authors to designate a style of popular music developed in the late 1960s and early 1970s, primarily by British rock musicians.[1] During this time groups such as King Crimson, the Moody Blues, Procol Harum, the Nice (and later Emerson, Lake, and Palmer), Gentle Giant, Genesis, Yes, Jethro Tull, Van der Graaf Generator, and Deep Purple attempted to blend late-'60s and early-'70s rock and pop with elements drawn from the Western art-music tradition.[2] This attempt to develop a kind of "concert-hall rock"—which was nevertheless still often performed in stadiums and arenas—was the result of a tendency on the part of some rockers and their fans to view rock as "listening music" (as opposed to dance music), an aesthetic trend that Wilfrid Mellers[3] attributes to the influence of the Beatles' *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* of 1967.[4]

The early progressive rockers were not the first to employ musical elements generally associated with the "classical" or art-music tradition in their arrangements. The mid-1960s British-invasion groups, in an apparent attempt to surpass one another in eclecticism, began to use instruments and stylistic elements drawn from both the British music-hall and European art-music traditions. Music-hall elements are present, for instance, in Peter and Gordon's "Lady Godiva" (1966) and Herman's

Hermits' "I'm Henry VIII, I Am" (1965); concert-hall elements can be found in the use of a string octet in the Beatles' "Eleanor Rigby" (1966) and harpsichord in the Rolling Stones' "Lady Jane" (1966).[5] Expanding this trend in stylistic eclecticism to include what might be considered a kind of pop-music exoticism, Beatles guitarist George Harrison introduced the Indian sitar into rock music in "Norwegian Wood" (1965), and Harrison's musical exoticism was quickly imitated by other rock musicians. This mixture of 1960s pop with the Indian musical tradition can, of course, be viewed as an early instance of the "East meets West" trend that two years later became a basic component of the psychedelic movement.[6]

Considering the trend toward stylistic experimentation that was so much a part of mid- to late-1960s rock and pop, the combination of rock and art-music practice as it occurs in a tune such as Procol Harum's 1967 "A Whiter Shade of Pale" (literally Bach and rock) was not especially new for its time.[7] What was distinctive about the progressive-rock movement that arose out of the British-invasion scene, however, was an attitude of art-music "seriousness"—critics often called it pretentiousness—that many of these musicians brought to their music making. Among the most ardent fans of progressive rock at the time, there was the perception that these musicians were attempting to shape a new kind of classical music—a body of music that would not disappear after a few weeks or months on the pop charts, but would instead be listened to (and perhaps even studied), like the music of Mozart, Beethoven, and Brahms, for years to come. In their sometimes uncompromising adherence to what they took to be lofty art-music standards, progressive-rock musicians often seemed to be more interested in standing shoulder to shoulder with Richard Wagner or Igor Stravinsky than with Elvis Presley or Little Richard.[8]

Within the developing progressive-rock style of the late '60s and early '70s, groups often incorporated different aspects of art-music practice into their music. Some groups, like Yes and Jethro Tull, explored ways of creating pieces of extended length.[9] Peter Gabriel and Genesis incorporated aspects of opera into their innovative song texts, creating stage shows that evolved into the 1974 one-man rock opera, *A Lamb Lies Down on Broadway.*[10] Gentle Giant made extensive use of traditional contrapuntal writing in its compositions and arrangements, while King Crimson explored complex metrical schemes, atonality, and free-form improvisation.[11] Many groups showcased instrumental virtuosity: Keith Emerson and Rick Wakeman on keyboards, Steve Howe and Robert Fripp on guitar, Chris Squire and Michael Rutherford on bass, Bill Bruford, Carl Palmer, and Phil Collins on drums—all of these musicians set new performance standards on their respective instruments while incorporating some aspect of "classical" playing into their personal styles.

Historical accounts of progressive rock in the years that follow the rich period from about 1967 to 1977 tend to chronicle how the movement began to dissolve in the late 1970s. Progressive rock was one target of the punk and new-wave groups that gained popularity late in the decade; for many of these groups, the aesthetic call was for a return to simplicity—often cast as a return to the raw garage-band sound of the mid-1960s—and the "overproduced" albums of Yes and Emerson, Lake, and Palmer, for instance, represented just the kind of approach that most of these groups—on the surface, at least—rejected. Indeed, there is an obvious difference in aesthetic approach between late-1970s progressive-rock album tracks such as Yes's "Awaken"

and ELP's "Pirates," on one hand, and early new-wave singles such as Talking Heads' "Take Me to the River" or Joe Jackson's "Is She Really Going Out with Him?"—not to mention the punk music of the Sex Pistols or the Ramones—on the other.[12]

Punk rock, in an effort perhaps to reestablish a directness of personal expression, tended to celebrate musical amateurism, and clearly such an aesthetic is antithetical to the drive to virtuosity and textural complexity found in the music of most progressive groups.[13] The simplicity of new-wave music, however, is often something of a deception. The music of Elvis Costello, Talking Heads, Joe Jackson, Devo, and other late-1970s new wavers is far more sophisticated that it may at first appear; most of this music is carefully written, arranged, and produced, and all this to the highest of pop-music professional standards. The perceived simplicity of this music ultimately boils down to a return to simpler formal types (mostly to the verse-refrain format of earlier pop) that in almost all instances respects the four-minute boundary of the pop single, an absence of extended instrumental soloing, and a relatively conservative harmonic vocabulary (especially when compared with that of progressive rock). New-wave groups also appealed to a new kind of musical simplicity by returning to the particular kinds of instruments used by 1960s rock groups: after a long absence from the rock stage and recording studio, Vox and Farfisa portable organs, Gretsch and Rickenbacker guitars, and Vox amplifiers were employed by many new wavers to evoke an earlier, simpler era in rock music.[14] Despite this return to less-sophisticated equipment, however, much new-wave music is actually more sophisticated in production terms than some progressive music of the same period.[15] Nevertheless, rock audiences still perceived new wave as simpler; it was understood as a return to basics, and as such, the new style had little use for any overt appeal to art music or art-music practice.

By the early 1980s, progressive rock was thought to be all but dead as a style, an idea reinforced by the fact that some of the principal progressive groups had developed a more commercial sound. Genesis, and especially drummer and post–Peter Gabriel lead vocalist Phil Collins, had more success in the 1980s with a mainstream rock approach than it had ever had in the 1970s playing progressive rock. In 1983, Yes scored its only number-one hit with "Owner of a Lonely Heart," written in part by South African pop-rock guitarist Trevor Rabin, who had replaced Steve Howe in the group.[16] Howe himself had left Yes to form Asia, along with ex-Yes keyboardist Geoff Downes, ex-King Crimson and UK bassist and vocalist John Wetton, and drummer Carl Palmer; Asia's 1982 single "Heat of the Moment" rose as high as number four on the Billboard charts, and the album on which this single appeared remained on the top forty album chart for thirty-five weeks, nine weeks at number one.[17] What went out of the music of these now ex-progressive groups when the more commercial sound came in was any significant evocation of art music: the Mellotrons and electric harpsichords were gone, replaced by distorted power-chord guitars;[18] the long and intricate tracks were replaced by tunes that would fit the radio pop-single format. But unlike the new wavers, who had (at least supposedly) returned to a 1960s brand of pop simplicity, the ex-progressive rockers moved more toward the rock mainstream that had existed in the 1970s when they were still playing progressive rock; they seemed far less influenced by the Animals or Iggy Pop and more influenced by Foreigner, Bad Company, and Led Zeppelin.

Despite this stylistic reorientation by its original practitioners, however, the progressive rock movement did not go under; rather, it went underground. Beginning in the early 1980s, a number of mostly British groups began performing and recording music that was clearly influenced by the music of the earlier progressive rockers; groups such as IQ, Twelfth Night, Pendragon, and especially Marillion tended to use Gabriel-era Genesis as the principal model in developing a style that has since been labeled "neo-progressive rock" (or simply "neo-prog"). Like the earlier music of the original progressive rockers, neo-prog also employs art-music practice within a rock context, though perhaps in a more indirect manner than did the original progressive rockers. Mellotron and synthesized string sounds, for example, saturate long and often intricately structured tracks that cover entire LP sides, but they seem to refer in many cases to those kinds of sounds as they can be found in 1970s Yes or Genesis and thus refer to the string section of a symphony orchestra only by way of this earlier music. Neo-prog bands of the 1980s never achieved the level of commercial success that the original progressive groups had enjoyed in the 1970s. The most successful neo-prog group of the 1980s was Marillion, who had twelve different singles reach the British top forty, three of these in the top ten.[19] But what success the neo-prog groups did enjoy was restricted to the United Kingdom and Europe, and none of these groups ever drew a significant level of attention in the United States.

Viewed within the historical context outlined thus far, neo-progressive rock might be viewed as a kind of stylistic and historical echo of progressive rock: it is less distinctive stylistically than its model and has had far less impact. But a recent resurgence of interest in progressive rock is likely to change this perception of neo-prog as well as the perception of progressive rock in general. Since the late 1980s, a number of new groups have appeared inside what might be termed the "progressive-rock underground"—a network of progressive-rock fans held together by Internet newsgroups and web sites, special magazines and fanzines devoted to progressive-rock music and the groups that play it, and mail-order businesses that distribute an impressive variety of new and old recordings.[20] These groups originate in Europe, Japan, and North America, and via the underground they are able to circulate their music to fans and listeners around the world.[21] The new progressive groups return not only to the early 1970s style of Genesis—as the neo-prog groups did—but also evoke the stylistic tendencies of King Crimson, Gentle Giant, ELP, Jethro Tull, and Yes.[22] Important to this chapter is the fact that with this return to the "classic" progressive-rock style comes a renewed fascination with engaging art-music practices in a rock context; like the originators of the style, this new generation of groups is grappling again with the problems of form, harmonic and melodic language, contrapuntal textures, instrumentation, and virtuosity that were so central to progressive rock in the 1970s.

Viewing the history of progressive rock over the course of three decades forces a rethinking of the commonly accepted historical accounts of the style; for instance, such an overview encourages one to see neo-prog not so much as an echo of the original progressive movement but rather as a significant link between the 1970s and the new resurgence of progressive rock that has been occurring in the 1990s. Considering this thirty-year view of progressive rock along with the careers of its originators also brings out another important point: progressive rock can be thought

of as a style that is separable from the output of any particular group. In the 1980s, for instance, Genesis was playing music in a mainstream pop style while the progressive style that it had pioneered was underground, being sustained by other musicians. If progressive rock cannot then be reliably distinguished simply on the basis of who is recording and performing the music, it seems clear that it must be a stylistic category that depends on characteristics to be found in the musical texts themselves. As I have been implying throughout this introduction, one of the characteristics that is central to progressive rock is the evocation of art music within the context of rock and pop. But how art music is evoked in this music is a complicated problem, and it is this problem upon which this chapter will focus.

It is clear that the original progressive rockers were conscious of their attempt to fuse rock and art-music practices in their music. This is perhaps most obvious in the case of Keith Emerson, who, first with the Nice and later with ELP, consistently reworked familiar classical pieces in his often flamboyant keyboard style; Emerson was among the first to work with a symphony orchestra. In the liner notes to the Nice's *Five Bridges* of 1969, Emerson writes:

> On a journey from the almost Utopian freedom of our music to the established orthodox music school I met Joseph Eger [conductor of the Sinfonia of London on the album] who was travelling in the opposite direction.
>
> Since that meeting we have on occasions been catalysts in combining together the music from our different backgrounds forming sometimes a fusion, and other times a healthy conflict between the orchestra, representing possibly the establishment, and the [rock] trio, representing the non-establishment; ourselves having complete trust in a rebellious spirit and highly developed, broad minded, music brain whose reformed ideas in direction have been frowned upon, almost spat upon by so-called critics. That being Joseph Eger, the fighter.[23]

Emerson goes on to give brief descriptions of each of the five movements in his "Five Bridges Suite," a piece that covers all of the album's first side. While side two features arrangements of pieces by Sibelius, Tchaikovsky, and Bach, the "Five Bridges Suite" is an original composition, composed and scored by Emerson with lyrics by the band's bassist and vocalist, Lee Jackson. In these liner notes, it is clear that Emerson means to bridge rock and art music in this piece, and that, in fact, this is perhaps the central idea of the work.

Members of other progressive groups have remarked about the blending of rock and art-music practice in their music. For example, Jon Anderson, lead vocalist with Yes, once described the band's approach by saying, "We are rock musicians who borrow ideas from the classics—we sometimes emulate the structural form, just as [other] rock groups emulate jazz, soul, and rhythm and blues in their music . . . We try to create music that is around us today in an orchestral way."[24] Lead guitarist Robert Fripp casts his aspirations for King Crimson in terms of his first hearing of *Sgt. Pepper* and specifically "A Day in the Life":

> I remember driving back from the hotel one night and on the radio I heard *Sgt. Pepper's* for the first time. I tuned in after they'd introduced the album. I didn't know what it was at first, and it terrified me—"A Day in the Life," the huge build-up at the end. At about the same time I was listening to Hendrix, Clapton with John Mayall's Bluesbreakers, the Bartok String Quartets, Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*, Dvorak's *New*

> *World Symphony* . . . they all spoke to me the same way. Perhaps different dialects, but it was all the same language. At that point, it was a call which I could not resist . . . From that point to this very day [1984], my interest is in how to take the energy and spirit of rock music and extend it to the music drawing from my background as part of the European tonal harmonic tradition. In other words, what would Hendrix sound like playing Bartok?[25]

The aspirations of these original progressive rockers to blend rock with classical music is readily apparent on the surface of their music; progressive rock of the late 1960s and early to mid-1970s borrows heavily and in a number of ways from the Western art-music tradition, and this characteristic is also obvious in the music of the progressive-rock groups that followed. It important to note, however, that progressive rock tends to borrow from "classical music" mostly as it is understood in the modern concert culture that promotes Western art music—a culture that can sometimes foster an image of the art-music tradition that is quite different from the ways in which that tradition is understood by musicologists and theorists. Making this distinction helps in accounting for how the borrowings that occur throughout progressive rock are often drawn freely from what scholars and other specialists would tend to view as very different styles; such diverse art-music charcteristics as baroque-era counterpoint, romantic-era virtuosity, and modernist rhythmic syncopation and sectional juxtaposition, for instance, seem to coexist comfortably and without any sense of historical incongruity within much progressive-rock music. One gets the sense that for these rock musicians, as well as for the audience for whom they compose, record, and perform their music, all of these borrowings are of the same kind: "classical."[26]

Considering the challenge that the original progressive-rock musicians established for their music, one might well wonder how successful these groups really were at blending 1960s and '70s pop and rock with classical music—two general styles that were at the time considered to be very disparate. In some instances it may seem as if progressive rock is simply rock music pasted over with a kind of art-music veneer, using classical-music instrumentation such as strings, pipe organ, or harpsichord to embellish musical structures that do not have much more in common with art music than does most other rock music of the time. Or inversely, progressive-rock musicians sometimes souped up classical music with a rock treatment—Keith Emerson's penchant for reinterpreting orchestral warhorses is perhaps the best-known example of this approach.[27] Both of these characterizations are, as it turns out, applicable to much progressive-rock music. But a more crucial issue, however, is whether these descriptions account for all progressive rock; and further, whether they account for all the ways in which art-music is evoked even for progressive-rock tracks in which they are indeed applicable. After noting the references to art music to be found on the surface of progressive-rock pieces, as well as in aspects of their performance, one might well wonder whether some deeper interaction with art-music practice might also be present in this music.

In order to explore these questions, I will focus on 1970s progressive rock, though certainly such an investigation could be expanded easily to include subsequent music in the style. This chapter will be further limited, for the most part, to a detailed discussion of a single piece by Yes entitled "Close to the Edge"; rock histori-

ans have tended to view Yes as one of the principal groups within the progressive-rock movement of the 1970s and have also tended to view "Close to the Edge" as one of the group's most important tracks. I will be concerned with exploring the ways in which this 1972 composition shares structural features and compositional practices with Western art music of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. By analyzing the piece according to criteria typically applied to Western art music (that is, formal, harmonic, rhythmic, motivic, and text-music analysis), I hope to demonstrate not only that the piece is a hybrid of rock and art music at the surface level, but also that the underlying structure of the work exhibits features common to both common-practice art music and the British-invasion pop from which the progressive-rock style emerged.

2

In September 1972, the British group Yes released its fifth album, *Close to the Edge.*[28] This album followed relatively close on the heels of the fourth album, *Fragile,* which had been released in January 1972, and the third album, called simply *The Yes Album,* released in March 1971.[29] The development of the Yes sound over the eighteen months that separate *The Yes Album* from *Close to the Edge* is dramatic. Personnel changes within the group played a major role in the band's growth; guitarist Steve Howe joined the group for *The Yes Album,* and multikeyboardist Rick Wakeman joined the group for *Fragile.* One may note that the song arrangements across these three albums become increasingly sophisticated over this short period. In fact, the *Close to the Edge* LP may be considered a significant point of arrival in the development of the Yes group; drummer Bill Bruford, who left the group after the recording of this album, has remarked that this LP "is absolutely my favorite. No doubt about it. To me, everything I did with the group was leading up to *Close to the Edge.*"[30]

The *Close to the Edge* album contains three songs. All of side one is taken up with the title track. Side two contains "And You and I" and "Siberian Khatru." The title track, "Close to the Edge," will be the focus of the analytical discussion that follows. This piece constituted the most extended work that the group had recorded up to that time. The liner notes divide the piece into four sections labeled "A Solid Time of Change," "Total Mass Retain," "I Get Up, I Get Down," and "Seasons of Man."[31] Note that in the formal diagram (see fig. 1.1) the piece is divided into four large sections, marked A A' B A". This division corresponds to the four-part division indicated on the album jacket. Note also that figure 1.1 indicates that the piece opens with a substantial instrumental introduction that occurs after a gradual crescendo of taped bird and stream sounds; these same taped sounds also fade out at the end of the track.

The words and music to "Close to the Edge" were written by guitarist Howe and lead vocalist Anderson, and the track was arranged by the entire group. According to Howe, the song began by putting together parts of two preexistent songs: one by Howe that became the basis for the chorus and one by Anderson that formed the basis for the verses. Howe also provided the harmonic progression for the B section

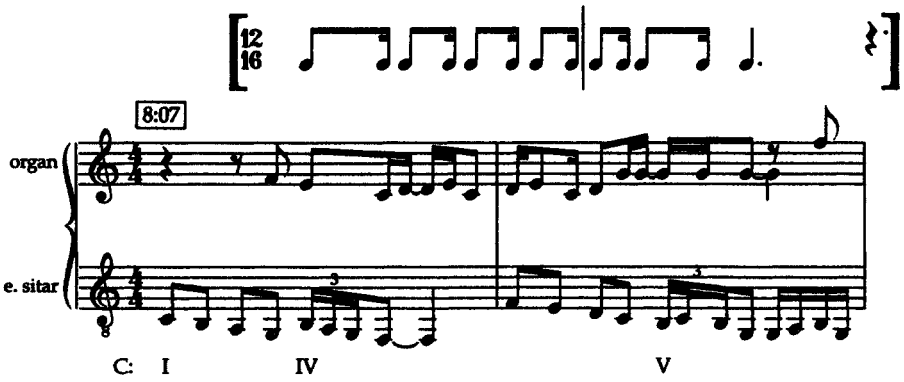
from yet another song.[32] The lyrics to "Close to the Edge" reveal the influence of Hermann Hesse's novel *Siddhartha.* The chorus, for example, contains the lyrics "Close to the edge, down by the river," followed by "seasons will pass you by, I get up, I get down." These lyrics likely refer to the river that plays such a crucial role in Hesse's novel and to the spiritual enlightenment that comes to Siddhartha as he communes with the river in the novel's final chapters. It is clear that the taped bird and water sounds that begin and end "Close to the Edge" are meant to suggest the river's edge, but I will also argue below that some of the fundamental ideas portrayed in Hesse's novel play an important role in the overall structure of the song.

Before discussing the structural aspects of the piece, however, I would like to consider a short excerpt that could be considered, following the discussion above, a surface instance of classical borrowing. This passage, which is here called the "Close to the Edge fugato," occurs at approximately 8:00.[33] As example 1.1 shows, the Coral electric sitar[34] and electric bass begin a pseudobaroque figure in C major and are joined by the pipe organ playing three statements of a melodic figure; this organ figure is a thematic transformation of the "Close to the Edge" theme (discussed below) that occurs earlier in the piece. The initial statement of the organ figure is imitated at the octave and at the fifteenth as these three statements of the figure ascend registrally.

While this passage is not likely to be mistaken for authentic baroque music, the texture, instrumentation, and counterpoint make clear the reference to the baroque style.[35] The kind of stylistic reference observed in this passage can be found in numerous passages throughout Yes arrangements during the early 1970s; the classical-guitar introduction to "Roundabout," the extended passage for solo piano in "South Side of the Sky," and the harpsichord solo in "Siberian Khatru" are other examples.[36] These stylistic references to art music have played a major role in prompting scholars and critics to label Yes music "classical rock" or "art rock," and I will return below to the important role played by this kind of stylistic intertextuality in Yes music. For present purposes it is sufficient to note that this example constitutes an instance of what I will term "stylistic reference" to Western art music. The discussion that follows, however, will explore a more fundamental kind of reference to art music that occurs in the structure of this work.

3

Figure 1.1 interprets the overall formal design of "Close to the Edge" as falling generally into a four-part scheme, with two large A sections followed by a contrasting B section and a return of the A section. Each A section begins with what I have designated an A-dorian verse; the final A section has two verse passages of structural importance. These verse passages begin at 3:54, 6:03, 14:59, and 15:53. Before considering these verses further, however, it may be helpful to address my use of the phrase "dorian mode." In using this term to describe the tonality of these passages, I am mostly prompted by a desire to avoid viewing the harmonic activity in the verse against the model of the traditional major-minor system (see fig. 1.2). According to the traditional model derived from common-practice-period European art music,



Example 1.1. "Close to the Edge" fugato

the chord progression A-minor – G-major – A-minor – B-minor that occurs in the verse and the general lack of a structurally significant leading-tone G# would be considered deviations from the tonal norm; thus, "modal" in this case could possibly signal an aesthetically significant departure from standard practice. But in rock music from about the mid-1960s forward, both this chord progression and the use of the natural seventh scale degree constitute stylistic norms; indeed, if the more conventional progression i – V – i – ii° were to occur in the verse, it would constitute a significant stylistic deviation. Thus, dorian mode is used in this instance to designate a harmonic environment that is typical within rock music.[37]

There are, however, other passages in this piece that can be viewed productively against the common-practice tonal model, and invoking traditional tonal procedures is a key component in creating both stylistic and structural references to classical music. If we recall the "Close to the Edge" fugato discussed above, for instance, one can see readily how important it is that such a passage be considered in the context of art-music practice. In the fugato, it is more a case of employing a contrapuntal combination of thematic elements to create the reference to art music than of overtly employing traditional harmony and voice leading; but other passages could be cited in which common-practice voice leading and harmonic progression are employed and in which detecting their presence plays a crucial role is establishing the stylistic reference. For instance, the church organ passages beginning at 12:10 and 12:27, the beginnings of which are shown in example 1.6 and discussed later, are clear instances of creating stylistic references to art music through the use of traditional voice leading and harmony. While the use of church organ in itself creates a reference to art music, the harmonic progression and voice leading are almost stereotypically "classical." There is nothing problematic about employing standard analytical techniques to such a passage.

Consider again the verse passages, specifically the first verse passage beginning at 3:54, after the substantial instrumental introduction (see ex. 1.2). The Coral electric sitar (along with the lead vocal) is in 12/8 meter, while the bass (along with the drums) plays in 3/2. Because rock listeners tend to take their tempo and metric bearings from the drums and bass, a listener is not likely to hear this passage in

Figure 1.1. Formal diagram of "Close to the Edge"

	Timing	Description	Key
	0:00 – 0:56	stream and bird sounds	
Intro	0:56 – 1:21	3-8ve ascending bass scale	e (d#-harm.)
	1:21 – 2:00	bass ostinato, 9x's to fermata	
	2:00 – 2:13	bass and guitar ostinato, 2x's to fermata	
	2:13 – 2:58	bass ostinato then ascending scale to lead-in fermata	
	2:58 – 3:54	"Close to the Edge" theme	D/d
A	3:54 – 4:22	intro and verse	a dorian
	4:22 – 4:53	verse and chorus 1	
	4:53 – 5:24	bridge	F
	5:24 – 6:03	bridge, chorus 1 (+ "I get up")	F to C
A'	6:03 – 6:33	intro and verse	a dorian
	6:33 – 7:09	verse and chorus 2	
	7:10 – 7:24	bridge	G
	7:25 – 7:59	bridge, chorus 1 (+ "I get up")	G to D
	8:00 – 8:28	"Close to the Edge" fugato	C
B	8:28 – 9:48	static interlude	E
	9:48 – 10:35	verse	
	10:35 – 11:19	verse	
	11:20 – 12:10	verse	
	12:10 – 12:47	church organ interlude	
	12:47 – 13:04	partial verse	
	13:04 – 14:11	church organ interlude and fanfare	
	14:11 – 14:59	"Close to the Edge" theme reset	F♯
A"	14:59 – 15:30	instr. verse (organ solo) w/ chorus 2	a dorian
	15:30 – 15:52	instr. verse (organ) w/ chorus 2	
	15:53 – 16:17	verse	
	16:17 – 16:33	verse	
	16:33 – 17:36	bridge, chorus 1 (+ I get up, extended)	B♭ to F
	17:36 – 18:38	fade to bird and stream sounds	

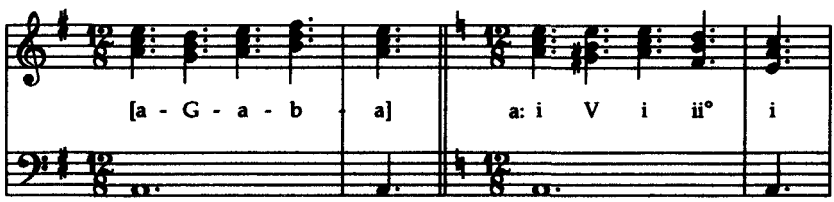
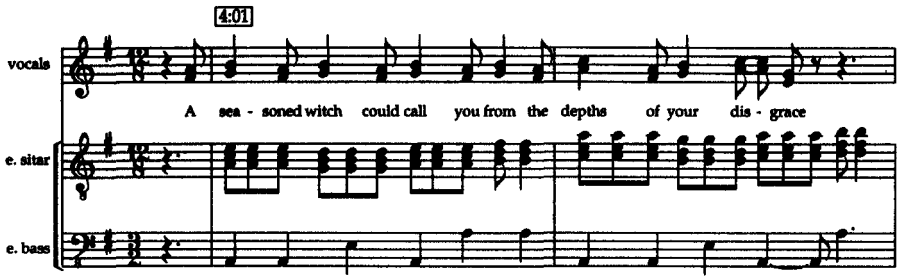


Figure 1.2. Dorian-mode harmonic progression in A-section verse



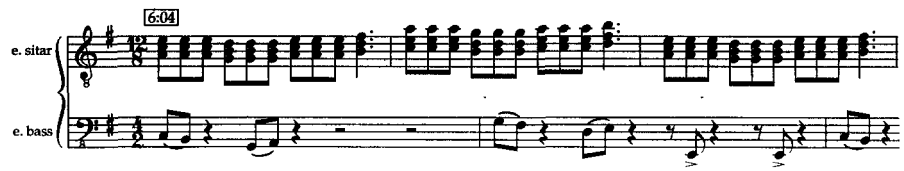
Example 1.2. Polymetric scheme between parts in A-section verse

terms of polymeter and is much more likely to hear the first verse in 3/2; consequently, the listener will perhaps interpret the rhythmic figures in the electric sitar and vocals as highly syncopated within the metric context of 3/2.

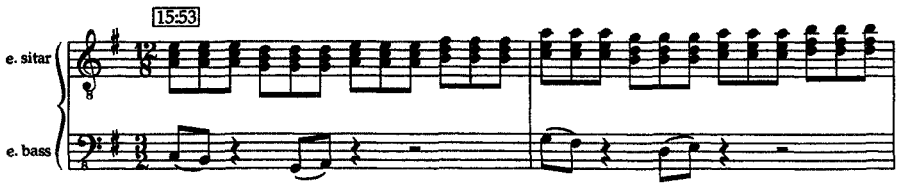
On the return of the verse passage at the start of the second A section (6:03ff.), the metric dissonance set up (or at least suggested) in the earlier passage is further developed (see ex. 1.3). While the Coral sitar (and vocals) remain in 12/8, the bass (and drums) are now in 4/2. But the repeating lengths, or "cycles," of these two metric levels no longer align, and the parts move in and out of synchronization according to a predictable pattern; that is, after eight bars of 12/8 and six bars of 4/2, the parts once again begin together. Unlike in the previous passage, the listener will now likely have great difficulty reducing the rhythmic patterns in the sitar and vocals to syncopations within 4/2, owing mostly to the lack of an aligned downbeat at the beginning of each measure.

After the lengthy B section, the A section returns at 14:59ff. with an instrumental verse, in this case a Rick Wakeman Hammond organ solo. One may note on the recording that Wakeman takes his metrical cue from the bass and drums, which are back in 3/2 as they were earlier. The electric guitar, now playing the part previously played on the Coral sitar, remains in 12/8 as before.

Following the organ solo the vocals return for the verse at 15:53ff. (see ex. 1.4), and there are some important changes in this passage. The piano is now doubling the Coral sitar and with the vocals and sitar is in 12/8. The bass part is very similar to the line that occurs in the second A section, except that bassist Chris Squire has trimmed the figure metrically so that it is no longer in 4/2 but in 3/2. This change thus aligns the new figure with the beginning of each 12/8 bar. While previously the



Example 1.3. Nonaligned meters between parts in A'-section verse

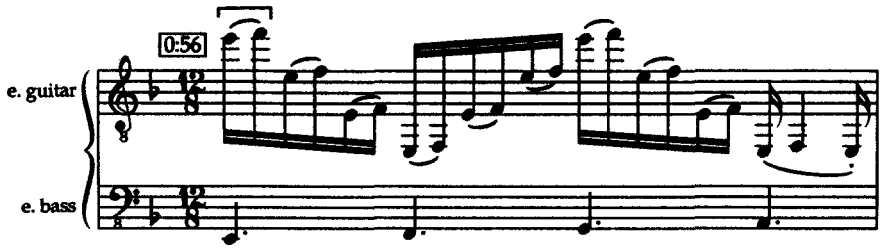


Example 1.4. Realigned meters in A"-section verse

3/2 meter seemed to dominate, now the 12/8 seems to take over, or at least to compete more effectively for the listener's metric orientation.

By directly comparing these four verse passages with one another in sequence, the techniques of variation at work across these passages become apparent. It is certainly not exceptional for rock musicians to rearrange the instrumentation in a tune from verse to verse, adding and changing parts along the way. In fact, it is fairly typical for rock arrangements to add something new to each statement of the verse, usually building up the arrangement to drive toward the ending. But in "Close to the Edge" one observes something more sophisticated than just building up an arrangement: here a musical issue is taken up. In the first A section the two metric levels are established or at least suggested. In the second section (A') these levels clearly establish a metric dissonance. In the third statement (organ solo, A") there is a return to the metric structure of the first verse statement; and in the fourth statement (vocal verse, A") the metric dissonance set up by the second statement is reconciled as the parts become aligned metrically. Over the course of the piece, therefore, verse sections do not simply return, they also develop; and, of course, variation according to some principle of development is a well-documented feature of much eighteenth- and nineteenth-century art music.[38] Thus we can see, in the unfolding of these four verses across some fifteen minutes of music, a long-range developmental strategy at work that invokes a familiar art-music practice. It is important to point out as well that the music involved in this development makes no significant stylistic reference to classical music on the surface; it is rather at the level of large-scale structure that the reference to art music is to be found. Stylistic and structural reference to art music can thus be seen to be independent of one another.

The preceding discussion has suggested that "Close to the Edge" falls basically into a four-part scheme. This scheme is supported by the return of the A sections and the presence of a contrasting B section and can be seen to refer back to rock song form through the use of strophic verse and chorus (or refrain). The use of bridge material to extend the verse sections is also traceable to rock sources.[39] In addition, the overall A A' B A" scheme can be traced back to the thirty-two-bar song form found in so many Tin Pan Alley tunes.[40] But it is also possible to detect features of an overarching two-part design, with the second section beginning at what I have labeled B in figure 1.1; and thinking of this piece in terms of a large two-part structure makes possible the further extension of the preceding argument suggesting the working out of a large-scale strategy. This two-part formal perspective hinges on interpreting the second part of the song as constituting, to some degree, a recomposition of the first part. In order to support that view, one must view the B



Example 1.5. E-F motive in the introduction

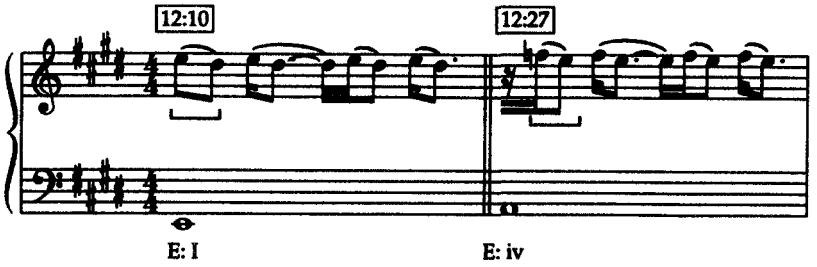
section as in some way reworking—or at least recalling in some significant way—the long instrumental introduction that begins the piece.

Let us take a closer look at the introduction (0:56ff.). The bass part for most of the introduction—that is, up to what has been termed the "Close to the Edge theme"—is based on an ascending scale that might be called the second mode of D harmonic minor and that forms the basis of the bass's opening material.[41] In the first subsection of the introduction, Chris Squire plays this scale in a slow stepwise ascent over the three octaves available to him on his Rickenbacker electric bass; he pauses in this steady ascent only twice, both times on the "tonic" pitch-class E. The guitar plays an angular figure based on the half step E–F (see ex. 1.5). As the introduction continues the bass falls into an ostinato pattern based on the exotic E scale, as guitarist Steve Howe improvises using scalar patterns freely derived from the D-minor scale patterns.[42]

Now let us now compare the opening of the introduction with the beginning of the B section (8:28ff.). The B section opens with a static section in E (again, not the traditional E major, though the E-major pitch-class collection is the basis for it). In contrast to the multivoice texture and exotic E tonality of the introduction, here one notes a tonal stasis and a floating, "focusless" texture in which sounds fade in and out of the soundscape. This section arrives through the motivic F–E half step played by the bass.

At 9:48 a new verse begins that ultimately forms the focus of the B section. This new material does not seem to be a recomposition of previous material in an obvious way, but I will return to an analysis of these B-section verses below. As the third B-section verse comes to its conclusion, an organ interlude begins that restates the half-step motive of the introduction, here transposed down a half step to occur at E–D♯ (see ex. 1.6). As the interlude continues, the half-step motive is transposed to F–E, recalling the pitch level of the introduction. The motive then returns to E–D♯ at the end of the interlude. This organ interlude returns after the "I get up, I get down" vocal climax of the B section, where it is extended somewhat (see 12:10ff.).

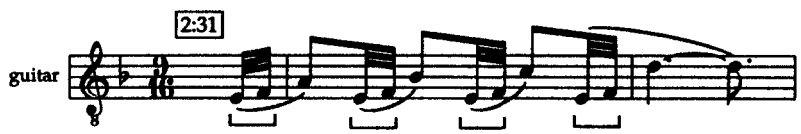
A third associative connection between the introduction and the B section may be found in the "Close to the Edge theme" that appears in both sections, as well as in the material that leads up to that theme. Consider the passage that introduces the theme in the introduction (2:45ff.; see ex. 1.7). With the E–F motive as the bottom voice in a compound melodic figure, the top voice ascends A–B♭–C–D. Now compare that passage with the keyboard fanfare that directly precedes the return of the



Example 1.6. E–D♯ and F–E motive in B-Section church-organ interlude

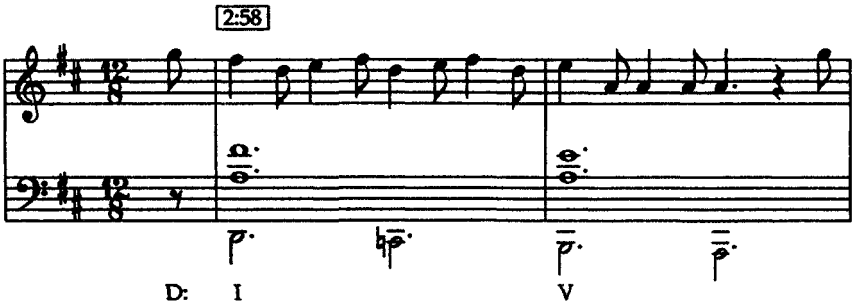
"Close to the Edge" theme (13:50ff.); example 1.8 shows the synthesizer part. By comparing examples 1.7 and 1.8, one may note that the second passage is motivically derived from the first: the common compound melodic figuration and the stepwise ascent of the top voice make the reference very clear.

Let us turn now to the "Close to the Edge theme" itself as it appears in the introduction (2:58ff.; see ex. 1.9). The theme appears four times in the introduction, alternately in D major and D minor. The same theme appears at the end of the B section in a transformed but easily identifiable form (14:11ff.). The return of the "Close to the Edge" theme at the end of the B section and the transformation of the material that leads up to that return constitute a recomposition of the latter portion of the introduction. The recall of the half-step motive, both transposed and at its original pitch-class level, constitutes a significant recall of the first portion of the introduction. Considering, in addition, the common tonic E shared by the introduction and the B section, the overarching two-part scheme becomes more attractive analytically than it might at first appear. In addition, the final return of the A section can be viewed as a kind of telescoped return of the initial two A sections, with the organ solo serving as the return of the first A section and the vocal verses serving as the return of



Example 1.7. E–F motive in the lead-in to the "CLose to the Edge" theme

Example 1.8. Synthesizer lead-in to the reset "Close to the Edge" theme



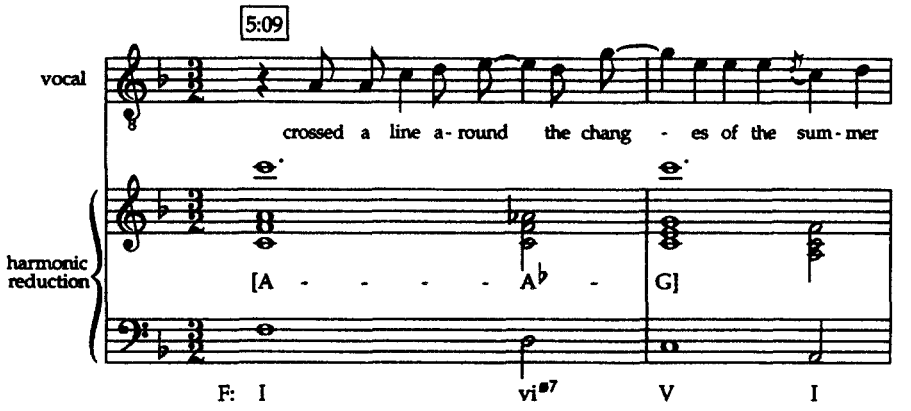
Example 1.9. "Close to Edge" theme in the introduction

the second A section. The metric analysis presented earlier tends to support this reading of the final A section: the instrumental verses correspond metrically to the first A section, and the vocal verses correspond to the second section.

This large two-part division in "Close to the Edge" corresponds to a similar formal division that occurs in other songs from both the *Close to the Edge* and *Fragile* albums. "Heart of the Sunrise" begins with a substantial instrumental introduction that returns and is developed with new material. "And You and I" features a return of the guitar introduction, which serves as a clear divider in an overall two-part design. Despite these similarities in structural design, however, no previous Yes number achieves the scale and complexity of "Close to the Edge," and in this sense the track constitutes a new point of arrival in terms of formal design—a point toward which, following Bill Bruford's remarks above, the previous music seemed to be leading.

But, as mentioned above, the structure of the song can in part be seen to enact in musical terms certain ideas that are central to the Hermann Hesse novel that inspired the lyrics. *Siddhartha* is set in India during the time of Buddha and chronicles the life of the young Brahmin Siddhartha from about the age of eighteen to the age of sixty. Throughout the novel Hesse returns to two themes that have some bearing on "Close to the Edge": the contrast of the world of the spirit and intellect with that of the senses and the idea that the unity of all things is experienced in a realm of timelessness. The book consists of twelve chapters laid out according to a three-part scheme of four chapters each, in which Siddhartha experiences the life of the ascetic, life in the material and sensual world (as a successful merchant), and enlightenment by the river.[43] The river serves as a symbol of timelessness throughout the novel and is the central image around which the story unfolds.

I do not want to claim that "Close to the Edge" should be understood as a portrayal of the novel, its story, or any of its characters; Jon Anderson has been quick to deny any notion that his lyrics always tell a story or articulate a philosophical point of view.[44] Rather, I want to focus on the notion that the piece both plays out the dialectic of the material and physical versus the spiritual and intellectual, as well as suggest that the piece also captures an aspect of the timelessness that is so central to the novel. Let us begin by considering the contrast between the verse and bridge sections in the song. Each verse is set in A dorian; the melody in the voice is chantlike



Example 1.10. A–A♭–G motive in the A-section bridge

and, as was discussed earlier, a certain amount of rhythmic and metric tension is present (see ex. 1.2). The bridge sections, by contrast, are in major keys (though in different keys at each appearance), with a far more conventional melodic contour in the voice; there is no unusual rhythmic tension, and the harmonic progression suggests that traditional voice leading is operative (see ex. 1.10). One could, then, view the verse as in some way capturing a kind of chaotic and perhaps primitive material realm, while the bridge stands for a more refined and even more life-affirming spiritual realm. The lyrics in these sections tend to reinforce this interpretation; consider, for instance, the following lyrics from the A-section verse:

A seasoned witch could call you from the depths of your disgrace
And rearrange your liver to the solid mental grace
And achieve it all with music that came quickly from afar
Then taste the fruit of man recorded losing all against the hour

These images tend to focus on being lost amid the confusion of material existence, contrasting "the depths of your disgrace" with the prospect of attaining "the solid mental grace." Perhaps, as in the novel, the "music that came quickly from afar" is the holy Om pronounced by the river itself.

By contrast, the bridge lyrics tend to be concerned more with images of a higher and simpler vision. Consider these lyrics drawn from the A-section bridge:

Getting over all the times I had to worry
Leaving all the changes far from far behind
We relieve the tension only to find out the master's name

The chorus then follows with:

Down at the end, round by the corner
Close to the edge, just by the river
Seasons will pass you by
I get up, I get down
Now that it's all over and done, now that you find, now that you're whole

In the bridge the tension of the chaotic material world is left "far from far behind," and enlightenment is reached when one "finds out the master's name." In the chorus we learn that all of this occurs "close to the edge, just by the river" and that in this timeless vision, "seasons will pass you by." The recurring lyric "I get up, I get down" could refer to the heights and depths of the human experience; certainly in Hesse's novel, Siddhartha experiences both in their fullest pain and glory.

The passage that runs "now that it's all over and done," however, suggests a topic that lyricist Anderson has described as one of the initial impulses of the song. In a radio interview, Anderson remarked: "The lyrical content became a kind of dream sequence in a way. The end verse is a dream that I had a long time ago about passing on from this world to another world, yet feeling so fantastic about it that death never frightened me ever since. I think in the early days when I was small I used to be frightened of this idea of not being here; where else can there be if there isn't a 'here'? And it just seemed a matter of course that death [is just as much] a beautiful experience for a man to physically go through as being born is."[45] One of the crucial scenes in *Siddhartha* is a near-death scene in which Siddhartha, thoroughly disgusted with himself after twenty years of life as an increasingly wealthy but also increasingly decadent merchant, decides to drown himself in the river:

> A chilly emptiness in the water reflected the terrible emptiness in his soul. Yes, he was at the end. There was nothing more for him but to efface himself, to destroy the unsuccessful structure of his life, to throw it away, mocked at by the gods. That was a deed which he longed to commit, to destroy the form which he hated! Might the fishes devour him, this dog of a Siddhartha, this corrupted and rotting body, this sluggish and misused soul! . . .
>
> With a distorted countenance he stared into the water. He saw his face reflected, and spat at it; he took his arm away from the tree trunk a little, so that he could fall headlong and finally go under. He bent, with closed eyes—towards death.
>
> Then from a remote part of his soul, from the past of his tired life, he heard a sound. It was one word, one syllable, which without thinking he spoke indistinctly, the ancient beginning and ending of all Brahmin prayers, the holy Om, which had the meaning of "the Perfect One" or "Perfection." At that moment, when the sound of Om reached his Siddhartha's ears, his slumbering soul suddenly awakened and he recognized the folly of his action.[46]

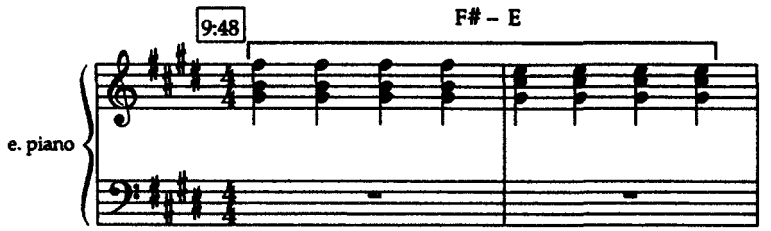
On the surface it is not immediately clear what Anderson's fascination with death as a "beautiful experience" and Siddhartha's narrow escape from it could hold in common. But in the novel, this scene occurs at just the point at which Siddhartha gives up a life of material wealth to become a simple ferryman on the river; the near suicide thus marks a point at which Siddhartha transcends material concerns to devote himself to a spiritual lifestyle. In a similar way, Anderson's vision of death is also a transformation into a higher consciousness and—in this case—into a purely spiritual state. The intersection between this important scene from the novel and Anderson's dream is the idea that there is a point of transition from the material to the spiritual; the verse and bridge, in both strictly musical terms and in the lyrics, can be seen to enact this crucial dialectical tension.

The same kind of contrast that occurs between the verse and chorus sections can be seen to be present at a much larger structural level, and extending this idea of

playing out the dialectical tension between the material and spiritual realms further reinforces the reading of the piece as a two-part form. Consider the introduction; with its exotic E tonality and overtly complicated—perhaps overly complicated—texture, it suggests the chaotic nature of the material world. As Howe's lead lines scurry frantically up and down the register of the guitar, the bass slowly unfolds the ascending scale and then breaks into a frenzied ostinato. This apparent chaos is interrupted twice by radical disruptions: vocal sonorities on "ah." The third disruption leads to the "Close to the Edge" theme, and through it, out of the introduction and on to the song proper. Now contrast this introduction with the B section: it is also centered on E, but here there is no frantic musical scurrying about; instead, a sustained and floating texture is achieved. Diatonic pitches fade in and out of the texture as Mellotron lines blend with melodic fragments from the guitar, acoustic piano, electric bass, and synthesizer bass pedals, all in a rich sea of reverb. Thought of in terms of the contrast discussed above, we can see that it is the introduction that captures the senseless whirr of the physical world and the B section that suggests the contrasting order, and perhaps even for a moment the timeless unity, of Siddhartha's spiritual vision.

As discussed above, there are a number of associations between the B section and the introduction; but the previous discussion deferred analysis of the three verses that occur in this B section, focusing instead on the church organ interlude, the fanfare, and the resetting of the "Close to the Edge" theme. But the verses can also be seen to be related to earlier material. A simple instance of this can be found in the piano chords that introduce the B-section verse. As example 1.11 shows, the upper voice of these chords articulates an alternation between F♯ and E, and this can be thought of as a major-key transformation of the opening E–F motive; this is all the more significant when one recalls that the organ interlude also recalles the E–F motive. But a more significant connection can be found between the harmonic progression found in the B-section verses and that of the A-section bridge and its variants. As example 1.10 shows, the harmonic progression of the first A-section bridge features a chromatic filling in of a major second, producing an A–A♭–G line in F major; this same filled-in second occurs in the A'-section bridge in G major (B–B♭–A) and in the A" bridge in B♭ (D–D♭–C). In the B-section verses, this chromatic filling in is taken up and expanded to span the interval of a fourth, from E down to B (see ex. 1.12).[47] This filled-in fourth occurs in each case directly after the articulation of the F♯–E motive and thus combines the transformed motive from the introduction with an expanded one from the bridge.

The connections both to the introduction and to the bridge sections are important in a consideration of how the dialectic operative between verse and bridge sections can be seen to be in effect between the introduction and B section. The transformation of the E–F motive to E–F♯ in the B section can be seen as reinforcing the notion of a transformation from the material realm into the spiritual one. The expansion of the filled-in seconds to filled-in fourths creates a stronger association between the B-section verses and the bridge sections. Since the bridge sections have been interpreted as characterizing the spiritual vision, it is possible to see the B-section verses as also suggesting the spiritual realm. The B-section verse lyrics gen-



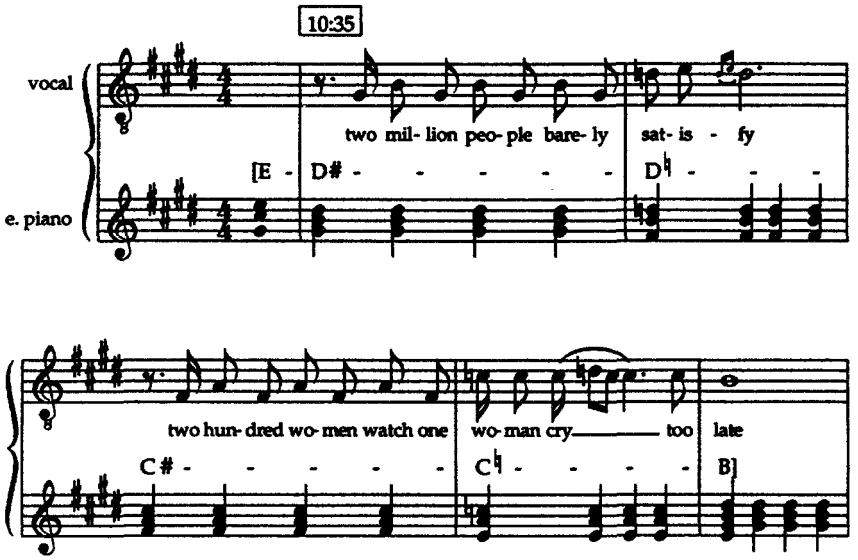
Example 1.11. F♯–E motive leading to the B-section verse

erally support this interpretation; consider, for instance, the following verse (the third of the three) from the B section:

In charge of who is there, in charge of me
Do I look on blindly and say I see the way
The truth is written all along the page
How old will I be before I come of age for you
I get up, I get down

Here, as in the bridge lyrics discussed above, there is the sense of participating in a mystical vision of the higher order of things—a vision very similar to ones that Siddhartha experiences in the latter third of the novel as he learns to listen to the river.

In terms of formal design, the B section can thus be seen to be a reworking of the introduction in an additional way to the ones described earlier in this chapter: the B section is a reinterpretation of the introduction in terms of an idea that is central to



Example 1.12. Filled-in fourth motive in the B-section verse

the Hesse novel. In this section, one might posit that the material realm (of the introduction) is transformed into the spiritual one, or, better, the spiritual nature of the material world is revealed through this transformation—and all of this is supported in terms of the music itself. As in Hesse's novel, perhaps, one sits by the river and understands the ultimate unity of all things.

The theme of timelessness is present in the lyrics of the bridge sections, as well as in the lyrics and the music of the B section. But there is an even larger-scale way in which the music can be seen to enact this idea. As was mentioned earlier, the piece fades in with bird and stream sounds and fades out with these same sounds at the end. Thinking about the overall structure of the piece, we can see that the first of the two large sections begins on E and ends, with the "Close to the Edge" fugato, at 8:28; this last subsection is in the key of C, but the final note in the guitar and bass figuration is F, which leads directly to the low E that begins the B section, and with it, the second large section of the piece. At its approximate midpoint then, the E–F motive is literally present as a way of reinitiating the music.

At the end of the second large section the last chorus is in F major, though the final chord of the piece is a IV in F, a B♭-major sonority. Still, that the piece ends in F is significant: if one were to loop the music from the end back to the beginning, the E–F motive, now thought of in terms of two key centers, would connect up the end with the beginning in a way that would parallel the way in which the first large section leads to the second (though, admittedly, this latter connection occurs in terms of pitch classes and not key centers). The piece then might be seen as a kind of loop or wheel at the largest level of formal structure.[48] Clearly, that the piece emerges out of taped sounds that suggest the timeless river of Hesse's novel, and that it retreats back into those same taped sounds, already indicates that the entire piece can itself be thought of as a kind of vision; and perhaps like the visions that occur in Arnold Schoenberg's *Erwartung* or *Die Glückliche Hand*, the almost seventeen minutes of music that make up "Close to the Edge" are really a kind of expansion of a mere moment in chronological time—the moment at which Siddhartha's soul awakens as he hears the holy Om. That the form of the piece at the largest level could then be seen to be circular further reinforces the overall connection of the music to Hesse's text: while at one level the piece unfolds in chronological time—and in so doing develops musical materials dynamically and teleologically—at another, perhaps higher level, the piece turns back on itself and explodes a moment in chronological time. It might be better to say that all the successive moments of chronological time collapse back into a larger synchronic vision.

4

The preceding analysis suggests that there are a number of features in the structure of "Close to the Edge" that correspond to structural features in Western art music: the piece unfolds a large-scale formal design reinforced by tonal, thematic, and rhythmic return and development. The piece can also be seen to take up central issues within the Hesse novel that in part inspired it. The lyrics reflect a concern with these issues, and the musical material itself can be seen to participate in pro-

jecting these issues in music-structural and -formal terms. At the largest level of structure, I would like to argue for a large circular form, divided at the approximately halfway point by a second beginning that transforms the first. It is also clear that in other ways one can detect elements of the thirty-two-bar AABA form so prevalent in popular song in this century, as well as elements of the strophic verse-refrain (with bridge) structure that is common in much rock music. Thus this analysis supports the claim that the fusion of classical and rock in this particular Yes piece is not restricted to surface features; indeed, in many of the passages upon which my analysis depends, there is no clear stylistic reference to art music on the surface at all. A fusion of the two styles of music occurs in the domain of structure, and at even the deepest level of formal structure "Close to the Edge" can be seen to resemble the formal structures of large works from the art-music tradition.

I do not want to claim, however, that this piece, by virtue of its use of structural modes of organization that are in some cases more characteristic of art music than of mainstream 1970s rock music, somehow thereby becomes art music in any traditional sense of this term. In fact, the essence of the aesthetic appeal of "Close to the Edge" is that it balances stylistically and structurally between the art music and rock worlds; "Close to the Edge" pushes at the stylistic boundary of 1970s rock by evoking the world of classical music, but ultimately it does not cross over into that world. It is, rather, the maintenance of this very tension between these two widely disparate styles that accounts for the compelling aesthetic effect of "Close to the Edge"; a reconciliation of these forces that would attempt to securely place the piece in either the world of rock music or that of art music would surely weaken the dynamic effect of the song.

By focusing my discussion on the structure of this piece, I also do not mean to imply that the stylistic intertextuality that occurs on the surface of the work is somehow subordinate aesthetically. These intertextual references—which, it should be noted, are by no means restricted to references to Western art music—play a crucial role in the aesthetic experience of a piece of Yes music. In fact, by working exclusively from the variety of stylistic references that occur in Yes music, one might just as easily label passages "jazz rock," "Latin rock," or even "country rock" or "folk rock."[49] But it is stylistic reference to art music that most distinguishes progressive rock from other styles of popular music, and this is an important and distinctive feature of Yes music. As the preceding analysis has shown, the networks of stylistic and structural reference in "Close to the Edge" can be distinguished from one another; certainly both networks are present in the work and are mutually reinforcing, but they can also be seen in many cases to be operating relatively independently.

"Close to the Edge," then, is a piece that challenges the listener's sense of stylistic boundary. And the piece not only challenges the often tacitly assumed line that may be supposed to separate rock music from art music; its attempt at stylistic fusion also led the group to test the boundaries of popular acceptance within the rock music community of musicians, critics, and listeners. After the recording of *Close to the Edge*, Yes began work on its seventh album, *Tales from Topographic Oceans*, released in January 1974.[50] *Tales* was a double LP that featured one song on each side and thus four songs on the scale of "Close to the Edge." Playing on the title of the earlier album, critics attacked the new release as going "over the edge."[51] But *Tales*

from Topographic Oceans takes up structurally where "Close to the Edge" left off and can be viewed in retrospect as a logical outgrowth of the musical concerns that had produced the earlier albums.[52] While "Close to the Edge" was inspired by Hesse's novel, *Tales from Topographic Oceans* was inspired by a commentary on the four Vedas that Anderson found in a footnote in Paramahansa Yogananda's *Autobiography of a Yogi.*[53] Despite constituting a logical extension of "Close to the Edge," both musically and in terms of lyrics, *Tales* was not a popular success, and the Yes drive toward complexity and expansiveness led it to a fork in the road where one path must have seemed to lead to artistic growth and satisfaction and the other to continued commercial success.[54] The direction that Yes decided to go is clear from its next studio album:[55] the first side of *Relayer* contains a single track, "The Gates of Delirium," inspired by Tolstoy's *War and Peace.* Thus the *Close to the Edge* album cannot be seen as the ultimate point of arrival in the group's drive to blend art music and rock. The LP does emerge historically, however, as the album with which Yes pushed its classical-rock fusion to the limits of popular acceptance, thus defining at least one boundary of commercial rock in the 1970s.

Other progressive groups followed a path similar to the one taken by Yes: Both Jethro Tull's *A Passion Play* and Genesis's *A Lamb Lies Down on Broadway* were attacked by critics as overindulgent; yet both albums might be seen as logical extensions of the albums that preceded them. Yes, then, was not the only group to push at both the boundaries of rock and art music as well as at the boundaries of commercial success. This brings us back to some of the central questions that were posed earlier in this chapter concerning progressive rock generally: how successful is this music at blending rock and art-music practice? And does this stylistic interaction occur only at the surface of the music or also at a deeper, structural level?

In the case of "Close to the Edge," this analysis has shown that the interaction between styles does indeed occur in the domains of large-scale structure and form. I have also suggested along the way that this piece extends formal structures to be found in earlier Yes music and that such structural concerns are evident in the pieces that follow "Close to the Edge." Others have suggested that the music of Jethro Tull, Genesis, ELP, King Crimson, and Gentle Giant also engages the art-music tradition in ways that affect form and structure.[56] But as suggestive as this research is, work on the progressive rock repertory is still in the preliminary stages; much more detailed analytical work needs to be done to more fully substantiate claims for large-scale structure and form in 1970s progressive rock in a broad sense. And, as I outlined above, two decades of progressive rock music have followed the first wave of the 1970s; most of this music is yet to be accounted for historically, let alone music-analytically. This chapter, then, may be seen as taking another step toward a fuller consideration of progressive rock—a fuller consideration that I am confident will continue to unfold in academic writing in popular music over the next several years.

Notes

An earlier version of this chapter was delivered at the 1992 conference "Popular Music: The Primary Text," held at Thames Valley University, London, 3–5 July.

1. For the use of "classical rock," see David P. Szatmary, *Rockin' in Time: A Social History of Rock and Roll*, 2d ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1991), 201–2. For "art rock," see Charles T. Brown, *The Art of Rock and Roll*, 2d ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1987), 179–92; Katherine Charton, *Rock Music Styles: A History*, 2d ed. (Madison, Wisc.: Brown & Benchmark, 1994), 192–206); David Joyner, *American Popular Music* (Madison, Wisc.: Brown & Benchmark, 1993), 279–86; Allan F. Moore, *Rock: The Primary Text* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1993), 79–87; Joe Stuessy, *Rock and Roll: Its History and Stylistic Development*, 2d ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1994), 274–300; and Ed Ward, Geoffrey Stokes, and Ken Tucker, *Rock of Ages: The Rolling Stone History of Rock and Roll* (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Rolling Stone Press, 1986), 480–83. For "progressive rock," see Edward Macan, *Rockin' the Classics: English Progressive Rock and the Counterculture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), and Jon Pareles and Patricia Romanowski, *The Rolling Stone Encyclopedia of Rock and Roll* (New York: Rolling Stone Press, 1983), 447–48. For "symphonic rock," see Dan Hedges, *Yes: The Authorised Biography* (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1981), 62.

In this study I will use the term "progressive rock," principally because those involved in the recent resurgence of interest in this style (as discussed briefly in the text later) have adopted this term universally.

2. Macan provides a thorough account of the history of progressive rock during this period in his *Rockin' the Classics*.

3. See Wilfrid Mellers, *Twilight of the Gods: The Music of the Beatles* (New York: Viking Press, 1973), 86. Mellers also states this position succinctly in the Beatles video documentary *The Compleat Beatles* (Delilah Films, 1982).

4. The Beatles, *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, Parlophone 7027/Capitol 2635 (1967). In his essay in this book, Dan Harrison explores the relationship between the Beatles and the Beach Boys in the period surrounding the release of the Beatles' *Sgt. Pepper*, the Beach Boys' "Good Vibrations," and the ill-fated *Smile* LP.

5. Peter and Gordon, "Lady Godiva," Capitol 5740 (1966); Herman's Hermits, "I'm Henry VIII, I Am," MGM 13367 (1965); the Beatles, "Eleanor Rigby," on *Revolver*, Parlophone 7009/Capitol 2576 (1966); and the Rolling Stones, "Lady Jane," London 902 (1966). For a consideration of the use of classical-music instrumentation in late British-invasion and psychedelic music, see my "Stylistic Competencies, Musical Humor, and 'This is Spinal Tap,'" in *Concert Music, Rock, and Jazz since 1945: Essays and Analytical Studies*, ed. Elizabeth West Marvin and Richard Hermann (Rochester, N. Y.: University of Rochester Press, 1995), pp. 402–24.

6. The Beatles, "Norwegian Wood," on *Rubber Soul*, Parlophone 3075/Capitol 2442 (1965). David Pichaske (*A Generation in Motion: Popular Music and Culture in the Sixties* [New York: Schirmer, 1979], 96) considers the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and his contact with the Beatles (among others) to be an important factor in directing the attention of late-'60s popular culture to Eastern religion and music. Later in his book Pichaske (171) quotes sitar virtuoso Ravi Shankar on the blending of Indian music and religion with hippie culture. According to Shankar, aspects of Indian culture were understood in a very superficial way, leading to gross distortions of these imported musical elements. For an interesting, if informal, discussion of the relationship between Eastern mysticism and psychedelic drugs in Beatles music, see Davin Seay with Mary Neely, *Stairway to Heaven: The Spiritual Roots of Rock 'n' Roll* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1986), 123–55.

7. Procol Harum, "A Whiter Shade of Pale," Deram 7507 (1967). Richard Middleton

(Studying Popular Music [Buckingham: Open University Press, 1990], 30) reports that the basic harmonic progression and organ melody in this tune are borrowed from a Bach cantata. Considering the stylistic eclecticism outlined here, it is perhaps not surprising to find Charlie Gillett (*Sound of the City: The Rise of Rock and Roll,* 2d ed. [New York: Pantheon, 1983], 394–95) pointing out that Percy Sledge's "When a Man Loves a Woman" (Atlantic 2326 [1966]) was "a vital inspiration behind the arrangement."

8. For a discussion of these attitudes about progressive rock, see Ward, Stokes, and Tucker, *Rock of Ages,* 480–82. Some idea of the kinds of things that were being written at the time can be found in a review by music critic Robert Sheldon, "Yes: Rainbow Theatre," *London Times,* 23 Nov. 1973. In assessing a Yes performance of its then recently released *Tales from Topographic Oceans* (discussed later), Sheldon is effusive about the historical importance of the music. He writes that Yes's music might best be termed "rockophonic" and that side three of the two-LP release will be studied twenty-five years hence as a turning point in modern music. In an interview with lead vocalist Jon Anderson and bassist Chris Squire that appeared less than a month later, Anderson uses the term "rockophonic," suggesting that he had read Sheldon's review. See Chris Welch, "Yes Weather the Storm," *Melody Maker,* 15 Dec. 1973. A more moderate summary of progressive rock's relation to the art-music tradition can be found in "Rock Goes to College," *Time,* 23 Sept. 1974, 90–91. A perceived air of pretentiousness among progressive-rock musicians is likely what prompts John Rockwell to dismiss Yes's music as "convoluted pop mysticism." See his "The Emergence of Art Rock," in *The Rolling Stone Illustrated History of Rock and Roll,* ed. Anthony DeCurtis, James Henke, and Holly George-Warren (New York: Random House, 1992), 493–94. Discussing the Moody Blues, Rockwell pronounces: "Although Moody Blues devotees seemed to think they were getting something higher toned than mere rock, they were kidding themselves: Moody Blues records were mood music, pure and regrettably not so simple. There's nothing wrong with that, of course, except for the miscategorization into something more profound" (494).

9. Yes's music is discussed later. For extended pieces by Jethro Tull, see *Thick as a Brick,* Reprise 2072 (1972), and *A Passion Play,* Chrysalis PV 41040 (1973). The formal design of *Thick as a Brick* is discussed by Nors S. Josephson in his "Bach Meets Liszt: Traditional Formal Structures and Performance Practices," *Musical Quarterly* 76/1 (1992): 67–92; see pp. 75–77 especially. Josephson views this piece as a cyclical variation form. For a discussion of the use of a number of art-music practices in progressive rock, see Edward Macan, "'The Spirit of Albion' in Twentieth-Century English Popular Music: Vaughan Williams, Holst, and the Progressive-Rock Movement," *Music Review* 53/2 (1992): 100–125.

10. Genesis, *A Lamb Lies Down on Broadway,* Atco SD2-401 (1974). Genesis's rock opera was not the first, however; the first rock opera was the Who's *Tommy* (Decca 7205 [1969]). The Who album made a tremendous impact on members of Genesis; remembering the period surrounding the recording and release of the group's first album, *From Genesis to Revelation* (Decca SKL 4990 [1969]), ex-Genesis lead vocalist Peter Gabriel relates how excited he was that one reviewer compared him to Who lead vocalist Roger Daltry: "That was the best review we got. It was incredibly exciting because it [*Tommy*] was my bible at the time." See Spencer Bright, *Peter Gabriel: An Authorised Biography* (London: Headline, 1989), 35.

11. Several cuts from the many Gentle Giant albums could be brought forward to illustrate the group's employment of traditional contrapuntal practice, but an especially good example is the first section of "On Reflection" (*Free Hand,* Capitol ST-11428 [1975]), a four-voice fugal exposition. Allan Moore discusses Gentle Giant's music briefly in his *Rock: The Primary Text,* 100–103. A transcription of "On Reflection" by Geir Hasnes appears in *Proclamation: The Occasional Gentle Giant Newsletter* 3 (Aug. 1993): 36–40. King Crimson's music is discussed in detail in Eric Tamm, *Robert Fripp: From King Crimson to Guitar Craft* (Boston: Faber and Faber, 1990).

12. Yes, "Awaken," on *Going for the One*, Atlantic 19106 (1977); Emerson, Lake, and Palmer, "Pirates," on *Works, Volume 1*, Atlantic 7000 (1977); Talking Heads, "Take Me to the River," Sire 1032 (1978); and Joe Jackson, "Is She Really Going Out with Him?" A&M 2132 (1979). That the new-wave songs were released as singles and the progressive songs were album tracks also betrays part of the aesthetic difference between these two styles: new-wave artists returned to the pop-single format of the 1960s, while progressive rockers had always tended to produce album tracks of extended duration.

13. For a detailed discussion of the punk-rock movement in Britain, see Dave Laing, *One-Chord Wonders: Power and Meaning in Rock* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1985). Greil Marcus was among the first to write about punk rock from the American side; see his "Anarchy in the UK," in *The Rolling Stone Illustrated History*, 594–607.

14. Of course, this return to the use of earlier and in many ways less sophisticated musical instruments was accompanied by a return to mid-1960s fashions. Perhaps the most extreme instance of this is the return of the beehive hairstyle sported by Cindy Wilson and Kate Pierson of the new-wave B-52s. For a discussion of the new-wave movement, see Ken Tucker's "Alternative Scenes: America," and "Alternative Scenes: Britain," both in *The Rolling Stone Illustrated History*, 573–78 and 579–85.

15. A comparison of, say, Yes's *Going for the One* with the Cars' first album, *The Cars* (Elektra 6E-135 [1978]), reveals that the Cars album is at least as well recorded and produced as the Yes one. Interestingly, Roy Thomas Baker produced this Cars album and later briefly worked with Yes on an album project that was never finished owing to a temporary break-up of the band in 1980. See Hedges, *Yes*, 128.

16. Yes, "Owner of a Lonely Heart," Atco 99817 (1983). This single appears on Yes's *90125* (Atco 90125 [1983]), which was produced by Trevor Horn. Horn had joined Yes to replace vocalist Jon Anderson for Yes's *Drama* album (Atlantic 16019 [1980]), along with Geoff Downes, who replaced Rick Wakeman. Together and aside from Yes, Horn and Downes constituted the techno-pop band called The Buggles and recorded two albums: one before they joined Yes (*The Age of Plastic*, Island ILPS 9585 [1980]) and one after (*Adventures in Modern Recording*, Carrere PZ 37926 [1981]). The Buggles' video to their "Video Killed the Radio-Star" has the distinction of being the first video ever played on MTV. Needless to say, the addition of the techno-pop Buggles to the Yes line-up was seen as a drastic departure by many progressive-rock fans, though the *Drama* LP remains very much within the progressive-rock style. The Buggles subsequently rerecorded a track they had done with Yes, "Into the Lens," renaming it "I Am a Camera"; this second version appears on *Adventures in Modern Recording*, and a comparison of the two highlights the differences between the Buggles and Yes styles.

17. Asia, "Heat of the Moment," Geffen 50040 (1982), which also appears on the album *Asia*, Geffen 2008 (1982). The second Asia album, *Alpha* (Geffen 4008 [1983]), spent eleven weeks on the top forty album chart; the single from that album, "Don't Cry" (Geffen 29571 [1983]), rose as high as number ten on the singles charts.

18. The Mellotron is an instrument that employs a standard keyboard to control taped sounds; the standard sounds employed in the late '60s and '70s tended to be orchestral strings, choral voices, and recorders. As one presses down on each key, one actually triggers a tape of, for instance, orchestral violins playing that pitch. For a thorough description of the Mellotron, as well as all of the synthesizers that played such a crucial role in the music of the original progressive rockers, see Mark Vail, *Vintage Synthesizers: Groundbreaking Instruments and Pioneering Designers of Electronic Music Synthesizers* (San Francisco: Miller Freeman Books, 1993).

19. Marillion's "Kayleigh" (EMI Maril 3 [1985]) went to number two, while "Lavender" (EMI Maril 4 [1985]) rose as high as number five and "Incommunicado" (EMI Maril 4 [1987]) to number six. Their third album, *Misplaced Childhood* (EMI MRL 2 [1985]), reached

number one in the British album charts and remained in the top one hundred for forty-one weeks.

20. A short listing of some of the new progressive groups would include Anekdoten, Landberk, and Ånglagård (Sweden); White Willow (Norway); Devil Doll and Deus ex Machina (Italy); Happy Family (Japan); and Cairo, Magellan, and echolyn (U.S.). But even the most cursory glance through progressive-rock magazines such as *Progression*, *i/e*, or *Exposé*—or through the mail-order catalogs of the Laser's Edge (New Jersey), ZNR Records (Kentucky), or Syn-Phonic (California)—will reveal the tremendous number of currently active progressive-rock groups. Greg Walker's January 1996 Syn-Phonic catalog lists approximately 2,000 CDs by groups, both active and defunct, from thirty-five countries around the world.

21. It is difficult to assess the current size of the progressive-rock underground community, but it would seem that it is still small by the standards of the popular-music industry. Almost all of the new progressive groups record either for small independent labels or release their music themselves. One notable exception to this is the American group echolyn, whose recent *as the world* CD (Sony BK 57623 [1995]) was released by the corporate giant Sony.

22. An interesting development in the mid-1990s has been the return of some of the original principal groups to the progressive-rock style. ELP returned to the scene with their *Black Moon* CD (Victory 383 480 003–2 [1992]), featuring a characteristic reworking of music from Prokofiev's ballet *Romeo and Juliet*. King Crimson's recent CDs, *Vrooom* (Discipline Records 9401 2 [1994], *Thrak* (Virgin 7243 8 40312 2 9 [1995]), and *B'Boom: Official Bootleg—Live in Argentina 1994* (Discipline Records 9503 [1995]), in many ways constitute an unmistakable return to their early-1970s style. At current writing, reunion albums are being planned by Gentle Giant, UK, and Yes (featuring the 1970s group members).

23. Keith Emerson, liner notes to the Nice, *Five Bridges*, Mercury SR-61295 (1969).

24. Jon Anderson, "Yes Split to Stay Fresh" (interview), in *Manchester Evening News*, 7 Dec. 1973. In the recent Yes video documentary, *Yesyears: A Retrospective* (Atco Video 50250–3 [1991]), keyboardist Rick Wakeman also remarks that during the early to mid-1970s Yes attempted to construct its songs according to structural principles drawn from Western art music.

25. This quotation appears in Tamm, *Robert Fripp*, 30–31. These remarks originally appeared in Bill Milkowski, "Fripp: I Take My Iconic Role of Being Robert Fripp, Public Guitarist, Quite Seriously," *Guitar World* 5/5 (Sept. 1984): 28. After correspondence with Fripp, Tamm has edited these remarks slightly and Tamm's version is quoted here.

26. How these musicians came to form their ideas about what makes music "classical" is an interesting sociomusicological question that lies beyond scope of this chapter. Edward Macan deals with this issue in some detail in chap. 6 of his *Rockin' the Classics*.

27. See, for instance, Emerson, Lake, and Palmer's *Pictures at an Exhibition* (Cotillion 66666 [1971]), which is not only based on Mussorgsky's piece but includes "Nut Rocker," a version of the march from Tchaikovsky's ballet *The Nutcracker* as an encore. In this case, ELP is actually covering a version done by the American instrumental group B. Bumble and the Stingers; this earlier version (Top Rank JAR 611 [1962]) hit number one in the British charts in April 1962.

28. Yes, *Close to the Edge*, LP format: Atlantic 19133 (1972); original CD format: Atlantic SD 19133–2 (n.d.); digitally remastered on CD: Atlantic 82666–2 (n.d). A different digital remastering can be found on the *Yesyears* retrospective box set (Atco 7 91644–2 [1991]). All of these are versions of the same studio recording. Live versions of "Close to the Edge" can be found on Yes, *Yessongs*, LP: Atlantic SD 3–100 (1973), CD: Atlantic 82682 (n.d.); Anderson, Bruford, Wakeman, and Howe, *An Evening of Yes Music Plus*, Caroline HER 006 (1994); and a wide variety of bootleg recordings. The two commercially released live versions can also be

found on the following videos, which correspond to the audio versions: *Yessongs*, VidAmerica 7033 (1984), and *An Evening of Yes Music Plus*, Griffin GVAB-108 (1994). An abridged arrangement of the piece for symphony orchestra can be found on *Symphonic Music of Yes*, RCA Victor 09026–61938–2 (1993).

29. Yes, *The Yes Album*, Atlantic 19131 (1971), and *Fragile*, Atlantic 19132 (1972).

30. Hedges, *Yes*, 68. Bruford left Yes to join King Crimson and was replaced by Alan White, who had played with numerous high-profile musicians—including John Lennon—in the period leading up to 1972.

31. On the original CD release, the lyrics, which had been printed on a green inner sleeve of the LP, were omitted, apparently a casualty of repackaging. The more recent digitally remastered version restores the lyrics, but not as they were packaged on the LP version.

32. Hedges, *Yes*, 68–69. Hedges quotes Howe to the effect that Howe's original song was "partially about the longest day of the year." Howe goes on to remark that "when you're writing for Yes, the whole integrity of holding on to things disappears. If the lick fits, you use it."

33. Timings are keyed to the studio version of "Close to the Edge" and will be given throughout as they occur on the original CD rerelease, which conforms to the newer digitally remastered version. To work from the digitally remixed version that is contained in the *Yesyears* box set, subtract 0:06 from each timing given.

34. The Coral electric sitar is an instrument manufactured by the Danelectro Company; it is tuned like a standard electric guitar, but a special bridge construction causes the instrument to produce a timbre somewhat like that of a sitar. See Tom Wheeler, *American Guitars: An Illustrated History*, rev. and updated ed. (New York: Harper Perennial, 1992), 16–21; for Steve Howe's discussion of this instrument, see his *The Steve Howe Guitar Collection* (San Francisco: GPI Books, 1993), 68–69.

35. See Robert Hatten, "The Place of Intertextuality in Music Studies," *American Journal of Semiotics* 3/4 (1985): 69–82, for a discussion of intertextuality in music. An extremely helpful survey of the uses of this term in literary criticism can be found in Thais E. Morgan, "Is There an Intertext in this Text? Literary and Interdisciplinary Approaches to Intertextuality," *American Journal of Semiotics* 3/4 (1985): 1–40. For applications of the concept of intertextuality to rock-music analysis, see my "Stylistic Competencies, Musical Humor, and 'This is Spinal Tap'" as well as "The Rutles and the Use of Specific Models in Musical Satire," *Indiana Theory Review* 11 (1990): 119–44. See also Philip Tagg, "Analyzing Popular Music: Theory, Method, and Practice," *Popular Music* 2 (1982): 37–67, which addresses this issue from a slightly different angle.

36. "Roundabout" and "South Side of the Sky" appear on *Fragile*; "Siberian Khatru" appears on *Close to the Edge*.

37. For a discussion of modes in rock music, see Moore, *Rock*, 47–50, as well as his "Patterns of Harmony," *Popular Music* 11/1 (1992): 73–106, and "The So-Called 'Flattened Seventh' in Rock," *Popular Music* 14/2 (1995): 185–201.

38. I am assuming a familiarity on the reader's part with the standard kinds of claims made by most twentieth-century music analysts about music in the "great German tradition"; clearly this literature is too vast for me to adequately reference here. For those less familiar with such claims, good introductions are provided by Nicholas Cook, *A Guide to Music Analysis* (New York: George Braziller, 1987), and Jonathan Dunsby and Arnold Whittall, *Music Analysis in Theory and Practice* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988).

39. For a discussion of typical formal elements in rock music, see Moore, *Rock*, 47–48.

40. For a discussion of standard form in popular songs, see Allen Forte, *The American Popular Ballad of the Golden Era, 1924–1950* (Princeton: Princeton Univrsity Press, 1995), 36–41, and Alec Wilder, *American Popular Song: The Great Innovators, 1900–1950*, ed. James T. Maher (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), 56.

41. If one takes a D harmonic minor scale—D–E–F–G–A–B♭–C♯–D—and, without changing any of the notes, merely respells the scale beginning and ending with E instead of D, one arrives at the following scale: E–F–G–A–B♭–C♯–D–E.

42. For readers wary of the exotic E-minorish tonality I suggest here, it is also possible to interpret the music as emphasizing ii° in D minor. In either reading, a strong emphasis on pitch-class E reinforces the two-part design discussed in the passages that follow.

43. For commentary on *Siddhartha* and these themes as they occur in the novel, see Theodore Ziolkowski, *The Novels of Hermann Hesse: A Study in Theme and Structure* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), 146–77; Edwin F. Casebeer, *Hermann Hesse* (New York: Warner Books, 1972), 23–54; and Joseph Mileck, *Hermann Hesse: Life and Art* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 159–72. Casebeer's preface is especially interesting since it was written in 1972 (the same year "Close to the Edge" was released) and addresses the popularity of Hesse's work within the hippie counterculture.

44. According to Dan Hedges, Jon Anderson has remarked: "Sometimes I'd just use a series of tantalizingly sounding words, but sometimes I'd get deeper into meaning and statement . . . I've had incredible conversations and get letters from people telling me what they think my words are all about. Who knows? Maybe they're right." See Hedges, *Yes*, 51.

45. This passage is transcribed in Thomas J. Mosbø, *Yes, But What Does It Mean? Exploring the Music of Yes* (Miltin, Wisc.: Wyndstar, 1994), 48; Anderson makes these remarks in a recorded interview titled "Yes Music: An Evening with Jon Anderson," which was released in 1977 by Atlantic records for use by radio stations. Mosbø engages in careful and comprehensive interpretations of the lyric to dozens of Yes songs, and my interpretation of "Close to the Edge" differs from his in some aspects. He also provides an analytical listening guide to the piece, which, though it is not technically specific in the way that my figure 1.1 is, still constitutes a very helpful guide (especially for the nonmusician).

46. Hermann Hesse, *Siddhartha*, trans. Hilda Rosner (New York: Bantam, 1971), 88–89.

47. It is probably coincidental that the chromatically filled-in seconds in the three bridge sections, when taken together, constitute a filled-in fifth from D down to G. Still, one might argue that by taking only the bridge and B-section verses into consideration, the following systematic unfolding of materials takes place: filled-in second from A to G; another filled-in second from B to A, creating an overall filled-in major third from B to G in bridge passages; a filled-in fourth from E to B in the B-section verses; and a resumption of the bridge-passage expansion with the filled-in second from D to C, completing and overall filling the fifth D down to G across bridge sections.

48. In all of the live versions that I have been able to check, the group plays the bridge and chorus (from 16:33 forward on figure 1.1) one whole step lower than on the studio version; in live performance an extra measure is added to smooth out this key change. This is presumably done to reduce the strain on Anderson's voice during live performance of the song. Thought of in terms of the point I am making here about the structure, one might wonder why, if the key relationship between the opposite ends of the piece was so crucial, the group would opt for such a modulation; this would seem to undercut the pitch-specific focus of my analysis at this point. But one might just as easily wonder why this last section would have been recorded to end in F in the first place. It is certainly possible that ending in F was important to the group for structural reasons (and could be accomplished in the studio) but was impractical under the demands an almost nightly performance schedule.

49. The beginning of "Sound Chaser" (*Relayer*, Atlantic 19135 [1974]) is perhaps the most pronounced instance of jazz-rock, perhaps owing to the influence of keyboardist Patrick Moraz, who replaced Wakeman on this LP. "To Be Over" from this same LP features pedal-steel guitar playing by Steve Howe that is unmistakably derived from country and western styles. The ending of Yes's cover version of Paul Simon's "America" (Atlantic 45–2854

[1972]) is in a Latin-rock style. The recent box set *Yesyears* contains a Yes version of the Stephen Sondheim–Leonard Bernstein song "Something's Coming" (Broadway rock?); this tune was originally the B side of a 1969 UK single that featured "Sweetness" as the A side (Atlantic 584280).

50. Yes, *Tales From Topographic Oceans*, Atlantic 2–908 (1974). Yes's sixth release was the three-LP live collection *Yessongs* (Atlantic 100 [1973]).

51. See Chris Welch, "Yes—Over the Edge," *Melody Maker*, 1 Dec. 1973 (concert review of *Tales*). Another review that plays on the title of *Close to the Edge* in a review of *Tales* is Steve Peacock, "Yes—Close to Boredom," in *Sounds*, 1 Dec. 1973. Chris Welch continues his word-play in "Yes: Adrift on the Oceans," *Melody Maker*, 1 Dec. 1973 (album review of *Tales*).

52. In a 1974 interview, bassist Chris Squire discusses the composition of *Tales*, revealing that sides one and three of the LP are motivically related. See Peter Erskine, "Hello Squire: Interview by Peter Erskine," *Sounds*, 19 Jan. 1974.

53. Paramahansa Yogananda, *The Autobiography of a Yogi* (Los Angeles: Self Realization Fellowship, 1946). The obvious affinity between Hesse's novel and the brand of Hindu religious and mystical philosophy that permeates Paramahansa's book make it clear why Anderson would have been intrigued by it. There is a further connection between *Tales* and the Beatles' proto-progressive *Sgt. Pepper*: among the many faces appearing on the *Sgt. Pepper* album cover are those of Parmahansa, his guru Sri Yukteswar, and the mysterious Babaji.

54. For an interesting discussion of the kinds of conflicting pressures to which rock musicians are subject, especially with regard to what he refers to as a pop versus rock distinction, see Simon Frith, *Sound Effects: Youth, Leisure, and the Politics of Rock 'n' Roll* (New York: Pantheon, 1983), 61–88.

55. It is at least clear what direction four of the five members of Yes decided to take. Keyboardist Rick Wakeman left the group due to his own misgivings about the musical path the group was on. As mentioned above, Wakeman was replaced on *Relayer* by Swiss keyboardist Patrick Moraz.

56. See Josephson, "Bach Meets Liszt"; Macan, "'The Spirit of Albion'"; and Tamm, *Robert Fripp*.

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