Abstract, Bibliography, and Musical Examples:

Embodied Expression in Bob Dylan's *Blood on the Tracks*

The songs of Bob Dylan offer a compelling opportunity to study embodied musical expression, particularly in songs that feature Dylan as a solo performer. Dylan's critically acclaimed album, *Blood on the Tracks* (1975), is comprised of songs all originally recorded with guitar in open-E tuning. Half of the ten songs were later arranged and re-recorded, but the original tracks with open-E guitar tuning are now available. This paper asserts the premise that all the songs on the album can be related to one basic guitar move: a fundamental gesture that is elaborated differently in each song. The analysis explores the songs of Dylan's *Blood on the Tracks* from the perspective of developing gestural variation, drawing from writings by Robert Hatten, David Lidov, and Eero Tarasti in order to explore how musical gestures contribute to embodied musical expression in the songs.

The use of open-E guitar tuning applies a constraint that narrows the field of choice for the songwriter-guitarist, indexing the harmonic and rhythmic content of the song more directly to the bodily connections between performer and instrument. Specific attributes in the corporeality of the guitar playing may project symbolic implications that support, amplify, or contradict attitudes of personae projected in Dylan's lyrics.[1] In "Shelter from the Storm," a powerful indexical relationship aligns embodied musical actions in the guitar playing with form-delineating rhythmic-harmonic tensions and the evolving narrative conveyed through the lyrics. (See Example 1.) The song projects a kind of anti-pastoral topic, in which love provides solace from a harsh and dangerous external world. The analysis explains the intermodal process through

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[1] This is comparable to the relationship between the persona and its environment in recorded popular song explored by Allen Moore (2005).

which a dynamic flux in image-schematic *containment* unites musical processes in the guitar playing, singing, and overall narrative trajectory of the song.[2] (See Figure 1.)

"Simple Twist of Fate" employs the same chords played in the same fretboard location as "Shelter from the Storm," but in a setting that is further elaborated harmonically, rhythmically, and formally. (See Example 2.) Directed stepwise voice leading in the guitar provides a lyrical accompaniment to Dylan's more speech-like declamatory vocal. In this manner, the guitar "sings" so that Dylan is free to distance his vocal persona, as if to comment as an observer. This distancing enhances the musical and social space for developing narrative in Dylan's balladic mode of storytelling. The single instance of a minor chord on the subdominant in the chord changes is a marked event. Played in a separate location on the fretboard requiring a move to higher strings, the minor chord interrupts gestural motion. The chord is charged with irony, as if to form an embodied representation of the "twist of fate" experienced by the characters depicted in the lyrics.

"Tangled Up in Blue" (Example 3) offers a further elaborated version of the fundamental guitar gesture while "Meet Me in the Morning" (Example 4) develops gestures through ironic resistance within a topical frame of traditional blues.

The study of gesture draws together diverse musical elements operating at different hierarchical levels. This paper explores dialectical oppositions in guitar riffs, in form-producing oppositions in verse and chorus, and in relationships in the grouping of songs and ensemble arrangements to comprise the complete album. (Please see Figure 2.)

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[2] While drawing upon the work of Larry Zbikowski (2002), Janna Saslaw (1996), and others who have employed image schematic models, my approach in tracking intermodal dynamic changes as a marker of narrative design is comparable to Eero Tarasti's approach (1994, 2002) in analyzing modalities in spatial, temporal, and actorial categories.
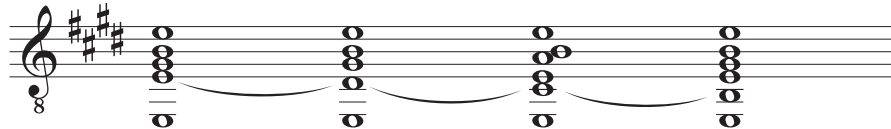
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Embodied Expression in Bob Dylan's *Blood on the Tracks*

Example 1. Bob Dylan. "Shelter from the Storm," *Blood on the Tracks*

a. Guitar chords (open E tuning)

b. Juncture between verses

Figure 1. Image schemata and cross-domain mapping

a. PATH TOWARD A GOAL

b. CYCLE
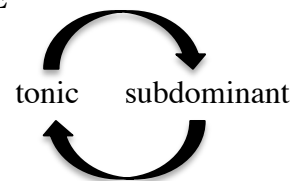
c. CONTAINMENT
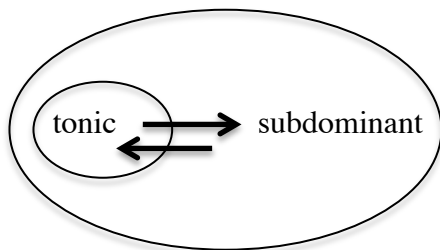
EXPANSION:
- movement outward from one boundary to another
- arm extension down the fretboard
- open-string dissonance
- *'Twas in another lifetime…*

RETURN:
- movement back within an initial boundary
- easing into tonic chord voicing
- open-string consonance
- *I came in from the wilderness…*

Example 2. Bob Dylan. "Simple Twist of Fate," *Blood on the Tracks*, guitar chords

```
        E      E/D#     E/D    A/C#       Am     E  E/D# A/C# (add9) E/B    B11    Esus4   E
  E |---0------0--------0------0---------0-----0---0----0----0------0------0-----0----0------|
  B |---0------0--------2------5---------0-----0---0----2----0------2------2-----0----0------|
 G# |---0------0--------0------1---------4-----0---0----1----1------0------1-----1----0------|
  E |---4------4--------4------0---------5-----4---4----0----0------0------2-----0----4------|
  B |---5------4--------3------2---------x-----5---4----2----2------0------0-----0----5------|
  E |---0------0--------0------x---------x-----0---x----x----x------x------x-----x----0------|
```

They sat together…   *…then he felt alone…*   *…a simple twist of fate.*

I   IV   iv   I   IV   V   I

Example 3. Bob Dylan. "Tangled Up in Blue," *Bootleg Series 1-3*, guitar chords

```
      verse:                         bridge:                    refrain:

        E    D/E          E Emaj9 A    F#m7  C#m       E       A      B11  Emaj7 B11   E
             (3x)                                      (2x)
  E |---5/7---7\5---||--0---0---0---||-0-----0------0---0---0----||--0----0----0----0-----|
  B |---7/9---9\7---||--0---0---2---||-2-----2------0---0---2----||--2----4----2----0-----|
 G# |---6/8---8\6---||--0---0---1---||-1-----0------0---0---1----||--1----3----1----0-----|
  E |---0-----0-----||--4---2---0---||-2-----2------4---2---0----||--2----4----2----4-----|
  B |---0-----0-----||--5---4---2---||-x-----2------5---4---2----||--0----0----0----5-----|
  E |---0-----0-----||--0---0---0---||-x-----0------0---0---0----||--x----0----x----0-----|
      (slide)
```

I had a job in the great north woods…   *But all the while I was alone…*   *…tangled up in blue.*

I   (VII)   I   IV   ii   vi   I   IV   V   I

Example 4. Bob Dylan. "Meet Me in the Morning," *Blood on the Tracks*

```
      Main riff:                                      chords:
           E                           A              B7       A7
  E |-------3^---0------0----------------0---||--5--------3------|
  B |-----------0---3--0--------0----2-------||--7--------5------|
 G# |-----------0---0--0--------0----1-------||--7--------5------|
  E |---0----------------------0-------------||--7--------5------|
  B |---------------------------------------||--x--------x------|
  E |---------------------------------------||--x--------x------|
          (bend)
```

I   IV   V   IV

Figure 2. *Blood on the Tracks:* Original recordings in open-E tuning and final album tracks

Key of song on album

Tangled Up In Blue	open E version, *Bootleg Series 1-3*	A major
Simple Twist of Fate	open E on album	E major
You're a Big Girl Now	open E version, *Biograph*	B minor to G major
Idiot Wind	open E version, *Bootleg Series 1-3*	A minor to E major
You're Gonna Make Me Lonesome When You Go	open E on album	E major
Meet Me in the Morning	open E on album	E major
Lily, Rosemary and the Jack of Hearts	open E version, *Bootleg Series 1-3*	D major
If You See Her, Say Hello	open E version, *Bootleg Series 1-3*	D major Played in C with capo 2nd fret
Shelter from the Storm	open E on album	E major
Buckets of Rain	open E on album	E major

New York sessions recorded September 16 and 19, 1974; released on *Bootleg Series 1-3,* 1991.

New York sessions recorded September 17, 1974; released on *Biograph*, 1985.

Minneapolis sessions recorded December 27, 1974; released on *Blood on the Tracks,* 1975.