Milton Babbitt's *Glosses* on American Jewish Identity

Alison Maggart

In 1987 Milton Babbitt's longtime collaborator, the Jewish poet and literary critic John Hollander, compiled several translations of Psalm 150 for Babbitt's choral work, *Glosses* (1988).[1] The men had worked together since the sixties. They regularly sat on panels together, discussing the relationship between music and text.[2] And, when Babbitt set Hollander's texts, the two men would correspond. Hollander would not only give detailed explanations of his poems' structures and contents, but also suggest appropriate musical settings.[3] It is therefore likely that Babbitt and Hollander discussed Hollander's conception of biblical literature as it related to his reworking of Psalm 150 for *Glosses*, particularly because the same year that Hollander supplied the translations for the musical work, he also contributed an essay on the Psalms to *Congregation: Contemporary Writers Read the Jewish Bible*, a collection of meditations on the books of the Old Testament. In his reflection, republished as "Hearing and Overhearing the Psalms" in 1997, Hollander argues that the Psalmic glosses exemplify how fluid, situated, and subjective the construction of literary meaning is. Each gloss, fashioned according to individual or collective contingencies and susceptible to circumstantial agendas, is not only valid, he claims, but in fact essential to the verse. He concludes: "Biblical poetry exists in and for its interpretations" (123–24).

Hollander's approach to the Psalms, which gives ontological power to interpretation, reflects a particularly American understanding of Jewish identity and meaning in the postwar period. Many American Jews in Hollander's and Babbitt's generation felt an obligation to reaffirm their Jewish identity in the post-Holocaust era. Yet, because they had matured in predominantly secular or purposefully assimilatory households, they lacked a clear or unified understanding of what it meant to be Jewish (Shapiro 1990, 73–74). This indeterminacy obliged each Jewish individual to design his or her own "Jewishness" in congruence with prior convictions. Thus, American Jewish identity in the postwar period was often constructed upon the rediscovery and assimilation of Judaism into one's preexisting, personal worldviews. For Babbitt, this manifests in symbols, derived from Jewish history and mythology, which he employs as metaphors for essentially non-religious, aesthetic views.

In what follows, I outline how Babbitt's relationship to his Jewish identity evolved over the course of his career: from concessions he made to Princeton's anti-Semitic policies early in his career to his active participation in conferences devoted to Jewish issues later in his career. Then, I examine allusions to Jewish history in Babbitt's lectures and published essays. The Exodus narrative proved especially rich for Babbitt's aesthetic philosophy, having implications for how he understood Schoenberg (as Moses) and (exiled) academic composers in America (the Promised Land). Lastly, I examine the repercussions Babbitt's constructed Jewish identity had for his music. To this end, I offer an analysis and interpretation of some of the more salient features—in particular, three climactic *unsung* moments—in *Glosses*. These three unpitched vocalizations, I argue, realize the Jewish tradition wherein God, in defying definition, also resists signification. Moreover, they allude to the musical symbol for *YHVH*, established by Schoenberg in his gloss of Psalm 150, *Modern Psalm* Op. 50c (1950).

The Unspoken "Jewish Issue"

Despite claiming that he "regarded himself as Jewish and did not wish to be in any way evasive about being Jewish," Babbitt rarely discusses his Jewish heritage in his published writings (quoted in Rosenburg 1979, 46–47).[4] When he does, he describes having been raised in a "lower upper class, economically well off" Jewish household (quoted in Cohen 1982, 235). Additionally, although he attended Reform services at the Beth Israel temple in Jackson, Mississippi, where the musical repertory, he laments, "consisted of one tune which was Anton Rubinstein's melody in F and another tune that was not," he never considered himself a religious person (quoted in Cohen 1982, 235). Even among his colleagues (at least early in his career), Babbitt's Jewish heritage often went unrecognized. For example, despite having taught Babbitt privately since 1935, Roger Sessions remained unaware of Babbitt's Jewish background until he recommended Babbitt for a teaching appointment at Princeton. When Babbitt's 1937 application was rejected because, as Babbitt divulges, "it was felt by someone that perhaps the first junior appointee in the Music Section should not be Jewish," Sessions "was surprised" (quoted in Hilferty 2011). Sessions, Babbitt describes, "thought of me as a 'Southern boy,' and because the name Babbitt wasn't normally taken to be 'Jewish,'" he hadn't suspected it (quoted in Rosenburg 1979, 46). Despite the disclosure, Sessions continued advocating for Babbitt's employment, and the next year Babbitt was given a position.

Anti-Semitic discrimination was common at elite universities during the interwar years. Policies instated by several Ivy League universities

(most prominently Harvard, Yale, and Princeton), which included numerical quotas and application qualifications purportedly judging student character and leadership abilities, allowed admissions committees to shape the demographic profile of incoming classes and severely curtail the number of Jews in attendance and on the faculty.[5] As Babbitt recounted, "[In the late 1930s] I was aware that there was a problem with the 'Jewish issue' in Ivy League music (and other) departments. . . . It did make a difference . . . even if . . . [one] claimed no particular adherence to the religion" (quoted in Rosenburg 1979, 46). Babbitt's conduct, when he did receive an appointment as Instructor in 1938, suggests that he believed quiet integration to be the most advantageous approach to academic bureaucracy. The first substantial work he completed after being hired was *Music for the Mass* (1941). As he put it, the work was composed for political reasons, namely, to "comfort [Princeton's] chairman" and to assuage departmental doubts about having a Jewish composer on the faculty (quoted in Brody 1993, 168).

Babbitt's acquiescence to university prejudices demonstrates a typical tack taken by Jewish academics during the thirties. At the height of discrimination, many intellectuals felt that Jewish culture was incompatible with hegemonic American culture and that professional success necessitated assimilation (Shapiro 1990). A case in point, Lionel Trilling, the first Jew to be hired in Columbia University's English department, asserted that Jewish culture could "give no sustenance to the American artist or intellectual who is born a Jew" (quoted in Shapiro 1990, 71).[6] Despite Babbitt's quiet conformity, his professional development and security at Princeton remained impeded (Brody 1993). He wasn't offered a position as Associate Professor until 1956, despite repeated letters from Sessions to Whitney Oates, Princeton's chairman of the Special Program in the Humanities, on his behalf:

> [Babbitt has] great prominence and responsibility and influence . . . in the world of music. It would be a very important consideration for me that Milton's position in the Department should be secured. . . . I can only say that I feel the rank of Assistant Professor is in no way commensurate either with his abilities, with his stature in comparison with some of the other younger members of the department, or with his very real services to the university. (Sessions 1952)

As institutional anti-Semitism abated following World War II, earlier initiatives for assimilation or cosmopolitanism were replaced with calls to rediscover the distinctiveness of American Jewish culture. As cultural historian Edward Shapiro describes:

> The [previous] era of "shah"—the reluctance of Jews to draw attention to themselves—abruptly ended. . . . In view of the Holocaust, assimilation

appeared to be a cowardly betrayal. . . . American Jews believed that they
could dignify the memories of the slain by remaining true to their Jewish
heritage. (Shapiro 1990, 73–74)

However, after years of distancing themselves from their Jewish heritage in
order to identify with American culture, working out what "being Jewish"
meant was a daunting question for American Jews, particularly because
they were aware of how vastly different their shared experiences were
from those of European Jews. Some individuals, attempting to mediate
the two identities, postulated a symbiotic, or at least parallel, relationship
between American and Jewish characters. Two generations of editors of
the American Jewish journal *Commentary*, for example, conflated notions
of American exceptionalism with Jewish Chosenness.[7] Promoting America
as the new bastion of an evolving Jewish culture, founding editor Elliot
Cohen described the vast possibilities for Jews in America in the 1945
inaugural issue. The country, he argued, provided opportunities not only
for individuals but also for the development of Jewish culture at large: "We
have faith that, out of the opportunities of our experience here, there will
evolve new patterns of living, new modes of thought, which will harmo-
nize heritage and country into a true sense of at-home-ness in the modern
world" (Cohen 1945, 1–3). Likening America to the "Promised Land" even
more explicitly, Cohen's successor Norman Podhoretz claimed Jewish cul-
ture would finally be able to escape "the desert of alienation in which it
had been wandering for so long and into the promised land of democratic,
pluralistic, prosperous America where it would live as blessedly in its
Jewishness as in its Americanness, safe and sound and forevermore, amen"
(1967, 134–35).

Hollander similarly proposed that American and Jewish cultures are
intrinsically linked; for him, however, the two identities were analogous pre-
cisely because they both defied definition. Like Babbitt, Hollander claimed
little religious connection to Judaism, although he felt a political and so-
cial obligation to affirm his "Jewishness" after World War II (Hollander
1985).[8] Still, Babbitt "felt that anomalousness, the anomalousness of being
Jewish, in history, and how being American-Jewish was a different kind of
hyphenation from other kinds" (quoted in Hollander 1985). According to
Hollander, American Jews faced difficulties different from other Jewish in-
dividuals because neither Jewish identity nor American identity was fixed.
Such indefiniteness, however, allowed for self-determinacy, and in this
manner Jewish and American identities were allied. In a 1985 interview
he stated:

Being American is a very special version of the condition of being a citi-
zen of a country, that it is anomalous in the history of nationalisms. It

is quite as anomalous in one sense as being a Jew is in the whole world of nations, races, religions, since trying to define being a Jew by any of those is very difficult, almost impossible. It's a tradition of identity that for some reason has continued. America, which has, of course, all of the physical and outward attributes of continuation, nevertheless was from the beginning a special case of being a nation. . . . Being Americans, we have a special burden on us, a burden of invention of self, and I feel that these matters are somehow related, metaphorically. That is, being Jewish and being American are in a way parables for each other. But I say that with some hesitation. Perhaps those two conditions are like two lights burning together, lights of two different colors. (Hollander 1985)

Hollander's insight—that what it means to be a Jew is an invention—has proven a lasting attitude among American Jews. In their 2000 sociological study, Steven Cohen and Arnold Eisen found that many American Jews, ambivalent toward traditional structures of Judaism, place "principal authority" in "the sovereign self" (2) and, accordingly, "aim to make Jewish narratives part of their own personal stories, by picking and choosing among new and inherited practices and texts so as to find that combination they as individuals can authentically affirm" (9).

In accepting a pluralistic American Jewish identity, this attitude has encouraged the creation of many different Jewish delineations, which may or may not be compatible, under the single moniker "American Jew." Problematically, these internal divisions can sometimes lead to discriminatory practices within the American Jewish community. As certain parties attempt to validate their own understandings of what it means to be Jewish, others who do not meet their criteria are excluded. Within the context of an already marginalized group, such divisions can be destructive.[9] More radically, in recognizing the invented nature of identity, such an attitude can empower individuals to construct Jewish cultural history with hindsight. As Hollander's colleague Harold Bloom argued in regard to Freud and Kafka, for instance, the artworks of one's predecessors *can become* Jewish not because of any stylistic feature, but rather because their creators' accomplishments come to be seen as having "redefined Jewish culture" (1988, 357). As Bloom put it, "[Freud and Kafka] are Jewish cultural figures only when they are viewed retrospectively. . . . [Consequently,] whatever the future American Jewish cultural achievement will be, it will become Jewish only after it has imposed itself as achievement" (357).

Breathing the Air of the Diaspora

In the 1960s Babbitt increasingly began supporting musical developments in Israel and contributing to conferences and workshops devoted

to Jewish culture.[10] In 1958 the Israeli composers Josef Tal and Tzvi Avni, with funding from UNESCO, studied electronic music with Babbitt at the Columbia-Princeton Electronic Music Center. These two composers seem to have become advocates for Babbitt in Jerusalem. Tal, for example, likely helped to arrange visiting lectures for Babbitt at the Rubin Academy of Music, where he was professor. In 1963 Babbitt first traveled to Israel to give a lecture, "On the Human Limitations in the Perception of Sounds" (Boehm 1963, 3). Two more trips followed, one in 1977 and one in 1978, during which Babbitt gave lectures and participated in seminars as part of the Rubin Academy Summer Program and the World Congress on Jewish Music. The wide scope and variety of topics addressed during these programs reflects a flourishing time for Israeli musicology.[11] At the Rubin Academy Summer Program Babbitt spoke on "The Vienna School," "20th-Century Music," and "The Music Academy and University." Although these subjects are representative of Babbitt's interests throughout his career, the topic of the last roundtable in which he participated was a departure.

In 1978, immediately following the close of the Summer Program, the Hebrew Academy hosted the World Congress on Jewish Music, convened in honor of the thirtieth anniversary of Israel's founding. Subtitled "Musical Tradition and Creation in the Culture of the Jewish People—East and West," the Congress was dedicated to detailing the ontology and morphology of Jewish music (Harrán 1979, 20). However, as Don Harrán recounted, "Participants encountered problems of definition. How does one describe the culture of the Jewish people[?] . . . More fundamentally, what is the Jewish people, or put bluntly, who is a Jew?" (1979, 20). Babbitt participated in the roundtable "How does the Jewish Composer Relate to his Jewish Tradition?" (Cohen 1982, 233–35).[12] Perhaps rather caustically interpreting the question, Tal, who also partook in the conversation, concluded his thoughts by saying, "The question about Jewishness [in music] belongs to the frame of mind of a Jew breathing the air of the Diaspora and desperately seeking an identity" (quoted in Cohen 1982, 233). Simply put, the question of Jewishness was an American one.

Babbitt took the point at issue "very seriously" (quoted in Cohen 1982, 234). Unsurprisingly, he centered his discussion around Schoenberg. Recounting an anecdote to which he frequently returned throughout his career, he narrated how, in a "cosmic cataclysm," destiny brought him (from Jackson, Mississippi) and Schoenberg (from Vienna) together in New York City in the same year (Babbitt 1976, 335–36). In this fated moment, European tradition was transferred "suddenly and summarily" to America (334–35). While after this point in the account Babbitt typi-

cally segues into descriptions of his early career—lessons with Sessions, the influence of Marion Bauer's *Twentieth Century Music* on his professional development, etc.—at the Congress's roundtable, he reveals, "We were always, as Jews, very much aware of what created this condition" (quoted in Cohen 1982, 235). The devastating effects of the war on the Jewish people, made vivid by the influx of European Jewish émigrés like Schoenberg to the United States, roused in Babbitt (and other American Jews) a profound self-awareness and sense of responsibility. Confronting European Jewish refugees not only underscored the varieties of Jewish experience, but also gave American Jews a new and more positive perspective on the opportunities the United States afforded Jewish individuals and culture.[13] "Any of us who survived World War II know perfectly well, as Jews," Babbitt stated,

> that we had a tendency at all moments to think rather differently about its consequences. Those of us, for example, who couldn't write a note of music for a half dozen years came back to that music affected very differently by what had happened in Europe and what had happened to us. (quoted in Cohen 1982, 235)

Recognizing the distinction between American and European Jewish experience led Babbitt, like Hollander, to invent a personal Jewish artistic identity: one that enveloped both European art tradition and American popular tradition (a common expression, Jack Gottlieb claims, of the "Jewish American dilemma" [2004, xiv]). Thus, in his Congress comments, in addition to Schoenberg, Babbitt also claims Jerome Kern, Irving Berlin, Richard Rodgers, and other Broadway and Tin Pan Alley composers to be part of the Jewish musical tradition that influenced him. The music of these composers, Babbitt reminds us, is not only "very centrally Jewish," but also, unlike some of Schoenberg's music, "ecumenical" (quoted in Cohen 1982, 235). Berlin composed "White Christmas," "Easter Parade," and "God Bless America," and Gershwin and Kern composed music about the South. Babbitt thus makes it clear that, at least for him, Jewishness in music is not dependent upon Jewish subject matter. At the end of the roundtable, most composers agreed that delineating one's Jewish identity from one's national heritage was difficult, if not impossible. Rather, it was decided that a composer or composition's status as "Jewish" was as much a product of one's perspective as anything else.

Around the same time that Babbitt began participating in these programs, he also began incorporating allusions to Jewish tradition in his lectures and essays (Gleason 2013).[14] Taking his cue from the rhetoric of the *Commentary* editors, Babbitt enlists a particularly powerful and emotion-laden symbol from the contemporary discourse and secures it for

his own cause: the Exile. In his retelling, the Holocaust is often correlated to the Exile so that he may advance the United States as the new cultural "Promised Land" and thereby bolster the prestige of (his) American music. Such a narrative appears in its most developed rendition in a 1974 banquet speech Babbitt delivered for Schoenberg's centennial celebration:

> [When Schoenberg arrived in America] suddenly and summarily the global course of contemporary musical development was transported and diverted from the European continent to our own, and our role was transformed from that of our *wandering predecessors . . .* to that of participants. . . . Ours was an upheaval within a *cosmic cataclysm . . .* [and] if we, trying to come of musical age, *sinned* on the side of over-anxiety, over-susceptibility unto naiveté, even gullibility, it was with a voracious enthusiasm and energy born of the unnatural suddenness of our new situation. . . . Schoenberg could not have foreseen . . . *the wilderness* into which his music has led us. . . . But those who are the *legitimate, if abandoned, children* of the Schoenbergian revolution, who do not measure their success by their successes, *in flight from persecution* under Gresham's Law, gladly would accept musical *asylum* in any Society where the air conditioner provided a zephyr touched by the sweet smell of such "alter Duft." (1976, 335–40, emphasis mine)

Babbitt's allusions are manifold: first, he champions America as the new Promised Land of cultural prosperity; then, in analogizing Pharaoh's Law with Gresham's Law, he secularizes the Exile narrative at the same time that he reiterates his inveterate concern for the economic wellbeing of academic composers; and, finally, in a characteristically nostalgic and romantic fashion, he places himself within the tradition of a more fragrant, Schoenbergian past.[15] Fidelity to the biblical Exile narrative is less important than its connotations and how those relate to Babbitt's aesthetic philosophy. Schoenberg, unquestionably, substitutes for Moses. His journey to the United States incites the "cosmic cataclysm," just as Moses' meeting with God incited a violent shaking on Mount Sinai. Schoenberg leads the new generation of composers into the "wilderness," and his Society (for Private Musical Performances) and music, like the Ark of the Covenant, emit an intoxicating sweetness.[16] However, the identity of the exiles is ambiguous. At first, it seems that the earlier generation of American composers—the "wandering predecessors"—are the exiles and that with Schoenberg's arrival, American exile from participation in serious music is over. Yet, later in the passage, Babbitt marks the disciples of Schoenberg, Babbitt among them, as the exiles. They follow Schoenberg, they are sinful, and they are described as abandoned children.[17] Still, the status of their exile is unclear. Are they in the wilderness or have they found asylum?

Further examination of his writings reveals that, for Babbitt, even if

America is the Promised Land, true asylum can only be found in the university. Indeed, the Exile narrative not only supports Babbitt's argument that the university should act as a safe haven for alienated composers, it also turns the institutional support for which Babbitt advocates into a dramatic and powerful moral dilemma. For example, when Babbitt bases the physical well-being of composers on the support of the university in his 1987 essay "The Unlikely Survival of Serious Music," he again resorts to mixed religious metaphors in order to garner emotional support for university patronage. He writes,

> The corporal survival of the composer . . . [relies on] the survival of the university in a role which universities seem less and less able or willing to assume: that is, of the *mightiest of fortresses against the overwhelming, outnumbering forces, both within and without* the university, of anti-intellectualism, cultural populism, and passing fashion. (1987a, 163, emphasis mine)

The analogy of the university as the "mightiest of fortresses" in this passage is particularly charged. Brody interprets the "allusion to Luther's hymn and its formidable history" as

> uncharacteristically self-effacing; the wit in incongruously juxtaposing the institutional and spiritual resources associated with Luther or Bach and contemporary academe seems adequately ironic to undercut Babbitt's own rhetoric, as if he were particularly anxious about the virulence of his arguments. (1993, 168)

I would argue, however, that because of the hymn's entanglement with anti-Semitism—from its authorship to its vital place within early-twentieth-century German national identity—Babbitt's allusion to it is central to his argument insofar as it helps dictate how we respond to a subtle correlation, masked in humor, that Babbitt makes later in the essay between German discrimination against both Jews and Americans.[18] He writes,

> To consign us [American academic composers] to the great world out there . . . is to consign us to oblivion . . . [because] the very term *academic* is conceived to be an immediate, automatic, and ultimate term of derogation. . . . If the best thing a composer can be is dead, the next best thing he can be is German. The worst thing, one of the worst things he can possibly be, still, is American. (1987a, 181)

Sympathy for American composers is thus carefully crafted against a background of German oppression.

A more nuanced interpretation of Babbitt's use of "fortress" can also be

gleaned by comparing "The Unlikely Survival" to other articles in which Babbitt employs similar language. Given Babbitt's recent participation in the Israeli conference "The University and the Academy," with its similar subject matter, it seems probable that "The Unlikely Survival" derived from (or at least is related to) his lecture there. Babbitt also used similar terms in a letter to Yohanan Boehm, the music critic of the *Jerusalem Post*. Lamenting the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra's decision to cancel Schoenberg's Violin Concerto from the season's program, Babbitt wrote, "Schoenberg was the greatest Jewish composer. . . . And [yet] his music still so suffers, *not only behind* the Iron Curtain *but in* other cultural citadels" (quoted in Boehm 1971, A15, emphasis mine). The similar rhetorical structures in this letter and in "The Unlikely Survival," wherein cultural philistinism threatens both *from the outside* and *from within* suggests that the fortress/citadel image is a single signifier in Babbitt's symbolic system, referring to institutions, which, despite their promise of refuge for serious music, fall victim to external pressures.

For Israeli audiences, the parallel to Masada and the Masada story would have been evident. The hillside fortress, which served as the Jews' last sanctuary during the First Jewish–Roman War and in which the Jews, rather than face defeat, committed mass suicide, was a powerful symbol for Zionists. Indeed, despite its problematic aspects, the legend gained new prominence in the early 1940s and came to symbolize Jewish heroism in the face of impending doom. As S. J. Goldsmith put it for *The Jewish Advocate*, "Masada is an ethos . . . among Jews; it is an inspiration to guard the frontiers. . . . It is a way of life . . . and remains a monument to the human spirit" (1966). Drawing parallels between the fates of the Masada refugees and the Jewish rebels in the ghettos of Nazi-occupied lands also allowed theologians to depict those killed in the wartime uprisings as righteous and deeply courageous (Ben-Yehuda 1995, 86). Babbitt most certainly knew the narrative and its connotations, not only because large-scale excavations of Masada began the year he first traveled to Israel, but also because Tal composed *Masada 967* (1973), an opera on the subject that Babbitt likely knew. It is also probable, thanks to the 1981 ABC miniseries, *Masada*, starring Peter O'Toole, that by 1983 (the year Babbitt gave his "Unlikely Survival" lecture) American audiences would have also recognized the allusion. Hence, when Babbitt likens the university to a fortress that safeguards the survival of serious music (even though this survival is "unlikely"), he restructures modernist isolation as an active, heroic, and necessary condition. Taking refuge in the asylum does not mean a withdrawal from society—it is no retreat to the ivory tower—so much as a desperate and losing battle with anti-intellectual populism.

One final example will suffice to demonstrate the ingenuity with which Babbitt interweaves the plight of American academic composers with that of the Jewish people in ancient, recent, and contemporary history. In "On Having Been and Still Being an American Composer" Babbitt explicitly advocates for an active battle against the "intellectual Philistines" of contemporary culture: "The defensive strategies of survival of [music's] elite have to be applied on many fronts: against the coercive coalition, that union of journalists, media meddlers, performers, and even (some) music historians" (1989, 432). Energizing his argument, he then again invokes personal and collective Jewish narratives:

> If I feel that I am confined to a populist *concentration camp* under the dictatorship of the mental proletariat, I also often feel that we (I can only hope that this is not an editorial 'we') *composers in America are in the position of Israel* in the 'family' of nations; I think particularly of the moment during the 'Yom Kippur' War when tens of thousands of denizens of Cairo poured into the streets screaming with hysterical joy in response to the report (false) that the Weizmann Institute had been *leveled by Egyptian* planes. Why this elation at such destruction? Because the Weizmann Institute represented that scientific, intellectual achievement which the Egyptians could not equal, or even comprehend. In Egypt as in America, there is nothing a no-nothing [*sic*] resents more than someone who knows something; *he knows plenty of nothing and nothing's plenty for him.* (Babbitt 1989, 433–34; emphases mine)

In his diatribe, Babbitt unequivocally associates American composers, attacked by the "most recent self-appointed custodians of culture," with an oppressed Jewish people (be it by Nazism, Communism, recent Egyptian politics, and, by association, ancient Egyptian enslavement). More subtly, he correlates his music in particular to the height of "scientific, intellectual achievement," represented by the Weizmann Institute, by employing terms ("scientific" and "intellectual") often used to characterize his compositions and theoretical discourse. In addition to asserting sympathy for the Jews within recent political history, he also reaffirms his affinity for Jewish popular tradition by alluding to George Gershwin's "Oh I Got Plenty of Nothin'" in the final sentence. In this quotation, Babbitt also snidely implies that those who attack his music are similarly "know-nothings," who endeavor to disguise their intellectual shortcomings through belligerence. Thus, cleverly interweaving these different layers of literal and metaphoric meaning, Babbitt argues for the value and relevance of "serious" music, despite the increasing antagonism it faced in the late 1980s both from within and from outside the university.

By drawing from Jewish narratives, Babbitt's rhetoric in these various

articles and lectures thus reinforces conceptions of the evolution of Western music history that Babbitt had developed early in his career. In correlating Schoenberg to Moses and in likening the university to a fortress, Babbitt not only legitimizes serious music, but he also underlines the valor of its practitioners. Interspersed references to Jewish participation in American popular culture further emphasize the role of American Jewish composers, like Babbitt, in realizing the consummate Western art music. Is it possible, therefore, as Bloom suggests, to retrospectively interpret Babbitt's music as Jewish?

New Meanings in Glossed Translation

There is nothing in Babbitt's music that sounds "Jewish" (at least in terms of characteristic phrase formulas or modal collections), a feature, which as Gottlieb (2004) paradoxically argues, characterizes much American Jewish music.[19] And yet, I would argue that allusions to Schoenberg in Babbitt's music, such as I will describe in *Glosses*, can be interpreted as symbols of Babbitt's Jewish heritage. From this perspective, the multiple-determination and function of musical events as well as the meaningfulness of interdimensional correspondences in Babbitt's works (such as between pitch and rhythmic parameters) might also be interpreted as resonating more generally with Jewish beliefs concerning the multiplicity of meaning in a religious text (such as described by Hollander and many others).

Babbitt composed *Glosses* for the American Boychoir in celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of its founding. It is unusual within Babbitt's oeuvre in that it sets a religious text: Psalm 150 in four different translations (Hebrew, Latin, German, and English).[20] The commission does not appear to have been subject to contractual restrictions, aside from those stipulating the performers (two soprano parts and two alto parts); other works on the program during which it was premiered are not accompanied by religious texts.

Glosses begins with a sequential introduction of each of the glossing languages (example 1). Each translation is restricted to a single vocal part (from lowest to highest): the second alto sings in Hebrew, the first alto sings in Latin, the second soprano sings in German, and the first soprano sings in English. Mapping a metaphoric archeology, in which the lowest voice, singing in Hebrew, symbolizes the deepest, oldest sediment in the linguistic history of the Psalms, the voices enter in staggered imitation, proceeding from lowest to highest voice, oldest to most recent translation. The voices not only accumulate in number and range but also dynamic intensity, symbolically representing the multitude of prayerful congregants intimated in the text.[21] Thus, the different voices both perform translational

Example 1: Partitioning of Glossarial Translations in the Different Vocal Registers, *Glosses* mm. 1–8.

glosses on the Hebrew source text as well as enumerate a history of biblical translation.

The power of translation to transform a text's meaning is a point that Hollander develops considerably in his essay "Hearing and Overhearing the Psalms" (1997). Translation, Hollander claims, inevitably and inconspicuously produces new meanings. However, these new meanings are not only the product of inadvertent connotations connected to a new denotation or of intended connotations lost in a new denotation. Many "misconstruings" and "reconstructions" (words he stresses as derived from the same Latin root) can be the result of unplanned formal and rhetorical by-products of the translation (anaphoric constructions, assonances, pseudo-metrical schemes, and allusions) that highlight certain words or phrases unremarkable in the original. For example, Hollander describes the "[incomprehensible] rhythmic component of the [King James's] psalm," created in translation (116). For a listener attuned to metered poetry, verses in pseudo-dactylic pentameter transform certain words or phrases by endowing them with accentual emphasis; they also seem to initiate quatrains, only to frustratingly break off before completion. In trying to make sense of the inadvertent aftermath of translation, of linguistic archaisms, and of thwarted (and anachronistic) expectations (that is, quatrains had not been formalized at the time of the Psalter's compilation), readers are compelled to construct their own interpretations of the new text. Thus, meanings are not lost in translation; rather, they proliferate.

According to Hollander, the Psalms' rich history of exegesis, translation, and propagation has made them particularly fertile sites for intertextual play. He describes how his childhood "misreadings" of the Psalms

"marked the growth of [his] inner ear for poetry" and came to influence how he viewed all textual meaning to be constructed (Hollander 1997, 116). As the Psalms taught him, a deep engagement with any text's formal, poetic structure is fundamental to understanding its meaning. Imagine a child who mishears the penultimate verse of Psalm 23—"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life"—as "Surely Mrs. Murphy shall follow me all the days of my life" (114). Hollander claims that the child's misunderstanding is "a more viable, powerful reconstruction of what had otherwise faded into abstraction than any primer's glossing" because it evinces the child's closer attention to the psalm's poetic structure and cadence (114). In substituting a literal being ("Mrs. Murphy") for abstractions ("goodness" and "mercy"), the child transforms the "mechanical allegory" produced by the verb "follow me" into a literal possibility (114). In recovering the poem's syntax, the child, although misunderstanding the poem's semantics, realizes the Psalm's poetic truth (114). As texts and formulaic prose structures become more familiar to adult readers, the dynamism of the text's architecture becomes invisible, and the meaning thereby created is often lost: "Losing, in mature literacy, the ability to make such mistakes can mean being deaf and blind to the power of even the KJV text, let alone that of the Hebrew. One's reading slides over the figuration, and thereby over the force of the line of verse" (114). Thus, attending to the linguistic *syntactical* structure, even if at the expense of the meaning created by surface-level rhetorical embellishment, is central for Hollander to grasping the text's truth.

That Babbitt likewise approached the Psalms from a literary perspective, examining the poetic interrelationships of the Psalms foremost, is evident in his sketches and program notes for *From the Psalter* (2002) (another choral work that weaves verses from Psalms 13, 40, and 41 in Sir Philip Sidney's translation into one "conjoining continuity"). In his program notes, Babbitt reveals himself to be more captivated by the structural and sonic aspects of poetry—how the rhythmic and rhyme schemes interact, coalesce to produce meaning, and transform through translation—than by interpretation. He writes,

> The syntax of the poetry may sometimes seem inarticulate, even convoluted; an occasional word is "archaic" (at least, for us), and familiar words are occasionally employed unfamiliarly, but the verses of the remarkable poet, essayist, and courtier are never ultimately obscure, but elegant, original, and—even—memorable. (Babbitt 2002)

Babbitt's impression of Sidney's translation expresses amusement and pleasure at the musical qualities afforded through idiosyncratic translation. His

description of the "familiar words occasionally employed unfamiliarly" (a phrase that, elsewhere jotted down singly, appears to have been the mainspring of Babbitt's program) also suggests that Babbitt attributed greater significance to the text's sonic quality than to its semantic meaning insofar as when one hears a familiar word employed unfamiliarly one perceives the word *musically*. Momentarily divorced from its meaning, the text's decontextualized vowels, consonants, and rhythms offer themselves for an instant as no more than sound.[22] Babbitt's turn of phrase is not just stylistically similar to Hollander's assertion that "reading through the Book of Psalms . . . meant encountering many *commonplaces in their uncommon original*" (1997, 119; emphasis mine); it also resonates with Hollander's sentiment that "mysterious poetry [is engendered] by distance from the English usage of a much earlier text" (124).

Hollander concludes "Hearing and Overhearing the Psalms" by proposing that the whole history of Psalmic exegesis has been fraught with such musical hearings and misreadings, and that such glosses are, in actuality, what give the Psalms their meaning: "The layers of misreading and rereading are part of the poetry of the text itself in the poetic portions of the Bible" (1997, 128). Viewing the Psalmic glosses as a synecdoche for how all textual meaning is constructed allows Hollander to then make a more extreme claim: that all poetical meaning is intertextual. As he puts it, "All poetry is in some way or another unofficial midrash, a revisionist commentary upon some kind of canonical text" (Hollander 1988, 114).[23] By identifying the roots of intertextual hermeneutics in Jewish tradition, Hollander locates "Jewishness" in a practice, not in a fixed characteristic. He furthermore proffers a symbol of Jewish identity that is structural—engagement with a glossarial intertext—rather than stylistic. Thus, when Babbitt alludes to the history of biblical translation in the opening measures of *Glosses*, he both performs and affirms Jewish tradition.

Glossing Miracles

In *Glosses* Babbitt follows directives that he lays out in his program notes for *Paraphrases* (1979): "[Glosses are] restatements [meant] to clarify, to reinterpret, to amplify" (Babbitt 1979). In the opening measures, the underlying structure of *Glosses* is made wholly transparent: the source hexachord (an all-combinatorial C-type hexachord) is immediately and unambiguously stated in the second alto (Figure 1). Such enumeration of the composition's fundamental material is unusual for Babbitt, who, as Andrew Mead has demonstrated, tends to compose works that are "revelatory" in character (that is, he does not reveal the underlying series until a climactic moment later in the piece). In fact, Babbitt associated

m. 1	3	6	8	10	13	16	18	21	25
		316843			461e38		e48613		83e164
		5t2079		29570t		9702t5		t07592	
	83e164		e48613	461e38				31684e	
t07592	9702t5				5t2079		29570t		
pp	*p*	*mp*	*mf*	*f*	*f*	*mf*	*mp*	*p*	*pp*

Figure 1: Pitch Array of *Glosses*, Blocks I and II.
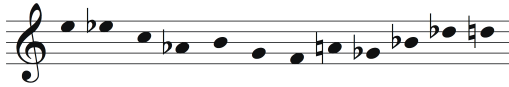
Figure 2: Schoenberg's "Miracle Set."

such straightforward expositions with Schoenberg. Schoenberg, Babbitt claimed, had a "taste for a phanic, foreground statement of the set at the outset of a work" (Mead 1994, 107). Thus, one might already perceive a faint suggestion of Schoenberg in Babbitt's initial concession.

In 1950 Schoenberg published *Die Wunder-Reihe* ("The Miracle Set"), an article in which he describes striking features of the prime series he uses in *Modern Psalm*, Op. 50c. *Modern Psalm*'s "Miracle Set," Schoenberg explains, consists of two symmetrically arranged hexachords, each of which contains tonal subsets (Figure 2). What Schoenberg found "miraculous" about the series was its ability to preserve hexachordal collections and intervallic successions under certain transpositions and inversions. For example, a transposition of the prime row down by whole-step produces a series in which the first hexachord is a retrograde of the prime row's second hexachord (Figure 3). These "strongly related configurations," Schoenberg notes, "produce a greater variety than double counterpoint" (quoted in Neff 1999, 79). Throughout *Modern Psalm*, Schoenberg emphasizes this feature of the series by freely pairing aggregate-creating hexachords to create a surface proliferating with imitative pitch structures and retrogrades. As Thomas Michael Couvillon describes, "Schoenberg's tendency . . . to freely retrograde individual hexachords is [in *Modern Psalm*] . . . incorporated into the serial structure" (2002, 69).

Of course, as Babbitt was quick to point out, this feature is not unique to the Miracle Set. It is rather a consequence of the interval content of the third-order all-combinatorial hexachord and its symmetrical arrangement across the series. In fact, in his Madison lectures, Babbitt implies that by failing to grasp the ramifications of his own syntactic structures, Schoenberg overlooked the true import of his system:
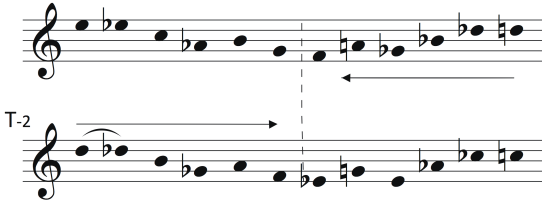
Figure 3: Hexachordal Retrogrades between Schoenberg's Miracle Set and the T$_{-2}$ Series.

Figure 4: The Prime Series of *Glosses*.

> Toward the end of his life, [Schoenberg] wrote the *Modern Psalms*, a set of little pieces for which he wrote the text. He never realized that the series he uses there—a third all-combinatorial hexachord—he had already used in the *Ode to Napoleon* and in the Opus 29 Suite. He didn't realize it was exactly the same hexachord. He never thought of these hexachords except in a particular ordering, and he never saw the generality of the unordered form. (Babbitt 1987a, 14)

In *Glosses* Babbitt clarifies, reinterprets, and amplifies (that is, he glosses) the structural properties of Schoenberg's Miracle Set in order to even more explicitly project the miraculous surface features that Schoenberg prized. Like Schoenberg had done in *Modern Psalms*, Babbitt constructs a series comprised of diatonic subsets in *Glosses*.[24] The first hexachord can be perceived as a subset of an F-major scale and the second hexachord can be perceived as a subset of a C-sharp minor scale (Figure 4).

Babbitt also arranges the series symmetrically, thereby constraining the number of uniquely ordered series from twenty-four to twelve.[25] Needless to say, these underlying characteristics influence the surface of *Glosses*, making allusions to tonality possible and producing a surfeit of retrograde relations. For example, in the final climactic section (mm. 170–85), wherein the Psalm's author implores "all that hath breath" to sing God's praises, Babbitt composes two large-scale retrogrades: one sung in unison by the first soprano and first alto and one sung in unison by the second soprano and second alto; the central point of both retrogrades occurs at measure 179 (at the system break in example 2).[26] Additionally, in staggering the entries of these paired retrogrades (the first parts enter at measure 170 and the second parts enter at the end of measure 173), Babbitt draws attention to two smaller, transposed and inverted retrogrades that occur *between the*

Example 2: Retrograde in All Voices in Glosses, mm.170–185

hexachords of the two parts. At "Praise ye" (measure 176), under sustained Fs in the first soprano and first alto, the second soprano and second alto project (8, 3, e, 1, 6, 4) an inverted retrograde of the second hexachords of the first parts (9, 7, 0, 2, t, 5), which had set "Alleluia" in measures 173 through 175 (example 2).[27] In thus glossing the structural "miracle" of Schoenberg's set, Babbitt suggests that he, like Hollander's child, who recognized poetic truth in the syntax of the KJV verse, recuperates the poetic truth of Schoenberg's *Modern Psalm*.

A glossarial reinterpretation of the structural basis of *Glosses* also

Example 2: Continued.

manifests in this section when Babbitt translates the opening measures' pitch array into the rhythmic dimension. Beginning in measure 170, a new time-point array alludes to the partitioning and transformation of pitch hexachords in the first two blocks.[28] Dynamic (as opposed to registral) projections traverse from the lowest to highest level, and at the midpoint of the section, the different dynamic lynes undergo the same transformations at the same transposition levels as had the pitch lynes of the first array (compare Figures 1 and 5).[2] On the one hand, such self-reflexivity emphasizes the self-sufficiency and autonomy of Babbitt's system. On the other hand, however, the time-point array presents a complication within Babbitt's system.

Unique to the culminating section in *Glosses* is the presence of three

	m. 170	172	176	179	182	185	188	193	195	199
f				538t61		68315t		16t835	t51386	
mf				70429e	4e7920		e92407			0297e4
mp		t51386	16t835		68315t					538t61
p	0297e4	e924(0)7				70429e		4e7920		

Figure 5: Time-Point Arrays in Glosses, mm. 170-99

unpitched vocalizations, notated with cross note heads ("×"). These vocalizations set the words "Lord" and "Yah" (example 3). During the section in which all "that hath breath" are called upon to sing God's praises, these unsung moments defy the text's demand. More importantly, the time-points—(9), (1), and (5)—at which they occur cannot be understood in relation to the underlying structure. They do not constitute a subset of the originating hexachord, nor do they seem to play a secondary role in the development of the work.

However, understanding *Glosses* in relation to *Modern Psalm* illuminates the significance of the three unpitched instances of "Lord" and "Yah." For one, the audible effect evokes Schoenberg's opera *Moses und Aron*, wherein Moses, rendered mute in front of Hebrews, can only articulate his message from God in *Sprechstimme*. More importantly, in his method of deploying these unsung moments, Babbitt also alludes to a Jewish tradition that Schoenberg engaged in his religious works: that the name of the Lord is unutterable and yet can be represented and understood through esoteric numerological structures. In fact, in *Glosses* Babbitt employs the same numerical symbol of YHVH that Schoenberg tenders in *Modern Psalm*.

In his religious works, Schoenberg frequently associates [048] pitch collections with YHVH.[30] Joe Argentino finds the prevalent (4, 0, 8) motive in *Modern Psalm* to be representative of "Schoenberg's God" (2010, 104). And, David Michael Schiller finds the same set to be significant in the "Adonoy Elohenu" section of Schoenberg's *A Survivor from Warsaw*. As he describes, Schoenberg substitutes the pitches (4, 0, 8, 0) for YHVH; thus, "like the Adono itself," he writes, "the augmented triad is presented as a substitute for the unpronounceable name of God: It is a God motive" (Schiller 2003, 103). Schiller proposes that Schoenberg made the association between (4, 0, 8, 0) and the name of God, symbolically represented by the Tetragrammaton and transliterated as YHVH, simply because (4, 0, 8, 0) and the transliteration are similarly patterned (the second and fourth elements are duplicates). The mutability of letter and number being a basic method in Jewish exegesis, Schoenberg perhaps saw such conversion pertinent. He might have also viewed the set, which contains an augmented triad, as representative of the unknowability of God, being, as it were, beyond the realm of human understanding (represented by major and minor

Example 3: "Unsung" Moments in Glosses, mm. 193–200

tonalities). Or, maybe the set's cyclic character, its ability to map onto itself at any transformation, was meant to represent the circular and infinite nature of *Ein-Sof*.

Scholars have long recognized that number symbolism in Schoenberg's music derives from his interest in Swedenborgian theology and the Kabbalah (Schiller 2003, 104). His belief in the impossibility of defining an invisible and hidden God has roots in Kabbalistic hermeneutics, wherein God is named "metaphorically as *Ein-Sof*—that which is infinite, without end—but which is often understood as *Ayin*—Nothingness" (Samolsky

1991, 179). In order to uncover the infinite and hidden nature of God, practitioners of Kabbalah seek to understand concealed meaning in the esoteric and foundational structures by which God created the universe and through which He manifests Himself in the universe: the Hebrew alphabet and its numerical conversions.[31] Thus, treating Hebrew letters in the bible as a cipher of the universe, Kabbalistic exegesis focuses on the "textual algebra in which words, names, letters, and spacing are open to manifold permutations," and which in "affording an infinite arrange of signification" reflect the multiplicity and infinite nature of God (179). Searching for instances of "submerged significance," interpreters will mine, rearrange, and convert numbers, letters, and other formal aspects of the biblical text (Levi 2009, 950–51). Whereas the mystical significance of numbers seems to have resonated with Schoenberg, other aspects of Kabbalah might also have resonated with Babbitt.[32]

Kabbalah practitioners' structural approach to meaning encourages many scholars to conceive Kabbalistic exegesis as an objective science with an objective language. Michael Laitman, founder of Bnel Baruch Kabbalah Education & Research Institute, for example, describes "the science of the Kabbalah" as "a precise objective language that describes sensations" and consequently can allow access to "the whole reality" (Laitman 2011). Or, as Amnon Shiloah, one of the speakers at the 1978 World Congress on Jewish Music, described in regard to the experiential pleasure and knowledge we gain from listening to music: "The Jewish Kabbalist abstains from revealing his personal experience. . . . He describes the objects of his contemplation objectively" (1992, 135). Indeed, for Kabbalists, the closest one can ever come to understanding the ineffable is to understand its formal, structural manifestations in the world. Indeed, attempts to describe the cosmos beyond these formal relationships and correlations will inevitably fail.

A similar conviction in the meaningfulness of internal, formal correspondences underlies Babbitt's aesthetics. His insistence on the multiple-functionality of individual pitches—each note's ability to be proleptic and analeptic, to contain the past and future—the parallelism between pitch and rhythmic domains, the infinite relational structures in his music, and the necessity of speaking of those structures objectively: these characteristics all affirm an aesthetics based on the belief that the microcosm can reveal the macrocosm. Just as a biblical text both internalizes and reflects a transcendental or universal unity, Babbitt's contextual structures do so too. Moreover, I would argue that the impossibility of ever wholly perceiving the complete structural coherence of Babbitt's music is fundamental to taking pleasure in it. The simultaneous concealment and infiniteness of reference in Babbitt's music is essential to its meaning.

In *Glosses* the three different time-points that set the un-pitched vo-calizations of "God"—(9), (1), and (5)—comprise a [048] set. This set is not an obvious manifestation of the underlying series nor does it play a significant role on the musical surface in other parameters. Its prominence on the musical surface is thus inexplicable, unless the collection is symbolic. I propose that these unsung moments in *Glosses* signify Schoenberg's YHVH. Just as the enslaved Israelites came to know God as Yahweh from Moses, Babbitt employs the musical symbol of God that Schoenberg established. His allusion not only marks Schoenberg as his Moses, however; it also reinforces and thus redefines what might be considered "Jewish" in music.

As Paul Zukofsky described, "Milton [Babbitt] picked and chose the cultures that he wished to make his own, and that is that amalgam of Schoenberg and Stravinsky with the American jazz element thrown in" (quoted in Hilferty 2011). I would add that Babbitt also picked and chose what elements of his Jewish heritage to incorporate into his rhetoric and music. Although many of these elements were likely adopted later in life and grafted onto preexisting aesthetic and philosophical convictions, they nonetheless offer new perspectives from which we can interpret Babbitt's work. Fashioning Jewishness in *Glosses* in this manner, Babbitt reminds us of the constructed nature of identity. Indeed, as we each reinvent our identities by building upon our pasts, we can, like the biblical glossers, not only give new meanings to our lives, but also rewrite our histories.

Notes

1. Hollander is the only living poet whose works Babbitt set. The first work on which Hollander and Babbitt collaborated was Philomel in 1964. In addition to *Philomel*, Babbitt also set Hollander's *The Head of the Bed* (1982), *The Virginal Book* (1988), *Quatrains* (1993), and *Pantuns* (2000).

2. In 1988 Babbitt and Hollander spoke together as part of Harvard University's "Vision and Resonance" series in two separate discussions, "Words and Music" and "Reflections and Responses." They also jointly participated in Symphony Space's *Face the Music: Concerts & Conversations for Fans & Skeptics* in 1990, and the Guggenheim's *Works and Process* series' panel, "Poets & Composers," in 2001.

3. In regard to *The Head of the Bed* and *Pantuns*, for example, see the letters from Hollander to Milton in the Library of Congress.

4. Babbitt did freely acknowledge being Jewish to colleagues and students. Discussion of his heritage in the written record therefore occurs mostly in transcribed interviews or conferences. See Babbitt quoted in Cohen (1982) and Hilferty (2011).

5. For more on Jewish discrimination among Ivy League admissions committees see Karabel (2005) and Synnott (2010).

6. Brody (1993) has described how the New York Intellectuals' ideas influenced Babbitt. Trilling was also, coincidentally, one of Hollander's professors at Columbia.

7. Girard argues that sentiments of American exceptionalism were particularly ardent in New York City in the postwar era; he attributes this sentiment to both the decline of Parisian cultural life following Nazi occupation as well as the commercial and financial success of New York following the war. For a general discussion of exile-related language in *Commentary* see Balint (2010). For a discussion of the New York Intellectuals' postwar commitment to topics centered around their Jewish heritage see Bloom (1986).

8. In contrast to Babbitt's adolescence, religion had played a significant role in Hollander's upbringing. He spent his adolescence in a Kosher household, took childhood lessons in Hebrew, and attended Conservative synagogue services. Nevertheless, in his twenties he "drifted" from religion.

9. I thank Scott Gleason for this perspective.

10. For more on Babbitt's participation in Europe during the postwar era see Beal (2006). In this book, Beal describes how Babbitt declined offers to participate in the Darmstadt Summer Program after 1964, despite repeated offers, which included financial support from Wolfgang Steinecke (beginning in 1958) and Ernst Thomas (through 1966). Several factors undoubtedly attributed to his absence at Darmstadt. To name just a few: Babbitt's evolutionary view of music history would have been considered conservative and backwards-thinking in comparison to the *tabula rasa* approach to history that many Darmstadt composers maintained; and, within the cultural Manifest Destiny framework that many New York Intellectuals held, to participate in programs geared towards reviving German musical culture, perceived as obsolescent, would have been regarded as inconsequential. Finally, as Babbitt revealed in an interview with Beal, he "disliked spending time in Germany" because he felt uncomfortable "as a Jew coming to terms with horrific postwar revelations about the Nazi era" (Beal 2006, 138–41).

11. Take, for example, the historian and musicologist Amnon Shiloah. Shiloah had recently published a book on the musicologically relevant findings from the recent excavations of ancient Israeli geological sites as well as on Kabbalistic interpretations of the Zohar; at the Congress, he lectured on "The Medieval Arab World."

12. Others that participated in this discussion were Zvi Avni, Moshe Cotel, Alexander Ringer, Leon Schidlovsky, Ralph Shapey, Robert Starer, Leonard Stein, and Josef Tal.

13. Shapiro writes that World War II was a watershed moment in forming a distinctive American Jewish identity because it "impressed upon American Jews the radical difference between their situation here and the conditions of Jews in Europe. . . . [Thus,] if prior to 1941 American Jews tended to view their status as glass half-empty and emphasized the barriers to Jewish equality, after 1945 they viewed their status as a glass half-full and stressed the opportunities for Jews in America" (1990, 73–74).

14. Gleason has demonstrated that Jewish themes are pervasive in many of the second generation of Princeton theorists' writings as well, including Benjamin Boretz, John Rahn, J. K. Randall, Brian Kane, David Lewin, and others. Furthermore, even when these themes are very subtly presented, they are consistently interpreted as Jewish (for example, by Martin Scherzinger and Dániel Péter Biró). Gleason has also argued that the utopian outlook inherent in much Princeton theory harbors social and ethical implications consistent with Jewish thought.

15. Babbitt's reference to Gresham's Law was also, undoubtedly, meant to bring to mind Dwight Macdonald's 1953 essay, "A Theory of Mass Culture," wherein Macdonald, in a sub-

section titled "Gresham's Law in Culture," bemoans the disintegrating distinction between high and mass culture.

16. "O Alter Duft" is the final song in Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*.

17. It is perhaps notable that Hollander, in his essay "The Question of American Jewish Poetry," also relates modern poets to Jewish exiles: "It is not merely that modern poets and Jews are outsiders, it is more that both carry the burden of an absolutely inexplicable sense of their own identity and history" (1988, 34).

18. The topic of Luther's anti-Semitism garnered intense interest in the 1970s and 1980s, so much so that Steven Rowan described it as "a best-seller" that is often "used as a means of highlighting basic flaws in . . . German society in particular [and as] a curtain raiser to what has come to be known as the Holocaust" (1985, 80). For brief overviews on the status of scholarship on Luther and the Jews at the time Babbitt published his Madison lectures see Amaru (1984); Pawlikowski (1975); Rowan (1985).

19. As Gottlieb (2004) describes, Jewish Tin Pan Alley and Broadway composers frequently incorporated Jewish elements in their songs that could go unnoticed by non-Jewish audiences by choosing Jewish melodic and cadential formulas that can function as "melodic puns." These "musical homophones," he continues, "have different meanings in different contexts, [and so they] have multiple resonances depending upon the cultural experiences of both the creator and listener" (3). It is worth noting that Babbitt was one of the authorities on Tin Pan Alley who Gottlieb interviewed for his book.

20. *From the Psalter* (2002) also sets a religious text, although not in Hebrew verse. It was also commissioned by the American Composers Orchestra for a program devoted to settings of the Psalms.

21. In addition to these linguistic transformations, serial transformations of each subsequent voice render the pitch and interval content ever more distantly related to the first collection. Following his usual practice, Babbitt employs a series derived from an all-combinatorial hexachord in *Glosses*. Unusually, however, the second alto projects the hexachord—ordered and unobscured—in the first three measures: (t, 0, 7, 5, 9, 2). Each subsequent voice then projects some variant of this model hexachord, demonstrating progressively more abstract and distant relationships that can be generated between source set and transformation by twelve-tone operation. The first alto realizes the implications of the source's combinatoriality by completing the series; its R_6-transformation introduces a new pitch collection while at the same time retaining the series' initial progression of intervals in retrograde. The second soprano, projecting an RI_e-transformation, reiterates the source-hexachord pitches, although their order is deranged. Finally, the first soprano, projecting an I_5-transformation demarcates the most abstract connection to the model: it shares no pitches in common with the source hexachord and inverts the intervallic progression. Further amplifying and reinforcing the import of the introduction, the staggered and progressive registral trajectory of these opening measures is also reflected in the partitioning scheme of the first twenty-seven measures, over the course of which solos, evenly distributed across the voices, progress from lowest to highest voice.

22. Babbitt was also perceptive of translational differences in poetic structure and rhyme scheme. In his sketches for *From the Psalter*, he compared Sir Philip Sidney's translations of Psalm 13 to the King James Version (Milton Babbitt, Box 7, Folder 2, Babbitt Collection, Library of Congress, Washington, DC).

23. The midrash is an ancient interpretative method that seeks to uncover biblical meaning through elaborate and often metaphorical analyses of the Torah.

24. Diatonic subsets are, in fact, unavoidable in C-type hexachords. Perhaps for this reason, they rarely form the bases of Babbitt's works.

25. Having this constraint is atypical in Babbitt's series, which tend to maximize combinatorial possibilities.

26. Sections in *Glosses* are delineated by the text. Babbitt evenly divides the six Psalm verses into three tripartite sections, demarcated by a praise refrain ("Praise ye the Lord") so that the general organization is as follows: Refrain (mm. 1–27), Verse 1 (mm. 28–59), Verse 2 (mm. 60–87); Refrain (mm. 88–114), Verse 3 (mm. 115–43), Verse 4 (mm. 144–69); Refrain (mm. 170–207), Verse 5 (mm. 208–23), Verse 6 (mm. 224–45); Refrain (m. 256). These divisions are underscored musically by the following: the partitioning of glossing languages among the voices, the tempo, the array structure, the partitioning of the series among voices, and the pitch collections maintained in each voice.

27. This is merely one instance of a retrograde in *Glosses*. In truth, the work is saturated with them.

28. Before this section in *Glosses*, Babbitt correlates rhythmic time-points to pitch dyads that remain invariant across trichordal arrays. For example, trichords in the first blocks of the first soprano in Verses 1 and 2 share the dyad pc-(e, 6). These pitches occur in both verses at time-point-(2, 6) (measures 31 and 61). The tonal implications of many of these invariants (in the soprano parts, for example, each invariant dyad is a perfect fourth/fifth) make their pairings more easily perceptible.

29. The *forte* lyne undergoes an RI_1 transformation, the *mezzo-forte* lyne undergoes an RI_9 transformation, the *mezzo-piano* lyne undergoes an RI_3 transformation, and the *piano* lyne undergoes an R_0 transformation.

30. The history of converting the tetragrammaton into numbers extends back to the Renaissance, when the Florentine Christian theologian Johannes Reuchlin conflated Jewish Kabbalistic and neo-Pythagorean traditions. First in *On the Wonder Working Word* (1494) and then more extensively in *On the Art of the Kabbalah* (1517), Reuchlin correlates YHVH to the Pythagorean tetractys: the sequence 1, 2, 3, 4, which had special significance within the Platonic tradition because the sum of the numbers is 10 (the perfect number) and because the ratios between them constitute the perfect harmonies (2:1 is an octave; 4:3 is a fourth, 3:2 is a fifth). See Celenza (2001).

31. According to the *Sefer Yetzirah*, God created the universe by permuting letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

32. Perhaps Lurianic Kabbalah's ontology of the Jewish exile—that the perpetual state of Jews as exiles reflects an original disaster of creation, when shards of the shattered vessels of God's divine attributes were captured by evil powers—gave foundation to the social exile in which Babbitt perceived his music, as it did for Hollander (Roth 1994).

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