



Understanding and Performing Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms*

by Ethan Nash

In June of 1964, Leonard Bernstein began a sabbatical from the New York Philharmonic, "officially free of chore," with "fifteen beautiful months to kill!"¹ He summarized the events of his sabbatical in a colorful, rhyming poem that appeared in the *New York Times* on October 24, 1965. Bernstein's original plan had been to collaborate with lyricists Betty Comden and Adolph Green on a musical version of Thornton Wilder's *The Skin of our Teeth*, to be directed by Jerome Robbins.²

But not to waste: there was a plan,
For as long as my sabbatical ran,
To write a new theater piece.
(A theater composer needs release,
And *West Side Story* is eight years old!)
And so a few of us got hold
Of the rights of Wilder's play *The Skin of Our Teeth*.³

Unfortunately, the project did not come to fruition. After frequent meetings all through the fall of 1964, business talks with the producer, and even a ten-day writing trip together to Martha's Vineyard, the project was abandoned.⁴ The poem continues:

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Six months we labored, June to bleak December.
And bleak was our reward, when Christmas came,
To find ourselves uneasy with our work.
We gave it up, and went our several ways,
Still loving friends; but there was the pain
Of seeing six months of work go down the drain.⁵

Calling the cancellation "a dreadful experience," Bernstein wrote to David Diamond in January 1965, "The wounds are still smarting. I am suddenly a composer without a project, with half that golden sabbatical down the drain."⁶ However, the collapse of the musical would ultimately prove to be quite fortuitous. Without a project, Bernstein first tried without success to find satisfaction in avant-garde music, experimenting with modeling music on twelve-note rows and adhering strictly to dodecaphonic elaboration.⁷

For hours on end I brooded and mused
On materialae musicae, used and abused;
On aspects of unconventionality,
Over the death in our time of tonality,
Over the fads of Dada and Chance,
The serial structures, the dearth of romance,
"Perspectives in Music," the new terminology,
Physiomathematomusicology;
Pieces called Cycles and Sines and Parameters
Titles too beat for these homely tetrameters;
Pieces for nattering, clucking sopranos
With squadrons of vibraphones, fleets of pianos
Played with the forearms, the fist and the palms
—And then I came up with the *Chichester Psalms*.⁸

Abandoning twelve-tone music and other experimental

forms as they were not "his music" and were "not honest," Bernstein, instead, produced the *Chichester Psalms*, a piece that he called "the most accessible, B-flat-majorish tonal piece I've ever written."⁹

These psalms are a simple and modest affair,
Tonal and tuneful and somewhat square,
Certain to sicken a stout John Cager
With its tonics and triads in E flat major.
But there it stands- the result of my pondering,
Two long months of avant-garde wandering-
My youngest child, old-fashioned and sweet.
And he stands on his own two tonal feet.¹⁰

Having rarely composed "in a programmatic vacuum," the needed inspiration for the writing of this piece arrived in the form of a commission from the

Very Reverend Walter Hussey, Dean of Chichester Cathedral. Hussey invited Bernstein to write a piece for the annual music festival involving the combined forces of the English cathedrals of Winchester, Salisbury, and Chichester.¹¹ It was here that the collapse of *Skin of Our Teeth* became quite the fortunate coincidence. Bernstein had at his disposal a wealth of discarded musical material from *Skin of Our Teeth*; music from his unused *Skin of Our Teeth* sketchbook ultimately became the basis for the thematic material in all three movements of *Chichester Psalms*.¹² It is equally important to note that Hussey's request came at the ideal time, one of the few periods of relative calm in Bernstein's life. Had he been preoccupied with another project, he might have accepted Hussey's invitation only to leave it to wait for years, as had been the case with his *Kaddish Symphony*.¹³

Before the "official" premier at Chichester on July 31, 1965, Bernstein obtained permission to give his work a "try-out" in New York; Bernstein conducted the piece at Philharmonic Hall

on July 15, 1965, with the New York Philharmonic, John Bogart, alto soloist, and the Camerata Singers, led by Abraham Kaplan. Kaplan recalls being so excited upon seeing the score for the first time that he assuredly told Bernstein that this would become one of his most famous and frequently performed works.¹⁴ Though Bernstein modestly dismissed it at the time as just a twenty-minute piece, Kaplan's prediction has held true over time; with its universal appeal and its Broadway elements, *Chichester Psalms* quickly established itself as Bernstein's most popular choral work.¹⁵ However, conductors may often be dissuaded from performing the piece due to a lack of familiarity with the Hebrew language. It is the hope that this article will give conductors a better understanding of the text/music relationship, some important issues of performance practice, and a guide to the proper pronunciation of the Hebrew.

Bernstein's Jewish Identity

Before beginning an analysis of the piece, this article will touch on the issue of Bernstein's Jewish identity. In his *Findings*, Bernstein alludes to the origin of his "Jewishness" through his description of his father's devotion to the Talmud:

His life's textbook is the Talmud. The Talmud is his guide to business ethics and economic construction. It has been so from his earliest childhood, and he has known no other teacher. He finds an analogy in the Talmud for every problem that arises in his business. If you should open his desk drawer nearest his right hand, you would find therein a small edition of the Bible and a well-thumbed copy of the Talmud.¹⁶

On why this was true for his father, Bernstein remarked, "... because ... the Talmud has been his food since he could first read; he has become part of it, and

it of him. And, because of his diligent study, his work has flourished materially, and he is a leader in his field, living proof that the wise man combines the spiritual and material in order to ensure a sound life."¹⁷ In fact, the "spiritual" unquestionably influenced Bernstein's own creative output. Burton writes that "one is struck

Assimilating Jewish Music, is extremely relevant; the subject of Schiller's book is "the contribution of Jewish performers and composers within their surrounding non-Jewish societies."²² The setting for the intended premier of *Chichester Psalms*, Chichester Cathedral, was most certainly a Christian one. Yet, Bernstein

ones of universal appeal. A reference to Israel occurs only once, late in Psalm 131. Psalms 23 and 100 are very commonly used in Christian contexts. Finally, as discussed below, the excerpt from Psalm 133 that concludes the work implies the peaceful coexistence of all peoples and cultures and the acceptance of all faiths.

Chichester Psalms is most definitely an eclectic work, a designation that surely would have pleased Bernstein.

Overview of Musical Analysis

Chichester Psalms is most definitely an eclectic work, a designation that surely would have pleased Bernstein. In a 1982 interview with Paul Laird, Bernstein declared that every artist is eclectic to some extent, asking:

by how deeply the interior life of this worldly man was influenced by his Jewish heritage,¹⁸ by the Hebrew texts he learned as a child (at his father's behest), and by the synagogue music he heard sung in Temple Mishkan Tefila every Friday evening."¹⁹

His first major composition, the *Jeremiah Symphony*, was a setting of Hebrew words from the Book of Lamentations and his major choral works, the *Kaddish Symphony*, the *Chichester Psalms*, and *Mass*, all include settings of Hebrew or Aramaic texts. Smaller works of Bernstein's on Hebrew texts include the *Hashkiveinu* (1945) and arrangements of *Yigdal* (1950), *Simchu Na* (1947) and *Reena* (1947). In fact, Burton proclaims that Bernstein's creative achievement is "the most significant body of specifically Jewish work achieved by a Jewish composer working in the field of classical music," with Ernest Bloch and Darius Milhaud being his only rivals.²⁰

Geoffrey Fine points out that Bernstein was often forced to make compromises "in an attempt to achieve a more universalistic, American appeal," often modifying works that had been conceived with Jewish themes.²¹ It is here that a definition of "Jewish music," as emphasized by David Schiller in

made the choice to use Hebrew texts, and, as discussed below, insisted that they be sung only in Hebrew, making it a distinctly Jewish work. Marin Alsop finds that with his "choice of a Hebrew text for a premier in the Church of England," we see Bernstein's "deep desire to embrace and include everyone in the experience."²³ In particular, his choice of Psalms confirms Alsop's interpretation; the texts are primarily ecumenical

Who are you if you are not the sum of everything that's happened before? Everything that you've experienced at least ... everything that has been significant in your experience, unconsciously mainly.²⁴

Bernstein suggests his compositional style includes jazz, Hebrew liturgical music, Bach, Beethoven, Schumann, Cho-

Bernstein's Chichester Psalms

cont.

S
A
U - rah, ha - ne - vel! v' - chi - nor u - - - rah!

T
B
U - rah, ha - ne - vel! v' - chi - nor u - - - rah!

Figure 1. Leonard Bernstein, *Chichester Psalms*, Movement I, mm. 1–5.

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pin, Mahler, Copland, Harris, Schuman, Schoenberg, and “the various movements that have revolutionized music in our century.”²⁵ So integral to this piece are the mixed meters, characteristic of composers such as Copland and Stravinsky. The harmonic language of the orchestral interlude that opens the third movement can be compared to that of Shostakovich with its added tones and poignant dissonances in a tonal context.²⁶ The frequent use of hemiola can certainly call to mind Brahms and countless Baroque composers. Jack Gottlieb has written at length about the

presence of motives from traditional Jewish music in this and other works of Bernstein. And of course, perhaps most prominent is the theatrical element, especially given the Broadway roots of the melodies themselves. In fact, David Stevens feels that all of Bernstein's large-scale compositions are theatrical with a “highly varied musical language, by turns jazzy, sentimental, austere or thunderously eruptive.”²⁷ Paul Epstein calls Chichester “a soundtrack” and writes of Biblical texts being “brashly set off by jazzy rhythms, pop-song harmonies, and scat singing delivery.”²⁸ And yet, Bernstein seamlessly weaves together these eclectic influences and styles into a coherent and brilliant musical piece.

Movement 1

Chichester Psalms begins with a blaring semitone, a B flat against an A played by the orchestra, introducing the dissonant interval that is prominent throughout the entire work. This is followed immediately by an appropriately “rousing” harmonization of what Gottlieb calls a “chorale melody,” the beginning of which is shown in Figure 1; the relentless parallel sevenths (both minor and major) between tenor and bass provide a constant jarring dissonance

in an otherwise tonal context, further helping to represent the “rousing of the dawn.”²⁹

Gottlieb notes that this chorale tune returns “like a signpost” to conclude the movement, and again at the beginning and end of the third movement (see Figure 7, Figure 13 and Figure 19).³⁰ Although fundamentally tonal, the movement is filled with distant key and chord relationships; there are sudden modulations, often based on Romantic “third relationships” (like the shift from E major in measure 19 to C major in measure 22 to A major in measure 24); there is also prominent use of the semitone relationship both in terms of chords (such as the shifts from C major to B major and E minor to E flat minor over a C pedal point shown in Figure 2) and individual sonorities (for example, the prominent F sharp against G shown in Figure 3, the B flat against A that opens the piece and the major sevenths [inverted semitones] between tenor and bass in the opening chorale).

Returning to the opening of the movement, the “majestic introit” leads to a festive setting of Psalm 100 in a constant 7/4 meter.³¹ Gottlieb demonstrates the close relationship between the descending orchestral figure at measure 11 and the “chorale melody.”³² As



Figure 2. Leonard Bernstein, *Chichester Psalms*, Movement 1, mm. 66–67.
reduction



Figure 3. Leonard Bernstein, *Chichester Psalms*, Movement 1, mm. 80–81.
semitone clash

shown in Figures 4 and 5, when the third note of the chorale melody is displaced by an octave, the melody becomes identical to that of the orchestral figure.³³

An interesting section to look at, quite unique in this movement, is the short interlude of solo voices in mea-

sures 101–08 (Figure 6). Following the spirited instrumental break, complete with muted trumpets, harps, and bongos,³⁴ these simple eight measures are sung by solo voices with a light polyphonic texture, and simple triads without any of the dissonant added tones



Figure 4. Leonard Bernstein, *Chichester Psalms*, Movement 1, mm. 1–2.
Chorale tune



Figure 5. Leonard Bernstein, *Chichester Psalms*, Movement 1, mm. 11–12.
Descending orchestral figure

101

S e - mu - na - to to. *p* *pp*

A Ki tov A - do - nai, l' - o - lam ha - s' - do V'a - dor va - dor e - mu - na - to to. *p* *pp*

T V' - ad dor va - dor e - mu - na - to to. *p* *pp*

B V'a - dor va - dor a - mu - na - to to. *p* *pp*

Figure 6. Leonard Bernstein, *Chichester Psalms*, Movement 1, mm. 101–106.
Solo section

that pervade the rest of the piece. This “merciful” reduction of dissonance appropriately coincides with the mention of God’s everlasting mercy [*chasdo*] as well as the line *v’ad dor vador emunato* [*and his truth endureth to all generations*]. As shown in Figure 6, the melody is passed from alto down to tenor down to bass. This could symbolize the passage of tradition and God’s love from one generation to the next. Also, the

simplified harmony and texture help to represent the innocence of children and the next generation.

Although not referring specifically to this section, Paul Laird notes a connection between this line of text and the entire “jazzy and commercial” 7/4 section which speaks to present generations using “a contemporary and accessible musical style.”³⁵

Rather than simply ending with the

last line of the Psalm, Bernstein makes a conscious decision to return for one final statement of *Ki tov Adonai*, [for the Lord is good] in measure 109. Interestingly, as alluded to earlier, this coincides with the same chorale tune that was used to “rouse the dawn” at the start of the movement. First, the sopranos and tenors sing a greatly augmented version of the tune, where each of the first, four notes lasts for seven beats. As shown in Figure 7, overlapping with this statement is a faster one by the orchestra in measure 113, containing the same prominent succession of major and minor sevenths sung by the tenor and bass to start the piece.

This manipulation of text and musical symmetry reminds us that just as the chorale tune is the basis for much of the musical material, God’s greatness and benevolence are paramount; *Ki tov Adonai* [*for the Lord is good*], now linked musically to the initial rousing of the dawn, is the reason that the dawn was roused in the first place, and is the fundamental motivation behind the singing of the entire piece.

Figure 7. Leonard Bernstein, *Chichester Psalms*, Movement 1, mm. 109–115.
Return of Chorale Tune

Movement 2

Each of the three movements contains portions of text from two different Psalms, and it is in the second movement that the texts truly interact in a very powerful way. The movement begins simply with the singing of Psalm 23 by a boy alto, accompanied by the harp, which may suggest King David as a shepherd boy accompanying himself on the lyre. So as not to lose this sense of innocence and naivety, Bernstein specifies that the solo is not to be sung by a woman. If finding a boy alto is not possible, he instructs that it be sung by an adult male alto. With its simplicity,

Geoffrey Fine identifies the melody with a Jewish style, even though it is not full of Jewish motivic and rhythmic material. Fine writes:

The melody line is simple and begs to be sung deliberately and honestly, without added vocal

embellishment or prepared interpretation. This simple honest writing pervades Jewish folk song settings.³⁶

It is remarkable to consider that this famous melody actually originated as the song "Spring Will Come Again," intended

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Bernstein's Chichester Psalms cont.



Figure 8. Leonard Bernstein, *Chichester Psalms*, Movement 2, mm. 1–2.



Figure 9. Leonard Bernstein, *Chichester Psalms*, Movement 2, mm. 29–31.

for *The Skin of our Teeth*.³⁷

The semitone clash between E and D sharp at the outset instantly gives the movement a Lydian character (Figure 8). Also, in his analysis of this section, Paul Laird makes note of both the frequent leaps in the angular melodic line as well as the “blues” influence suggested by the C natural in places like measure 30 (Figure 9).³⁸

Following the opening solo section,

the divided sopranos of the choir sing the same melody, but they do so in canon, a measure apart (Figure 10). The result of this close canon is a series of prominent dissonances, most notably the major seconds of measures 33, 35, 37, 39, and 43 and the brief minor seconds (as a result of the “blue note” C natural against the C sharp) in measures 41 and 45.

These dissonances along with the

chromatic neighbor tones in the accompaniment help depict the uneasiness of the words, *Gam ki eilech b'gei tsalmavet* [Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death]. The close imitation of the lower part is also a literal, musical “shadow.” At the same time, the canon also supports a more positive interpretation, for the section concludes *Lo ira ra, ki Atah imadi* [I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me]; this helps suggest, that even in danger, the Lord is always close by, or in this case, literally, a step behind.

Following the innocence of the opening section, however, we are reminded at measure 64 that “life is not that simple.” Bernstein interrupts the tranquility with “the reality of what man has inflicted upon himself.”³⁹ Using music that originated as “Mix! Make a mess of ‘em. Make the sons of bitches pay!” in the Prologue to *West Side Story*, a blistering *Allegro feroce* is established, the shouting choir exclaiming *Lamah ragshu?* [Why do the nations rage] over a frenzied orchestra. Sean Hickey writes “It is not difficult to imagine Sharks and Jets squaring off to this music.”⁴⁰ An extraordinarily difficult passage to sing from a diction standpoint, this section is full of improperly accentuated and even interrupted words; as will be discussed below, this “nonsense” being uttered by the men of the choir is consistent with



Figure 10. Leonard Bernstein, *Chichester Psalms*, Movement 2, mm. 32–39.

95

Figure 11. Leonard Bernstein, *Chichester Psalms*, Movement 2, mm. 94–97.

the incoherent raging of the people implied by the text. In measure 80, at the mention of the *malchei erets* [kings of the earth], the strength of the rulers is represented by strong singing in unison with the orchestra.⁴¹ Just as the “rulers take counsel together” against the Lord and his people, the tenors incessantly blare out *yachad* [together] thirteen times, fighting “against” the bass section’s continuation of the text. In measure 94, Bernstein further depicts this battle musically, having the tenor and bass sing in extremely close canon, making it very

unclear where the beat is and very unsettling for the listener (Figure 11).

What follows is perhaps the most powerful moment of the entire work as the innocent opening melody and the texture of the violent middle section are juxtaposed. Instructed to sing “blissfully unaware of threat,” the soprano and alto sing of the Lord’s preparing a table before them in the presence of enemies. Musically speaking, the enemy is in fact present, not only disturbing the mood of the treble voices, but also working against the triple meter, particularly in

measures 102–03 (Figure 12).

Though the singing of the men is mostly subdued, the listener cannot ignore the incessant and percussive continuation of Psalm 2 in the background (especially given the three *subito forte* moments) as the treble voices seek a return to the initial innocence. Perhaps the soprano and alto obliviousness to the distraction represents man’s obliviousness or his denial of the problems in the world. Or, to interpret with a more positive slant, perhaps it also represents one’s ability to go on and to find peace

L’istesso tempo ♩ = 108
p (blissfully unaware of the threat)

Figure 12. Leonard Bernstein, *Chichester Psalms*, Movement 2, mm. 102–104.

The musical score shows the piano accompaniment for the first three measures of Movement 3. The key signature has one flat (Bb). The first measure is marked *f assai*. The second measure is marked *ff*. The harmonic progression is: Cm9, Ebm9 (1st inv.), Am9, C#m9 (3rd inv.), C & C+, C#m9 (3rd inv.), Cm9, and Eb (against Fb).

Figure 13. Leonard Bernstein, *Chichester Psalms*, Movement 3, mm. 1–3.

and contentment in spite of turmoil.⁴² Ultimately the opening texture and mood return at measure 119, unencumbered until the final eleven measures

the disturbance, the movement ends, in Bernstein's own words, "in unresolved fashion, with both elements, faith and fear, interlocked."⁴⁴

sharp minor 9. At the end of measure 3, Bernstein alters the expected E flat of the violin melody by a half step, resulting in a semitone clash between E flat and F flat. This lush, passionate string writing is reminiscent of many passages in the music of Shostakovich. For example, Shostakovich's 5th Symphony begins with the bold presentation of the thematic material by the strings alone. Later in the same symphony, we find another example of Shostakovich's expressive dissonance based on tonal chords with added semitones (including the same C minor 9 sonority used in Bernstein's opening and superimposed major and minor thirds), during an intense passage for divided strings early in the third movement, as shown in Figure 14.⁴⁷

Not only is the semitone prominent as a dissonant note in Bernstein's third movement, but also it functions as a prominent interval of harmonic relation.

when the *Lama ragshu* melody returns in the orchestra. As Gottlieb writes:

Their innocent melody gradually quiets the menace of Psalm 2, but even under their final long note, the orchestra whispers a reminder of the disturbance, so that the movement ends on an equivocal note.⁴³

Here, at measure 136, the treble voices sustain an A while the orchestra is firmly rooted in the distantly related key of C minor. Although their ability to maintain the A through the harmonic clash and the orchestra's ultimate return to A may represent a victory of sorts over

Movement 3

The third movement is divided into three distinct sections, each with its own affect. In his letter to Hussey, Bernstein describes the orchestral prelude, "based on the opening chorale, whose assertive harmonies have now turned to painful ones. There is a crisis . . ." ⁴⁵ As shown in Figure 13, this "crisis" is represented by the preponderance of "tonal" chords with added dissonant semitones, particularly minor 9th chords.

In addition to the prominent C minor 9 and A minor 9 chords, there is much comparably dissonant sonority that results such as the clashing C major and augmented chords⁴⁶ and the inverted C

Not only is the semitone prominent as a dissonant note in Bernstein's third movement, but also it functions as a prominent interval of harmonic relation. For example, with the turmoil of the second movement still lingering, a distant trumpet plays the Psalm 23 melody, but does so in A flat major, a half step below the tonality of the sustained A minor 9 chord⁴⁸ as shown in Figure 15. Also noteworthy is the fact that several of the voices expand or contract by half step from one sonority to the next, as occurs frequently throughout Bernstein's

77

espr.

Vln. 2
Vln. 3

mf dim. *p* *mf dim.*

Vla. 1

mf dim. *p* *mf dim.*

Vla. 2
Vlc. 1

mf dim. *p* *mf dim.*

Vlc. 2
Cb.

mf dim. *p* *mf dim.*

Cm9 Bbm
(2nd inv.) /BbM

Cm9 Bbm
(2nd inv.) /BbM

Figure 14. Dmitri Shostakovich, *Symphony No. 5*, Movement 3, Rehearsal 77.

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orchestral introduction.

In the second section, beginning at measure 20, the semitone relationship remains prominent as "... the tension is suddenly relieved, and the choir enters humbly and peacefully singing Ps. 131, complete, in what is almost a popular song (although in 10/4 time!)."⁴⁹ The prominence of the semitone as both a dissonant interval and level of harmonic relationship in the introduction has prepared the listener for this "seemingly tonal" section where, as J. Wesley

Flinn writes, "motion by minor second predominates" instead of the expected "motion by fifth."⁵⁰ The harmonic reduction in Figure 16 shows Bernstein's linking of the distantly related keys, G major and B major, accomplished by the prominent semitone shifts in measure 23 (foreshadowed in measure 21) and measure 27.⁵¹

Here the half step motion in measure 23 from G major to the F sharp major chord (which first functioned merely as a neighboring minor second-related

chord in measure 21), creates a V/III leading to B major. It is then the shift from F sharp major to D major (with the prominent semitone motions from A sharp to A and from C sharp to D) in measure 27 that begins the transition back to the original G major tonality. With these relationships established, the listener is less surprised by the sudden transition from B major to F major (V of the semitone-related B flat major) in measure 32 as shown in Figure 17.⁵²

Another important semitone rela-

10

Tpt. (mute)
Harp 1

pp lontanato

Strings
Harp 2

pp *p > pp*

Figure 15. Leonard Bernstein, *Chichester Psalms*, Movement 3, mm. 10–12.

Bernstein's Chichester Psalms cont.

20

G F# G F# B F# D6 Bm D⁴ G
(V/III) (III) (V/III) (V) (iii) (V)

Figure 16. Leonard Bernstein, *Chichester Psalms*, Movement 3, mm. 20–29.
Harmonic reduction

tionship is the frequent use of chromatic neighbor tones in the melody line, as demonstrated by the treble voices in measure 31. Flinn astutely points out two more comparable moments including the “minor second substitution” of measure 31,⁵³ as well the harmonic progression that leads into the final *Hineh Mah Tov* chorale, shown in Figure 18.

After already resolving from D7 to G over a G pedal point in measure 56, the harmony suddenly shifts down to D flat 7 (the V chord of the semitone-related G flat major), before ultimately resolving back to G two measures later. Essentially it is a I-V7-I progression over a pedal point, but with the V chord

a half step lower than expected.⁵⁴ The unifying nature of the semitone is nicely summarized by Flinn:

The permeating use of half steps is a natural outgrowth of Bernstein's compositional voice. That does not mean there are no examples of forced constructs in the movement- the piece was initially constructed so that the minor second was its usual dissonant self, added to give big chords a chromatic coloration. The overwhelming use of dissonant half-steps may be reconciled with the piece's otherwise tonal quality

by examining the movement in its entirety as a unified movement created out of this repeated gesture; the preponderance of the figure eventually leads to total saturation and a sense of aural familiarity, creating an alternate tonality based on the simplicity of half-step motion.⁵⁵

This concept of the genesis of a work from simple elements calls to mind Bernstein's own writings about the same phenomena in the works of his predecessors. In his *Norton Lectures*, he demonstrates how everything in the opening movement of Beethoven's

30

Chorus
Naf - shi k' - ga - mul a - lei i - mo, Ka - ga mul a - lai

vocal
Naf - shi k' - ga - mul a - lei i - mo,

harm. red.
G G F# B F#⁴ Bb⁶
(V of B) (V of Bb)

Figure 17. Leonard Bernstein, *Chichester Psalms*, Movement 3, mm. 30–33.
Vocal lines and harmonic reduction



Figure 18. Leonard Bernstein, *Chichester Psalms*, Movement 3, mm. 55–59.
Reduction

Figure 19. Leonard Bernstein, *Chichester Psalms*, Movement 3, mm. 60–63.

Sixth Symphony (Pastoral) is derived from just the first four measures. Bernstein writes of Beethoven's symphony, "Every bar and phrase to come—and I mean every one, without exception—will be some kind of transformation, some metaphorical rendering, of the elements present in these four little bars."⁵⁶ Given this awareness, it is not at all surprising that a work of Bernstein's could evolve from something as simple as the typically dissonant semitone. As mentioned previously, the entire work begins with just a single blaring semitone, namely, the clash between A and B flat in the orchestra; as shown in previous examples, every subsequent movement also contains a semitone in its opening sonority (see Figure 8 and Figure 13).

Leading into the final section, the harmonic progression based on this unifying element of the semitone ushers in a final harmonization of the chorale (which is also a building block of the piece). Quite fittingly, the words of this final chorale

setting are a solemn celebration of unity, the *Hineh Mah Tov*. As shown in Figure 20, even the chorale's harmonization, colored by frequent major and minor sevenths (the former being inverted semitones), is a union between G major and distantly related keys.

The *Hineh Mah Tov* text, frequently sung at Jewish gatherings to express how special it is to be together, is most literally translated "Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell together." Bernstein interprets, "In this atmosphere of humility, there is a final chorale coda (Ps 133, vs. 1), a prayer for peace."⁵⁷ In light of the musical elements that unify the work, this interpretation is significant, as is Bernstein's translation which ends, "dwell together in unity." In broader terms, the entire work represents a union of seemingly irreconcilable elements: the dissonant minor second and major seventh (inverted minor second) clashes throughout, the close relationship between typically distantly

related (i.e., 3rd-related and semitone-related) keys, the juxtaposition of good and evil in movement two, and the fusion of eclectic musical styles. Perhaps most significant is Bernstein's choice of specifically ecumenical Psalm texts in Hebrew for an English cathedral choir, suggesting a bridge between cultures. This union makes it all the more appropriate to end with this passage

Bernstein's Chichester Psalms cont.

about how wonderful it is for brothers and sisters, whether related biologically, culturally, emotionally, or through music, to simply “dwell together.”

Hebrew, let them not do it!” This proved to Kaplan that Bernstein, even though he was in show business and often had to compromise, had a conscience when it

shown in Figure 20.⁵⁹

This *fermata* helps to provide a brief moment of pause and reflection, perhaps even uneasiness, after the men's

Issues of Performance Practice

Performance Only in Hebrew

One of the things that Bernstein insisted on was that the piece only be performed in Hebrew. Abraham Kaplan, sensing that this would become Bernstein's greatest work, suggested at the time that it be published with a singable English translation. Keeping an open mind about the idea, Bernstein asked Kaplan to prepare one. Kaplan recalls that he “worked like a dog on it.” When it was finished, Kaplan recalls being driven by Jack Gottlieb to Bernstein's Westchester home, where the three of them worked on it together for about eight hours without a break. Suddenly at one point, Bernstein stopped and said, “You know what, if they don't want to do it in

came to composition. He knew it had to be done only in Hebrew and would not budge on the idea.⁵⁸

disturbance fades out, before the reassuring “Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me...” enters. However, shortly before the piece was premiered and published, Bernstein decided during a rehearsal to remove this *fermata*, a change that Abraham Kaplan regretted. Three months after the premiere, Kaplan conducted the piece in Carnegie Hall and, without asking Bernstein, decided to

Perhaps most significant is Bernstein's choice of specifically ecumenical Psalm texts in Hebrew for an English cathedral choir, suggesting a bridge between cultures.

Optional Fermata

A more subtle performance practice issue concerns measure 119 of the second movement. Prior to the soloist's *ach, ach tov*, there was originally a *fermata*, as

Figure 20. Leonard Bernstein, *Chichester Psalms*, Movement 2, mm. 117–119.

restore the *fermata*. Bernstein was in the audience with his entire family and did not say anything about Kaplan's decision, perhaps forgetting that he had even made the change in the first place. Thus, according to Kaplan, it is a legitimate choice to add a *fermata* at the beginning of measure 119.⁶⁰

The Pronunciation of God's Name

For many observant Jews, singing the name Adonai in a concert or anywhere outside of a prayer service or a comparable situation is considered to be a violation of the third commandment, "You shall not take the name of the Lord God in vain." The holy name of God, the tetragrammaton YHWH⁶¹ was considered so sacred in ancient Israel that it could be pronounced only by the High Priest on Yom Kippur [the Day of Atonement] in the central sanctuary of Jerusalem. The name, Adonai, is itself a euphemism for God's name, literally meaning "my Lord." However, observant Jews would argue that since we do not know how to pronounce the sacred name anymore, the euphemism Adonai must be treated with the same care and respect. Therefore, in concert performances, it is common practice among observant Jews (or when the audience consists predominantly of observant Jews) to substitute "a euphemism for a euphemism." Common substitutions include Adóshem and Adomai. While both of these substitutions, are meaningless, Adomai has the advantage that the difference will be imperceptible to the audience. Thus it is possible to give choir members the choice of whether to sing Adonai, or the substitute Adomai.

Bearing in mind that this may often not be an issue, conductors should weigh all the options as the particular situation dictates when singing Adonai in a concert setting. Regardless of their own beliefs or opinions, conductors should be sensitive to the fact that cer-

tain audiences and individual members of the choir may feel strongly about this issue.

Issues of Pronunciation

ח Chet and צ Chaf

Abraham Kaplan included the following distinction in the Pronunciation Guide:

ח -slightly guttural *h*, though not as guttural as⁶² *צ*, which is pronounced as in German "Buch."

In this case, the *ח* represents the letter

ח *Chét* (the voiceless pharyngeal fricative), while the *צ* represents the letter צ *Chaf* (the voiceless uvular fricative). These sounds are in fact pronounced differently by Hebrew speakers of *Mizrahi* descent (generally speaking, this refers to Jews of North Africa and the Middle East). However, the overwhelming recommendation here is that both *ח* and *צ* be pronounced the same; the sound should be the voiceless uvular fricative, represented in IPA as [χ], with an acceptable alternative being the German *ch*, as in *Buch* or *Bach*, [x]. It is simply not practical to attempt the sound of the ח *Chét* unless it is inherent in one's native tongue.⁶³ Also, the danger here is that singers will be misled by the

h (particularly at fast tempos) and sing an American *h* by mistake.

Kaplan explains via interview that he intended this distinction more as a theoretical instruction than one that was intended to be enforced; it was there primarily in the event that there was or would be a generation that could easily differentiate between the two sounds. In fact, Kaplan recalls that very little time was spent in rehearsal on the pronunciation of these letters.

Issues Pertaining to the *Sheva*

Consistent with what many publishers do today, the score uses an apostrophe to denote the *sheva* vowel.⁶⁴ However, Kaplan says that if he had it to do over again, he would change every apostrophe assigned a musical note to a regular *e*. Similarly, he would change his instruction for the pronunciation of the sound; rather than having it sung "as a 'neutral' vowel like the mute E in French," it should be an [E], exactly like the *segól* vowel.⁶⁵

A choice arises in cases where a note is given syllabic value when it really should not be as in the word *b'sim'cha* (with gladness). In this word, the pro-

nunciation by right should be the three syllable [bE sIm »Xa]. However, clearly the word is given four syllables instead of three. There are several options that one has in cases like this. Perhaps the best option is to "Bernstein-ize" the word; in other words, sing it as he wrote it (and heard it), even though it is incorrect, and simply pronounce the word [bE sI mE »Xa].⁶⁶

Another option is to distinguish between the true mobile *sheva* and the incorrectly indicated mobile *sheva*; in this specific case, one could use the unaccented [E] for the first and a more neutral [˘], [∅], or [I] for the second, resulting in, for example, [bE sI m˘ »Xa].⁶⁷ Particularly at the high speed of movement 1, this can work very well, with the syllable *m'* being a quick percussive and rhythmic effect rather than containing a clear vowel sound.⁶⁸

Accentuation Errors

For the most part, "errors" in accentuation should remain as they are. The errors are most blatant in the men's section of the second movement. In fact, words like *lama* and *yóshév* are literally separated into syllables to the point

where they become mere sounds rather than coherent words.⁶⁹ In Kaplan's opinion, it would be "a stupidity" to make any attempt to correct the word accents, particularly at the breakneck speed of this section in the second movement or in the first movement. He notes that Bernstein had studied the Hebrew and was perfectly capable of setting it with correct word accents when he wanted to.⁷⁰ Furthermore, like Poulenc and Stravinsky, Bernstein often liked to purposely have fun with word accents.

Chichester Psalms: Pronunciation Guide

A word preceded by an asterisk (*) is one in which Bernstein has given a musical note to a typically unvoiced *sheva* (»). In these cases, conductors have the option of replacing the [E] with a more neutral vowel like [˘], [∅] or [I] (NOT [i] or [e]).

An underlined word is one where Bernstein's implied accentuation is contrary to the correct Hebrew pronunciation, but generally, the accentuation should not be "corrected."

Note that the pronunciation of the vowels is consistent with a more formal pronunciation than that used in colloquial Israeli speech. If one wishes to emulate Israeli Hebrew, the letter *i* should always be pronounced [i] and the letter *o* should always be pronounced [ɔ].⁷¹

The transliteration implies a Sephardic pronunciation of Hebrew, the pronunciation more commonly used today. While Bernstein's *Hashkiveinu*, for example, was conceived with Ashkenazic Hebrew in mind, this is not the case here. It is clear from Bernstein's transliteration, and his own 1965 recording of the premier, that performance in Sephardic Hebrew was his intention.

Movement 1

Psalm 108, Verse 2:

U-ra ha-ne-vel v'-chi-nor a-i-ra sha-ḥar
 'u ra ha 'ne vel ve χɪ 'nor a 'i ra 'ʃa χar
 Awake the psaltery and the harp I will wake the dawn

Awake, psaltery and harp: I will rouse the dawn!

Psalm 100, entire:

Ha-ri-u l'A-do-nai kol ha-a-rets
 ha 'ri u la do 'nai kol ha 'a rets
 Shout joyfully to Adonai all the Earth

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the Earth.

*Iv'-du et a-do-nai *b'-si-m'-ḥa⁷².*
 iv 'du et a do 'nai be si me 'χa
 Serve - Adonai with gladness

Serve the Lord with gladness.

*Bo-u l'-fa-nav *bi-r'-na-na*
 'bo u le fa 'nav bi re na 'na
 Come into His presence with singing

Come into His presence with singing.

D'-u ki A-do-nai Hu E-lo-him
 de 'u ki a do 'nai hu e lo 'him
 Know that Adonai He (is) God

Know ye that the Lord, He is God.

Hu a-sa-nu v'-lo a-nah-nu
 hu a 'san u ve 'lo a 'naχ nu
 He made us and not we

It is He that has made us, and not we ourselves.

*A-mo v'-tson *ma-r'-i-to*
 a 'mo ve 'tson ma re i 'to
 His people and flock of His pasture

We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.

Bo-u sh'-a-rav b'-to-dah, ḥa-tsei-ro-tav bit-hi-lah
 'bo u ʃe a 'rav be to 'da χa tse ro 'tav bit hi 'la
 Enter His gates with thanksgiving His courts with praise

Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise.

Ho-du lo, ba-r'-chu sh'-mo.
 ho 'du lo ba re 'χu ʃe 'mo
 Give thanks to Him bless His name

Be thankful unto Him, and bless His name.

*Ki tov A-do-nai, l'-o-lam *ḥa-s'-do,*
 ki tov a do 'nai le o 'lam χa se 'do
 For good (is) the Lord everlasting (is) His mercy

For the Lord is good, His mercy is everlasting,

v'-ad dor va-dor e-mu-na-to.
 ve 'ad dor va 'dor e mu na 'to
 and for all generations His faithfulness

And His faithfulness endures for all generations.

Movement 2

Psalm 23, entire:

A-do-nai ro-i, lo eḥ-sar.
 a do 'nar ro 'i lo εḥ 'sar
 The Lord (is) my shepherd not shall I want

The Lord is my shepherd,
 I shall not want.

Bin-'ot de-she yar-bi-tsei-ni,
 bin 'ot 'de ʃe jar bi 'tse ni
 In beautiful pastures He has me lie

He makes me to lie down
 in green pastures,

Al mei m'-nu-chot y'-na-ha-lei-ni,⁷³
 al me me nu 'χot je na ha 'le ni
 Beside waters still He leads me

He leads me beside
 the still waters,

Naf'-shi y'-sho-vev,
 naf 'ʃi je ʃo 'vev
 My soul He restores

He restores my soul.

**Ya-n'-ḥe-ni b'-ma-'ag-lei tse-dek,*
 ja ne 'χe ni be ma ag 'le 'tse dek
 He leads me in paths of righteousness

He leads me in the paths
 of righteousness

l'-ma-'an sh-'mo.
 le 'ma an ʃe 'mo
 for the sake of His name

For His name's sake.

Gam ki ei-lech b'-gei tsal-ma-vet,
 gam ki e 'leχ be 'ge tsal 'ma vet
 Even though I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death

Yea, though I walk
 through the Valley of
 the Shadow of Death,

Lo i-ra ra, ki A-tah i-ma-di.
 lo i 'ra ra ki a 'ta i ma 'di
 not will I fear evil for You (are) with me

I will fear no evil,
 For You are with me.

*Shiv'-t'-cha *u-mish-a-n'-te-cha⁷⁴ he-mah y'-na-ḥa-mu-ni.*
 ʃiv te 'χa u miʃ a ne 'te χa he 'ma je na χa 'mu ni
 Your rod and Your staff they (will) comfort me

Your rod and Your staff
 they comfort me.

Ta-'a-roch l'-fa-nai shul-chan⁷⁵ ne-ged tso-r'-rai
 ta a 'roχ le fa 'nai ʃul 'χan 'ne ged tso re 'rai
 You have set before me a table in the presence of my enemies

You prepare a table
 before me in the presence
 of my enemies.

Di-shan-ta va-she-men ro-shi co-si r'-va-yah.
 di 'ʃan ta va 'ʃe men ro 'ʃi ko 'si re va 'ja
 You have anointed with oil my head my cup overflows

You anoint my head
 with oil, my cup
 overflows.

Movement 2 continued

Ach tov va-ḥe-sed yir-d'fu-ni
 aχ tov va 'χε sed jir de 'fu ni
 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me

kol y'mei ḥa-yai
 kol jε 'me χa 'jai
 all the days of my life

V'-shav'ti b'veit A-do-nai l'-o-rech ya-mim.
 ve jav 'ti be 'vet a do 'nai le 'o reχ ja 'mim
 And I will dwell in the house of the Lord the length of (my) days Forever.

Psalm 2, vs. 1–4

*La-ma ra-g'-shu go-yim *u-l'-u-mim yeh-gu rik?*
 'la ma ra ge 'fu go 'jim u le u 'mim jeh 'gu rik
 Why are agitated the nations and the peoples mutter in vain
 a vain thing?

**Yi-t'-ya-ts'-vu⁷⁶ mal-chei e-rets,*
 ji te ja tse 'vu mal 'χε 'ε rets
 Stand up kings of earth/land
 The kings of the earth
 set themselves,

**v'roz-nim⁷⁷ no-s'-du ya-ḥad*
 vroz 'nim no se 'du 'ja χad
 and rulers take counsel together
 And the rulers take
 counsel together

Al A-do-nai v'al m'-shi-ḥo
 al a do 'nai ve 'al me si 'χo
 Against the Lord and against His anointed.

N'-nat-kah et mos'-ro-tei-mo,
 ne nat 'ka εt mos ro 'te mo
 Let us break - their bands
 Saying, let us break
 their bands asunder;

V'-nash-li-chah mi-me-nu a-vo-tei-mo.
 ve naʃ 'li χa mi 'me nu a vo 'te mo
 And cast away from us their cords
 And cast away their cords
 from us.

*Yo-shev ba-sha-ma-yim *yi-s'-ḥak,*
 jo 'sev ba ʃa 'ma jim ji se 'χak
 He that sits in the heavens laughs
 He that sits in the
 heavens laughs,

*A-do-nai *yi-l'-ag la-mo!*
 a do 'nai ji le 'ag 'la mo
 the Lord mocks them
 And the Lord mocks
 them!

- ¹¹ Myers, *Bernstein*, 136–37.
- ¹² Dale Warland, liner notes to The Dale Warland Singers, ACC (American Choral Catalogue) 123, 1999. Abraham Kaplan recalls that Bernstein's "Warmup," comprised of nonsense syllables like "du bing, du bang," which later appeared in his Mass, was also originally from *Skin of Our Teeth*. Abraham Kaplan, interview, 8/28/06.
- ¹³ Myers, *Bernstein*, 137.
- ¹⁴ Abraham Kaplan, interview, 8/28/06.
- ¹⁵ Burton, *Bernstein*, 349.
- ¹⁶ Bernstein, *Findings*, 13–14. From an essay on his father for English Composition Class at Harvard in 1938. The Talmud is a record of rabbinic discussions pertaining to Jewish law, ethics, customs and history.
- ¹⁷ Bernstein, *Findings*, 14.
- ¹⁸ Geoffrey Fine writes that at the beginning of his career, several of his friends, including Aaron Copland, had tried to persuade him to change his obviously Jewish name and to downplay his Jewish background. He notes "Aaron Copland's father's original name, Kaplan, was mistakenly transcribed as Copland by a British immigration official. He never changed it back. Aaron Copland's wonderful music is as un-Jewish sounding as his Anglicized surname." Geoffrey B. Fine, *The Vocal Music of Leonard Bernstein: Jewish Interpretations and Applications*, thesis, (New York: Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 1998), 84.
- ¹⁹ Burton, *Bernstein*, 487.
- ²⁰ Burton, *Bernstein*, 487.
- ²¹ Amazingly, *West Side Story* is a prime example of this. Fine cites excerpts from Bernstein's diary logs indicating that the original premise of the show (the working title of which was actually *East Side Story*) involved tensions not between Americans and Puerto Ricans, but rather, between Jews and Catholics, with the modern "Juliet" being Jewish. Geoffrey Fine, *Vocal Music of Bernstein*, 23.
- ²² Schiller, *Assimilating Jewish Music*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 2.
- ²³ Marin Alsop, liner notes from *Bernstein Chichester Psalms*, Naxos, 8.559177, 2003.
- ²⁴ Paul Laird, *Leonard Bernstein, A Guide to Research*, (New York: Routledge, 2002), pp. 14–15. It is the definition "choosing what appears to be the best from diverse sources" that Laird pursues in his discussion of Bernstein's eclectic style.
- ²⁵ J. Wesley Flinn, "Layers of Tonality in the Third Movement of Leonard Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms*," *Music Research Forum* 17 (2002), 49.
- ²⁶ Paul Laird describes Bernstein's basic harmonic style as follows: triadic writing with significant use of added tones, often adding piquant dissonance, even in his most lyrical passages; an expanded concept of tonality that, besides traditional tonic-dominant relationships includes rich use of modal inflections, borrowed chords, and chromaticism; a fondness for static harmonies; and the use of dissonance to communicate emotional distress. Laird also mentions the chromaticism of Mahler and Strauss as possible influences on Bernstein. Laird, *A Guide to Research*, 37.
- ²⁷ David Stevens, liner notes, Erato Disques S.A., Paris, France 1999 3984-21669-2, 5.
- ²⁸ Paul Epstein, Collegiate Chorale Concert Notes, Spring 2006. He writes, "The whole nature of a soundtrack is multi-stylistic; in a single movie-score you are likely to hear echoes of Richard Strauss, Duke Ellington, Led Zeppelin, Henry Mancini, and Spike Jones. This is the sensibility behind the *Chichester Psalms'* varied palette."

Bernstein's Chichester Psalms

cont.

- ²⁹ Gottlieb, program notes, New York Philharmonic, 10/18/90.
- ³⁰ Gottlieb, program notes, New York Philharmonic, 10/18/90.
- ³¹ Gottlieb compares this with Bernstein's *Kaddish* Symphony in which the Invocation leads into an *Allegro* in 7/8.
- ³² Laird notes that Jack Gottlieb has written extensively about Bernstein's melodic manipulation and the genesis of a composition from small building blocks. Laird, *A Guide to Research*, 38. Note the comparison below to Bernstein's own writings about Beethoven's 6th Symphony (Pastoral) in *The Unanswered Question: Six Talks at Harvard* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976).
- ³³ Gottlieb relates this to a musical motive that he calls Bernstein's "faith motive," a descending perfect fourth followed by a descending whole or half step. He notes that this motive permeates the liturgy of High Holy Day music and is used as the final cadence for the Benediction recited, for example, on the major festivals of Sukkot, Passover, and Shavuot. See Gottlieb, "Symbols of Faith in the Music of Leonard Bernstein," *Musical Quarterly* 66, no. 2, April 1980, 292.
- ³⁴ Paul Laird finds the inclusion of the three bongo parts in measure 50 to be a possible vernacular influence, as well as representative of Bernstein's enduring love for Latin percussion. Paul Laird, "Leonard Bernstein: Eclecticism and Vernacular Elements in *Chichester Psalms*," *The Society for American Music Bulletin*, Volume XXV, no. 1 (Spring 1999).
- ³⁵ Paul Laird, "Leonard Bernstein: Eclecticism and Vernacular Elements in *Chichester Psalms*," *The Society for American Music Bulletin*, Volume XXV, no. 1 (Spring 1999). Admitting that it may seem blasphemous to suggest it, Paul Laird even mentions the theme to *The Flintstones* as a possible subconscious reference. He notes that Bernstein had young children during the years that *The Flintstones* aired on network television as an evening program (1960–66) who might have watched the show. While Laird refers to the melodic outline in m. 22, it is worth noting that the descending perfect fifths and octave leaps of mm. 103–06, specifically coinciding with *v'ad dor vador emunato* (his truth endureth to all generations) resemble the melody to *The Flintstones*, even more.
- ³⁶ Later, when full strings join to accompany the duet, Fine is reminded of string instruments accompanying the Levites' glorious chanting in the Temple. Fine, *The Vocal Music of Leonard Bernstein*, 66–67.
- ³⁷ The original lyrics for the boy alto's solo in measures 119–133 were "Spring will come again, Summer then will follow, Birds will come again, Nesting in the hollow, Once again, we'll know all we know, After the winter comes spring." Burton, *Bernstein*, 348.
- ³⁸ Paul Laird, "Leonard Bernstein: Eclecticism and Vernacular Elements in *Chichester Psalms*."
- ³⁹ Marin Alsop, liner notes to Bernstein *Chichester Psalms*, Naxos, 8.559177, 2003.
- ⁴⁰ Sean Hickey, liner notes to Bernstein *Chichester Psalms*, Naxos, 8.559177, 2003.
- ⁴¹ Here, Bernstein borrows a technique from Mozart and many other Classical and Baroque composers. As an example, in the *Dixit Dominus* of Mozart's K339-*Vesperae solennes de confessore*, a sudden switch to a unison texture like this one frequently coincides with words about strength and power, such as *juravit Dominus* (the Lord has judged).
- ⁴² Given Bernstein's proud admission of eclecticism, and Fine's comparing the Psalm 23 melody to Jewish folk music, a comparison to American folk or popular music seems plausible. I cannot help but be reminded here of the Simon and Garfunkel recording of *Silent Night*; a recording of the Six 'O Clock News, reporting some of the troubling events of the 60s, begins faintly in the background, gradually increasing in volume, ultimately distracting us from *Silent Night*, and leaving us with a similarly conflicted feeling.
- ⁴³ Gottlieb, program notes, New York Philharmonic, 10/18/90.
- ⁴⁴ From Bernstein's letter to Hussey. Gottlieb, program notes, New York Philharmonic, 10/18/90.
- ⁴⁵ From Bernstein's letter to Hussey. Gottlieb, program notes, New York Philharmonic, 10/18/90.
- ⁴⁶ On beats 6–7 of measure. 2, when the B sharp and F double sharp are respelled, the result is a C-major triad (C, E, G) juxtaposed with a C augmented triad (C, E, G sharp).
- ⁴⁷ The first, third and fourth movements of this symphony are full of intimate passages for strings; the slow movement of Symphony No. 7 as well as the opening movements of Symphonies 6 and 8 contain examples of comparable passages.
- ⁴⁸ J. Wesley Flinn further points out that this cadential A minor 9 chord at measure 10 is exactly a semitone lower than the next cadential sonority, B flat minor 9, at measure. 15. J. Wesley Flinn, "Layers of Tonality in the Third Movement of Leonard Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms*," *Music Research Forum*, 17 (2002): p. 52. Note the semitone expansion and contraction from one chord to the next in measure 15 as well as the semitone motion to the D major 4/3 chord in measure 16 (foreshadowing the tonic key of G major) and to the chords in measures 17 and 18 which become progressively less dissonant.
- ⁴⁹ From Bernstein's letter to Hussey. Gottlieb, program notes, New York Philharmonic, 10/18/90.
- ⁵⁰ Flinn, "Layers of Tonality," 50.
- ⁵¹ The section is actually in 10/4, hence, each half note in the reduction represents 5 beats.
- ⁵² The B major chord can also be interpreted as an enharmonically spelled Neapolitan chord in the key of B flat, hence allowing it function as a common chord in the

- modulation.
- ⁵³ A comparable substitution occurs with the interaction between the lower voices and the viola in mm. 22–23. Flinn, “Layers of Tonality,” 54–55.
- ⁵⁴ Instead of the expected contraction of the F–C flat tritone to the G flat-B flat major third, the C flat is respelled as the enharmonic B and it is the D flat-A flat perfect fifth that contracts to the D-G perfect fourth.
- ⁵⁵ Flinn, “Layers of Tonality,” 55.
- ⁵⁶ Leonard Bernstein, *The Unanswered Question: Six Talks at Harvard* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976), 157, 159.
- ⁵⁷ From Bernstein’s letter to Hussey. Gottlieb, program notes, New York Philharmonic, 10/18/90. There are countless settings of this text, many of which, particularly some Hebrew folk settings, are quite spirited and festive. Also, the words “in unity” are not necessarily implied by the translation, as the word *yachad* simply means “together.” The word *gam* technically means “also” and perhaps in this context it means “so much.”
- ⁵⁸ Abraham Kaplan, interview 8/28/06.
- ⁵⁹ Abraham Kaplan, interview, 8/28/06.
- ⁶⁰ Abraham Kaplan, interview, 8/28/06.
- ⁶¹ This represents the Hebrew letters י *Yud*, ה *Hé*, ו *Vav/Waw* and ה *Hé* and is often vocalized and written out as *Jehovah* or *YAHWEH*.
- ⁶² The term “guttural” is potentially misleading. Since a common definition of “guttural” is “pertaining to the throat,” one could easily be misled and conclude that since the *ch* is to be like the sound of the German sound of *Buch* (the voiceless velar fricative), the sound should more closely resemble the German “ich-laut” (the voiceless palatal fricative)- which is NOT the case! In fact, the ח *Chét* is produced even further back in the throat and is MORE guttural, according to the common definition of the word.
- ⁶³ Shmuel Bolozky explains via interview that the *Mizrahi* ח *Chét* is pronounced “as if you were ‘choking’ a bit, and without the vocal cords vibrating.” Shmuel Bolozky, interview, 6/14/06.
- ⁶⁴ This vowel is represented by two vertical dots underneath the letter. Opinions vary on the proper pronunciation of this sound; some prefer the open *e* [E] or the open *i* [I], others prefer a neutral sound like the English *schwa* [ʌ]. Under no circumstances should this sound be a closed *e* [e] or *i* [i] or, worse yet, the diphthong [ei].
- ⁶⁵ While there are many who would disagree, Kaplan feels as if the [E] more closely resembles Israeli speech and is more conducive to a pure sound when singing. Abraham Kaplan, personal interview, 8/28/06. The choir on Bernstein’s 1965 premiere recording pretty consistently tends towards an [E] for this sound. The pronunciation of this sound varies greatly from one recording to the next and even from one word to the next on many recordings.
- ⁶⁶ In this way, the quiescent *sheva*, since it is assigned a note, is simply treated like a mobile *sheva*. In spite of the fact that it is not necessarily the “correct” pronunciation of Hebrew, Kaplan is steadfast in his conviction that choirs should sing the pronunciation that Bernstein had in his head. Abraham Kaplan, personal interview, 8/28/06.
- ⁶⁷ This option might be especially desirable at slower tempos where it could be argued that using [E] for the incorrectly mobile *sheva* makes the pronunciation error too prominent; for example, in measures 20–21 of movement 2, *yan’heini* [jan ‘Xe ni] (He guideth me) might sound more accurate as [jan ‘Xe ni] than it would as [janE ‘Xe ni]. Generally speaking, the option of slightly altering the music itself to correct the pronunciation is highly discouraged (such as by singing the syllable “yan” for two beats or moving the *n*’ to the last eighth note of the measure to make the pronunciation error less obvious).
- ⁶⁸ This is comparable to Jack Gottlieb’s treatment of the word *Yit’gadal* at the beginning of his Half Kaddish.
- ⁶⁹ This can be compared to Stravinsky’s setting of words like *Do... mi... num* in his *Symphony of Psalms* and his similar practice in other works. In the case of this section, the incoherence actually makes sense. The nations are raging and the misaccentuated words are Bernstein’s musical setting of the nonsense.
- ⁷⁰ The passages sung by the women and soloist in the second movement are actually very effectively set, with correct accentuation in almost all cases. Given the rewriting that was necessary to turn this song from “Spring Will Come Again” to Psalm 23, this is particularly impressive.
- ⁷¹ The actual vowel sounds would fall somewhere between the closed [i] and open [I] and between the closed [o] and open [ç]. See Asher Laufer’s vowel diagram for clarification. Asher Laufer, “Hebrew,” *Handbook of the International Phonetic Association*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 97.
- ⁷² Could be pronounced [bE sl m’ ‘Xa] with the second *sheva* more neutral.
- ⁷³ The score mistakenly has *ynaḥaleini*, but the word should have a regular *h* [h].
- ⁷⁴ Proper syllabification would typically be *u-mish-an-te-cha*, or in this case, *u-mish-a-ne-te-cha*.
- ⁷⁵ A difference in pronunciation is not recommended; however, according to the transliteration scheme used by Bernstein, the word should be spelled *shulhan*.
- ⁷⁶ The first *sheva* is incorrectly vocalized, hence, [jl t’ ja tSE ‘vu] is an option.
- ⁷⁷ In this case, the first *sheva* vowel is elided, hence *v’-roz-nim* has become shortened to *vroz-nim*.

