ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: THE HARMONIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE BLACK RELIGIOUS QUARTET SINGING TRADITION

Cedric Carl Dent, Doctor of Philosophy, 1997

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The development of folk music in the United States includes many distinct styles of quartet singing. This study examines the harmonic development of black religious quartet singing, a subgenre of black gospel music. This community-based, church-oriented style of quartet singing became popular in the early 1920s and continues to thrive today.

This study applies traditional tonal theory, jazz theory and Schenkerian analysis to quartet performances, and through these methods of analysis, identifies and traces threads of harmonic development through the genre, which define stylistic epochs. Threads of development include use of meter and rhythm, call-and-response techniques, function of the bass voice, chord structures and use of added dissonance, number and function of voice parts, and variation techniques in repetitive song structures. The investigation identifies three styles of black religious quartet singing: folk, jubilee, and gospel. The performances examined include "I'm Praying Humble" (1937) by Mitchell's Christian Singers, "One Day When the Lord Will Call Me" (1942) by the Southern Sons and "Mary Don't You Weep" (1959) by the Swan Silvertones. Additionally, a recent trend of development is identified and labeled neo-jubilee, and a performance of "Mary" (1988) by

the vocal group TAKE 6 represents this trend. Complete transcriptions of these performances are provided for musical analysis.

The influence of big band music on the development of black religious quartet singing is also examined. The course of development in quartet singing is strikingly similar to that of big band music and is observable in the aforementioned threads of harmonic development.

Finally, group singing is the focus of this study, and only styles that are a cappella or harmonically independent of instrumental accompaniment are examined. Styles where instrumental accompaniment is a part of the fundamental structure of the performance are not examined.

THE HARMONIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE BLACK RELIGIOUS QUARTET SINGING TRADITION

by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Need for Study

The black religious quartet singing tradition, a vital part of the tradition known as black gospel music,[1] has received increased attention from music scholars in recent years. This research has primarily concentrated on the areas of history and musicology.[2] When music outside the classical tradition, jazz in particular, has been the subject of analysis, the focus has generally been more on instrumental than vocal performance. The focus of this study is the analysis of a performance tradition that, although influenced by instrumental jazz, is a vocal art, one that presents some unique challenges for the analytical process. For example, the addition of words raises questions related to text-painting such as, how is the music composed or arranged to reflect the meaning of the text? Also, how text, with its subtle variances in vowel and consonant sounds, relates to tone color must be taken into account. And in black religious quartet singing, nonsense syllables are sometimes used as vehicles for creating specific rhythmic nuances. "Blue notes"—pitches that lie outside the confines of the Western notational system—are also prevalent. Another motivation for an analytical study of this music is the hope that more interest in the art form may be encouraged, especially in the United States where it originated. Black religious quartets historically have been well received in Europe, enjoying a popularity and professional standing that has rarely been equaled in the United States. A case in point is the Golden Gate Quartet, considered one of the most popular black religious quartets of the 1930s and 1940s.[3] When their popularity and audience began to diminish in America, they took up residence in Europe where their careers continue to thrive today.[4] Samuel Carroll Buchanan writes, "In 1984 the group celebrated its fiftieth anniversary with a tour of over two hundred fifty performances!"[5] In discussing why the Golden Gate Quartet's music remains popular in Europe, Buchanan further states:

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[1] Kerill Leslie Rubman, "From 'Jubilee' to 'Gospel' in Black Male Quartet Singing" (M.A. thesis, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1980), 1.

[2] Ray Allen, Singing in the Spirit: African-American Sacred Quartets in New York City (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991), 9.

> Their recordings are used in schools to teach an aspect of American culture. Hence, when the group performs in the big European cathedrals (70 percent of their work) for fifteen hundred to two thousand people, approximately 60 percent of their audiences are teenagers. In this way their music is perpetuated … This recognition is not available in the United States.[6]

Historical Background

James Weldon Johnson, in the preface to his 1940 collection of Negro spirituals, makes the following observation about quartet singing:

> Pick up four colored boys or young men anywhere and the chances are ninety out of a hundred that you have a quartet. Let one of them sing the melody and the others will naturally find the parts. Indeed, it may be said that all male Negro youth of the United States is divided into quartets.[7]

While the remark may be an overstatement, it does offer testimony to the widespread popularity of the black religious quartet singing tradition in the early part of the twentieth century.

---

[3] Ray Funk and Stephen K. Peeples, booklet from Jubilation! Great Gospel Performances, Volume One: Black Gospel, (Rhino R2 70288, 1992), 7.

[4] Samuel Carroll Buchanan, "A Critical Analysis of Style in Four Black Jubilee Quartets in the United States" (Ph.D. Diss., New York University, 1987), 191–96.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid., 15.

[7] James Weldon Johnson, ed., The Books of American Negro Spirituals (New York: Viking Press, 1940), 35.

A definitive date of origin is not known, although Buchanan suggests that quartet singing became popular through the minstrel shows of the 1800s, in which blacks as well as whites participated.[8] Near the end of the nineteenth century, quartet singing was further promulgated by southern black institutions such as Fisk University, Hampton University, Tuskegee Institute and Utica Institute.[9] The singers from these schools were often formally trained and did concert tours to raise money for their institutions.[10]

In the 1920s, it was the untrained, community-based black religious quartets that captured the attention of recording companies.[11] It is the style of these early recorded groups and their successors that is the focus of this dissertation. The earliest two styles thrived concurrently from about 1920 to 1950. One of these is the folk style,[12] which originated in Jefferson County, Alabama. The cities of Bessemer, Birmingham and Fairfield were important centers of quartet development in this region.[13]

The other early school of black religious quartet singing is the jubilee style. Its center of development was the Tidewater area of Virginia and North Carolina.[14]

In the 1950s, the gospel style succeeded the folk and jubilee styles of quartet singing. It was more universal in scope, not linked to any particular geographical region. It is during this period that black religious quartet singing reached its peak in popularity.[15]

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[8] Buchanan, 38.

[9] Allen, 2.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid., 3.

[12] The terms folk, jubilee and gospel to describe style periods come from Anthony Heilbut, The Gospel Sound: Good News and Bad Times (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1971), 76–79.

[13] Horace Clarence Boyer, How Sweet the Sound: The Golden Age of Gospel (Washington, D.C.: Elliott & Clark Publishing, 1995), 31. See also Doug Seroff, "Old-Time Black Gospel Quartet Contests," Black Music Research Journal 10, no.1 (Spring 1990): 27.

Finally, the 1970s marked the beginning of the contemporary gospel style, taking its name from the current mainstream style of gospel music, which it has assimilated.[16] This style continues to thrive alongside a more recent trend of development herein designated neo-jubilee.

Parameters of Study

Three of the four style periods mentioned above—folk, jubilee and gospel— are discussed in detail in the chapters that follow, including complete analyses of representative musical works. The contemporary gospel style is not examined, as developments primarily in the areas of lead singing and instrumental accompaniment characterize this style; instruments essentially replace group singing as the primary source of accompaniment for the lead singer.[17] For this reason it lies outside the scope of this study, which examines group singing that is a cappella or harmonically independent of the otherwise light rhythm accompaniment.

In addition to the folk, jubilee and gospel styles, this study also examines the recent neo-jubilee trend. (The term "trend" serves to distinguish it from established styles.) Because the neo-jubilee trend is so recent, and the sample of groups and performances so small, established patterns of development are not yet conclusive. It is a significant trend, however, because it continues to build upon threads of harmonic development established in the earlier style periods.

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[14] This region comprised the following counties: Charles City, Middlesex, Mathews, King and Queen, King William, Richmond, and Lancaster. See Buchanan, 75.

[15] Allen, 7.

[16] For a description of contemporary gospel music see Allen, 7–8.

[17] Rubman, 100–101.

There are five characteristics that distinguish the black religious quartet singing tradition from related styles such as barbershop, male chorus, doo wop, jubilee-style chorus,[18] and vocal jazz. They are: (1) a common source for song selection—primarily spirituals and gospel songs;[19] (2) vocal arrangements which stand rhythmically and harmonically independent of instrumental accompaniment;[20] (3) a vocal group of four to six singers;[21] (4) vocal arrangements based harmonically on prior performances (when using songs previously performed by other groups);[22] and (5) individual voice parts that are free to perform melodic variations in repeated sections of a song.[23]

---

[18] For a description of the jubilee-style chorus see Bernice Johnson Reagon, ed., We'll Understand it Better By and By: Pioneering African American Gospel Composers (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, c. 1992), 12.

[19] Anthony Heilbut, liner notes from All of My Appointed Time, Stash ST–114, 1978.

[20] Kip Lornell, Happy in the Service of the Lord (Urbana & Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 4.

[21] Ironically, many quartets have traditionally contained more than four voices. This suggests that the term "quartet" refers to the number of voice parts as opposed to the actual number of group members. See Lornell, 4.

[22] Dr. Reagon states that her research revealed no significant structural differences in various quartet arrangements of a given song. The analysis of two versions of "Mary Don't You Weep" in this dissertation supports her findings. Bernice Johnson Reagon, interview by author, 16 March 1995, telephone conversation.

[23] The analyses in the following chapters show that these melodic variations alter local harmonies but generally do not affect the large-scale harmonic design of a performance.

For example, most barbershop quartet performances contain most of the characteristics listed, but they draw on a different body of songs. Another comparison could be with many black church-oriented male choruses, which share a common repertoire with black religious quartets. However, these choruses contain more than four to six voices, requiring more than one voice to a part. This inhibits the spontaneous melodic freedom within individual voice parts, which, as listed above, is characteristic of the quartet tradition.

For the purposes of this investigation, the term "traditional quartet voice parts" refers to the four-part texture composed of first tenor, second tenor, baritone and bass in close-position voicing. Most often, an inner voice (second tenor or baritone) supplies the melody. As demonstrated throughout this study, this fundamental four-voice texture can be augmented to include as many as two additional lead parts or as many as four tenor parts.[24]

A final note relates to the issue of objectivity in this study. The piece representing the neo-jubilee trend is a performance by the vocal group TAKE 6, which formed in 1980. Though the release date for this recorded performance is 1988, it is part of TAKE 6's original repertoire from 1980.[25] Currently a singer, arranger and co-producer in TAKE 6, the author's association with the group began in 1985, well after the establishment of the original repertoire.[26] Consequently, his involvement in the musical arranging process began with material that postdates the 1988 recording.

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[24] Many quartet performances in the gospel style utilize two lead singers accompanied by traditional quartet voice parts. Representing the neo-jubilee trend, some performances by the group TAKE 6 utilize one lead accompanied by a five-voice texture—three tenors, baritone and bass.

[25] The 1988 recording is accepted as TAKE 6's first professional recording. However, the group recorded much of the same material previously under a different name for Legacy Records. "Mary" (analyzed in this dissertation) is included in this earlier recording, which predates this writer's affiliation with the group. See Melinda Joiner, "TAKE 6, Oakwood Group Is on the Top in Music," Huntsville (Ala.) Times, 22 January 1989; and Brian Mansfield, "TAKE 5 with TAKE 6," Nashville Night Life [1988], 18–20.

Methodology

There is no consensus among scholars concerning the number of style periods that make up the black religious quartet singing tradition. While one writer separates the tradition into only two stylistic epochs,[27] another distinguishes five.[28] In another instance, two writers identify the earliest recorded black religious quartet style as folk, but offer conflicting descriptions of the style.[29] Finally, present developments in the genre rarely receive any recognition at all.

Through applying various analytical procedures to black religious quartet performances, this dissertation identifies salient features that serve to define style periods of the genre. These features are traced through the genre as threads of development including: use of meter and rhythm, call-and-response techniques, function of the bass voice, chord structures and use of added dissonance, number and function of voice parts, and variation techniques in repetitive song structures.

Additionally, this study examines the influence of big band music on the development of black religious quartet singing. The course of development in quartet singing is strikingly similar to that of big band music and is observable in the threads of development listed above. For instance, the way the bass instrument moved from pulsing on the strong beats of the measure in Dixieland jazz to "walking" patterns in the Swing Era, paralleled the development of bass singing in black religious quartet performances. Also, swing eighth notes, repeating riff patterns[30] as a form of call-and-response, chord voicings, and jazz-style dissonances in quartet singing, followed the same trend of development as in big band music. Accordingly, parallels in the development of both genres are a theme throughout this examination.

---

[26] Robert K. Oermann, "Take 6 Takes Flight in Harmony," Nashville Tennessean, 12 March 1989.

[27] Reagon, 14.

[28] H. Wiley Hitchcock and Stanley Sadie, eds. New Grove Dictionary of American Music (New York: Grove's Dictionaries of Music, 1986), s.v. "Gospel Music: Black Gospel Music," by Horace Clarence Boyer.

[29] Ibid. See also Heilbut, The Gospel Sound, 76–77.

The analytical procedures employed include traditional tonal theory,[31] which serves to identify chord constructs and surface harmonic progressions. Because this style of music is heavily jazz-influenced, jazz theory is also employed.[32] Jazz chord symbols are often employed in conjunction with traditional roman numeral analysis to identify jazz-style dissonances such as ninth, eleventh, thirteenth and added sixth chords.[33] Schenkerian analysis is useful in identifying large-scale harmonic designs in quartet performances.[34] It also aids in identifying the function of ambiguous sonorities resulting from blue notes and incomplete chord structures.

Each of chapters II through IV examines a different style of black religious quartet singing—folk, jubilee and gospel respectively. A different performance is used to represent each style and serves as a model to identify salient characteristics of the respective style periods. Following are the three representative works selected for analysis along with the respective artists and dates of performance:

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[30] A riff is a short melody, usually two or four measures long, that repeats over changing harmonies. See Gunther Schuller, Early Jazz (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), 48–50.

[31] Edward Aldwell and Carl Schachter, Harmony and Voice Leading, 2 vols. (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978–79).

[32] Steve Sample, An Approach to Mainstream Jazz and Pop Harmony (Santa Barbara, Calif.: Kinko's Publishing Group, 1986). See also Steven Strunk, "The Harmony of Early Bop: A Layered Approach," Journal of Jazz Studies VI/1 (Fall/Winter 1979): 4–53.

[33] The added sixth chord is an apparent seventh chord that occurs when the sixth above the root is added to a basic $^{5}_{3}$ chord. The added sixth dissonance occurs most often over tonic and subdominant harmony in black religious quartet performances. For more on the added sixth chord and other apparent seventh chords see Aldwell and Schachter, vol. 2, 79–82.

Folk
"I'm Praying Humble"—Mitchell's Christian Singers (1937)[35]

Jubilee
"One Day When the Lord Will Call Me"—Southern Sons (1942)[36]

Gospel
"Mary Don't You Weep"—Swan Silvertones (1959)[37]

Because no single quartet performance can give a complete picture of a style, musical examples from other recordings supplement the three performances listed above, supporting the proposed patterns of development in the style periods.

Chapter V examines a performance from the recent trend of development listed below:

Neo-Jubilee
"Mary"—TAKE 6 (1988)[38]

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[34] Allen Forte and Steven E. Gilbert, Introduction to Schenkerian Analysis (New York: Norton, 1982). See Also Allen Forte, The American Popular Ballad of the Golden Era, 1924–1950 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

[35] Gospel Vol. 2/Gospel Quartets/1921–1942, Frémeaux & Associés FA 026, 1994.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Jubilation! Great Gospel Performances, Volume One: Black Gospel, Rhino R270288, 1992.

[38] TAKE 6, TAKE 6, Reprise 9 25670–2, 1988. This selection is a different performance of the same piece recorded by the Swan Silvertones in the gospel style despite the shortened song title.

Since many quartet compositions performed today date back at least as far as the beginning of the 1900s, this dissertation is a study in the development of music arranging, not composition. A case in point would be the two performances of "Mary Don't You Weep," examined in this study. Their dates are 1959 and 1988, and they represent the gospel style and neo-jubilee trend respectively.[39]

Transcriptions

Black religious quartet singing is primarily an oral tradition. This is mainly because most of the performers in this genre have no formal music training. Allen gives the following personal account of the learning process of untrained or community-based quartets:

> While the learning and rearranging process is complex, patterns do emerge. First, the song leader introduces the song to the group through a tape-recorded version, or simply by singing the basic melody through several times. The leader continues to sing while the background singers gradually fall in behind. The chorus and verses are repeated several times until everyone becomes familiar with the song's basic melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic framework. At this point the singing stops, and the members start making decisions about where the song will be pitched and which background singers will sing which harmony parts (high tenor, tenor, background lead, baritone, bass, etc.). This process is exhausting and time consuming; the group may run through a song a number of times, with different members switching parts, until they reach a satisfactory configuration.[40]

Because published scores for quartet arrangements are rare or in most cases non-existent, transcriptions of performances from extant recordings must serve as the primary source material for study and analysis. Complete transcriptions (by the author) of the primary pieces selected as representatives of the three style periods and recent trend are presented in the appendix to this discussion. Additionally, transcriptions of short musical examples that supplement the discussion appear directly in the text.

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[39] An even earlier recording by the Utica Jubilee Singers dates back to 1928. This suggests that the same fundamental harmonic structure may exist throughout several style periods. See Allen, 25.

[40] Ibid., 56.

There were certain limitations in transcribing the performances for this study. First, as Buchanan also found, regional dialects and the "snatching" of words, particularly idiomatic of the jubilee style, rendered the text at times incoherent.[41] Additionally, in some cases, the inferior recording quality (one performance was recorded as early as 1926) further complicated the process. The use of blue notes, or what at least one writer refers to as "approximate pitch,"[42] is commonplace in this style of music and cannot be accurately portrayed in standard Western music notation. As Eileen Southern observed, the most common blue note in a Negro folk melody based on a major scale is lowered scale degree $\hat{7}$.[43] Other common blue notes in the pieces analyzed for this paper are lowered scale degrees $\hat{3}$ and $\hat{5}$.

Blue notes are notated three ways in the accompanying transcriptions: (1) as a pitch lowered or raised a semitone (which is often borrowed from the parallel minor mode), (2) as a pitch lowered or raised less than a semitone to an approximate pitch, and (3) as a pitch lowered or raised a semitone that is further altered to an approximate pitch. The first instance employs conventional notation. For example, lowered scale degree $\hat{3}$ is an E♭ in the key of C major, as shown in the first note of example 1.1. In the second and third instances, also shown in example 1.1, an arrow accompanies the note indicating that it is lowered or raised microtonally.

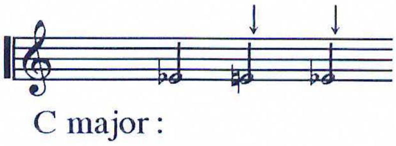
---

[41] Snatching refers to articulating words and syllables with as short a duration as possible, which sometimes involves omitting ending consonants. The device creates a staccato effect, which intensifies the underlying rhythmic pulse of the music and heightens the effect of syncopation. See Buchanan, 127.

[42] Douglas A. Lee, "The Quiet Revolutionary in Black American Music: An Essay-Review," Black Music Research Journal 12, no. 2 (Fall 1992): 224.

[43] Eileen Southern, The Music of Black Americans: A History, 2d ed. (New York: Norton, 1983), 191. Scale degrees are given as numbers with carets throughout this dissertation.

Example 1. 1: Notation of Blue Notes



There are also rhythmic and melodic nuances that result from the preaching style of the lead vocalist, particularly in the gospel style. This technique is more akin to speaking than singing at times, and is indicated in the transcriptions with grace notes and indefinite pitch notation.[44]

Three of the primary pieces transcribed, "One Day When the Lord Will Call me," "Mary Don't You Weep" and "Mary," are performed in jazz swing feel. As such, eighth notes are executed with more time allotted to the first of every two consecutive eighth notes (i.e., like a triplet). In jazz, these are referred to as "swing eighths."[45]

"Mary Don't You Weep," as performed by the Swan Silvertones, employs rhythm accompaniment (not shown in the transcription). In the recording of this performance, the use of electric guitar, bass guitar and drums sometimes made it difficult to ascertain the voice parts clearly. For instance, although the vocal bass part is independent of the instrumental bass, the lines of both parts sometimes intersect and coincide melodically, creating a challenge in differentiating one from the other.

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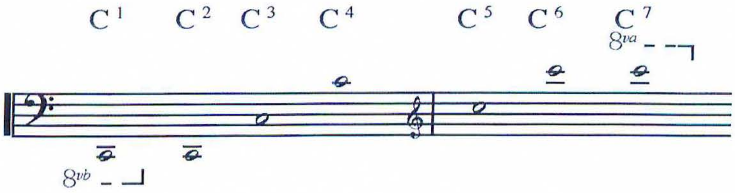
[44] For the indefinite pitch symbol used by jazz and popular music arrangers, see Don Sebesky, The Contemporary Arranger, rev. ed. (Sherman Oaks, Calif.: Alfred Publishing Co., 1984), 177–79.

In all cases, every effort was made to render transcriptions accurately. However, for the reasons mentioned and the more general interpretive subtleties and anomalies that can never be captured in print, a cassette recording of the four primary pieces analyzed accompanies this dissertation.

Finally, references to specific pitches are made according to standard international acoustical terminology where numerical superscripts designate the octave of a pitch. The octave number refers to pitches from a given C to the B a major seventh above it, as illustrated in the following diagram:



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[45] Mark Gridley, Robert Maxham and Robert Hoff, "Three Approaches to Defining Jazz," The Musical Quarterly 73, no. 4 (1989): 520–21.

CHAPTER II

"I' M PRAYING HUMBLE"

Characteristics of Folk Style

In the 1920s, recording companies such as Columbia, Victor and Okeh began to focus heavily on black religious quartets from two geographical regions in the United States: Jefferson County, Alabama and the Tidewater Virginia area.[1] The two centers of quartet activity differed significantly in style: Jefferson County quartets made up the folk style, while the Tidewater groups belonged to the jubilee style.[2] Though these southern regions marked two centers of activity, black religious quartets thrived in other parts of the United States owing, in part, to the northerly migration of African-Americans after World War I.[3] Radio, recordings, and concerts by traveling singing groups also contributed to the proliferation of quartet singing throughout the nation.[4] Subsequently, they generally aligned themselves stylistically with one of the two prevailing schools.

More attention in research has been devoted to the jubilee style than to the folk style of quartet singing,[5] and this research has presented broad generalities that do not draw clear lines of distinction between the two styles. For instance, Buchanan includes Mitchell' s Christian Singers—a group presented here as a leading proponent of the folk style—in his analysis of four "jubilee" quartets.[6] Heilbut concurs with Buchanan, describing their performances as "a more rugged version of jubilee spirituals."[7]

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[1] Allen, 3. See also Reagon, 14.

[2] Reagon, 14.

[3] Allen, 3.

[4] Boyer, How Sweet the Sound, 47.

[5] See, for example, Rubman' s thesis and Buchanan' s dissertation.

[6] Buchanan, 81–88.

[7] Heilbut, 77.

The analyses in this investigation present a different interpretation, outlining distinct stylistic differences between folk- and jubilee-style performances. Characteristics of the folk style include part-singing that is less developed than in the jubilee style, often exhibiting chord structures that lack thirds, roots or both. Generally, the bass voice moves rhythmically with the other voice parts but is often nonfunctional. Authentic cadences are often incomplete or avoided. Added dissonance is generally limited to seventh chords, and there is generous use of blue notes, which creates melodic variety in repeated sections of music within individual voice parts. Also, a two-beat-per-measure rhythmic feel is commonplace in folk-style quartet performances.

As previously stated, black religious quartet singing was not limited to Jefferson County, Alabama, or Tidewater, Virginia, as evidenced by Mitchell's Christian Singers, who originated in Kinston, North Carolina in 1931.[8] One observer described their style as "a fascinating transitional stage in the evolution of harmony."[9] Their performance of "I'm Praying Humble" distinctly portrays the above characteristics and stands in clear contrast to the other styles presented in this dissertation.

Number and Function of Voice Parts

Most folk-style quartets consist of four singers, who adhere strictly to traditional quartet voice-part assignments. Generally, the second tenor carries the melody, as in Mitchell's Christian Singers' performance of "I'm Praying Humble." Only two of the groups examined for this study contained more than four singers. One of these is the Wright Brothers of Dallas, Texas.[10] The other is the Famous Blue Jay Singers, who originated in Brighton, Alabama in 1923.[11] Both were five-member groups that adhered to the traditional four-voice texture, requiring one member to double another voice part.[12]

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[8] Buchanan, 82, 84.

[9] Ibid., 87.

[10] Jean Buzelin, booklet from Gospel: Vol. 2/Gospel Quartets/1921–1942, trans. Don Waterhouse, Frémeaux & Associés FA 026, 1994.

In the late 1940s, the Famous Blue Jay Singers adapted their style to accommodate a five-voice texture. In this format, a lead singer stood apart from, and was accompanied by, the remaining voice parts, which maintained the traditional four-voice structure. This change proved to be a major stylistic adjustment that anticipated the gospel style of the 1950s and 1960s.[13]

Formal Structure

"I'm Praying Humble," as performed by Mitchells' Christian Singers, follows one of the most common song patterns found in spirituals—the verse-chorus format.[14] It also employs the most common arrangement of the verse-chorus format in quartet performances—harmonized group singing in the chorus and a call-and-response pattern in the verse.[15] However, an added transition section (T) represents a departure from convention. Thus, instead of the usual alternation of verse (V) and chorus (C), the form of "I'm Praying Humble" is:

C V c T C V c T C V c

Each capital letter in the diagram represents a sixteen-measure section of music. The phrase structure of the chorus is a parallel period, comprising two identical eight-measure phrases. One eight-measure phrase is a half chorus, designated in the diagram with the lower case c. In all the verses (V), the music remains the same while the text varies. The transition (T) represents the departure from convention referred to earlier.[16] As the following discussion demonstrates, this addition to the traditional verse-chorus format creates contrast in the texture, and provides an overall sense of structural balance.

---

[11] Opal Louis Nations, booklet from Glad I Found the Lord: Chicago Gospel 1937–1957, Heritage HT CD 08, 1991.

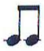
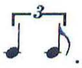
[12] Lornell, 4.

[13] Boyer, How Sweet the Sound, 99–101.

[14] Southern, 188.

[15] Rubman, 44.

Meter and Rhythm

At the beginning of the 1900s, New Orleans Dixieland jazz emphasized every beat of the measure.[17] Also, eighth notes were played "straight" (i.e., with even distribution). In the 1920s, Chicago Style Dixieland, which emphasized a two-beat feel, became popular.[18] With the full arrival of the Swing Era in the 1930s came a return to the four-beat feel and the new employment of swing eighths (i.e., uneven distribution of eighth notes). Thus, the rhythm  was executed more like .[19]

This pattern of rhythmic development occurs loosely in the development of black religious quartet singing, clearly showing the influence of instrumental jazz. The folk style shows a predilection for the two-beat feel associated with Chicago Style Dixieland, marked by cut-time meter in the examples presented in this chapter. Additionally, eighth notes are generally sung straight. These features can be observed in example 2.1, which shows the opening chorus of "I'm Praying Humble."

---

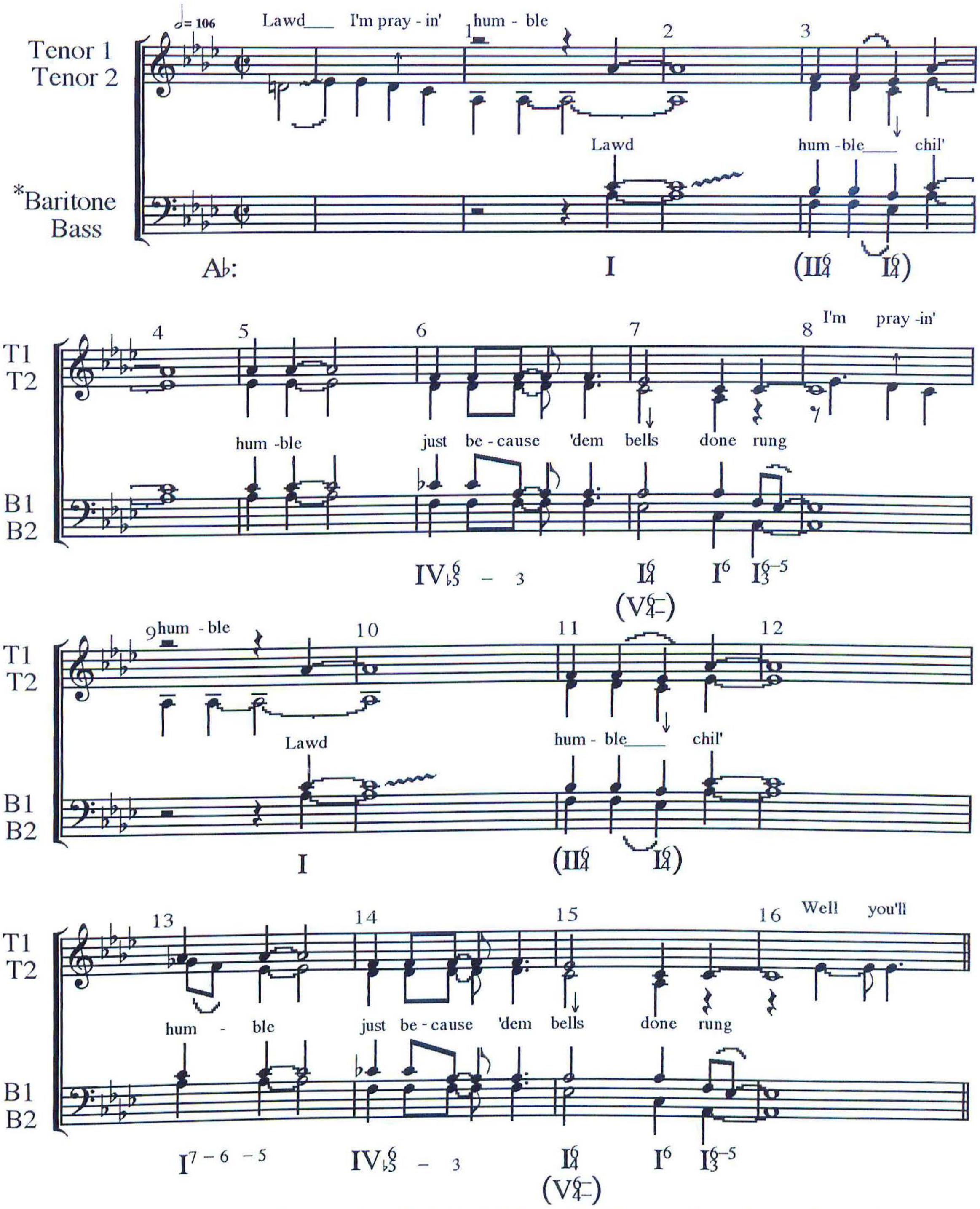
[16] For the purposes of this discussion of "I'm Praying Humble," the term "transition" serves to describe the section of music added to the verse-chorus format.

[17] Tanner and Gerow, 43–44.

[18] Ibid., 56.

[19] Samuel A. Floyd, Jr., The Power of Black Music (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 122.

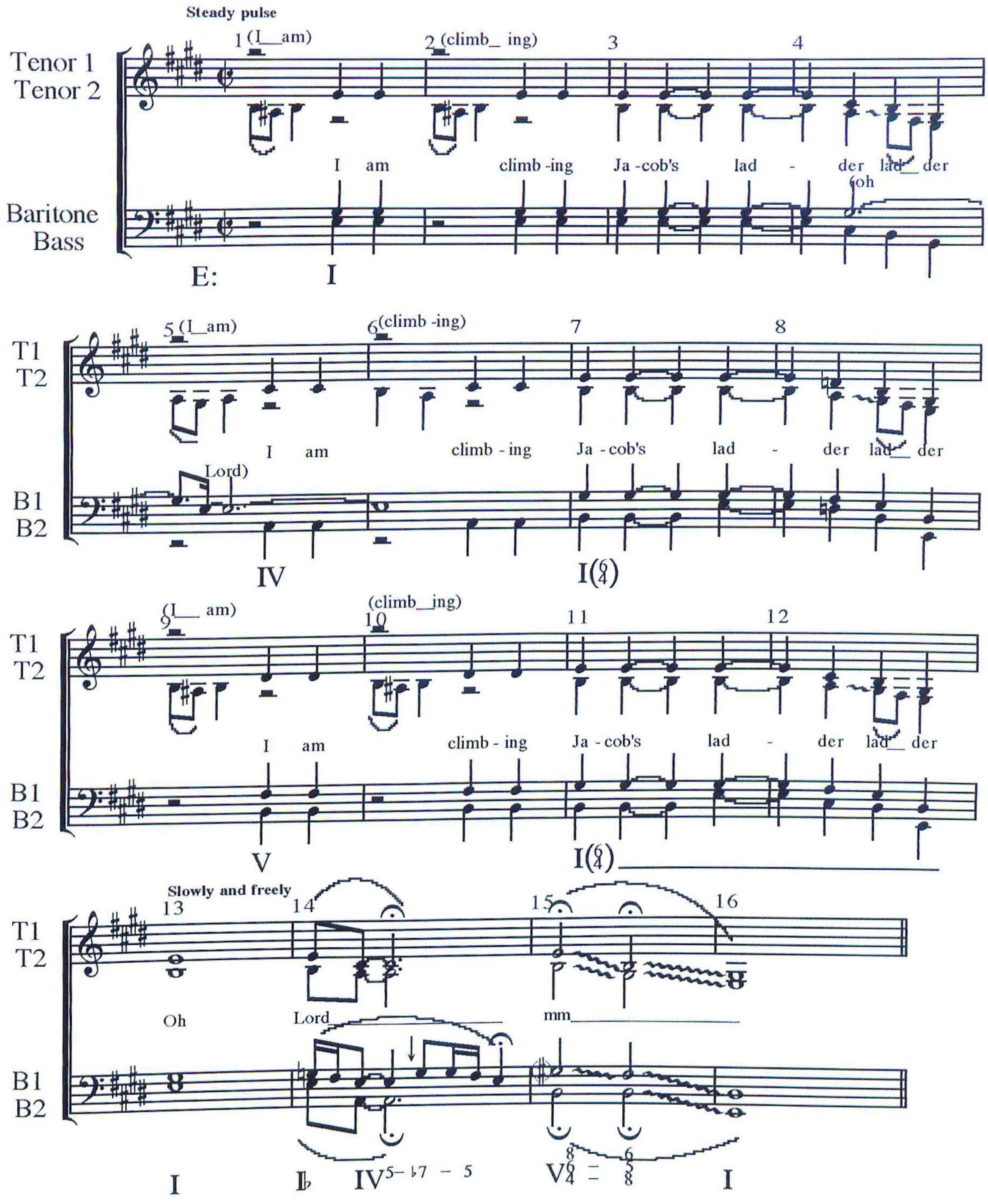
Example 2. 1: "I'm Praying Humble," Chorus


Tenor 1
Tenor 2
*Baritone
Bass
T1
T2
B1
B2
𝅗𝅥 = 106
Lawd___ I'm pray - in' hum - ble
Lawd
hum - ble___ chil'
A♭:
I
(II$^6_4$ I$^6_4$)
hum - ble
just be - cause 'dem bells done rung
I'm pray - in'
IV$^6_{♭3}$ - 3
I$^6_4$
(V$^{6-}_{4-}$)
I^6 I$^{6-5}_3$
hum - ble
Lawd
hum - ble___ chil'
I
(II$^6_4$ I$^6_4$)
hum - ble
just be - cause 'dem bells done rung
Well you'll
I^{7-6-5}
IV$^6_{♭3}$ - 3
I$^6_4$
(V$^{6-}_{4-}$)
I^6 I$^{6-5}_3$

** The third of the tonic chord (C in the key of A♭ major) is consistently performed as a blue note (lowered) throughout the baritone voice part.*

Another trait commonly found in folk-style performances is a steady pulse, interrupted by a ritard or a slower, free-moving section of music. This is not a fixed rule and does not occur in "I'm Praying Humble." Therefore, choruses of two additional performances appear in examples 2.2 and 2.3 that clearly show this feature. In example 2.2, the final four measures (measures 13–16) are slower and contain several pauses. In example 2.3, a 6/4 measure with a ritard (measure 6) interrupts the second half of the chorus. These are not arbitrary tempo changes and pauses; rather, they serve a harmonic purpose to be discussed later. Note also that the time signature for both examples is cut time, reflecting the two-beat feel of the folk style, and the even distribution of eighth notes is characteristic.

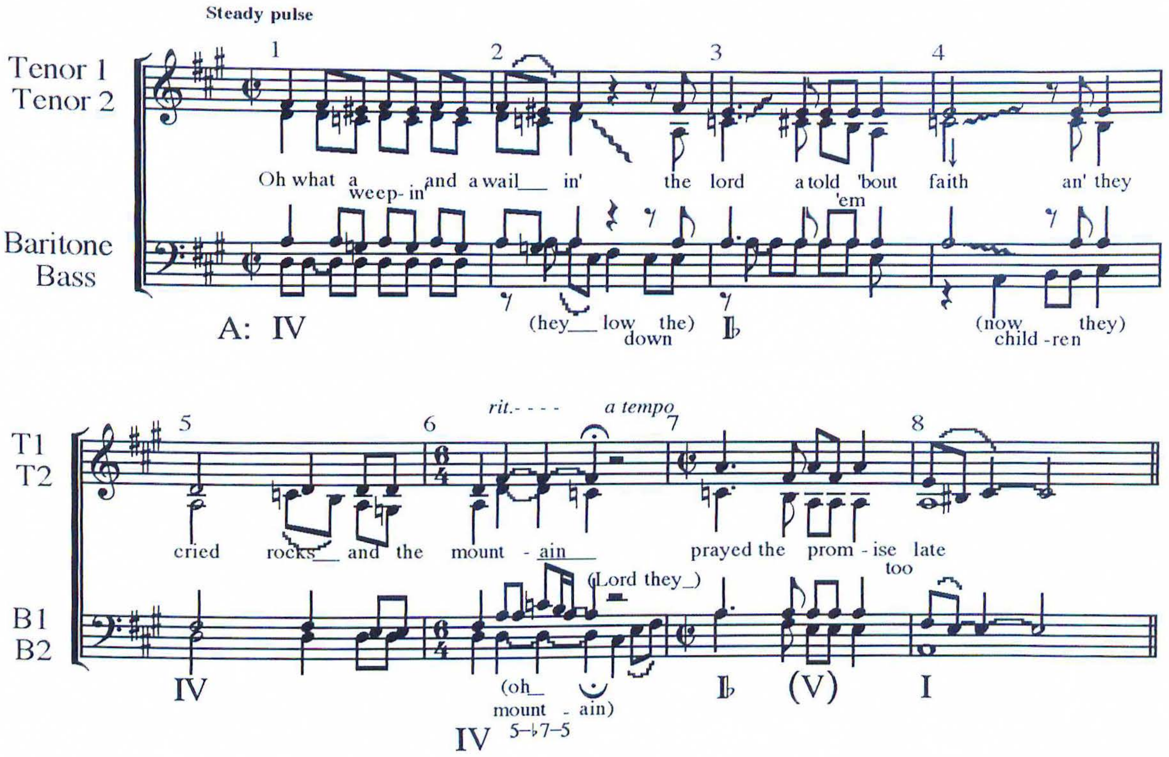
Example 2. 2: "Climbing Jacob's Ladder," Bessemer Sunset Four (1930)[20]


Steady pulse
Tenor 1
Tenor 2
Baritone
Bass
(I__am)
(climb_ ing)
I am climb -ing Ja -cob's lad - der lad__ der
oh
E:
I
T1
T2
B1
B2
(I_am)
(climb -ing)
Lord)
I am climb - ing Ja - cob's lad - der lad__ der
IV
I(6 4)
(I__ am)
(climb__ing)
I am climb - ing Ja - cob's lad - der lad__ der
V
I(6 4)
Slowly and freely
Oh
Lord
mm
I
I♭
IV5– ♭7 – 5
V6 4
I

---

[20] Gospel Quartets/1921–1942.

Example 2. 3: "I Dreamed of the Judgment Morning," Dunham Jubilee Singers (1930)[21]


Steady pulse
Tenor 1
Tenor 2
Baritone
Bass
1
2
3
4
Oh what a weep-in and a wail__ in' the lord a told 'bout 'em faith an' they
(hey__ low the) down
(now child-ren they)
A: IV
I♭
T1
T2
B1
B2
5
6
7
8
rit.- - - -
a tempo
cried rocks__ and the mount - ain__ prayed the prom - ise too late
(Lord they_)
(oh__ mount - ain)
IV
IV 5–♭7–5
I♭
(V)
I

Call-and-Response

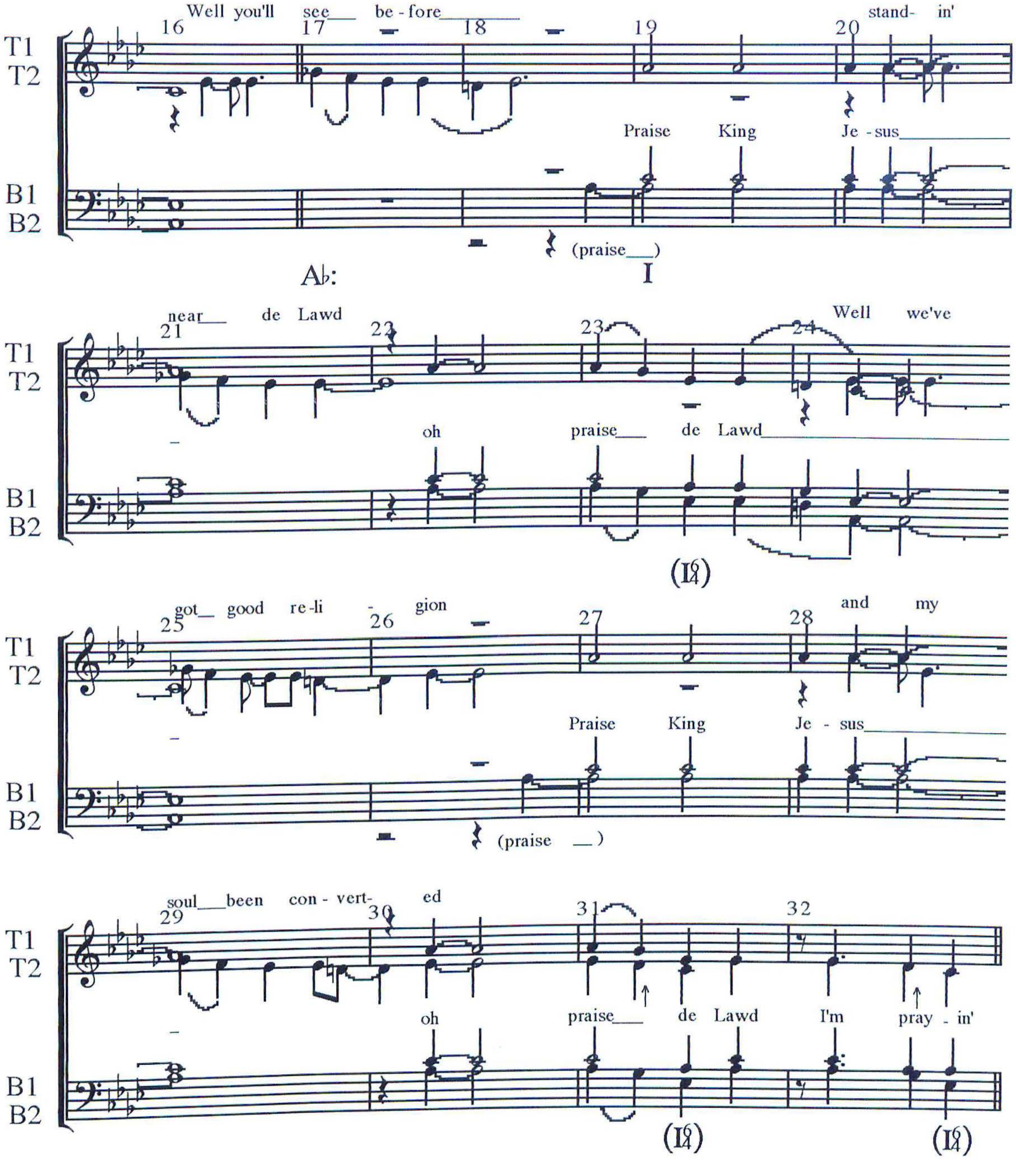
Many scholars have identified African song structures as the source of the call-and-response technique used in American music and particularly in African-American music.[22] In its most basic form, a lead singer alternates with a group by singing a line ("call") to which the group responds ("response"). The verse of "I'm Praying Humble" provides a lucid example of this technique, shown in example 2.4.

---

[21] Ibid.

[22] Floyd, 44. See also Schuller, 27; and Southern, 188.

Example 2. 4: "I'm Praying Humble," Verse


T1
T2
B1
B2
Well you'll see___ be - fore___ stand- in'
Praise King Je - sus___
(praise___)
A♭:
I
near___ de Lawd
Well we've
oh praise___ de Lawd___
got___ good re-li - gion
and my
Praise King Je - sus___
(praise __)
soul___been con - vert- ed
oh praise___ de Lawd I'm pray - in'

In example 2.4, the second tenor, who carries the melody throughout "I' m Praying Humble," supplies a two-measure call that alternates with a two-measure response by the rest of the group.[23] This basic form of the call-and-response technique is most common in the folk style, and can be observed in performances by several groups including the Birmingham Jubilee Singers, Dunham Jubilee Singers, Famous Blue Jay Singers, Heavenly Gospel Singers, the Cotton Belt Quartet and others.[24]

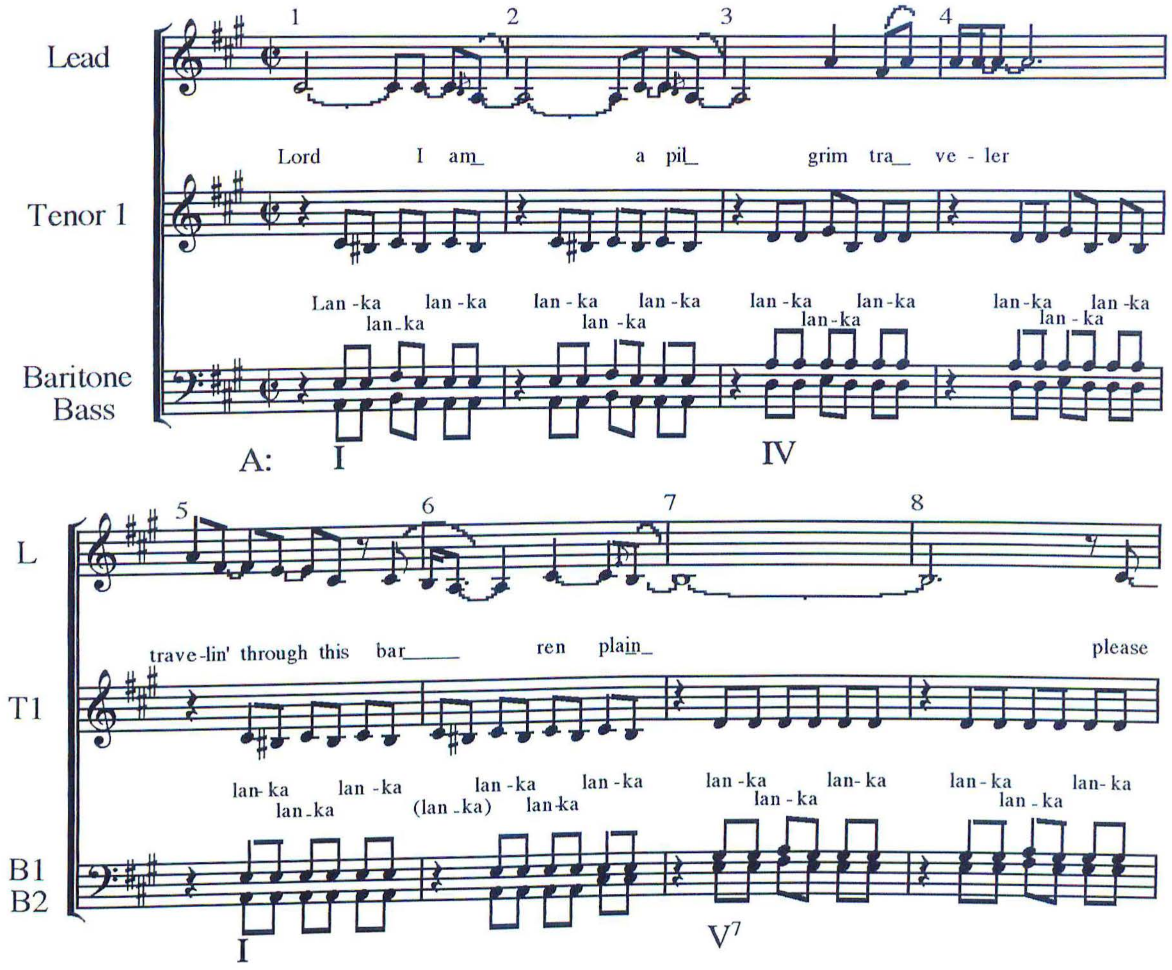
In 1928, the Silver Leaf Quartet of Norfolk introduced a variation of the call-and-response technique to the black religious quartet format. This technique set a lead vocalist (usually the second tenor) apart from the remaining voices, which supplied a repeating rhythmic pattern or riff as accompaniment. Example 2.5 shows the "clanka lanka" riff, so-named for nonsense syllables that it employed.

---

[23] Note the similar structure used in the chorus of "Climbing Jacob's Ladder" (example 2.2). However, there the length of the constituent parts of the call-and-response pattern is considerably shorter—two beats respectively (in measures 1–2, 5–6 and 9–10).

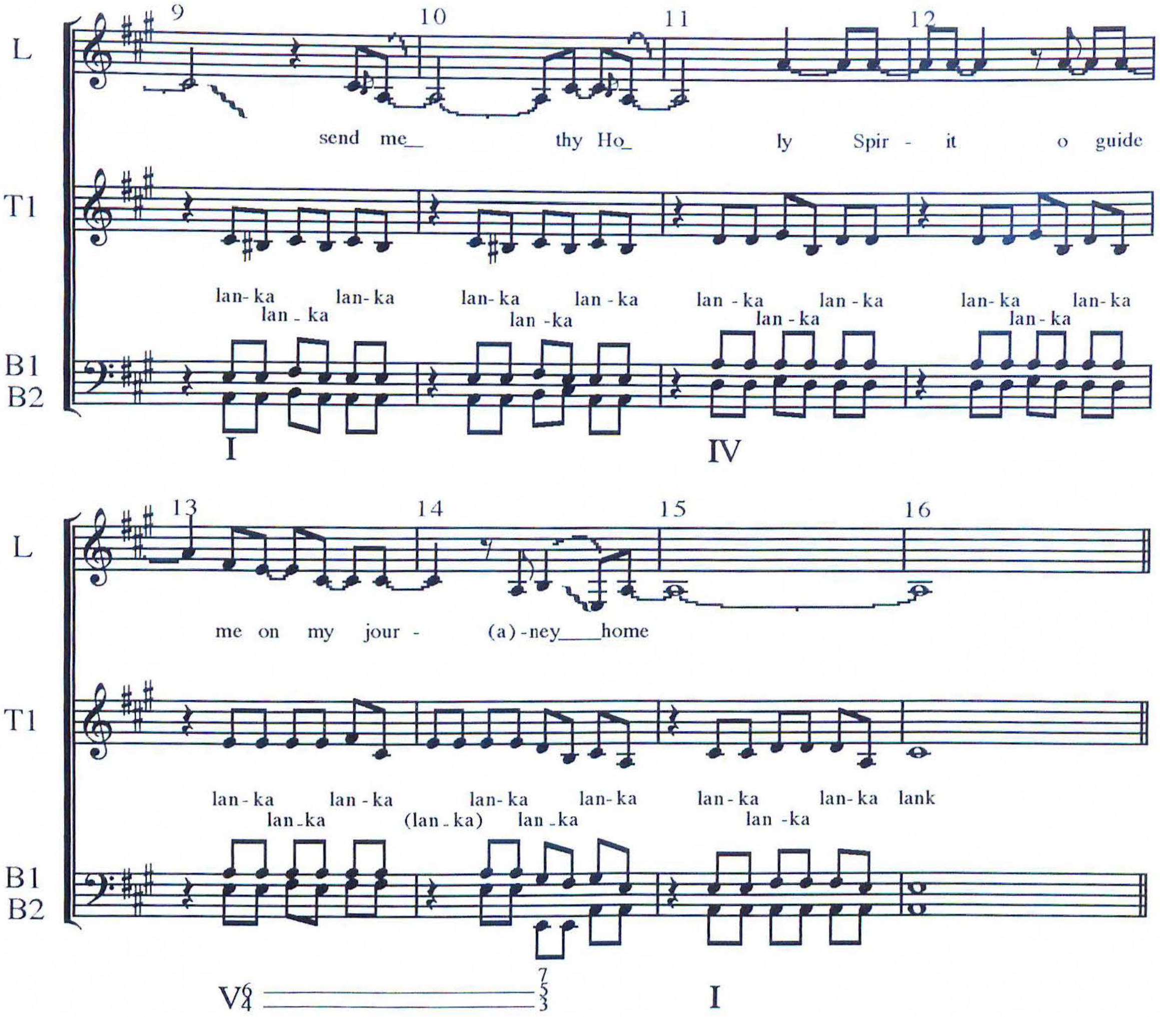
[24] Performances by these quartets and others, illustrating their use of call-and-response, can be heard on Gospel Quartets/1921–1942.

Example 2. 5: “Sleep On, Mother,” Second Verse, Silver Leaf Quartet of Norfolk (1928)[25]


Lead
Tenor 1
Baritone
Bass
1
2
3
4
Lord I am_ a pil_ grim tra_ ve - ler
Lan -ka lan-ka lan -ka lan - ka lan -ka lan - ka lan -ka lan-ka lan-ka lan-ka lan-ka lan -ka
A: I
IV
L
T1
B1
B2
5
6
7
8
trave-lin' through this bar____ ren plain_ please
lan- ka lan-ka lan -ka lan -ka (lan-ka) lan-ka lan -ka lan -ka lan- ka lan - ka lan - ka lan - ka lan- ka
I
V7

---

[25] Silver Leaf Quartette of Norfolk (1928–1931), Document Records DOCD-5352, 1995.


L
T1
B1
B2
9
10
11
12
send me__ thy Ho_ ly Spir - it o guide
lan- ka lan - ka lan- ka
lan- ka lan -ka lan - ka
lan - ka lan - ka lan - ka
lan- ka lan - ka lan- ka
I
IV
13
14
15
16
me on my jour - (a) -ney___home
lan - ka lan_ka lan - ka
lan- ka (lan_ka) lan_ka lan- ka
lan- ka lan -ka lan- ka lank
V6/4
7/5/3
I

In example 2.5, a prominent lead part alone provides the melody and text. The remaining voice parts are relegated to the clanka lanka accompaniment figure. The distinction between lead and background parts is maintained throughout the performance.

The development of the clanka lanka technique spans all the quartet styles discussed in this study. The Silver Leaf Quartet of Norfolk, who introduced the technique, is one of the earliest identified jubilee-style quartets. However, it was most popular among folk-style quartets in its seminal years of development.[26] As shown in example 2.5, the Silver Leaf Quartet used the textual pattern "lanka lanka lanka." The Famous Blue Jay Singers were the first folk-style group to adopt the technique in their 1931 version of "Sleep On, Mother," altering the pattern to "clanka lanka lanka."[27] The distinction between lead and group, encouraged by the clanka lanka riff, foreshadowed the gospel style of the 1950s and 1960s, when a fifth voice was added to maintain the traditional four-voice structure as accompaniment for a prominent lead vocalist.

Bass Voice

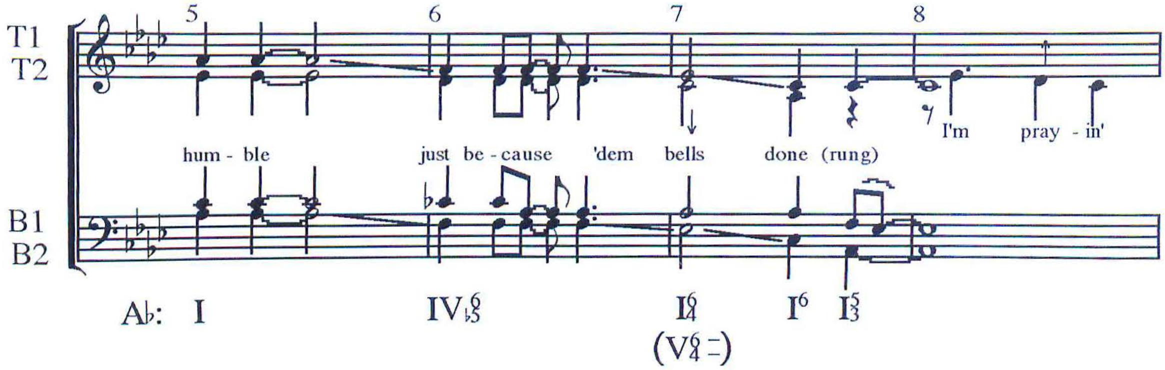
Perhaps the most striking feature of "I' m Praying Humble" is the lack of a functional bass line through most of the chorus and verse. As a rule, the bass doubles the first tenor voice an octave below in parallel motion, as shown in example 2.6. Note that the bass and first tenor break away from parallelism at the ends of phrases, such as on the word "rung" in measure 7.

---

[26] Seroff lists thirteen vocal groups that employed the clanka lanka riff between the years 1928–1950. Of the thirteen, seven are folk-style quartets, three are jubilee and three are gospel. See booklet from Birmingham Quartet Anthology, Clanka Lanka CL 144,001/002, 1980.

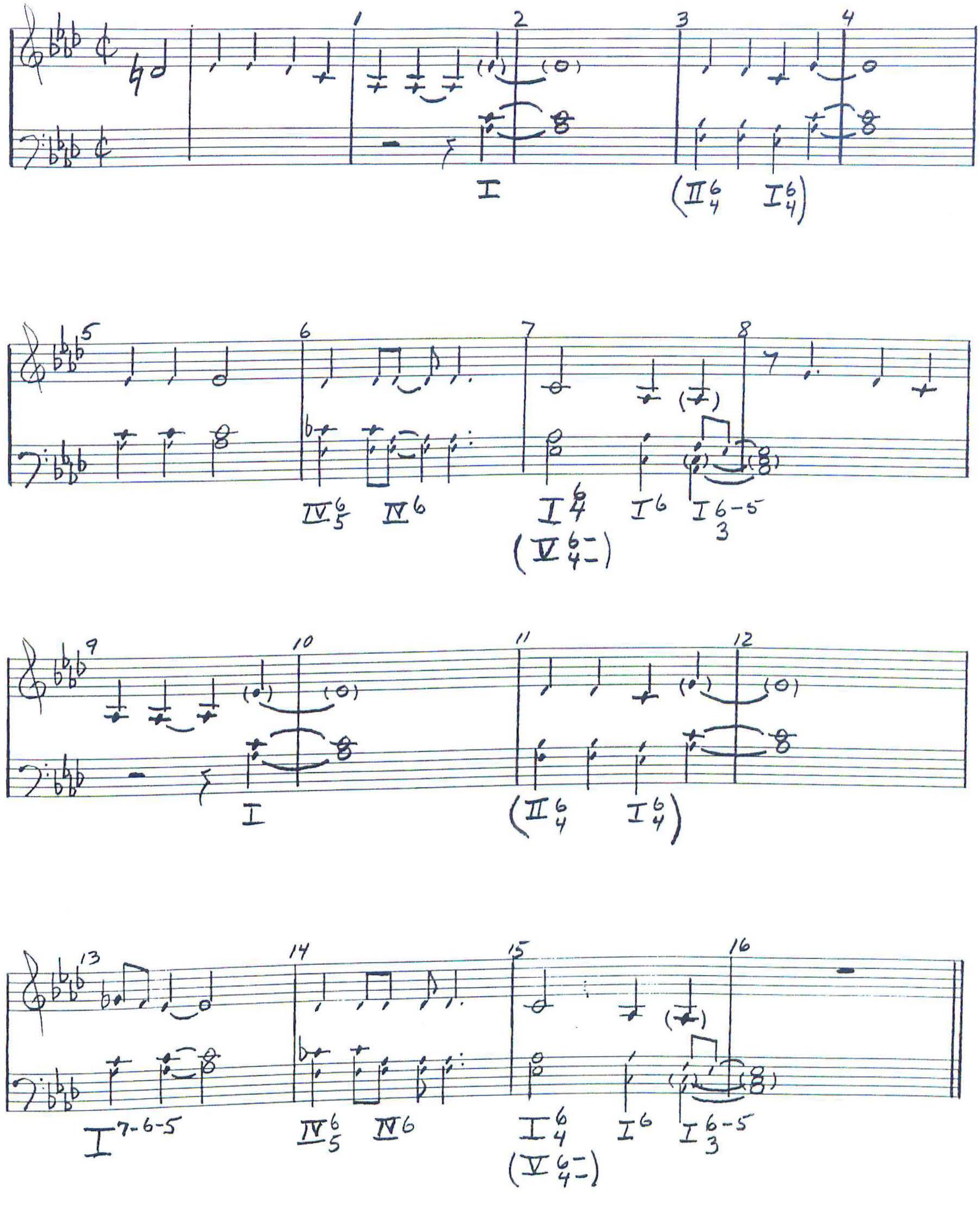
[27] The title "Sleep On, Mother" was changed to "Clanka Lanka" in the Famous Blue Jay Singers performance. Subsequently, the technique became known as the "clanka lanka" riff.

Example 2. 6: Nonfunctional Bass in Chorus


T1
T2
B1
B2
5
6
7
8
hum - ble
just be - cause
'dem
bells
done (rung)
I'm
pray - in'
A♭: I
IV♭5 6 3
I 6 4
(V 6 4 5 3)
I6
I 5 3

One consequence of this nonfunctional bass is a lack of root-position chords. The analytic reduction of the chorus (example 2.7) shows several chords in inversion reflected in the roman numeral analysis below the staff.

Example 2. 7: Three-Voice Reduction of Chorus


1
2
3
4
I
(II 6 4
I 6 4)
5
6
7
8
IV 6 5
IV 6
I 6 4
(V 6- 4-)
I 6
I 6-5 3
9
10
11
12
I
(II 6 4
I 6 4)
13
14
15
16
I 7-6-5
IV 6 5
IV 6
I 6 4
(V 6- 4-)
I 6
I 6-5 3

Because the bass and first tenor represent a doubling of the same part at the octave, the part-writing of the chorus, essentially, is a three-voice structure, as shown in example 2.7. Parenthesized notes are implied notes not literally present or registrally displaced in the performance, as in the case of the parenthesized E♭^{4} at the end of measure 1. (Tonic harmony, which governs measures 1–2, determines this implied note. Additionally, the descending lead-in line of the second tenor part in measures 0–1 outlines the tonic triad with E♭^{4} prominently displayed at the beginning of the line and in the uppermost position.) This principle also applies to the implied E♭^{4} in measures 9–10 and 11–12. The implied C^3 in the bass clef at measures 7–8 and 15–16 represents the logical continuation of the bass part's voice leading in the three-voice texture. C^3 is literally present as C^4 in the first tenor voice of the performance (see measures 7–8 and 15–16 of example 2.1), but for the sake of continuity this upper voice is transferred to the lower register in example 2.7.[28]

The nonfunctional bass also results in incomplete chords, observed in the verse of "I'm Praying Humble." Like the reduction of the chorus, the reduction of the verse (example 2.8) removes the first tenor part to reveal a three-voice structure. Additionally, example 2.8 imposes a rhythmic reduction on the verse, removing syncopated figures and repeated notes and providing a clearer picture of the harmonic structure for analytical purposes.

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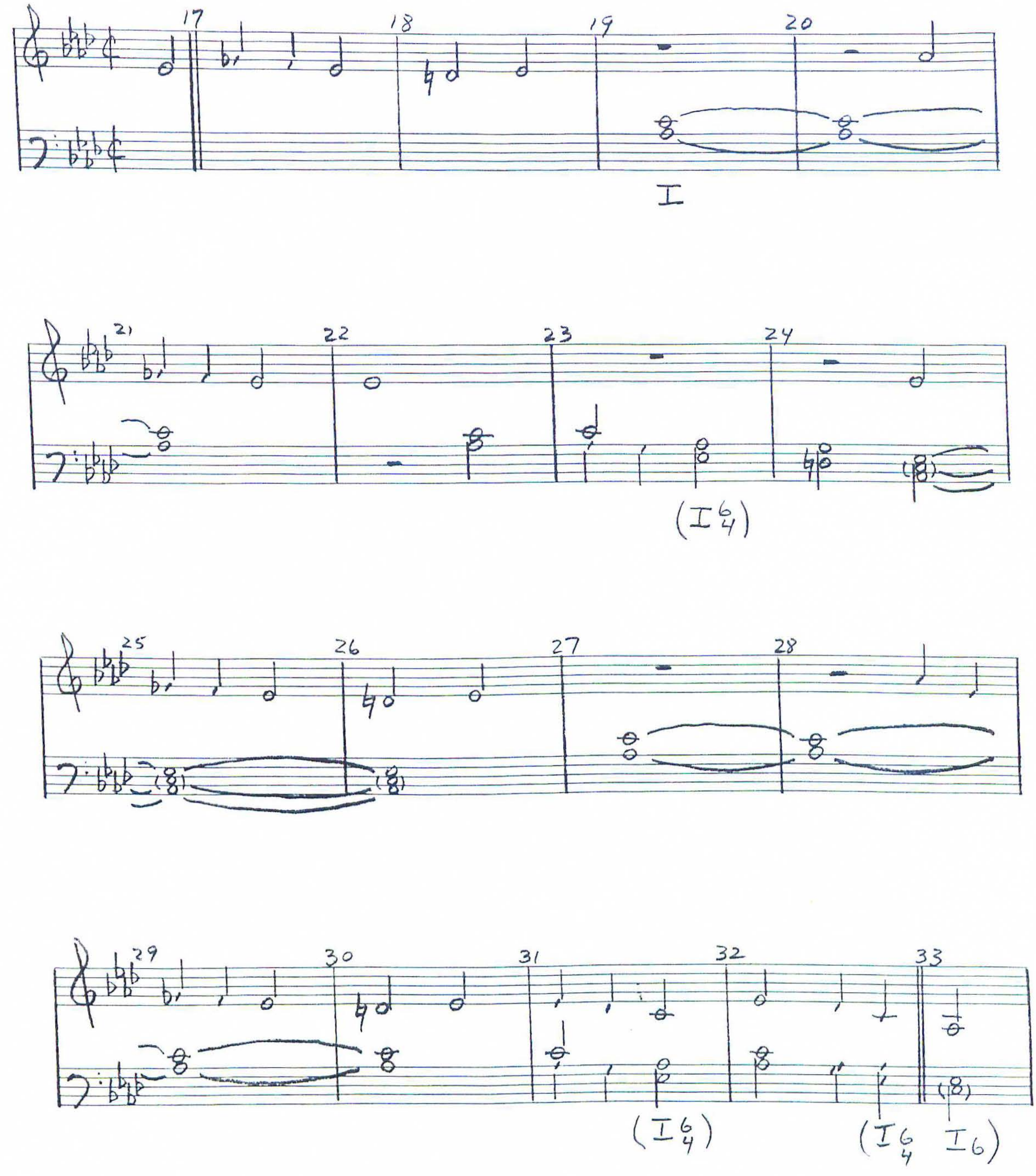
[28] For more on implied notes see Forte and Gilbert, 119–23.

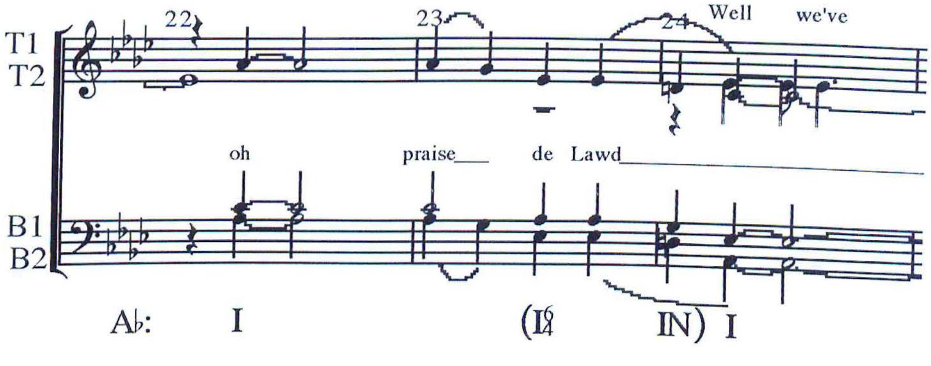
Example 2. 8: Three-Voice Rhythmic Reduction of Verse


17
18
19
20
I
21
22
23
24
(I 6 4)
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
(I 6 4)
(I 6 4 I6)

The call-and-response pattern, which effectively sets off the second tenor from the homophony of the remaining voices in the verse, thins out the three-voice texture even more. Thus, example 2.8 shows the texture reduced, at times, to two voice parts, as in measures 19, 23 and the beginning of 24. The resulting ambiguous harmonies, owing to incomplete chord structures (see beat 3 of measure 23 and the downbeat of measure 24), ultimately support the arpeggiation of tonic harmony.

When examining the original voice parts in the verse (i.e., reinserting the first tenor), the part-writing bears a striking resemblance to parallel organum of the ninth century in which an accompanying voice moves at a fourth or fifth below an established melody. In parallel organum, one or both of these voices can also be doubled at various intervals.[29] In measures 22–24 of the verse (example 2.9), the bass occasionally moves at a fourth below the baritone while the first tenor duplicates the bass an octave above.

Example 2. 9: Parallelism in Verse



Raised scale degree $\hat{4}$ (D♮ in the key of A♭ major) is also reminiscent of this early music, suggesting the lydian church mode in measure 24.

---

[29] Donald Jay Grout and Claude V. Palisca, A History of Western Music, 3d ed. (New York: Norton, 1980), 81.

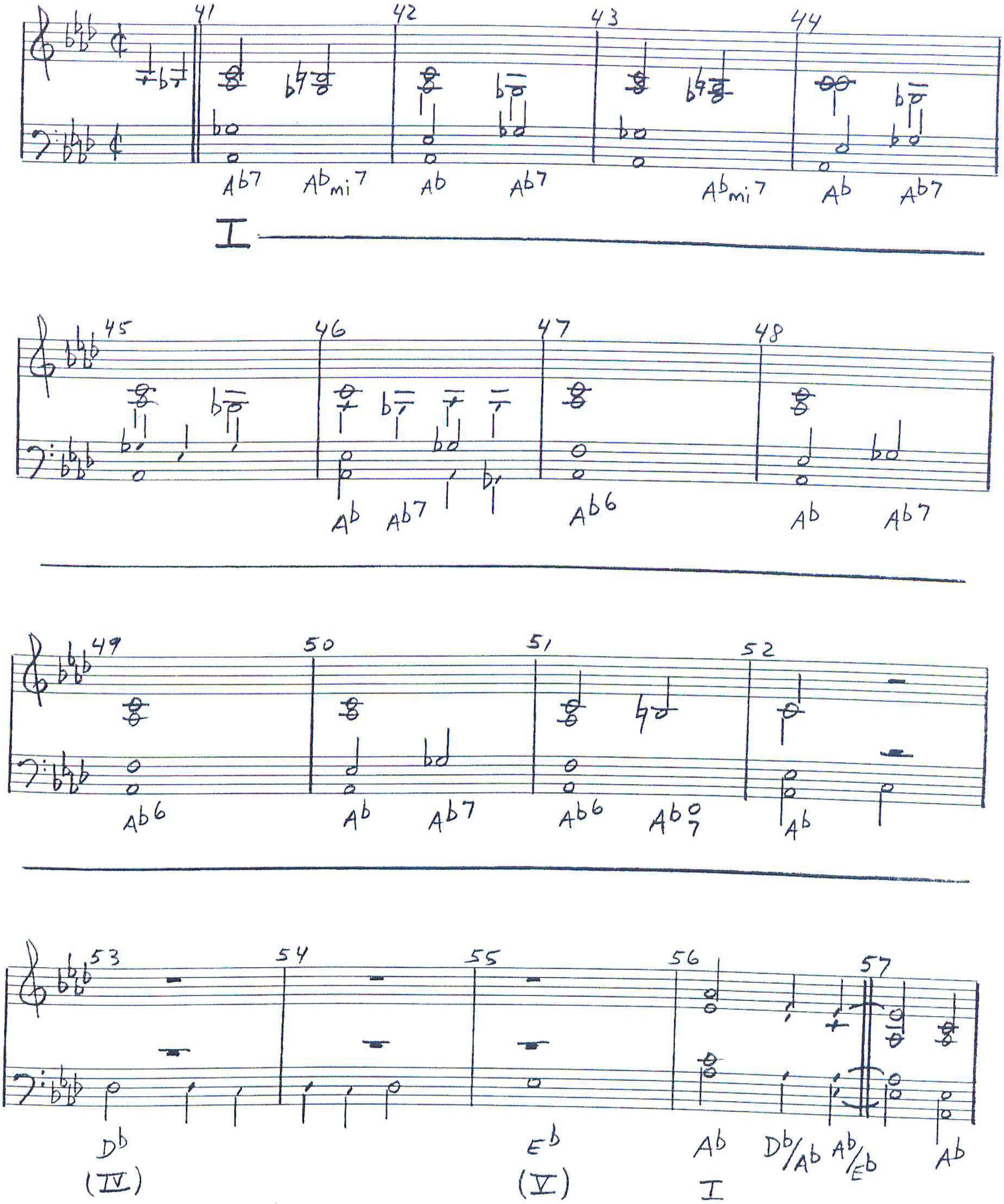
None of the folk-style quartets examined by this writer show a nonfunctional bass part through an entire performance, and "I'm Praying Humble" is no exception. In contrast to the parallelism in the chorus and verse, the transition section counters with the full sound of well-developed four-part harmony. The bass and first tenor voices break from parallel motion, and for the first time in the performance there are four independent voices in the texture. The bass consistently provides chord roots, as shown in the reduction of example 2.10.

A nonfunctional bass part for entire sections of a performance, as in the case of "I'm Praying Humble," is the exception rather than the rule in the folk style, and is unique to performances by Mitchell's Christian Singers.[30] What is more common is a functional bass line with short nonfunctional digressions interspersed throughout the performance, as in example 2.11, sung by a different group.

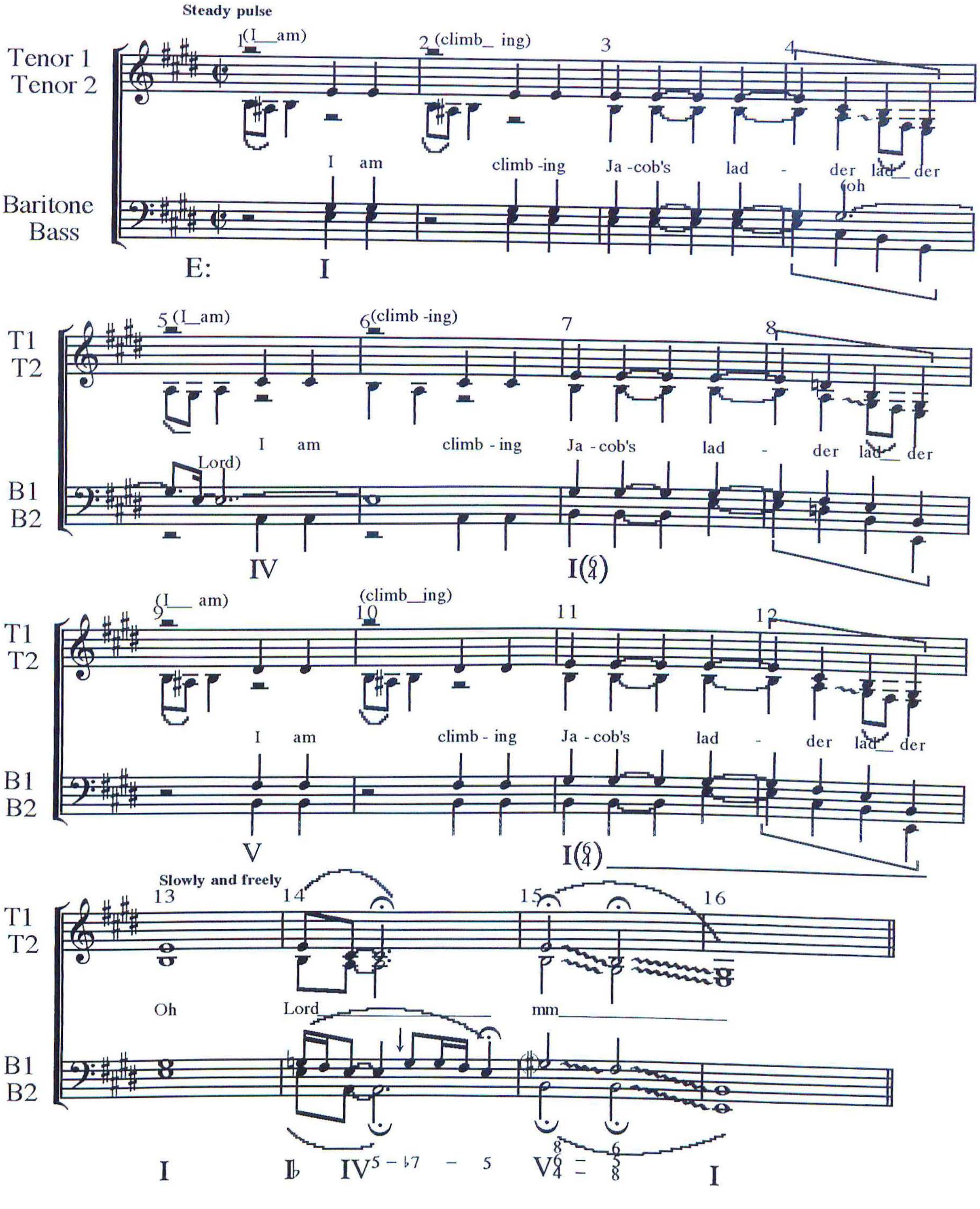
---

[30] For other examples of nonfunctional bass parts in performances by Mitchell's Christian Singers listen to "Them Bones" from Gospel Quartets/1921–1942; and "You See the Sign of Judgment" from Negro Spirituals/Gospel Songs/1926–1942, Frémeaux & Associés FA 008, 1993.

Example 2. 10: Rhythmic Reduction of Transition


41
A♭7
A♭mi7
42
A♭
A♭7
43
A♭mi7
44
A♭
A♭7
I
45
46
A♭
A♭7
47
A♭6
48
A♭
A♭7
49
A♭6
50
A♭
A♭7
51
A♭6
A♭9/7
52
A♭
53
D♭
(IV)
54
55
E♭
(V)
56
A♭
I
D♭/A♭
A♭/E♭
57
A♭

Example 2. 11: "Climbing Jacob's Ladder," Bessemer Sunset Four (1930)[31]


Steady pulse
Tenor 1
Tenor 2
Baritone
Bass
(I__am)
(climb_ ing)
I am climb -ing Ja -cob's lad - der lad_ der
(oh
E: I
T1
T2
B1
B2
(I__am)
(climb -ing)
Lord)
IV
I(6 4)
(I__ am)
(climb_ing)
V
I(6 4)
Slowly and freely
Oh Lord mm
I I♭ IV5 – ♭7 – 5 V6 4 I

---

[31] Gospel Quartets/1921–1942.

Returning to the excerpt from "Climbing Jacob's Ladder" (example 2.11), the bass moves in parallel octaves at the end of the first three systems of music (bracketed in measures 4, 8 and 12). This kind of occasional nonfunctionality in bass parts can be observed in several folk-style performances by prominent quartets such as Second Zion Four, Heavenly Gospel Singers and in early performances by the Dixie Hummingbirds.[32]

Finally, bass parts of the folk tradition generally move homophonically with the other voice parts. "I'm Praying Humble," as well as the other performances discussed in this chapter, clearly illustrates this feature. This characteristic makes the folk style the most homophonic style in the black religious quartet tradition.

Chord Structures and Added Dissonance

Chords are often incomplete in the folk style for two reasons: the first, previously discussed, is the result of an occasionally nonfunctional bass line; folk-style quartets tend as well to avoid authentic cadences by using incomplete chords. There are no complete authentic cadences in "I'm Praying Humble." Example 2.12a shows an incomplete cadence from "I'm Praying Humble." Incomplete cadences from previous performances are also shown (examples 2.12b and c).

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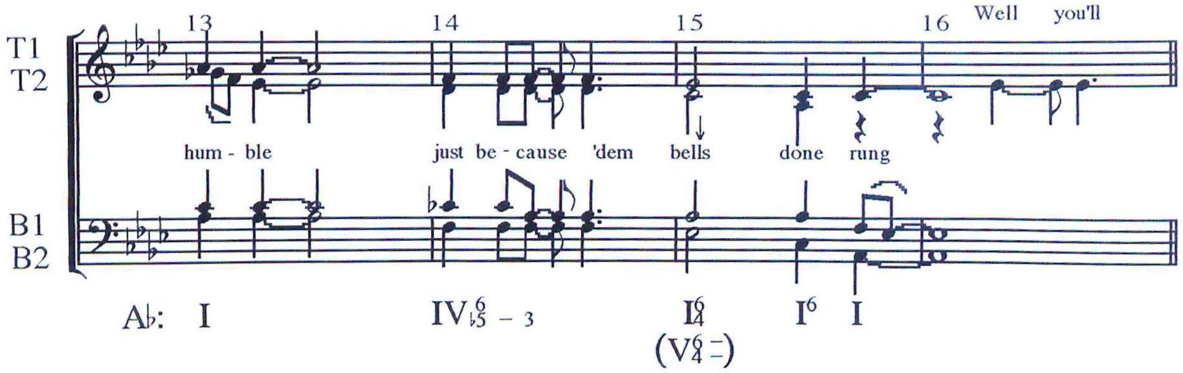
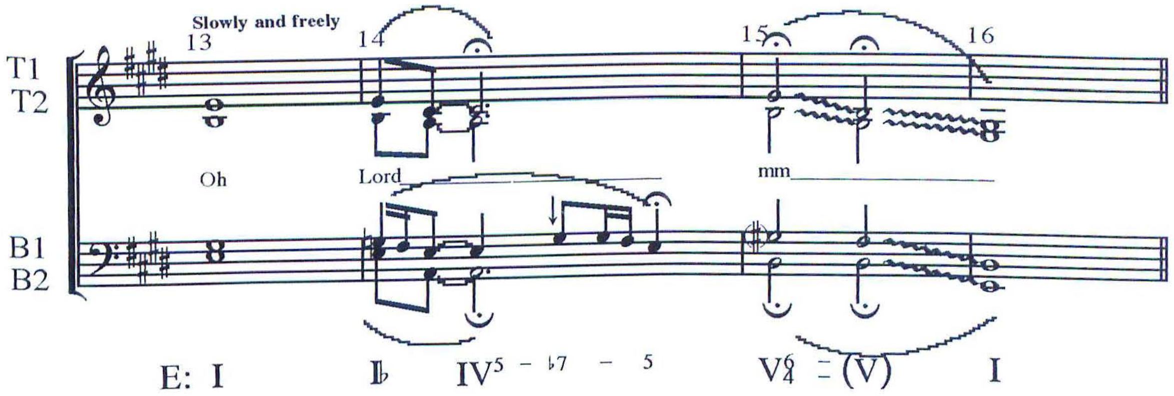
[32] Listen, for example, to "Praise Him Shining Angels" (Second Zion Four), "Walk in the Light" (Heavenly Gospel Singers) and "I Looked down the Line" (Dixie Hummingbirds) from Gospel Quartets/1921–1942.

Example 2. 12: Incomplete Authentic Cadences[33]

(a) "I'm Praying Humble"


T1
T2
B1
B2
13
14
15
16
Well you'll
hum - ble
just be - cause 'dem
bells
done
rung
A♭: I
IV 6 ♭5 – 3
I 6 4
(V 6 4 – –)
I6
I

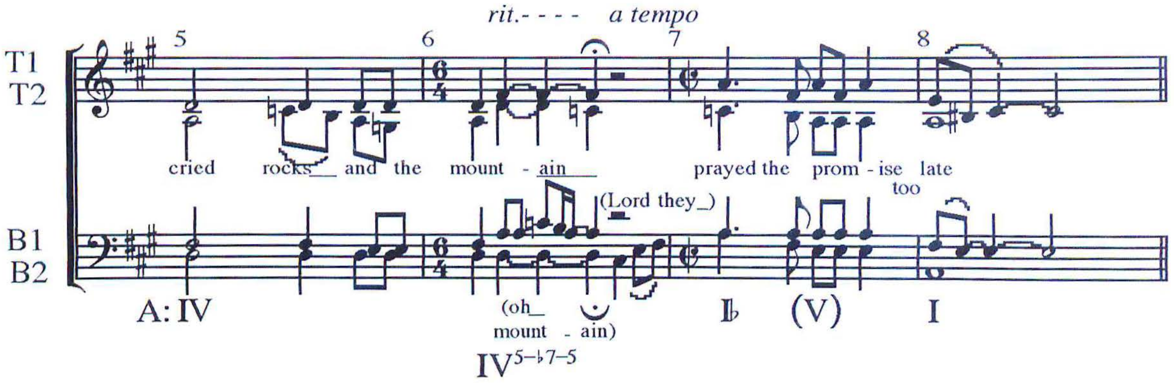
(b) "Climbing Jacob's Ladder"


Slowly and freely
13
14
15
16
T1
T2
B1
B2
Oh
Lord
mm
E: I
I♭
IV5 – ♭7 – 5
V 6 4 – – (V)
I

---

[33] Examples 2.11a–c are from Gospel Quartets 1921–1942.

(c) "I Dreamed of the Judgment Morning"



In each case of example 2.12, the chords preceding the cadence are complete (containing at least roots and thirds) and progress according to traditional part-writing rules. Also, the bass is functional throughout examples 2.12b and c, consistently providing chord roots. In example 2.12a, a cadential $^6_4$ chord preceded by dominant preparation creates momentum toward an authentic cadence. However, resolution of the cadential $^6_4$ chord is avoided by an arpeggiation of tonic harmony (in the bass voice) in measure 15. Similar harmonic motion toward an authentic cadence occurs in example 2.12b, but the cadential $^6_4$ resolves to an ambiguous chord before progressing to tonic. The cadence in example 2.12c is even more incomplete. The chord that arrives on beat 3 of measure 7 resembles a cadential $^6_4$ but lacks a third. This ambiguous sonority then progresses directly to tonic in measure 8. Ambiguous authentic cadences are a curious, yet identifying, characteristic of the folk style.

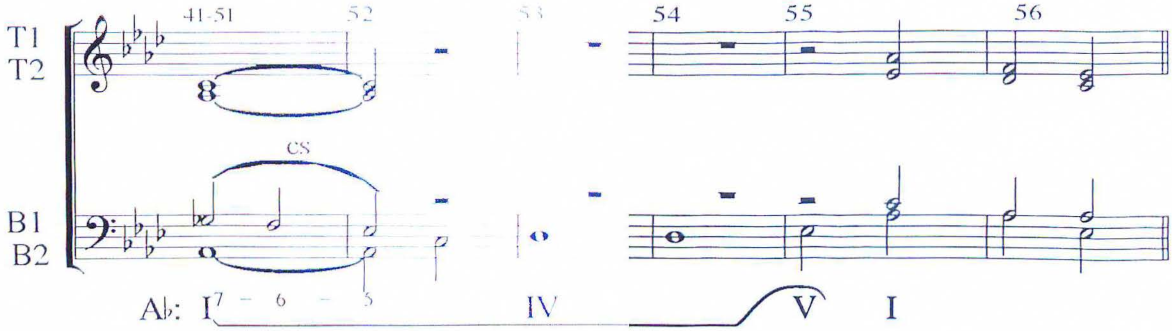
The lowered seventh is the only added dissonance that appears regularly in folk-style quartet arrangements. Its most common position is over the subdominant chord, as in the three excerpts of example 2.12. In each instance, its purpose is twofold: (1) to evoke a blue quality by borrowing from the parallel minor mode and (2) to embellish the fifth above the subdominant. Accordingly, C♭^{4} in the baritone part of example 2.12a (measure 14) is the seventh of the subdominant chord in the key of A♭. It is also lowered scale degree $\hat{3}$, borrowed from the key of A♭ minor. Note however, that it skips down to A♭^{3}, the fifth of the subdominant, thereby decorating the latter note with a consonant skip. Something similar occurs in measures 14 and 6 of examples 2.12b and 2.12c respectively. However, an additional folk-style feature accompanies the embellishing seventh in the latter two examples (2.12b and 2.12c)—a pause or change to a slower tempo. This feature was identified earlier in this chapter as a common folk-style trait that serves a harmonic purpose. Folk-style quartets tend to highlight the seventh over subdominant harmony with a pause, ritard or change to a slower tempo. Also, the embellishment occurs most often in the baritone voice.[34]

The seventh dissonance over dominant and tonic harmony also occurs in folk-style performances, although less frequently. The transition section of "I'm Praying Humble" (see example 2.10) shows the baritone part moving back and forth between E♭^{3} (the fifth) and G♭^{3} (the seventh) over tonic harmony (A♭) by step or skip. This motion effectively embellishes the fifth of tonic harmony over a twelve-measure section of music. Accordingly, example 2.13 is a harmonic reduction of the transition section showing the large-scale consonant skip that embellishes the fifth.

---

[34] For more folk-style examples of the embellishing seventh over subdominant harmony, listen to "Lead Me to the Rock" and "Handwriting on the Wall" (Heavenly Gospel Singers) from Gospel Quartets/1921–1942; "You See the Sign of Judgment" (Mitchell's Christian Singers) from Negro Spirituals/Gospel Songs/1926–1942; and "God Don't Like It" (Belmont Silvertone Jubilee Singers) from Belmont Silvertone Jubilee Singers/Southern Wonder Quartet (1939/40), Document Records DOCD–5371, 1995.

Example 2. 13: Harmonic Reduction of Transition



The examination of recorded folk-style performances uncovered one piece that is a notable exception to many folk-style characteristics. It is mentioned here for two reasons. First, it contains harmonic features that portend future developments in the black religious quartet tradition. Second, the recording of this forward-pointing performance occurred quite early during the folk-style period. Example 2.14 shows the chorus of this 1926 performance.

One striking feature about the performance in example 2.14 is its total commitment to the minor mode (G minor). The overwhelming majority of folk-style performances are in the major mode and contain a generous amount of blue notes borrowed from the parallel minor mode. Also, the four-beat feel per measure is a departure from the two-beat feel normally associated with folk-style performances. Another exceptional feature is a fully functional bass and the consistent use of complete chords, including a complete authentic cadence that is prepared by an applied dominant seventh chord (measures 6–8). There is also consistent use of the added sixth chord (measures 1, 2 and 5), an extremely rare dissonance in the folk style.[35]

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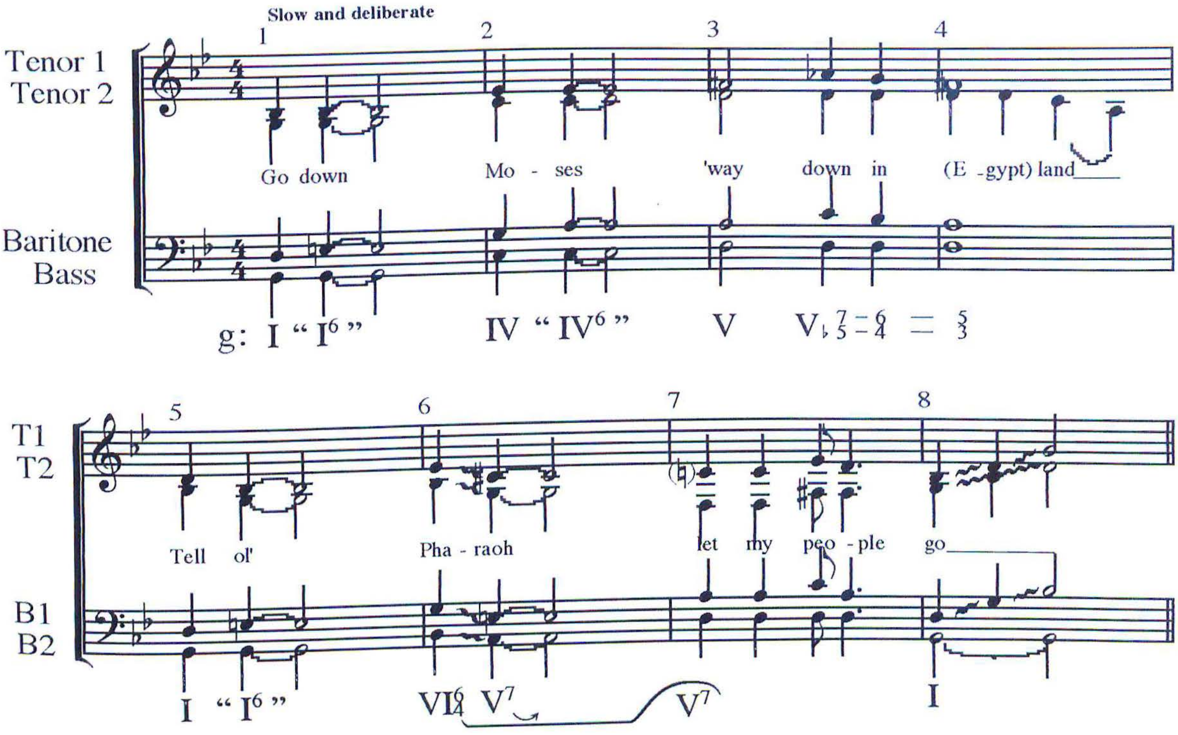
[35] In this study, the figured bass for the added sixth chord is placed within quotation marks (as in example 2.14) to distinguish it from a chord in first inversion. See Aldwell and Schachter, vol. 2, 79–82.

Example 2. 14: "Go Down, Moses," Cotton Belt Quartet (1926)[36]


Slow and deliberate
Tenor 1
Tenor 2
Baritone
Bass
Go down
Mo - ses
'way
down in
(E -gypt) land
g: I "I6"
IV "IV6"
V
V♭ 7-6 5-4 = 5 3
T1
T2
B1
B2
Tell ol'
Pha - raoh
let my
peo - ple
go
I "I6"
VI6/4 V7
V7
I

Still another exception in this performance is the use of instrumental accompaniment and unusual instrumentation (not shown in example 2.14). "Go Down, Moses" employs very prominent and dramatic pipe organ and chimes accompaniment. This unusual combination of voice and instruments occurred at a time when most quartets were either a cappella or accompanied by an unobtrusive guitar. Perhaps the prominent organ accompaniment influenced the unprecedented harmonies of the vocal arrangement; that is, the vocal parts may have been derived from the chord voicings of the organ accompaniment.

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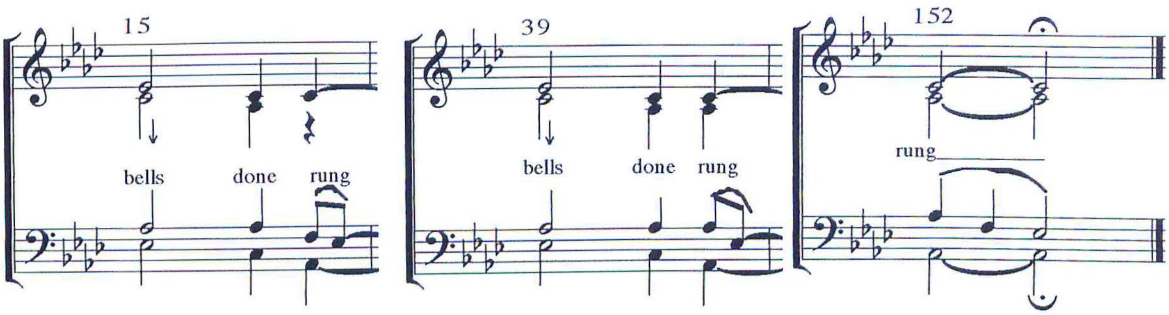
[36] Gospel Quartets/1921–1942.

Variation Techniques

The repetitious nature of the verse-chorus format encourages melodic variation within individual voice parts. Example 2.15 shows how the approach to the final note of the chorus varies throughout "I'm Praying Humble" on the word "rung."

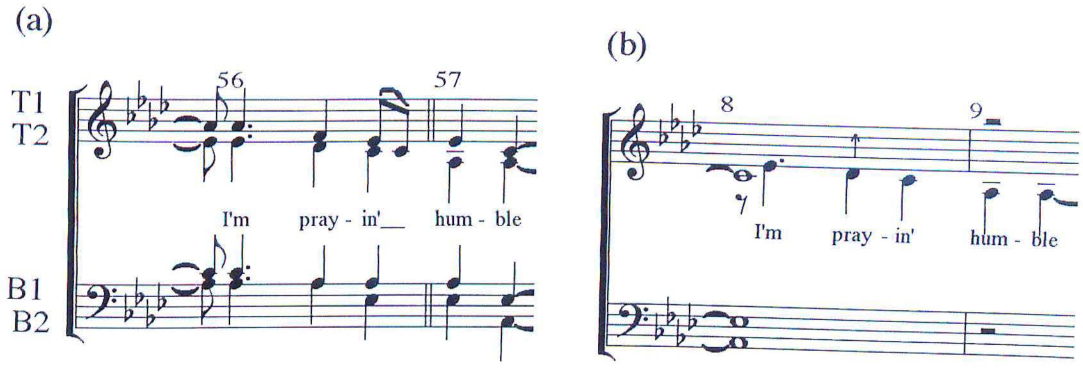
Example 2. 15: Melodic Variation



In two of the choruses, the phrase ending for the baritone alternates between approach by step (measure 15) and by skip (measure 39). The diminutions in these first two instances combine in the final chorus (measure 152) to create a consonant skip filled in with an incomplete neighbor tone.

Blue notes abound within individual voice parts of folk-style performances. (They occur comparatively less frequently in jubilee-style performances, where more emphasis is placed on group vocal blend.) Example 2.16 shows the use of blue note variation at the beginning of the chorus in the second tenor part.

Example 2. 16: Nondiatonic Melodic Variation



When the second tenor's lead-in motive to the chorus is harmonized, as in measure 56 of example 2.16a, scale degree $\hat{4}$ (D♭ in the key of A♭ major) is diatonic (on the word "pray-"). Yet, when the lead-in motive is not harmonized, as in measure 8 of example 2.16b, $\hat{4}$ is raised microtonally (indicated with an upward arrow) creating nondiatonic melodic variation.

Mitchell's Christian Singers' use of blue notes was particularly effective. Apparently, they surpassed other folk-style quartets in this, as hinted at in the following account:

> ... Here is a European harmony—the harmony of the hymn—with the dew still on it. The transitionals to the final chord with what Fanny Kemble would have described as their extraordinary wild and unaccountable slurs, dips, slides, and loops, bring exclamations of delight from modern academic musicians who have tried and failed to notate them.[37]

In another example of their use of blue notes, the third of the tonic triad (C in A♭ major) is consistently lowered in the baritone voice part throughout the entire performance of "I'm Praying Humble" (see example 2.1). When sustained for two or more beats, this note is in a constant state of motion. The lowered C^4 appears to slide upward toward diatonic C^4

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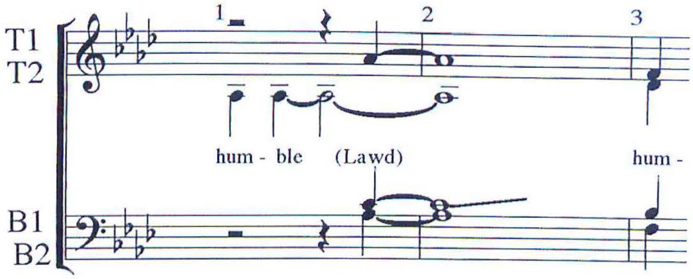
[37] Buchanan, 87.

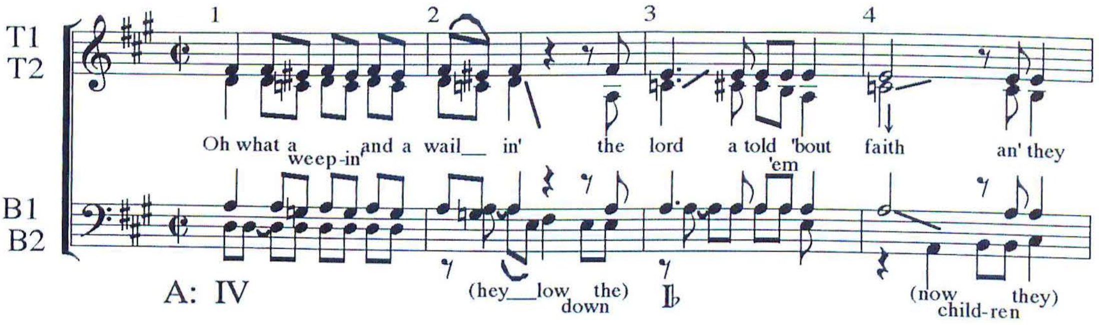
but does not reach it before the chord changes. This is indicated with a hanging glissando marking as in measure 2 of example 2.17.

Example 2. 17: Lowered Scale Degree $\hat{3}$ in Motion


T1
T2
B1
B2
1
2
3
hum - ble
(Lawd)
hum -

Example 2.18 shows part of a performance by another quartet, which further illustrates the high degree of blue notes in folk-style performances.

Example 2. 18: Use of Blue Notes in "I Dreamed of the Judgment Morning"[38]


T1
T2
B1
B2
1
2
3
4
Oh what a
weep-in
and a
wail__
in'
the
lord
a told
'bout
'em
faith
an' they
(hey__low
down
the)
(now
child-ren
they)
A: IV

Most of the blue notes in example 2.18 occur in the second tenor voice part, which carries the melody. Note how scale degree $\hat{4}$ (D in the key of A) in measure 2 slides downward to an approximate pitch. Also, the downbeats of measures 3 and 4 in the second tenor represent varying blue notes. ($C\natural^4$ on the downbeat of measure 4 is lower than the $C\natural^4$ in measure 3, as indicated by the downward pointing arrow.) Note that both blue notes slide upward to approximate pitches. Also, the baritone's A^3, which accompanies the second tenor's $C♮^4$ on the downbeat of measure 4, simultaneously slides in the opposite direction to an approximate pitch.

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[38] Gospel Quartets 1921–1942. For the full chorus see example 2.3.

It seems plausible that Mitchell's Christian Singers' use of blue notes balanced their use of a nonfunctional bass part. Recall that their use of nonfunctional bass parts was greater than the norm for other quartets in the folk style. If it is plausible that frequent use of a nonfunctional bass, which often creates motion in parallel octaves between outer voices, can create less-sonorous chord structures, then one might imagine that Mitchell's Christian Singers' special use of blue notes provided a tonal richness that compensated for the bareness of this parallelism. Perhaps this explains why a Mitchell's Christian Singers performance does not lack fullness of sound and why they are one of the most memorable groups from the folk-style tradition.[39]

Other Structural Features

Text-painting devices strengthen the structural coherence of "I'm Praying Humble." One such device occurs at the end of the transition section, where there is an implied cadential progression, as shown in example 2.19.

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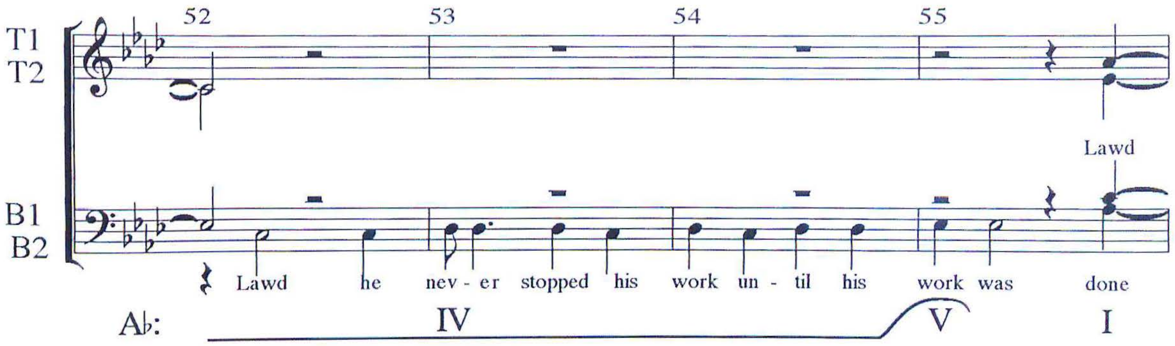
[39] Buzelin, booklet from Gospel Quartets/1921–1942.

Example 2. 19: Text-Painting in Transition


52
53
54
55
T1
T2
B1
B2
Lawd
Lawd he nev - er stopped his work un - til his work was done
A♭:
IV
V
I

Because the bass sings chord roots throughout the transition, it is clear what chords are represented when the upper voices drop out at measure 52. Thus, the transition creates a context that strongly suggests the continuation of chord roots. Because this is the strongest authentic cadential movement by the bass in the piece (further strengthened by dominant preparation), it evokes a strong sense of finality at this point in the performance. This sense of finality and completeness is heightened by the sentiment of the accompanying text, which exclaims, “Lawd he never stopped his work until his work was done” (example 2.19).

Another instance of text-painting occurs when the idea of running faster and faster, intimated by the text of the transition, is captured by an increase in the number of words in the transition. Accordingly, both the chorus and the transition are sixteen measures in length. The transition contains forty words:

> Now you can watch the sun and see how he run,
> Don’t never let it catch you with your works undone.
> O man Joshua was de son o’ Nun,
> Lawd he never stopped his work until his work was done.

The chorus in comparison contains only twenty-eight words. Covering the same space brings about a slower pacing of the text:

Lawd I'm prayin' humble Lawd humble chil,'
Humble just because dem bells done rung.
Lawd I'm prayin' humble Lawd humble chil,'
Humble just because dem bells done rung.

The three verses, sixteen measures each, also show a gradual increase of words as the song progresses. The first verse contains a total of thirty-two words. The second and third verses contain thirty-four and thirty-five words respectively. Accompanying this gradual increase in the pacing of the text is a gradual increase in tempo throughout the performance—"running faster and faster." These devices may or may not be consciously executed by the performer but the result is the same—a heightened sense of the meaning of the words and strengthening of the piece's structural integrity.

Summary

The folk style represents one of two early prominent periods of professionally recorded black religious quartets that thrived from about 1920 to 1950. Folk-style quartet performances rarely deviate from the verse-chorus formal structure. Though "I'm Praying Humble," performed by Mitchell's Christian Singers, is based on this structure, an added section of music augments the verse-chorus pattern. This added section, called a transition, provides textural contrast in the performance and contains the only implication of a IV—V—I cadence when the bass sings the roots of these chords unaccompanied (see example 2.19).

The verse of "I'm Praying Humble" uses the most basic form of call-and-response, where a lead singer alternates with the remaining voices in singing phrases. This basic form of the call-and-response pattern is the most common one in folk-style performances. As an alternative, some folk-style performances employ the clanka lanka riff, which points ahead to the gospel quartet style. The technique undergoes further development in the jubilee and gospel styles of quartet singing.

Folk-style performances generally employ a two-beat rhythmic pulse marked by cut-time meter, as in "I' m Praying Humble." Eighth notes are also evenly distributed, a characteristic that changes when the swing feel of jazz exerts its influence on later quartets.

Folk-style performances adhere strictly to traditional quartet voice parts, as most quartets contain four singers—one to a part. The texture is highly homophonic, since all voices generally follow the rhythm of the melody (usually sung by the second tenor).

The bass is often nonfunctional in "I' m Praying Humble," moving in parallel octaves with the first tenor. This minimizes the occurrence of root-position chords, and at times creates incomplete or ambiguous chord structures. Finally, folk-style performances often weaken authentic cadences with incomplete chords, or avoid them altogether.

The seventh is the only added dissonance employed regularly in the folk style. It occurs most often as a blue note in subdominant harmony and as a substitute for, or embellishment of, the fifth of the chord. Many performances highlight the embellishing seventh figure with a slower tempo or a pause in the music.

Finally, the repetitive verse-chorus format creates the opportunity for variation, which helps sustain musical interest and heighten emotional intensity. Though melodic variation within individual voice parts is universal throughout the black religious quartet tradition, the use of blue notes as a form of melodic variation is particularly characteristic of the folk style, as demonstrated in "I' m Praying Humble."

CHAPTER III

"ONE DAY WHEN THE LORD WILL CALL ME"

Characteristics of Jubilee Style

While the folk style was thriving in the 1920s and 1930s, mainly in Jefferson County, Alabama, groups from the Tidewater Virginia area were developing a different approach to black religious quartet singing—the jubilee style. The two styles have fundamental characteristics in common such as traditional quartet part-writing, songs based on the verse-chorus format, and a penchant for performances in a two-beat feel. However, jubilee-style performances, due to the influence of jazz and barbershop music, show more consistent use of complete chords and dissonant harmonies.

Ironically, a group outside the black religious quartet tradition—the Mills Brothers, who performed four-part arrangements of popular songs of the day—was the stylistic catalyst for major developments in the jubilee style. Early in the 1930s, it was instrumentally derived techniques of this group that jubilee quartets copied, such as imitation horn sounds, riff patterns, a lead singer taking on the persona of an instrumental soloist and a pump bass.[1] Additionally, jubilee quartets adopted the Mills Brothers' use of added dissonance, particularly the added sixth chord.

The influence of barbershop music effected more use of dominant and minor seventh chords, applied dominants, and mode borrowing chords such as ♭VI. Other characteristics of the jubilee style include snatched words for staccato effect,[2] circle-of-fifth progressions, and a more consistently functional bass part. Finally, although authentic cadences are occasionally incomplete, they are more consistently complete than in the folk tradition.

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[1] Pump bass is a technique derived from Chicago Style Dixieland where the bass voice pulses in a manner characteristic of a tuba, or string bass, on the strong beats of the measure.

[2] For a description of "snatching" see note 41 in Chapter I.

The Golden Gate Quartet from Norfolk, Virginia was the most popular group of the jubilee style,[3] and admittedly modeled their style after the Mills Brothers.[4] Subsequently, they were the first black religious quartet to use the instrumentally derived techniques introduced by the Mills Brothers. The Southern Sons originated in Newark, New Jersey in 1935. Though based outside the Tidewater Virginia area, their vocal style derived, in a very real sense, from the Golden Gate Quartet.[5] One writer describes them as "perhaps the most immaculate group of all."[6] Their performance of "One Day When the Lord Will Call Me" provides cogent examples of jubilee-style characteristics. Additionally, as a five-member group, the texture occasionally expands to five parts, foreshadowing the subsequent gospel style of quartet singing.

Formal Structure

As in the folk style, the verse-chorus structure is dominant in the jubilee style of quartet singing, although it is frequently modified to include a recitative-style introduction. This added section is different in character from the rest of the piece. It is slow, free moving and generally contains a different text and melody from the rest of the piece. The recitative-style introduction had been an established technique in the more general category of black gospel music and was thus adopted by the quartet tradition. Following is Horace C. Boyer's description of what became known as the recitative-and-aria category of gospel songs (the term, of course, derives from the classical music tradition):

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[3] Rubman, 40.

[4] Buzelin, booklet from Gospel Quartets/1921–1942.

[5] The vocal arrangements and blend of the Southern Sons were very close to that of the Golden Gate Quartet owing to William Langford who sang with both groups successively. See Ray Funk, The Southern Sons on Trumpet, booklet from Southern Sons Quartette, I Love the Lord, P-Vine PCD–2186, 1991.

[6] Buzelin, booklet from Gospel Quartets/1921–1942.

> Recitative-and-aria songs always come in two or three different tempos. Normally, the first part is in a very slow, nonpulsed tempo. Unlike gospel ballads, which have a slow but rhythmic pulse, these songs are rendered in a chanted reciting style … the singer has the opportunity to decorate the tones, alter the rhythm, and hold tones to reveal the true meaning of the lyric. The composition moves to the next section and to another tempo—the joyous part.[7]

With the addition of the recitative-style introduction to the verse-chorus format, the formal design of "One Day When the Lord Will Call Me" is:

I V C1 V C1 V C1 C2 C2 C3

"I" in the diagram represents the introduction. There are three verses (V), each with a different text. C1, C2 and C3 represent three variations of the chorus. In contrast to the verses, the variation among the choruses is musical and not textual. C1 is the standard chorus and occurs after each verse for a total of three times. C2 stands for the "instrumental chorus," so-called because the voices imitate the sound of real instruments. This section occurs twice, consecutively, and contains an alternate melody added to the original four voice parts, creating a five-voice texture. C3 represents the final chorus. A jazz-influenced tag ending distinguishes it from the other choruses. All but one of the sections of "One Day When the Lord Will Call Me" consist of sixteen-measure periods. The tag effectively extends the final chorus to eighteen measures. Also, a short vamp, in the jazz tradition, precedes the first of the two occurrences of the instrumental chorus. The background voices establish a riff pattern in the vamp that accompanies an added lead voice throughout the instrumental chorus.

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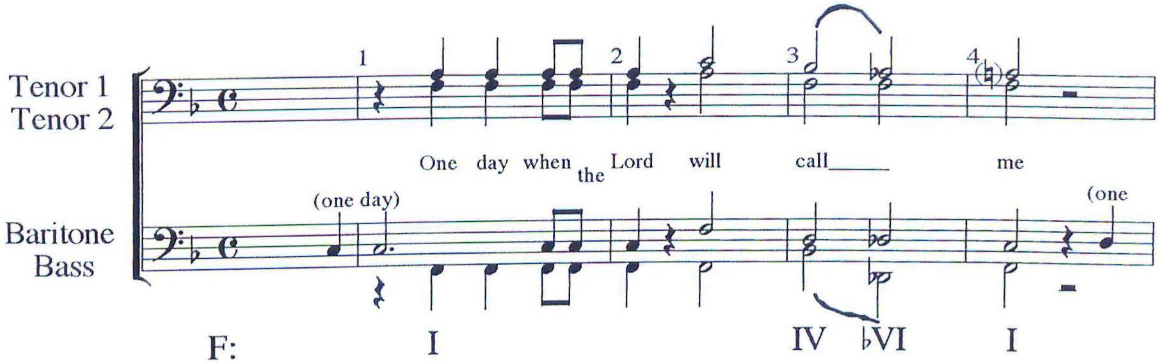
[7] Reagon, 220–24.

Chord Structures and Added Dissonance

In addition to recitative-style introductions, jubilee quartets sometimes close performances in the recitative style. These recitative-style introductions and endings often showcase barbershop-style devices. One such device occurs in the opening four measures of "One Day When the Lord Will Call Me," shown in example 3.1.

Example 3. 1: The Swipe



The baritone carries the melody for the first twelve measures of the introduction, marked by pick-up notes to each four-measure group as in example 3.1. In measure 3, the baritone's melody descends chromatically through D♭^{3}. A chord borrowed from the parallel minor key of F minor, ♭VI, supports the chromatic D♭^{3}. The ♭VI chord is common in barbershop music and, in this instance, occurs in the context of a popular barbershop device called the swipe. The two chords of measure 3 are a textbook example of the definition of a swipe: "A progression of two or more chords sung on a single word or syllable[;] a characteristic feature of the barbershop style of music."[8] Additionally, swipes often employ dominant seventh chords, and the singers often execute them with a glissando effect (i.e., each singer slides from his respective pitch in one chord to his pitch in the next chord). A slur marks the swipe on the word "call" in measure 3 (example 3.1). Swipes also occur in measures 11 and 14 of the introduction.

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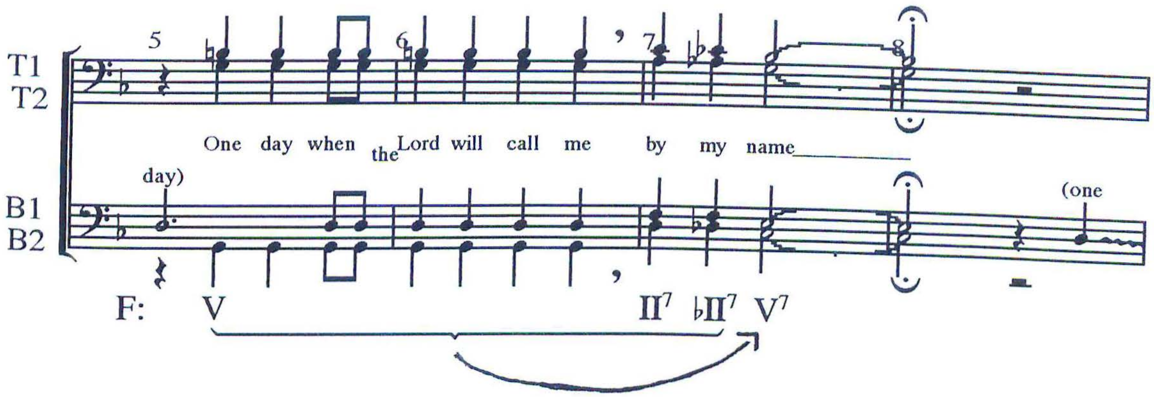
[8] Burt Szabo and Dave Stevens, eds., Barbershop Arranging Manual (Kenosha, Wis.: Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America, Inc., 1980), 448.

The aforementioned dominant seventh chords that are often associated with swipes are called "barbershop sevenths." The Barbershop Arranging Manual defines them as "a four-part chord of dominant seventh quality which may be used on any pitch of the chromatic scale."[9] It often occurs as an applied dominant chord, as in measure 7 of the introduction (example 3.2).

Example 3. 2: The Barbershop Seventh



In measure 7, the labeling of the barbershop seventh chord is $\flat\mathrm{II}^7 \curvearrowright \mathrm{V}$, as it functions as part of an applied dominant progression that begins in measure 5. It also substitutes for $\mathrm{V} \curvearrowright \mathrm{V}$, providing a half-step approach to V in the key of F major. Jazz theorists call this common occurrence a tritone substitution because the root of the $\flat\mathrm{II}^7$ is a tritone away from $\mathrm{V} \curvearrowright \mathrm{V}$, the chord for which it substitutes.[10]

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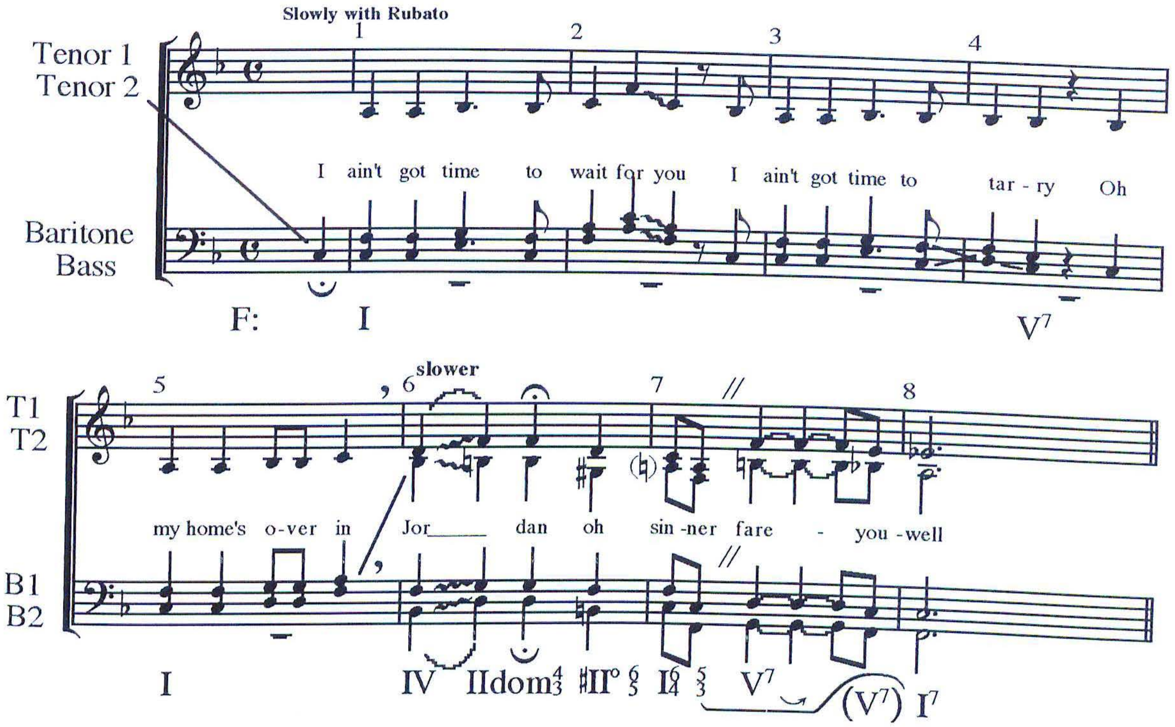
[9] Ibid., 11–12.

[10] Sample, 68.

Examples of recitative-style introductions and endings with the aforementioned barbershop-style characteristics abound in the jubilee style. Example 3.3 provides another instance.

Example 3. 3: "No Hiding Place," Norfolk Jubilee Quartet (1938)[11]


Slowly with Rubato
Tenor 1
Tenor 2
Baritone
Bass
1
2
3
4
I ain't got time to wait for you I ain't got time to tar - ry Oh
F: I V7
T1
T2
B1
B2
5
6
slower
7
8
my home's o-ver in Jor dan oh sin -ner fare - you -well
I IV IIdom4/3 #II° 6/5 I 6/4 V7 (V7) I7

As is customary in recitative-style introductions, the text in example 3.3 is different from the rest of the piece (not shown in the example). A barbershop swipe accompanies the bass' entrance at measure 6. Also, the swipe characteristically employs a barbershop seventh, functioning in this instance as IIdom^{4}_{3}. These barbershop characteristics are particularly expressive, in this instance, for two reasons. First, a change in the number of voice parts occurs with the execution of the swipe, as the bass does not enter until measure 6. Second, a change in tempo accompanies the swipe at measure 6.[12]

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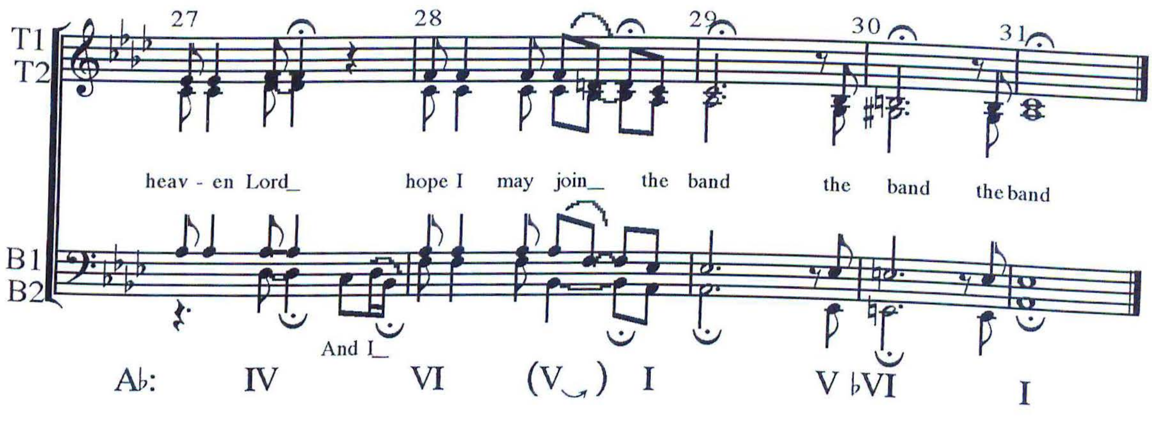
[11] Gospel Songs 1926–1942.

Authentic cadences are sometimes incomplete in jubilee-style performances, as was also observed in the folk style. However, they do not result from incomplete chords, as in the folk style, but rather, from incomplete harmonic progressions. In such cases, there is often harmonic motion toward an authentic cadence where V⌣V by-passes resolution to V and progresses directly to I, creating an applied dominant-to-tonic authentic cadence, as shown in example 3.4.

Example 3. 4: Applied Dominant-to-Tonic Authentic Cadence, "I Hope I May Join the Band," Norfolk Jubilee Quartet (1921)[13]



The fermata in measure 28 of example 3.4 highlights the barbershop seventh, which progresses directly to tonic. Note also that it is part of a swipe (indicated by the slur preceding the fermata) that further emphasizes the barbershop seventh. Measures 29–31 represent tonic harmony prolonged by ♭VI in measure 30. The ♭VI is, in turn, embellished by V, which serves as its lower neighbor.[14]

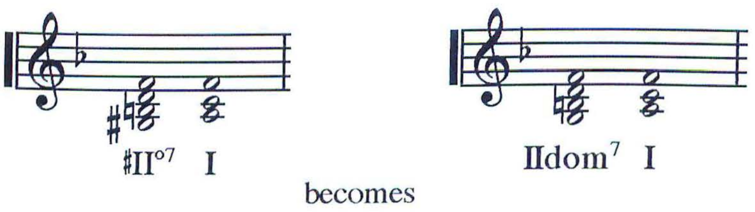
---

[12] More examples of barbershop characteristics in recitative-style introductions and endings can be heard to good effect in "Massa's in the Cold Cold Ground" and "Ol' Man Mose" from The Golden Gate Quartet, Birth of a Legend: Their Early Years 1937–1939, Blue Moon BMCD 3015, 1995; and "I Hope I May Join the Band" (Norfolk Jubilee Quartet) from Gospel Quartets/1921–1942.

[13] Gospel Quartets/1921–1942.

The applied dominant-to-tonic authentic cadence is unique to the jubilee style, resulting from the high occurrence of applied dominant chords in the form of barbershop sevenths. The intervallic construction of the V^7⌣V in a dominant-to-tonic authentic cadence is the same as IIdom^7, but its function is different. IIdom^7 derives from ♯II$^{\circ 7}$, the common-tone diminished seventh chord that is an embellishment of I.[15] Example 3.5 shows the origin of IIdom^7.

Example 3. 5: Origin of IIdom^7



Example 3.5 shows how ♯II$^{\circ 7}$ becomes IIdom^7 by altering one chord tone (the root). As an embellishment of tonic harmony, ♯II$^{\circ 7}$, and therefore IIdom^7, serves a neighboring, rather than cadential, function. In comparison, V⌣V functions as dominant preparation for an authentic cadence.[16] When V is not present, the authentic cadence is incomplete creating the applied dominant-to-tonic authentic cadence.

---

[14] The V at the end of measure 29 is in the service of the ♭VI that follows and should not be misconstrued as cadential in function.

[15] Strunk, 12–15. See also Aldwell and Schachter, vol. 2, 198–201.

[16] Ibid. Measures 6–7 of example 3.3 show a G^7 chord functioning as an embellishment of tonic harmony and as dominant preparation successively.

In "One Day When the Lord Will Call Me," the final cadence of the introduction appears, at a glance, to be an applied dominant-to-tonic authentic cadence. Closer examination shows that it is an instance of harmonic retrogression,[17] outlined in example 3.6. In example 3.6c, the short upper beam in the bass part outlines a short chain of bass fifths at the cadence point.[18] Harmonic retrogression effectively disjoints the chain of fifths and consequently an authentic cadence, indicated by the reversed arrow in the roman numeral analysis at measure 14.

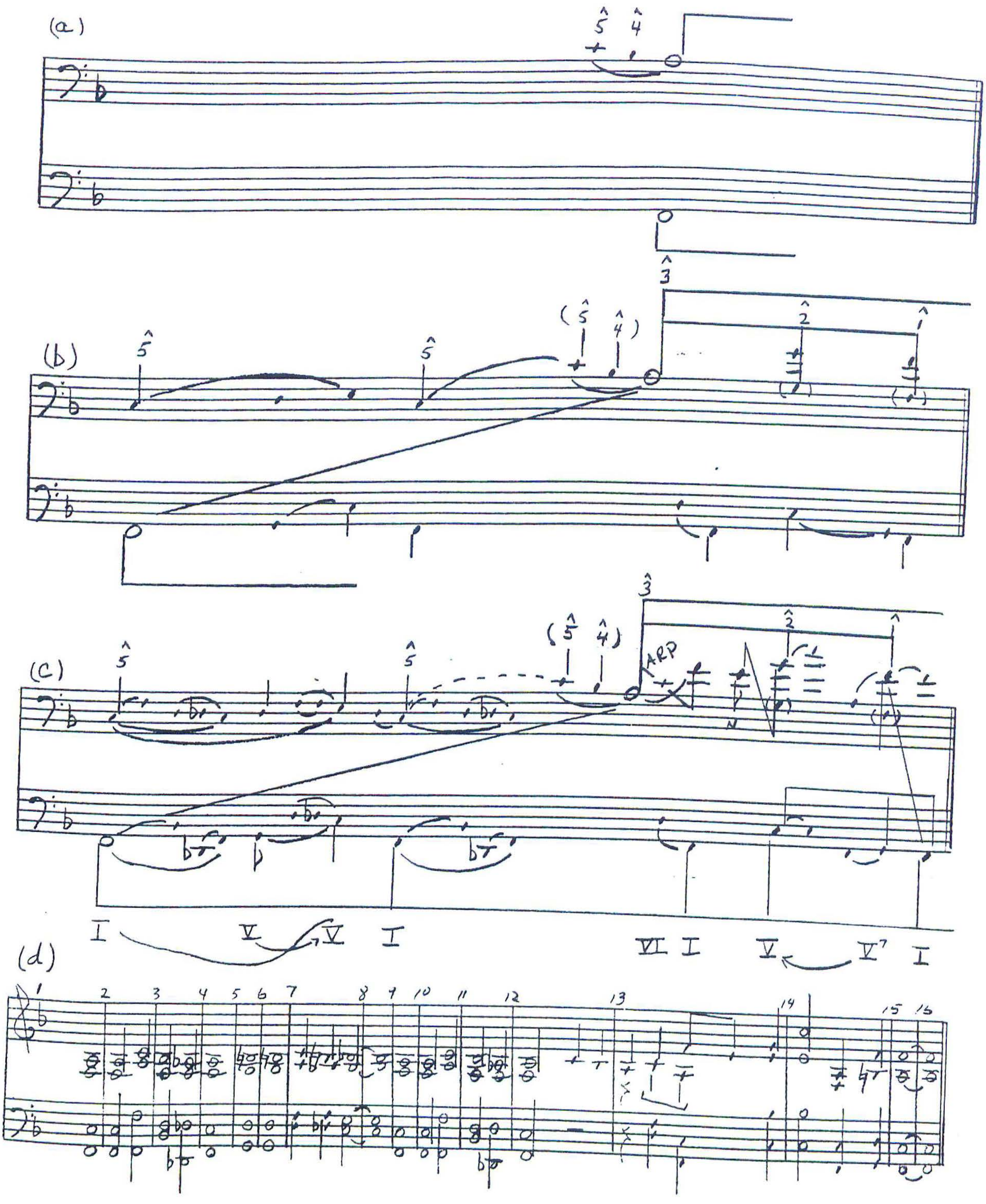
The tonic chord on beat 3 of measure 14, at first look (example 3.6d), appears to be the resolution for the prominent dominant seventh chord on the downbeat of measure 14. However, the foreground sketch (example 3.6c) interprets the tonic chord as an embellishment of the applied dominant chord that follows. The "real" final tonic comes in measure 15. Thus, the large-scale progression in measures 14–15 is V—I, as shown in example 3.6b.

---

[17] Retrogression is harmonic progression through the circle of fifths in the opposite direction. Another term is "back-relating applied dominants." See Aldwell and Schachter, vol. 2, 103.

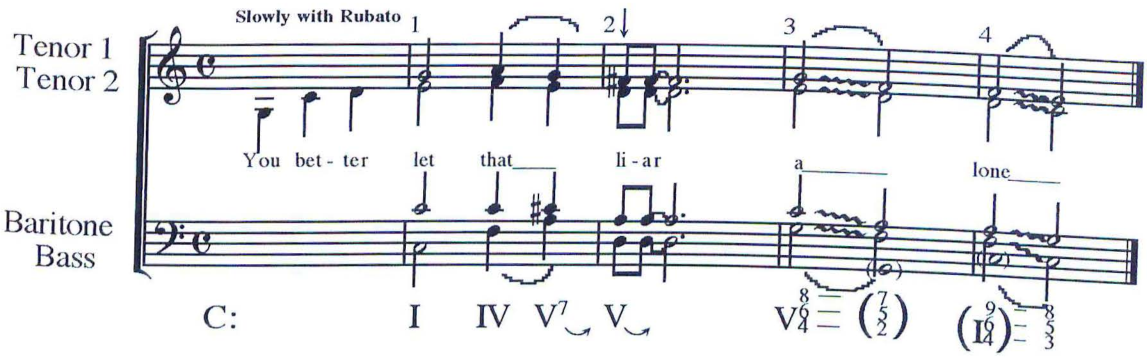
[18] The notion of beaming chains of bass fifths in Schenkerian analysis comes from Forte, 17.

Example 3. 6: Graphic Analysis of Introduction


(a)
$\hat{5}$ $\hat{4}$
$\hat{3}$
(b)
$\hat{5}$
$\hat{5}$
($\hat{5}$ $\hat{4}$)
$\hat{2}$
$\hat{1}$
$\hat{3}$
(c)
$\hat{5}$
$\hat{5}$
($\hat{5}$ $\hat{4}$)
ARP
$\hat{2}$
$\hat{1}$
N
I V V I VI I V V7 I
(d)
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16

As previously discussed, incomplete authentic cadences in the jubilee style result more from missing chords (e.g., the dominant-to-tonic authentic cadence) than from incomplete chords. Example 3.7 shows an exception, where the final authentic cadence of a jubilee-style performance is incomplete as a result of incomplete chord structures.

Example 3. 7: "You Better Let that Liar Alone," Silver Leaf Quartet (1928)[19]



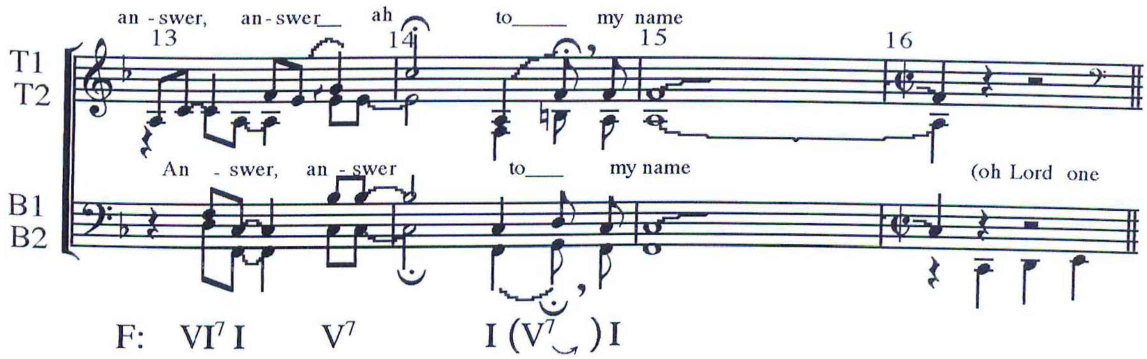
Several features of example 3.7 suggest the implied bass notes in measures 3–4 (in parentheses). First, the circle-of-fifths progression in measures 1–3 creates strong motion toward an authentic cadence, marked by the arrival of the cadential V^6_4 on the downbeat of measure 3. Second, the chord at the end of measure 3 repeats on the downbeat of measure 4 suggesting that suspensions are in operation across the barline. Third, the sudden parallelism between outer voices at measure 3 suggests that bass note F^3 on beat 3 is nonfunctional; the parenthesized G^2 is a functional alternative. Finally, this performance was recorded early in the jubilee period when an undeveloped bass part would have been more likely. As discussed later in this chapter, major jubilee-style characteristics developed in the early 1930s and beyond, which was after the recording of this piece.

---

[19] Silver Leaf Quartette of Norfolk (1928–1931).

Several barbershop-style characteristics are also present in example 3.7. As the slurs indicate, swipes occur in measures 1, 3 and 4. Also, a barbershop seventh occurs within a swipe on beat 4 of measure 1. This also occurs in "One Day When the Lord Will Call Me" at the end of the introduction.[20] Note how the swipe in example 3.8 progresses from I to V^7‿V on the word "to" (measure 14). This swipe is particularly expressive because of the large melodic leap in the first tenor part.

Example 3. 8: Final Cadence of Introduction



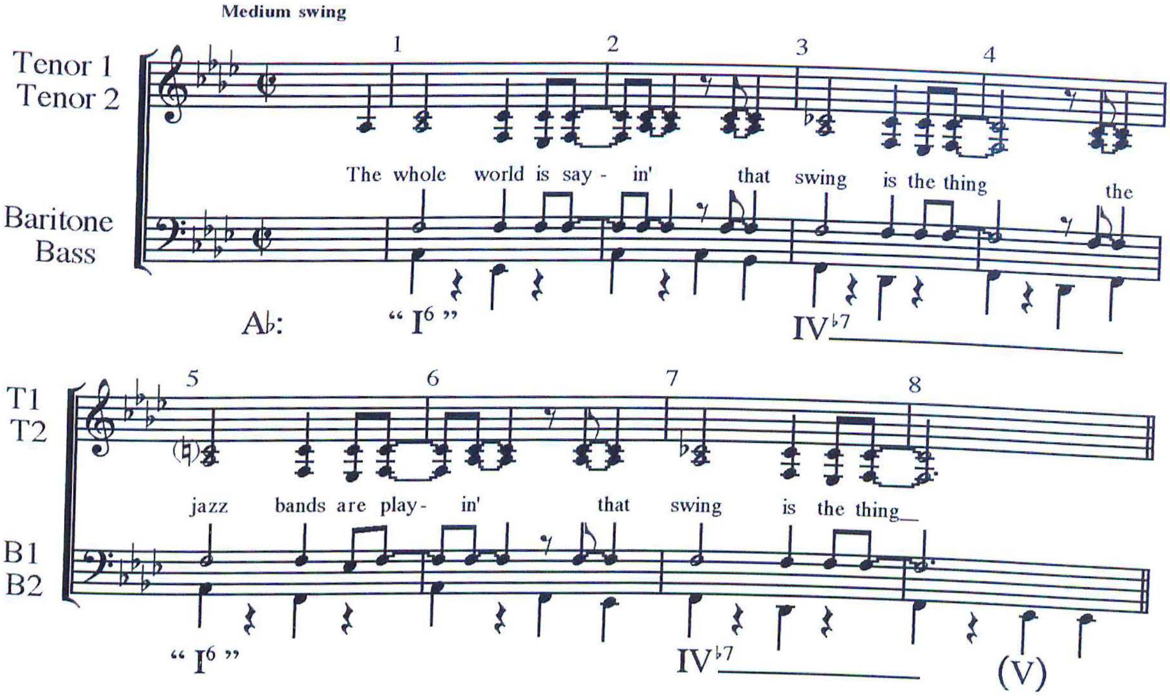
an - swer, an - swer__ ah to____ my name
13 14 15 16
T1
T2
An - swer, an - swer to___ my name (oh Lord one
B1
B2
F: VI^7 I V^7 I (V^7‿) I

In addition to more liberal use of dominant sevenths, the added sixth chord evolved into a regularly employed sonority in the jubilee style. The Mills Brothers, who were as much an influence as barbershop music, frequently employed the added sixth chord, as shown in example 3.9.

---

[20] The Barbershop Arranging Manual is replete with examples of swipes containing barbershop sevenths. See Szabo and Stevens, 328–40.

Example 3. 9: “Swing Is the Thing,” Third Chorus, Mills Brothers (1936)[21]


Medium swing
Tenor 1
Tenor 2
Baritone
Bass
1
2
3
4
The whole world is say - in' that swing is the thing the
A♭:
“ I6 ”
IV♭7
T1
T2
B1
B2
5
6
7
8
jazz bands are play- in' that swing is the thing
“ I6 ”
IV♭7
(V)

The baritone, who intones F^3 almost exclusively, supplies the sixth dissonance in place of the fifth above the root in measures 1–2 and 5–6.

Jubilee quartets initially used the added sixth chord sparingly, most often for dramatic effect at the close of a performance or at a prominent cadence point within a performance. Its only occurrence in “One Day When the Lord Will Call Me” is in the climactic ending of the piece, shown in example 3.10.

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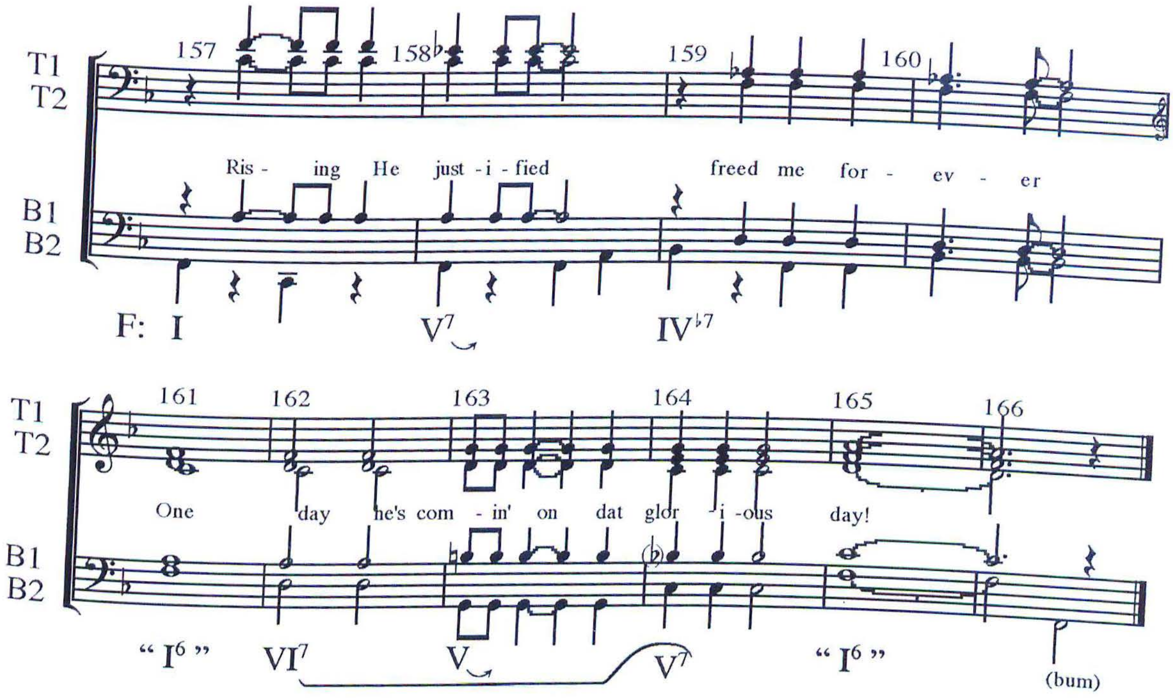
[21] The Mills Brothers, Past CD 7049, 1994.

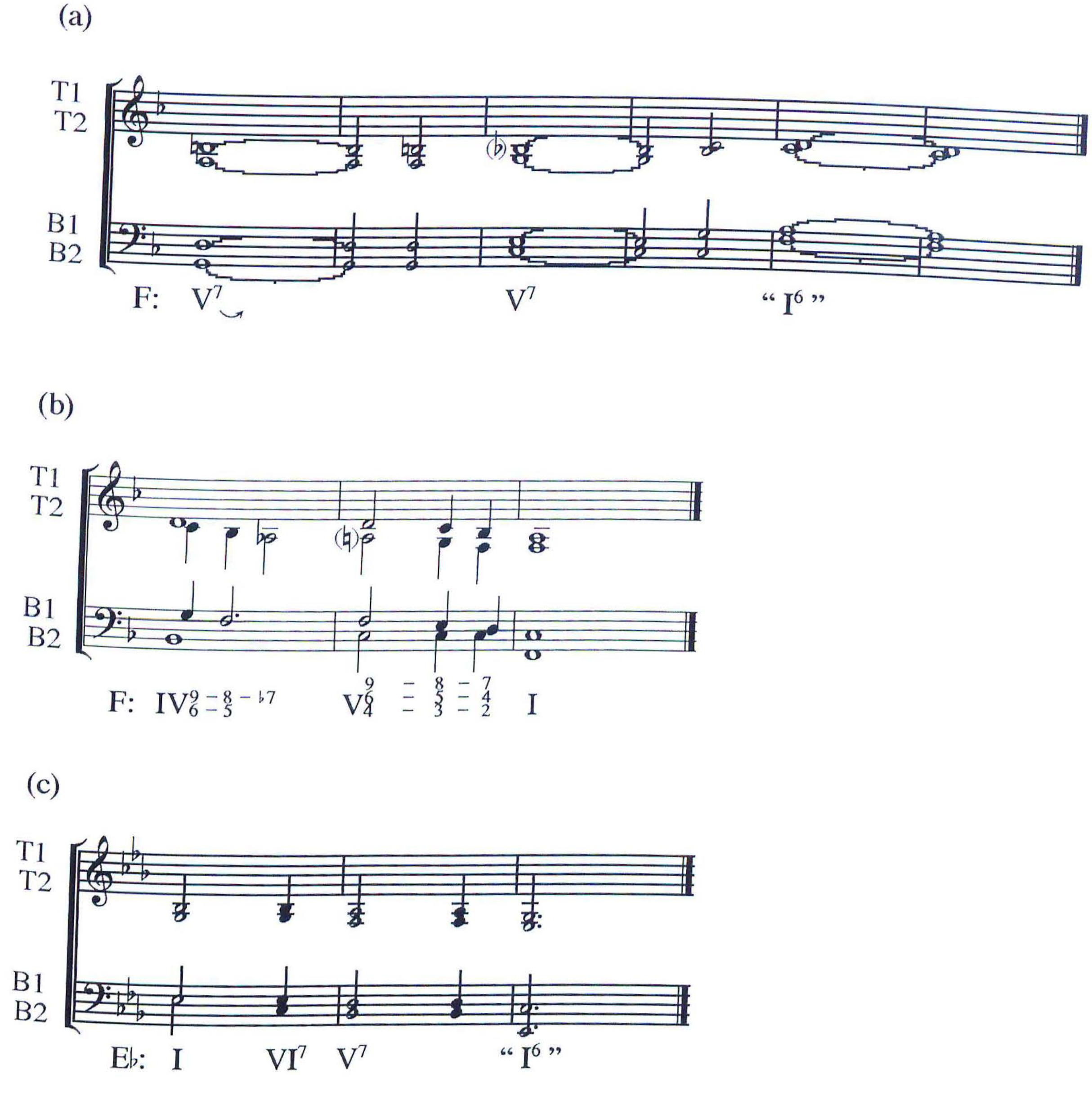
Example 3. 10: "One Day When the Lord Will Call Me," Final Phrase


T1
T2
B1
B2
157
158
159
160
161
162
163
164
165
166
Ris - ing He just - i - fied freed me for - ev - er
One day he's com - in' on dat glor - i - ous day!
F: I
V7
IV♭7
" I6 "
VI7
V
V7
" I6 "
(bum)

The Southern Sons' use of the added sixth chord is unique, in that an added fifth voice supplies the sixth in measures 161 and 165 (example 3.10). The expanded texture combines with the added dissonance to heighten emotional intensity for a climactic ending. Other factors contribute to the climax as well, such as the switch to higher position chord voicings and rhythmic augmentation in the final six measures. Also, the final cadence is the only fully functional authentic cadence in the piece; there are no missing chord members, avoidance of the dominant chord or harmonic retrogression.

As noted, the added sixth chord in a five-voice texture is exceptional in the jubilee style. Example 3.11 shows it in the more common four-voice settings.

Example 3. 11: The Added Sixth Chord in Jubilee-Style Performances[22]


(a)
T1
T2
B1
B2
F: V7
V7
" I6 "
(b)
T1
T2
B1
B2
F: IV 9 6 – 8 5 – ♭7
V 9 6 4 – 8 5 3 – 7 4 2
I
(c)
T1
T2
B1
B2
E♭: I
VI7 V7
" I6 "

In example 3.11a, the sixth is added to the final tonic chord in root position. In the second measure of example 3.11b, the added sixth occurs in the form of a 9–8 suspension over a cadential $^6_4$ chord. Example 3.11c illustrates the sixth as substitute for the fifth at the cadence.

---

[22] The three excerpts are taken respectively from "Stalin Wasn't Stallin' " (Golden Gate Quartet) from The Gospel Sound, Columbia G 31086, 1994; "Didn't It Rain" (Norfolk Jubilee Quartet) and "He Knows Just How Much We Can Bear" (Selah Jubilee Singers) from Gospel Quartets/1921–1942.

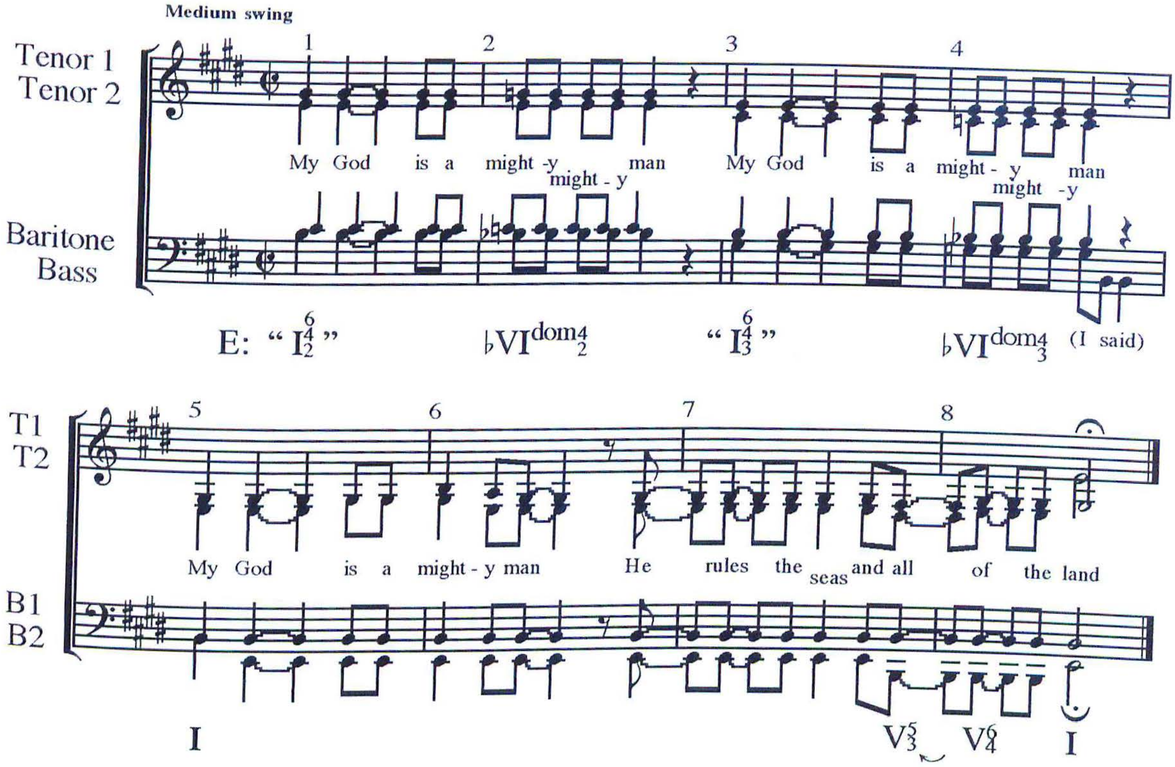
The jubilee period ended in the early 1950s with the last American recordings of two of its most representative quartets—the Golden Gate Quartet and the Southern Sons.[23] The final years of the period saw increased use of seventh chords (including apparent seventh chords such as the added sixth chord), as in the performance presented in example 3.12. The harmony of measures 1–4 (example 3.12) is a succession of apparent seventh chords, alternating between inversions of the added sixth chord and ♭VIdom^7.[24] Also, harmonic progression in measures 3–4 is a repeat of that in measures 1–2 with the voice parts shifted down one position. Additionally, measures 7–8 show another instance of an incomplete cadence. Note the V$^6_4$, which, according to traditional part-writing rules, should resolve to V$^5_3$. In this case, the chord positions are reversed, recalling the similar technique of harmonic retrogression.

---

[23] The Golden Gate Quartet's final American release was on Okeh Records in 1952. They moved to France in 1959 and are still quite active. See Buchanan, 99–100. The Southern Sons' last recording was released on Excello Records in 1954. Shortly thereafter, they disbanded. See Ray Funk, The Southern Sons on Trumpet.

[24] Increased used of apparent seventh chords (particularly added sixth chords) in late jubilee performances can also be observed in "Lover Come Back to Me" and "Careless Love" from Golden Gate Quartet, Golden Years (1949–1952), FD Music 152142, 1993; and "David and Goliath" from Jubilee 4, Greatest Spirituals, Quicksilver QSCD–1026, n.d.

Example 3. 12: "My God Is a Mighty Man," Southern Sons (1950)[25]


Medium swing
Tenor 1
Tenor 2
1
2
3
4
My God is a might -y might - y man
My God is a might - y might -y man
Baritone
Bass
E: " $I^{6}_{4\,2}$ "
$\flat VI^{dom\,4}_{\,2}$
" $I^{6}_{4\,3}$ "
$\flat VI^{dom\,4}_{\,3}$
(I said)
T1
T2
5
6
7
8
My God is a might - y man
He rules the seas and all of the land
B1
B2
I
V^{5}_{3}
V^{6}_{4}
I

Bass Voice

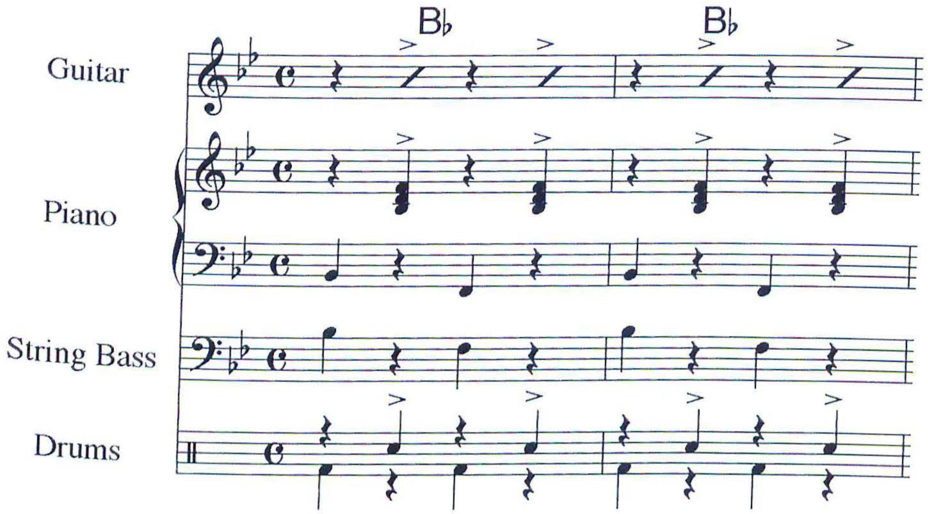
The bass voice is more consistently functional in the jubilee style than in the folk style. One reason for this is the influence of barbershop music, as observed in the introduction of "One Day When the Lord Will Call Me." Barbershop characteristics such as the ♭VI, the barbershop seventh and the swipe all contribute to more use of complete chords and, consequently, functional bass parts.

---

[25] Southern Sons Quartette. I Love the Lord. P-Vine (Trumpet Records) PCD-2186, 1991.

The influence of big band jazz is another reason for more functional bass parts in the jubilee style. Specifically, Chicago Style Dixieland from the 1920s provided the rhythmic model (example 3.13) that jubilee-style bass singers emulated and labeled "pump bass."[26]

Example 3. 13: Chicago Style Dixieland[27]



Example 3.13 is a simplified model of Chicago Style Dixieland, showing the string bass pulsing on the strong beats of the measure and emphasizing chord roots on the downbeat of every measure. Thus, the Dixieland influence is most significant because it consistently emphasizes chord roots.

The Mills Brothers were the first vocal quartet of any style to adopt the pump bass technique and employ it in the manner shown in example 3.14.

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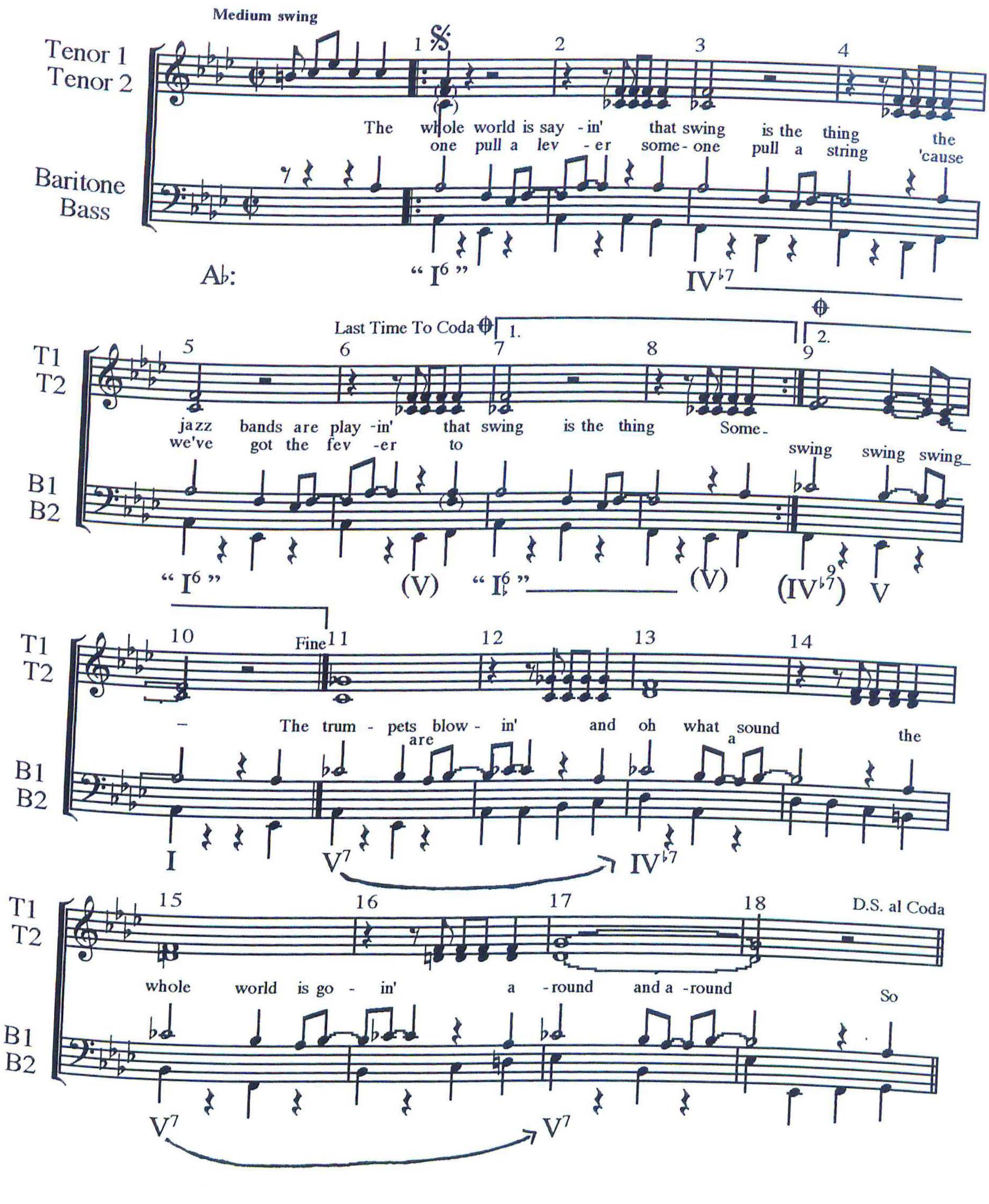
[26] Buchanan, 100, 108.

[27] Transcription copied from Tanner and Gerow, 57.

Example 3. 14: "Swing Is the Thing," First Chorus, Mills Brothers (1936)[28]

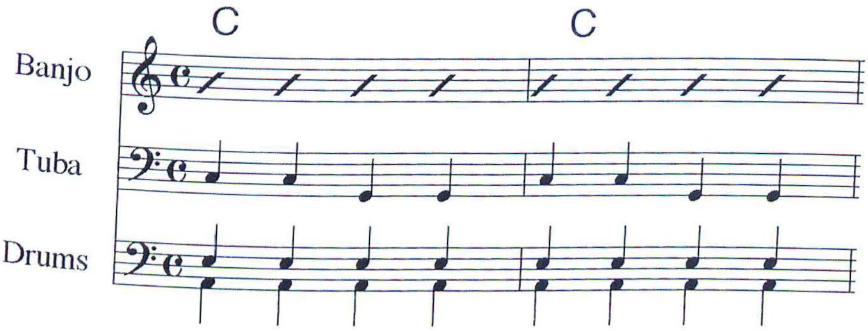

Medium swing
Tenor 1
Tenor 2
Baritone
Bass
T1
T2
B1
B2
The whole world is say - in' that swing is the thing the
one pull a lev - er some- one pull a string 'cause
jazz bands are play - in' that swing is the thing Some-
we've got the fev - er to
swing swing swing
The trum - pets blow - in' and oh what a sound the
are
whole world is go - in' a - round and a - round So
Ab:
"I6"
IV♭7
Last Time To Coda
1.
2.
(V)
"I♭6"
(IV♭7 9)
V
Fine
I
V7
D.S. al Coda

---

[28] The Mills Brothers.

Not only does the bass singer for the Mills Brothers emulate the rhythm and contour of the Chicago Style Dixieland bass, but he also imitates the sound of a tuba, utilizing the syllable "boom" and a rounded tone quality.[29] The tuba influence comes from the New Orleans Dixieland style (example 3.15), which preceded Chicago Style Dixieland.

Example 3. 15: New Orleans Dixieland[30]



As shown in example 3.15, the tuba pulses on every beat of the measure. This characteristic was discarded by vocal quartets. Thus, the Mills Brothers combined the tuba sound of New Orleans Dixieland with the rhythm of the Chicago Style Dixieland string bass.[31]

---

[29] Several writers acknowledge the influence of the tuba on the Mills Brothers and subsequently on jubilee-style quartets. See, for instance, liner notes from The Mills Brothers, Famous Barber Shop Ballads, Decca DLP 5051, 1949; Peter A. Grendysa, booklet from The Golden Gate Quartet, Swing Down, Chariot, Columbia/Legacy CK 47131, 1991; and Buchanan, 108.

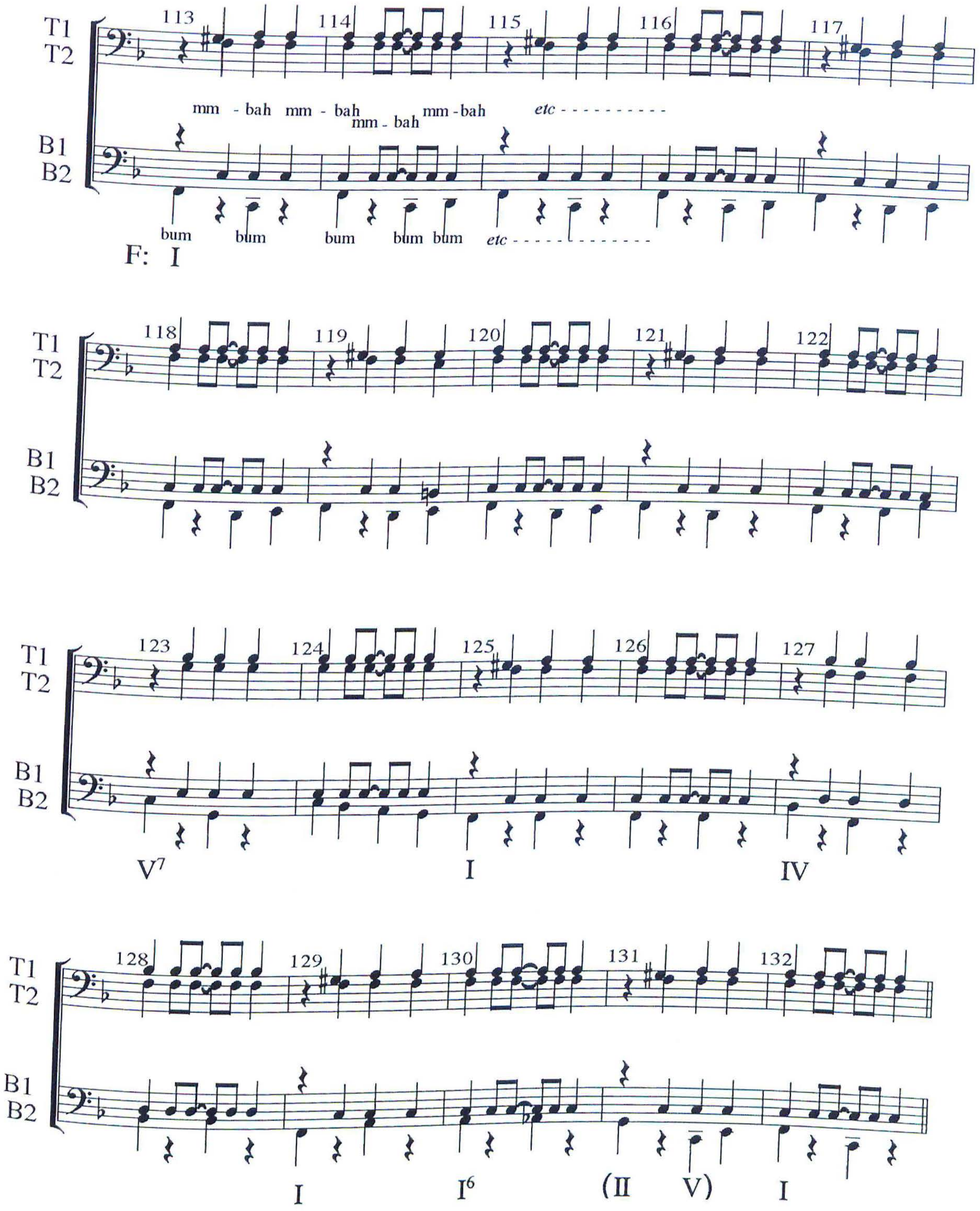
[30] Transcription copied from Tanner and Gerow, 57.

[31] To observe the influence of Dixieland jazz on jubilee quartets listen to Jazz Vol. 3 New Orleans. Smithsonian Folkways Records 02803, 1992.

With one major difference, the Golden Gate Quartet was the first jubilee-style quartet to employ the pump bass technique, following the lead of the Mills Brothers. The bass singer for the Mills Brothers tended to "pump" throughout an entire performance. In comparison, the Golden Gate Quartet, and the jubilee quartets that followed, reserved the pump bass technique for certain sections of the performance. The instrumental chorus of "One Day When the Lord Will Call Me" (example 3.16) shows an effective use of the pump bass technique, showcasing pulsing on the strong beats of the measure, emphasizing chord roots and employing the syllable "bum" (a variant of the tuba-simulated "boom").

In the folk style, the bass generally sings rhythmically with the upper voice parts throughout a performance with occasional lead-ins and fill-ins. The jubilee-style bass, on the other hand, often begins in rhythmic sync with the other voices and then switches to the pump bass technique at a prescribed point in the performance. Such is the case in "One Day When the Lord Will Call Me." Prior to the instrumental chorus, the rhythm of the voice parts is relatively uniform.

Example 3. 16: Pump Bass in Instrumental Chorus

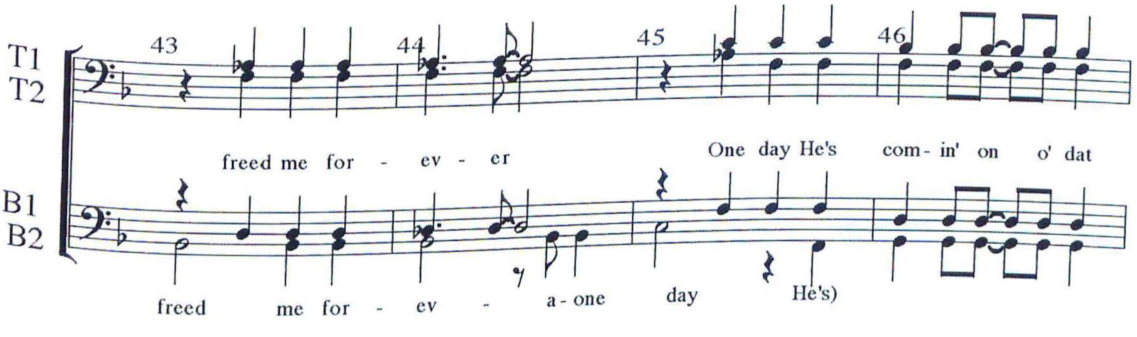

T1
T2
B1
B2
113
114
115
116
117
mm - bah mm - bah mm - bah mm -bah etc
bum bum bum bum bum etc
F: I
118
119
120
121
122
123
124
125
126
127
V7
I
IV
128
129
130
131
132
I
I6
(II V)
I

Meter and Rhythm

As previously observed, the folk style is characterized by tempo changes, pauses and ritards within sections of music. In jubilee-style performances, once a steady pulse is established, the rhythmic momentum rarely abates. Conversely, recitative-style introductions and endings are common in the jubilee style but not in the folk style. In "One Day When the Lord Will Call Me," the recitative-style introduction employs a four-beat feel while the pulsed sections use a two-beat feel. This is generally the case in performances that utilize the recitative-and-aria style format.[32]

The employment of swing eighths also distinguishes the jubilee from the folk style. This rhythmic feature is a significant development in black religious quartet singing, which recalls the transition from Dixieland to Swing in instrumental jazz. To emphasize this feel, many jubilee quartets added nonsense syllables that coincided with the latter note of the swing eighth figure as in the chorus of "One Day When the Lord Will Call Me" (example 3.17).

Example 3. 17: Swing Eighths


43
44
45
46
T1
T2
freed me for - ev - er
One day He's com- in' on o' dat
B1
B2
freed me for - ev - a - one day He's)

---

[32] For more recitative-and-aria style performances in the jubilee tradition listen to "I Hope I May Join the Band" (Norfolk Jubilee Quartet) from Gospel Quartets/1921–1942; "No Hiding Place" (Norfolk Jubilee Quartet) from Gospel Songs/1926–1942; "Massa's in the Cold Cold Ground" and "Ol' Man Mose" from The Golden Gate Quartet, Birth of a Legend; and "Look Away into Heaven" from Golden Gate Quartet, Golden Years.

At the end of measure 44, the bass part adds the syllable "a" as a swing eighth pick-up note to the beginning of the word "one." Likewise, at the end of measure 46, all the voice parts add the syllable "o" to the dialect-inflected "dat." These added eighth notes, which occur throughout the performance, serve to emphasize the swing feel and heighten the sense of forward motion.

Another feature that works in combination with swing eighths and nonsense syllables to affect, is the use of snatched words. When applied to swing eighths and syncopated figures, snatching creates a percussive effect that further intensifies the rhythmic nature of a given performance. The Southern Sons use this technique to good effect in "One Day When the Lord Will Call Me." The Golden Gate Quartet, the originators of the technique, was also quite adept at snatching.[33] A member of the quartet once described the technique:

> What we tried to create was what I used to call "vocal percussion." It was just like a drum but it had notes to it, it had lyrics to it you see. And you had different beats, you had different accents. Like a bunch of guys beating a tom-tom somewhere, and that's what it had to sound like. It all had to be done sharply and together, along with the harmony, and we sang simple chords. We were trying to sing chords that sounded good to the ear.[34]

The use of riff patterns, a technique borrowed from big band music, is also a significant rhythmic feature of the jubilee style. The process by which big bands learn riff-style arrangements (also called head arrangements) is also descriptive of riff patterns in jubilee-style performances, thus verifying the influence of the former on the latter. A former Count Basie band member describes the learning process:

> Basie would start out and vamp a little, set a tempo, and call out, "That's it!" He'd set a rhythm for the saxes first, and Earl Warren would pick that

---

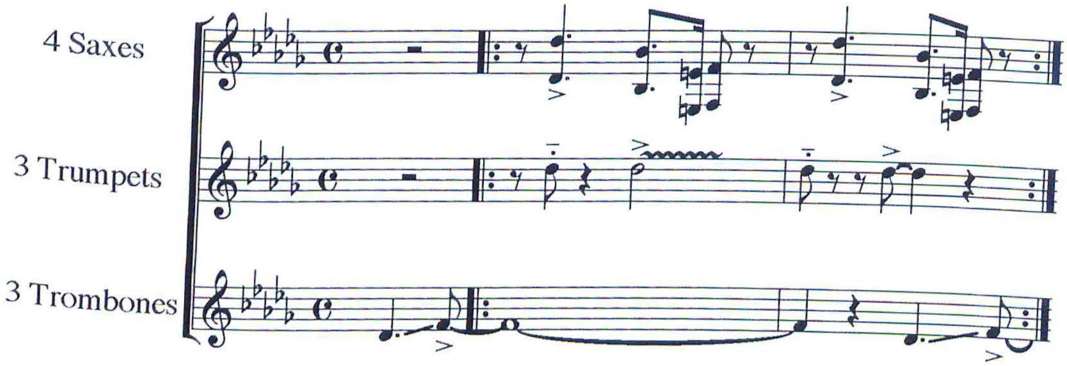
[33] The Golden Gate Quartet uses snatching consistently on the double-compact disc recording Golden Gate Quartet, Gospel 1937–1941, Frémeaux & Associés FA 002, 1992.

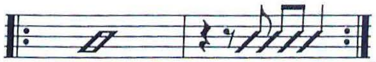
[34] Grendysa, 6.

> up and lead the saxes. Then he'd set one for the bones and we'd pick that up. Now it's our rhythm against theirs. The third rhythm would be for the trumpets.[35]

Inherent in the above description is the notion of texture developed by the layering of rhythmic or riff patterns to create a riff-style arrangement, as shown in example 3.18.

Example 3. 18: "One O'Clock Jump," Count Basie Band (1937)[36]



As with the pump bass technique, the Mills Brothers were first to imitate this layered structure with voices, which was then infused into the jubilee tradition. To compare, example 3.19 returns to the Mills Brothers' performance of "Swing Is the Thing" to show their groundbreaking use of riff patterns. The baritone carries the melody, and set against the rhythm of the melody is the following two-measure rhythmic pattern in the first and second tenor parts: . A third rhythmic pattern is the pump bass that pulses on the strong beats of the measure.

Further support for big band music as the basis for riffs is the way jubilee quartets imitate the sound of big band instruments. This was another innovation of the Mills

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[35] Floyd, 167–68.

[36] Transcription copied from Barry Kernfeld, ed. New Grove Dictionary of Jazz (London: Macmillan; New York: Grove's Dictionaries of Music, 1988), s.v. "Riff," by J. Bradford Robinson. For a recorded performance of this example listen to Count Basie, Old Manuscripts: Broadcast Transcriptions 1944–45, Music & Arts CD–884, 1995.

Brothers.[37] In example 3.19, the tenors imitate the sound of trumpets with harmon mutes.[38] This is accomplished by singing with the hands cupped over the mouth.[39] Additionally, the bass employs the pump bass technique, imitating the sound of a tuba, and the baritone sings the melody.

Once adopted by jubilee quartets, many textural variations in riff patterns were used, utilizing many combinations of imitated instruments. Example 3.20 shows one such variation in the instrumental chorus of "One Day When the Lord Will Call Me."

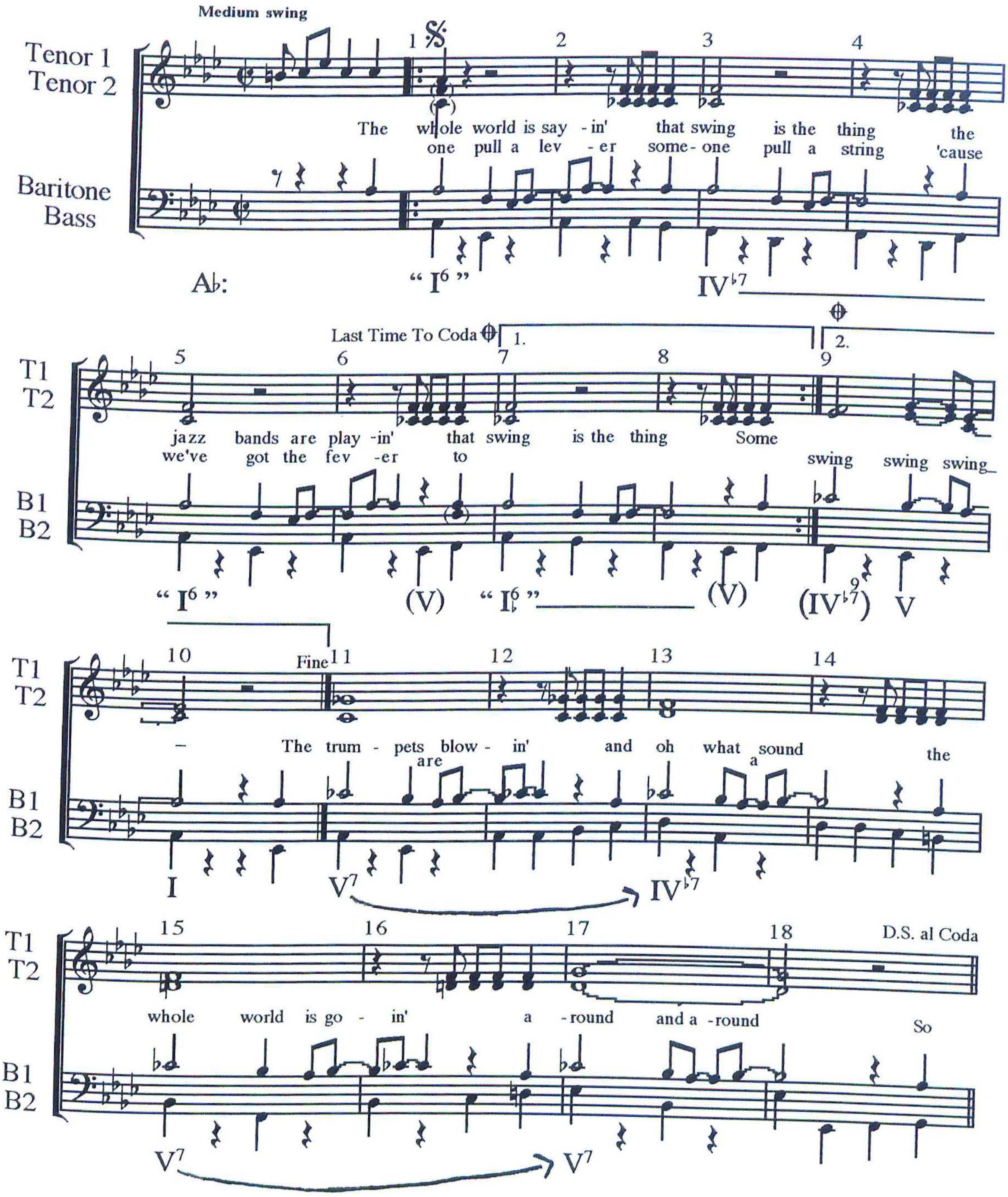
---

[37] Liner notes from Famous Barber Shop Ballads.

[38] Mutes for brass instruments like the trumpet, are devices that are inserted into the bell of the instrument, which affect volume and tone color. The harmon or wa-wa mute for trumpets and trombones is popular in jazz. For more on various mutes for brass and their effects see Samuel Adler, The Study of Orchestration, (New York: Norton, 1982), 250–53.

[39] Liner notes from Famous Barber Shop Ballads.

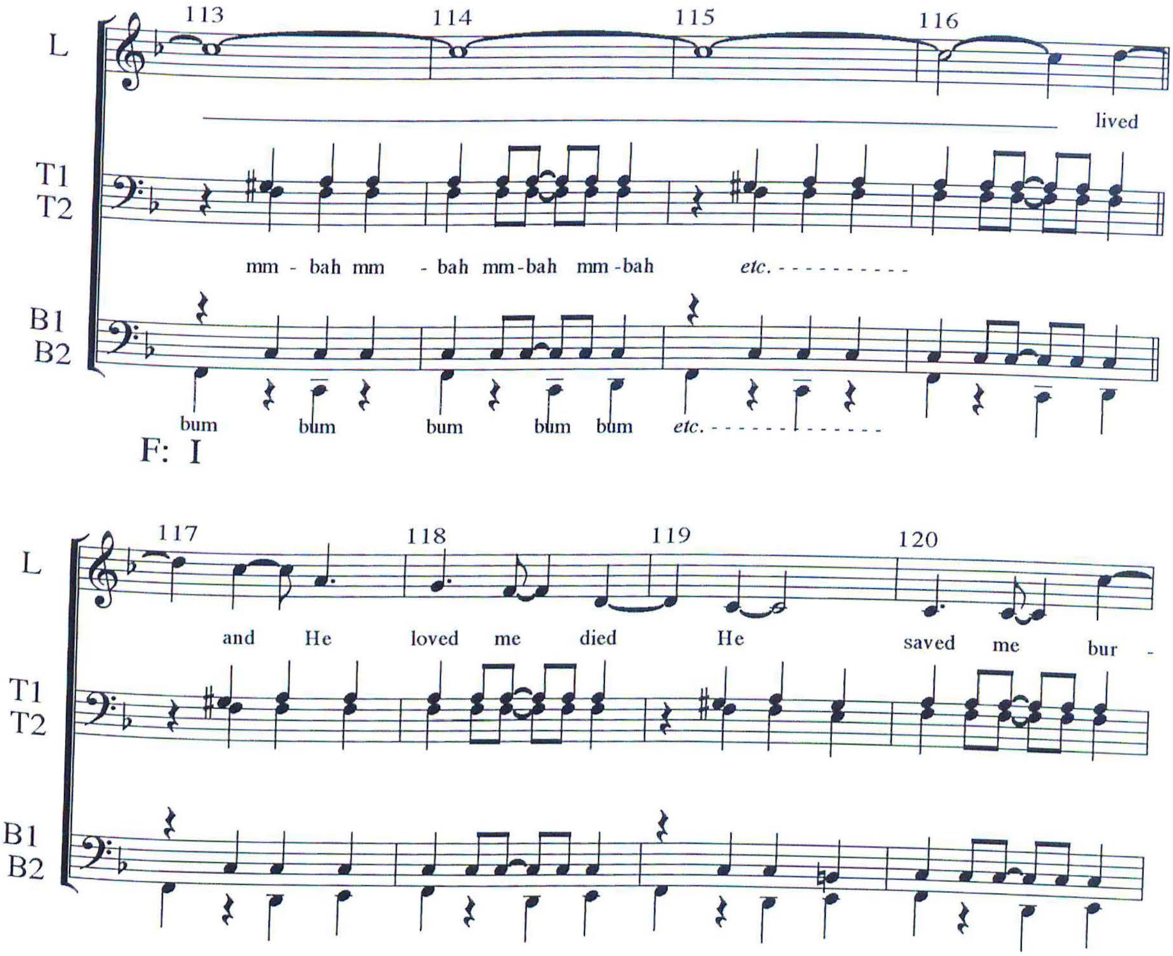
Example 3. 19: "Swing Is the Thing," First Chorus (1936)[40]

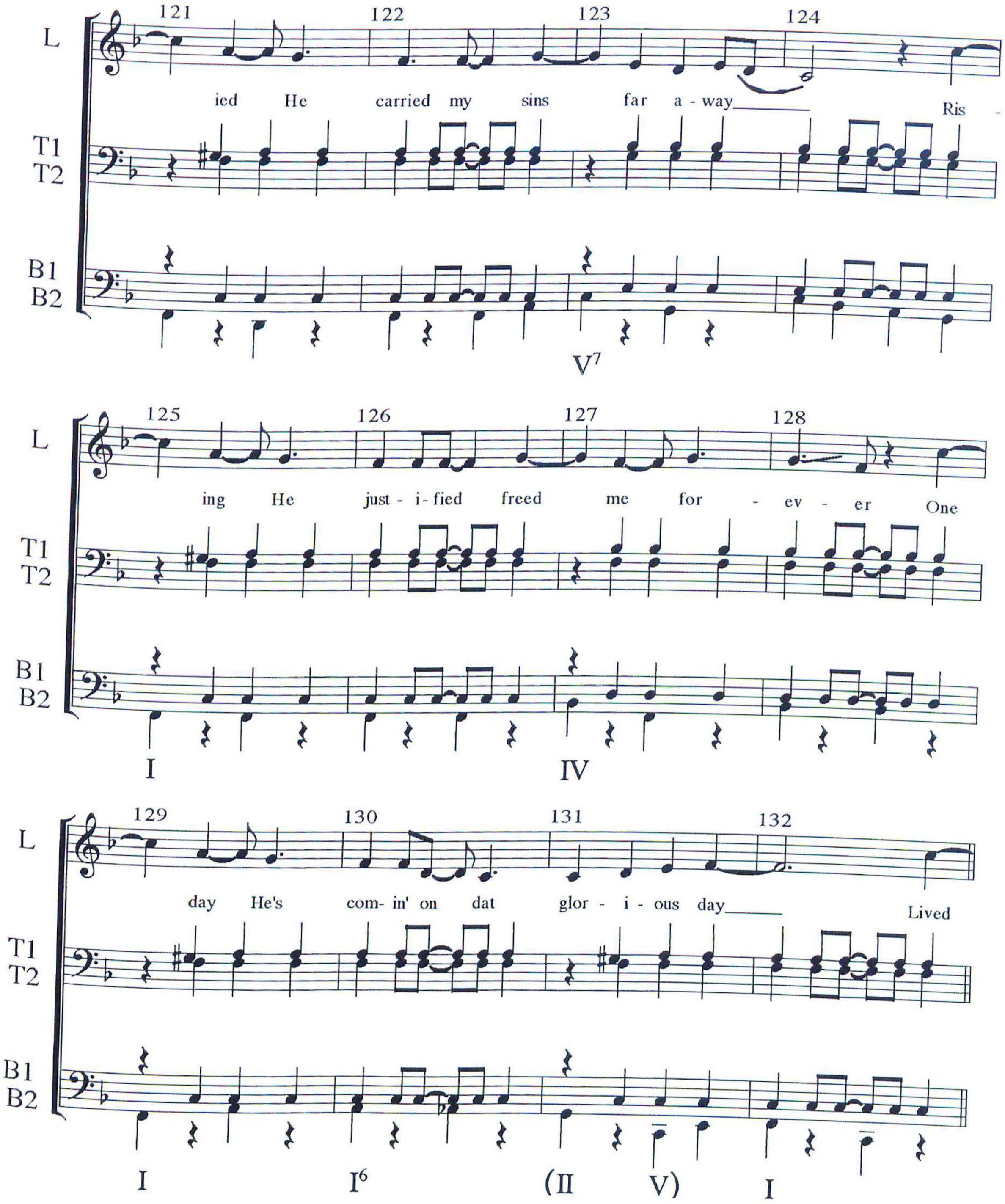

Medium swing
Tenor 1
Tenor 2
Baritone
Bass
The whole world is say - in' that swing is the thing the
one pull a lev - er some- one pull a string 'cause
A♭:
"I6"
IV♭7
Last Time To Coda
1.
2.
T1
T2
B1
B2
jazz bands are play -in' that swing is the thing Some
we've got the fev -er to swing swing swing_
"I6"
(V)
"I6"
(V)
(IV♭9/7)
V
Fine
The trum - pets blow - in' and oh what sound the
are a
I
V7
IV♭7
D.S. al Coda
whole world is go - in' a - round and a - round So
V7
V7

---

[40] The Mills Brothers.

Example 3. 20: Instrumental Chorus


L
T1
T2
B1
B2
113
114
115
116
lived
mm - bah mm - bah mm-bah mm-bah etc.
bum bum bum bum bum etc.
F: I
117
118
119
120
and He loved me died He saved me bur -


L
T1
T2
B1
B2
121
122
123
124
ied He carried my sins far a - way Ris -
V7
125
126
127
128
ing He just - i - fied freed me for - ev - er One
I
IV
129
130
131
132
day He's com- in' on dat glor - i - ous day Lived
I
I6
(II V)
I

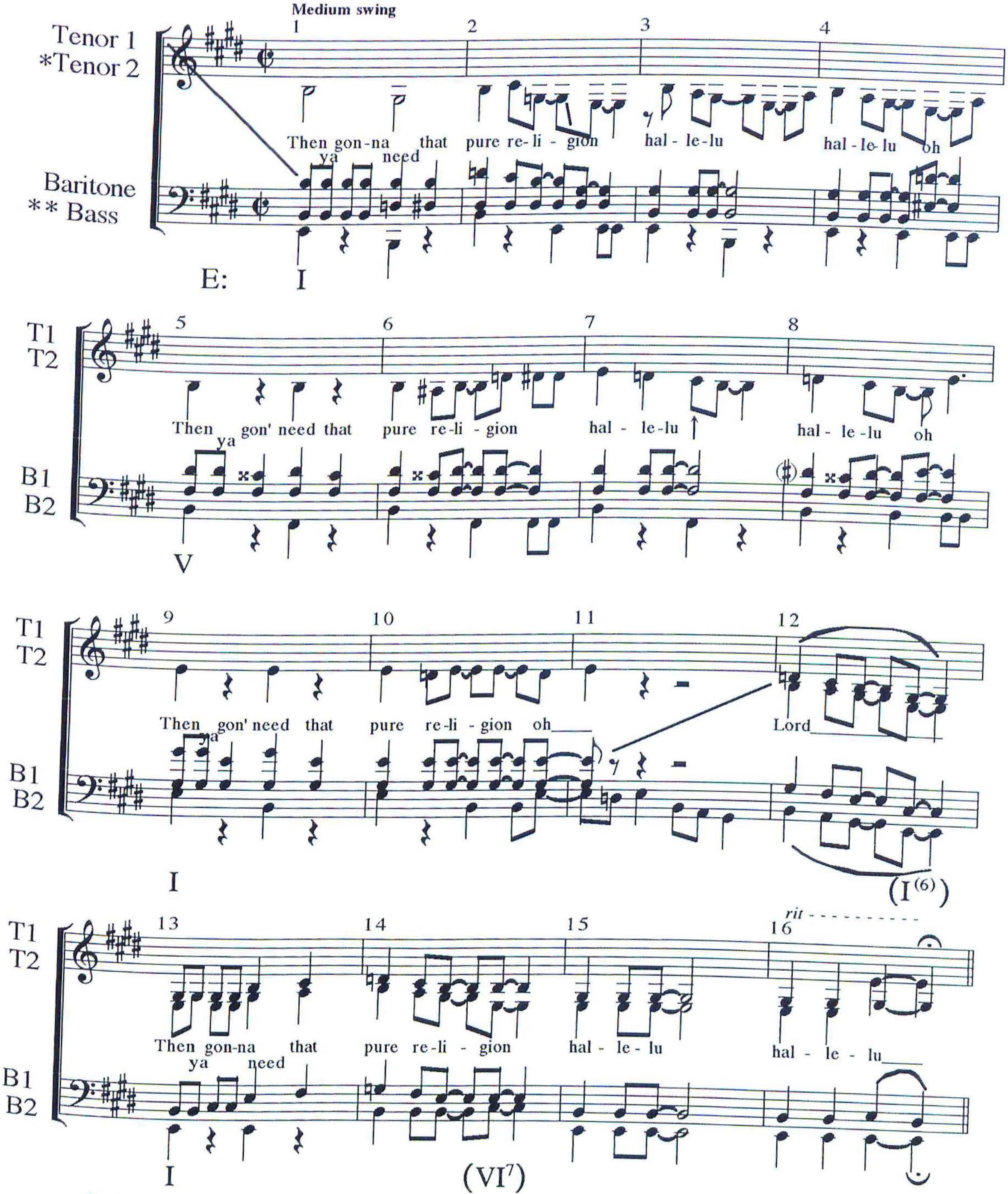
Three of the voice parts (T1, T2 and B1) establish a two-measure riff pattern. The nonsense syllables they sing, "mm-bah," are onomatopoetic, simulating the sound of big band brass manipulated by wa-wa mutes. An added fifth voice (L) provides the text of the chorus in the context of an alternate melody. This melody takes on the character of a jazz solo. It is based on an F pentatonic scale, which is completely spelled out in the opening six notes. No doubt this contributes to its improvised quality, as jazz artists often use pentatonic scales as an improvisational tool.[41] The bass in example 3.20 supplies a third rhythmic layer in this riff pattern with the pump bass technique. The bass uses the syllable "bum," capturing the feel and sound of a tuba.

Example 3.21 presents another textural variation of the instrumental riff style, this time by the Golden Gate Quartet, the first jubilee-style quartet to adopt the technique. As in the previous two examples, example 3.21 shows a three-layer riff pattern. The second tenor assumes the role of jazz soloist, improvising an alternate melody while imitating a trumpet with a harmon mute. First tenor and baritone sing their normal harmony parts and provide the text. The bass customarily pumps on the syllable "bum."

---

[41] Ramon Ricker, Pentatonic Scales for Jazz Improvisations (Lebanon, Ind.: Studio P/R, Inc., 1975), 1.

Example 3. 21: "Pure Religion," Instrumental Chorus, Golden Gate Quartet (1938)[42]


Medium swing
Tenor 1
*Tenor 2
Baritone
** Bass
T1
T2
B1
B2
Then ya gon-na need that pure re-li - gion hal - le-lu hal - le- lu oh
Then ya gon' need that pure re-li - gion hal - le-lu hal - le-lu oh
Then ya gon' need that pure re-li - gion oh Lord
Then ya gon-na need that pure re-li - gion hal - le - lu hal - le - lu
rit
E:
I
V
I
(I(6))
I
(VI7)

* Imitate trumpet with harmon mute
** Imitate plucked string bass

---

[42] Gospel Quartets/1921–1942.

Call-and-Response

Generally, the call-and-response technique provides textural contrast in the otherwise highly homophonic verse-chorus format associated with black religious quartet performances. In "One Day When the Lord Will Call Me," the instrumental-style riff substitutes for the call-and-response technique and is comparable to the clanka lanka riff of the folk style in this regard. Big band-style riffs derived from the call-and-response technique initially[43] and this, of course, demonstrates the long-standing tradition of mutually borrowed ideas between instrumental and vocal genres. Then jubilee quartets borrowed the big bands' technique as a substitute for the original call-and-response.

In "One Day When the Lord Will Call Me," the verse and standard chorus contain the same harmonic plan. Also, the second tenor's melody is fundamentally the same in both sections and there is no use of call-and-response. After three consecutive statements of the homogenous verse and chorus, the instrumental chorus containing the previously described instrumental riff pattern provides melodic, rhythmic, textural and timbral contrast.

A vamp precedes the beginning of the instrumental chorus. Shown in example 3.22, it is significant for two reasons.

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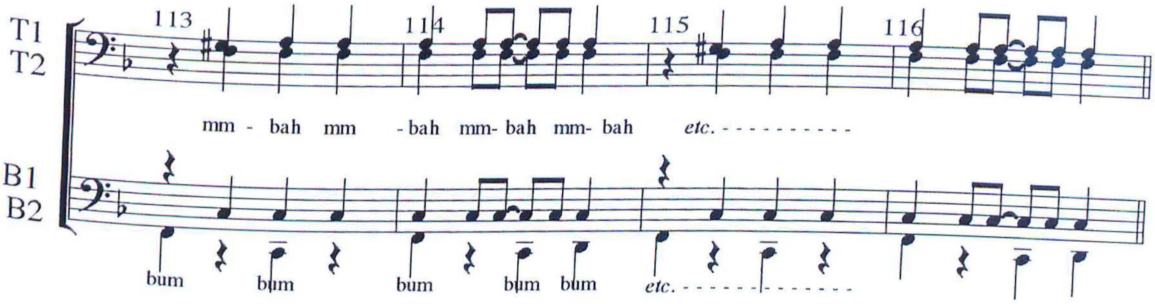
[43] Schuller, 28.

Example 3. 22: Vamp



First, it establishes the two-measure riff pattern (measures 113–114) that will repeat throughout the section. Second, the vamp is yet another big band derived technique. As such, it serves the same purpose as in a big band arrangement—as an introduction or interlude before an improvised solo. As shown in example 3.22, the vamp of the riff pattern continues for four measures before the start of the instrumental chorus.[44]

Though the instrumental-style riff developed from the call-and-response technique, it did not supplant this basic form in the jubilee style. Furthermore, because the instrumental riff style began with the Golden Gate Quartet in the 1930s, there were some jubilee quartets established well before then that never employed the technique. The most popular of these earlier groups were the Silver Leaf Quartet, Norfolk Jubilee Quartet and the Selah Jubilee Singers.[45] Following is Doug Seroff's characterization of these groups:

> The classic straight gospel quartets … tended to de-emphasize rhythm in favor of masterfully rendered harmony, often showcased in extended chords, or *moans*. Occasionally, this emphasis on harmony manifested itself to the utter exclusion of rhythmic elements.[46]

---

[44] See example 3.20 for the entire instrumental chorus including the introductory vamp.

[45] The Silver Leaf Quartet originated around 1919 and started a different trend of riff patterns with the clanka lanka figure. See Boyer, How Sweet the Sound, 34. The Norfolk Jubilee Quartet originated sometime before 1921 and the Selah Jubilee Singers around 1926. See Buchanan, 76–88.

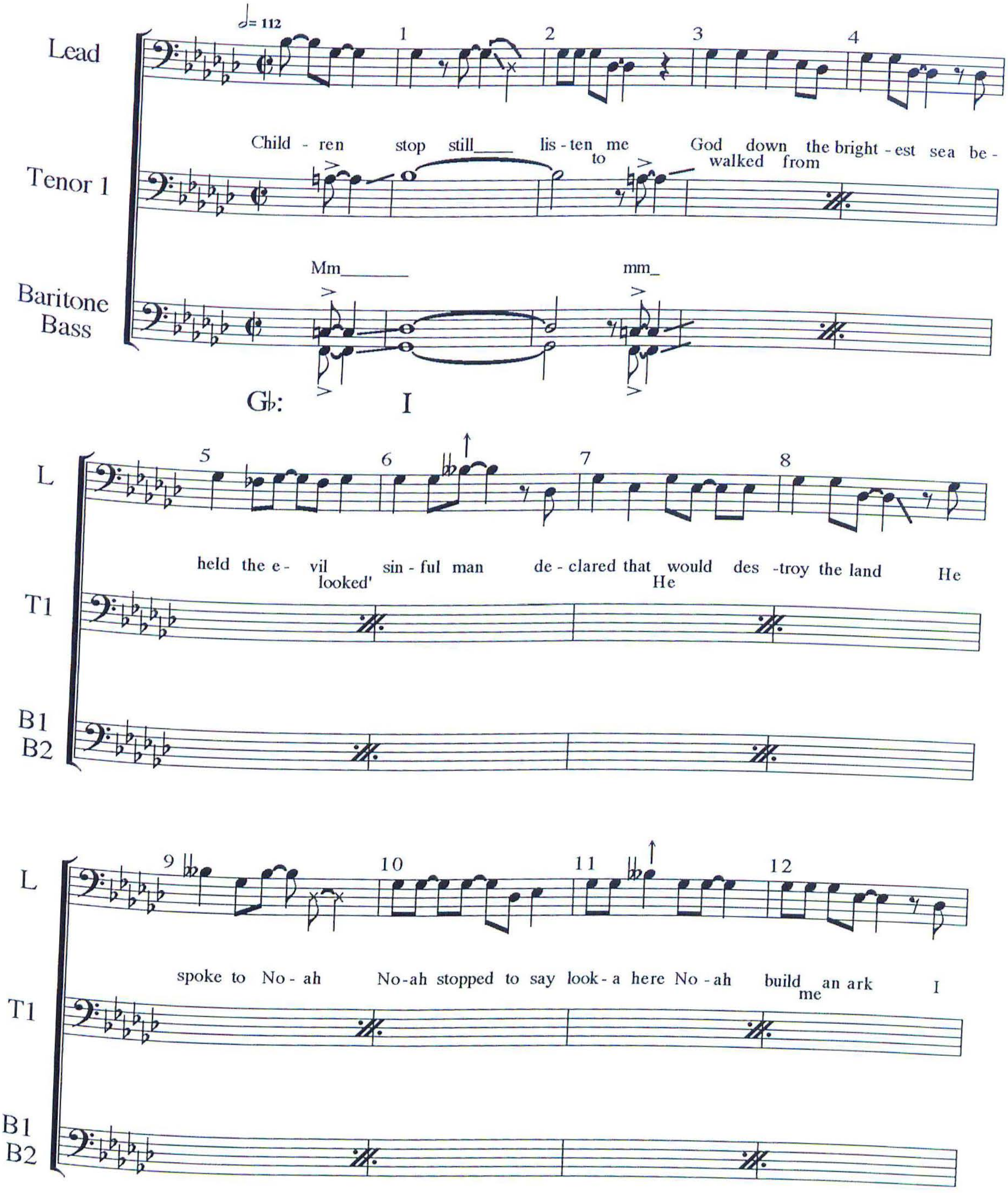
[46] Seroff, 28.

The “narrative” style is another form of call-and-response that originated in the jubilee tradition.[47] Though performed almost exclusively by the Golden Gate Quartet, the popularity of this group and the influence of the narrative style on subsequent gospel-style quartets warrant an examination of its characteristics. A storytelling lead singer, accompanied by background voices in a riff pattern, characterizes this style. The lead/accompaniment structure distinguishes the narrative style from the layered approach of the instrumental riff style and recalls the clanka lanka riff style—perhaps its folk-style equivalent. Example 3.23 shows a portion of a Golden Gate Quartet performance that employs the narrative style.

---

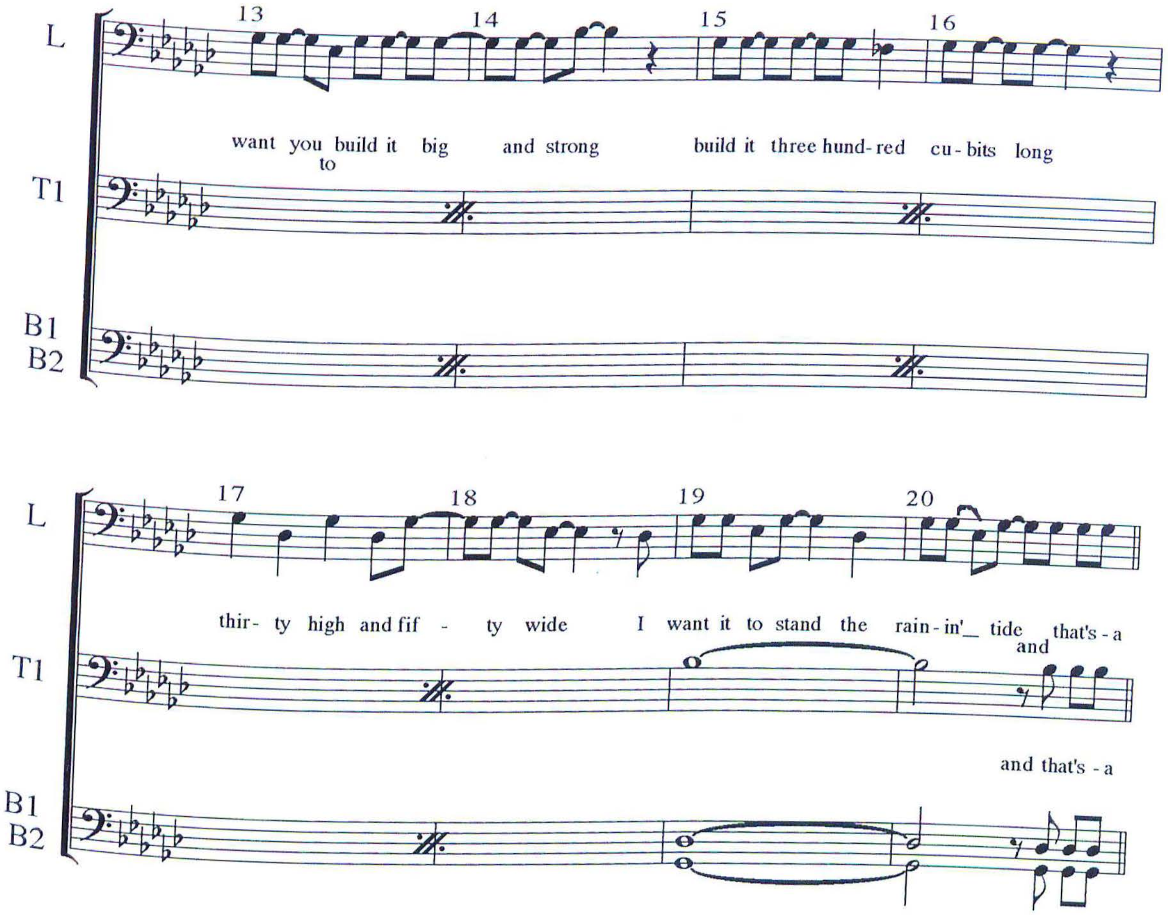
[47] The text in the narrative style most often relates a Bible story (usually from the Old Testament) in a humorous and colloquial manner. See Buchanan, 125.

Example 3. 23: "Noah," First Verse, Golden Gate Quartet (1939)[48]


Lead
Tenor 1
Baritone Bass
T1
B1 B2
L
♩= 112
Child - ren stop still___ lis - ten to me God walked down from the bright - est sea be -
held the e - vil looked' sin - ful man de - clared that He would des -troy the land He
spoke to No - ah No-ah stopped to say look - a here No - ah build me an ark I
Mm______ mm_
G♭: I

---

[48] The Golden Gate Quartet, Their Early Years 1937–1939.


L
T1
B1
B2
13
14
15
16
want you build it big and strong build it three hund-red cu-bits long
to
17
18
19
20
thir- ty high and fif - ty wide I want it to stand the rain-in'_ tide that's-a
and
and that's-a

Along with a voice-part structure similar to that of the clanka lanka riff style, the narrative style contributes several innovations in the development of black religious quartet singing. For one, the melody is conversational and improvisatory. In example 3.23, the conversational quality manifests itself in the way the melody centers around a single pitch (tonic note G♭^{3}), and simulates the inflections of speech with melodic contouring. Notice the way some four-measure groups conclude with downward motion (measures 4, 8 and 12), recalling the natural fall or cadence of the speaking voice that occurs in conversation. Occasionally the downward motion complements a symbolic rise in the speaking voice as in the second four-measure group, which employs the following text:

> Beheld the evil looked' sinful man,
> Declared that He would destroy the land.

The melody that corresponds to this couplet ascends to a peak on the word "man" in measure 6. In response, the concluding line of the couplet ends with a descent to "land" (measure 8)—the rhyming counterpart of "man." The melody is also improvisatory, as its rhythm and contour never repeat verbatim.

Another innovation of the narrative style is limited harmonic progression, which encourages melodic improvisation by the lead singer. In "Noah" (example 3.23), a single chord (the tonic), sung by the background voices, comprises the harmony for the entire performance.[49] The single chord combines with the unchanging rhythm of the accompanying riff pattern to create the feeling of suspended motion. It is the improvisatory lead singer who sustains musical interest.

The feeling of suspended motion is intensified by the extended length of the verses in "Noah." Instead of the traditional eight- or sixteen-measure period structure, the verse in example 3.23 is twenty measures. A second verse (not shown in example 3.23) is thirty-six measures.[50] Extended formal structures, limited harmonic progressions, riff patterns and an improvisatory lead all point ahead to the gospel period where these features become commonplace and combine to form the gospel-style vamp.[51]

Number and Function of Voice Parts

Developments such as the narrative style or the instrumental riff style did not affect the number of voice parts in the quartets of the jubilee style. Like folk quartets, most jubilee quartets consisted of four singers, who adhered to traditional quartet voice parts. Only two of the better known groups contained more than four singers—the Selah Jubilee Singers and the Southern Sons. The Selah Jubilee Singers consisted of six singers,[52] while the Southern Sons included from four to six singers.[53] Like the Southern Sons, the Selah Jubilee Singers originated in the northern region of the United States but had strong ties to the Tidewater area.[54] Their roster included two former Norfolk Jubilee Quartet members and a former Golden Gate Quartet member.[55] Both groups adhered to the traditional four-part texture, which required voices to either lay out or double a voice part.[56]

---

[49] The syncopated F chord in the riff pattern is in the service of the tonic G♭ chord.

[50] For more examples of the narrative style listen to "Golden Gate Gospel Train" and "Sampson" from The Golden Gate Quartet: Their Early Years 1937–1939; and "Run for a Long Time" and "Noah Had a Hammer" from Jubilee 4, Greatest Spirituals.

[51] Research for this study uncovered a narrative-style performance titled "Book of the Seven Seals" from The Prewar Gospel Story: 1902–1944, Best of Gospel Records 21, 1995, that was attributed to the Dixie Hummingbirds. Close scrutiny of the phrasing style and timbre of the lead, blend of the group vocals, and other related characteristics point to the Golden Gate Quartet as the more likely artist in this performance.

In "One Day When the Lord Will Call Me," the Southern Sons break with convention, twice expanding to a five-voice texture. Each time, the added fifth voice assumes a different function and foreshadows future developments in the genre. First, the added voice provides an improvised alternate melody accompanied by traditional quartet parts. Example 3.24 shows the added voice in this role in the opening four measures of the instrumental chorus.

---

[52] Boyer, How Sweet the Sound, 163.

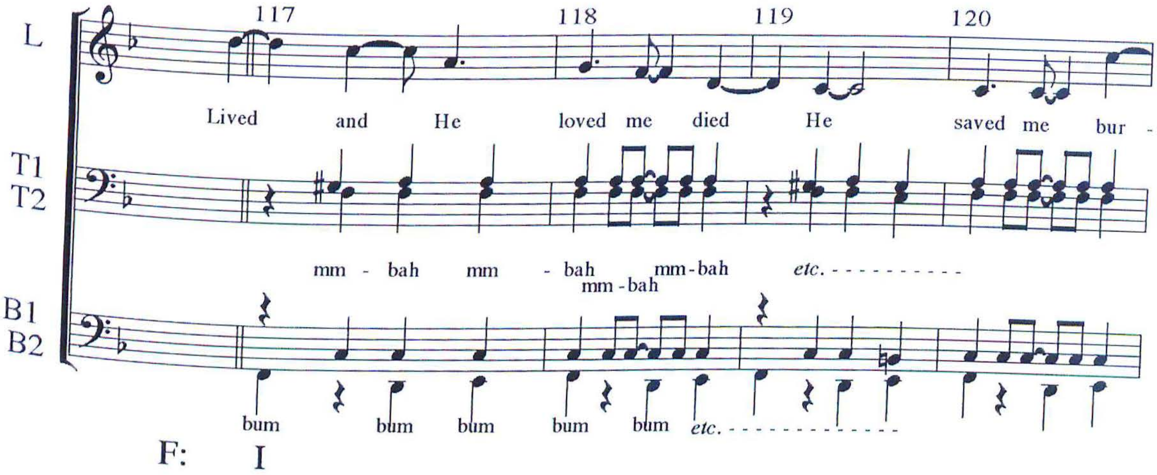
[53] The Southern Sons consisted of five members when they recorded "One Day When the Lord Will Call Me." See Buzelin, booklet from Gospel Quartets/1921–1942; and Funk, The Southern Sons on Trumpet.

[54] Boyer, How Sweet the Sound, 163.

[55] Ibid., 164.

[56] Lornell, 4.

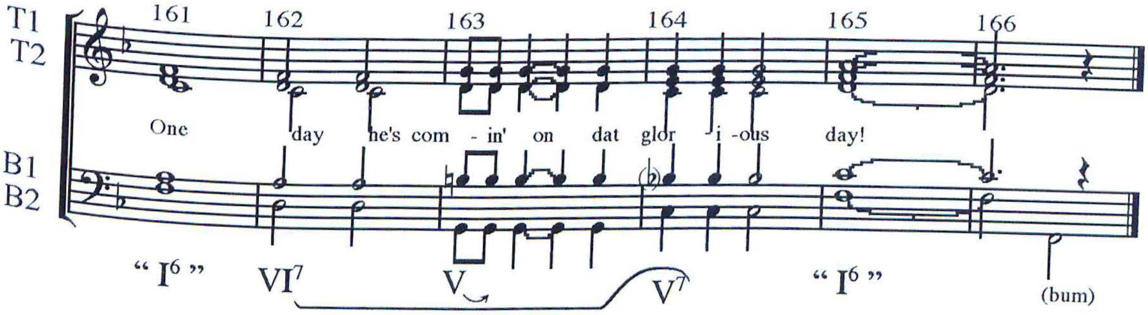
Example 3. 24: Fifth Voice as Lead


L
T1
T2
B1
B2
117
118
119
120
Lived and He loved me died He saved me bur -
mm - bah mm - bah mm-bah mm-bah etc.
bum bum bum bum bum etc.
F: I

This function of the fifth voice part foreshadows the gospel style, where a prominent lead part accompanied by traditional quartet parts is a consistent and salient feature.

The other function assumed by the added fifth voice is as a chord member, as shown in example 3.25.

Example 3. 25: Fifth Voice as Chord Member


T1
T2
B1
B2
161
162
163
164
165
166
One day he's com - in' on dat glor i -ous day!
"I⁶"
VI⁷
V
V⁷
"I⁶"
(bum)

In the climactic ending of "One Day When the Lord Will Call Me," the added voice part provides the added sixth in measures 161 and 166. In measure 162, the added voice repeats its note (D^4) as do all the upper voices. D^4 continues as common tone in measure

163, doubling the second tenor part, and moves down by step to C^4 in measure 164 to double the root of the dominant chord. This notion of supplementing an original four-part arrangement with added notes prefigures the more recent neo-jubilee trend of quartet singing exploited by the group TAKE 6. In the neo-jubilee trend, TAKE 6 consistently adds notes to a pre-existing four-part arrangement, expanding the texture to six or more parts.

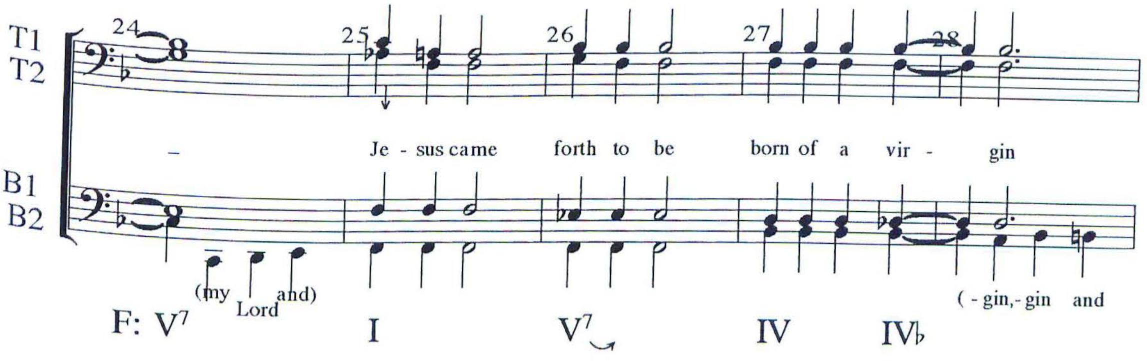
Variation Techniques

As in the folk style, variation in the jubilee style occurs in the form of melodic nuances that may occasionally alter local harmonies but do not affect the large-scale harmonic structure.

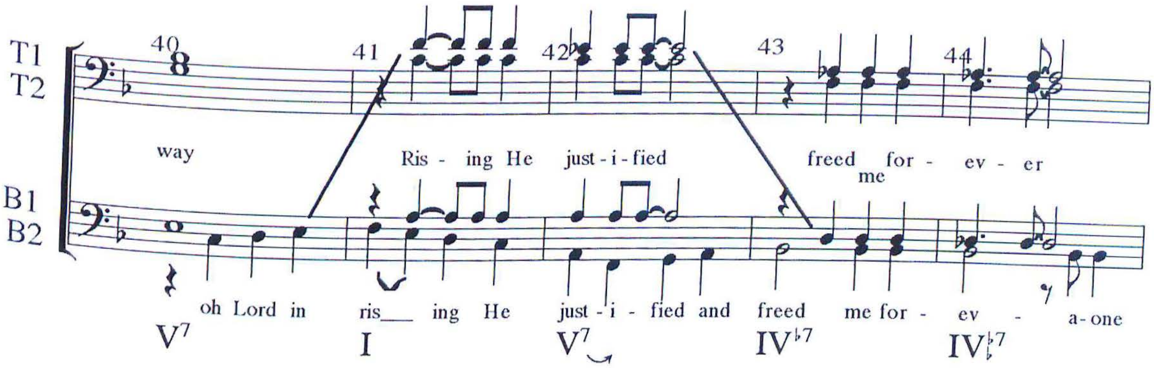
In "One Day When the Lord Will Call Me," the verse and chorus contain the same harmonic plan. Subsequently, the baritone part occasionally creates melodic variation in the second phrase of this repetitive structure. The variations add musical interest, sometimes altering local harmonies as in example 3.26.

Example 3. 26: Melodic Variation in Baritone Part

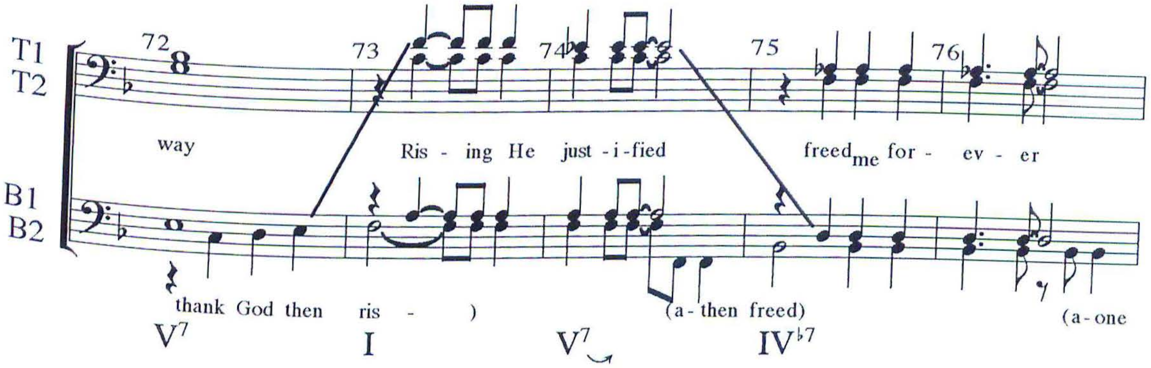
(a)



(b)


T1
T2
B1
B2
40
41
42
43
44
way
Ris - ing He just - i - fied
freed me for - ev - er
oh Lord in
ris___ ing He
just - i - fied and
freed me for - ev - a-one
V7
I
V7
IV♭7
IV♭7

(c)


T1
T2
B1
B2
72
73
74
75
76
way
Ris - ing He just - i - fied
freed me for - ev - er
thank God then
ris -)
(a - then freed)
(a-one
V7
I
V7
IV♭7

In the three instances of example 3.26, harmonic progression begins with a dominant seventh chord in the key of F major. It then moves from tonic to subdominant via an applied dominant. The melodic line of the baritone is the same in examples 3.26a and 3.26b, F—E♭—D—D♭. However, the voice-leading of the baritone part transfers to the uppermost position in measures 41–42 of example 3.26b, signaled by the large ascending leap of the three upper voices at the beginning of measure 41 and a complementary descending leap at measure 43. This form of variation, through part displacement, can also be observed in performances by the Mills Brothers, whose work, of course, greatly influenced jubilee-style groups.[57] Another common type of melodic variation occurs in example 3.26c where the baritone's voice leading is the same as that in example 3.26b. However, in example 3.26c, the baritone line stops one note short, ending on D^3 rather than D♭^{3}—the diatonic, rather than lowered, third of the chord. Consequently, the local harmony changes from a minor seventh chord in measure 44 to a dominant seventh chord in measure 76.

---

[57] Compare, for instance, the first chorus from the Mills Brothers performance of "Swing Is the Thing" (example 3.14) with the third chorus (example 3.9). The voice leading of the first tenor in example 3.14 moves to the baritone position in example 3.9.

Summary

One of the most notable developments in the jubilee style of quartet singing is the influence of barbershop music. This influence manifests itself in increased use of seventh chords (most notably barbershop sevenths), swipes and ♭VI. Most often, these barbershop-style characteristics occur in recitative-style introductions and endings, as observed in "One Day When the Lord Will Call Me" and other examples cited in this chapter.

The influence of big band jazz caused an increase in the use of added dissonance. Apparent seventh chords (the added sixth chord in particular) occurred sparingly initially, but with more frequency near the end of the jubilee period. In the 1930s, well over a decade after the start of the jubilee period, the Golden Gate Quartet began to employ another big band technique—the instrumental riff style, which included layered riff patterns, imitation horn sounds, improvised passages in the style of a jazz soloist and a pump bass. Although it did not supplant the normative call-and-response technique, the instrumental riff style became a viable alternative as in "One Day When the Lord Will Call Me." In addition, swing eighths became common in jubilee-style performances. Further, in "One Day When the Lord Will Call Me," a jazz vamp introduces the riff-style instrumental chorus.

The narrative style, especially popular in Golden Gate Quartet performances, is to the jubilee style what the clanka lanka riff is to the folk style. It represents development of the call-and-response technique and, like the clanka lanka riff, promotes a prominent lead singer, which portends the gospel style of quartet singing.

The influence of jazz and barbershop music encouraged more consistent use of complete chords than in the concurrent folk style. However, authentic cadences are often similarly incomplete, although more from the avoidance of the dominant chord than from incomplete chords. This results in a pattern of applied dominant-to-tonic authentic cadences. “One Day When the Lord Will Call Me” shows another common characteristic—harmonic retrogression at cadence points, where the components of a complete authentic cadence are present but not in normal sequence. Thus, $\mathrm{V}\curvearrowright\mathrm{V}—\mathrm{V}—\mathrm{I}$ becomes $\mathrm{V}—\mathrm{V}\curvearrowright\mathrm{V}—\mathrm{I}$.

As in the folk style, a four-voice texture is typical in the jubilee style. “One Day When the Lord Will Call Me” is exceptional, twice expanding to a five-voice texture. Each time, it foreshadows future developments in the quartet tradition. In the instrumental chorus, an added fifth voice improvises a solo over the traditional four-voice texture, which adumbrates the primary voice-part structure of the gospel style. The ending of the piece shows another use of the added fifth voice. It becomes a chord member by either supplying added dissonance or doubling a chord member. This points ahead to the neo-jubilee trend of using five- and six-part chord structures.

CHAPTER IV

"MARY DON'T YOU WEEP"

Characteristics of Gospel Style

The gospel period of quartet singing in the 1950s and 1960s evolved from the convergence and continued development of folk- and jubilee-style characteristics. For instance, gospel quartet performances make generous use of blue notes, and sevenths are the only regularly employed dissonance, as in the folk style. There is also, as in the folk style, less use of barbershop-style devices and less timbral variety (e.g., imitation horn sounds). Conversely, the gospel style makes more consistent use of the complete chord structures typical of the jubilee style. And though the bass voice utilizes the rhythmic pattern of the pump bass technique less frequently, it continues to emulate the sound of a tuba.

Perhaps the most significant development of the gospel period is the shift of emphasis from group to lead singing. Both the folk style clanka lanka riff and the jubilee narrative style were antecedents of this development. The shift of emphasis led to consistent use of more than four voice parts, since quartets began adding a fifth voice to maintain a four-voice structure as accompaniment to a prominent lead singer.[1] Further, it became common to have more than one lead singer in a performance, a practice that occasionally expanded the number of voice parts to as many as six.[2]

Meter is another thread that continues to develop in the gospel style. A four-beat feel per measure replaces the two-beat feel of the folk and jubilee styles; it is marked by a change from cut time to common time. Also, a nascent walking bass emphasizes every beat of the measure in the new common-time meter.

---

[1] Boyer, How Sweet the Sound, 97.

[2] Ibid.

The gospel-style vamp represents continued development of call-and-response. Essentially, it is an intensification of the use of riff patterns, providing a repetitive framework over which a prominent lead vocal improvises melodically and textually. Furthermore, the vamp extends the formal structure, whose length is generally controlled by the lead. The vamp also brings about a rise in the emotional pitch of a performance.

The Swan Silvertones originated in West Virginia with the name Four Harmony Kings. Shortly after relocating to Knoxville, Tennessee in the early 1940s, their name changed twice, first to the Silvertone Singers, and then to the Swan Silvertone Singers.[3] As their discography shows, a final modification in the name led to the Swan Silvertones. As the centerpiece of analysis in this chapter, their performance of "Mary Don't You Weep" clearly captures the essence of the gospel style. Recorded in 1959, it is their most popular performance.[4]

Transitional Style

The Swan Silvertones, like many groups of the gospel period, began as what one writer calls a "quasi-jubilee quartet."[5] The jubilee style of the Golden Gate Quartet was a major influence on these early gospel-style quartets. As Heilbut notes, "Some of the hardest [i.e., hard-line] gospel quartets consider the Gates their favorites."[6] This transitional style, which was most prevalent during the years 1946–50, featured jubilee-style characteristics, but with an evolving prominent lead singer. Example 4.1 is an excerpt from a quasi-jubilee-style performance.

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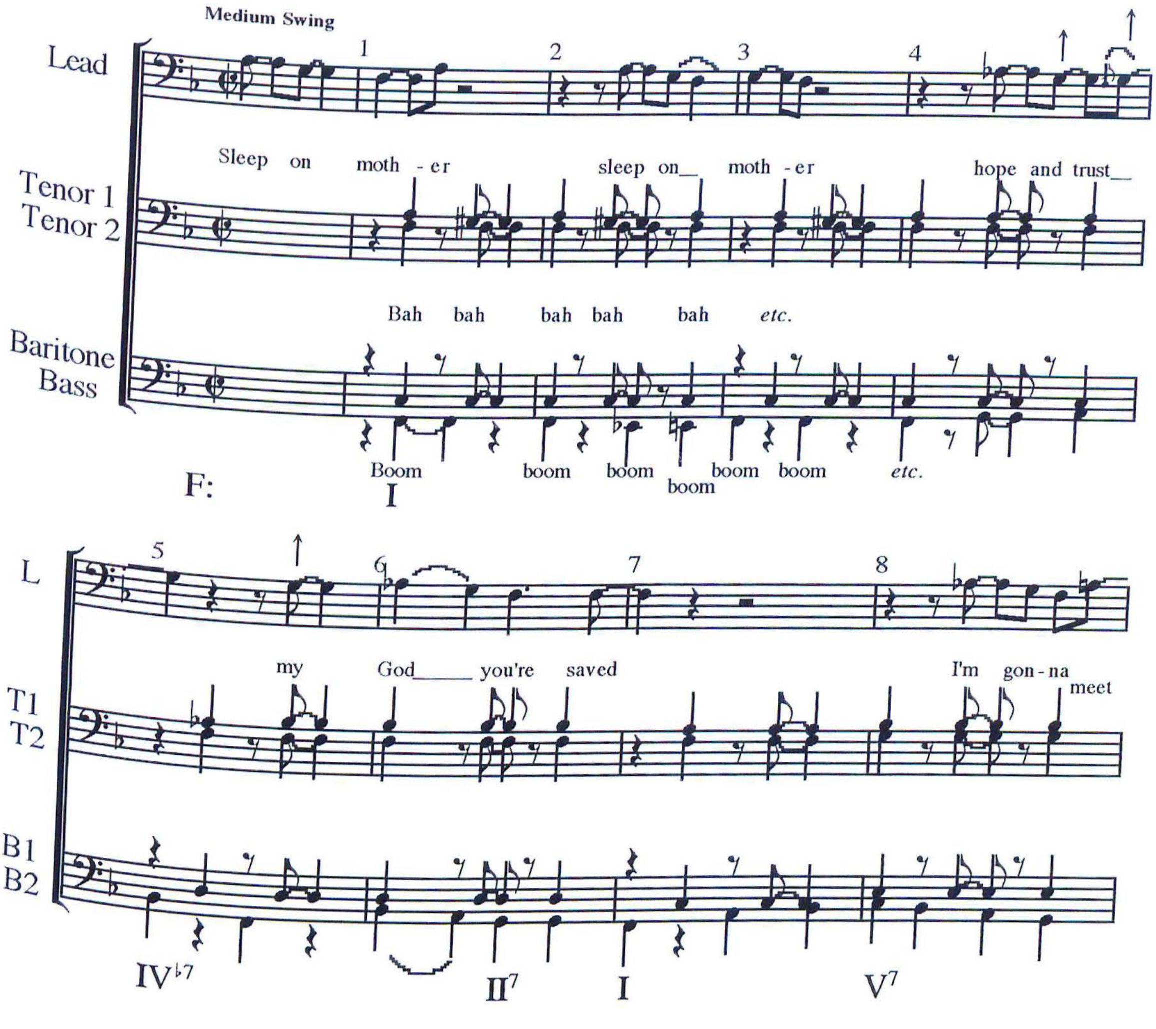
[3] Boyer, How Sweet the Sound, 175–76.

[4] Ibid., 177.

[5] Rubman, 89–91.

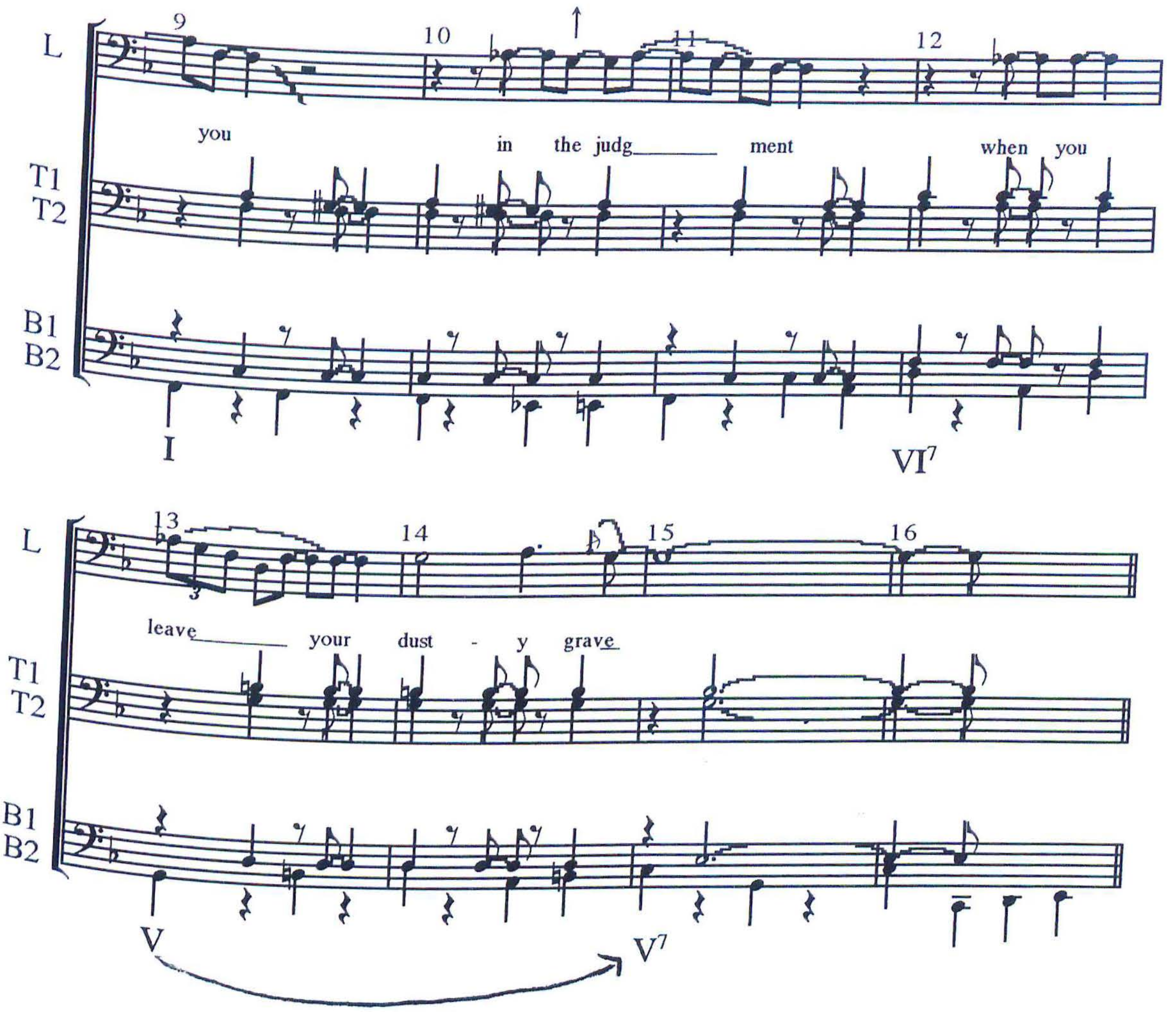
[6] Heilbut, 77.

Example 4. 1: "Will the Circle Be Unbroken," Third Verse, Swan Silvertones (ca. 1946–51)[7]


Medium Swing
Lead
Tenor 1
Tenor 2
Baritone
Bass
1
2
3
4
Sleep on moth - er sleep on_ moth - er hope and trust_
Bah bah bah bah bah etc.
Boom boom boom boom boom boom etc.
F:
I
L
T1
T2
B1
B2
5
6
7
8
my God_____ you're saved I'm gon - na meet
IV♭7
II7
I
V7

---

[7] Swan Silvertone Singers, Gospel Soul, King Blues KBGCD–468, 1993. There is no original date of recording listed for this performance. However, Rubman (89) documents that the Swan Silvertones recorded forty songs for King Records during the years 1946 to 1951. "Will the Circle Be Unbroken" appears to have been recorded during this period.


L
T1
T2
B1
B2
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
you
in the judg___ ment
when you
leave___ your dust - y grave
I
VI7
V
V7

This example of the quasi-jubilee style exhibits several jubilee-style features. For one, it employs the instrumental riff style, with the two tenors and baritone imitating horns with the syllable "bah." They are also in a two-measure repeating rhythmic pattern while the bass employs the characteristic "boom" syllable in a pump bass pattern. Cut-time meter and the consistent use of complete chords also recalls the jubilee style.

On the other hand, the emphatic preaching style of the lead, including a wide dynamic and timbral range, high degree of melisma, improvised melody and text—all characteristic in the gospel style—are not yet dominant. In addition, this performance does not include the characteristic gospel-style vamp in which the background voices vamp on one or two chords while the lead improvises in a preaching manner. However, some new gospel-style features that are present in example 4.1 include a prominent lead vocal with a generous use of blue notes. Another feature is a consistent five-voice texture that is maintained throughout the performance.

In another quasi-jubilee-style performance, Rubman identifies the recitative-and-aria song style, common in the jubilee style, in combination with newer gospel-style characteristics:

> In "All Alone" the group uses two other approaches. The verse is sung in barbershop-style blended harmony, without rhythm, with pauses to emphasize individual chords. In the chorus, Claude Jeter and, later, Solomon Womack exhibit "gospel"-style lead singing, improvising vocal flights with snatches of the lyrics as the group sings the chorus in a steady rhythm. Underneath, Henry Bossard adds bass runs.[8]

Formal Structure

The formal design of "Mary Don't You Weep" reflects the significance of vamps in the gospel period. In overall proportion, the vamp is nearly half of the entire performance—thirty-four of the eighty measures of music. It consists of two sections, an opening (Va1) and a closing vamp (Va2). The chorus (C) is a sixteen-measure period that repeats once in the performance. A single verse (V) repeats the music of the chorus, but with a different text. The diagram below represents the formal structure of "Mary Don't You Weep":

C C V Va1 Va2

---

[8] Rubman, 91. For another example of a popular gospel-style quartet that began as quasi-jubilee listen to "Well, Well, Well" (Soul Stirrers) from All of My Appointed Time, Stash ST–114, 1978.

Like the music, the text is highly repetitive in "Mary Don't You Weep." The second phrase of the verse is the same as the latter half of the chorus. However, the verse is truncated four measures by an early entrance of the vamp (Va1). The text of the chorus and verse (without the truncation) is presented below. The lines in italics mark the repetition:

Chorus: O Mary don't you weep, O Martha don't you moan;
O Mary don't you weep, O Martha don't you moan.
O Mary don't you weep, down in the Red Sea;
O Mary don't you weep, O Martha don't you moan.
Verse: If I could, surely would;
Stand on the rock, Moses stood.
O Mary don't you weep, down in the Red Sea;
O Mary don't you weep, O Martha don't you moan.

The highly repetitive structure of the music and text applies only to the background voices, which provide a static backdrop for the lead vocal performance. As the focal point of the performance, the lead is varied both melodically and textually throughout the song and is in a constant call-and-response pattern with the remaining voices.

Number and Function of Voice Parts

As previously noted, the gospel period of quartet singing featured lead singing and downplayed group singing. Rubman observes that "Back-up vocal parts were sung softer ... for they now served as decorative effects rather than chordal accompaniments."[9] To allow the lead to improvise freely while maintaining complete and consistent four-part harmony, a fifth voice part became a permanent addition to the structure of gospel quartet performances. Such is the case in "Mary Don't You Weep."

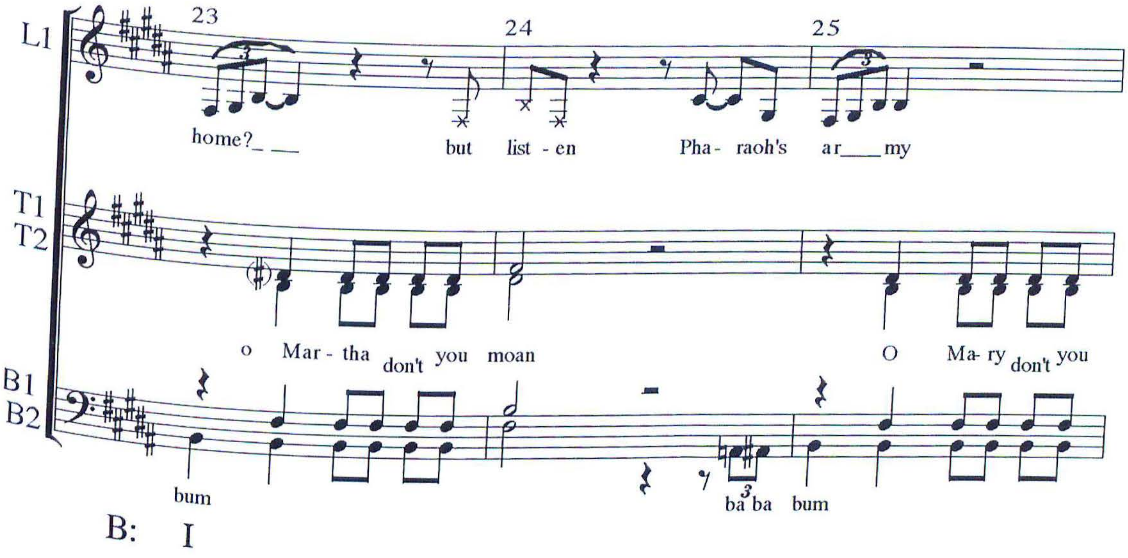
---

[9] Rubman, 96.

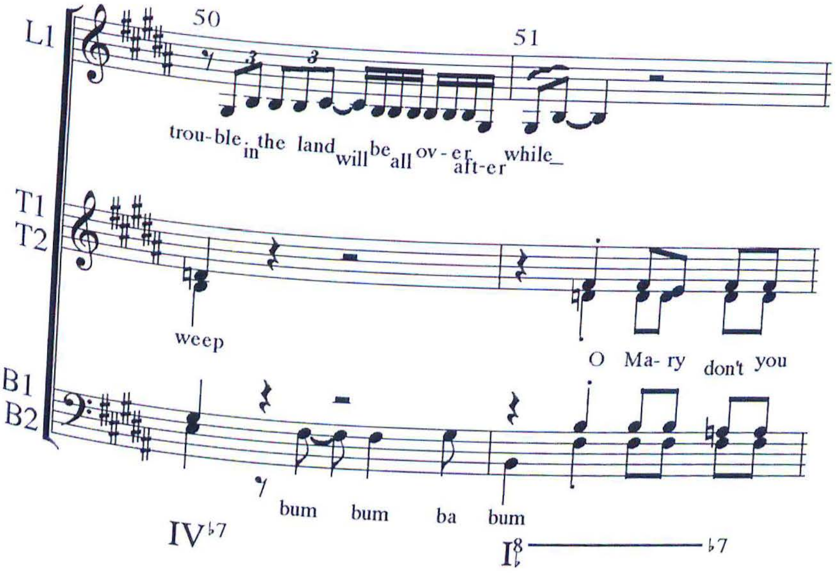
Along with a high degree of blue notes, several additional features mark the prominence of the lead vocal in the gospel style. Example 4.2 presents three striking features from the lead vocal performance of "Mary Don't You Weep" commonly observed in the gospel style.

Example 4. 2: Prominent Features of Lead Vocal Performance

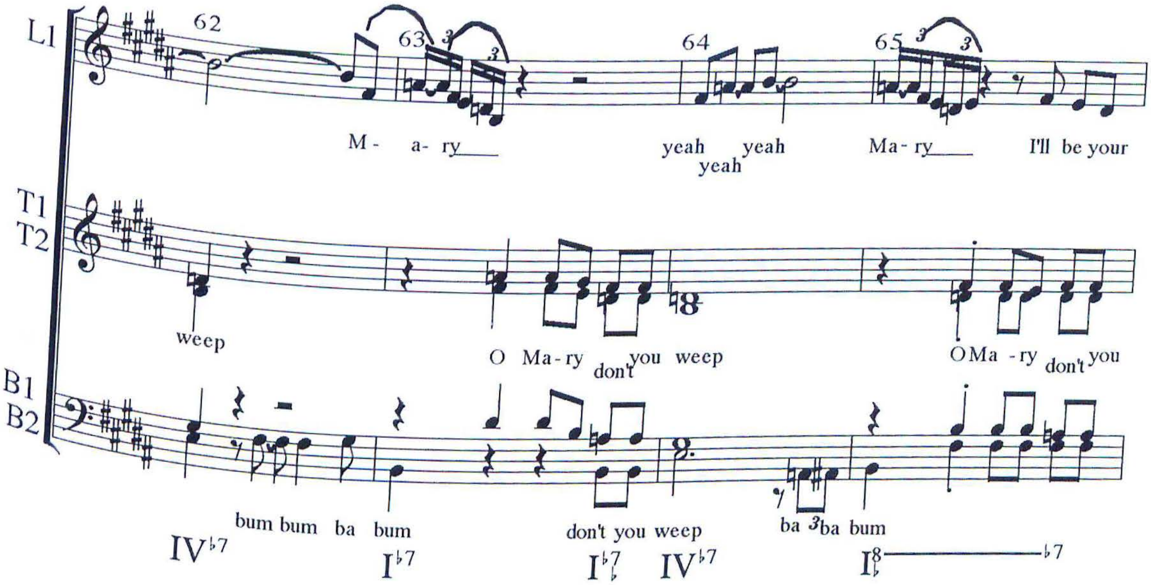
(a) Half-Sung/Spoken Notes


L1
T1
T2
B1
B2
23
24
25
home?
but
list - en
Pha - raoh's
ar__ my
o Mar - tha don't you moan
O Ma- ry don't you
bum
ba ba bum
3
B: I

(b) Chanting


L1
T1
T2
B1
B2
50
51
trou-ble in the land will be all ov-er after while
weep
O Ma-ry don't you
bum bum ba bum
IV♭7
I♭8 ♭7

(c) Melismatic Passages


L1
T1
T2
B1
B2
62
63
64
65
M- a- ry
yeah yeah yeah
Ma-ry
I'll be your
weep
O Ma-ry don't you weep
O Ma-ry don't you
bum bum ba bum
don't you weep
ba 3 ba bum
IV♭7
I♭7
I♭7
IV♭7
I♭8 ♭7

The use of half-sung notes (example 4.2a) gives the lead vocal performance a conversational and improvisatory feel and demonstrates the timbral variety common in gospel-style lead vocal performances.

Example 4.2b shows a technique borrowed from black preaching known as "chanting."[10] This technique heavily emphasizes one note, called the "reciting tone." As shown in example 4.2b, tonic note B^3 serves as reciting tone. The following quotation describes how chanting became employed by gospel singers:

> Gospel singers and composers ... have a keen ear for the black preacher's music, and have assimilated his spirituals into their respective singing styles and songs. The raw spirituals are themselves too folklorish for modern gospel composers, so what they have done is to skim off the cream of the preacher's musical and textual crop, leaving the folkish remains for the "foolish" who preach the gospel. The sermonettes, exempla, and guttural hack which have become stylish in modern gospel are indisputable evidence that singers and composers reap royalties for the music black preachers originated and have perpetuated since the creation of antebellum spirituals. By the same token, this volume offers strong evidence that "rural blues preaching" (particularly praying) may have preceded rural blues crooning, and that "rhythm and blues preaching" may have preceded rhythm and blues singing. Aretha Franklin's gospel and rhythm and blues singing style, as a case in point, was probably initiated when as a child she listened to her father, the renowned Rev. C. L. Franklin, "sing" his sermons on Sunday mornings.[11]

The melismatic passages in example 4.2c further illustrate the highly improvisatory nature of lead vocal performances and their virtuosic tendency in the gospel period.

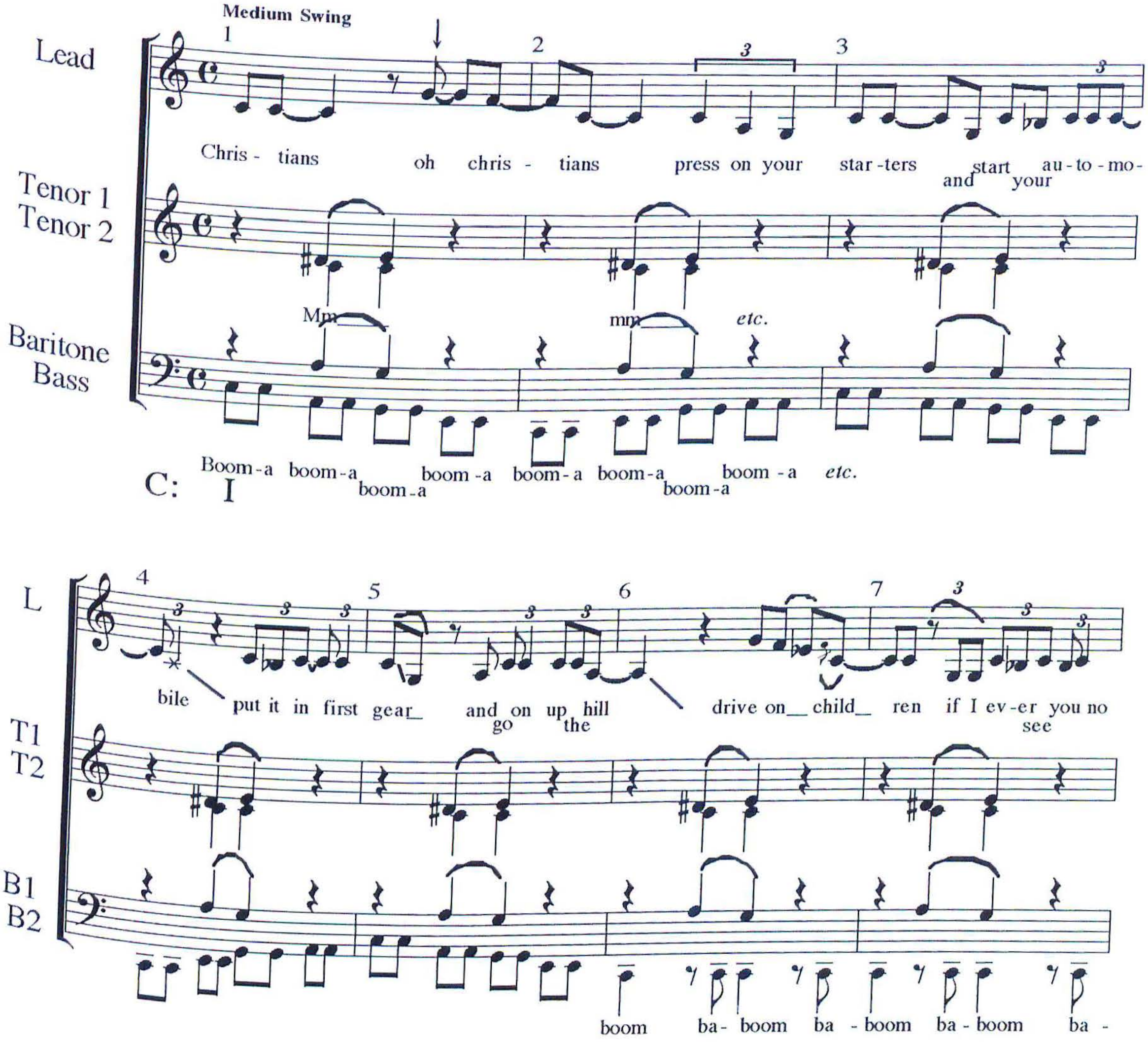
Example 4.3 presents another gospel-style performance exhibiting the three characteristics illustrated in example 4.2.

---

[10] Jon Michael Spencer, Sacred Symphony: The Chanted Sermon of the Black Preacher (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1987), 2.

[11] Ibid., XIV.

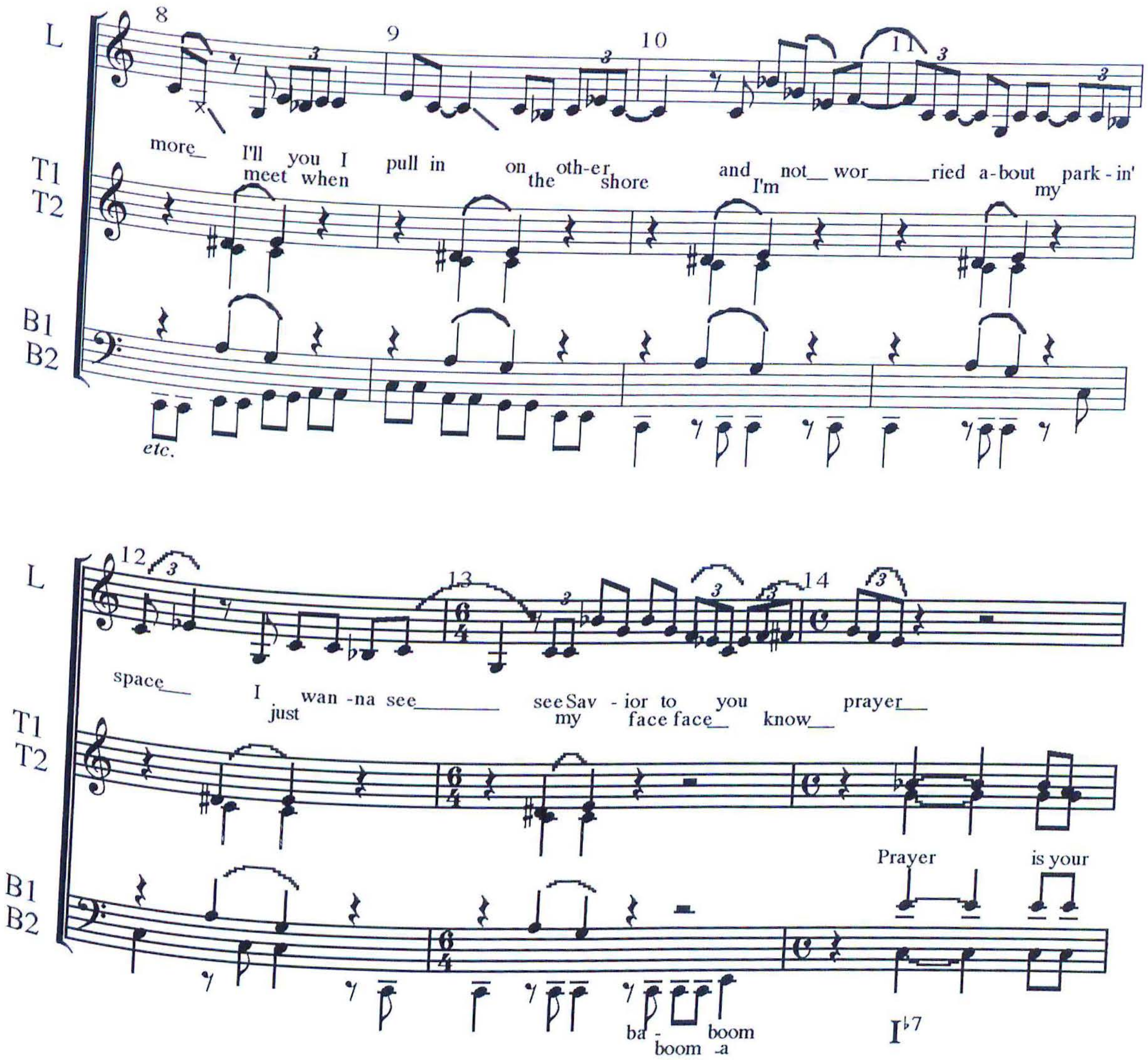
Example 4. 3: "Christian's Automobile," Ending, Dixie Hummingbirds (1957)[12]

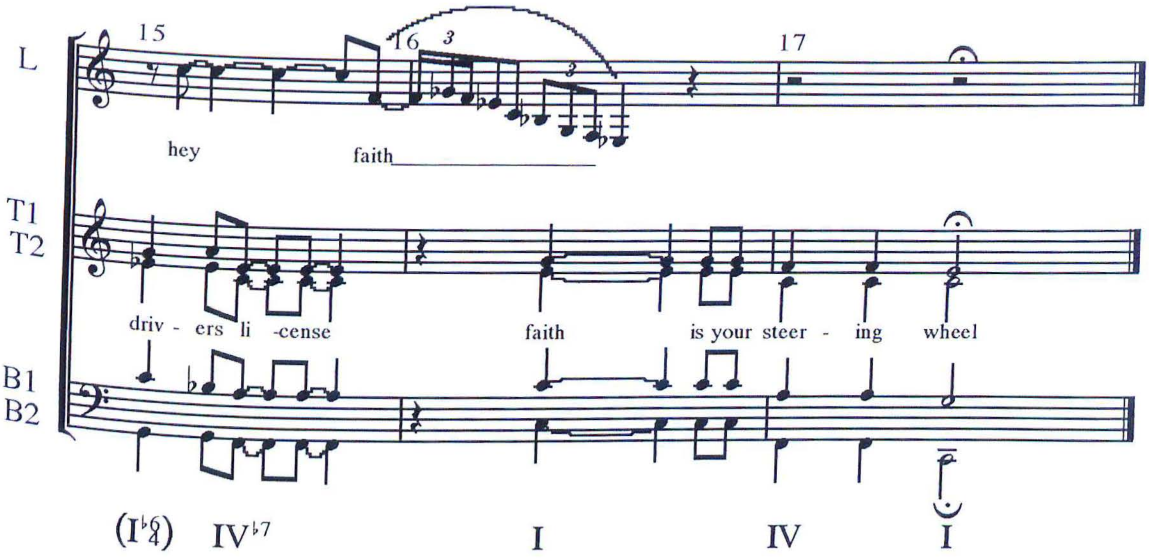


Medium Swing
Lead
Tenor 1
Tenor 2
Baritone
Bass
1
2
3
3
3
Chris - tians oh chris - tians press on your star -ters and start your au - to - mo -
Mm mm etc.
Boom - a boom - a boom - a boom - a boom - a boom - a boom - a boom - a etc.
C: I
L
T1
T2
B1
B2
4
5
6
7
bile put it in first gear and go on up the hill drive on child ren if I ev - er you no see
boom ba - boom ba - boom ba - boom ba -

---

[12] Jubilation! Great Gospel Performances, Vol. 1: Black Gospel, Rhino R2 70288, 1992.

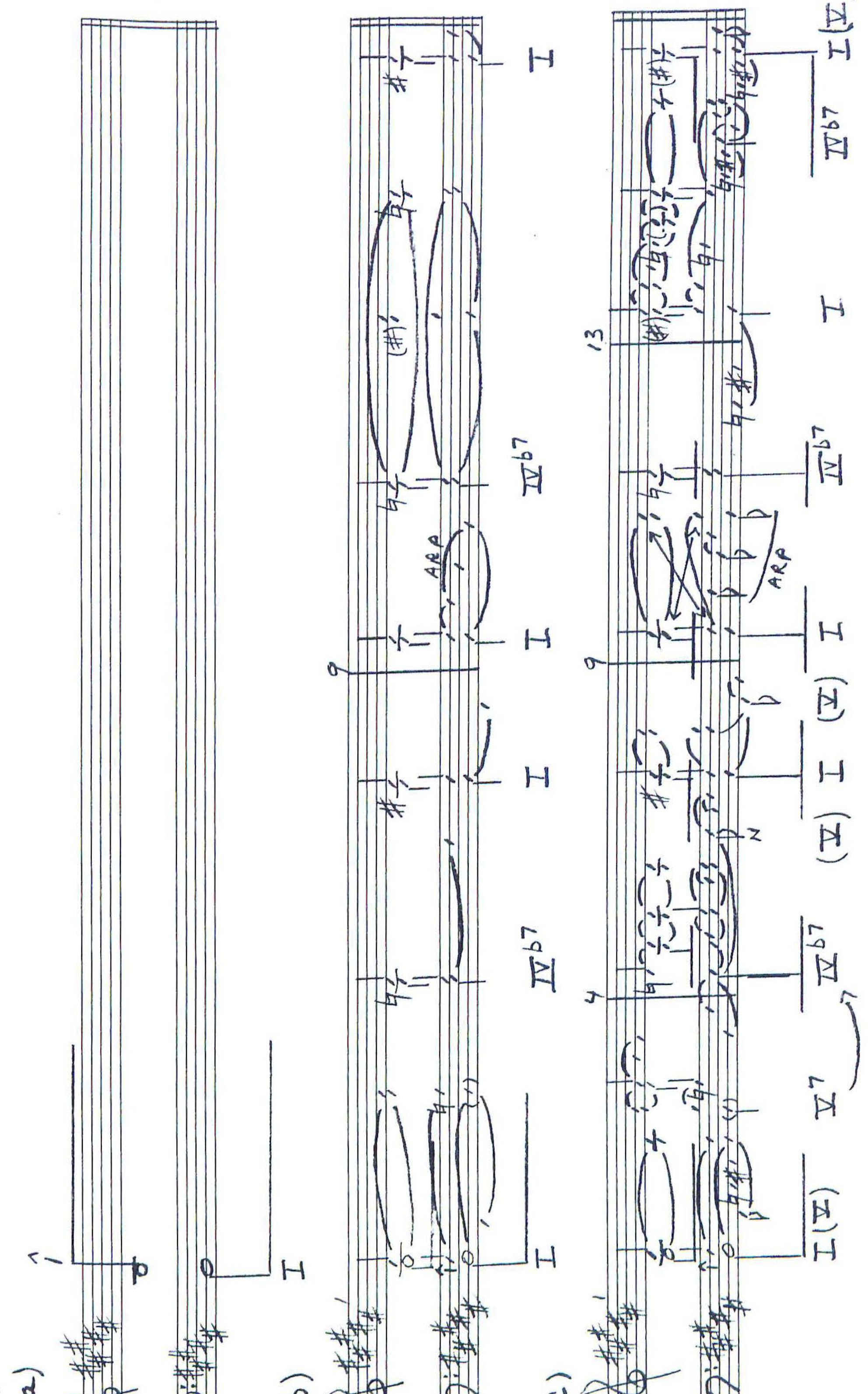

L
T1
T2
B1
B2
8
9
10
11
more_ I'll meet you when I pull in on the oth-er shore and I'm not_ wor_____ried a-bout my park-in'
etc.
12
13
14
space_ I just wan -na see_______ see my Sav - ior face to face_ you know_ prayer_
Prayer is your
ba - boom boom -a
I♭7


15
16
3
17
L
hey
faith
T1
T2
driv - ers li -cense
faith
is your steer - ing
wheel
B1
B2
(I♭6/4) IV♭7
I
IV
I

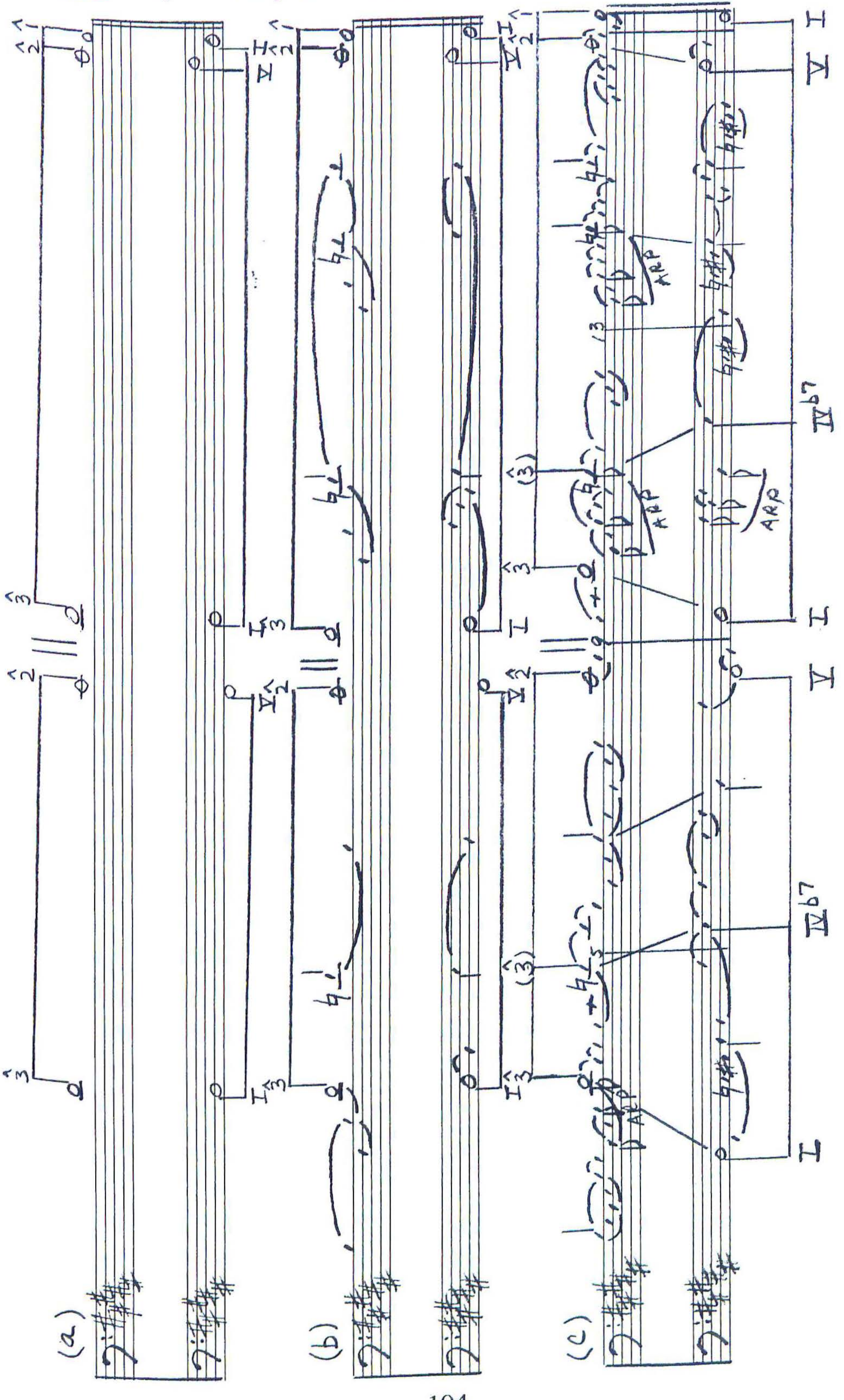
As in "Mary Don't You Weep," the lead vocal performance in example 4.3 shows an abundance of blue notes (indicated with arrows) and hanging glissandi. Also, scale degrees $\hat{3}$ and $\hat{7}$ are often lowered to their minor-scale equivalents. Additionally, note the half-sung notes in measures 4 and 8, the heavy emphasis on tonic note C as reciting tone throughout and the melisma that spans more than an octave in measure 16.

To further illustrate the respective functions of group and lead in "Mary Don't You Weep," examples 4.4 and 4.5 present graphic analyses of the group parts and the lead vocal improvisation for comparison.

Example 4. 4: Graphic Analysis of Chorus, Background Voice Parts


Example 4. 4: Graphic Analysis of Chorus—Background Voice Parts
(a)
I
(b)
I
IV♭7
I
9
I
ARP
IV♭7
I
(c)
I (V)
V7
4
IV♭7
N
(V) I (V)
9
I
ARP
IV♭7
13
I
IV♭7
I (V)

Example 4. 5: Graphic Analysis of Chorus, Lead and Bass



(a)
(b)
(c)
$\hat{3}$
$\hat{2}$
$\hat{1}$
(3)
I
V
IV♭7
ARP

Example 4. 5: Graphic Analysis of Chorus—Lead and Bass

In example 4.4, the second tenor supplies the melody/fundamental line for the background voices. There is no descent of the fundamental line as well as no accompanying bass arpeggiation. There are, however, four references to V—I movement. In each instance, an F♯ is flagged in the bass of example 4.4c and labeled with V in parenthesis.

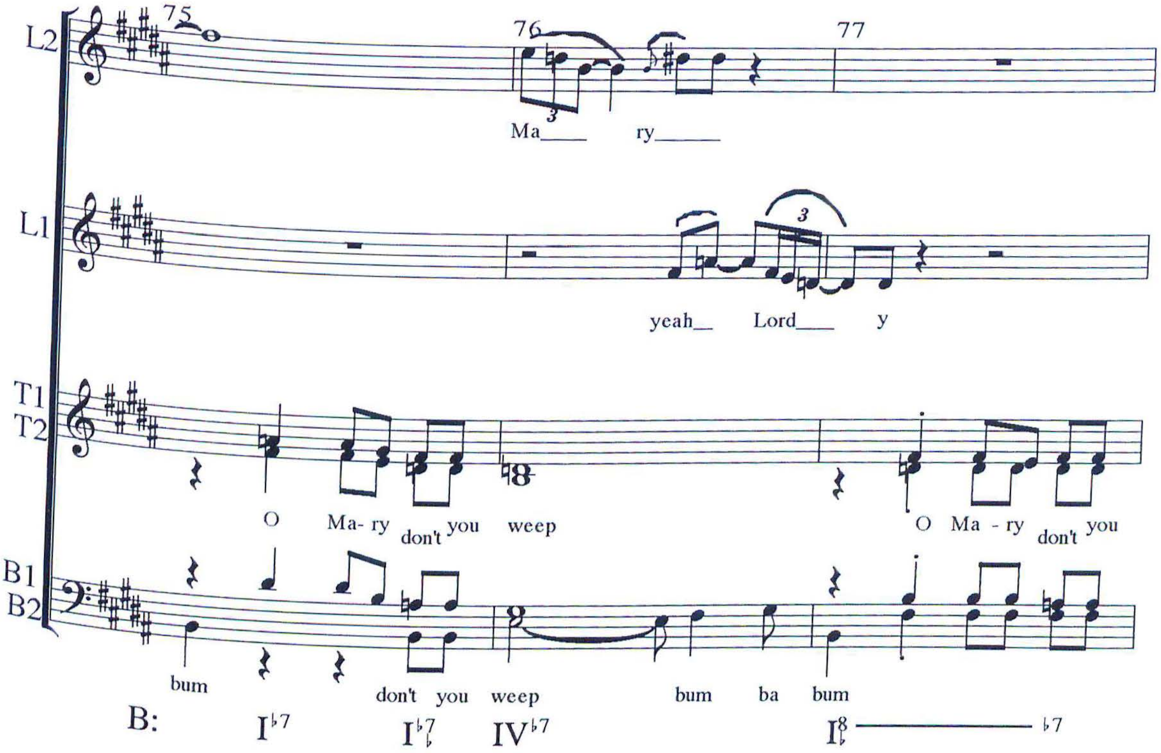
Example 4.5 clarifies the significance of the flagged F♯'s from example 4.4. When analyzing the lead vocal improvisation with the bass, two of the F♯'s (in measures 8 and 16) are part of the bass arpeggiation of the fundamental structure. As shown in example 4.5, the fundamental structure projects an interrupted $\hat{3}$—$\hat{2}$—$\hat{1}$. Projection of the fundamental line in the lead vocal performance and not in the background voice parts further illustrates the prominence of the lead in "Mary Don't You Weep."

Another significant innovation of the gospel style of quartet singing is the employment of a second lead singer, which occasionally expands the vocal texture to six voices in "Mary Don't You Weep" (example 4.6). With the addition of the second lead, example 4.6 exhibits a tripartite vocal texture. The second lead serves as a timbral foil for the first lead. As shown in example 4.6, it is in a higher tessitura than the first. Also, the second lead is sung in falsetto as opposed to the raspy and guttural quality of the first lead. The backdrop for the opposing leads is traditional quartet voice parts, serving, collectively, as a third layer in the vocal texture. This three-layer vocal structure recalls the instrumental riff style from the jubilee tradition. The two structures differ fundamentally in that emphasis is on lead vocal parts in the gospel period as opposed to layered riff patterns in the instrumental riff style.[13]

---

[13] For another example of a two-lead quartet performance listen to "I'm Bound for Canaan Land" (Famous Blue Jay Singers) from Glad I Found the Lord: Chicago Gospel 1937–1957, Heritage HT CD 08, 1992.

Example 4. 6: Second Lead Voice Part


75
76
77
L2
Ma___ ry___
L1
yeah__ Lord___ y
T1
T2
O Ma- ry don't you weep
O Ma - ry don't you
B1
B2
bum don't you weep bum ba bum
B: I♭7 I♭7 IV♭7 I♭8 ♭7

Meter and Rhythm

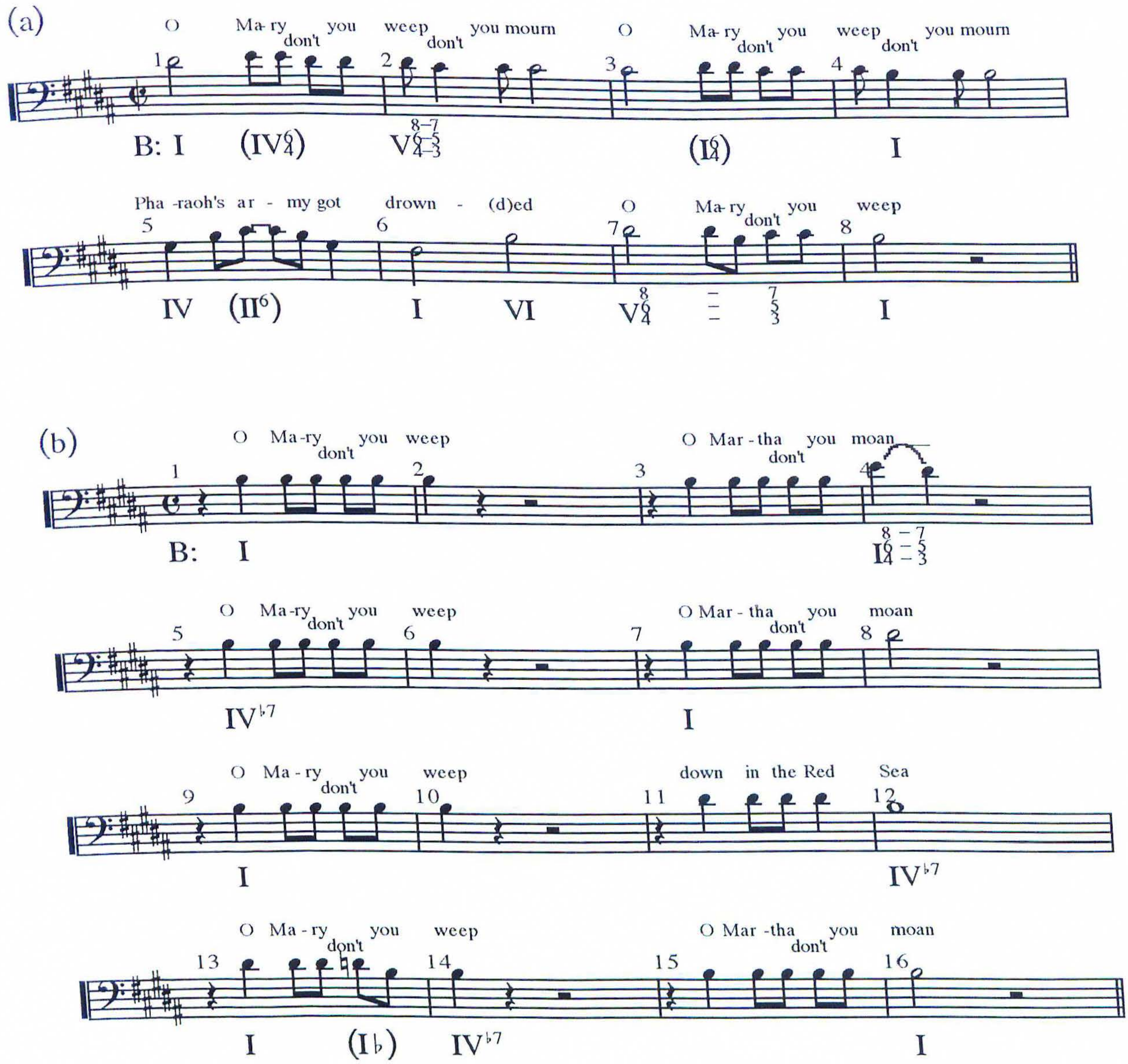
Accompanying the change from a two-beat feel to a four-beat feel was more emphasis on swing eighth notes. These changes paralleled developments in big band music where emphasizing four beats to the measure in the Swing Era replaced the two-beat emphasis of Chicago Style Dixieland. These changes in meter and rhythm were reflected in the repertoires of gospel-style quartets, which were generally adapted from three sources: Negro spirituals, earlier quartet performances and newly created gospel songs.[14]

---

[14] Allen, 36, 60, 232. See also Boyer, How Sweet the Sound, 153.

The Swan Silvertones version of "Mary Don't You Weep" is an example of the first source, a Negro spiritual. To show the change in rhythmic pulse, example 4.7 presents the original tune and the Swan Silvertones adaptation.

Example 4. 7: Gospel-Style Adaptation of a Negro Spiritual


(a)
O Ma-ry don't you weep don't you mourn O Ma-ry don't you weep don't you mourn
B: I (IV$^6_4$) V$^{8-7}_{6-5}{}_{4-3}$ (I$^6_4$) I
Pha-raoh's ar - my got drown - (d)ed O Ma-ry don't you weep
IV (II^6) I VI V$^8_6{}_4$ – $^7_5{}_3$ I
(b)
O Ma-ry don't you weep O Mar - tha don't you moan
B: I I$^{8-7}_{6-5}{}_{4-3}$
O Ma-ry don't you weep O Mar - tha don't you moan
IV$^{\flat 7}$ I
O Ma - ry don't you weep down in the Red Sea
I IV$^{\flat 7}$
O Ma - ry don't you weep O Mar -tha don't you moan
I (I♭) IV$^{\flat 7}$ I

The chorus of the original tune at example 4.7a is eight measures long. It is generally performed at a bright tempo in cut time, with even distribution of eighth notes.[15]

Following standard practice for quartet singing, the second tenor supplies the melody in the background voices of the Swan Silvertones performance. Example 4.7b shows the second tenor's melody alone. The rests following each two-measure group reflect the alternation of group and lead singing in a call-and-response pattern, which expands the chorus to twicethe length of the original chorus. A slower tempo, marked by the change in time signature, expands the chorus even more, and eighth notes are performed with the swing feel of jazz.

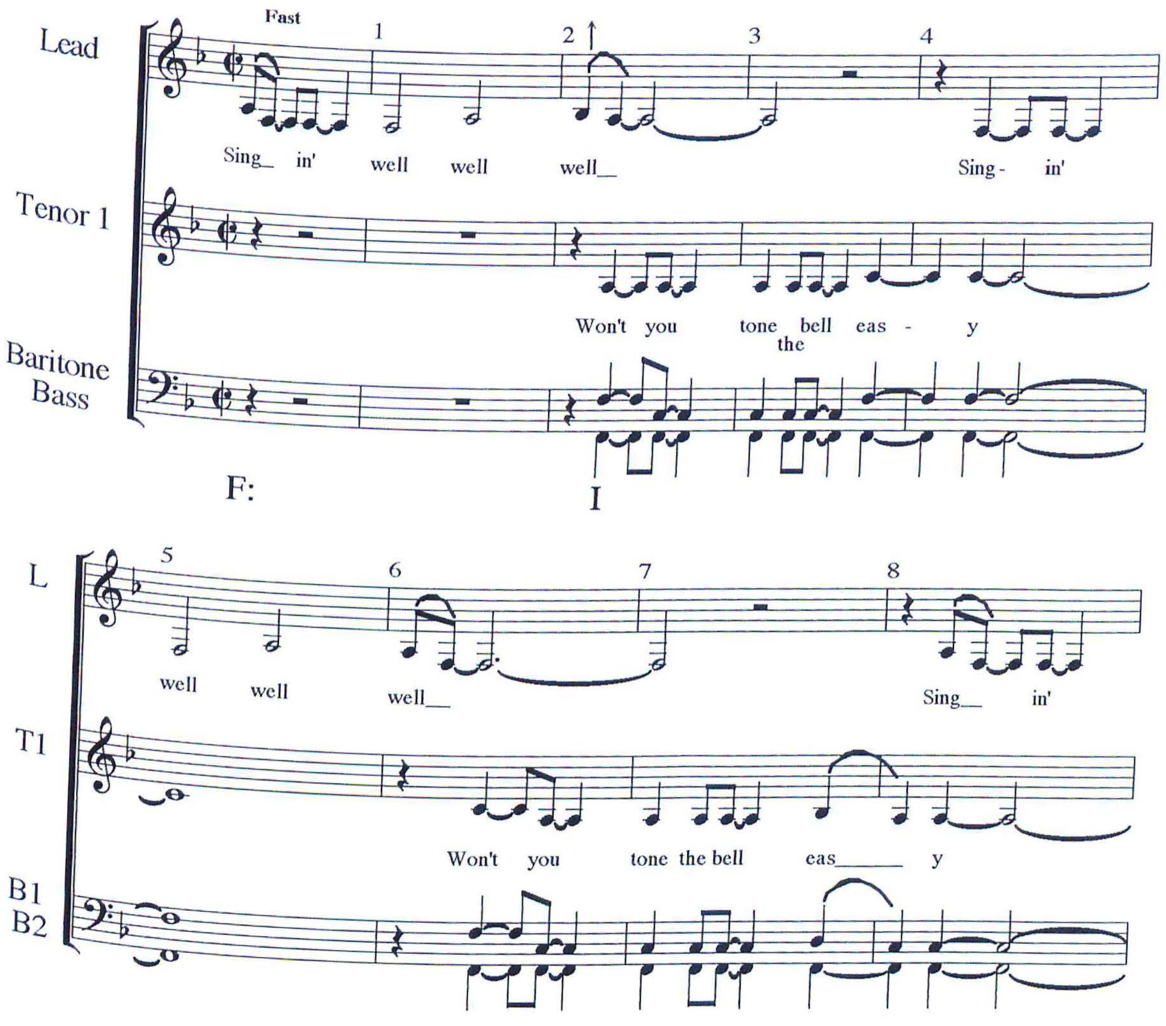
Example 4.8 illustrates the adaptation of an earlier quartet performance, the second source of song material for gospel-style quartets, as mentioned above.

---

[15] For recorded examples of the original melody see Jimmy Witherspoon, Golden Gospel, Stereo Sounds SA–13, n.d.; Tennessee Ernie Ford, Sing a Spiritual with Me, Capital ST 1680, 1962; and "Pharaoh's Army Got Drowned" from Norfolk Jazz and Jubilee Quartets-Vol. 3 (1925–1927), Document Records DOCD–5383, 1995.

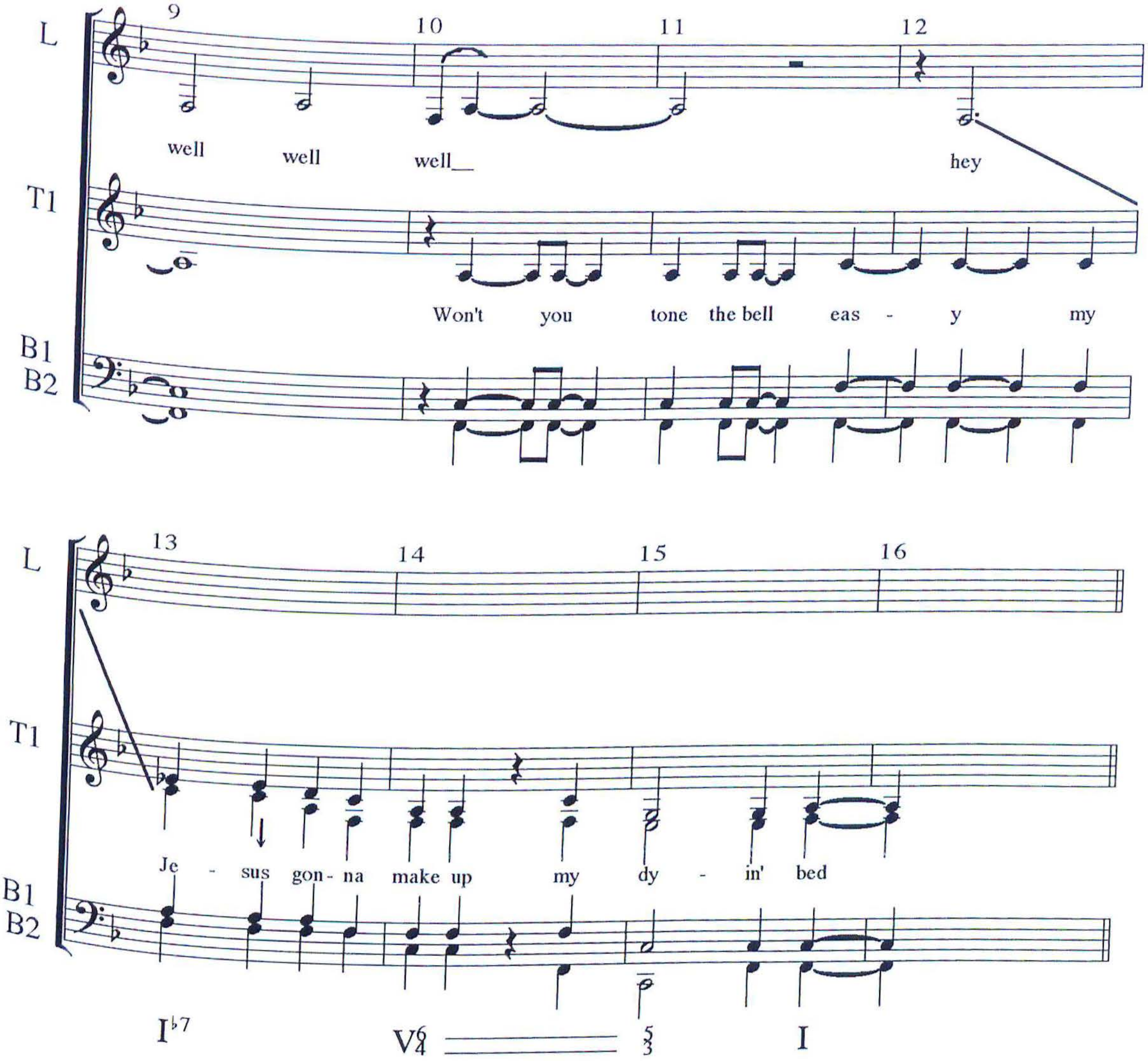
Example 4. 8: Gospel-Style Adaptation of an Earlier Quartet Performance[16]

(a)

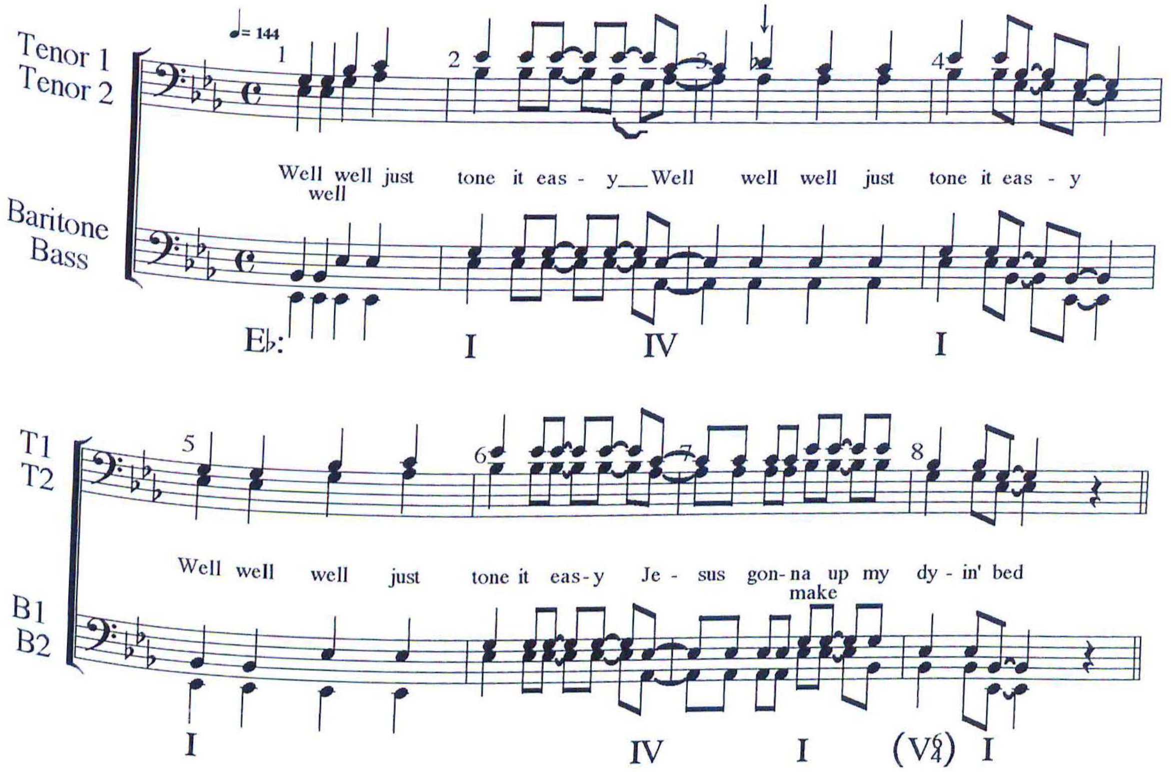

Lead
Tenor 1
Baritone
Bass
Fast
1
2
3
4
Sing_ in' well well well_ Sing - in'
Won't you tone the bell eas - y
F:
I
L
T1
B1
B2
5
6
7
8
well well well_ Sing_ in'
Won't you tone the bell eas_ y

---

[16] "Toll the Bells Easy" (Golden Gate Quartet) from Gospel Quartets/1921–1942; and "Well, Well, Well" (Soul Stirrers) from All of My Appointed Time.


L
T1
B1
B2
9
10
11
12
well well well__
hey
Won't you tone the bell eas - y my
13
14
15
16
Je - sus gon - na make up my dy - in' bed
I♭7
V6/4
5/3
I

(b)

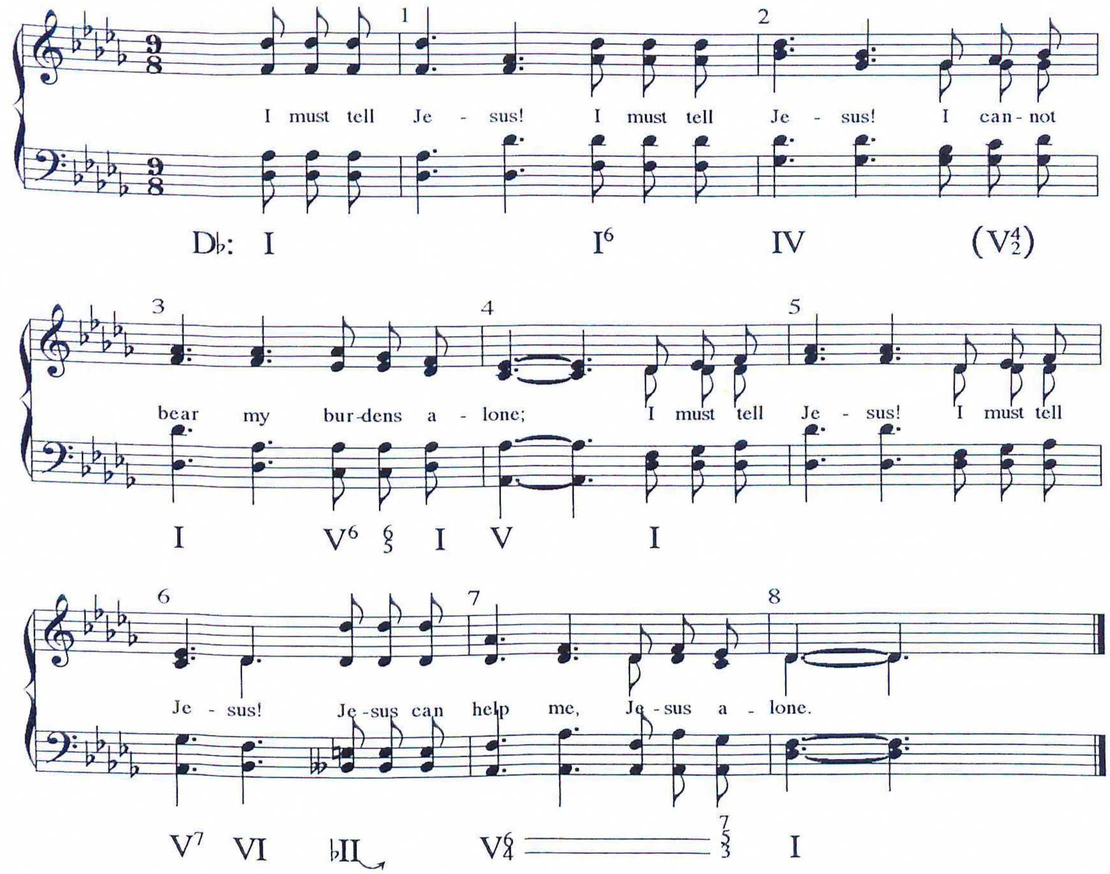

Tenor 1
Tenor 2
Baritone
Bass
♩= 144
Well well just well
tone it eas - y__Well
well well just
tone it eas - y
E♭:
I
IV
I
T1
T2
B1
B2
Well well well just
tone it eas-y
Je - sus gon-na make up my
dy - in' bed
I
IV
I
(V$^6_4$)
I

Example 4.8a is a jubilee-style quartet performance set in cut time and performed at a very fast tempo. Example 4.8b shows a gospel-style adaptation of it by the Soul Stirrers. Though one of the better-known gospel-style quartets, the Soul Stirrers adaptation is an early performance from their quasi-jubilee years in the late 1940s. However, even a performance from the seminal years of the gospel style such as this shows a change to common-time meter and a more relaxed tempo.

Example 4.9 shows the third source from which gospel quartet performances derived—newly created gospel songs.

Example 4. 9: Gospel-Style Adaptation of a Newly Created Gospel Song[17]

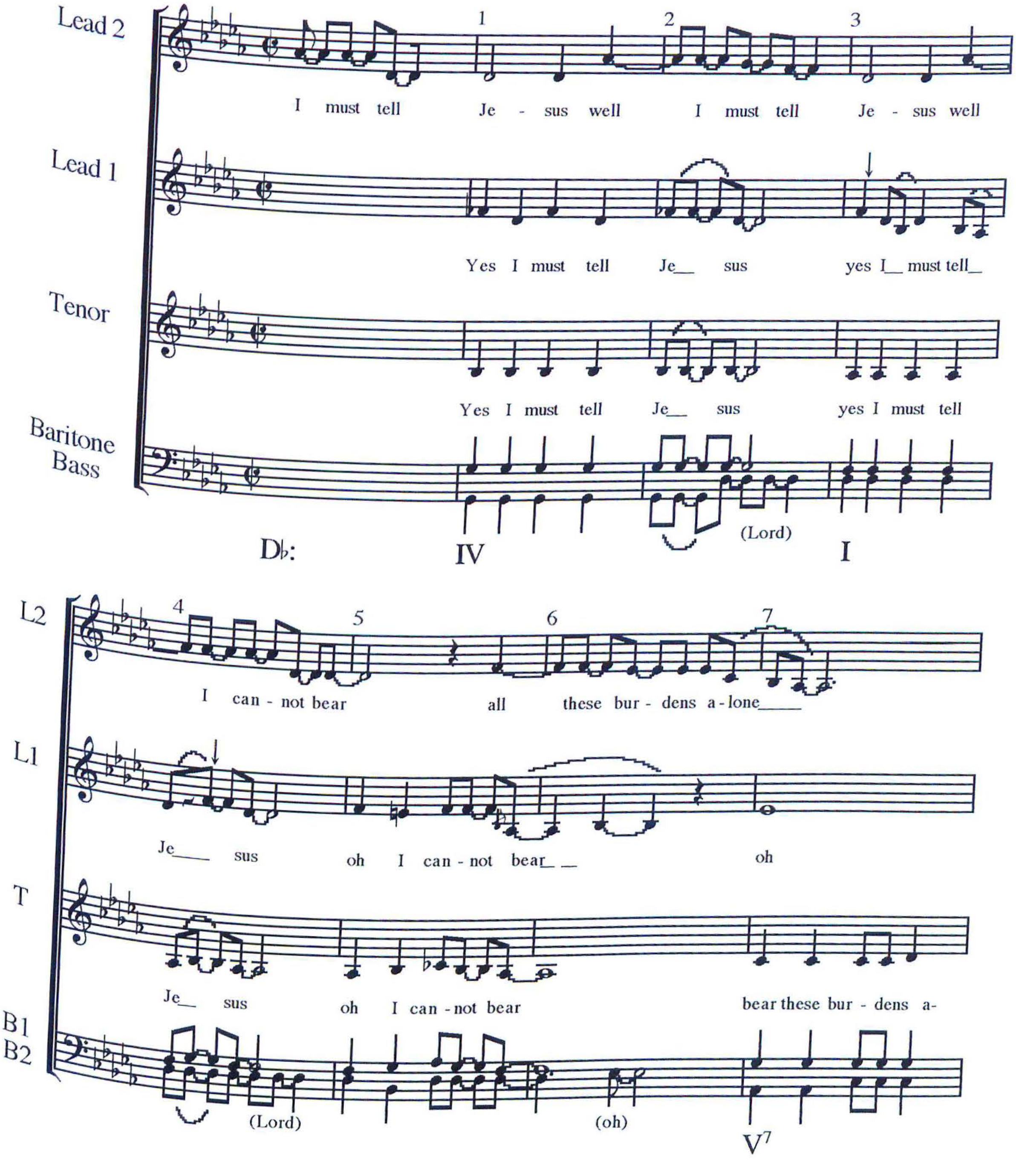
(a)

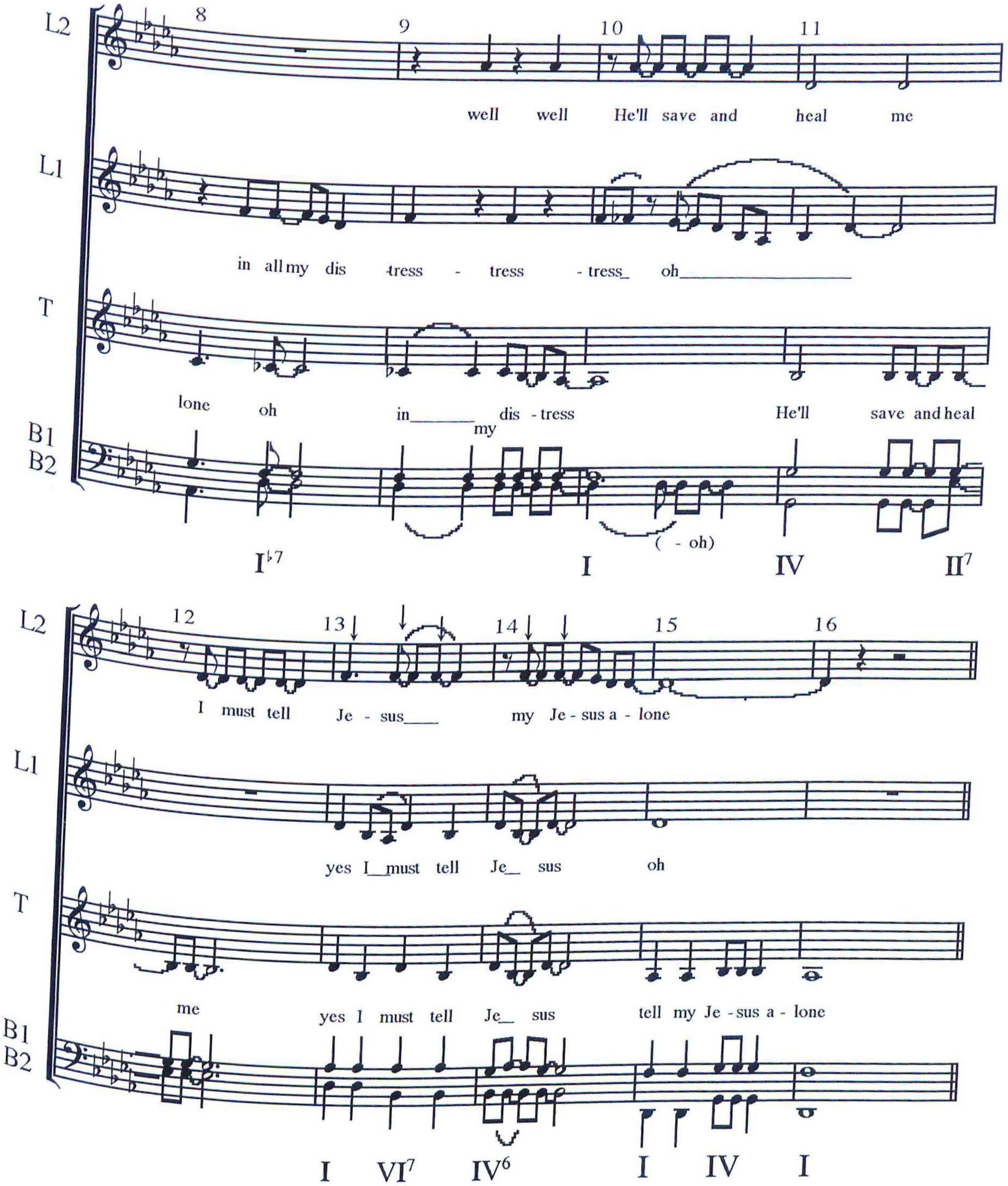

1
2
I must tell Je - sus! I must tell Je - sus! I can - not
D♭: I
I6
IV
(V4/2)
3
4
5
bear my bur-dens a - lone; I must tell Je - sus! I must tell
I
V6
6/5
I
V
I
6
7
8
Je - sus! Je-sus can help me, Je-sus a - lone.
V7
VI
♭II
V6/4
7/5/3
I

---

[17] Transcription copied from Elisha A. Hoffman, "I Must Tell Jesus," The New National Baptist Hymnal (Nashville: National Baptist Publishing Board, 1977), 232; and "I Must Tell Jesus" (Famous Blue Jay Singers) from Glad I Found the Lord.

(b)


Lead 2
Lead 1
Tenor
Baritone Bass
1
2
3
I must tell Je - sus well I must tell Je - sus well
Yes I must tell Je__ sus yes I__ must tell__
Yes I must tell Je__ sus yes I must tell
(Lord)
D♭:
IV
I
L2
L1
T
B1
B2
4
5
6
7
I can - not bear all these bur - dens a - lone____
Je____ sus oh I can - not bear__ __ oh
Je__ sus oh I can - not bear bear these bur - dens a-
(Lord)
(oh)
V7


L2
L1
T
B1
B2
8
9
10
11
well well He'll save and heal me
in all my dis -tress - tress - tress_ oh
lone oh in my dis - tress He'll save and heal
(- oh)
I♭7
I
IV
II7
12
13
14
15
16
I must tell Je - sus my Je - sus a - lone
yes I must tell Je sus oh
me yes I must tell Je sus tell my Je - sus a - lone
I
VI7
IV6
I
IV
I

Example 4.9 shows the inventiveness of gospel quartets in adapting songs based on meters other than cut time. Here, the Famous Blue Jay Singers adapt a modern composition, published at present in many Protestant church hymnals, that is set in compound triple meter (example 4.9a). The Famous Blue Jay Singers adaptation (example 4.9b) is in common time.[18]

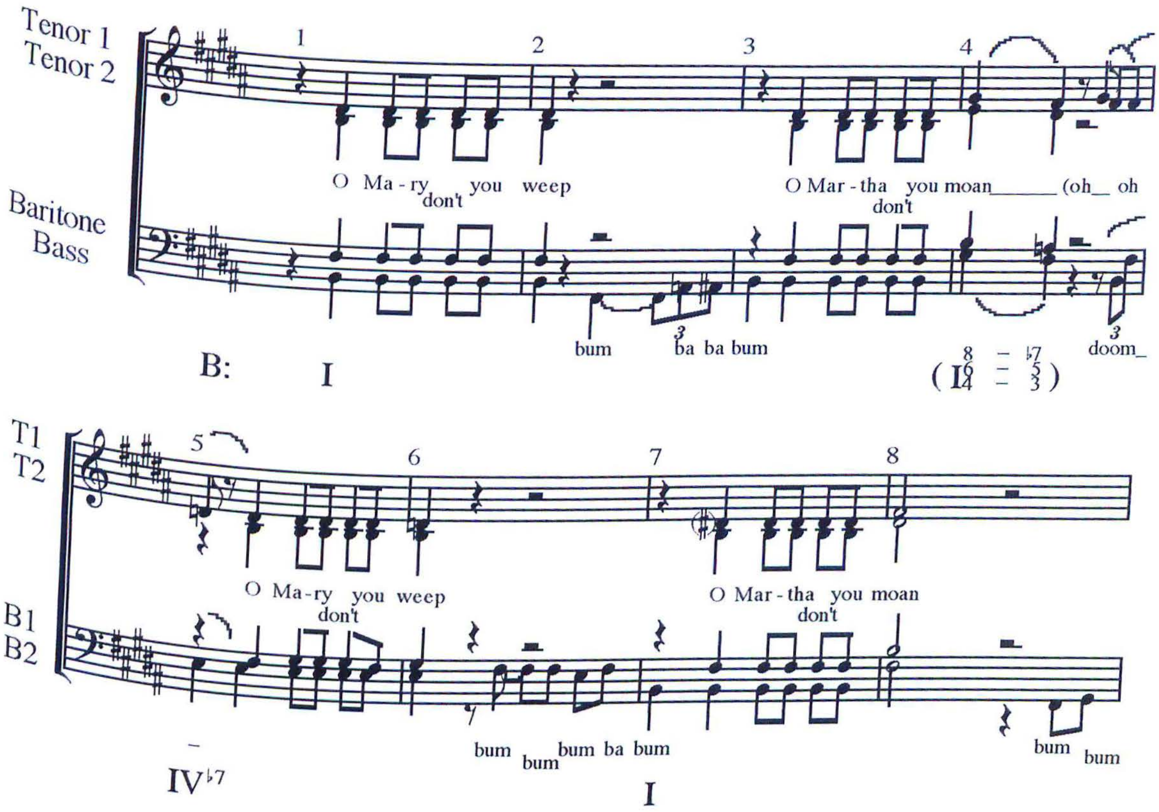
Bass Voice

Two characteristics of jubilee-style bass parts continued in the gospel style: the trend toward consistently functional bass parts and the retention of the tuba-simulated syllable of the pump bass—"boom" (or sonic derivatives such as "bum" or "doom"). However, bass singers abandoned the rhythm of the pump bass technique. "Mary Don't You Weep" clearly illustrates these characteristics, as shown in example 4.10.

---

[18] For a similar adaptation see Lucie E. Campbell, "Something Within," The New National Baptist Hymnal, 275. Several quartet performances have adapted this hymn, originally set in 3/4, to 4/4. Compare for example the version entitled "Something within Me" from The Best of the Pilgrim Travelers, Specialty CDCHD 342, 1991. A recent neo-jubilee-trend performance can be heard on TAKE 6, So Much 2 Say, Reprise 9 25892-2, 1990.

Example 4. 10: "Mary Don't You Weep," Opening Phrase


Tenor 1
Tenor 2
Baritone
Bass
1
2
3
4
O Ma - ry don't you weep
O Mar - tha don't you moan_____ (oh__ oh
bum
ba ba bum
doom_
B:
I
(I 8 6 4 — ♭7 5 3)
T1
T2
5
6
7
8
O Ma-ry don't you weep
O Mar - tha don't you moan
B1
B2
bum bum bum ba bum
bum bum
IV♭7
I

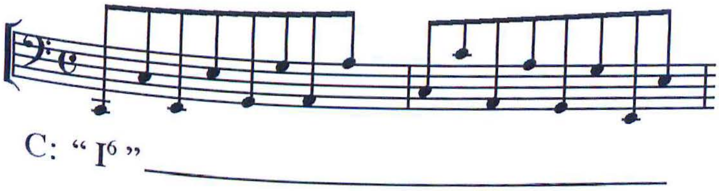
The large-scale harmonic progression of example 4.10 is I—IV—I, supported by functional movement in the bass voice. Note also that the bass follows each two-measure group with a fill-in figure that uses a tuba-simulated syllable (measures 2, 4, 6 and 8).

Along with the rhythmic change from a two-beat to a four-beat feel came a new trend of bass singing, which imitated the walking bass style of boogie-woogie. Boogie-woogie is a percussive piano style that emphasizes walking bass ostinatos.[19] Example 4.11 shows the particular ostinato copied by quartet bass singers.

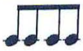
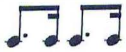
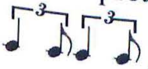
---

[19] For more on boogie-woogie see Eric Kriss, Barrelhouse and Boogie Piano (New York: Oak Publications 1973).

Example 4. 11: Boogie-Woogie Bass Ostinato[20]



This development in gospel quartet singing is portentous because it again mirrors a pattern of development in big band music. Below, Floyd describes how boogie-woogie contributed to the development of jazz, a description that applies equally to its role in the black religious quartet tradition:

> … it [boogie-woogie] (1) influenced the change in jazz from a two-beat to a four-beat feel and (2) caused the eighth-note subdivisions of the beat to be interpreted as uneven durations, moving from  to  to , the last coming to be known as swing eighths.[21]

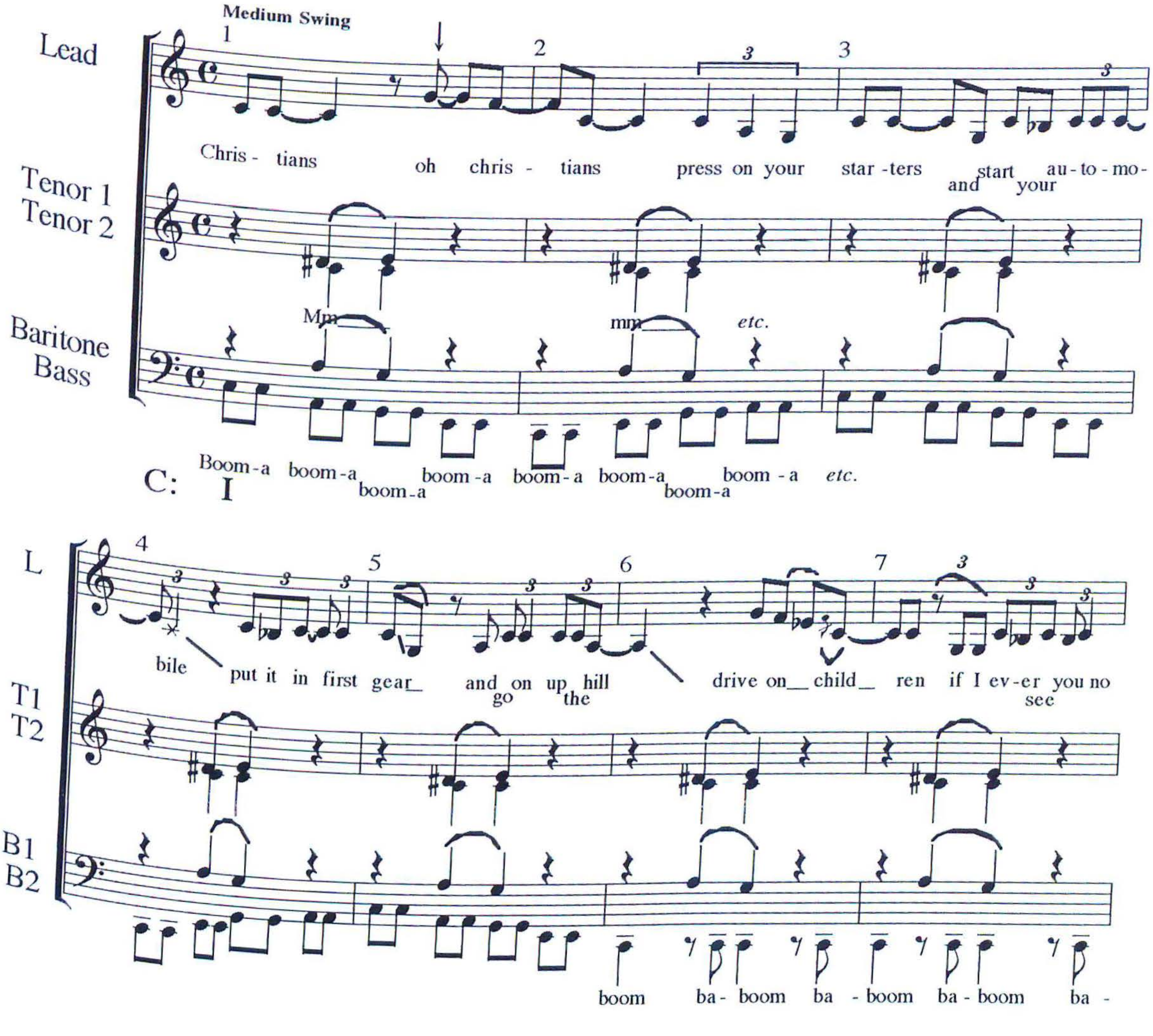
Since the boogie-woogie bass line does not occur in “Mary Don’t You Weep,” example 4.12 shows the device in a performance by another well-known gospel quartet—the Dixie Hummingbirds.

---

[20] Transcription copied from Barry Kernfeld, ed. New Grove Dictionary of Jazz (London: Macmillan; New York: Grove’s Dictionaries of Music, 1988), s.v. “Boogie Woogie,” by Paul Oliver. For recorded examples of boogie-woogie listen to Jazz Vol. 10: Boogie Woogie, Jump and Kansas City, Smithsonian Folkways Records 02810, 1991.

[21] Floyd, 122.

Example 4. 12: “Christian’s Automobile,” Vamp, Dixie Hummingbirds (1957)[22]


Medium Swing
Lead
Tenor 1
Tenor 2
Baritone
Bass
Chris - tians oh chris - tians press on your star -ters and start your au - to - mo-
Mm mm etc.
Boom -a boom -a boom -a boom -a boom - a boom -a boom -a boom - a etc.
C: I
L
T1
T2
B1
B2
bile put it in first gear and go on up the hill drive on child ren if I ev - er you no see
boom ba - boom ba - boom ba - boom ba -

Except for the broken octaves, the boogie-woogie bass pattern in measures 1–5 of example 4.12 uses the same notes as in example 4.11. The broken octaves, of course, are idiomatic to the piano, the medium for which the pattern was initially conceived. The performance in example 4.12 was executed with a swing feel. Thus, the durations of each pair of eighth notes employ the long-short pattern, described by Floyd above, and exemplified by the syllables in the boogie-woogie bass part—“boom-a.” The longer syllable "boom" corresponds to the longer durational value in a pair of swing eighths. Likewise, "a" corresponds to the shorter note value.[23]

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[22] Jubilation! Great Gospel Performances, Vol. 1.

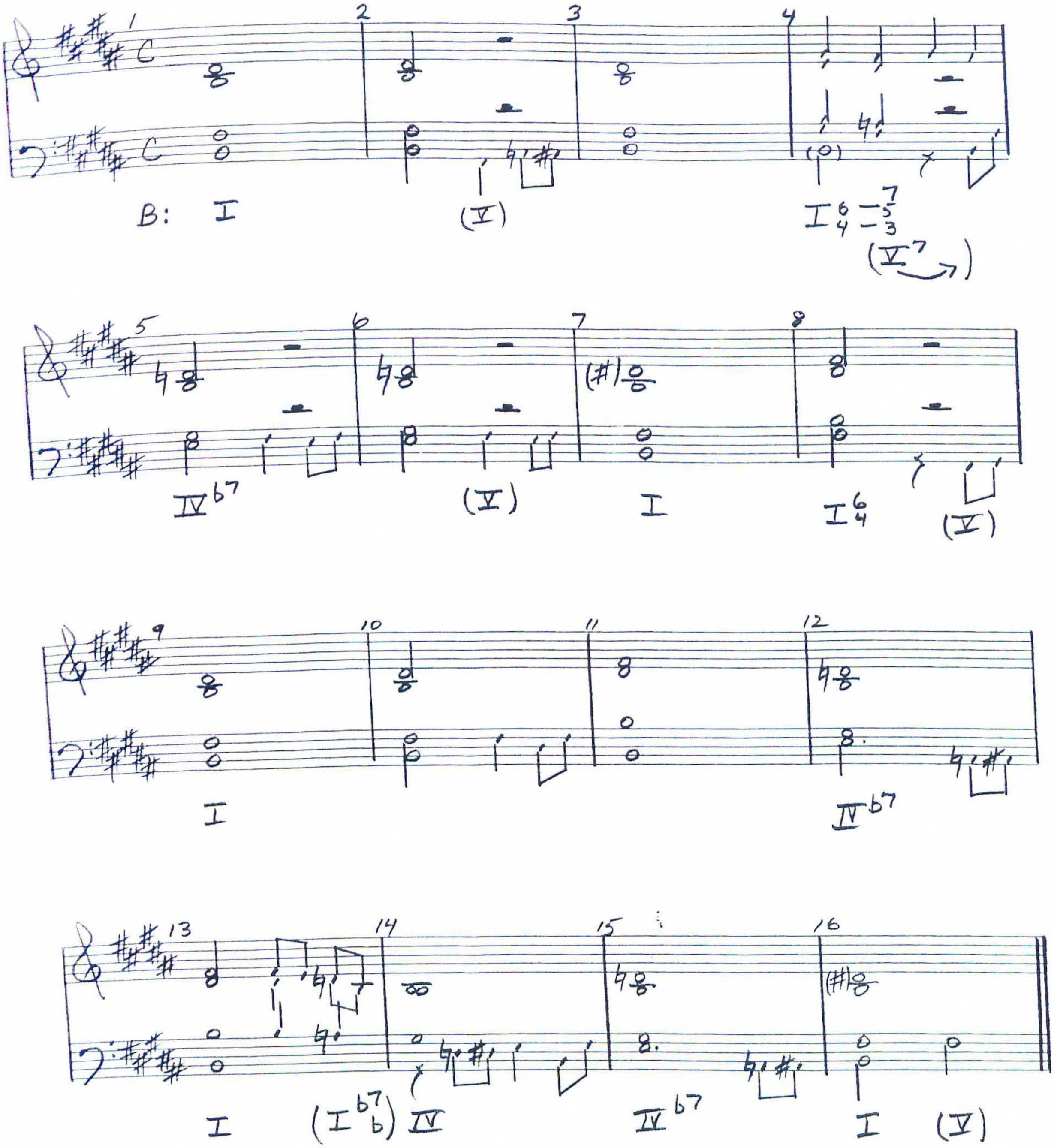
Chord Structures and Added Dissonance

Fewer chords and less added dissonance in the background vocal parts enhance the prominence of the lead vocal. Thus, gospel-style quartet performances show less use of barbershop harmony and jazz-style dissonances. Except for the dominant seventh chord, there are no chords with added dissonance in "Mary Don't You Weep." Moreover, the entire performance hinges on two sonorities—I and IV in the key of B major. The reduction in example 4.13 shows the two-chord harmonic plan of the background voices in the chorus.

---

[23] For more examples of the boogie-woogie bass line in gospel quartet performances listen to "Dig a Little Deeper" (Norfolk Singers) from Glad I Found the Lord; "Jesus Met theWoman at the Well" (Famous Blue Jay Singers) from Jubilation! Great Gospel Performances Vol. 1; and "My Rock" (Swan Silvertones) from Jubilation! Great Gospel Performances Vol. 2: More Black Gospel, Rhino R2 70289, 1992.

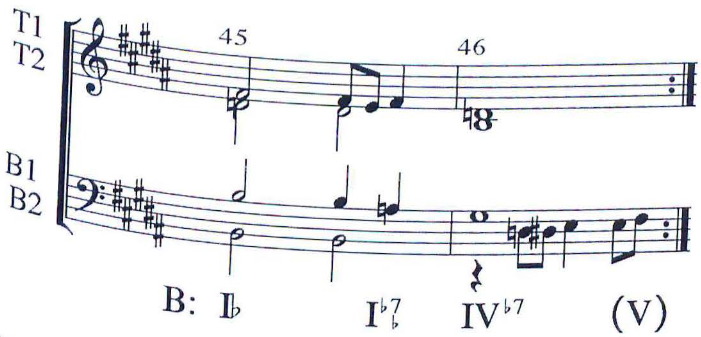
Example 4. 13: Rhythmic Reduction of Chorus, Background Voice Parts


1
2
3
4
B: I
(V)
I 6/4 – 7/5/3
(V7 → 7)
5
6
7
8
IV b7
(V)
I
I 6/4
(V)
9
10
11
12
I
IV b7
13
14
15
16
I
(I b7/b)
IV
IV b7
I
(V)

The basic harmonic structures in gospel-style performances accommodate, and even encourage, improvisation by the lead vocal. That gospel vamps occupied a significant part of the formal structure is proof of this notion. Accordingly, gospel vamps were devised as "working sections" for the lead vocal—the points in the performance designed to showcase the melodic, rhythmic, timbral and textual interpolations of the lead.[24] Even the length of the vamp is extemporaneous, left to the discretion of the lead singer.

In "Mary Don't You Weep," the opening section of the vamp is a two-measure pattern taken from the chorus. Example 4.14 is a rhythmic reduction of the opening vamp.

Example 4. 14: Rhythmic Reduction of Opening Vamp



Harmonic progression in the opening vamp utilizes the only two sonorities of the entire performance: I—IV.

A closing vamp extends the melodic idea of the opening vamp to the four-measure pattern shown in example 4.15.

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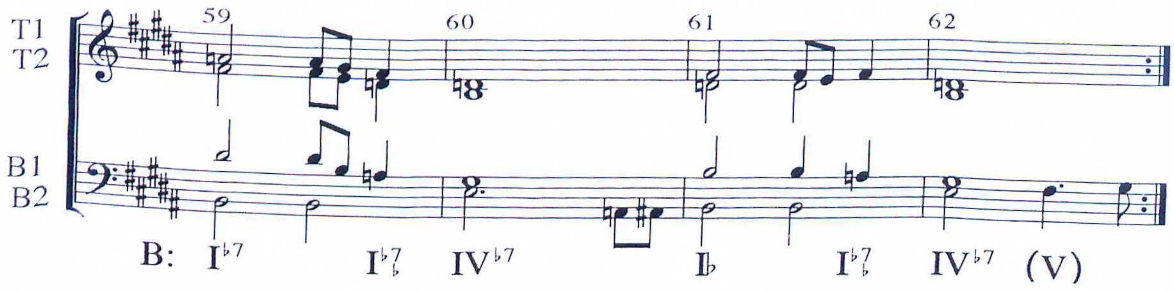
[24] Rubman, 86–87.

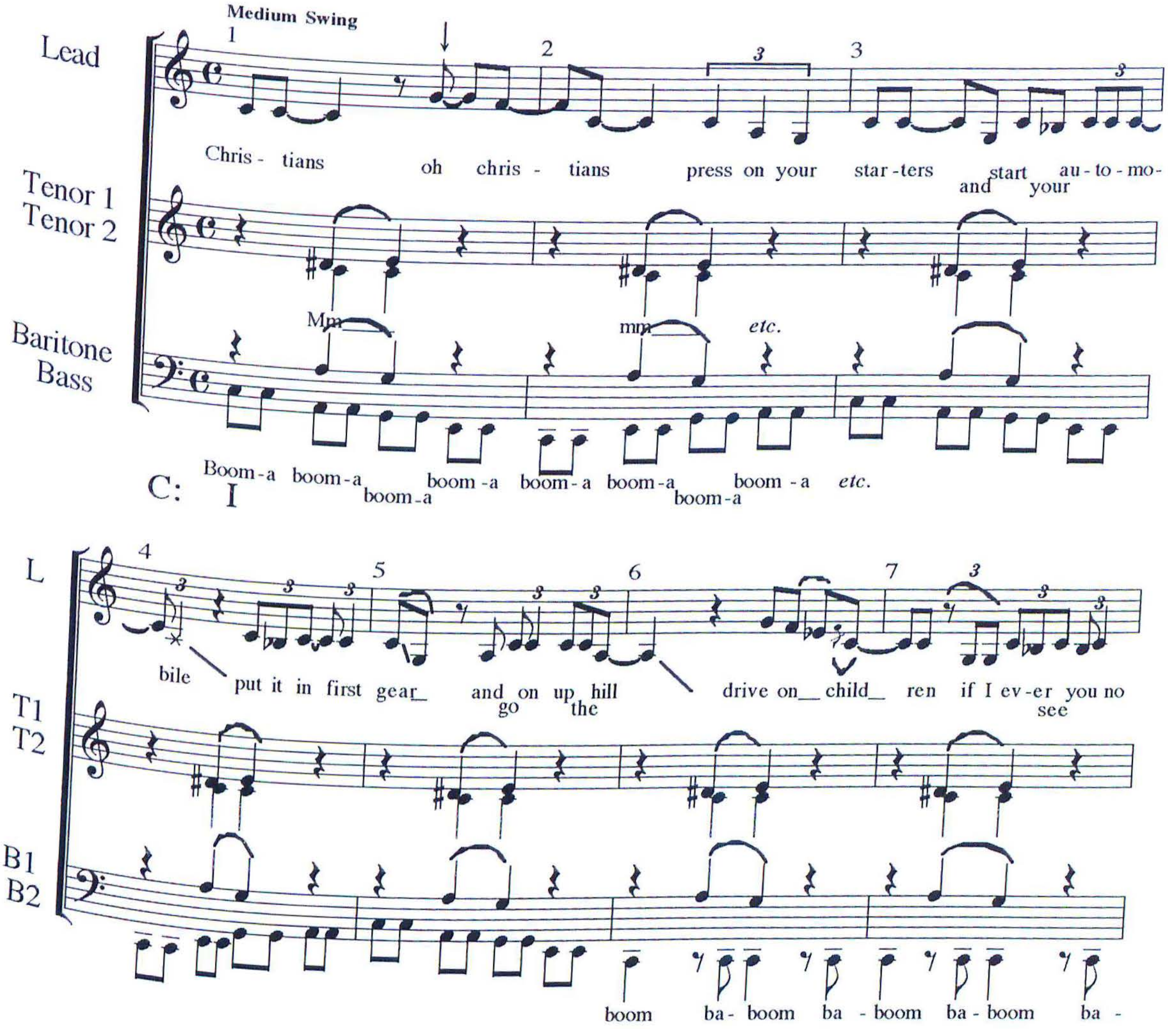
Example 4. 15: Rhythmic Reduction of Closing Vamp



Two measures are added to the beginning of the opening vamp (example 4.14) to produce the four-measure pattern of the closing vamp (example 4.15). However, the harmonic progression remains unchanged. Each two-measure group of the closing vamp progresses from I to IV.

Example 4.16 presents the vamp from another gospel-style performance exhibiting a similarly limited harmonic structure supporting an improvisatory lead vocal.

Example 4. 16: "Christian's Automobile," Vamp, Dixie Hummingbirds (1957)[25]


Medium Swing
Lead
Tenor 1
Tenor 2
Baritone
Bass
Chris - tians oh chris - tians press on your star - ters and start your au - to - mo-
Mm mm etc.
Boom-a boom-a boom-a boom-a boom-a boom-a boom-a boom-a etc.
C: I
L
T1
T2
B1
B2
bile put it in first gear_ and go on up the hill drive on_ child_ ren if I ev - er you no see
boom ba - boom ba - boom ba - boom ba -

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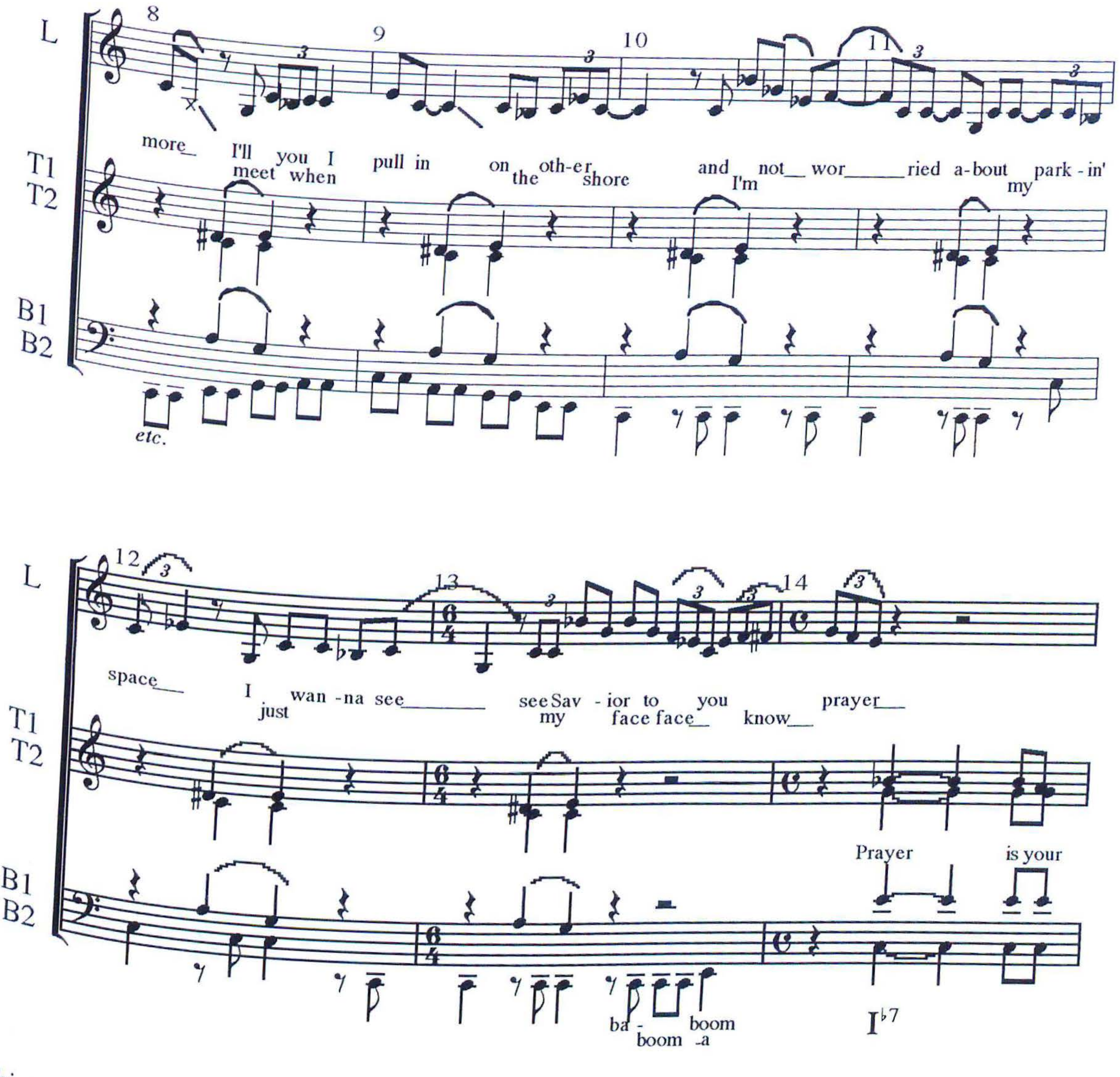
[25] Jubilee! Great Gospel Performances, Vol. 1.


L
T1
T2
B1
B2
8
9
10
11
more_ I'll meet you when I pull in on the oth-er shore and I'm not_ wor_____ried a-bout my park-in'
etc.
12
13
14
space_ I just wan-na see______ see my Sav-ior face to face_ you know_ prayer_
Prayer is your
ba- boom boom -a
I♭7

This vamp is even more harmonically restricted than that in "Mary Don't You Weep," with harmonic progression limited to a single sonority—the tonic chord—over which the lead improvises.[26]

Cadences in the gospel style are more complete than in the earlier folk and jubilee styles. This is due, in part, to more consistent use of complete chords. Moreover, there are generally no “missing chords” at cadence points, as in the case of the applied dominant-to-tonic authentic cadence in the jubilee style.

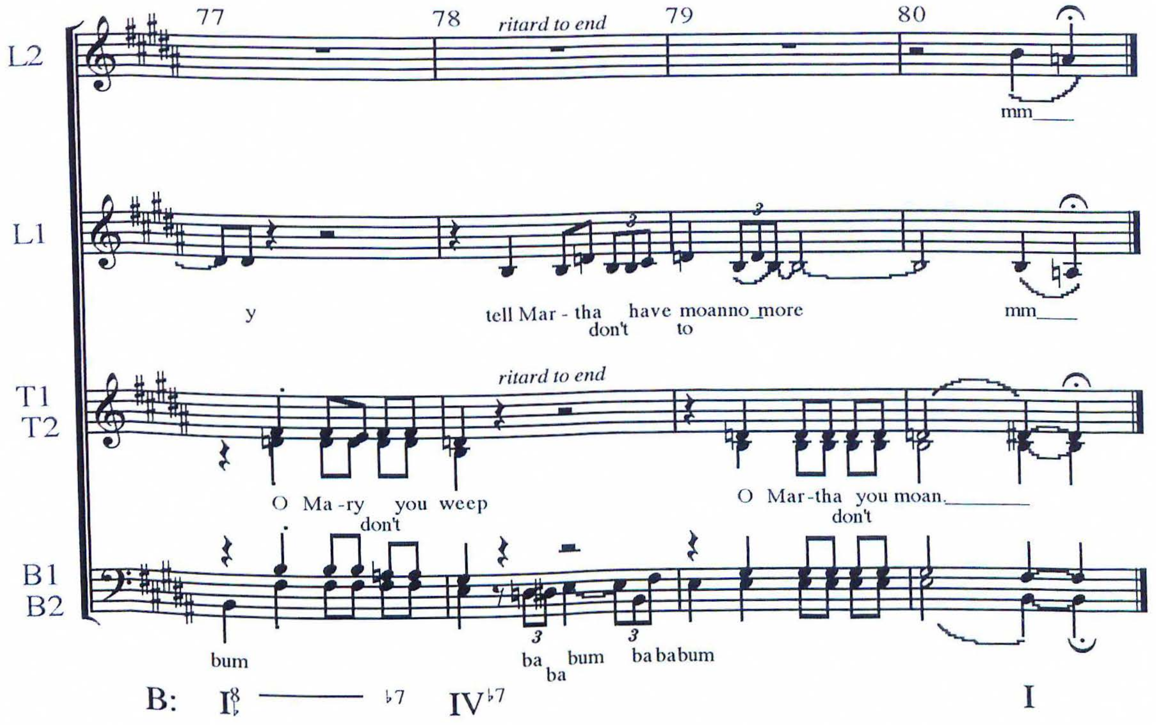
---

[26] For more examples of limited harmonic progressions supporting prominent lead performances listen to "I'll Never Forget" (Dixie Hummingbirds) from The Gospel

However, plagal cadences occur more frequently than authentic cadences in the gospel style, as shown in the three instances of example 4.17.

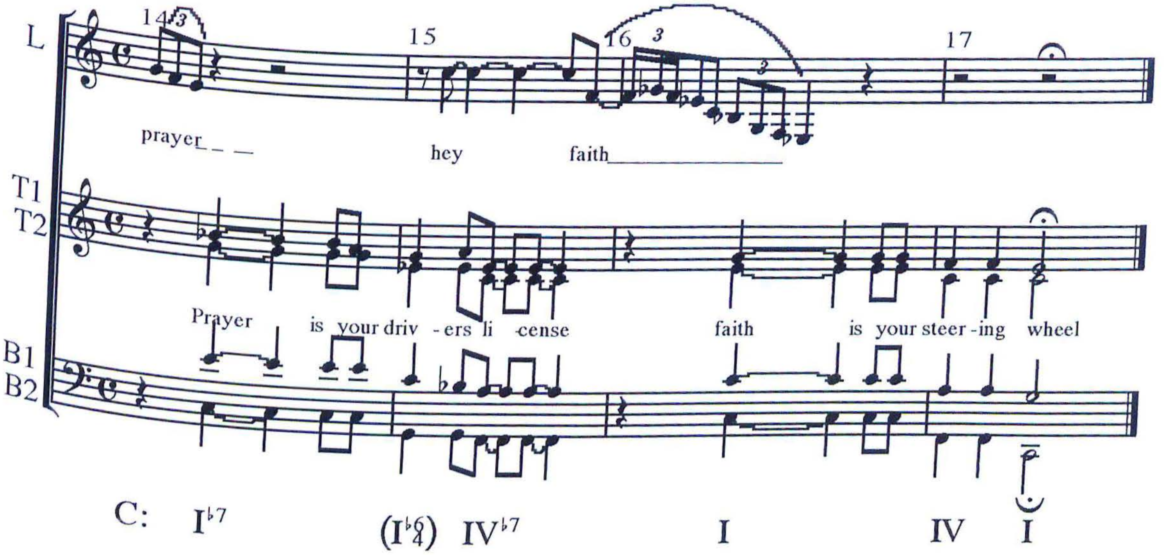
Example 4. 17: Plagal Cadences in Gospel-Style Performances

(a)

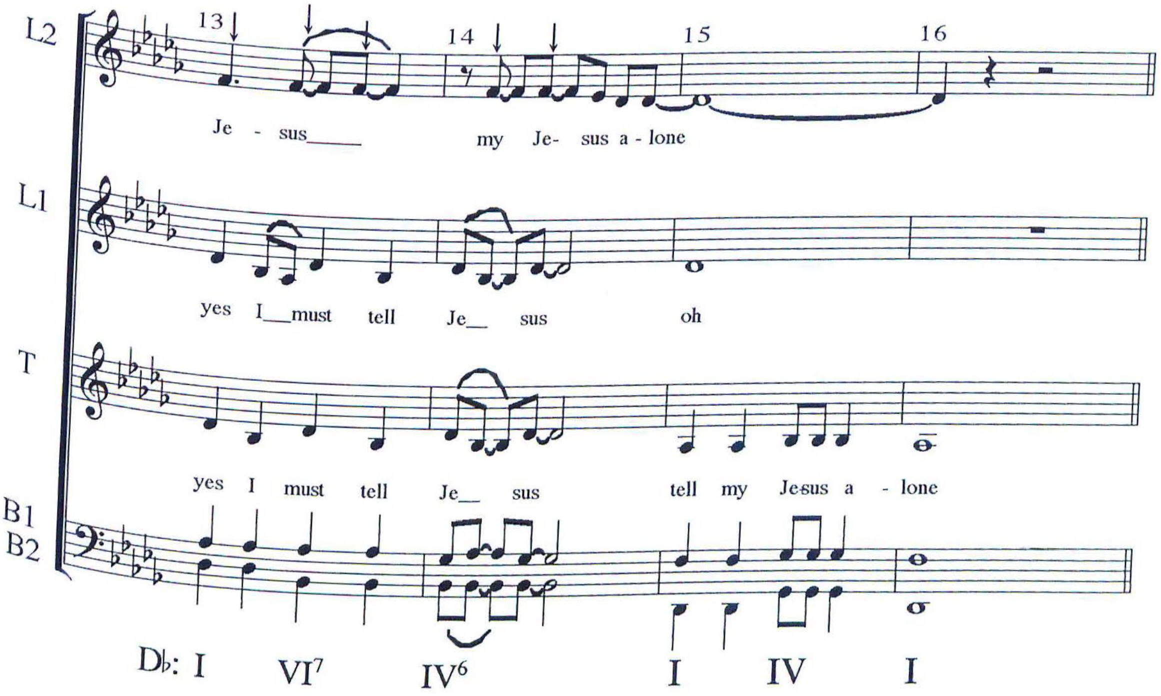

77
78
79
80
ritard to end
L2
mm
L1
y
tell Mar - tha don't have to moanno more
mm
T1
T2
ritard to end
O Ma -ry don't you weep
O Mar-tha don't you moan
B1
B2
bum
ba ba bum
ba ba bum
B: I♭7 IV♭7 I

Sound, Columbia/Legacy C2K 57160, 1994; and “Well, Well, Well” (Soul Stirrers) from All of My Appointed Time.

(b)


L
T1
T2
B1
B2
14
15
16
17
3
prayer
hey
faith
Prayer
is your driv - ers li - cense
faith
is your steer - ing wheel
C: I♭7
(I♭6/4) IV♭7
I
IV I

(c)


L2
L1
T
B1
B2
13
14
15
16
Je - sus
my Je- sus a - lone
yes I must tell Je sus
oh
yes I must tell Je sus
tell my Je-sus a - lone
D♭: I
VI7
IV6
I
IV
I

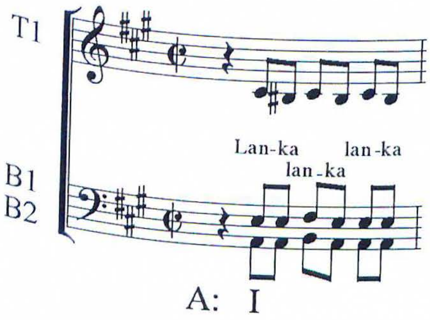
Example 4.17 shows the final plagal cadence from "Mary Don't You Weep" with plagal cadences from previously discussed performances (see examples 4.3 and 4.9b). The prominence of plagal cadences results from the prominence of vamps in the gospel style. Because of their repetitious nature, gospel-style vamps tend to avoid dominant chords that might suggest a cadence point, thereby bringing closure to an otherwise indefinite repeating pattern. Therefore, harmonic progressions such as I—IV in the vamp of "Mary Don't You Weep" and the static I in the vamp of "Christian's Automobile" (see example 4.3) are very common. It is in this harmonic milieu—effecting continued momentum—that plagal cadences became popular.

Call-and-Response

The clanka lanka riff pattern, previously identified as a form of call-and-response in the folk style, developed as an accompanimental device for an emergent prominent lead singer. As the lead singer became more prominent in the gospel period of quartet singing, the clanka lanka riff continued to flourish and evolve. The following discussion examines how it developed in conjunction with other burgeoning threads of development.

Example 4.18 presents the clanka lanka riff in an early form as performed by the Silver Leaf Quartet in 1928.

Example 4. 18: The Clanka Lanka Riff[27]



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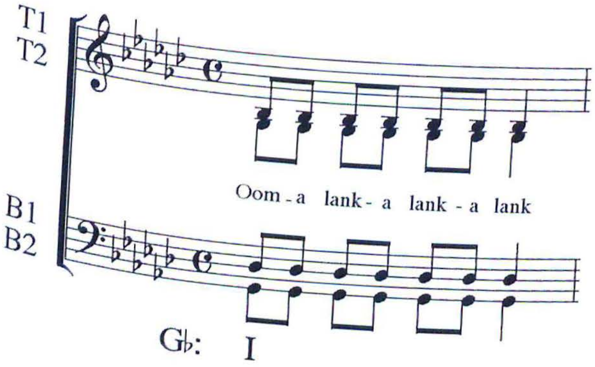
[27] "Sleep On, Mother," Silver Leaf Quartette of Norfolk (1928–1931).

In performances employing the clanka lanka riff, the harmony may have changed, but the rhythm and text of the one-measure pattern (example 4.18) generally remained constant.

For comparison, example 4.19 presents an updated version of the clanka lanka riff with gospel-style modifications.

Example 4. 19: Gospel-Style Developments of the Clanka Lanka Riff[28]



The clanka lanka riff pattern in example 4.19 shows increased textual variety with the addition of the "oom" syllable. Also, this pattern employs swing eighths compared to evenly punctuated eighth notes in example 4.18. Furthermore, example 4.19 shows an increase in the number of voice parts accompanying the lead voice (not shown). Finally, example 4.19 shows a change from the two-beat rhythmic feel of earlier styles to the four-beat rhythmic feel (marked by common-time meter) that is characteristic of the gospel period.

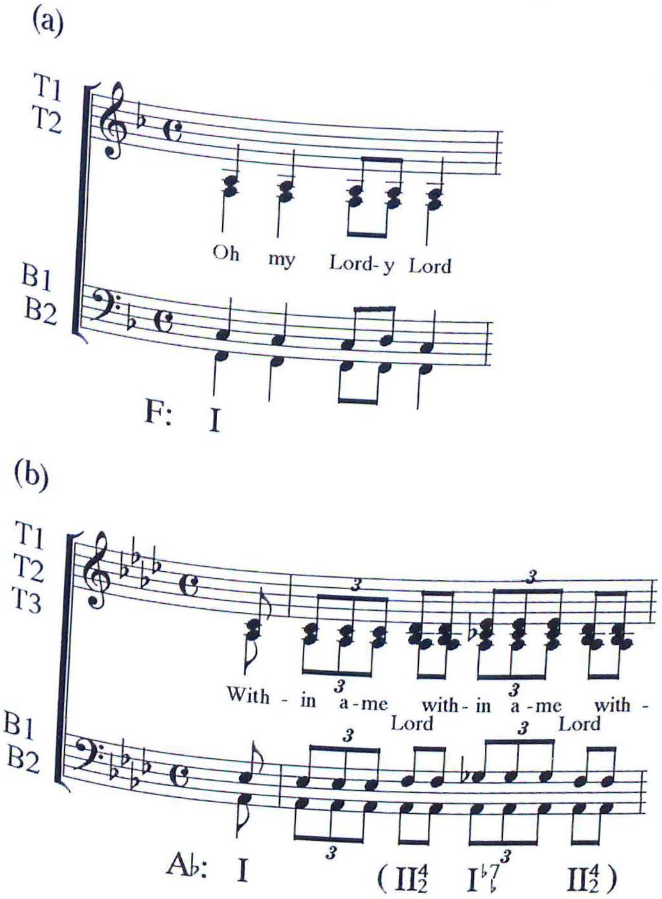
According to Boyer, some quartets substituted the phrase "Oh my Lord-y, Lord-y, Lord" for the "Oom-a lank-a, lank-a, lank" employed in example 4.19.[29] Though it was a generic phrase not necessarily related to the text of the lead vocal performance, the use of "real" words represents a further development of the clanka lanka riff. Example 4.20 shows other developments in the use of real words.

---

[28] "Standing in the Safety Zone" from Fairfield Four, Standing in the Safety Zone, Warner Alliance WBD-4137, 1992.

[29] Boyer, How Sweet the Sound, 95.

Example 4. 20: Further Developments of the Clanka Lanka Riff[30]


(a)
T1
T2
Oh my Lord- y Lord
B1
B2
F: I
(b)
T1
T2
T3
With - in a-me with- in a-me with -
Lord Lord
B1
B2
Ab: I (II4/2 I♭7/♭ II4/2)

Example 4.20 shows clanka lanka riffs from separate performances of the same song—"Something within Me." Example 4.20a shows a modification of the phrase identified by Boyer. It truncates the number of syllables and emphasizes quarter notes instead of eighth notes. Example 4.20b shows yet another development. It uses words directly related to the text of the song. Moreover, the words derive from the title of the song—"Something within Me."[31]

---

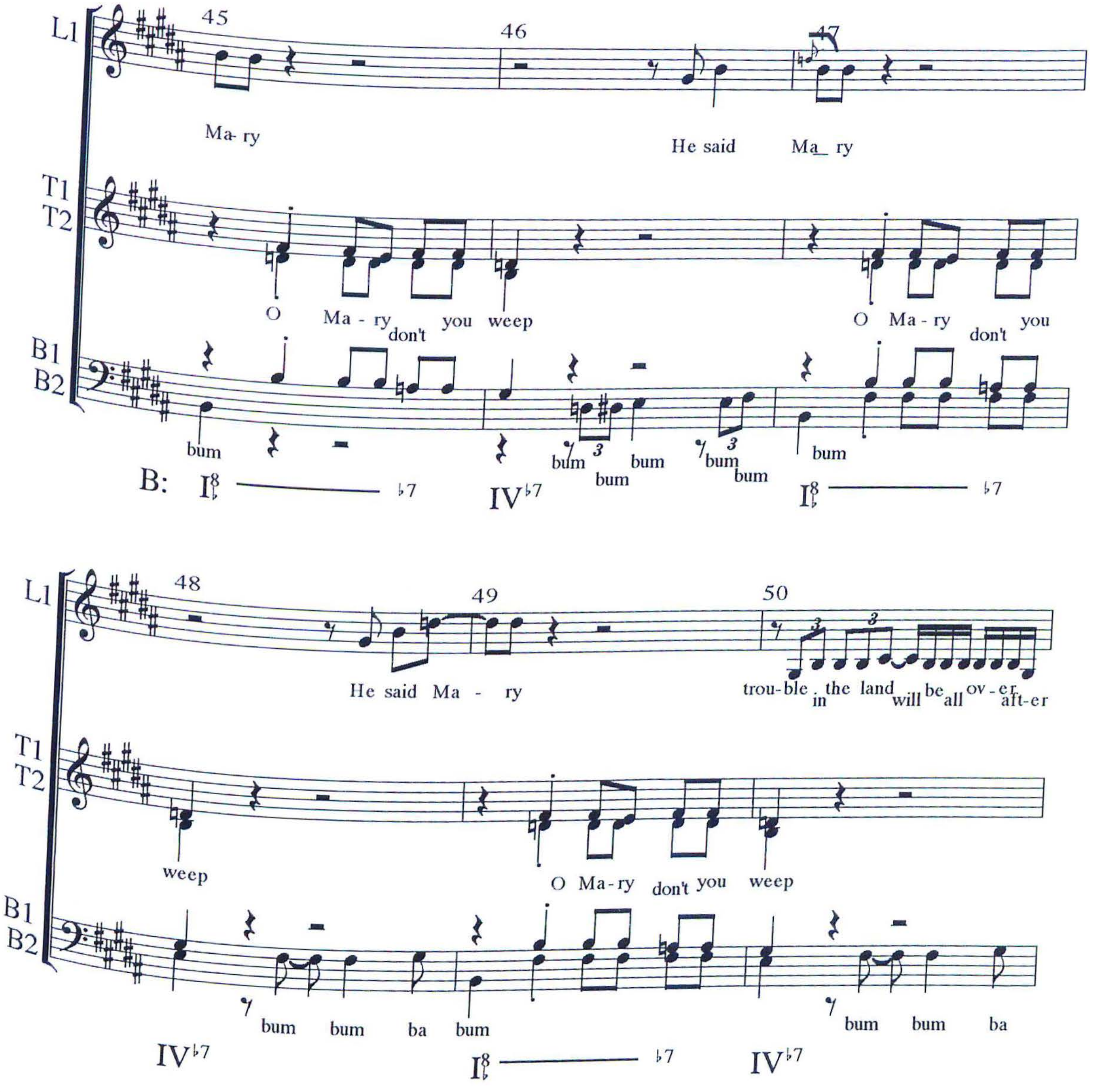
[30] "Something within Me," Best of the Pilgrim Travelers; and "Something within Me," TAKE 6, So Much 2 Say.

"Mary Don't You Weep" combines elements from the clanka lanka riff style and a basic call-and-response pattern. The background voice parts are in a call-and-response pattern with the lead voice part throughout the performance. However, the vamp of "Mary Don't You Weep" integrates elements of the clanka lanka riff style, as shown in example 4.21.

---

[31] Example 4.20b is a performance from the neo-jubilee trend, presented here for continuity in examining the development of the clanka lanka riff. A formal discussion of the neo-jubilee trend takes place in chapter V.

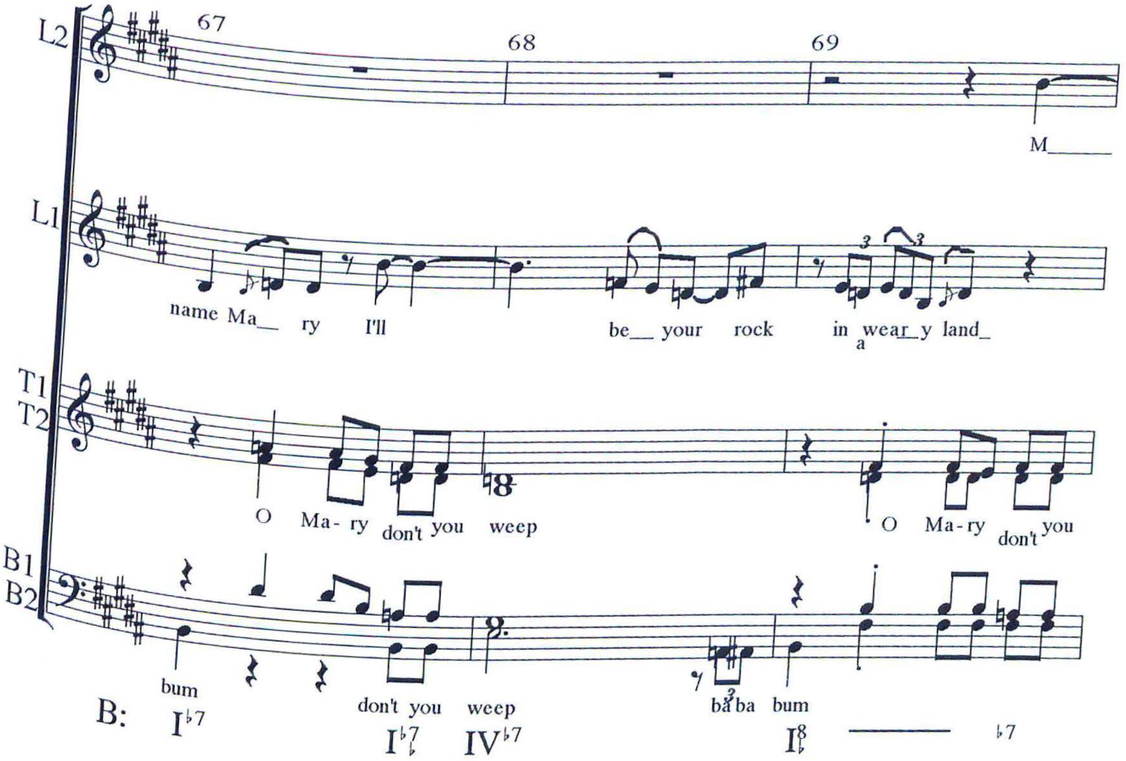
Example 4. 21: Opening Vamp

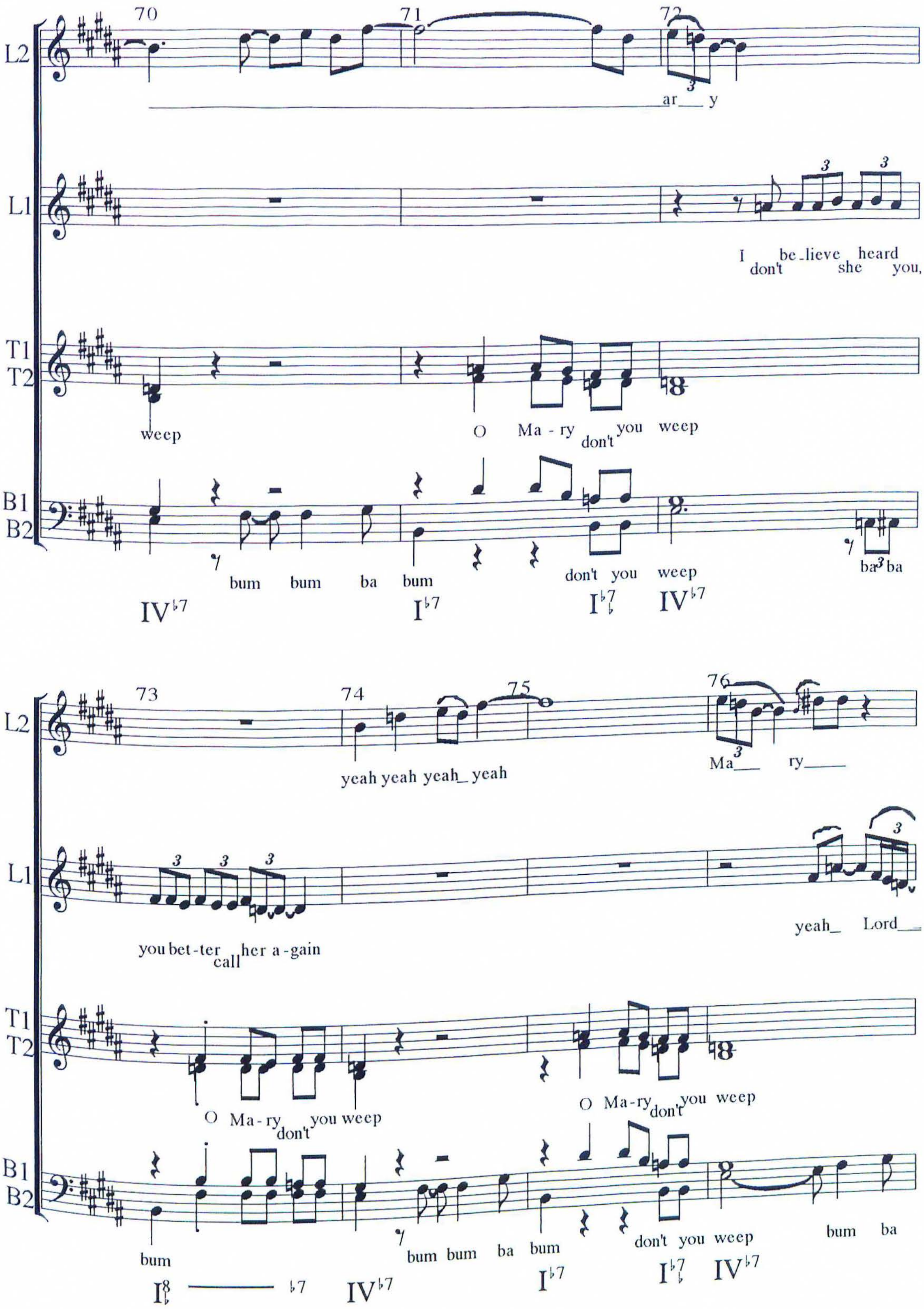

L1
T1
T2
B1
B2
45
46
47
48
49
50
Ma- ry
He said
Ma_ ry
O Ma - ry don't you weep
O Ma - ry don't you
bum
bum bum bum
bum bum
B: I♭7 ♭7 IV♭7 I♭7 ♭7
He said Ma - ry
trou-ble in the land will be all ov-er aft-er
weep
O Ma-ry don't you weep
bum bum ba bum
bum bum ba
IV♭7 I♭7 ♭7 IV♭7

Like the clanka lanka riff pattern in example 4.20b, the vamp of "Mary Don't You Weep" (example 4.21) exhibits a repeating accompanimental pattern that employs real words directly related to the text of the lead vocal performance. However, it differs from the clanka lanka riff in that it repeats every two measures instead of every measure, which accommodates the basic call-and-response relationship between lead and background. Thus, the titular phrase "O Mary Don't You Weep" is the "response" of the background voices in measure 45 (example 4.21) and "He said Mary" is the "call" of the lead voice in measure 46, to which the background voices respond again in measure 47.

While the lead engages the background voices in a call-and-response pattern throughout "Mary Don't You Weep," a secondary call-and-response pattern commences when the second lead enters in the closing vamp (example 4.22).

Example 4. 22: Closing Vamp

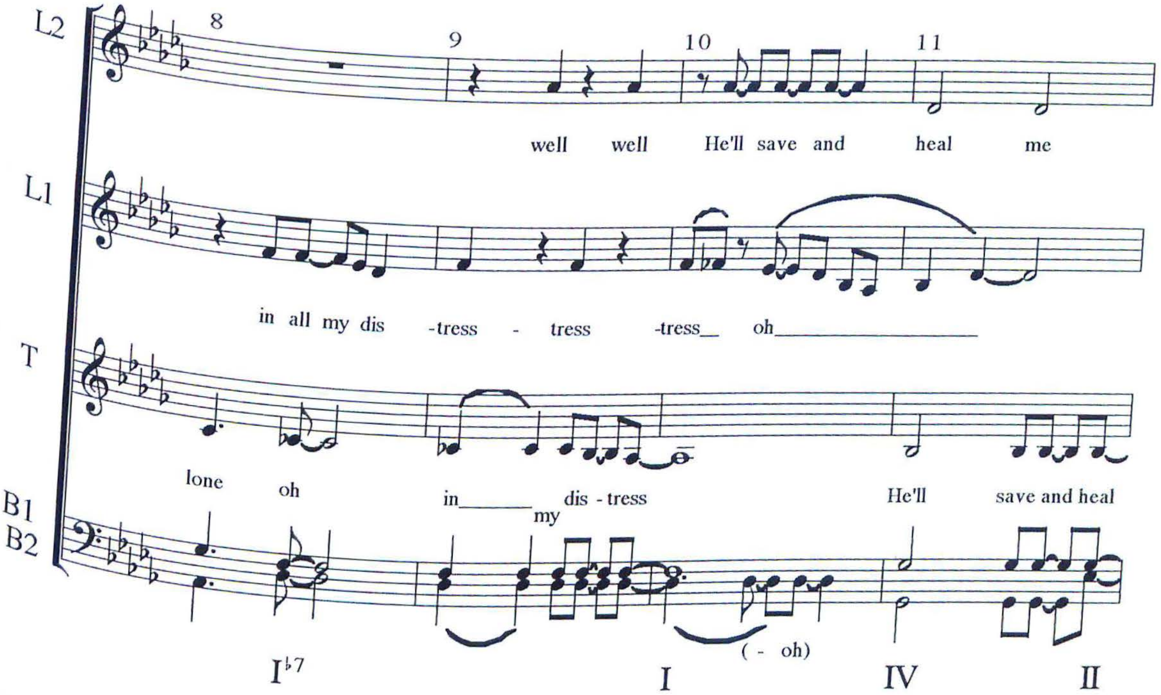

L2
L1
T1
T2
B1
B2
67
68
69
M___
name Ma__ ry I'll
be__ your rock
in a wear_y land_
O Ma- ry don't you weep
O Ma-ry don't you
bum
don't you weep
ba ba bum
B: I♭7
I♭7 IV♭7
I♭8 ♭7


70
71
72
73
74
75
76
L2
L1
T1
T2
B1
B2
ar__ y
I don't be-lieve she heard you,
weep
O Ma-ry don't you weep
bum bum ba bum
don't you weep
ba ba
IV♭7
I♭7
I♭7
IV♭7
yeah yeah yeah_ yeah
Ma__ ry___
you bet-ter call her a-gain
yeah_ Lord__
O Ma-ry don't you weep
O Ma-ry don't you weep
bum
bum bum ba bum
don't you weep
bum ba
I8♭ ♭7
IV♭7
I♭7
I♭7
IV♭7

Note how the lead engages the second lead in an actual dialogue in example 4.22. When the second lead exclaims "M-ar-y," stretched from the end of measure 69 through measure 72, the lead responds with "I don't believe she heard you, you better call her again." The second lead then cries out more emphatically, this time preceding "Mary" with "yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah!" This dialogue transpires over the ongoing riff pattern of the background voices creating a multi-dimensional call-and-response pattern.

Multi-dimensional call-and-response patterns are common in gospel-style performances that incorporate a second lead. Example 4.23 shows another example.

Example 4. 23: Multi-Dimensional Call-and-Response[32]


L2
8
9
10
11
well well He'll save and heal me
L1
in all my dis -tress - tress -tress__ oh________
T
lone oh in_____ my dis - tress He'll save and heal
B1
B2
(- oh)
I♭7
I
IV
II

When the lead sings "in all my distress" beginning in measure 8, the background voices answer in measure 9 with the same text. Likewise, when the second lead intones "He'll save and heal me" beginning in measure 10, the background voices repeat the same text in measure 11. In the midst of this call-and-response pattern, the first and second lead parts engage in a secondary pattern in measure 9. The first lead repeats the latter syllable of the word "distress" on the strong beats of the measure, while the second lead responds with "well" on the corresponding weak beats.[33]

---

[32] "I Must Tell Jesus"(Famous Blue Jay Singers) from Glad I Found the Lord.

Variation Techniques

As in the folk and jubilee styles, melodic variation in individual voice parts is common in the gospel style. Additionally, with the emergence of the prominent lead singer in the gospel style there is a new dimension in variation techniques—textual variation. This form of variation is apparent in the concluding phrases of the first three sections of "Mary Don't You Weep" presented in example 4.24.

Example 4. 24: Textual Variation in Lead Vocal Performance

(a) Pharaoh's army they got drowned in the sea one day;
But Jesus said Mary yo' little sister don't have to moan no more.

(b) (But listen) Pharaoh's army they got drowned in the sea one day;
But I believe a man said Mary yo' little sister don't have to moan no more.

(c) (Because-a) Pharaoh's army, that's what the Bible said,
got drowned in the sea one day;
But I believe the man said Mary ...

The three instances of example 4.24 represent three variations of the text from the original Negro spiritual (see example 4.7a). The corresponding text from the original spiritual is:

Pharaoh's army got drowned,
O Mary don't you weep.

Textual variation evolves through an additive process. This is clearly illustrated in the way the first line of text from the original spiritual (presented above) expands progressively in the three instances of example 4.24. The text in example 4.24a is from the end of the opening chorus (measures 8–15) of the Swan Silvertones performance. Note how the first line from the original text expands to include the words "they" and "in the sea one day." Example 4.24b is from the second chorus (measures 23–31) and expands further. It adds the lead-in phrase "but listen" to the beginning of the line. Example 4.24c is from the verse (measures 40–45), which is truncated by an early entrance of the vamp. Here, the phrase "that's what the Bible said" replaces the word "they" from examples 4.24a and 4.24b in an expansive gesture. And though the idea of a lead-in phrase is maintained from example 4.24b, the words are altered to "because-a" at the beginning of example 4.24c.

---

[33] For another example of multi-dimensional call-and-response listen to "How I

Example 4.24 also shows an expansion of the second line of text from the original Negro spiritual—"O Mary don't you weep." Once expanded in example 4.24a, it is the beginning of the line that undergoes more variation in examples 4.24b and 4.24c. Thus, the phrase "But Jesus said" in example 4.24a changes to "but I believe a man said" in example 4.24b. A more subtle change occurs in example 4.24c where "a man" (example 4.24b) becomes "the man."[34]

Other Structural Features

The text of "Mary Don't You Weep" relates to the song's harmonic design in several ways. The text of the chorus is drawn from the two major divisions of the Bible—the Old and New Testaments. The first phrase of the chorus concerns "Mary and Martha," two characters from the New Testament:

Got Over" from Swan Silvertones, Love Lifted Me/My Rock CDCHD 340, 1991.

[34] For more examples of variation in lead vocal performances listen to "What Do You Know about Jesus?" and "Milky White Way" from Swan Silvertones, Love Lifted Me/My Rock; "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" from The Soul Stirrers, Heaven is My Home, Specialty SPCD–7040–2, 1993; and "Jesus Done Just What He Said" from The Soul Stirrers, Jesus Gave Me Water, Specialty SPCD–7031–2, 1992.

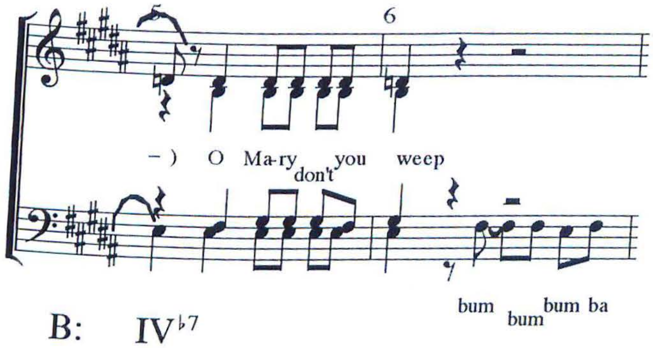
O Mary don't you weep, O Martha don't you moan;
O Mary don't you weep, O Martha don't you moan.[35]

The second phrase interjects references to the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt—a story from the Old Testament:

(Pharaoh's army)
O Mary don't you weep, down in the Red Sea;
O Mary don't you weep, O Martha don't you moan.[36]

The music captures the textual duality by using two sonorities throughout the song—I and IV in the key of B major. This dual connection between words and music is strengthened by duality of mode as well. Throughout the chorus, the tonic chord associates with the major mode. Conversely, the subdominant associates with the minor mode. The first tenor consistently adds $\flat\hat{3}$ to the subdominant harmony creating IV$^{\flat 7}$ as in measures 5–6, shown in example 4.25.

Example 4. 25: Mode Mixture



The fundamental structure of the lead and bass (see example 4.5) also depicts the duality of the text with a structural interruption. The interruption reflects the shift of emphasis in the text from the New Testament (NT) theme to the Old Testament (OT) theme at the beginning of the chorus' second phrase. The following diagram illustrates:

---

[35] John 11:19.

[36] Exod. 14:23ff.

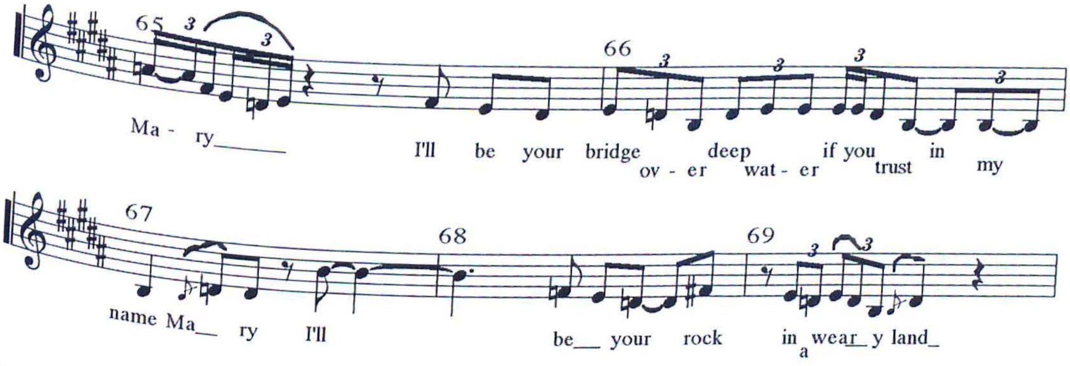
$\hat{3}$—$\hat{2}$ || $\hat{3}$—$\hat{2}$—$\hat{1}$

I—V I—V—I

NT OT

The lead singer treats text much the same way a jazz musician improvises a solo, particularly in the vamp. At measures 65–69, shown in example 4.26, the lead improvises two references to water suggested by text from the chorus—"I'll be your bridge over deep water … " and "I'll be your rock in a weary land."

Example 4. 26: Textual Development in Lead Vocal Performance


65
3
3
Ma - ry
I'll be your bridge over water deep if you trust in my
66
3
3
3
3
67
name Ma ry I'll
68
be your rock
69
in a weary land
3
3

Both references represent variations on a theme. The textual theme established in the chorus is, "Pharaoh's army, they got drowned in the sea one day." With the idea of "water" as the unifying element, the vamp returns to this theme in measures 65–67 (example 4.26) with the phrase "I'll be your bridge over deep water if you trust in my name Mary."

The second reference to water is less overt. "I'll be your rock in a weary land" (measures 67–69, example 4.26) refers to a "rock" in a desert that yielded a spring of water upon being struck by the rod of Moses the prophet. This reference comes from the same scriptural narrative as the drowning of Pharaoh's army, but later in the story.[37]

Summary

The most significant development of the gospel period of quartet singing was the shift of emphasis from group singing to lead singing. This shift of emphasis was foreshadowed by the clanka lanka riff style from the folk tradition and the narrative style from the jubilee tradition. Consequently, quartets added a fifth voice to maintain a consistent four-part structure as accompaniment for the new prominent lead singer.

An important thread of development that continued to evolve in the gospel style is the call-and-response technique. The introduction of gospel-style vamps represented continued development of the technique, as shown in "Mary Don't You Weep." Just as riff patterns (such as the clanka lanka riff and instrumental-style riff) are a form of call-and-response, gospel vamps are composed of a repeating riff as accompaniment for an improvising lead singer. Also, "Mary Don't You Weep" employs a second lead (another new feature of the gospel style), which creates a multi-dimensional call-and-response pattern. Thus, call-and-response patterns occur simultaneously between lead and group, and lead and second lead.

The influence of big band jazz is evident in the change from a two-beat rhythmic feel in earlier quartet styles to a four-beat rhythmic feel in the gospel style. This thread of development runs parallel to the shift in big band jazz from a two-beat feel in Chicago Style Dixieland to a four-beat feel in the Swing Era. "Mary Don't You Weep," an adaptation of a Negro spiritual, reflects the change of feel with a change of meter. And just as swing eighths accompanied the change of feel in big band jazz, likewise, swing eighths in the gospel-style adaptation of "Mary Don't You Weep" replace the evenly punctuated eighth notes of the original Negro spiritual.

---

[37] Exod. 17:5–6.

Another thread of development that has a parallel in the evolution of jazz is the development of the bass voice. Just as boogie-woogie influenced a change from a two-beat feel to a four-beat feel in jazz, the use of boogie-woogie bass patterns effected the same change of rhythmic feel in quartet music. Though not observed in "Mary Don't You Weep," several quartet performances from the gospel period demonstrate the boogie-woogie influence. Boogie-woogie bass lines represented the beginning of walking bass lines in quartet singing—a trait that would be further developed in the recent neo-jubilee trend.

Chord structures in the gospel style show a convergence of characteristics from the earlier folk and jubilee styles. On the one hand, chords are complete (containing roots and thirds) most of the time—a carry-over from the jubilee style. On the other hand, the seventh is the only regularly added dissonance, as in the folk style. Also, harmonic progression is often restricted in gospel-style performances, particularly in vamps, which encourages improvisation by the lead singer. "Mary Don't You Weep," uses two chords exclusively—I and IV.

Finally, lead singing is highly improvisatory in the gospel style, as saliently displayed in "Mary Don't You Weep." As a consequence, textual variation in repeated sections of music is a prominent characteristic of gospel-style performances, representing continued development of variation techniques in the genre.

CHAPTER V

"MARY"

Characteristics of Neo-Jubilee Trend

At present, there is one vocal group from the black religious quartet singing tradition enjoying unprecedented success. To date, recorded performances of the group TAKE 6 have garnered seven Grammy awards.[1] Additionally, one of TAKE 6's five commercially released recordings has sold over a million units. Two other recordings have sold over 500,000 units. Along with the critical acclaim and mass appeal achieved by TAKE 6, scholarship acknowledges their recent contribution to the development of black religious quartet singing with statements like the following:

> Lornell's forecast for the future of gospel quartet singing is rather pessimistic; he doubts that the genre will ever again approach its mid-century apogee. Perhaps not, but the musical heritage of the quartet is assured by groups such as Take Six [i.e., TAKE 6] and the numerous popular ensembles whose artistic and cultural foundations are certainly indebted to this tradition.[2]

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[1] The Grammy award is regarded among the most prestigious honors given for a recorded musical performance released in the United States. Members of the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences (NARAS) elect the winners of the award. Those professionals responsible for the creation of commercially released recordings comprise the voting members, including performers, producers, arrangers, sound engineers and recording companies.

[2] Willie Strong, review of Happy in the Service of the Lord, by Kip Lornell, in College Music Symposium 36 (1996): 177–79. See also Reagon, 14; and Allen, 8.

A lesser known group, the Breath of Life Quartet, is significant for their stylistic influence on TAKE 6.[3] They began recording professionally thirteen years before TAKE 6 and their vocal arrangements represent a critical turning point in the harmonic development of the genre. Innovations by TAKE 6 and the Breath of Life Quartet constitute a trend of development that this writer designates neo-jubilee.

As its name suggests, the most significant development of the neo-jubilee trend is the return of emphasis to group singing. Additionally, a new emphasis on jazz harmonization combines with the smooth well-blended group sound associated with jubilee-style quartets. Thus, ninth, eleventh and thirteenth chords are commonplace, representing expansion of added dissonances established in the jubilee style (namely sevenths and occasional use of the added sixth).[4]

New developments in quartet singing continue to parallel developments in big band jazz. For instance, neo-jubilee performances regularly employ chord voicings associated with big bands of the Swing Era. Also, TAKE 6 often emulates the rhythmic interplay among instrumental sections in big band jazz (i.e., trumpets, trombones, saxophones and rhythm). And the boogie-woogie-style walking bass gives way to a more linear approach just as it did in the development of big band jazz. Thus, there are more passing-tone dissonances as bass lines anticipate and delay the arrival of the roots of chords.

Harmonic variation is prominent in the neo-jubilee trend, which can be seen as further development of the melodic variation common in earlier styles. Thus, there are more instances of melodic repetition in successive phrases of a song accompanied by varying harmonic progressions.

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[3] Mr. Claude V. McKnight III, an original member of TAKE 6, testifies to the direct influence of the Breath of Life Quartet. Claude V. McKnight III, interview by author, 3 August 1995, live interview, Nashville, Tenn.

[4] Mr. Shelton Kilby, the vocal arranger for the Breath of Life Quartet, cites the Hi-Lo's as the primary influence on the use of dissonance in Breath of Life Quartet

The Breath of Life Quartet adheres to the emphasis on group singing more strictly than TAKE 6. TAKE 6 often uses the quasi-jubilee approach, exhibiting a balance between group and lead emphasis. "Mary" is one such performance. Moreover, the arrangement is based on the Swan Silvertones gospel-style performance of "Mary Don't You Weep" examined in chapter IV.[5] Comparison of the two performances occurs frequently throughout this chapter to highlight recent neo-jubilee-trend characteristics.

Formal Structure

In the earlier Swan Silvertones performance of "Mary Don't You Weep," there is only one verse. Because of an elision with the vamp that follows, the verse is shortened by four measures and never appears in its entirety. The verse (V) occurs twice in the more recent TAKE 6 performance, once in its entirety (a sixteen-measure period) and once with the elision. Also, the TAKE 6 performance ends with an additional half chorus (c), the last eight measures of a full chorus (C). These exceptions aside, the TAKE 6 performance follows the structure of the Swan Silvertones performance, including a vamp that contains an opening section (Va1) and a closing section (Va2). The diagram below represents the formal design of "Mary":

C C V V Va1 Va2 c

---

arrangements. The Hi-Lo's was a vocal jazz quartet popular in the 1950s and 1960s. Shelton Kilby III, interview by author, 16 March 1995, telephone conversation.

[5] In addressing queries concerning the influence of the Swan Silvertones' "Mary Don't You Weep," Mr. Mark Kibble, the senior vocal arranger for TAKE 6, confirmed that its harmonic structure is the basis for the TAKE 6 version. Mark Kibble, interview by author, 3 August 1995, live interview, Nashville, Tenn.

Number and Function of Voice Parts

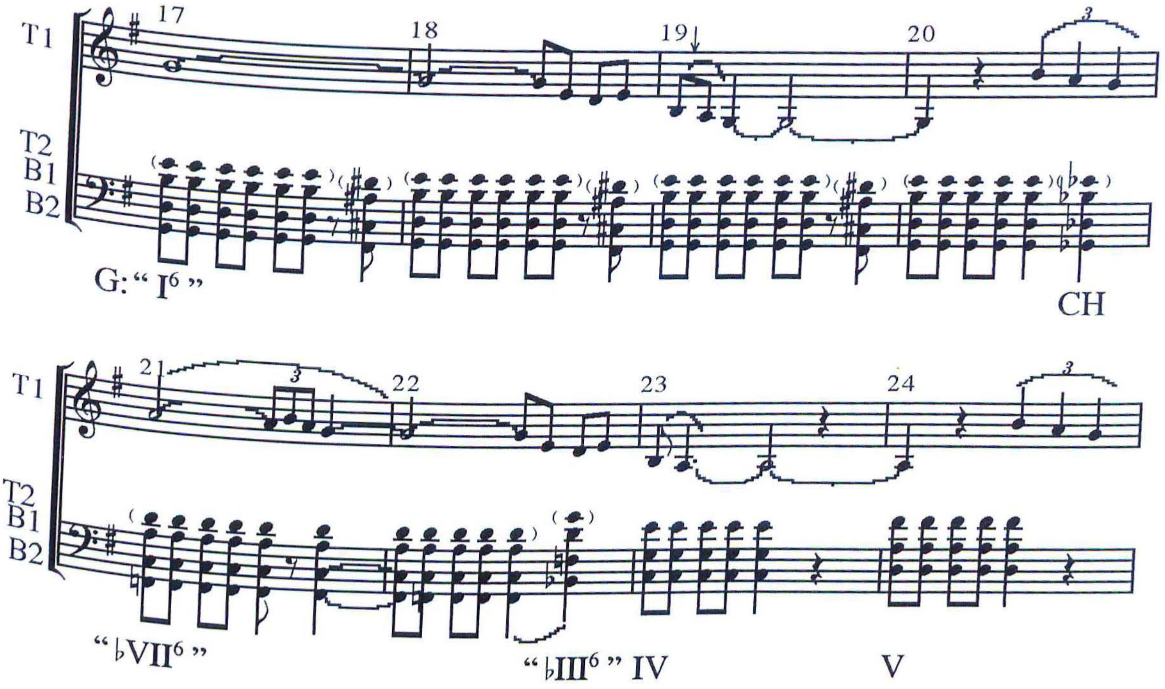
TAKE 6 began as a four-member quartet (with a different name) and expanded to a six-member group. This evolution happened gradually, progressing from four to five members, and then from five to six members.[6] The early four-voice performances of TAKE 6 show the direct influence of the Breath of Life Quartet, which is strictly a four-member group. Moreover, many of TAKE 6's early performances were vocal arrangements borrowed from the repertoire of the Breath of Life Quartet. One such performance was "If We Ever Needed the Lord Before."[7] When TAKE 6 grew to a five-member group, the added voice part supplied occasional dissonance in the performance much like the jubilee-style performance of "One Day When the Lord Will Call Me" by the Southern Sons (chapter III). However, TAKE 6's use of the additional voice part was more pervasive than in the earlier "One Day When the Lord Will Call Me," supplying dissonance throughout the performance as in example 5.1.

---

[6] The members of TAKE 6 have discussed the group's origins in several interviews. See, for example, Bob Protzman, "Taking It in Stride," St. Paul (Minn.) Pioneer Press Dispatch, 2 February 1989.

[7] Breath of Life Quartet, Spirituals, Chapel C–5311, 1977.

Example 5. 1: TAKE 6, Early Five-Voice Style[8]



Except for the notes added in the TAKE 6 performance (in parentheses), example 5.1 shows the voice parts as originally performed by the Breath of Life Quartet. In this section of the performance, the fifth voice frequently provides the added sixth dissonance, recalling its use in the latter years of the jubilee period.[9]

Upon expanding to a six-voice ensemble, TAKE 6 adopted two approaches to the function of voice parts. "Mary" represents one approach, which recalls the transitional quasi-jubilee style that developed into the gospel style. In this approach, a five-voice texture accompanies a prominent lead vocal. The lead vocal performance in "Mary"

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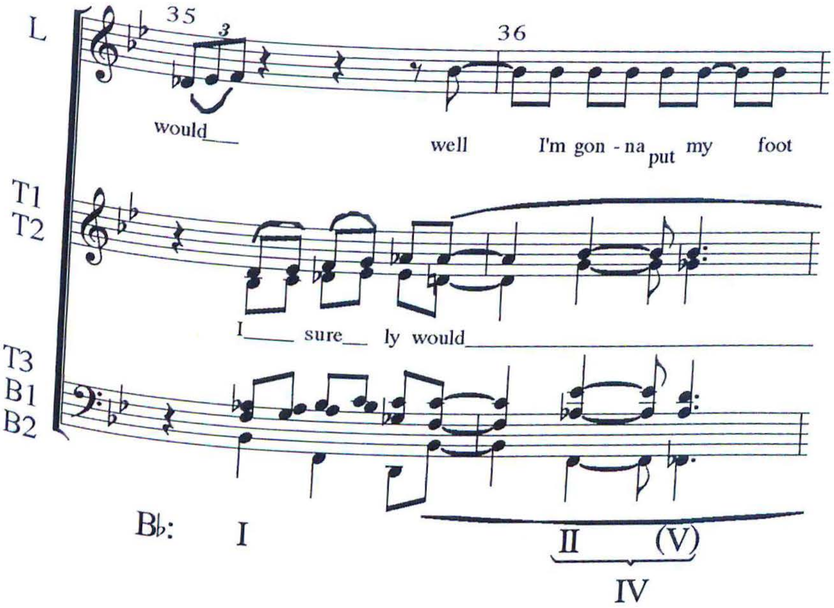
[8] TAKE 6 member Mr. Mark Kibble was the newly added member in this performance. "If We Ever Needed the Lord Before" was also the first song Mr. Kibble performed with TAKE 6. It is remarkable that he joined TAKE 6 and improvised this fifth part only moments before his debut with the group. Kibble, 1995.

[9] The unique use of strict parallelism in example 5.1 results in the sixth dissonance being added to chords other than the normative I and IV.

(example 5.2) demonstrates the continuation of prominent lead singing features introduced by quasi-jubilee quartets and developed during the gospel period (chapter IV).

Example 5. 2: Prominent Features of the Lead Vocal[10]

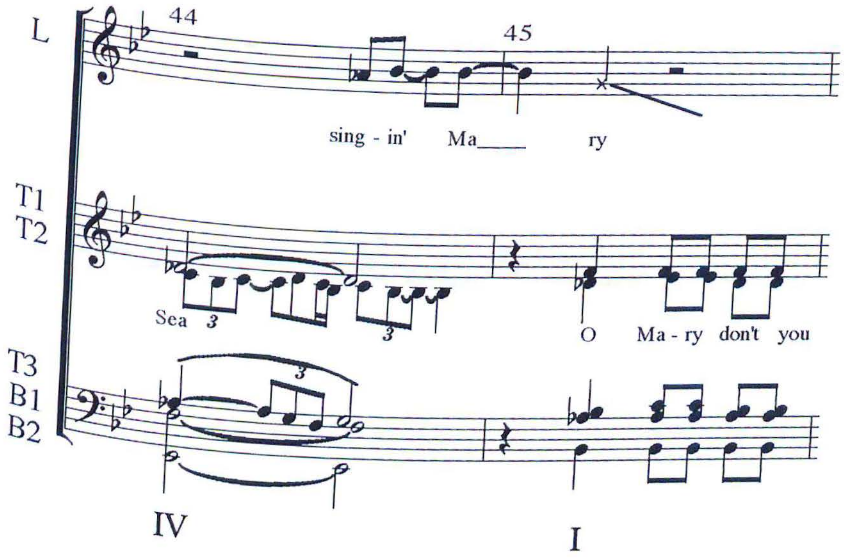
(a) Chanting


L
T1
T2
T3
B1
B2
35
3
36
would
well
I'm gon - na put my foot
I sure ly would
B♭: I
II (V)
IV

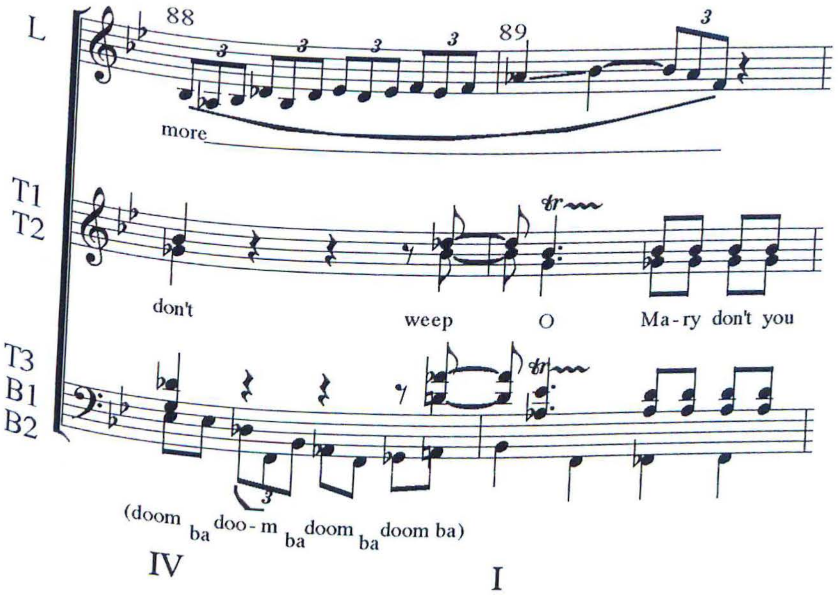
---

[10] For more examples of the use of a prominent lead in TAKE 6 performances, listen to "Milky White Way" from TAKE 6, Reprise 9 25670–2; "Something within Me" from So Much 2 Say; and "O Thou that Tellest" from Handel's Messiah: A Soulful Celebration, Reprise 9 26980–2, 1992. See example 4.2 (chapter IV) to compare similar use of these features in a gospel-style lead vocal performance.

(b) Half-Sung/Spoken Notes

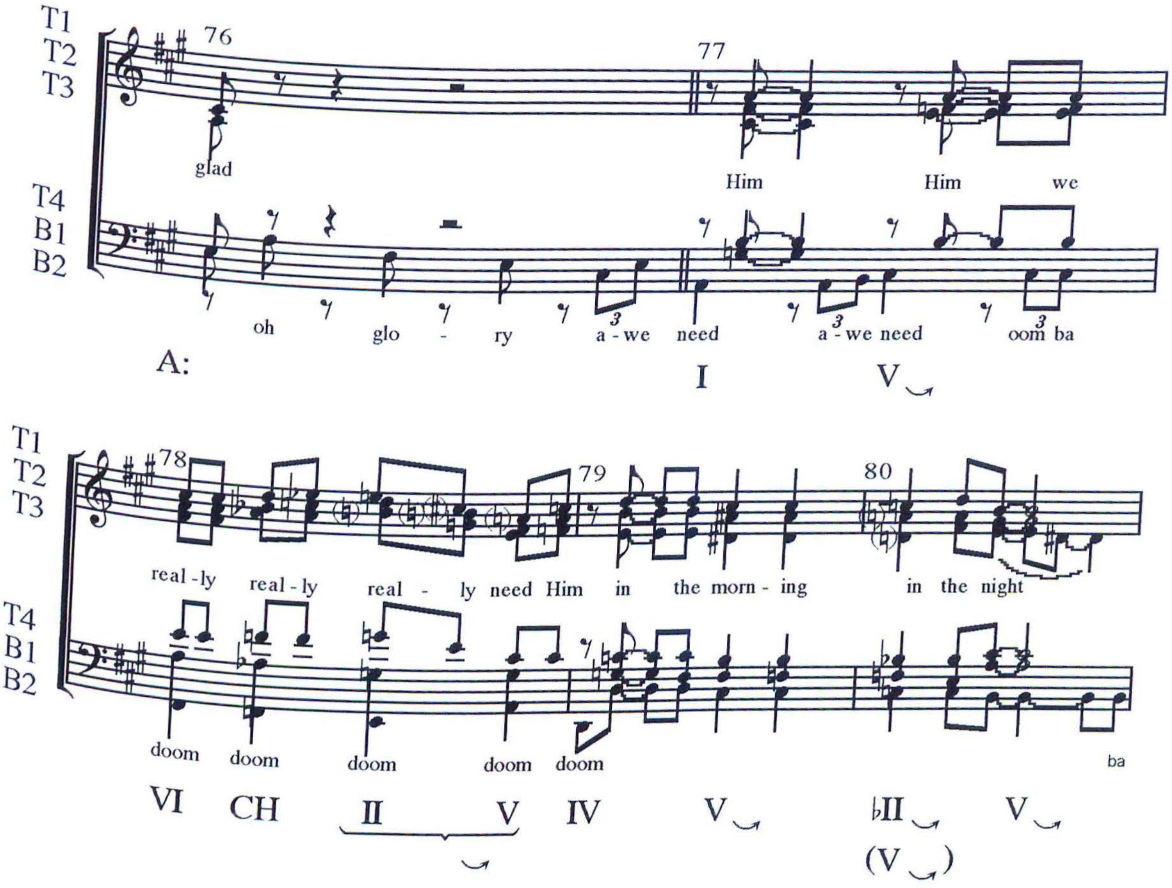

L
T1
T2
T3
B1
B2
44
45
sing - in' Ma___ ry
Sea
O Ma - ry don't you
IV
I

(c) Melismatic Passages


L
T1
T2
T3
B1
B2
88
89
more
don't weep O Ma-ry don't you
tr
(doom ba doo - m ba doom ba doom ba)
IV
I

The other approach to function of voice parts used by TAKE 6 is strictly jubilee, where a six-voice texture employs no prominent lead vocal part. Example 5.3 presents an excerpt from another TAKE 6 performance illustrating this approach.

Example 5. 3: Strict Jubilee Approach[11]


T1
T2
T3
T4
B1
B2
76
77
78
79
80
glad
Him
Him
we
oh
glo - ry
a - we need
a - we need
oom ba
A:
I
V
real - ly
real - ly
real - ly need Him
in
the morn - ing
in the night
doom
doom
doom
doom
doom
ba
VI
CH
II
V
IV
V
♭II
V
(V)

Compared to TAKE 6, the Breath of Life Quartet uses the strict jubilee approach exclusively.

In some rare instances, TAKE 6 takes advantage of modern recording technology to create vocal textures that expand to as many as eight voice parts as in measures 72–74 of "Mary" (example 5.4).

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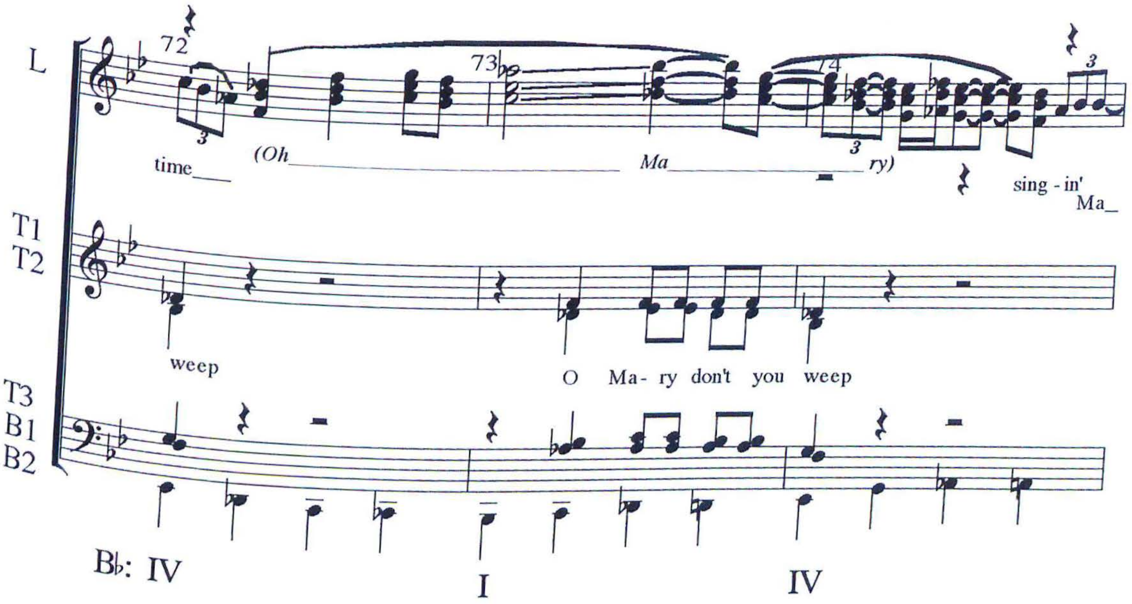
[11] "If We Ever" from TAKE 6, TAKE 6.

Example 5. 4: Eight-Voice Texture[12]


L
T1
T2
T3
B1
B2
72
73
74
time___
(Oh
Ma
ry)
sing - in'
Ma__
weep
O Ma- ry don't you weep
weep
B♭: IV
I
IV

In example 5.4, it is not the accompanying group voice parts that expand the texture. Instead, two voice parts are assigned to harmonize the melody of the lead. Thus, a five-voice texture serves, essentially, as accompaniment for a more prominent three-voice texture.[13]

Chord Structures and Added Dissonance

As a thread of development, the use of added dissonance in the neo-jubilee trend picks up where the jubilee style ended. As previously demonstrated, the added sixth dissonance that occurs in late jubilee-style performances is generally absent from gospel-style performances, which generally exhibit less use of dissonance. Example 5.5 shows the return of the added sixth dissonance in the neo-jubilee trend compared to its earlier use in the jubilee style. The similarities between the two instances of example 5.5 are striking, given that they were recorded nearly thirty years apart. Both instances show added sixth chords as part of a succession of seventh chords. Also, both instances employ close-position voicing of chords in inversion.

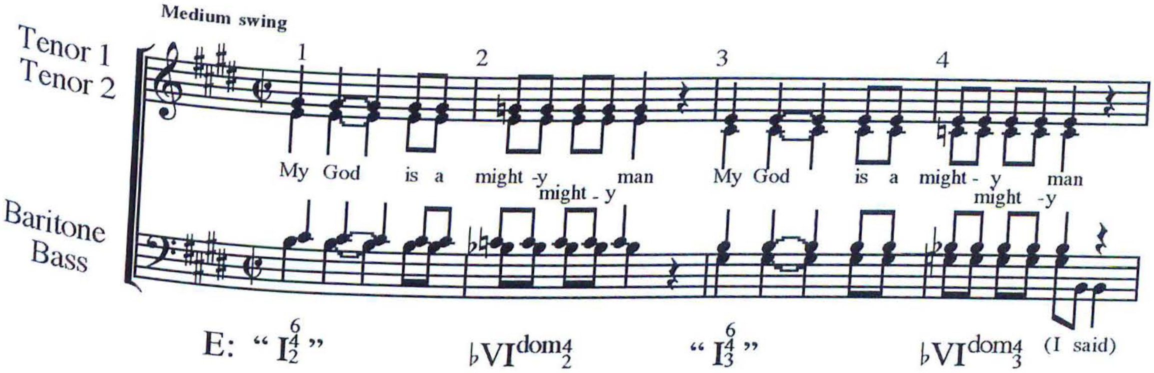
---

[12] TAKE 6 uses multitrack recording to record voice parts beyond the number of voices in the group. This technique is standard practice in professional sound recording. For more on multitrack recording see Neal Brighton, "Multitrack Recording," Electronic Musician 8, no. 10 (October 1992): 78–82; and Neal Brighton and Scott Wilkinson, "Overdubbing," Electronic Musician 9, no. 6 (June 1993): 72–76.

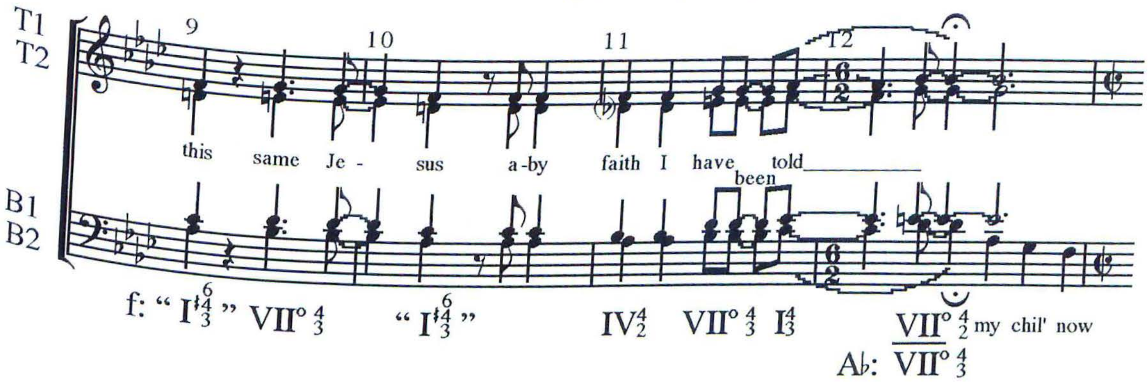
[13] For another TAKE 6 performance that expands to more than six voice parts listen to "Let the Words" from TAKE 6. For examples of expanded voice parts in Breath of Life Quartet performances listen to the beginning of "Ghetto Child" and the end of "The Master Plan" from Breath of Life Quartet, Ghetto Child, Ultimate Records S7517, 1979.

Example 5. 5: Comparison of Use of Added Dissonance in Jubilee Style and Neo-Jubilee Trend[14]

(a) "My God Is a Mighty Man," Southern Sons (1950)


Medium swing
Tenor 1
Tenor 2
Baritone
Bass
1
2
3
4
My God is a might -y man
might - y
My God is a might - y man
might -y
E: "$I^{6\,4}_{2}$"
$\flat VI^{dom}{}^{4}_{2}$
"$I^{6\,4}_{3}$"
$\flat VI^{dom}{}^{4}_{3}$
(I said)

(b) "This Same Jesus," Breath of Life Quartet (1977)


T1
T2
B1
B2
9
10
11
12
this same Je - sus a-by faith I have been told
f: "$I^{6\,\natural4}_{3}$" $VII°^{4}_{3}$
"$I^{6\,\natural4}_{3}$"
IV^{4}_{2} $VII°^{4}_{3}$ I^{4}_{3}
$VII°^{4}_{2}$ my chil' now
A♭: $VII°^{4}_{3}$

---

[14] Southern Sons Quartette, I Love the Lord; and Breath of Life Quartet, Spirituals.

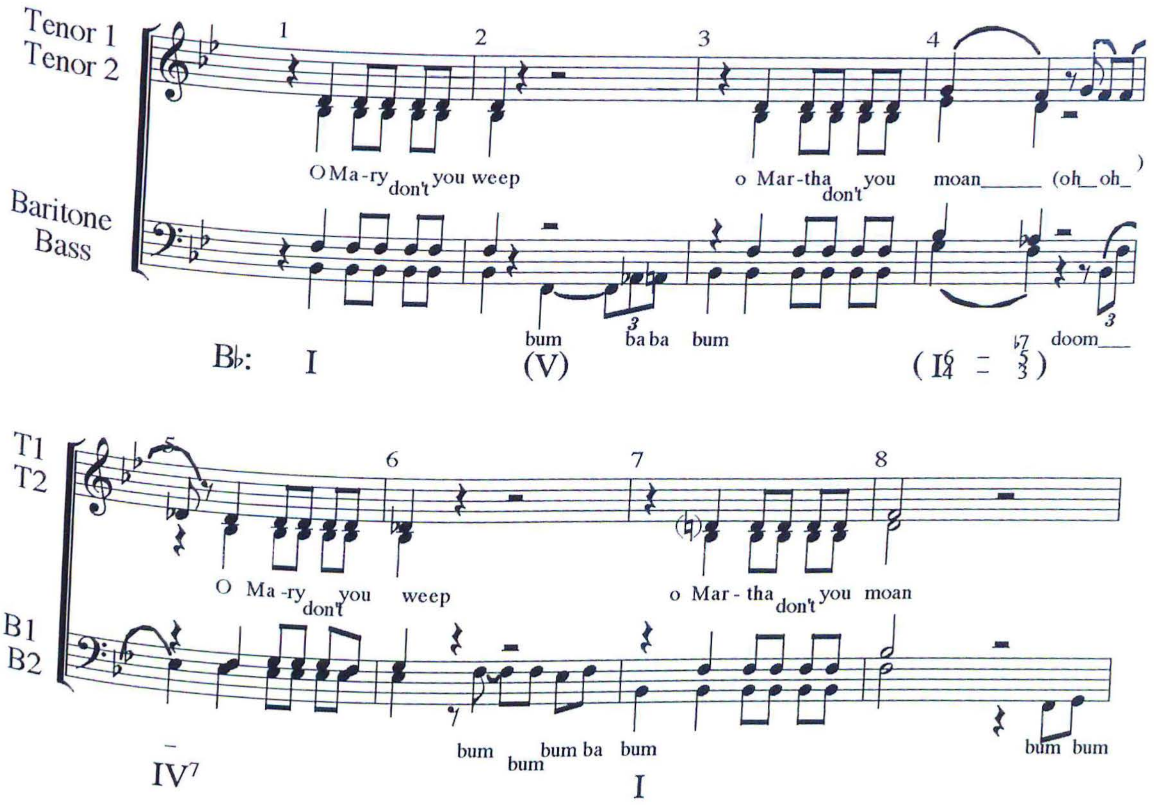
Besides seventh chords (including apparent seventh chords such as the added sixth chord), the regular use of ninth, eleventh and thirteenth chords is a new development in the neo-jubilee trend.[15] These jazz-style dissonances are generally created in one of three ways. Example 5.6 compares the background voice parts in the opening phrase of "Mary" with the earlier Swan Silvertones voice parts to show one method for creating dissonance. Measures 1–4 of example 5.6b preserve, with slight modification, the four-voice structure of the Swan Silvertones performance in example 5.6a. Measures 5–7 expands to a five-voice texture in example 5.6b. The added fifth voice is dissonant, adding a ninth (F) above bass note E♭.

---

[15] Ninth, eleventh and thirteenth dissonances (above the root) are called extensions in jazz. The dissonance extends a chord while maintaining the basic function of the chord. See Sample, 40–41.

Example 5. 6: Dissonance Through Added Notes[16]

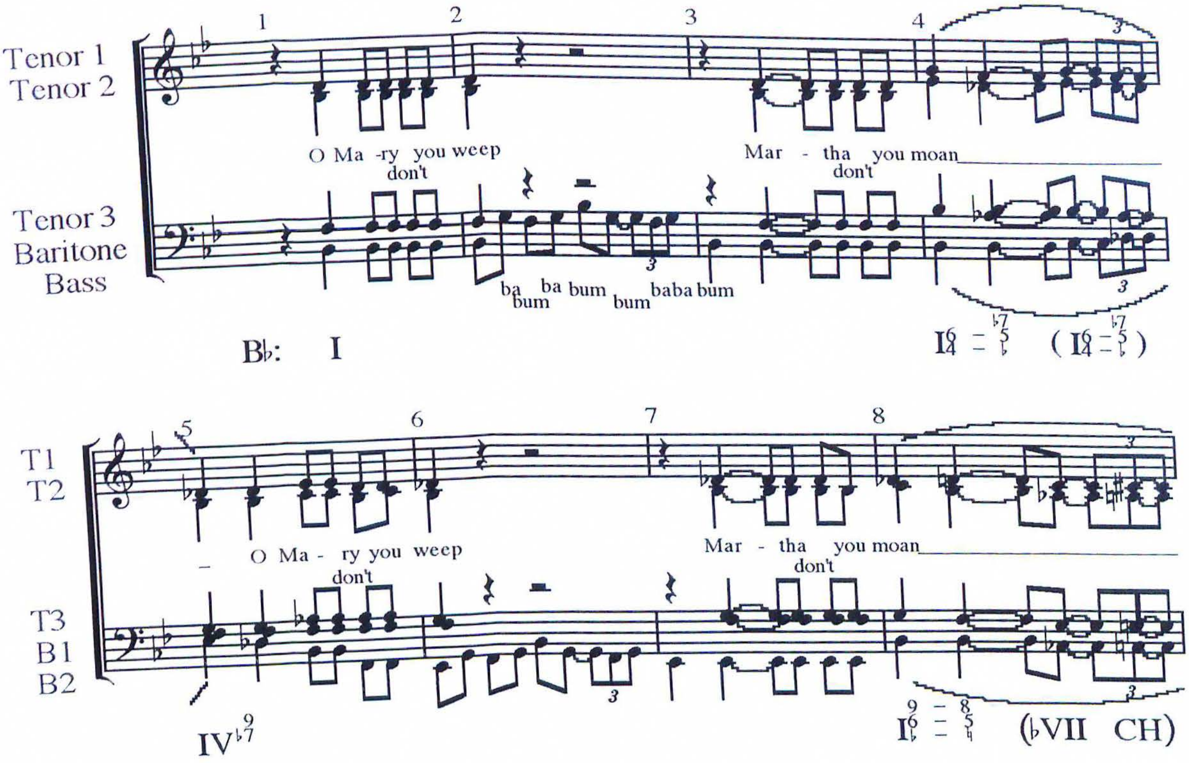
(a) Swan Silvertones Version


Tenor 1
Tenor 2
Baritone
Bass
O Ma-ry don't you weep
o Mar-tha don't you moan
(oh_ oh_)
bum ba ba bum
doom
B♭: I
(V)
(I$^6_4$ – $^{♭7}_{\substack{5\\3}}$)
T1
T2
B1
B2
O Ma-ry don't you weep
o Mar-tha don't you moan
bum bum bum ba bum
bum bum
IV^7
I

---

[16] To compare, excerpts from the Swan Silvertones version of "Mary Don't You Weep" are transposed a half step down from the original key signature to match that of the TAKE 6 version as in example 5.6.

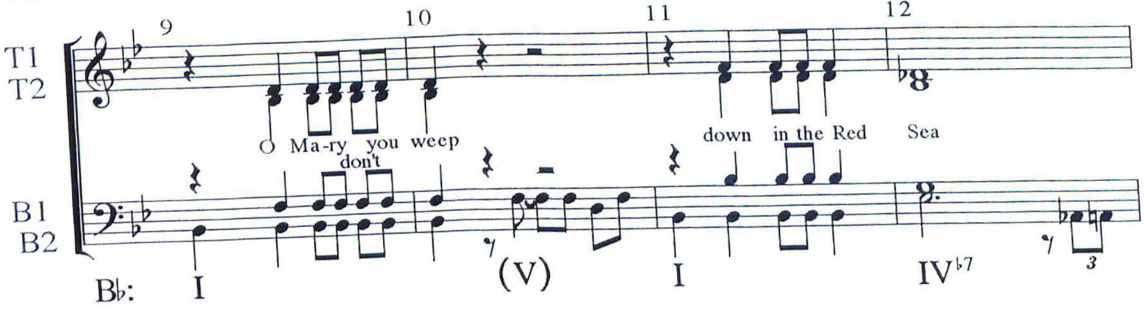
(b) TAKE 6 Version


Tenor 1
Tenor 2
Tenor 3
Baritone
Bass
O Ma -ry you weep
don't
Mar - tha you moan
don't
ba bum ba bum bum baba bum
Bb: I
T1
T2
T3
B1
B2
O Ma - ry you weep
don't
Mar - tha you moan
don't
IV♭7 9
(♭VII CH)

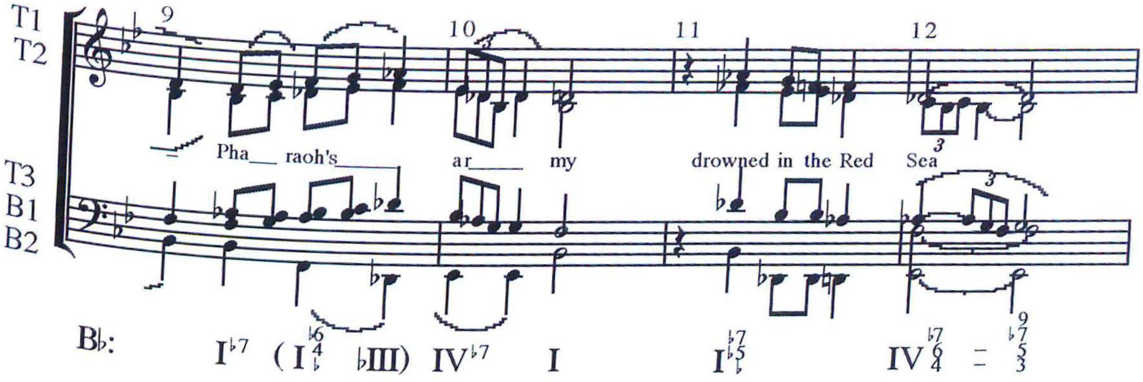
A second method of creating dissonance is through reharmonization, as shown in the comparison in example 5.7.

Example 5. 7: Dissonance Through Reharmonization

(a) Swan Silvertones Version


T1
T2
B1
B2
O Ma-ry you weep
don't
down in the Red Sea
Bb: I
(V)
I
IV♭7

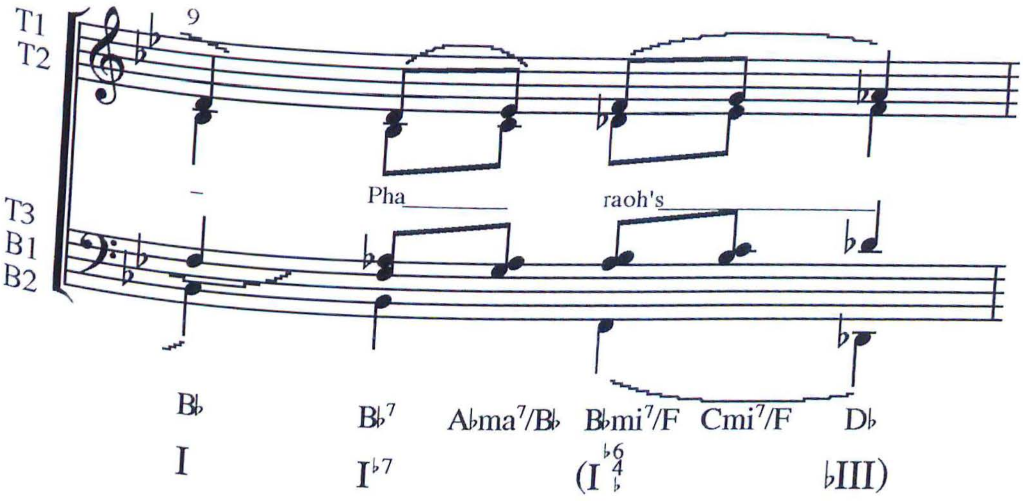
(b) TAKE 6 Version


T1
T2
T3
B1
B2
9
10
11
12
Pha__ raoh's__
ar__ my
drowned in the Red
Sea
3
B♭:
I♭7 (I♭6 4 ♭ ♭III) IV♭7 I
I♭7 ♭5 ♭
IV♭7 6 4 – 9 ♭7 5 3

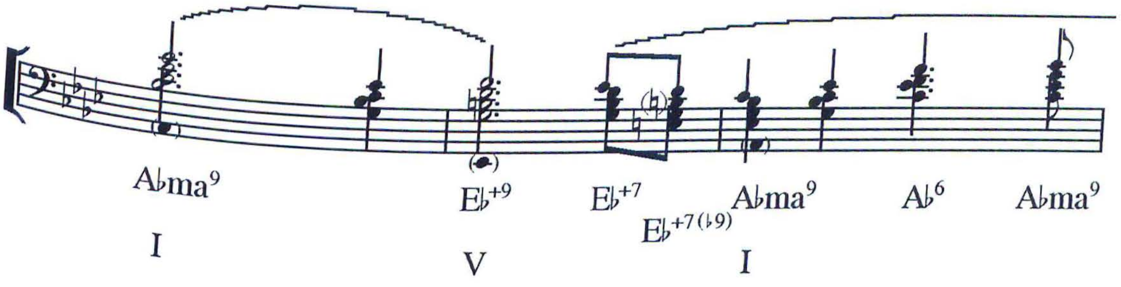
The second tenor supplies the melody in the two instances of example 5.7. This melody consists of a repeating B♭ in measures 9–10 of example 5.7a, accompanied by tonic harmony—a B♭ chord. The reharmonization at example 5.7b also begins with prolongation of B♭ harmony but utilizes a technique borrowed from the Swing Era of big band jazz in measure 9—a succession of seventh chords in close position. To maximize the effect of this technique, the melody is put in motion at measure 9 of example 5.7b. Thus, the repeating B♭ of example 5.7a is transformed into a melodic line that ascends from B♭^{3} to F^{4} in measure 9 and returns to B♭^{3} on beat 3 of measure 10. Note the similarity in chord structures between measure 9 and a passage written for four trombones presented together in example 5.8.

Example 5. 8: Close-Position Voicing in "Mary" and Big Band Jazz[17]

(a) "Mary"


T1
T2
9
Pha
raoh's
T3
B1
B2
B♭
B♭7
A♭ma7/B♭
B♭mi7/F
Cmi7/F
D♭
I
I♭7
(I ♭6 4 ♭
♭III)

(b) Four Trombones


A♭ma9
I
E♭+9
V
E♭+7
E♭+7(♭9)
A♭ma9
I
A♭6
A♭ma9

Examples 5.8a and 5.8b both show a succession of seventh chords in close position.[18]

The reharmonization of the opening phrase of "Mary" (example 5.7b) illustrates a significant feature in the neo-jubilee trend: reharmonization often alters an original melody.[19] More reharmonization occurs in the verse of "Mary" along with other significant features. For the first time in the performance, the vocal texture expands to open-position voicing in measures 36–38, shown in the second instance of example 5.9.

---

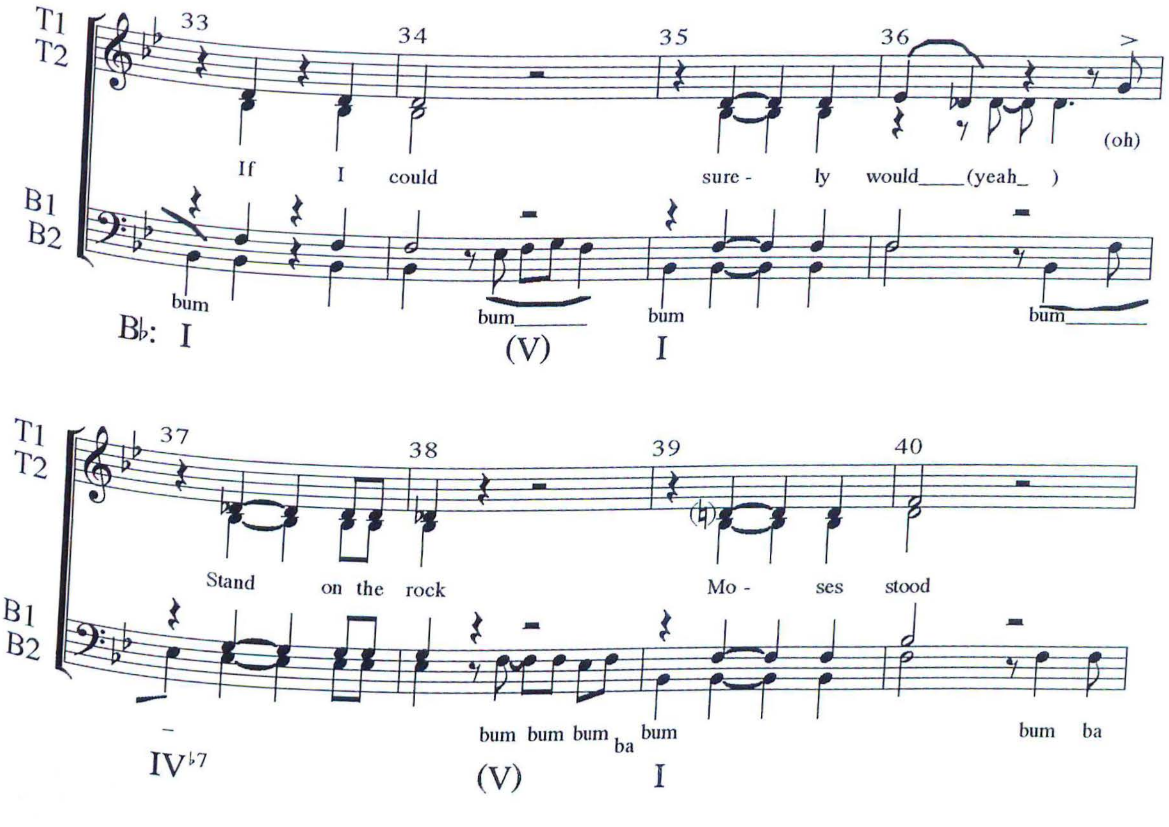
[17] Transcription of trombones copied from Sebesky, 21.

[18] For more examples of close-position voicing in quartet singing see example 5.5.

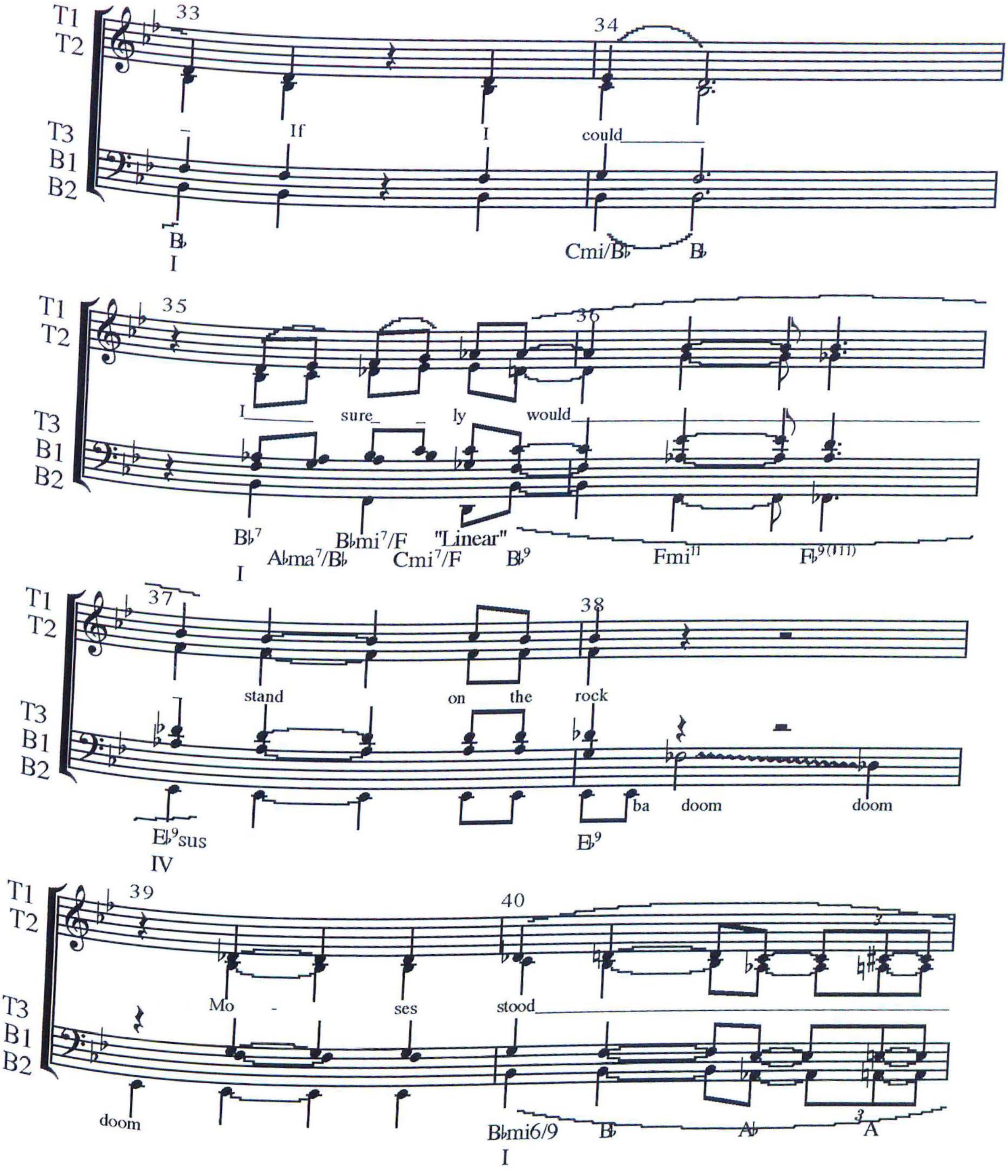
[19] For another example, see the Breath of Life Quartet adaptation of "If We Ever Needed the Lord Before" in example 5.22. Compare also "Have Thine Own Way Lord" from Breath of Life Quartet, Plenty Good Room, Chapel S 5276, 1975; and Adelaide A. Pollard and George C. Stebbins, "Have Thine Own Way, Lord!", The New National Baptist Hymnal, 125.

Example 5. 9: Reharmonization in Verse

(a) Swan Silvertones Version

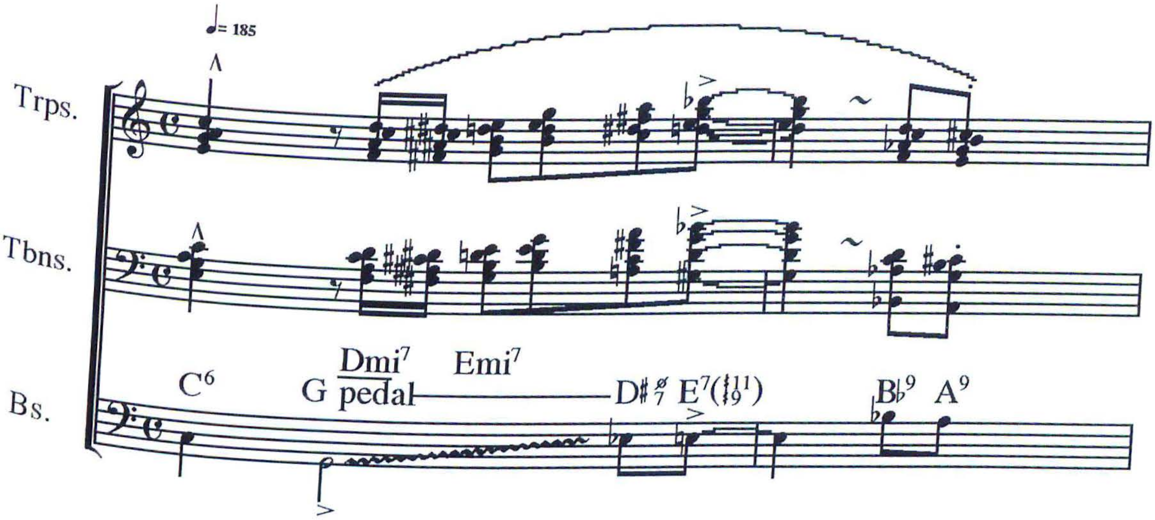

T1
T2
B1
B2
33
34
35
36
If I could
sure - ly would____(yeah_)
(oh)
bum
bum______
bum
bum_______
B♭: I
(V)
I
37
38
39
40
Stand on the rock
Mo - ses stood
bum bum bum ba bum
bum ba
IV♭7
(V)
I

(b) TAKE 6 Version


T1
T2
T3
B1
B2
33
34
If
I
could
B♭
I
Cmi/B♭
B♭
35
36
I
sure
ly
would
B♭7
A♭ma7/B♭
I
B♭mi7/F
Cmi7/F
"Linear"
B♭9
Fmi11
F♭9(♯11)
37
38
stand
on
the
rock
ba
doom
doom
E♭9sus
IV
E♭9
39
40
Mo
ses
stood
doom
B♭mi6/9
I
B♭
A♭
A
3

The chord voicings in measure 35 of example 5.9b act as a transition to the open-position voicings in measures 36–38. Measure 35 begins with close position chords on beats 2 and 3 that recall the harmonic progression and chord voicings from the chorus (see example 5.7b). The following two chords on beat 4 are in semi-open position,[20] creating a smooth transition in voice leading to the open-position chords of measures 36–38. The gradual progression from close to open position is another device borrowed from big band music as example 5.10 illustrates.

Example 5. 10: Progression from Close- to Open-Position Voicing[21]



The gradual progression from close- to open-position voicing occurs in the trombones of the big band illustration (example 5.10). The first measure begins with close-position chords and expands to semi-open position for the last chord of the measure ($E^7(^{\sharp 11}_{\flat 9})$). The phrase concludes with two chords in open position on beat 2 of the second measure.

---

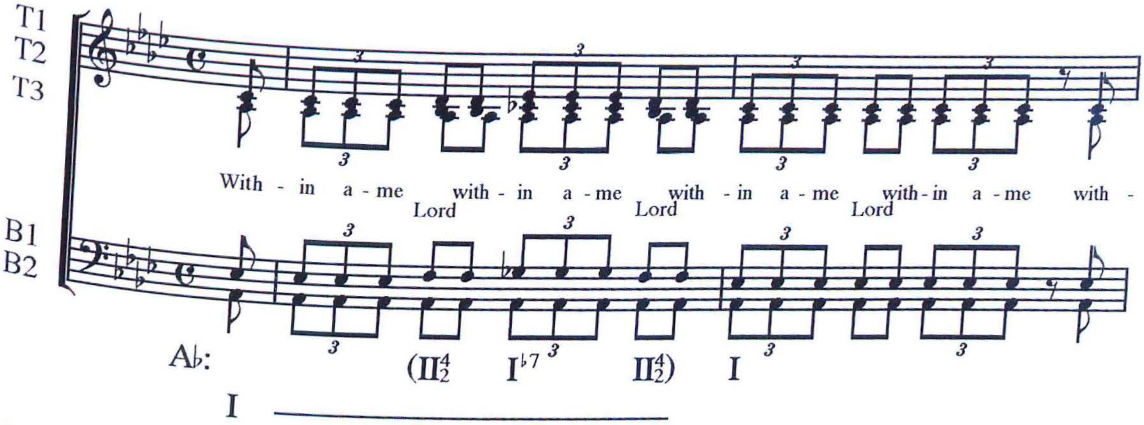
[20] Semi-open-position voicing results from dropping the second highest voice in a close-position chord down an octave. See Sebesky, 49.

[21] Transcription copied from Sebesky, 32.

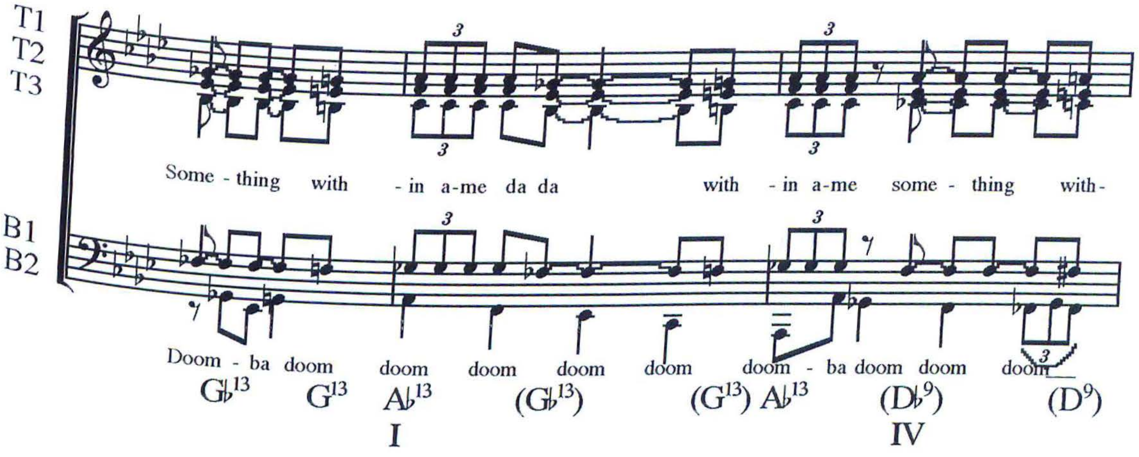
Along with the change to open-position voicings in "Mary" comes a displacement of the second tenor's melody. Thus, the second tenor's melody in measure 35 of example 5.9b begins with conjunct motion and leaps up to B♭^{4} in the first tenor on beat 2 of measure 36. The melody remains in the first tenor through measure 38. Comparing measures 37–38 of example 5.9b with 5.9a verifies the displacement of the melody. Note how the melody of the words "stand on the rock" is a repeating B♭^{3} in the second tenor of example 5.9a. In example 5.9b, the repeating B♭^{3} transfers to B♭^{4} in the first tenor. This illustrates another significant feature in the neo-jubilee trend: reharmonization utilizing open-position voicing often displaces the melody to the uppermost position in chord structures. To illustrate further, example 5.11 shows another instance of melodic displacement in open-position voicing.

Example 5. 11: Melodic Displacement in Open-Position Voicing[22]

(a)


T1
T2
T3
With - in a - me with - in a - me with - in a - me with - in a - me with -
Lord Lord Lord
B1
B2
A♭:
I
(II$^4_2$ I$^{♭7}$ II$^4_2$) I

(b)


T1
T2
T3
Some - thing with - in a-me da da with - in a-me some - thing with-
B1
B2
Doom - ba doom doom doom doom doom doom - ba doom doom doom
G♭13 G13 A♭13 (G♭13) (G13) A♭13 (D♭9) (D9)
I
IV

Example 5.11a shows the beginning of the opening chorus of "Something within Me" as performed by TAKE 6. The melody is a repeating A♭^{3} in the third tenor voice part. Example 5.11b is a reharmonization, in open-position voicing, that occurs later in the performance. It shows the two previously identified features of reharmonization in effect. First, the melody transfers to the uppermost position, effected by open-position voicing.

---

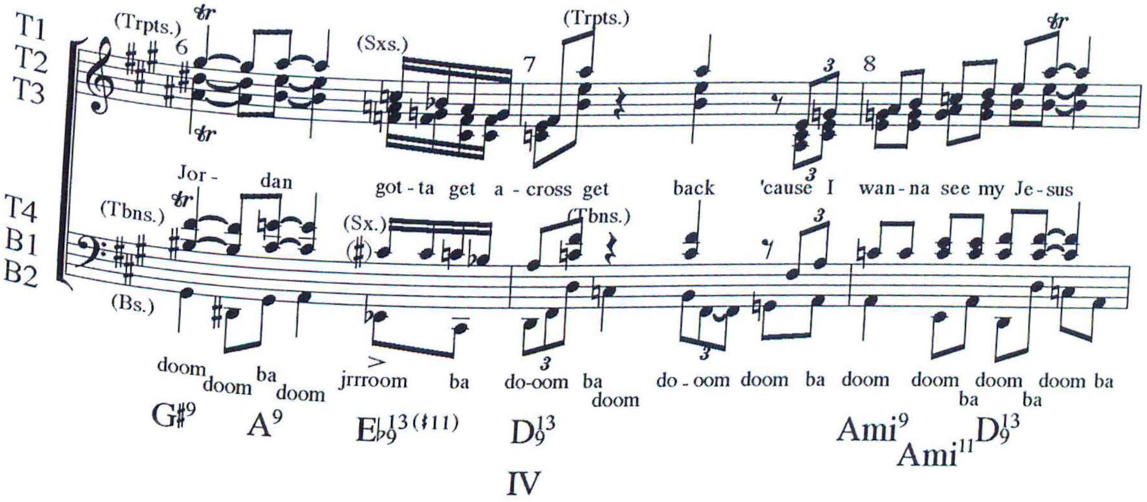
[22] "Something within Me" (TAKE 6) from So Much 2 Say

Second, the reharmonization alters the repeating A♭ melody. Note how lower neighbor tones (diatonic and chromatic) ornament the A♭ melody throughout example 5.11b.

Another big band technique adopted in the neo-jubilee trend is "sectional playing," where voices emulate the rhythmic and melodic interplay between sections of a big band (i.e., saxophones, trumpets, trombones and rhythm instruments). TAKE 6 pioneered the adaptation of this technique in black religious quartet singing, just as the Mills Brothers introduced the instrumental riff style in the earlier jubilee tradition. Because of its quasi-jubilee-style approach, "Mary" does not exhibit this feature. It is more common in performances employing a strict jubilee-style approach, as shown in the comparisons in examples 5.12 and 5.13.

Example 5. 12: Comparison of Linear Sectional Playing Style in Vocal and Big Band Arrangements[23]

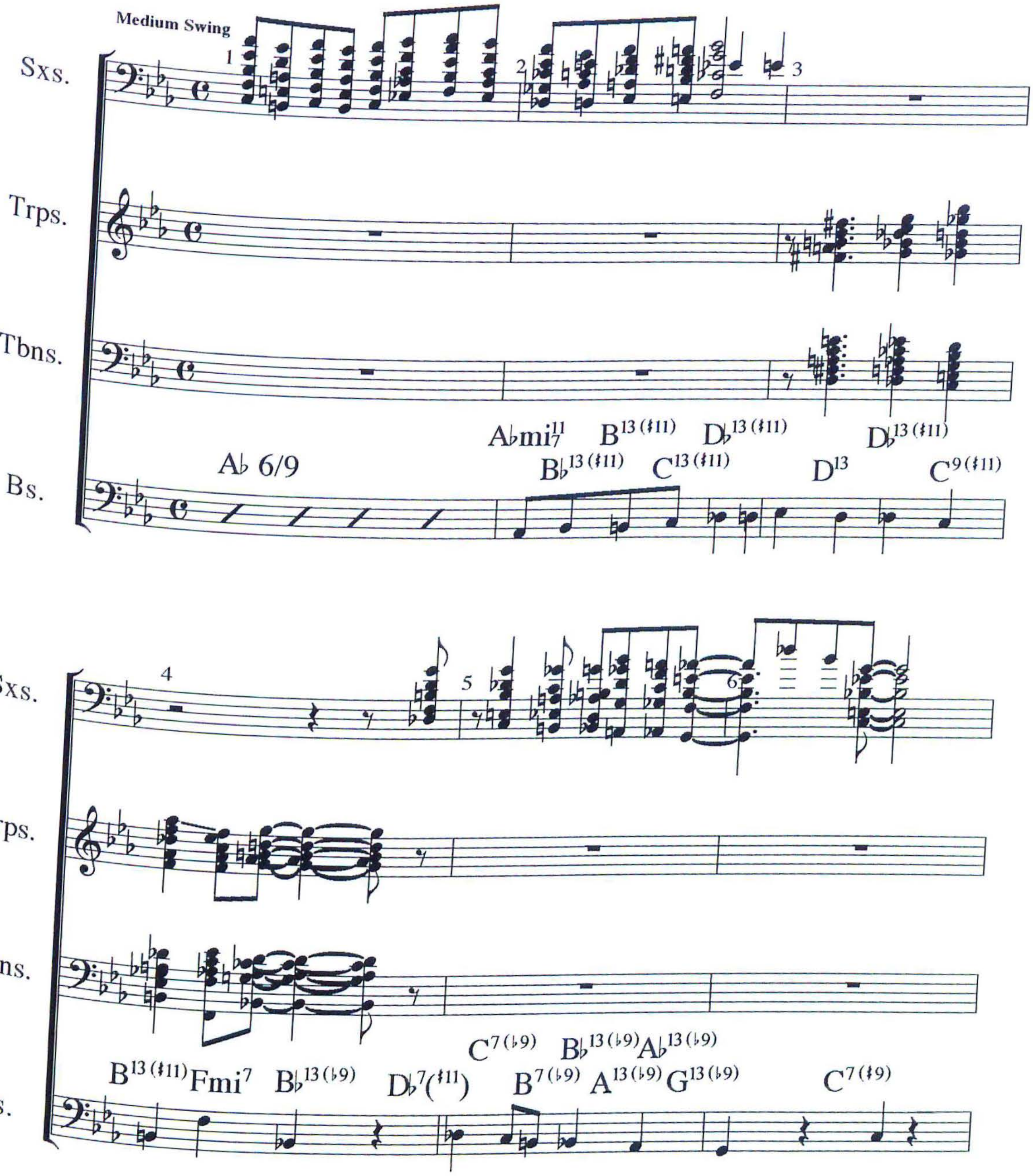
(a)


T1
T2
T3
T4
B1
B2
(Trpts.)
(Sxs.)
(Trpts.)
(Tbns.)
(Sx.)
(Tbns.)
(Bs.)
6
7
8
3
Jor - dan
got - ta get a - cross get
back
'cause I
wan - na see my Je - sus
doom doom ba doom
jrrroom ba
do-oom ba doom
do - oom doom ba doom
doom doom ba doom ba doom ba
G♯9
A9
E♭9 13 (♯11)
D9 13
Ami9
Ami11
D9 13
IV

---

[23] "Get Away, Jordan" from TAKE 6; and Steve Sample, "Sometimes I'm Happy," Unpublished Score, n.d., University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa.

(b)


Medium Swing
Sxs.
Trps.
Tbns.
Bs.
1
2
3
4
5
6
A♭ 6/9
A♭mi11 7
B♭13(♯11)
B13(♯11)
C13(♯11)
D♭13(♯11)
D13
D♭13(♯11)
C9(♯11)
B13(♯11)
Fmi7
B♭13(♭9)
D♭7(♯11)
C7(♭9)
B7(♭9)
B♭13(♭9)
A13(♭9)
A♭13(♭9)
G13(♭9)
C7(♯9)

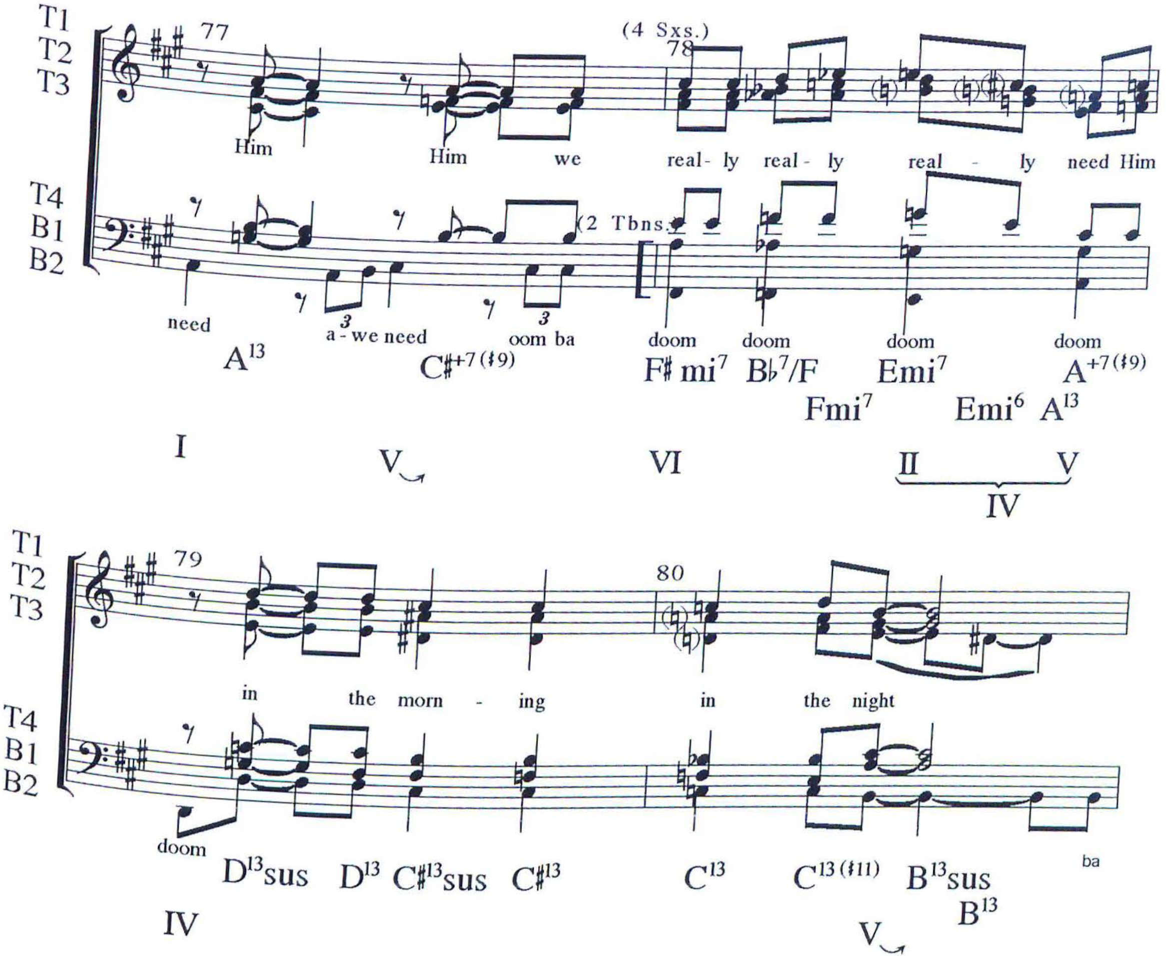
Example 5.12 compares a performance by TAKE 6 with a big band performance. In the big band performance (example 5.12b), the sectional playing is linear, alternating between saxophones and brass (trumpets and trombones). Naturally, there is timbral contrast between the two choirs of instruments (i.e., reeds versus brass), and the voicing of the brass spans a wider tonal range than the saxophones—generally between two and three octaves for the brass compared to under two octaves for the saxophones.

The TAKE 6 performance (example 5.12a) recreates big band sectional playing through contrast in chord voicings, tonal ranges and rhythm. Note how the voice parts generally span a tonal range of three octaves with the first tenor emphasizing A^5, recalling the range of the brass in example 5.12b. Also, the passage is voiced in open position. In the midst of this brass-like passage comes a sudden change to close position (in the upper five voice parts) and, consequently, a more narrow tonal range on beat 4 of measure 6. Also, there is a change of note values—from eighths and quarters to sixteenths. This momentary shift in the musical dialogue effectively recalls the saxophones in example 5.12b, which also exhibit a more narrow tonal range and shorter note values than their brass counterparts.

TAKE 6 also emulates the vertical approach to sectional playing, where contrast in chord voicings, tonal ranges and rhythm occurs simultaneously as in example 5.13.

Example 5. 13: Comparison of Vertical Sectional Playing Style in Vocal and Big Band Arrangements[24]

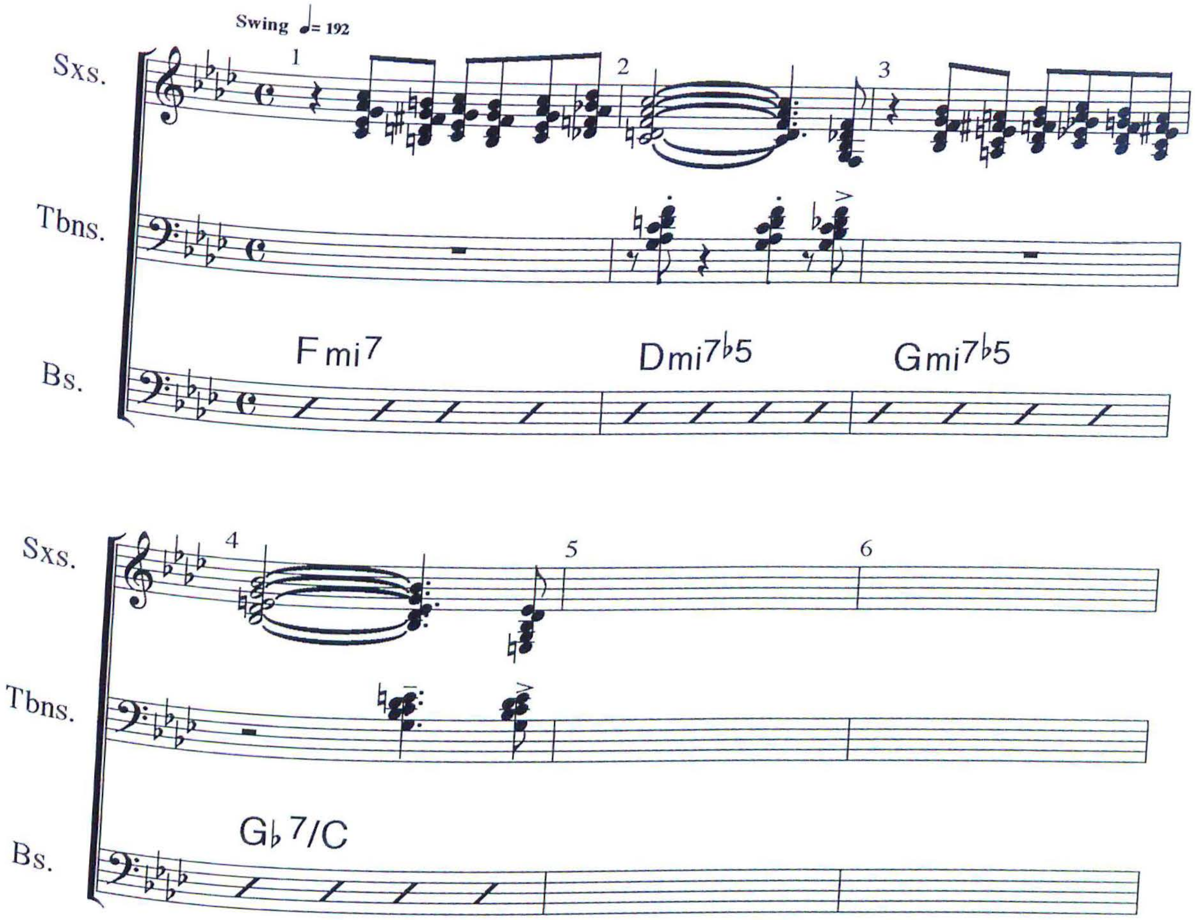
(a)


T1
T2
T3
77
(4 Sxs.)
78
Him
Him
we
real- ly
real - ly
real - ly
need Him
T4
B1
B2
(2 Tbns.)
need
a - we need
oom ba
doom
doom
doom
doom
A13
C♯+7(♯9)
F♯ mi7
B♭7/F
Fmi7
Emi7
Emi6
A13
A+7(♯9)
I
V
VI
II
V
IV
T1
T2
T3
79
80
in
the
morn - ing
in
the
night
T4
B1
B2
doom
D13sus
D13
C♯13sus
C♯13
C13
C13(♯11)
B13sus
B13
ba
IV
V

---

[24] "If We Ever" from TAKE 6; and Steve Sample, "My Favorite Things," Unpublished Score, n.d., University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa.

(b)



In example 5.13b, the saxophones are in close-position block voicing, where the chords are voiced in close position within an octave and the uppermost part is doubled an octave lower.[25] Similarly, the upper four voice parts in measure 78 of the TAKE 6 performance (example 5.13a) move in close-position voicing (without the octave doubling). The trombones provide contrast to the fluid rhythm of the saxophones with syncopated stabs in example 5.13b. The simulated trombones in example 5.13a (baritone and bass) also

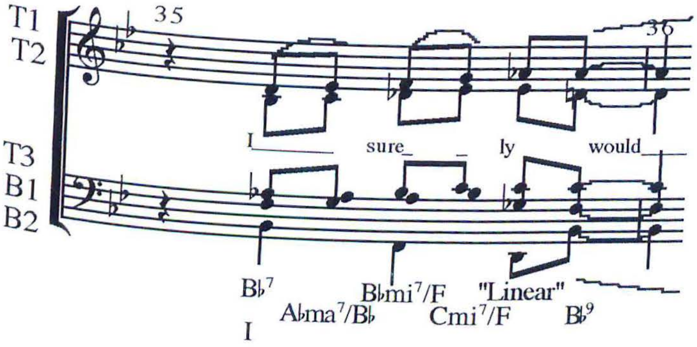
---

[25] Sebesky (52) identifies close-position block voicing as “the single most popular and imitated dance band sound of all time.”

"play" a contrasting rhythm against the upper four voice parts in measure 78—steady quarter notes against eighth notes.

In addition to added dissonance and reharmonization, a third method for creating dissonance occurs in measure 35 of "Mary," shown in example 5.14.

Example 5. 14: Dissonance through Voice Leading



Measure 35 contains a chord resulting from voice leading exclusively that does not function according to traditional harmonic syntax. The chord in question is an apparent dominant seventh built on bass note D. Instead of progressing to a chord built on G, whose root lies a fifth away, it moves to a B♭^{9} chord. As indicated in the roman numeral analysis, B♭ harmony dominates measure 35, which contains the D chord. However, when listening to this passage, the D chord, which is the most trenchant chord of the measure, does not jar the ear. This is because its construction is of linear origin, as it contains two notes in common with the chords that directly precede and follow it: inner notes E♭^{4} and C^4 with the preceding Cmi^7/F chord, and C^4 and the first tenor note A♭^{4} with the following B♭^{9} chord. Also, inner notes E♭^{4} and G♭^{3} resolve by step to notes in the following B♭^{9} chord. Further still, in the voice leading of the bass, the root of the linear chord (D^2) completes an arpeggiation of the B♭ triad, which, as identified, governs the harmony of measure 35.

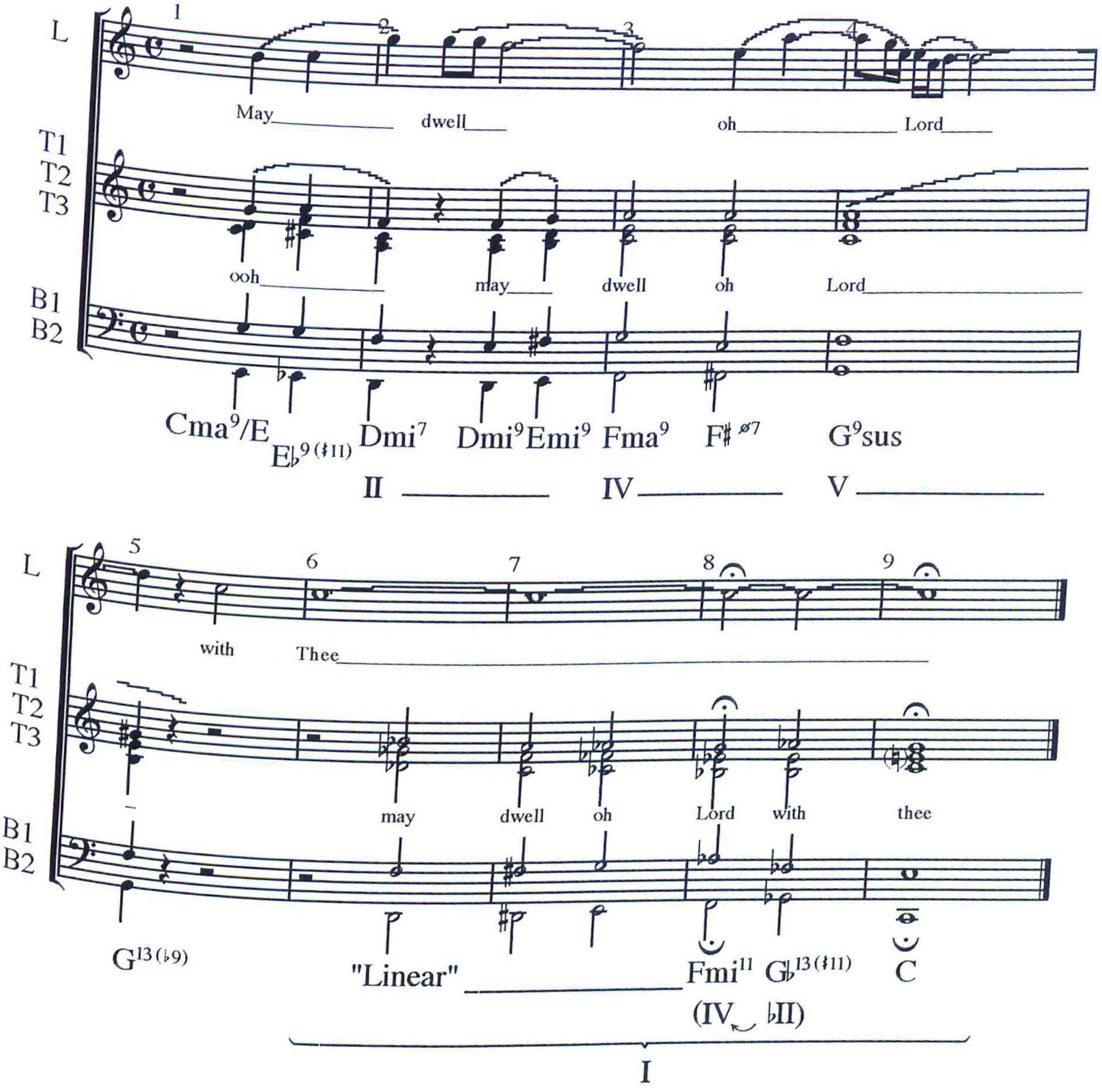
Example 5.15 shows an earlier TAKE 6 performance (when the groups' name was Alliance) where, again, voice leading alone creates dissonance. The roman numeral analysis below the staff (example 5.15) shows an authentic cadence with dominant preparation as the large-scale harmonic design. The lead vocal's C^5 on the downbeat of measure 6 represents the arrival of the final tonic in the key of C major, which is prolonged for 4 measures. The prolongation is, essentially, a IV—I harmonic progression, as the three sonorities labeled "linear" (in measures 6–7) are in the service of IV. Note how the three tenor parts descend chromatically while the lower voices ascend chromatically, and all voice parts converge on subdominant harmony (IV) in measure 8. IV is further embellished by an applied ♭II chord in an instance of harmonic retrogression. Finally, the applied ♭II is unique because, along with its relationship to the preceding IV, it is an apparent seventh chord that resolves linearly to I in measure 9.[26]

With fewer voices than TAKE 6, the Breath of Life Quartet accomplishes a comparable amount of added dissonance through unique chord voicings. Example 5.16 shows two devices commonly observed in Breath of Life Quartet performances that effect increased levels of dissonance.

---

[26] For another example of dissonance resulting from voice leading listen to the end of "I'm on My Way" from TAKE 6, So Much 2 Say.

Example 5. 15: "Bless this House," Final Cadence, Alliance/TAKE 6 (1984)[27]

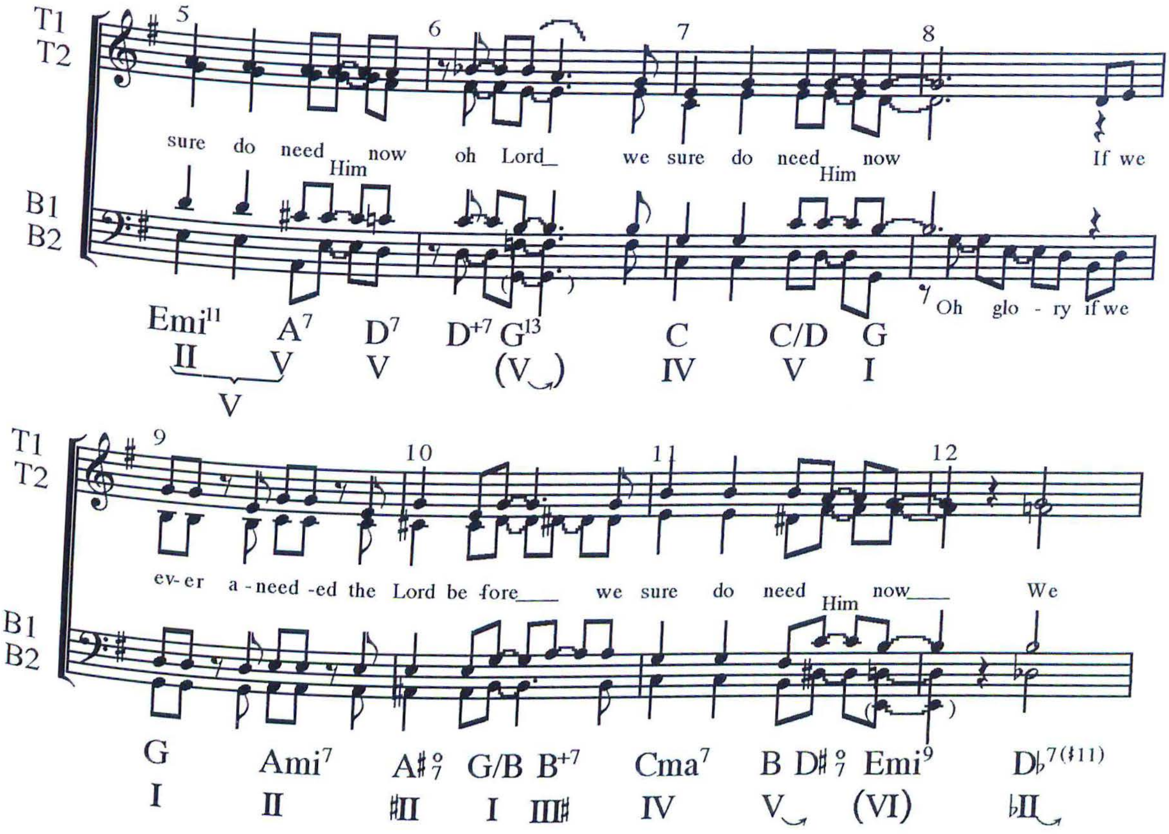

L
T1
T2
T3
B1
B2
1
2
3
4
May
dwell
oh
Lord
ooh
may
dwell
oh
Lord
Cma9/E
E♭9(♯11)
Dmi7
Dmi9
Emi9
Fma9
F♯ø7
G9sus
II
IV
V
5
6
7
8
9
with
Thee
may
dwell
oh
Lord
with
thee
G13(♭9)
"Linear"
Fmi11
G♭13(♯11)
C
(IV ♭II)
I

---

[27] Alliance, Something Within, Legacy Records LR 002, 1984.

Example 5. 16: Dissonance in Breath of Life Quartet Performances[28]

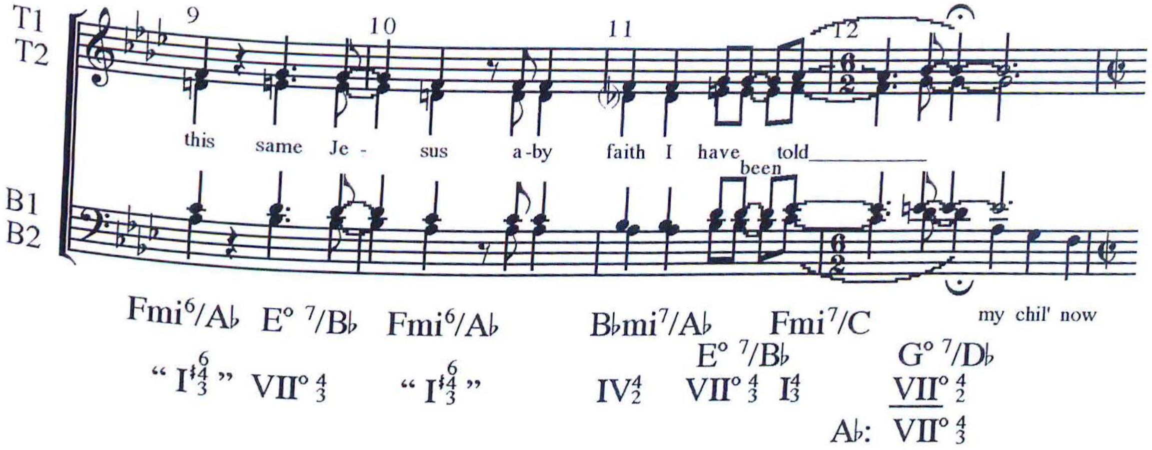
(a) Implied Bass Notes


T1
T2
B1
B2
5
6
7
8
sure do need Him now oh Lord_ we sure do need Him now If we
Oh glo - ry if we
Emi11 A7 D7 D+7 G13 C C/D G
II V V (V) IV V I
V
9
10
11
12
ev- er a - need -ed the Lord be fore___ we sure do need Him now___ We
G Ami7 A♯°7 G/B B+7 Cma7 B D♯°7 Emi9 D♭7(♯11)
I II ♯II I III♯ IV V (VI) ♭II

---

[28] "If We Ever Needed the Lord Before" and "This Same Jesus" from Breath of Life Quartet, Spirituals.

(b) Succession of Chords in Inversion


T1
T2
B1
B2
9
10
11
12
this same Je - sus a-by faith I have been told
my chil' now
Fmi6/A♭ E° 7/B♭ Fmi6/A♭ B♭mi7/A♭ Fmi7/C
E° 7/B♭ G° 7/D♭
"I♮4 6 3" VII° 4 3 "I♮4 6 3" IV4 2 VII° 4 3 I4 3 VII° 4 2
A♭: VII° 4 3

Example 5.16a shows two instances where the root of the chord is implied, which frees the bass voice to supply an additional chord tone. The implied G^2 in measure 6 (in parenthesis) is a vital link in a chain of bass fifths that begins in the previous measure and ends with bass note C^3 in measure 7. The complete chain of bass fifths is E^3—A^2—D^3—G^2—C^3. A second implied bass note, E^2 in measure 12, again involves bass movement by fifths. Here, the music cadences on E^2, briefly tonicizing E minor. In both instances, the literal bass voice supplies the seventh of the chord. The effect is that of a five-note chord, which creates the opportunity for more dissonance within the chord while maintaining essential members of the basic triad. Thus, the chord built on the implied G^2 in measure 6 (G^{13}_{9}) contains three dissonances—a seventh (literally sung by the bass), ninth and thirteenth—while still providing the third. Similarly, the chord with an implied bass note in measure 12 (Emi^9) adds a seventh and ninth to an E minor triad.[29]

---

[29] The notion of implying complete chords with essential chord tones is not novel in music and can be observed, for example, in the Two-Part Inventions of J. S. Bach. However, it is unique in the development of the black religious quartet tradition and particularly characteristic of performances by the Breath of Life Quartet.

In another Breath of Life Quartet performance (example 5.16b), chord roots are present but not in the bass voice. The result is a succession of seventh chords in inversion. Seventh chords voiced in close position also shows the influence of big band music.[30]

The earlier gospel period of quartet singing saw the development of more consistently complete cadences with chords containing at least roots and thirds, and authentic cadences progressing according to traditional part-writing rules. However, there was a preponderance of plagal cadences influenced by the prominence of gospel-style vamps. Neo-jubilee performances continue the trend of fully developed cadences. But because gospel-style vamps are not as pervasive in the neo-jubilee trend, there are fewer instances of plagal cadences. As shown in example 5.17, whether authentic or plagal, cadences employ complete chords and fully functional harmonic progressions in the neo-jubilee trend, often incorporating added dissonance.

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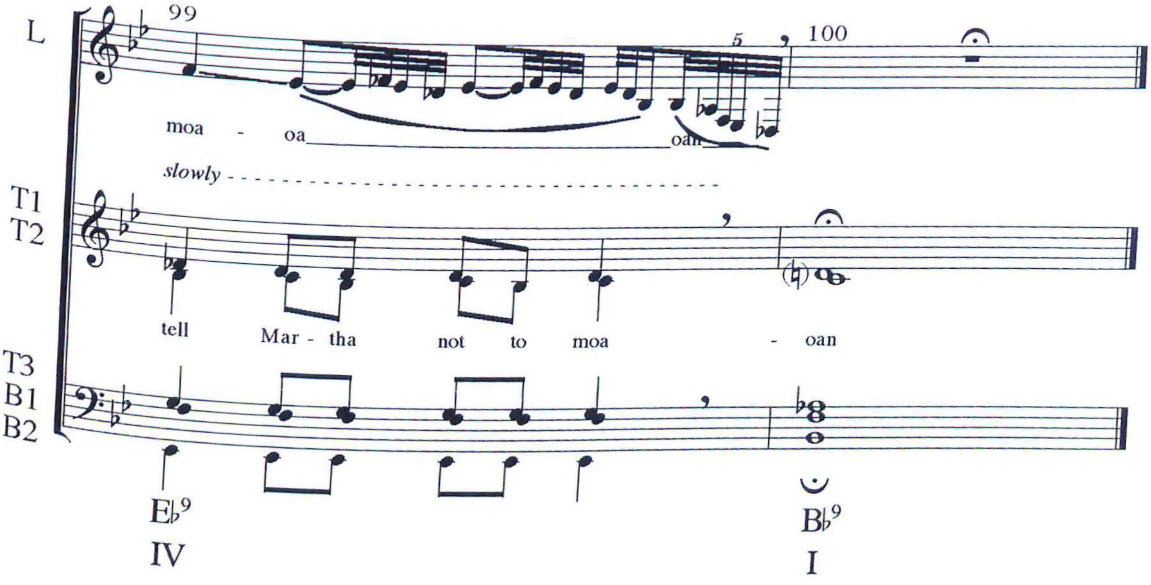
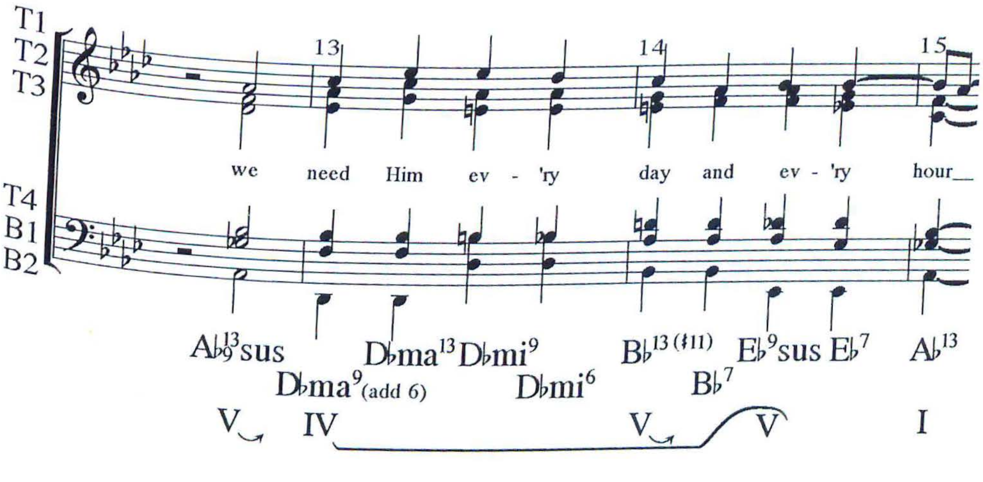
[30] Similar use of added dissonance occurs in "Plenty Good Room" and "Have Thine Own Way Lord" from Breath of Life Quartet, Plenty Good Room.

Example 5. 17: Neo-Jubilee Cadences[31]

(a) Plagal Cadence


L
99
100
moa - oa oan
slowly
T1
T2
tell Mar - tha not to moa - oan
T3
B1
B2
E♭9
IV
B♭9
I

(b) Authentic Cadence


T1
T2
T3
13
14
15
we need Him ev - 'ry day and ev - 'ry hour
T4
B1
B2
A♭13 9 sus
D♭ma9 (add 6)
D♭ma13
D♭mi9
D♭mi6
B♭13 (♯11)
B♭7
E♭9sus
E♭7
A♭13
V
IV
V
V
I

---

[31] "Mary" and "If We Ever" from TAKE 6.

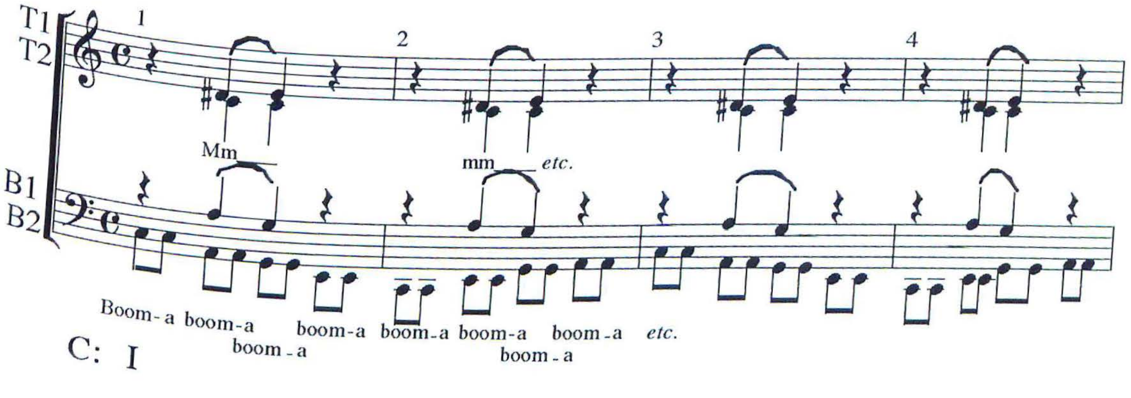
"Mary" is based on the earlier gospel-style performance by the Swan Silvertones and, as such, maintains its use of plagal cadences, as shown in example 5.17a. "If We Ever" (example 5.17b) demonstrates an authentic cadence in a strict jubilee setting (no prominent lead vocal). Along with complete chord structures and harmonic progressions, both instances in example 5.17 incorporate added dissonance as indicated in the accompanying jazz chord symbols.

Bass Voice

As previously noted (in chapter IV), boogie-woogie influenced the transition from Chicago Style Dixieland to Swing in big band jazz. Likewise, the boogie-woogie-style walking bass, emulated by gospel-style quartets, developed into the swing-style walking bass in the neo-jubilee trend. Example 5.18 presents a comparison of bass singing in the gospel style and neo-jubilee trend that shows the development.

Example 5. 18: Development of Walking Bass in Neo-Jubilee Trend[32]

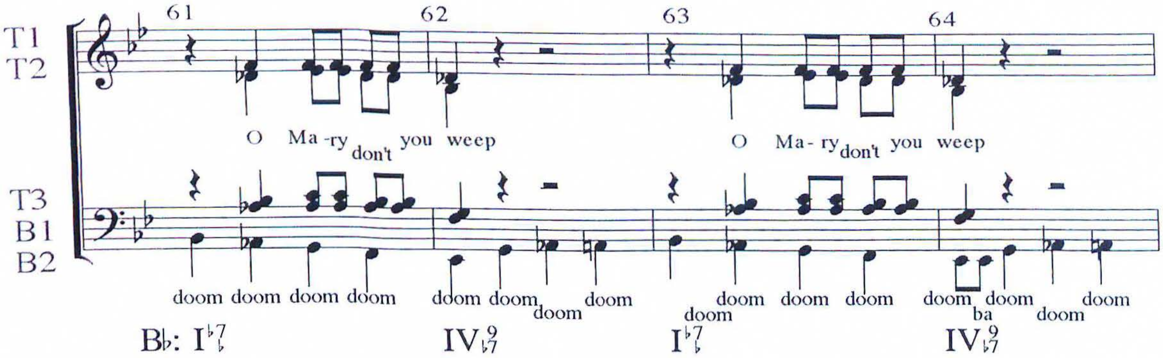
(a) "Christian's Automobile," Dixie Hummingbirds (1957)


T1
T2
B1
B2
1
2
3
4
Mm
mm
etc.
Boom-a boom-a boom-a boom-a boom-a boom-a boom-a boom-a etc.
C: I

---

[32] "Christian's Automobile" from Jubilation! Great Gospel Performances, Vol. 1; and "Mary" from TAKE 6.

(b) "Mary," TAKE 6 (1988)

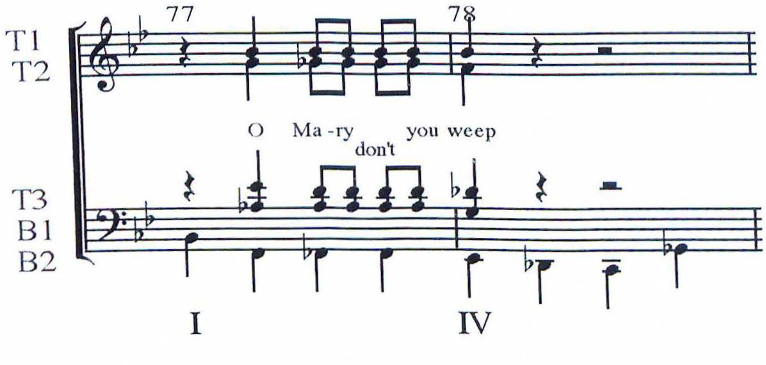


61
62
63
64
T1
T2
T3
B1
B2
O Ma -ry don't you weep
O Ma- ry don't you weep
doom doom doom doom
doom doom doom doom
doom doom doom doom
doom doom ba doom doom
Bb: I♭7
IV9♭7
I♭7
IV9♭7

As is the custom in boogie-woogie, the bass line in example 5.18a outlines a chord—C major. Comparatively, the bass in example 5.18b moves linearly or melodically from one chord to the next. In this swing-style approach, the bass is freer melodically, and since it is not restricted to outlining chords, it is also free to treat chords as points of arrival and departure. This approach is further illustrated in example 5.19.

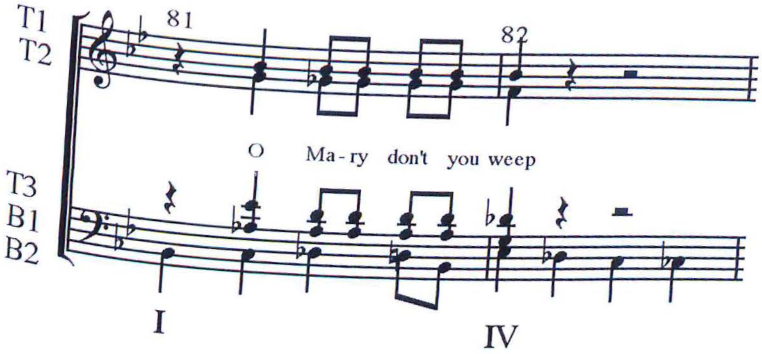
Example 5. 19: Swing-Style Walking Bass in "Mary"

(a)

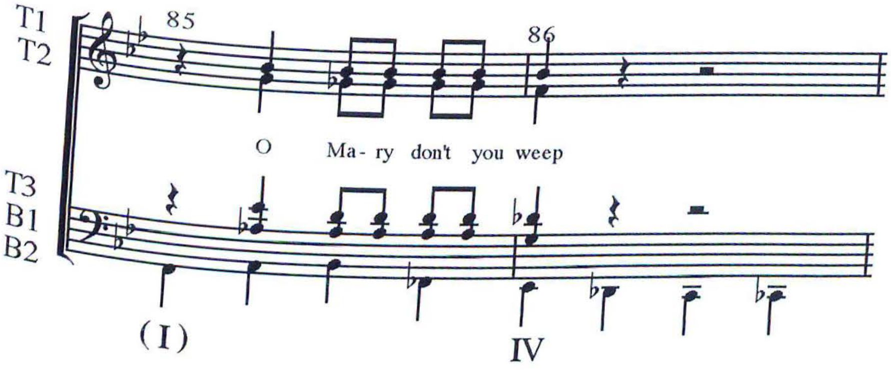


77
78
T1
T2
T3
B1
B2
O Ma -ry don't you weep
I
IV

(b)


T1
T2
81
82
O Ma-ry don't you weep
T3
B1
B2
I
IV

(c)


T1
T2
85
86
O Ma-ry don't you weep
T3
B1
B2
(I)
IV

The three instances of example 5.19 are from the vamp of "Mary." In each instance, the large-scale harmonic progression is I—IV and the upper voice parts remain unchanged. The bass is different in each case—note, for instance, the descending line at example 5.19a as compared to ascending motion at 5.19c. Clearly, as in big band music, the swing-style approach allows for a more improvisatory performance by the bass voice.[33]

---

[33] For more examples of swing-style walking bass in TAKE 6 performances listen to "If We Ever," "Jordan" and "David and Goliath" from TAKE 6; and "I've Got Life" from Join the Band, Reprise 9 25470–2, 1994.

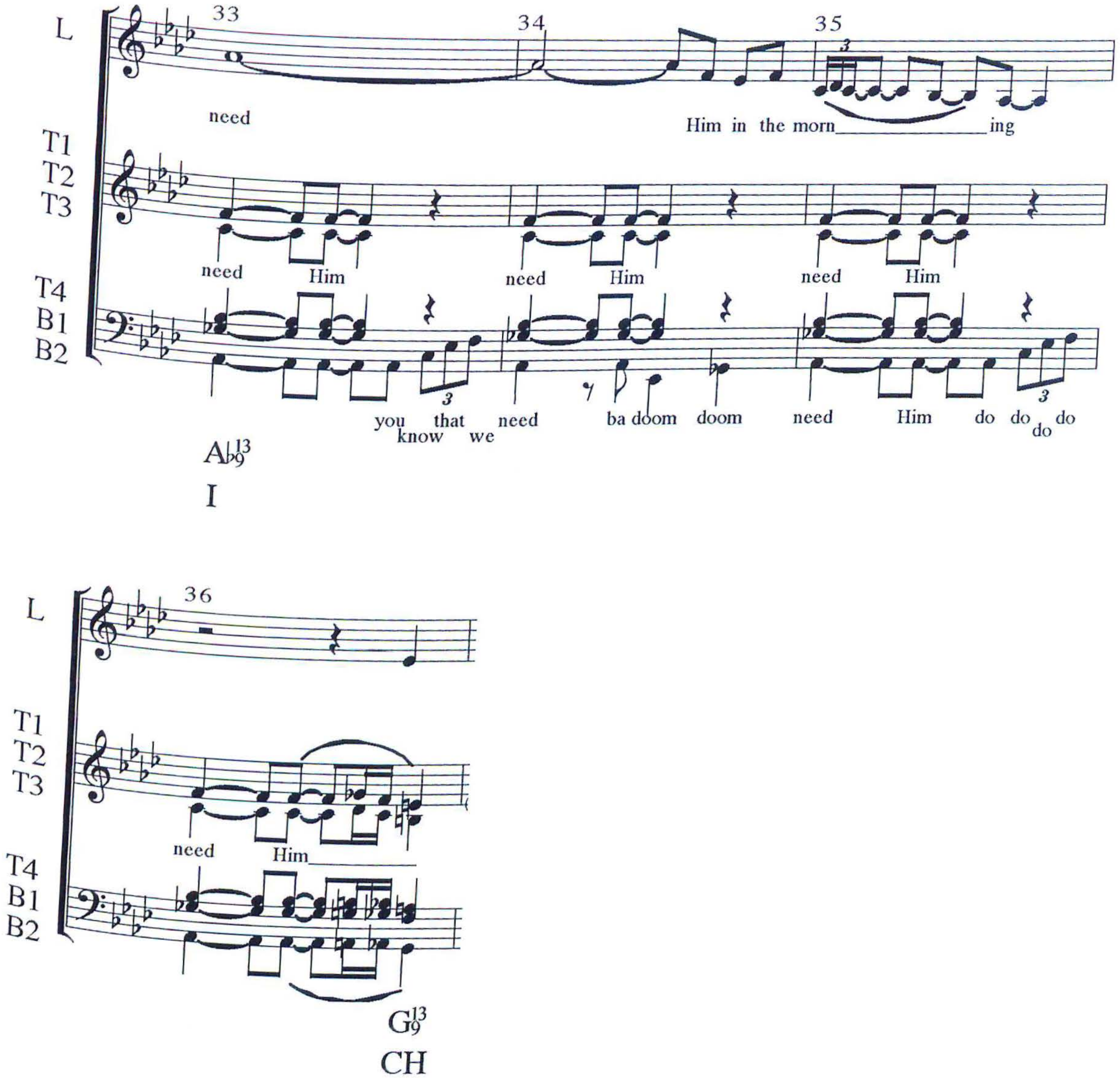
Call-and-Response

Chapter IV presented an example showing the contribution of the neo-jubilee trend in the development of the clanka lanka riff (see example 4.20b). In this example, the employment of real words in the riff pattern relates directly to the text of the performance. Besides this development, no new call-and-response patterns have developed in the neo-jubilee trend as in the case of the folk-style clanka lanka riff, the instrumental-style riff of the jubilee tradition or the gospel-style vamp. TAKE 6 performances draw on patterns established in earlier styles, occasionally with modifications. For instance, the TAKE 6 performance of "If We Ever" uses a modified clanka lanka riff, a portion of which is presented in example 5.20. As is customary of clanka lanka riffs, example 5.20 shows a prominent lead vocal accompanied by a repeating one-measure rhythmic pattern in the remaining voice parts. However, the clanka lanka riff is modified in that it only occurs in the verse of "If We Ever." Traditionally, in contrast to the basic call-and-response technique, the clanka lanka riff spans an entire performance.[34]

---

[34] As another modification of the clanka lanka riff, "Something within Me" from So Much 2 Say and "Milky White Way" from TAKE 6 both use more than one clanka lanka pattern throughout the performances.

Example 5. 20: "If We Ever," Verse, Clanka Lanka Riff[35]


L
T1
T2
T3
T4
B1
B2
33
34
35
36
need
Him in the morn ing
need Him
need Him
need Him
need Him
you know that we need
ba doom doom
need Him do do do do
A♭$^{13}_{9}$
I
G$^{13}_{9}$
CH

Variation Techniques

Harmonic ingenuity highlights the return of emphasis to group singing in the neo-jubilee trend. Moreover, harmonic variation tends to take precedence over melodic variation in repeated phrases or sections of music. To compare, example 5.21 presents the melody from "If We Ever Needed the Lord Before" as performed in the jubilee style and neo-jubilee trend, respectively, to show the shift of emphasis from melodic to harmonic variation.

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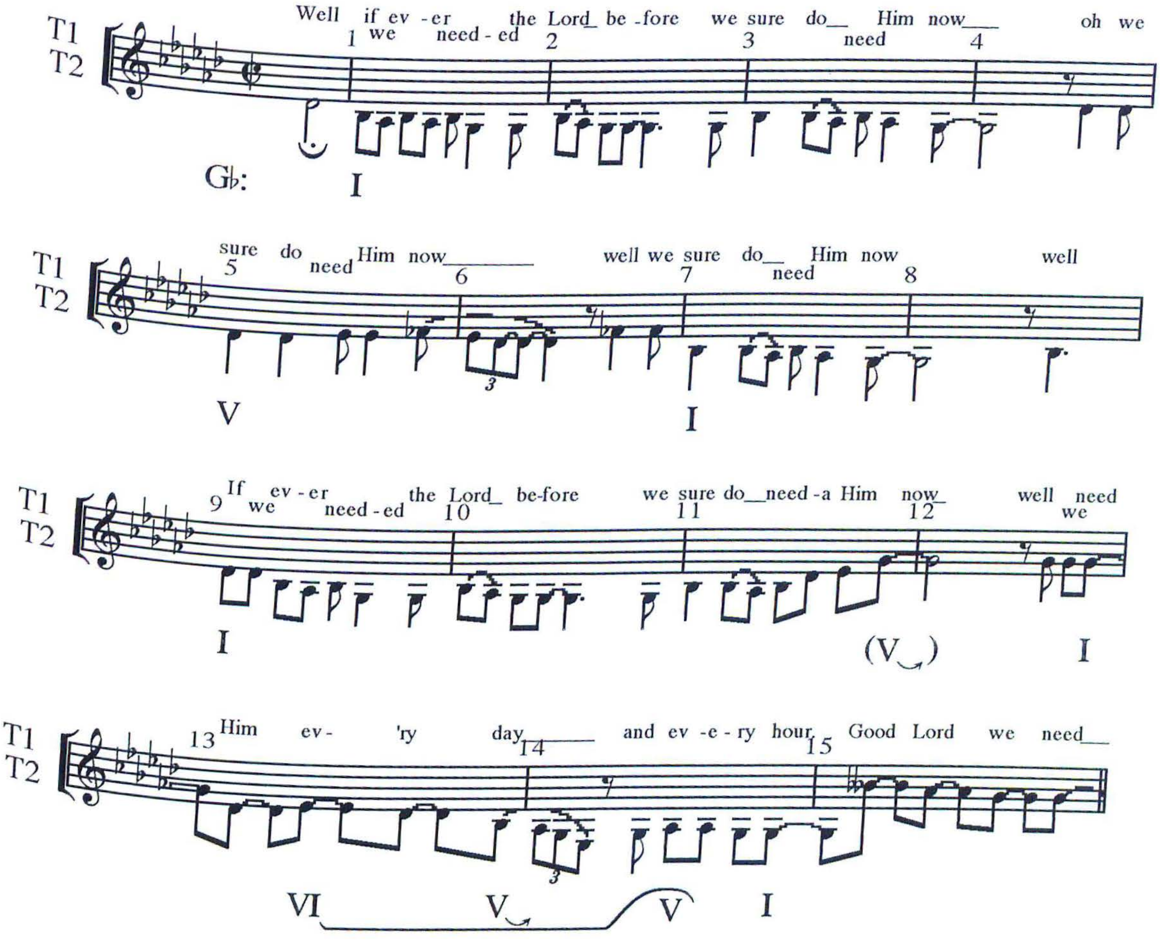
[35] TAKE 6.

Example 5. 21: "If We Ever Needed the Lord Before," Comparison of Melody in Jubilee Style and Neo-Jubilee Trend[36]

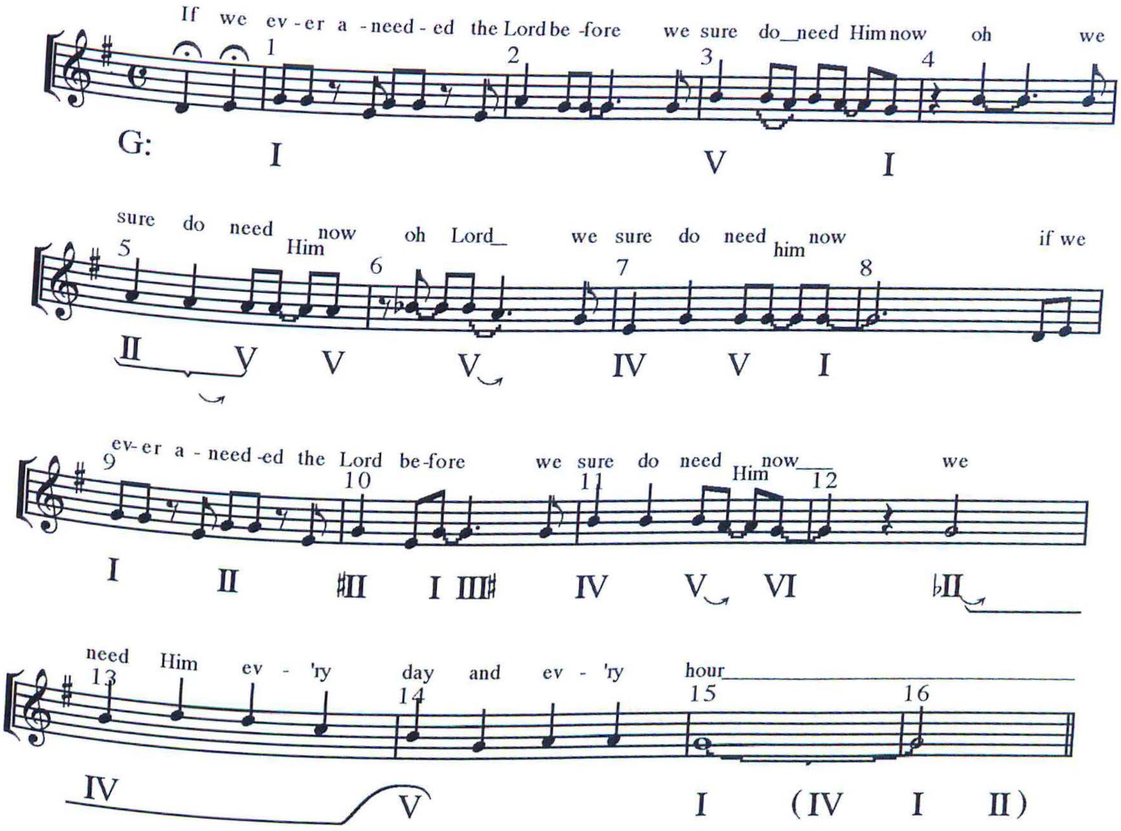
(a)


T1
T2
Well if we ev-er need-ed the Lord_ be-fore we sure do_ need Him now___ oh we
1 2 3 4
G♭:
I
sure do need Him now_______ well we sure do_ need Him now well
5 6 7 8
V
I
If we ev-er need-ed the Lord_ be-fore we sure do_need-a Him now_ well we need
9 10 11 12
I
(V)
I
Him ev- 'ry day_____ and ev-e-ry hour Good Lord we need__
13 14 15
3
VI
V
V
I

---

[36] Example 5.21a was transcribed from an unidentified cassette recording obtained from Mr. Adrian Watkins. He suggested that the Golden Gate Quartet might be the group on the tape. Analysis of the performance in comparison with several other Golden Gate Quartet recordings does reveal striking similarities. Adrian Watkins, interview by author, 15 January 1994, live interview, Huntsville, Ala. Example 5.21b is from Breath of Life Quartet, Spirituals.

(b)

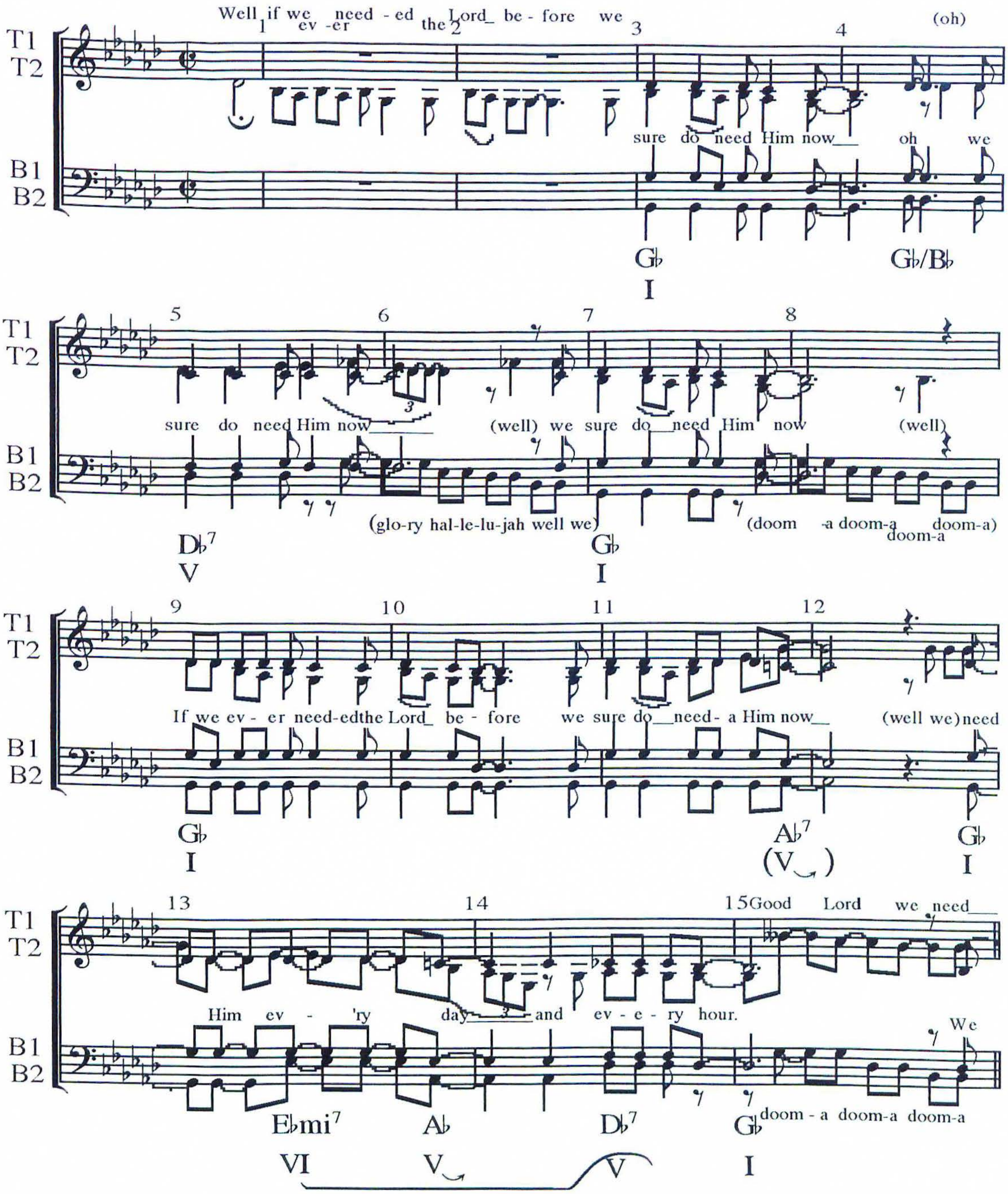

If we ev - er a - need - ed the Lord be -fore we sure do_need Him now oh we
sure do need Him now oh Lord_ we sure do need him now if we
ev- er a - need -ed the Lord be-fore we sure do need Him now___ we
need Him ev - 'ry day and ev - 'ry hour___
G:
I V I
II V V V IV V I
I II ♯III I III♯ IV V VI ♭II
IV V I (IV I II)
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16

The jubilee-style melody of example 5.21a is more improvisational and, therefore, less repetitious than the neo-jubilee-trend melody (example 5.21b). Note, for instance, the difference between measures 1–4 of the first phrase and measures 9–12 of the second phrase in example 5.21a. Measures 1–4 end with descending motion to $G\flat^{3}$ while measures 9–12 conclude with ascending motion to $G\flat^{4}$. Conversely, the neo-jubilee melody (example 5.21b) is nearly identical in measures 1–4 and 9–12.

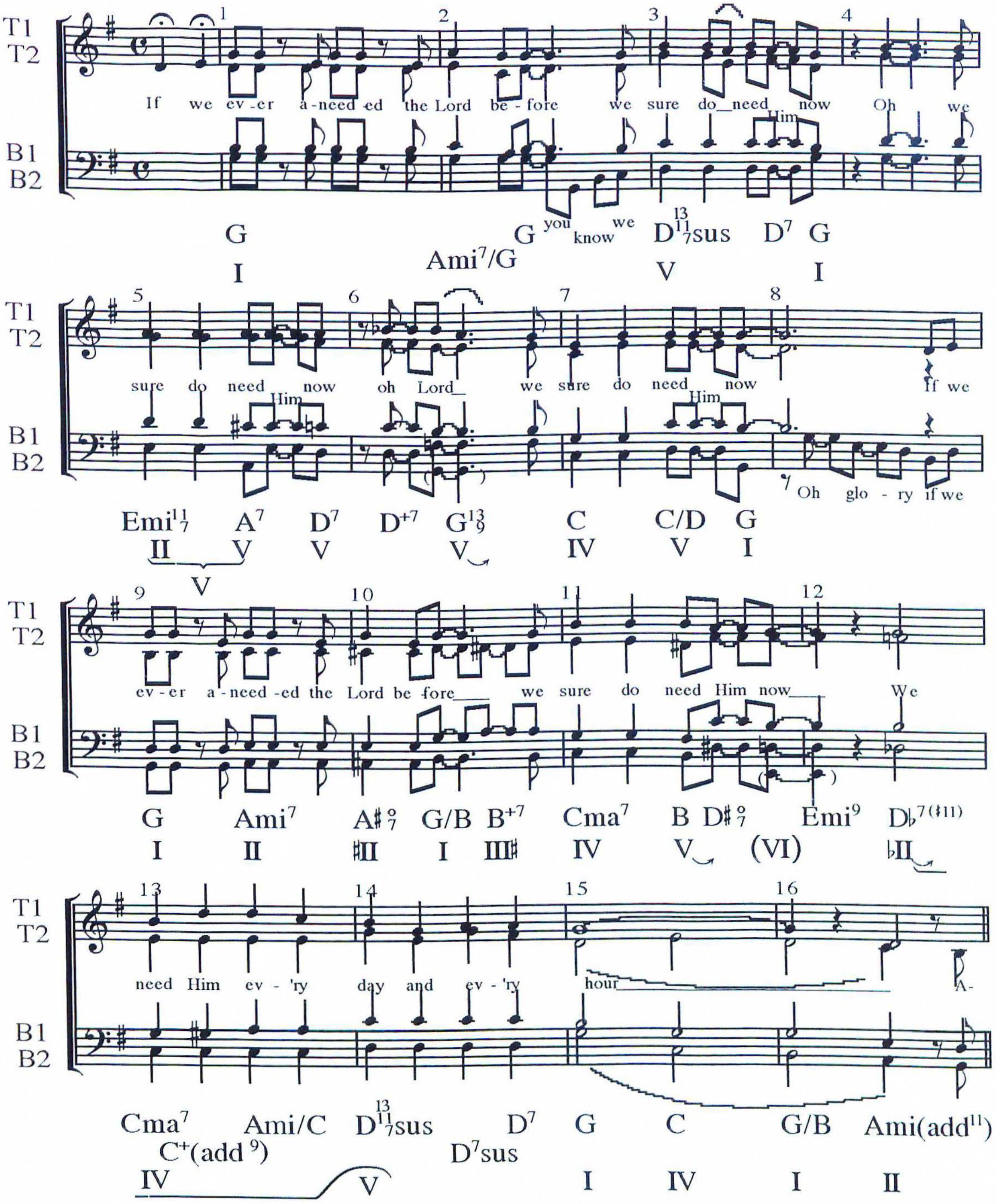
Example 5.22 places the two melodies in their respective harmonic contexts to further highlight the shift of emphasis from melodic to harmonic variation.

Example 5. 22: "If We Ever Needed the Lord Before," Comparison of Harmony in Jubilee Style and Neo-Jubilee Trend

(a)


T1
T2
B1
B2
Well if we ev-er need-ed the Lord_ be-fore we
sure do need Him now__ oh we
(oh)
G♭
I
G♭/B♭
sure do need Him now
(well) we sure do__need Him now
(well)
(glo-ry hal-le-lu-jah well we)
(doom -a doom-a doom-a doom-a)
D♭7
V
G♭
I
If we ev- er need-ed the Lord_ be - fore
we sure do__need- a Him now__
(well we) need
G♭
I
A♭7
(V)
G♭
I
Him ev - 'ry day and ev - e - ry hour.
Good Lord we need__
We
doom - a doom-a doom-a
E♭mi7
A♭
D♭7
G♭
VI
V
V
I

(b)


T1
T2
B1
B2
If we ev - er a - need ed the Lord be - fore we sure do need Him now Oh we
you know we
G Ami7/G G D13 11 7sus D7 G
I V I
sure do need Him now oh Lord we sure do need Him now If we
Oh glo - ry if we
Emi11 7 A7 D7 D+7 G13 9 C C/D G
II V V V IV V I
V
ev - er a - need - ed the Lord be fore we sure do need Him now We
G Ami7 A♯°7 G/B B+7 Cma7 B D♯°7 Emi9 D♭7(♯11)
I II ♯II I III♯ IV V (VI) ♭II
need Him ev - 'ry day and ev - 'ry hour A-
Cma7 Ami/C D13 11 7sus D7 G C G/B Ami(add11)
C+(add 9) D7sus
IV V I IV I II

In example 5.22b, when the melody of the first phrase repeats, the harmony is different. Measures 1–4 project a prolongation of tonic harmony with the progression I—V—I. Conversely, measures 9–12 move away from tonic, cadencing on submediant E in measure 12—an illustration of "harmonic variation." The switch from close-position chord voicings in measures 1–4 to open position in measures 9–12 further highlights the harmonic variation. Comparatively, example 5.22a shows "melodic variation" between measures 1–4 and 9–12 while the harmony is essentially the same, projecting the G♭ tonic chord. Only measure 12 is different, moving to a dominant seventh chord.

As a result of more use of jazz-style dissonances, neo-jubilee performances often employ chord voicings associated with big band music, which usually places the melody in the uppermost position (first tenor).[37] Eleventh and thirteenth chords, which Sebesky labels as "higher number chords," occur frequently in example 5.22b. Note the $\mathrm{D}^{\substack{13\\11}}_{7}$sus in measure 3, Emi^{11}_{7} in measure 5, G^{13}_{9} in measure 6 and the $\mathrm{D}\flat^{7(\sharp 11)}$ in measure 12 as examples of higher number chords. As a result, the top voice (first tenor) carries the melody throughout example 5.22b. Conversely, the jubilee-style performance exhibits less harmonic complexity and variation (example 5.22a), and the second tenor supplies the melody. Also, the melodic contour is freer, frequently crossing the first tenor throughout the performance.

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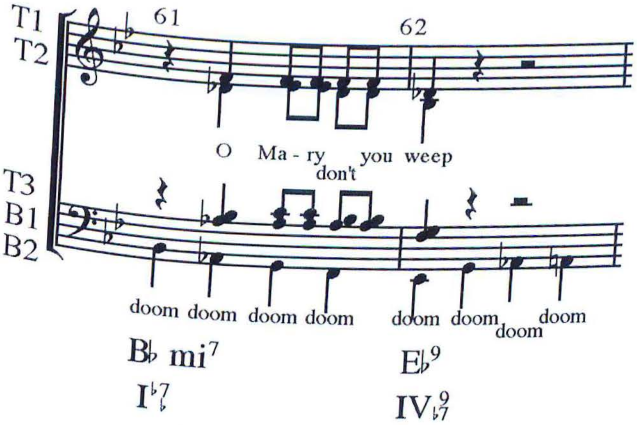
[37] Examples illustrating the most popular chord-voicing techniques for instrumental jazz in The Contemporary Arranger (e.g., close-position block voicing, open-position, semi-open position, clusters etc.) consistently place the melody in the top voice. See Sebesky, 16–52.

The Breath of Life Quartet's "If We Ever Needed the Lord Before" is unusual in that the first tenor carries the melody for the entire performance.[38] What is more common is to reserve placing the melody in the top voice part for predetermined phrases or sections, most often in the context of harmonic variation. Such is the case in "Mary" and can be observed in the harmonic construction of the vamp.

In the bipartite vamp, shown in example 5.23, the opening vamp (example 5.23a) is a two-measure repeating riff based on I—IV, the basic harmonic progression for the performance.

Example 5. 23: Opening and Closing Vamps

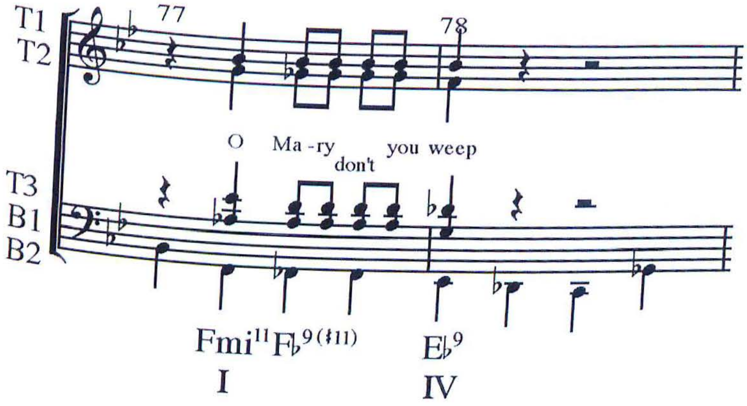
(a)


T1
T2
61
62
O Ma - ry don't you weep
T3
B1
B2
doom doom doom doom doom doom doom doom
B♭ mi7
I♭7
E♭9
IV9♭7

---

[38] The same is true of the TAKE 6 performance of "If We Ever," which is based on the earlier Breath of Life Quartet version.

(b)



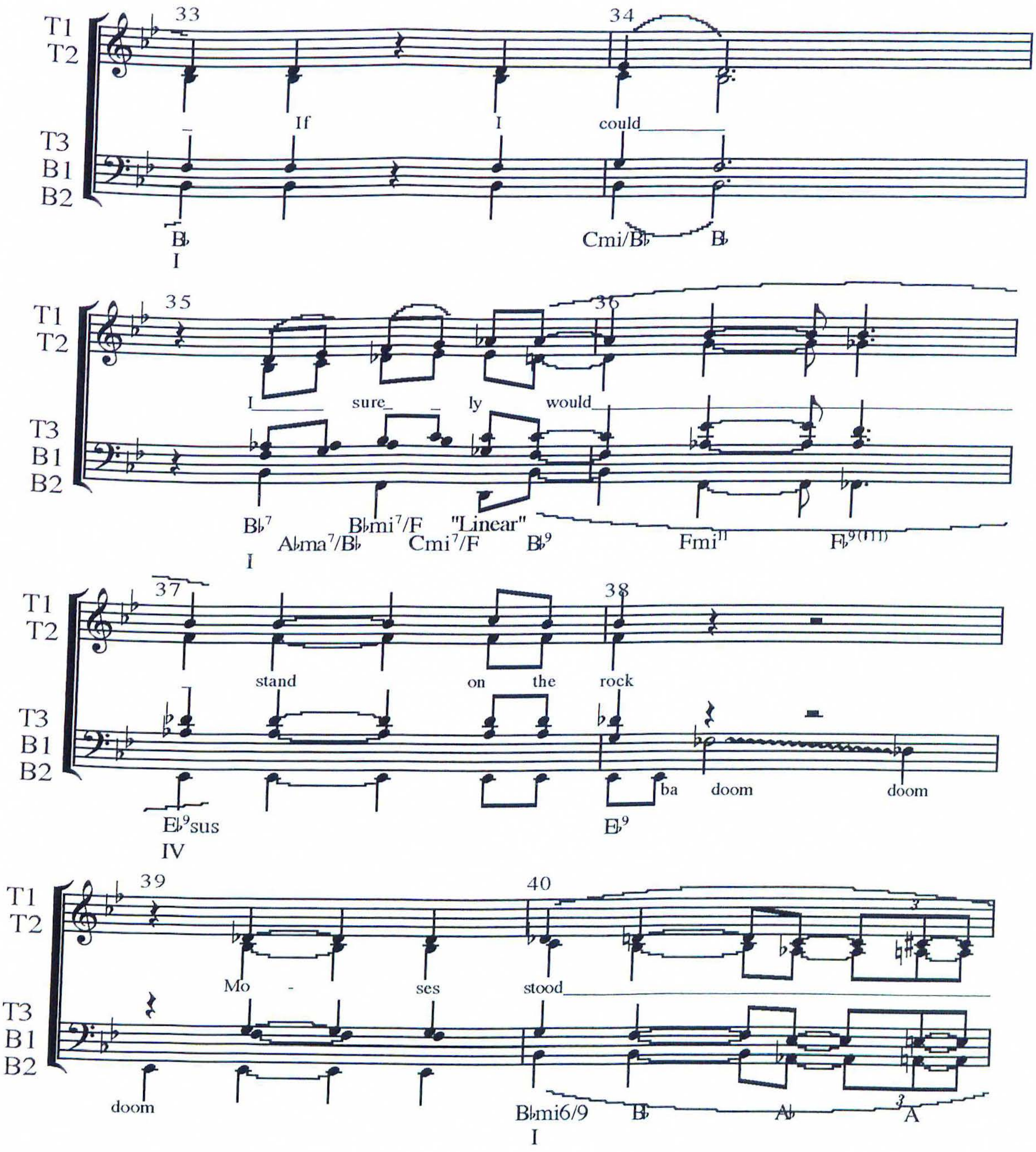
The riff that comprises the opening vamp (example 5.23a) is derived, essentially unaltered, from the final phrase of the chorus. The chords employ traditional quartet voicings (close position) with melody in the second tenor and with an added fifth voice.

The riff that comprises the closing vamp (example 5.23b) is a harmonic variation of the first riff. Though the underlying harmonic progression remains I—IV, the reharmonized riff redefines the I in measure 61 as applied dominant of IV in measure 77. Furthermore, the tonic B♭ chord, as an applied dominant in measure 77, is transformed by harmonic substitution. First, a II—V progression substitutes for the B♭ chord in measure 77. This creates the following chain of bass fifths: F—B♭—E♭. Second, a tritone substitution for B♭ in the chain effectively alters the chain to F—(F♭)—E♭.

The harmonic variation of example 5.23b contains more dissonance, creating higher number chords on beats 2 and 3 of measure 77. Consequently, the second tenor's melody in the opening vamp (example 5.23a) is transferred to the top voice in the closing vamp (5.23b) projecting a repeated $B\flat^4$. Example 5.23b also shows another significant feature related to higher number chords. Along with the melody placed in the top voice, the chords change from close position at 5.23a to open position at 5.23b.

The melody of example 5.23a is different from that of 5.23b. Sung by the second tenor, it begins on D♭^{4}, is prolonged by upper neighbor note E♭^{4}, and finally descends to B♭^{3} in measure 62. This raises the question as to how it is determined that the repeating B♭^{4} in the top voice of example 5.23b represents a transfer of the second tenor's melody from example 5.23a. The answer lies in the passage of music from which the closing vamp derives, shown in example 5.24.

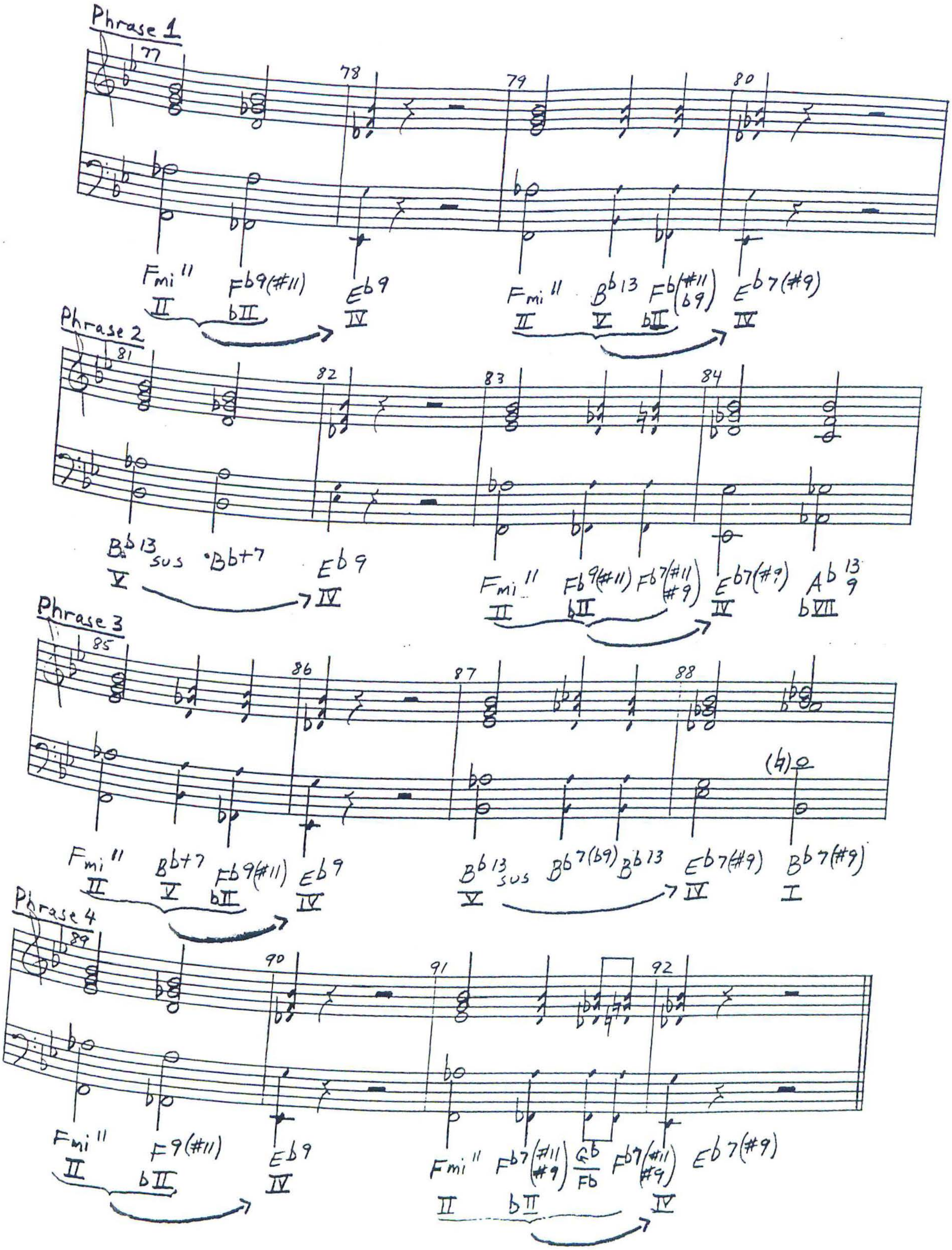
Example 5. 24: Origin of Closing Vamp


T1
T2
T3
B1
B2
33
34
If
I
could
B♭
I
Cmi/B♭
B♭
35
36
I
sure
ly
would
B♭7
I
A♭ma7/B♭
B♭mi7/F
Cmi7/F
"Linear"
B♭9
Fmi11
F♭9(♯11)
37
38
stand
on
the
rock
ba
doom
doom
E♭9sus
IV
E♭9
39
40
Mo
ses
stood
doom
B♭mi6/9
I
B♭
A♭
A

Example 5.24 shows the first phrase of the verse in "Mary." The melody for the entire phrase emphasizes note B♭. The phrase begins with traditional quartet voice parts. The second tenor carries the melody for the first three measures (measures 33–35), emphasizing B♭^{3}. When the voice leading moves to higher number chords in open position in measure 36, the melody moves an octave higher to B♭^{4}, transferred to the top voice for measures 36–38. When the voice leading returns to close position chords at measure 39, the melody returns to the second tenor, continuing to highlight B♭^{3}. The progression of open position chords, with melody in the top voice (measures 36–38), provides the music for the closing vamp. Thus, harmonic progression and voice leading are essentially identical between measures 36–38 of example 5.24 and example 5.23b, supporting the melodic displacement in the closing vamp.

The harmonic variation continues in the closing vamp, as illustrated in example 5.25.

Example 5. 25: Rhythmic Reduction of Closing Vamp

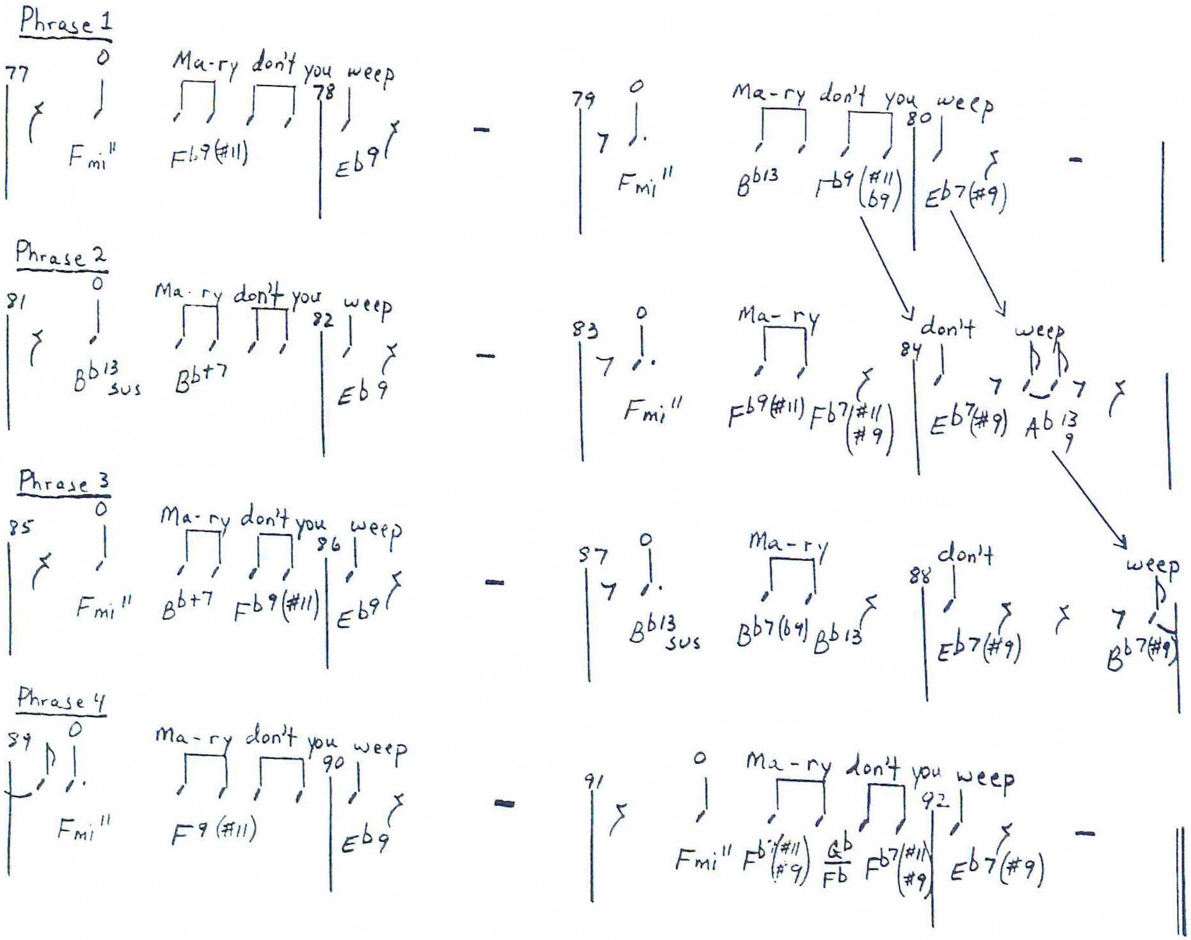

Phrase 1
77
78
79
80
Fmi11
Fb9(#11)
Eb9
Fmi11
Bb13
Fb(#11 b9)
Eb7(#9)
II
bII
IV
II
V
bII
IV
Phrase 2
81
82
83
84
Bb13sus
Bb+7
Eb9
Fmi11
Fb9(#11)
Fb7(#11 #9)
Eb7(#9)
Ab13 9
V
IV
II
bII
IV
bVII
Phrase 3
85
86
87
88
Fmi11
Bb+7
Fb9(#11)
Eb9
Bb13sus
Bb7(b9)
Bb13
Eb7(#9)
Bb7(#9)
II
V
bII
IV
V
IV
I
Phrase 4
89
90
91
92
Fmi11
F9(#11)
Eb9
Fmi11
Fb7(#11 #9)
Gb/Fb
Fb7(#11 #9)
Eb7(#9)
II
bII
IV
II
bII
IV

Four phrases comprise the closing vamp. Each phrase is four measures long. Except for the bass line, the riff established in measures 77–78 is the same at the beginning of each phrase. In measures 77–78 (first phrase), the bass approaches subdominant E♭ by stepwise motion. In measures 81–82 (second phrase), bass movement by fifth substitutes for the stepwise motion of measures 77–78. Though the upper voice parts remain the same, the change in bass line affects the character of the harmonic progression, reflected in the jazz chord analysis (example 5.25). The bass line of measures 85–86 (third phrase) is a conflation of the bass in measures 77–78 and 81–82. Here, tritone substitution (F♭) breaks up the bass movement by fifths, to approach subdominant E♭ by half step. The bass in measures 89–90 (fourth phrase) returns to the original motion of measures 77–78. Of course, the underlying harmonic progression, I—IV, is maintained in each two-measure group.

Harmonic variation in the latter half of each of the four phrases is more striking. Changes in the second tenor and bass voice parts create most of the variation, along with an extra chord, which is added to the ends of the second and third phrases. The A♭$^{13}_{9}$ chord at the end of the second phrase is an extension of the chain of fifths that spans measures 83–84—F—(F♭)—E♭—A♭. Of course, the bass note F♭^{2} in measure 83 is a tritone substitution for B♭ in the chain. The chord added to the end of the third phrase is built on tonic note B♭, extending the basic two-chord progression to I—IV—I in measures 87–88.

Rhythmic variation complements harmonic variation in the closing vamp. Example 5.26 shows a pattern of rhythmic variation that parallels and, consequently, highlights the harmonic variation.

Example 5. 26: Rhythm Analysis of Closing Vamp



Phrase 1
77
Ma-ry don't you weep
78
Fmi11
Fb9(#11)
Eb9
79
Ma-ry don't you weep
80
Fmi11
Bb13
Fb9(#11 b9)
Eb7(#9)
Phrase 2
81
Ma-ry don't you weep
82
Bb13 sus
Bb+7
Eb9
83
Ma-ry
don't
weep
84
Fmi11
Fb9(#11)
Fb7(#11 #9)
Eb7(#9)
Ab13 9
Phrase 3
85
Ma-ry don't you weep
86
Fmi11
Bb+7
Fb9(#11)
Eb9
87
Ma-ry
88
don't
weep
Bb13 sus
Bb7(b9)
Bb13
Eb7(#9)
Bb7(#9)
Phrase 4
89
Ma-ry don't you weep
90
Fmi11
F9(#11)
Eb9
91
Ma-ry don't you weep
92
Fmi11
Fb7(#11 #9)
Gb/Fb
Fb7(#11 #9)
Eb7(#9)

Example 5. 26: Rhythm Analysis of Closing Vamp

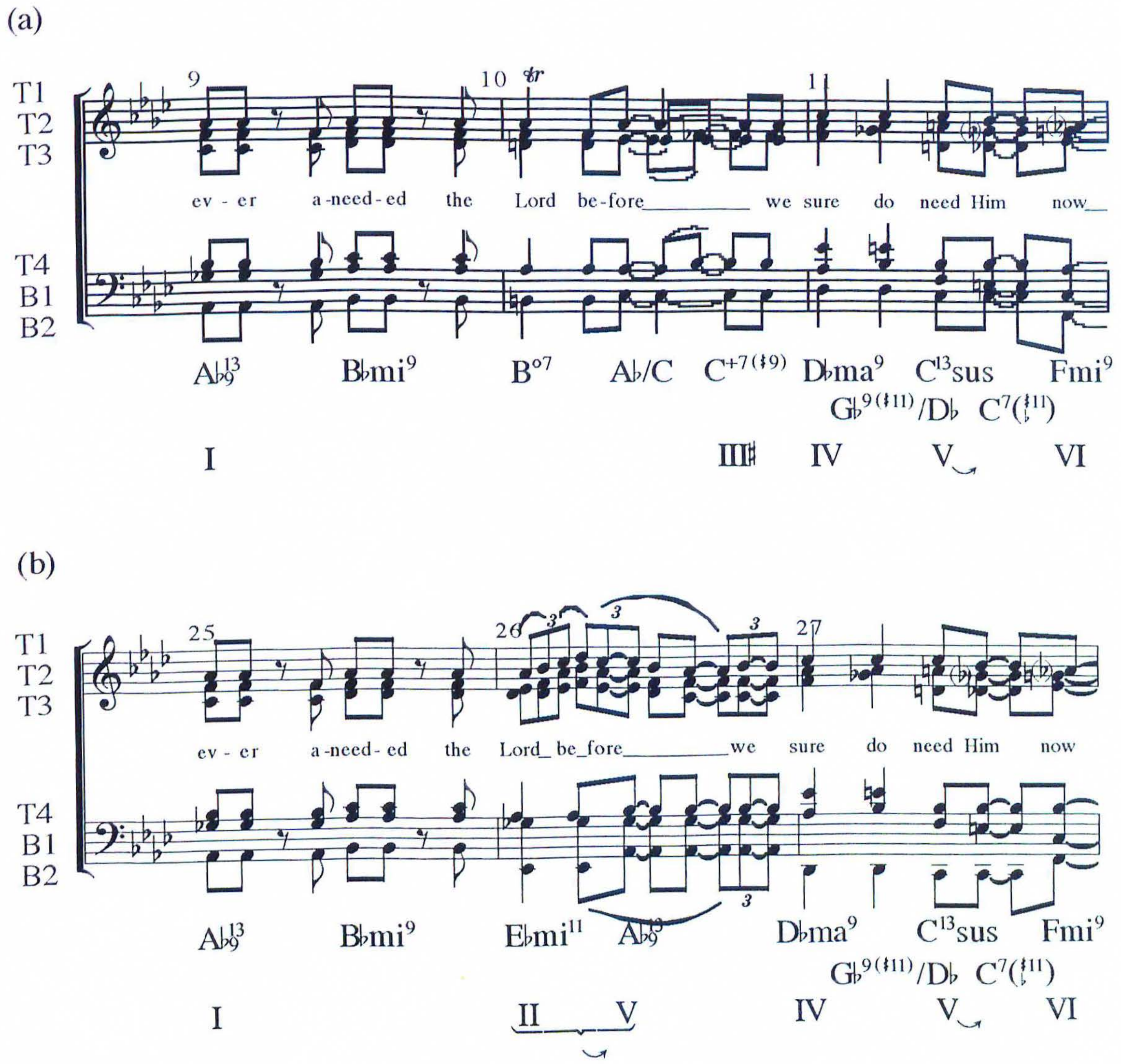
Except for the fourth phrase, the rhythmic pattern is the same at the beginning of each phrase of example 5.26. Most of the rhythmic variation occurs in the latter half of each phrase, which, one may recall, is where the more striking harmonic variation occurs. Chord symbols are provided in example 5.26 to show the relationship between rhythmic and harmonic variation.

The first phrase of example 5.26 (measures 77–80) contains two statements of the phrase "O Mary don't you weep." The only difference between the two statements is the placement of the first word "O." It enters a half beat earlier in the second statement (measure 79). The latter statement of "O Mary don't you weep" in phrases two and three extend progressively, which the arrows point out in example 5.26. Note how the word "weep" on beat 1 of measure 80 (first phrase) comes on the upbeat of beat 3 in measure 84 (second phrase). It occurs even later in the measure at the end of the third phrase (measure 88). Likewise, the position of "don't" shifts from beat 4 in measure 79 of the first phrase to the downbeat of measure 84 in the second phrase and maintains this new position at the end of the third phrase. The word "you" is dropped from the phrase "O Mary don't you weep" at the end of phrases two (measure 84) and three (measure 88). Finally, the fourth phrase (measures 89–92) repeats the rhythmic pattern of the first phrase. However, the rhythmic variation between the two halves of the first phrase reverses in the fourth phrase. Thus, the syncopated "O" of the latter half of the first phrase (measure 79) comes at the beginning of the fourth phrase (measure 89).

These harmonic and rhythmic variation techniques, prominently featured in the vamp, serve to highlight the return of emphasis to group singing in the neo-jubilee trend of quartet singing.

As another example of harmonic variation, example 5.27 shows a portion of the chorus from TAKE 6's performance of "If We Ever" harmonized three ways.

Example 5. 27: Harmonic Variation in "If We Ever," TAKE 6 (1988)[39]


(a)
T1
T2
T3
T4
B1
B2
9
10
11
tr
ev - er a-need-ed the Lord be-fore___ we sure do need Him now__
A♭$^{13}_{9}$ B♭mi^9 B°7 A♭/C C$^{+7(♯9)}$ D♭ma^9 C^{13}sus Fmi^9
G♭$^{9(♯11)}$/D♭ C^7($^{♯11}_{♭}$)
I III♯ IV V VI
(b)
T1
T2
T3
T4
B1
B2
25
26
27
3
ev - er a-need-ed the Lord_ be_fore___ we sure do need Him now
A♭$^{13}_{9}$ B♭mi^9 E♭mi^{11} A♭$^{13}_{9}$ D♭ma^9 C^{13}sus Fmi^9
G♭$^{9(♯11)}$/D♭ C^7($^{♯11}_{♭}$)
I II V IV V VI

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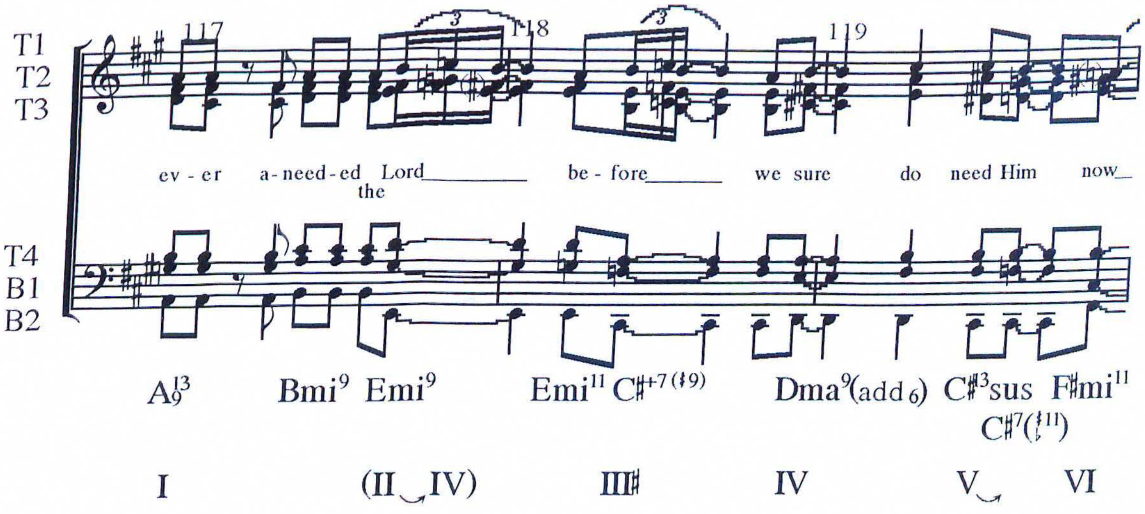
[39] TAKE 6.

(c)


T1
T2
T3
117
118
119
3
3
ev - er a-need-ed the Lord before we sure do need Him now
T4
B1
B2
A13/9
Bmi9 Emi9
Emi11 C♯+7(♯9)
Dma9(add 6) C♯13sus F♯mi11
C♯7(♯11)
I
(II IV)
III♯
IV
V
VI

The large-scale design in each instance of example 5.27 is I—IV—VI. However, the approach to IV in the design is harmonically different in each case. In measure 10 of example 5.27a, III♯ precedes IV. In the second instance (example 5.27b), an applied II—V progression precedes IV. The operations in examples 5.27a and 5.27b combine to produce harmonic progression in example 5.27c. Thus, II from the II—V progression (example 5.27b) moves through III♯ (from example 5.27a) to finally cadence on IV in measure 119. This form of developmental variation recalls the same type of variation applied to a single voice part as melodic variation, examined in chapter II. There, a voice part moved by step in one instance, by skip in a second instance, and culminated with both diminutions in a third instance.[40] The employment of this concept, first as melodic variation in the folk style, and then as harmonic variation as in example 5.27, clearly demonstrates the development of variation techniques in black religious quartet singing.

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[40] See example 2.15 in chapter II.

Meter and Rhythm

A significant feature of big band jazz in the Swing Era is the emphasis on every beat in the measure. This is readily apparent in "Mary," signaled by a walking bass in the vamp, which stresses four beats per measure in common-time meter. Also, neo-jubilee-trend performances continue the trend of infusing earlier quartet performances with swing-style rhythm characteristics. Such is the case in the Breath of Life Quartet adaptation of "If We Ever Needed the Lord Before" where a four-beat rhythmic feel replaces the two-beat feel of an earlier jubilee-style rendition (compare examples 5.21 and 5.22).

Likewise, swing eighths are prevalent in neo-jubilee-trend performances. "Mary" clearly demonstrates this feature as do several other performances discussed in this chapter such as "If We Ever (Needed the Lord Before)," performed by both TAKE 6 and the Breath of Life Quartet, "This Same Jesus" (example 5.5b), "Something within Me" (example 5.11) and "Get Away, Jordan" (example 5.12a).

Summary

The neo-jubilee trend of quartet singing marks a return of emphasis to group singing. Performances by TAKE 6, the most notable vocal group of the neo-jubilee trend, fall into two categories, both of which emphasize group singing. One is a strict jubilee approach where the single objective is the even blend of group singing. The second category recalls the transitional quasi-jubilee style that preceded the gospel style. This approach incorporates a prominent lead singer, although group singing remains paramount. "Mary," the primary piece for analysis in this chapter, is representative of the quasi-jubilee approach.

The return of emphasis to group singing is evident in the way threads of harmonic development continue to evolve. One such thread is the development of variation techniques. In neo-jubilee-trend performances, emphasis on harmonic variation in repeated phrases or sections of music represents an extension of the melodic variation within a single voice part common in earlier styles of quartet singing. Several instances of harmonic variation occur in "Mary," most notably in the vamp.

The continued proliferation of swing-style big band characteristics in the neo-jubilee trend encourages development of other musical threads. One such thread is the development of chord structures and added dissonance, which shows a new penchant for the regular use of jazz harmony, including ninth, eleventh and thirteenth chords. As shown in "Mary," there are generally three methods for creating these jazz-style dissonances. These include the employment of added notes, reharmonization and voice leading that creates linear progressions.

Chord voicings often emulate those associated with big band music. "Mary," in particular, uses close-position voicing of parallel seventh chords, and higher number chords in open-position voicing with melody in the top voice. Other TAKE 6 performances emulate the contrast and interplay of choirs within the big band ensemble.

Finally, the boogie-woogie-style walking bass, emulated by gospel-style quartets, develops into the more melodic and improvisational swing style of bass walking in the neo-jubilee trend. In "Mary," the bass sings homophonically with the other group voice parts in the chorus and verse. It switches to a walking pattern in the vamp where the lead singer is more improvisational. This parallels the tendency of the bass player to reserve the walking bass for improvisational solos in instrumental jazz performances.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

Threads of Harmonic Development

Six threads of harmonic development have been identified and traced to show their evolution through the black religious quartet singing tradition. These threads of development fall into three categories: threads that show continuous development through the entire genre; shorter threads that do not span the entire genre and; fragmented threads, where there is a caesura in the development that picks up again later in the evolutionary process.

"Number and function of voice parts" is a thread that shows continuous development throughout the tradition. In the concurrent folk and jubilee styles, quartets generally consisted of four singers that adhered to traditional quartet voice parts. With the shift of emphasis to lead singing in the gospel style, quartets added a voice part to maintain a four-voice structure as accompaniment for a prominent lead singer. Many quartets employed two lead singers, expanding the vocal texture to as many as six parts. With the return of emphasis to group singing in the neo-jubilee trend, TAKE 6 redefined roles in the six-voice texture with two approaches. In the quasi-jubilee approach, a five-voice background that often employs jazz-style harmony accompanies a prominent lead singer. In the strict jubilee approach, all six voices serve to create jazz-style chord structures.

Another thread that shows development throughout the genre is "the role of the bass voice." Often nonfunctional in the folk style, functional bass parts appeared more often in the latter half of the jubilee period when the Golden Gate Quartet popularized the pump bass technique, which emphasized chord roots on the strong beats in the measure.

Boogie-woogie influenced the beginning of walking bass parts in the gospel period, which emphasized chord roots and outlined chords with the boogie-woogie bass pattern. Development in the neo-jubilee trend is characterized by more melodic walking bass parts.

"Variation techniques" is yet another thread of development that spans the black religious quartet tradition. Melodic variation within individual voice parts in repeated sections of music was the primary form of variation in the folk and jubilee styles. Prominent lead singing added a new dimension in the gospel style—textual variation. Then when the emphasis on group singing returned in the neo-jubilee trend, with a predilection for jazz harmony, melodic variation in individual voice parts evolved to the form of harmonic variation.

Shorter threads of development include "meter and rhythm," which shows development through the gospel style and not in the neo-jubilee trend. Cut-time meter is dominant in the folk style as well as the even distribution of eighth notes. Cut time is also the meter of choice in the jubilee style, but there are also performances, such as "One Day When the Lord Will Call Me," that begin to incorporate the swing feel of jazz (utilizing uneven distribution of eighth notes). Common-time meter replaces cut time in the gospel style. Also, there is more consistent use of swing eighths marked by the occasional boogie-woogie style walking bass.

There is also development of "call-and-response techniques" in the three established styles but not in the neo-jubilee trend. New call-and-response patterns developed in each of these three styles. The clanka lanka riff, for instance, was evolving in the folk style during the time the narrative style was developing in the jubilee tradition. Both riff styles featured a lead singer accompanied by the remaining voice parts in a repeating riff pattern. And both represented early manifestations of the gospel-style vamp that followed. Also, the instrumental-style riff developed among jubilee quartets as another form of call-and-response. The gospel-style vamp represented the culmination of riff development in quartet singing. It was designed to showcase a virtuosic lead performance and effect an emotional climax in a highly improvisatory setting.

"Chord structures and added dissonance" is an example of a fragmented thread of development. In the folk style, chord structures were often incomplete and the seventh was the only regularly added dissonance. Chord structures were more consistently complete in the jubilee style. And along with regularly employed seventh chords, the added sixth chord evolved into a common sonority in the jubilee style. The development of chord structures shows no innovations in the gospel style when lead singing became the focal point. Development resumed in the neo-jubilee trend when group singing returned to prominence. Regularly employed dissonances expanded to include jazz-style harmony including ninth, eleventh and thirteenth chords, and open- and semi-open-position chord voicings became common, contrasting the consistent use of close-position voicings in earlier styles.

Influence of Big Band Music

The influence of big band music on the black religious quartet tradition is profound. The way big band jazz evolved from New Orleans Dixieland to Chicago Style Dixieland to Swing is reflected in many of the threads of development. For instance, bass singing in the jubilee style began imitating the tuba sound associated with New Orleans Dixieland while pulsing on the strong beats of the measure in the tradition of Chicago Style Dixieland. Then, just as boogie-woogie helped usher in the Swing Era, likewise, gospel-style bass singers turned to a boogie-woogie influenced style, which emphasized every beat in the measure and encouraged swing eighth notes. Finally, the Swing Era saw the development of a linear walking bass style, which is another pattern of development reflected in bass singing of the neo-jubilee trend.

In big band music, the heterophonic playing style of Dixieland jazz evolved into the vertical and sectionalized style of Swing. The same is true in the development of quartet singing. The instrumental-style riff from the jubilee tradition, consisting of layered riff patterns, is akin to the heterophonic style of Dixieland jazz. Additionally, in the neo-jubilee trend, TAKE 6 emulates the sectional playing style of swing bands through contrast in chord voicings, tonal ranges and rhythmic figures.

The way big band music moved from a two-beat rhythmic feel to a four-beat feel in the transition from Chicago Style Dixieland to Swing, is reflected in the transitions from folk and jubilee styles of quartet singing to the gospel style. The transcriptions in this dissertation mark the development with a change from cut-time meter in folk- and jubilee-style performances to common-time in gospel-style performances. Accompanying the change of meter was the shift to swing eighths, again parallel to the development in big band music.

Other Stylistic Influences

The influence of barbershop music is significant for two reasons. First, the employment of swipes, barbershop sevenths and the ♭VI encouraged complete chord structures in the jubilee style. Second, it introduced new harmonies that served as transition to the jazz-style dissonances of the neo-jubilee trend of quartet singing.

The emergent composers of black gospel music introduced the recitative-and-aria song style to black religious music in the late 1930s. Consequently, jubilee-style quartets adopted the technique, which served two purposes. First, the slow, nonpulsed style highlighted barbershop devices in recitative-style introductions and endings. Second, the slow introductions and endings added variety and contrast to the formal structures of quartet performances.

Toward a Method of Arranging

This study lays the groundwork for developing a method for arranging in the black religious quartet style—a project this writer plans to pursue. It clearly identifies the structure of traditional quartet voice parts. It also identifies the most commonly added dissonances and outlines three methods for adding jazz-style dissonance—adding notes to an established four-part arrangement, complete reharmonization and voice leading dictated by linear progression. Also, it suggests options for the function of voice parts in four-, five- and six-voice textures, and explores variation techniques in quartet arranging.

Recommendations for Further Study

The scope of this dissertation is limited to group singing that is a cappella or harmonically independent of instrumental accompaniment. The contemporary gospel style of quartet singing, which followed the gospel style, utilizes full instrumental accompaniment and, therefore, lies beyond the scope of the present investigation. Another study might examine instrumental harmonic development through the contemporary gospel period, the beginnings of which can be observed as early as in the folk style of quartet singing. Also, many groups perform both styles (i.e., a cappella and with instrumental accompaniment). A study comparing the musical adjustments that such groups must make to alternate between the two styles or how one style affects the approach in the other style would also be a worthwhile endeavor.

Perhaps another study could examine precursor groups of the folk and jubilee styles, which would include analyses of quartet singing in the minstrel shows of the

1800's.[1] Also, black college quartets, which consisted of formally trained singers, were performing regularly at the turn of the century and simultaneously followed a different trend of development than the community-based quartets of the day.[2] Examining the differences between the two trends would be valuable.

There is renewed interest in the black religious quartet tradition as evidenced by the large number of recently reissued recordings listed in the discography of this dissertation. Unfortunately, this interest has taken hold more in other countries than in the United States—its birthplace. It is hoped that this investigation will reinvigorate its presence throughout the world, spawn more theoretical scholarship and encourage its acceptance as an art form.

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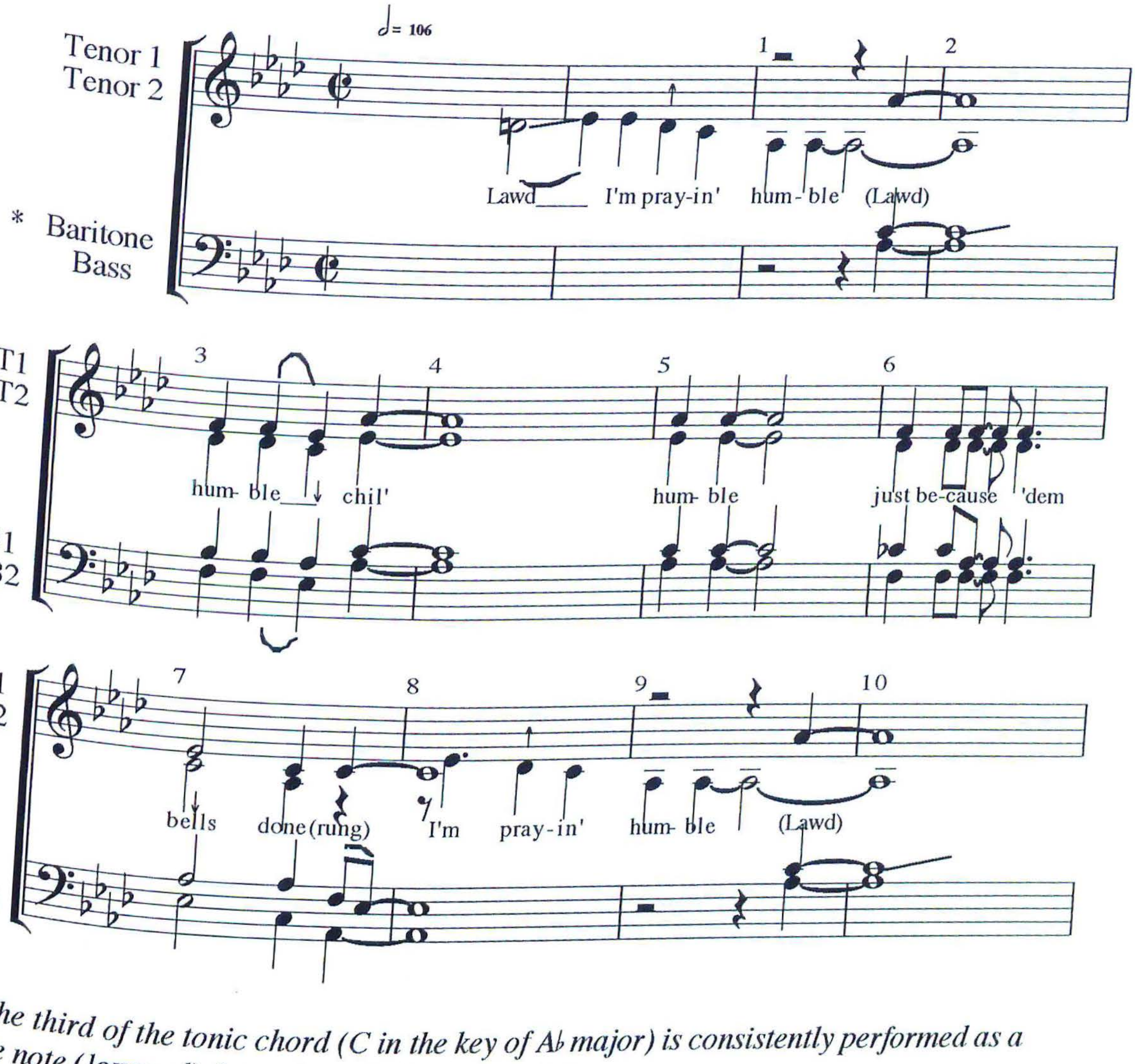
[1] Buchanan, 38.

[2] Allen, 4.

APPENDIX

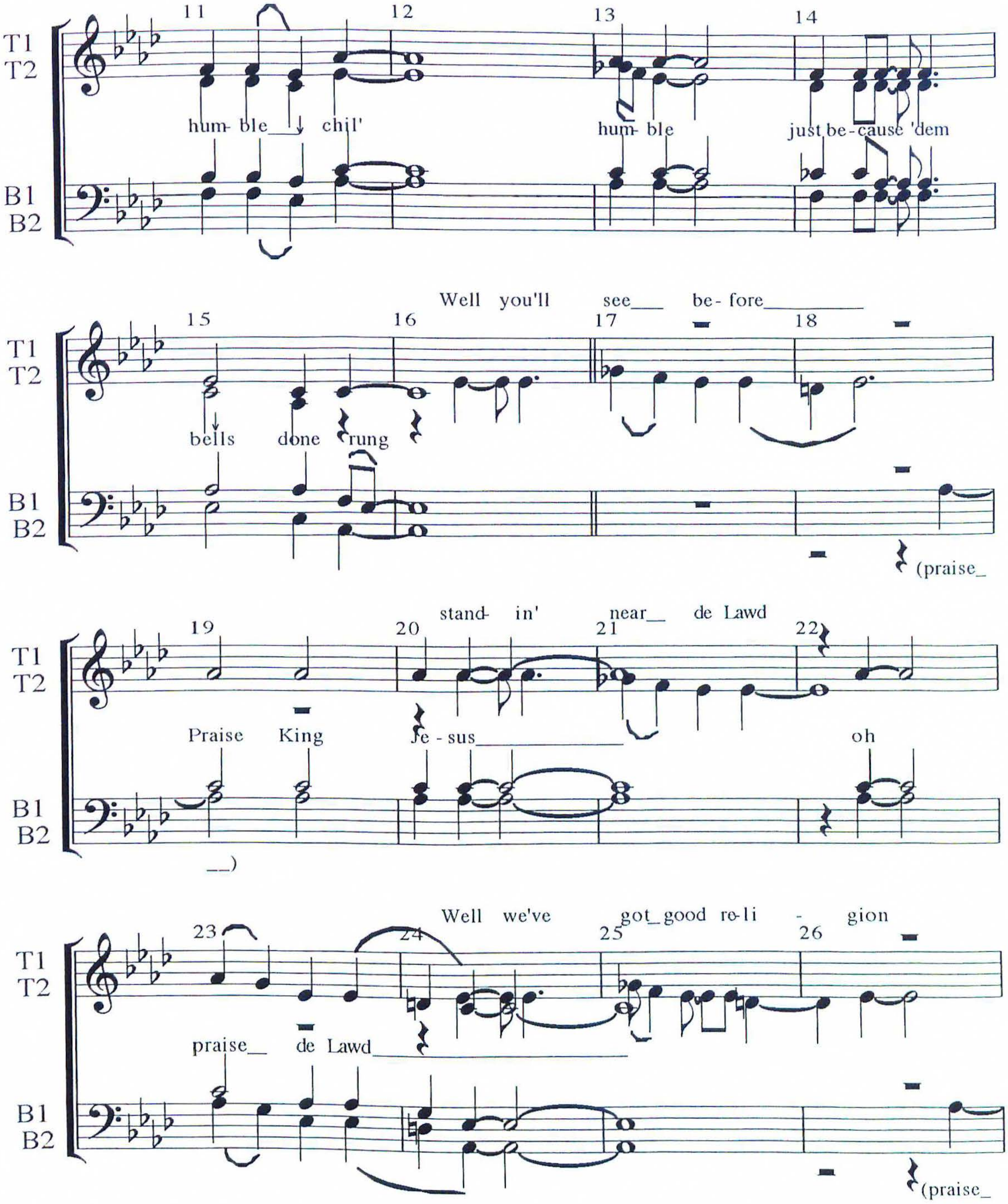
TRANSCRIPTIONS

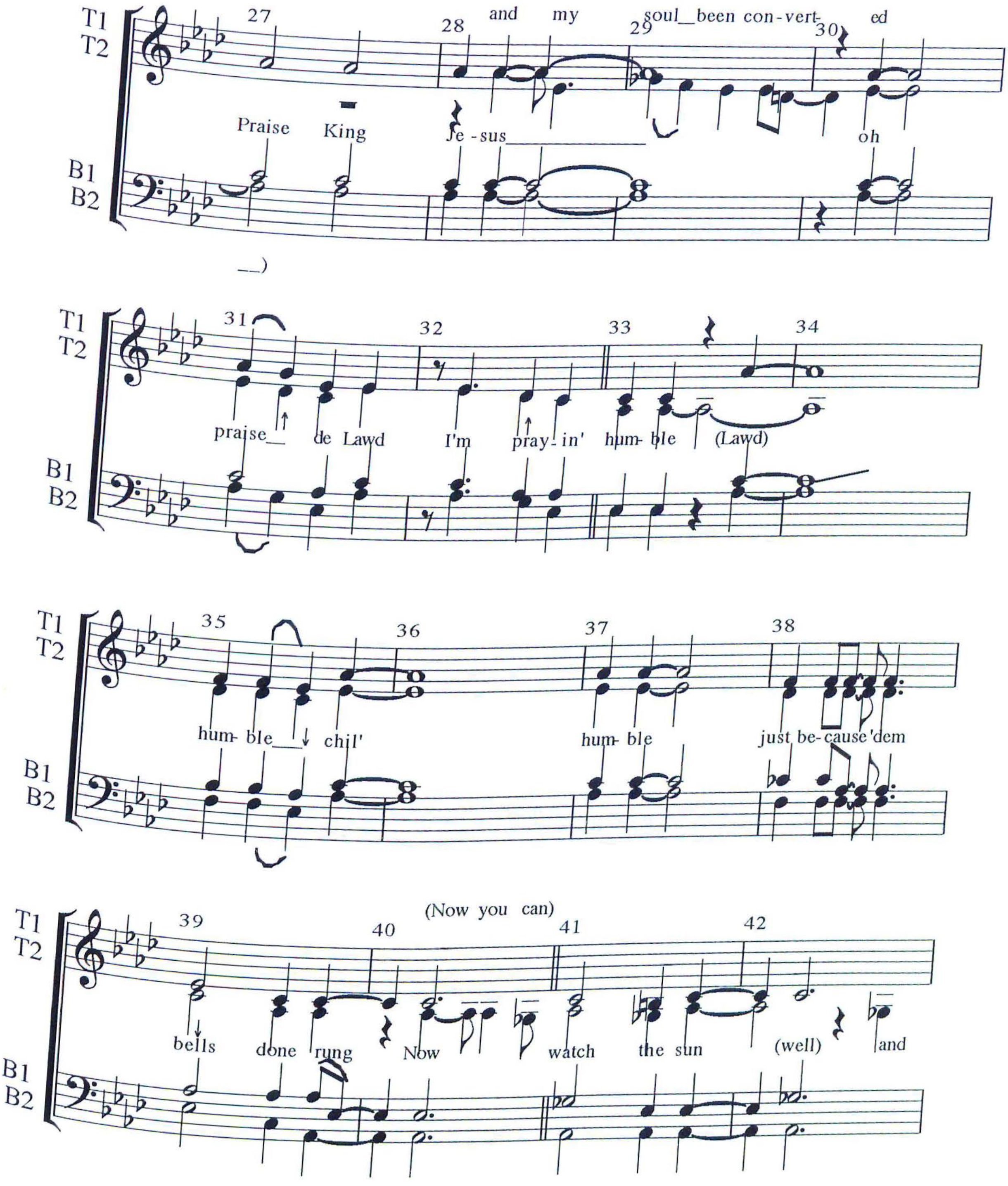
"I'm Praying Humble," Mitchells' Christian Singers (1937)

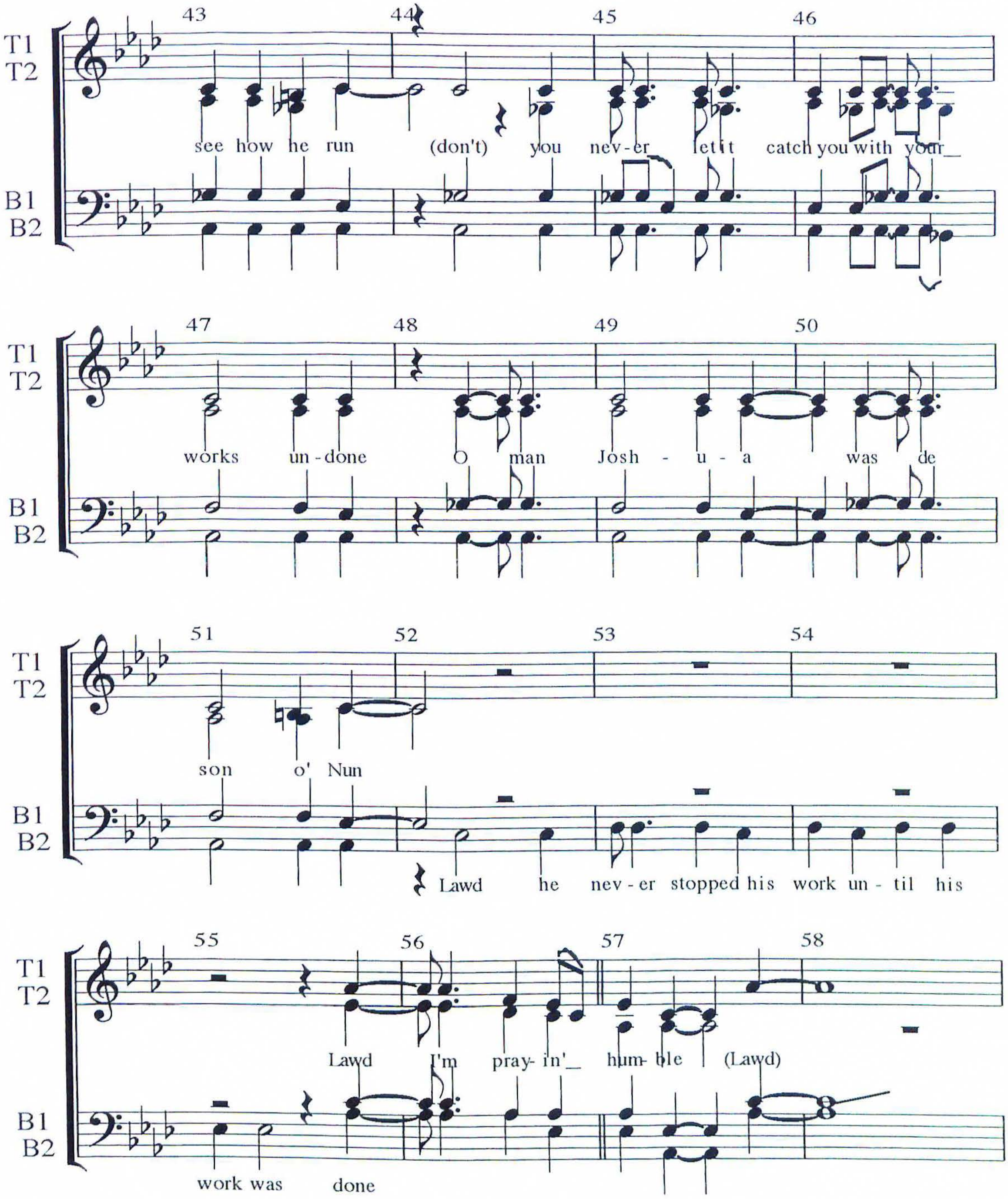


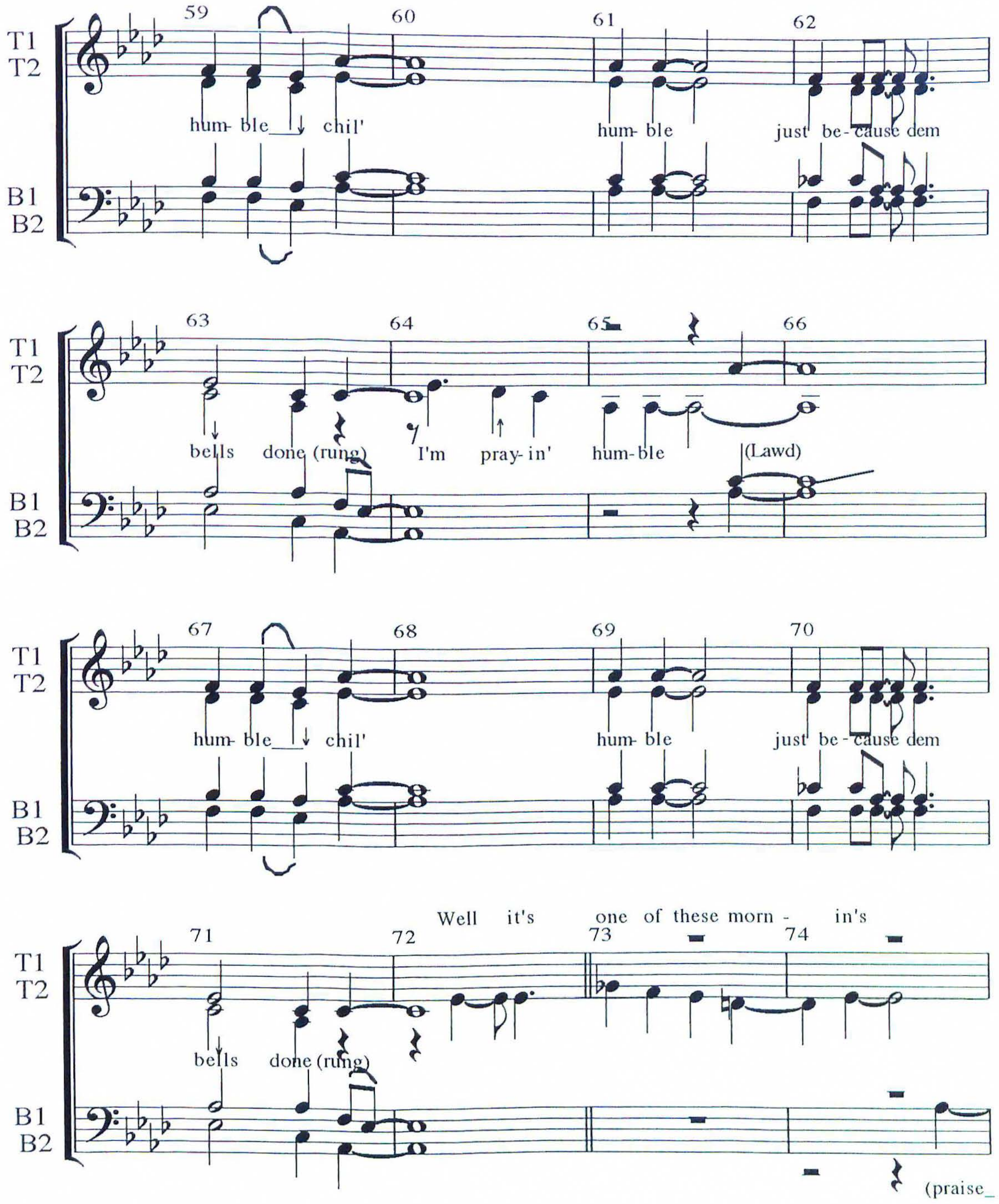
= 106
Tenor 1
Tenor 2
* Baritone
Bass
1
2
Lawd
I'm pray-in'
hum-ble
(Lawd)
T1
T2
B1
B2
3
4
5
6
hum-ble
chil'
hum-ble
just be-cause
'dem
7
8
9
10
bells
done (rung)
I'm
pray-in'
hum-ble
(Lawd)

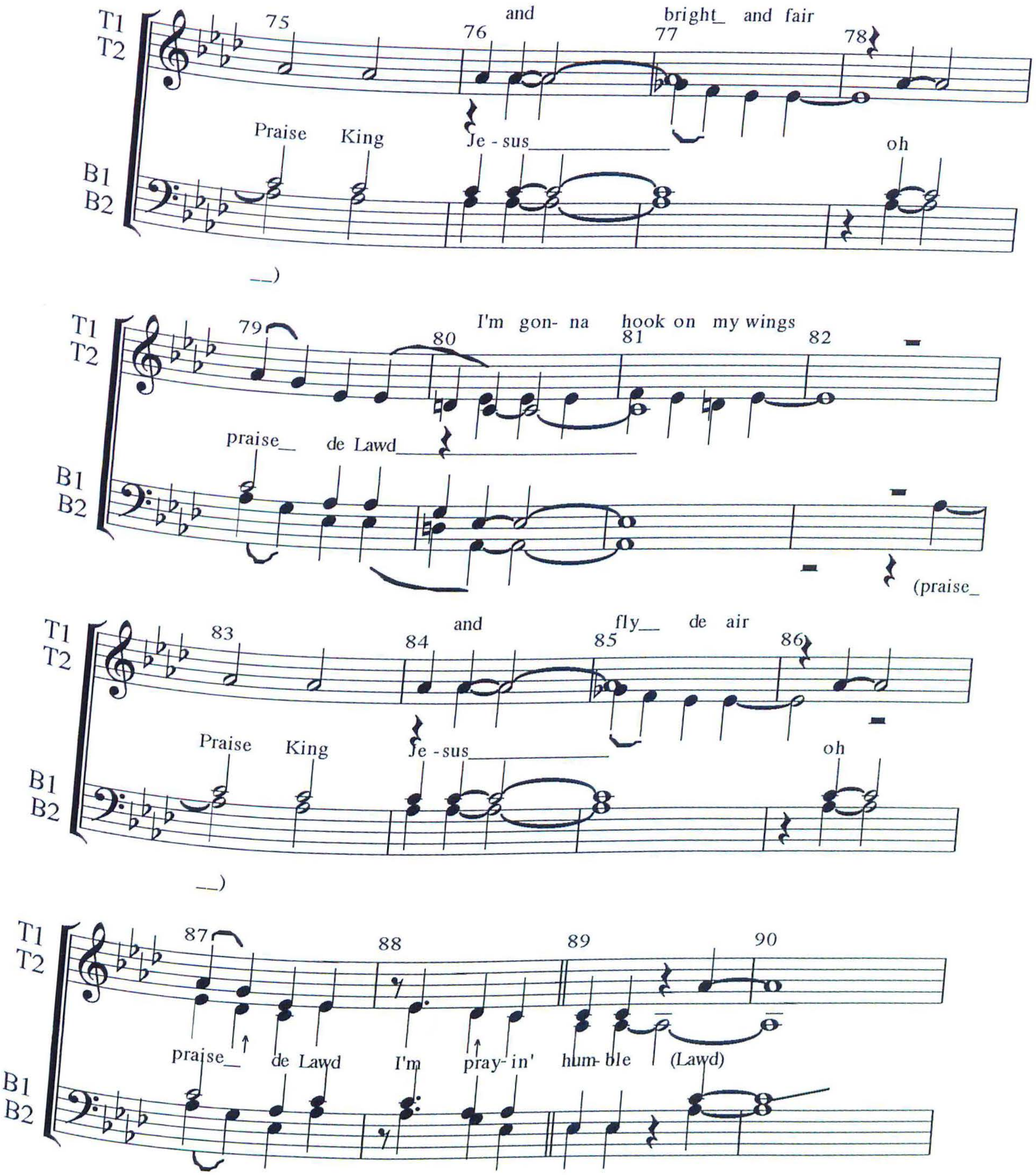
** The third of the tonic chord (C in the key of A♭ major) is consistently performed as a blue note (lowered) throughout the baritone voice part.*

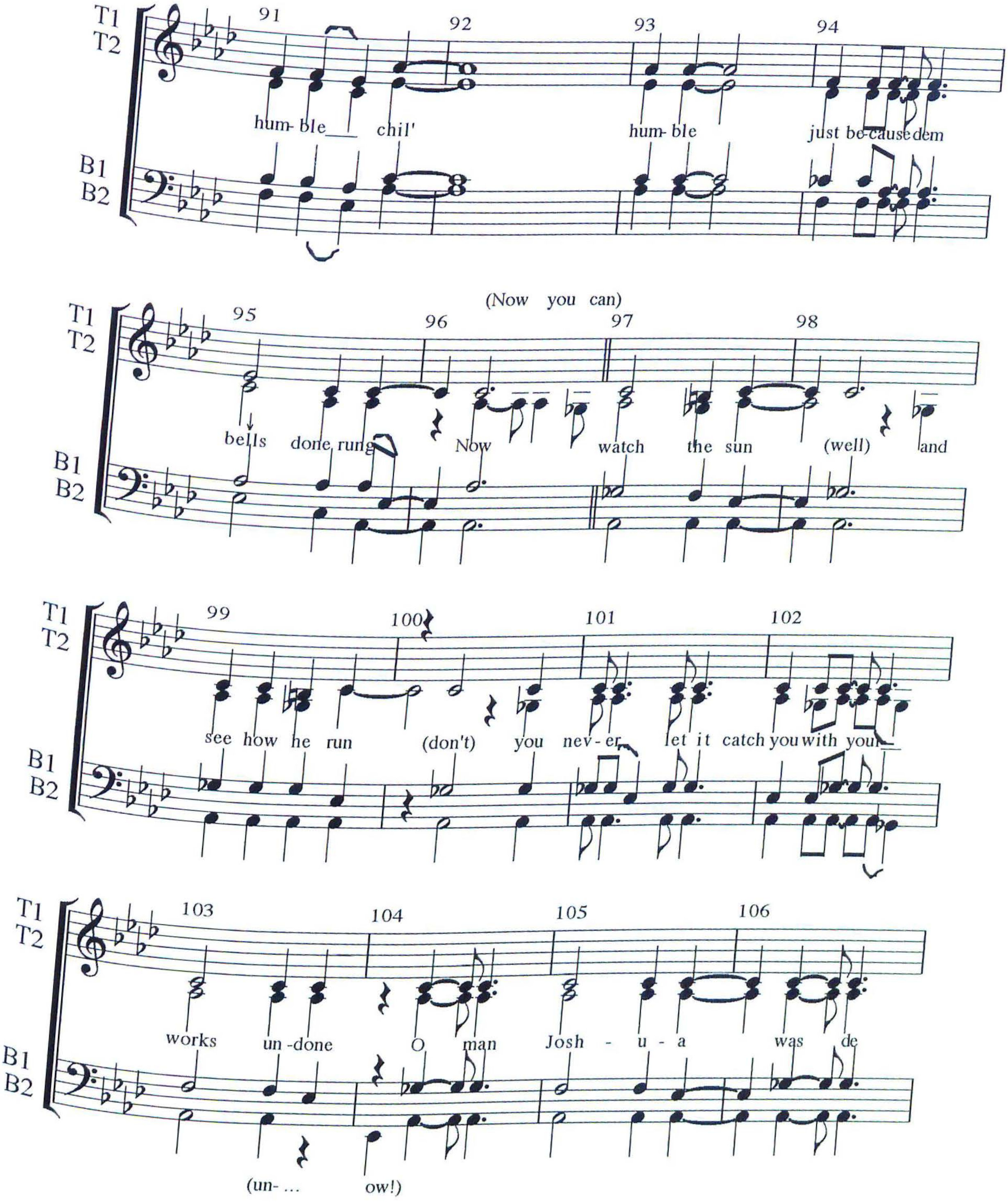

T1
T2
B1
B2
11
12
13
14
hum- ble chil'
hum- ble
just be-cause 'dem
15
16
17
18
Well you'll see be- fore
bells done rung
(praise
19
20
21
22
stand- in' near de Lawd
Praise King Je - sus
oh
)
23
24
25
26
Well we've got good re-li - gion
praise de Lawd
(praise

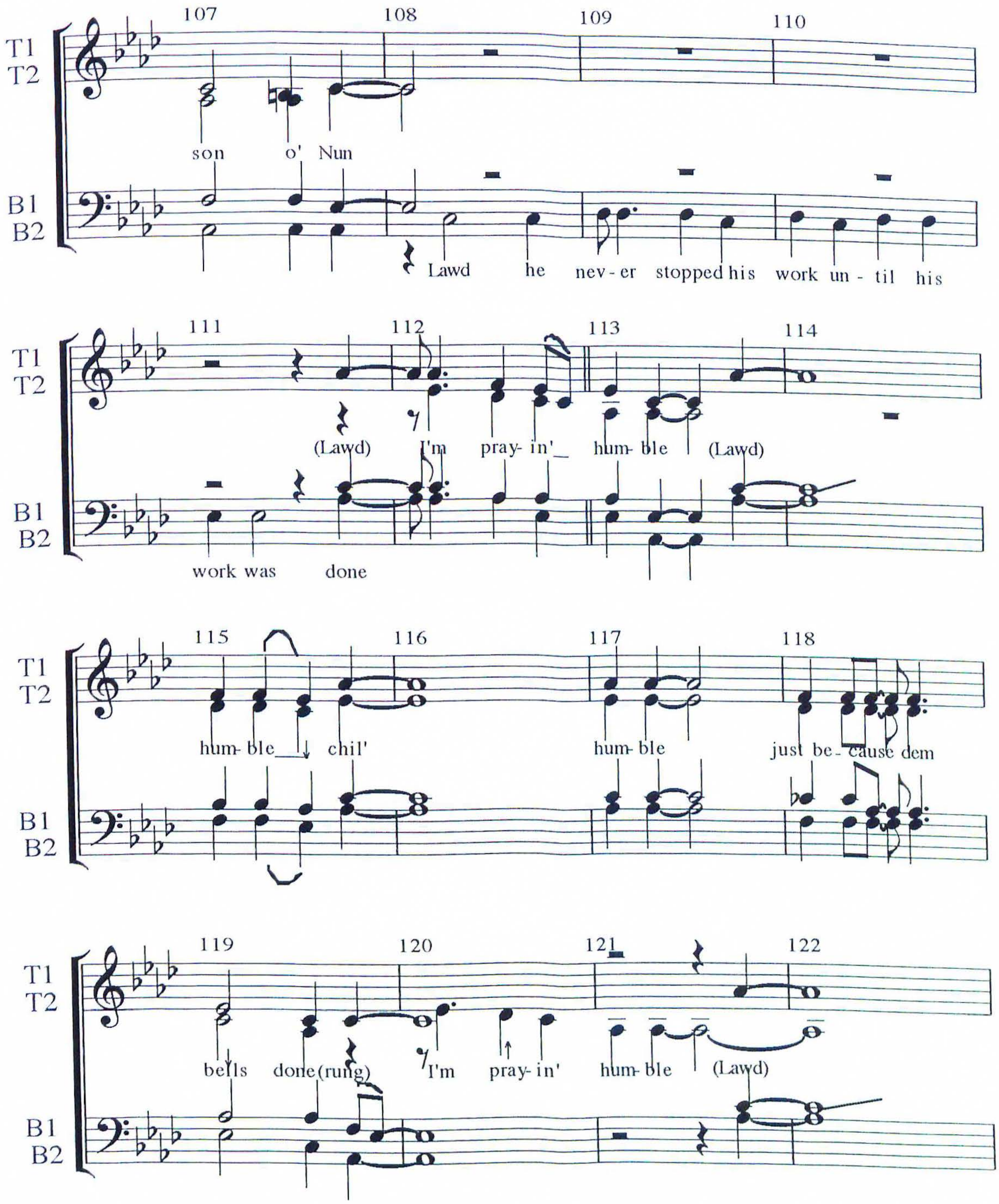

T1
T2
B1
B2
27
28
29
30
and my soul__been con-vert- ed
Praise King Je - sus______________ oh
__)
31
32
33
34
praise__ de Lawd I'm pray - in' hum- ble (Lawd)
35
36
37
38
hum- ble__ chil' hum- ble just be- cause 'dem
39
40
41
42
(Now you can)
bells done rung Now watch the sun (well) and

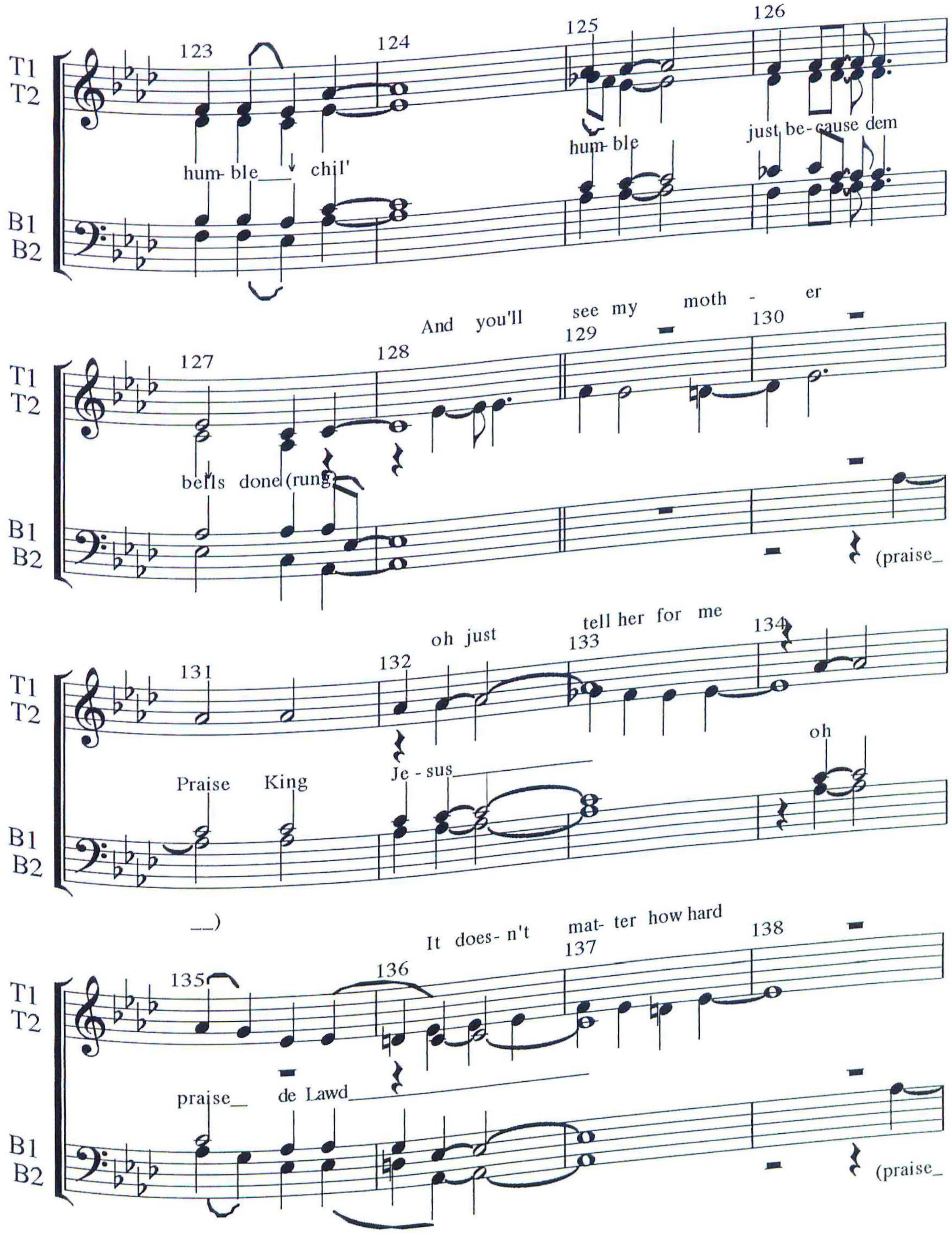

T1
T2
B1
B2
see how he run (don't) you nev-er let it catch you with your_
works un-done O man Josh - u - a was de
son o' Nun
Lawd he nev-er stopped his work un-til his
Lawd I'm pray-in'_ hum-ble (Lawd)
work was done

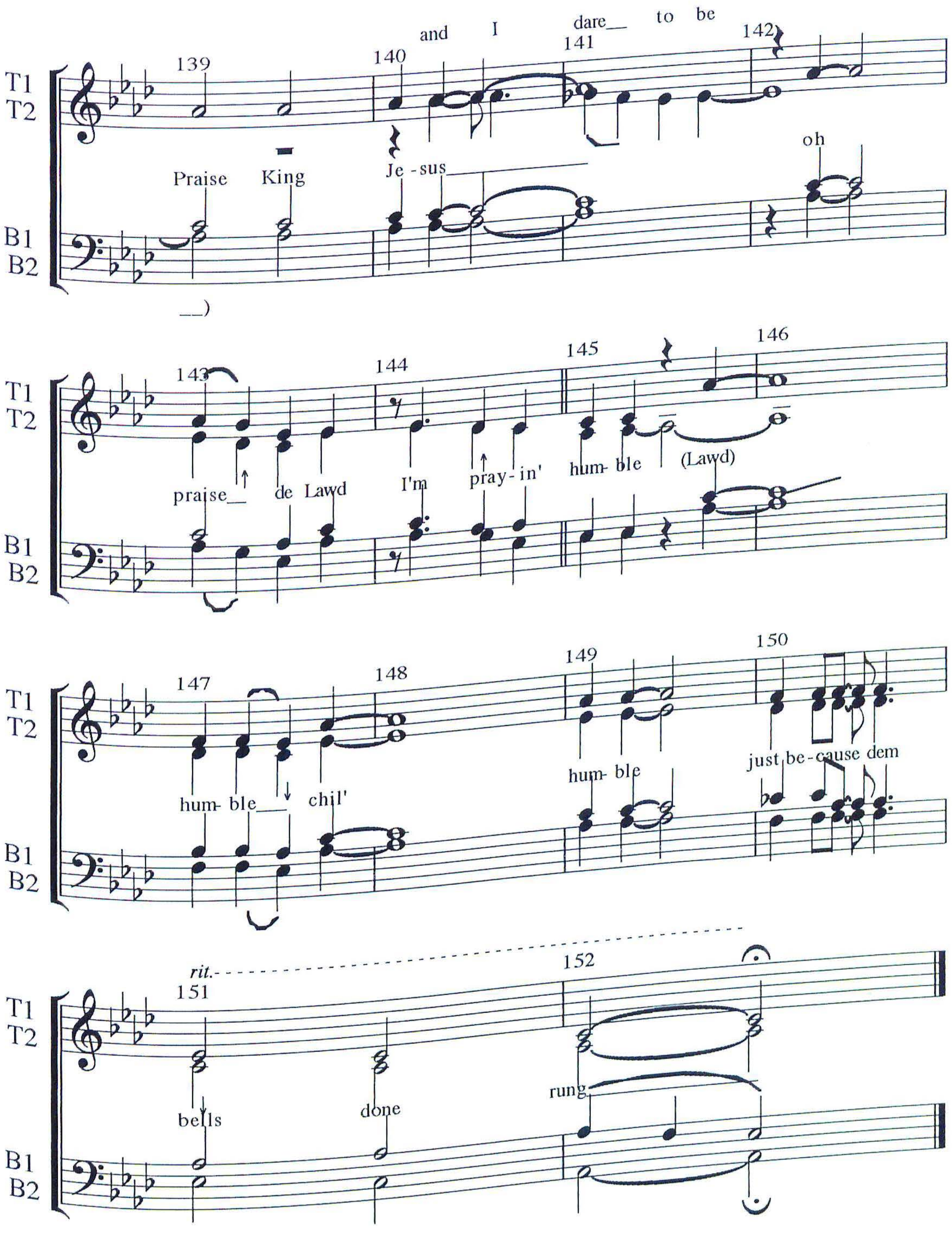

T1
T2
B1
B2
59
60
61
62
hum- ble___ chil'
hum- ble
just be- cause dem
63
64
65
66
bells done (rung)
I'm pray- in'
hum- ble
(Lawd)
67
68
69
70
hum- ble___ chil'
hum- ble
just be- cause dem
71
72
73
74
bells done (rung)
Well it's
one of these morn - in's
(praise_


T1
T2
B1
B2
75
and
76
bright_ and fair
77
78
Praise King Je - sus_____________ oh
__)
79
I'm gon- na hook on my wings
80
81
82
praise_ de Lawd_____________
(praise_
83
and
84
fly__ de air
85
86
Praise King Je - sus_____________ oh
__)
87
88
89
90
praise_ de Lawd I'm pray- in' hum- ble (Lawd)

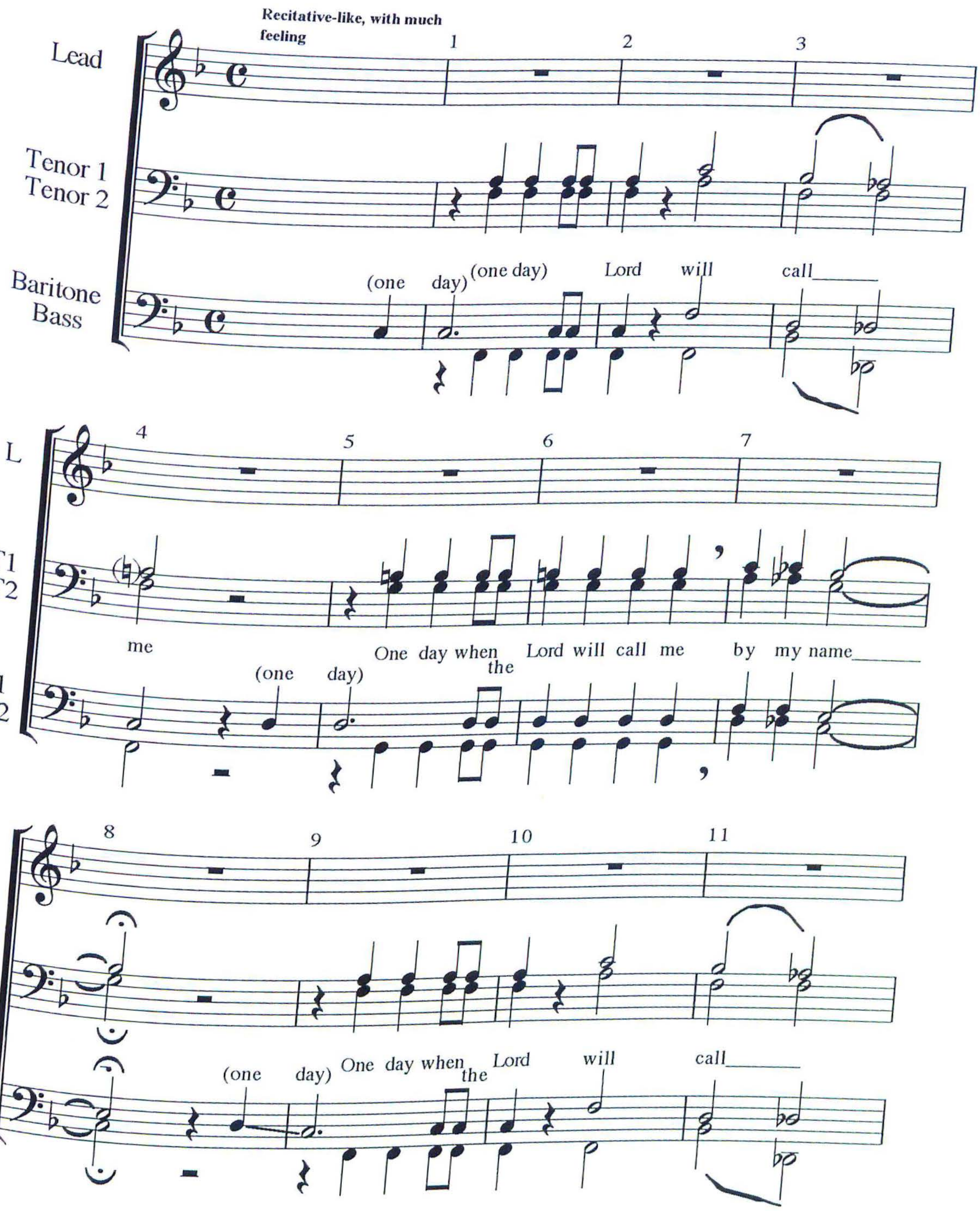

T1
T2
B1
B2
91
92
93
94
hum-ble chil'
hum-ble
just be-cause dem
(Now you can)
95
96
97
98
bells done rung
Now
watch the sun
(well)
and
99
100
101
102
see how he run
(don't)
you
nev-er
let it catch you with your
103
104
105
106
works un-done
O man
Josh-u-a
was de
(un-…
ow!)

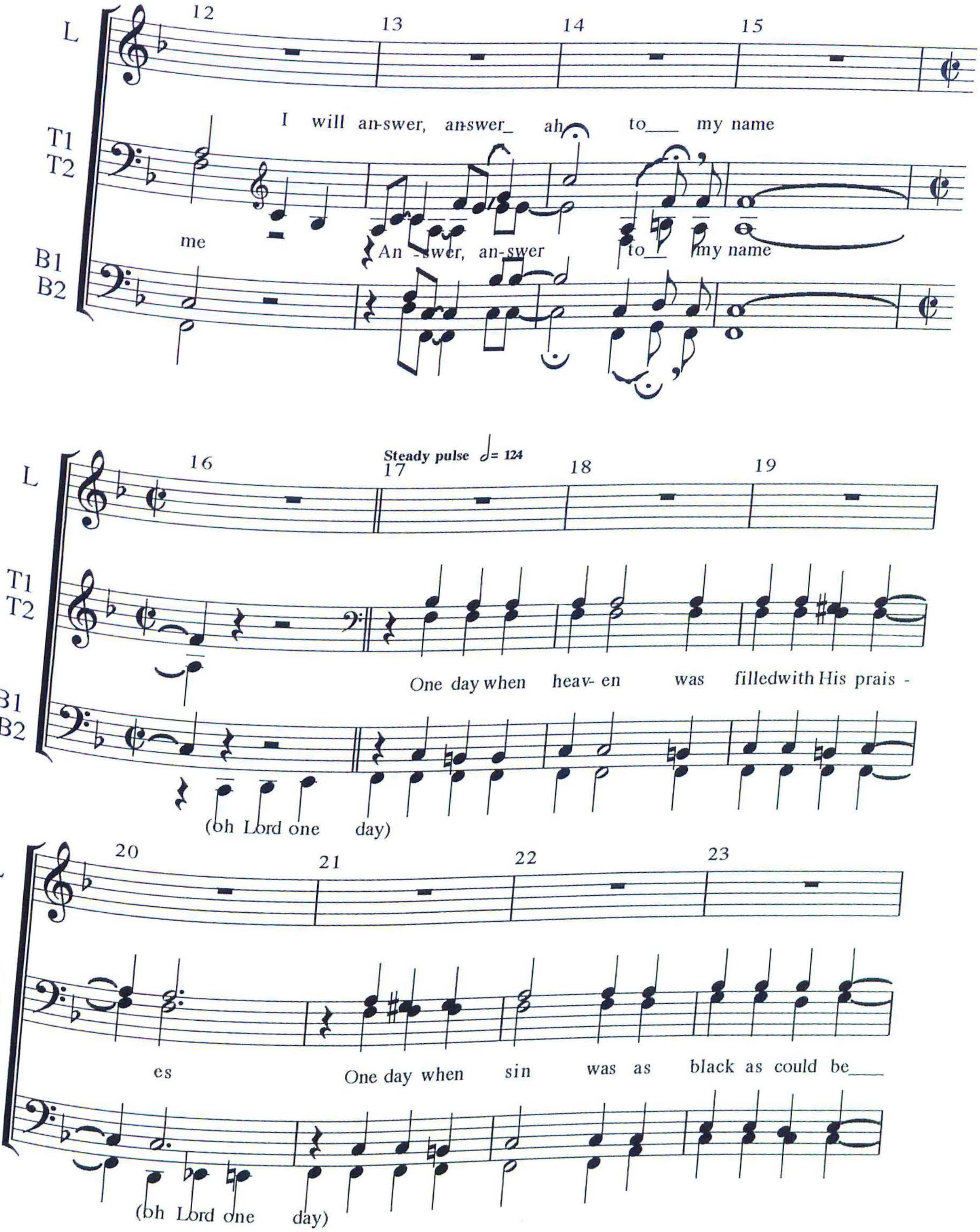

T1
T2
B1
B2
son o' Nun
Lawd he nev-er stopped his work un-til his
(Lawd) I'm pray-in'_ hum-ble (Lawd)
work was done
hum-ble_ chil' hum-ble just be-cause dem
bells done (rung) I'm pray-in' hum-ble (Lawd)

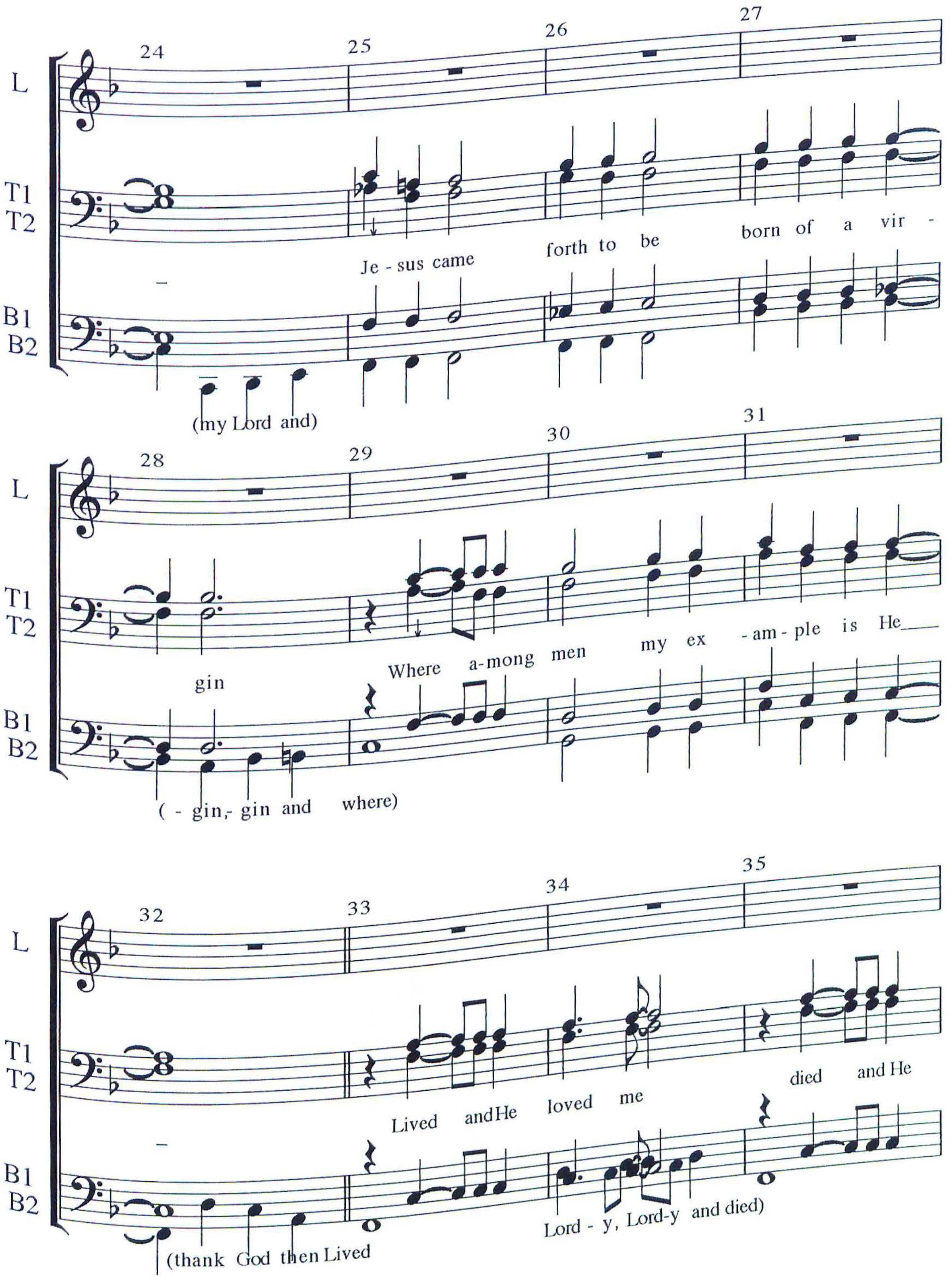

T1
T2
B1
B2
123
124
125
126
humble ble chil'
hum- ble
just be-cause dem
127
128
129
130
bells done (rung
And you'll see my moth - er
(praise_
131
132
133
134
Praise King Je - sus
oh just tell her for me
oh
__)
135
136
137
138
praise_ de Lawd
It does- n't mat- ter how hard
(praise_

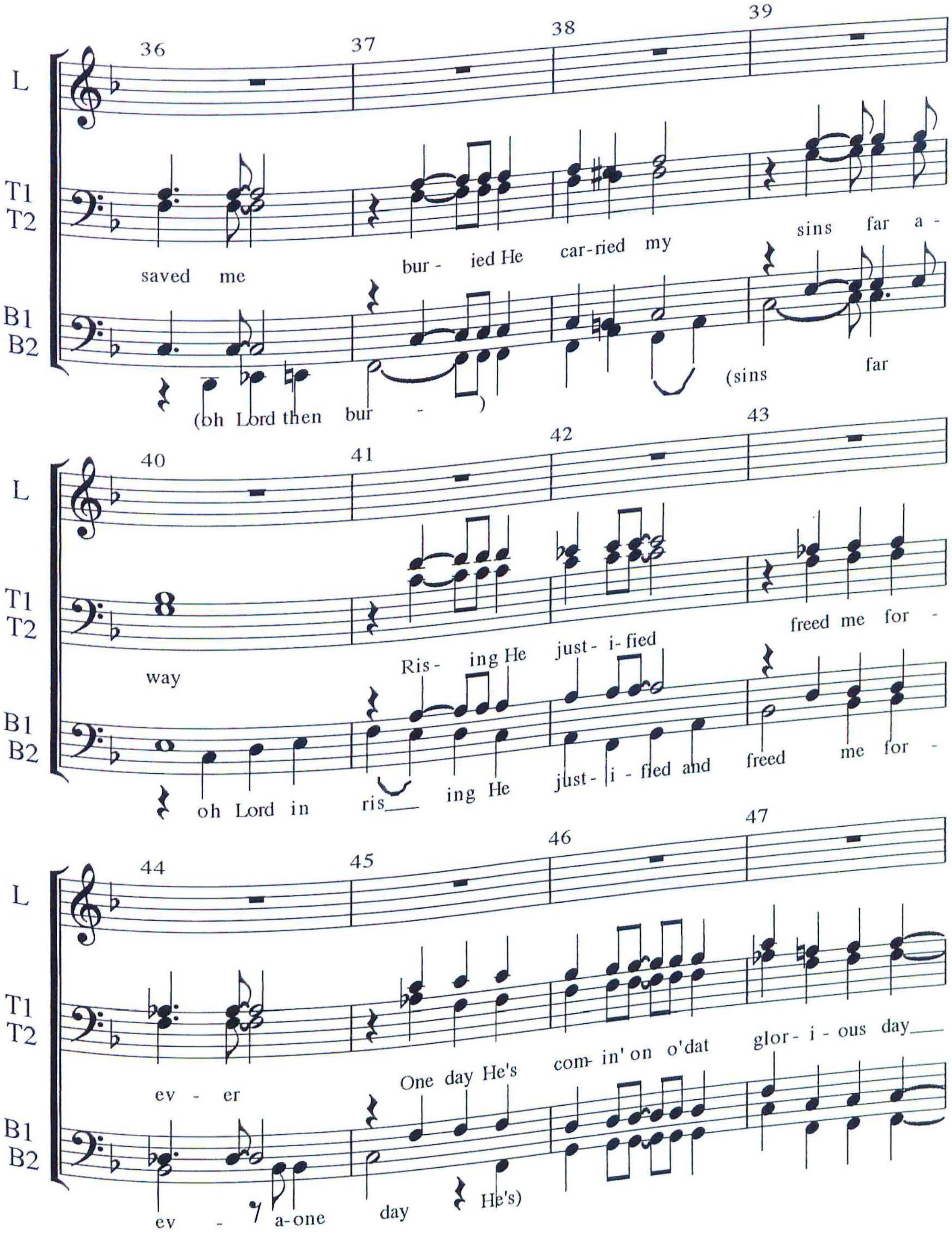

T1
T2
B1
B2
139
140
141
142
and I dare__ to be
Praise King Je - sus
oh
__)
143
144
145
146
praise__ de Lawd I'm pray - in' hum - ble (Lawd)
147
148
149
150
hum - ble__ chil'
hum - ble
just be - cause dem
rit.
151
152
bells done rung

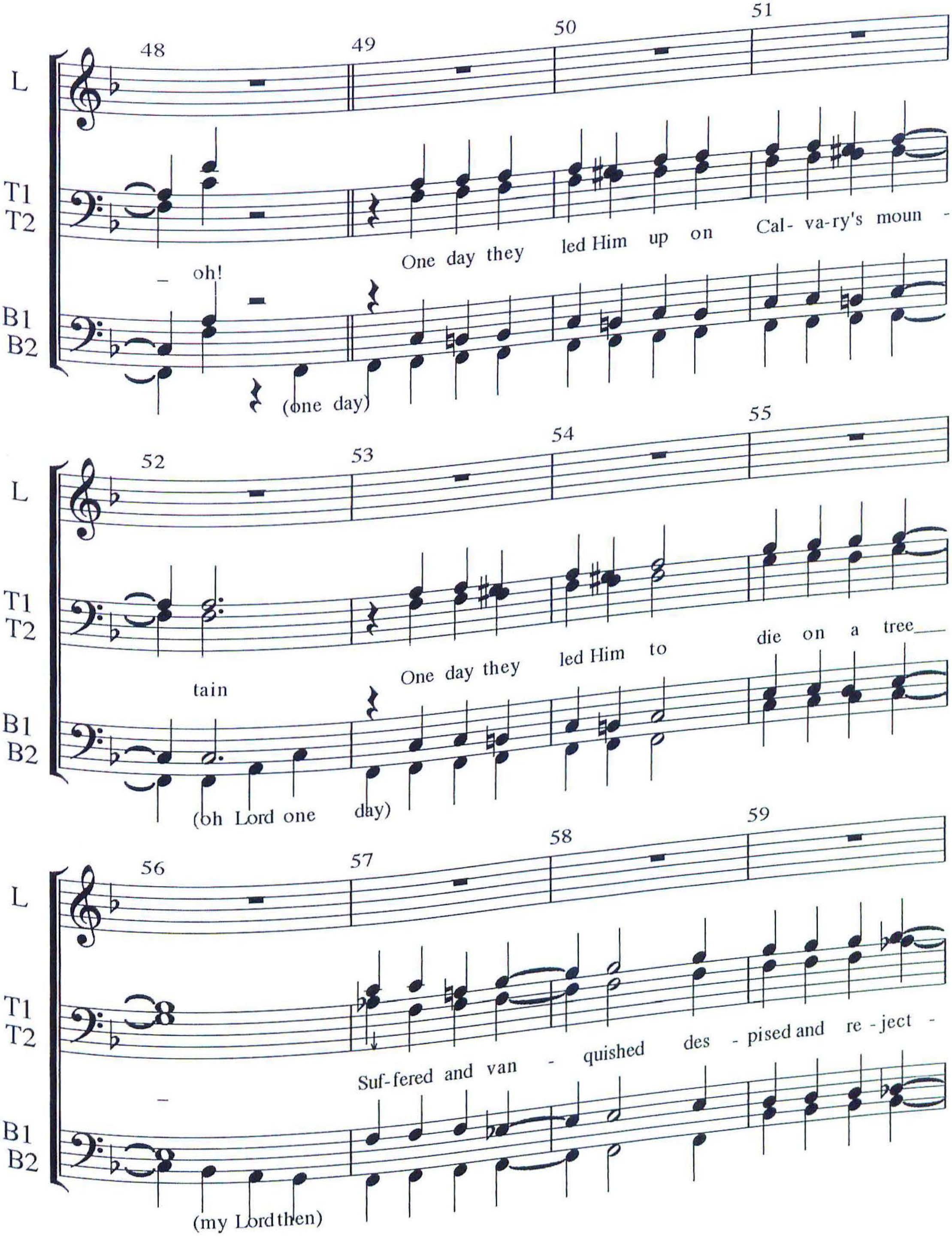
"One Day When the Lord Will Call Me," Southern Sons (1942)

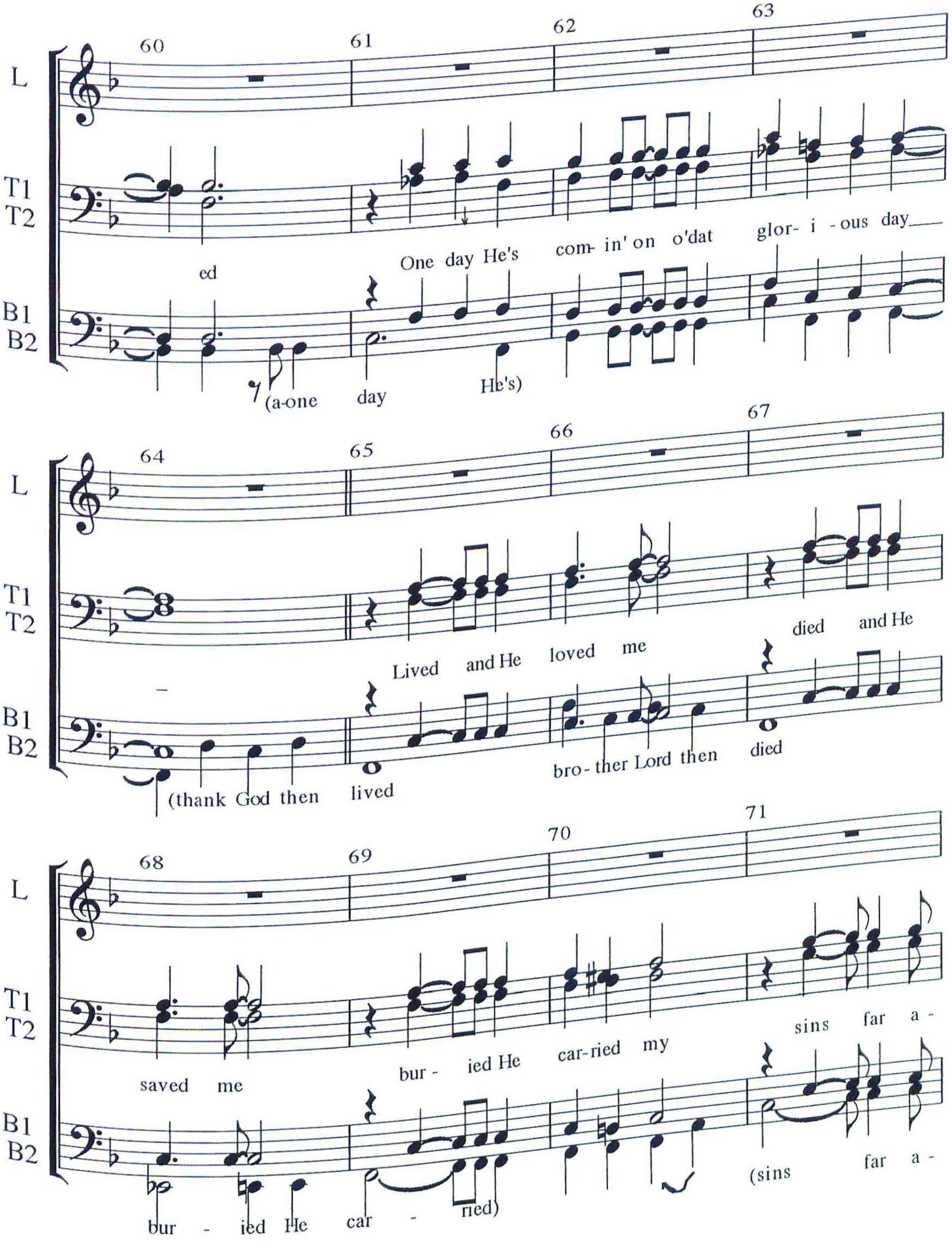

Recitative-like, with much feeling
Lead
Tenor 1
Tenor 2
Baritone
Bass
L
T1
T2
B1
B2
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
(one day) (one day) Lord will call
me (one day) One day when the Lord will call me by my name
(one day) One day when the Lord will call

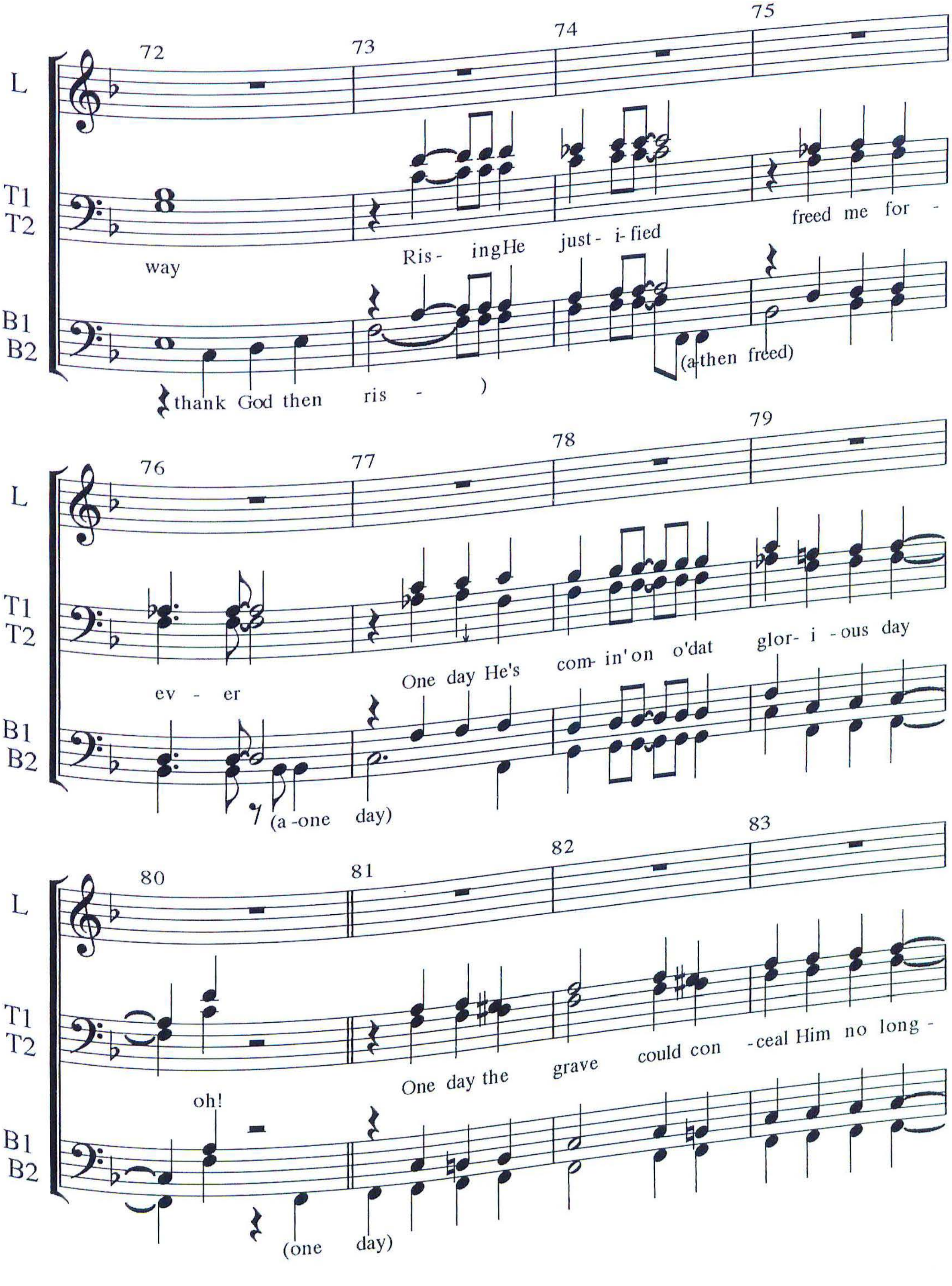

L
T1
T2
B1
B2
12
13
14
15
I will an-swer, an-swer_ ah to___ my name
me
An -swer, an-swer to__ my name
16
Steady pulse 𝅗𝅥 = 124
17
18
19
One day when heav- en was filledwith His prais -
(oh Lord one day)
20
21
22
23
es One day when sin was as black as could be___
(oh Lord one day)

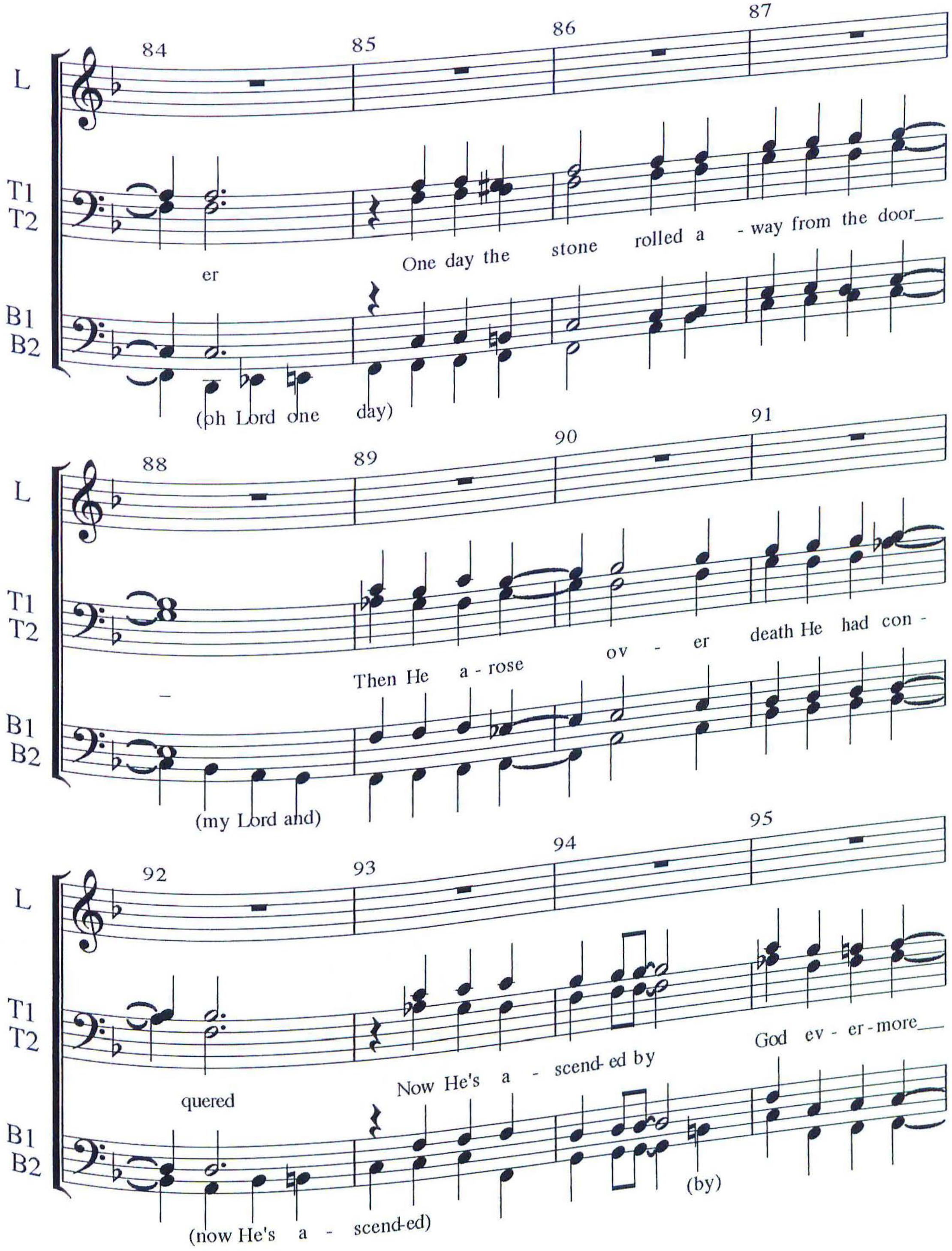
L
T1
T2
B1
B2
24
25
26
27
Je - sus came forth to be born of a vir -
(my Lord and)
28
29
30
31
gin
Where a-mong men my ex - am - ple is He
(- gin,- gin and where)
32
33
34
35
Lived and He loved me died and He
Lord - y, Lord-y and died)
(thank God then Lived

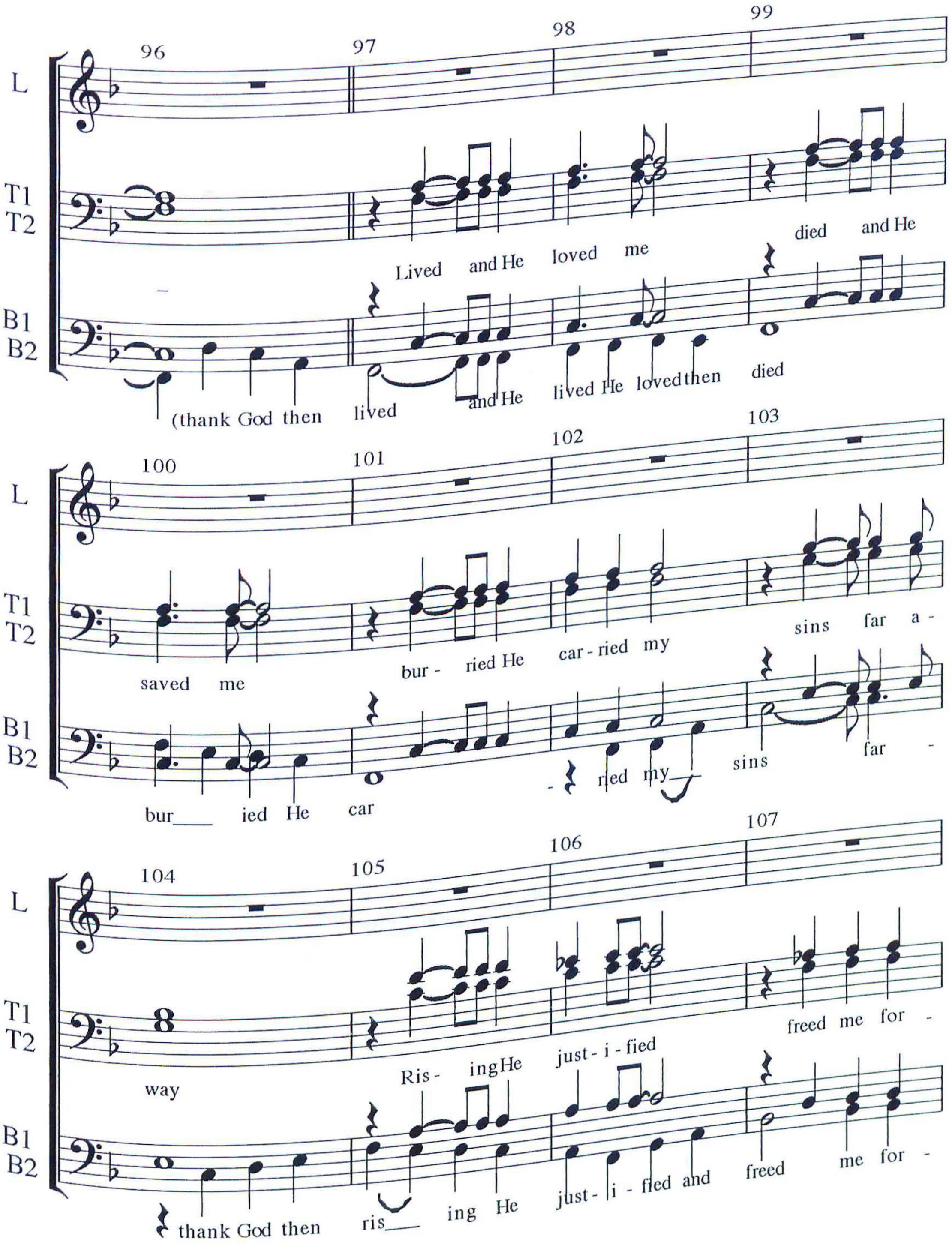

36
37
38
39
L
T1
T2
B1
B2
saved me
bur - ied He car-ried my
sins far a -
(oh Lord then bur -)
(sins far
40
41
42
43
way
Ris - ing He just - i - fied
freed me for -
oh Lord in ris ing He just - i - fied and freed me for -
44
45
46
47
ev - er
One day He's com - in' on o'dat glor - i - ous day
ev - a-one day He's)

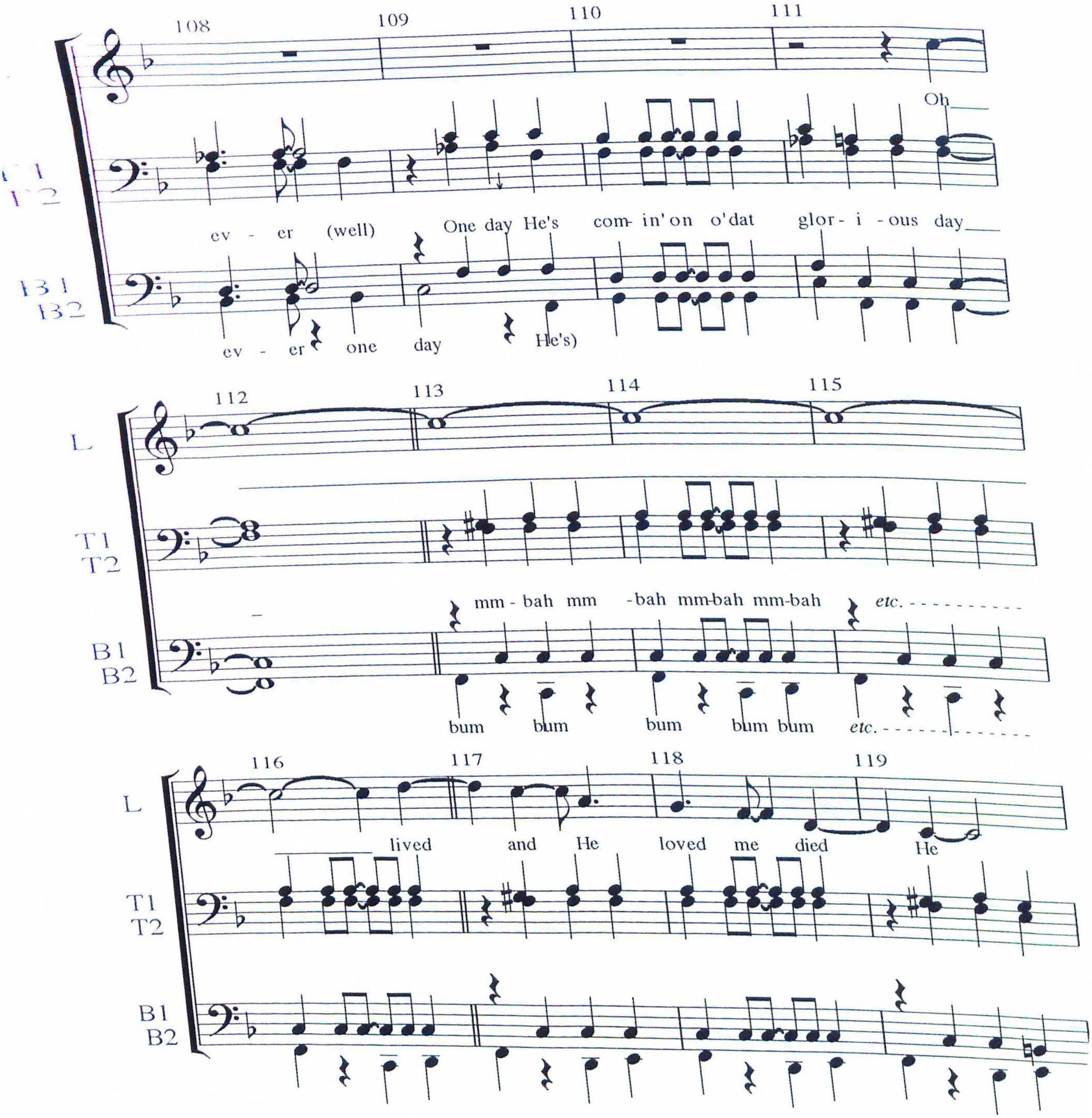
48
49
50
51
L
T1
T2
B1
B2
oh!
One day they led Him up on Cal- va-ry's moun -
(one day)
52
53
54
55
tain
One day they led Him to die on a tree
(oh Lord one day)
56
57
58
59
Suf-fered and van - quished des - pised and re - ject -
(my Lord then)

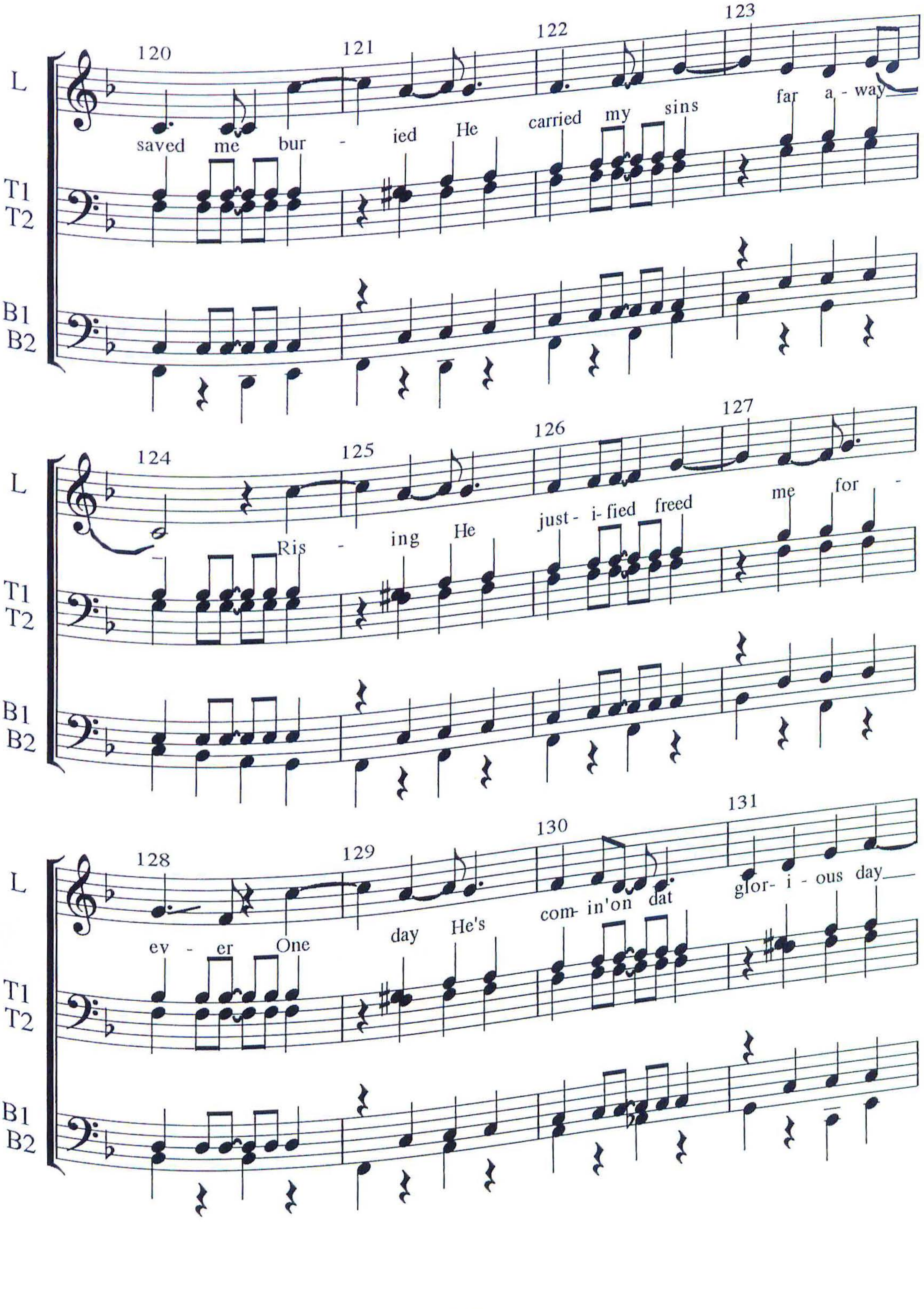

60
61
62
63
L
T1
T2
B1
B2
ed
One day He's com- in' on o'dat glor- i - ous day
(a-one day He's)
64
65
66
67
Lived and He loved me died and He
(thank God then lived bro- ther Lord then died
68
69
70
71
saved me bur - ied He car-ried my sins far a -
bur - ied He car - ried)
(sins far a -

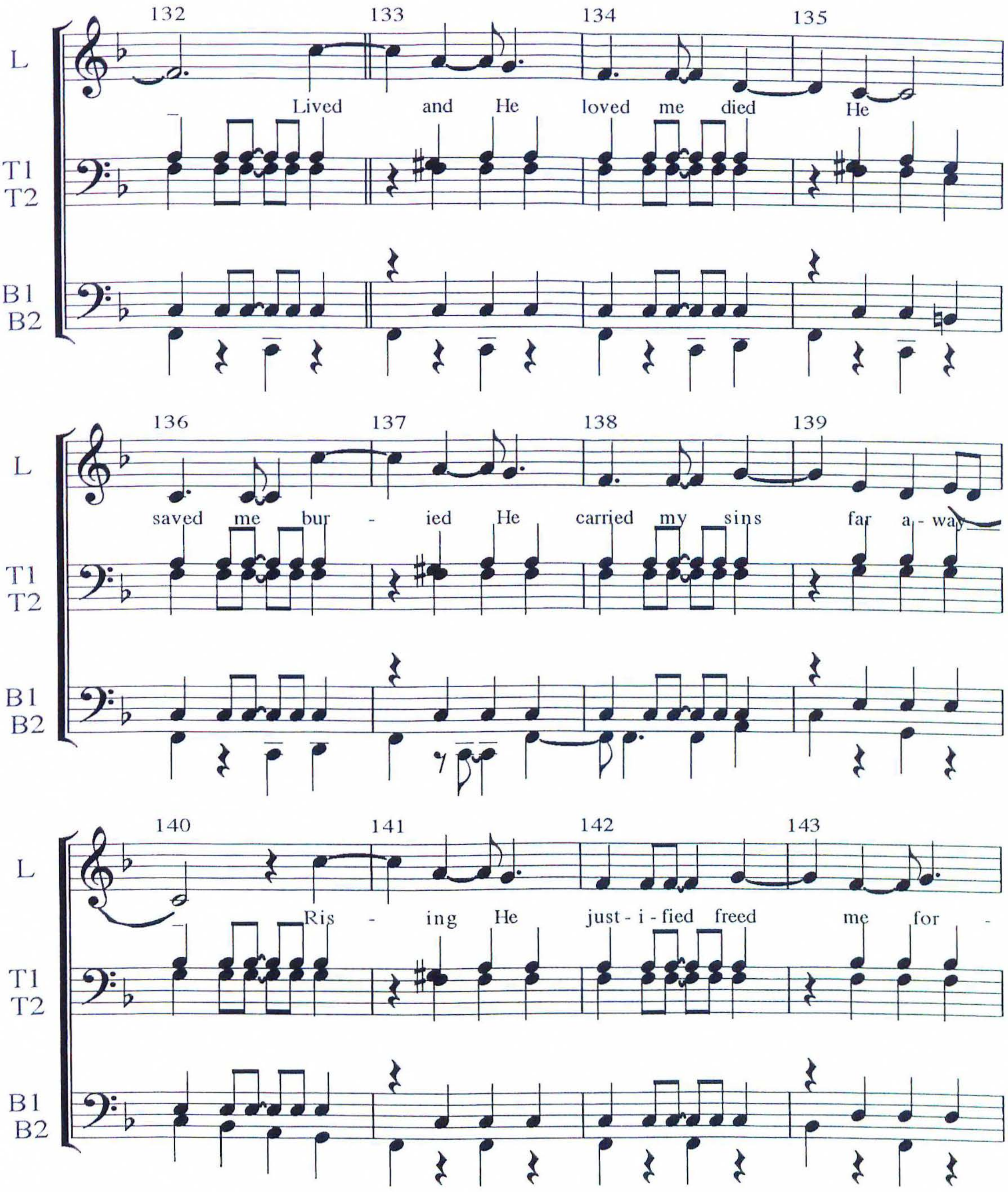

72
73
74
75
L
T1
T2
B1
B2
way
Ris- ingHe just- i- fied freed me for -
thank God then ris -)
(a then freed)
76
77
78
79
ev - er
One day He's com- in'on o'dat glor- i - ous day
(a -one day)
80
81
82
83
oh!
One day the grave could con -ceal Him no long -
(one day)

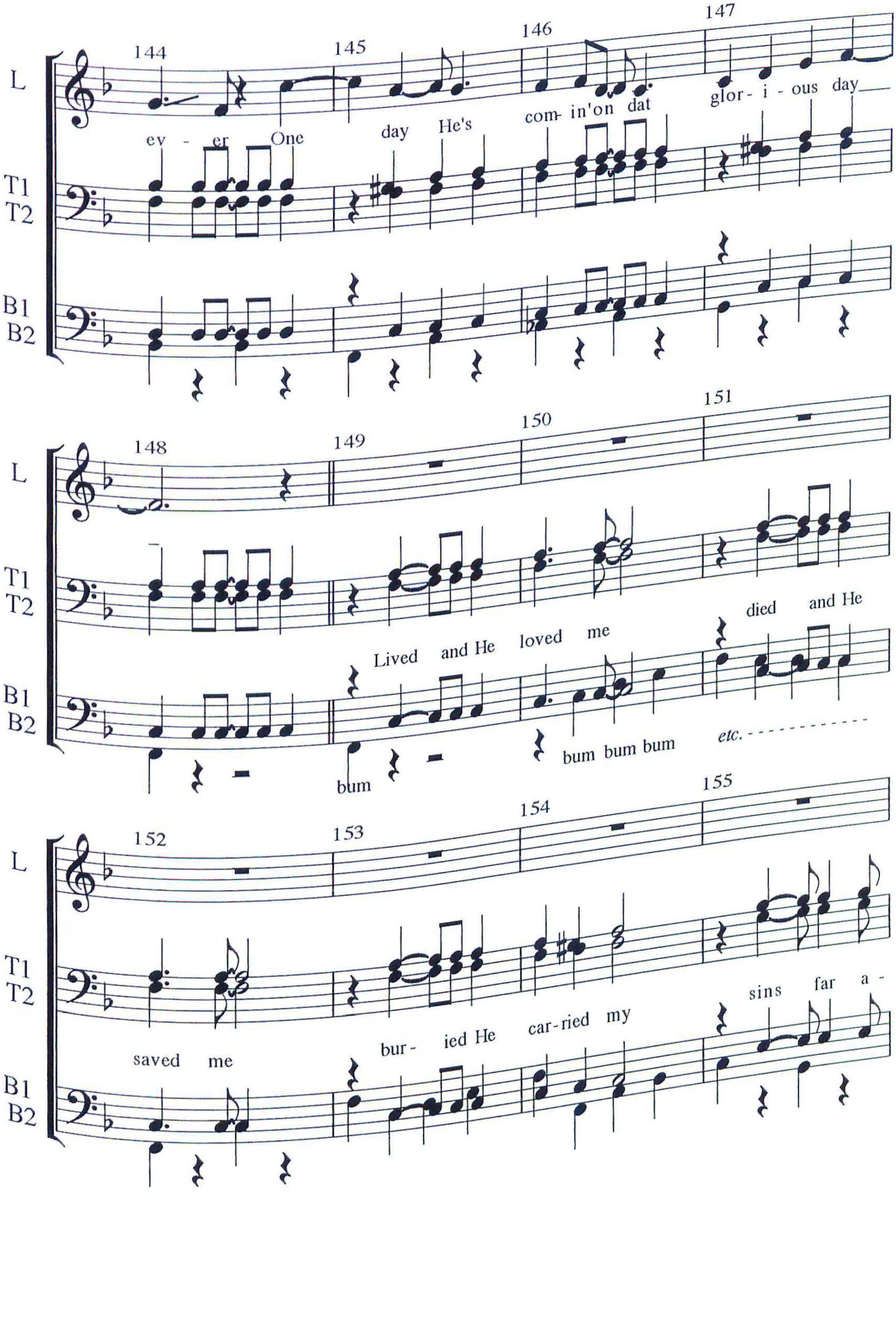

L
T1
T2
B1
B2
84
85
86
87
er
One day the stone rolled a - way from the door
(oh Lord one day)
88
89
90
91
Then He a - rose ov - er death He had con -
(my Lord and)
92
93
94
95
quered
Now He's a - scend- ed by God ev - er - more
(now He's a - scend-ed)
(by)

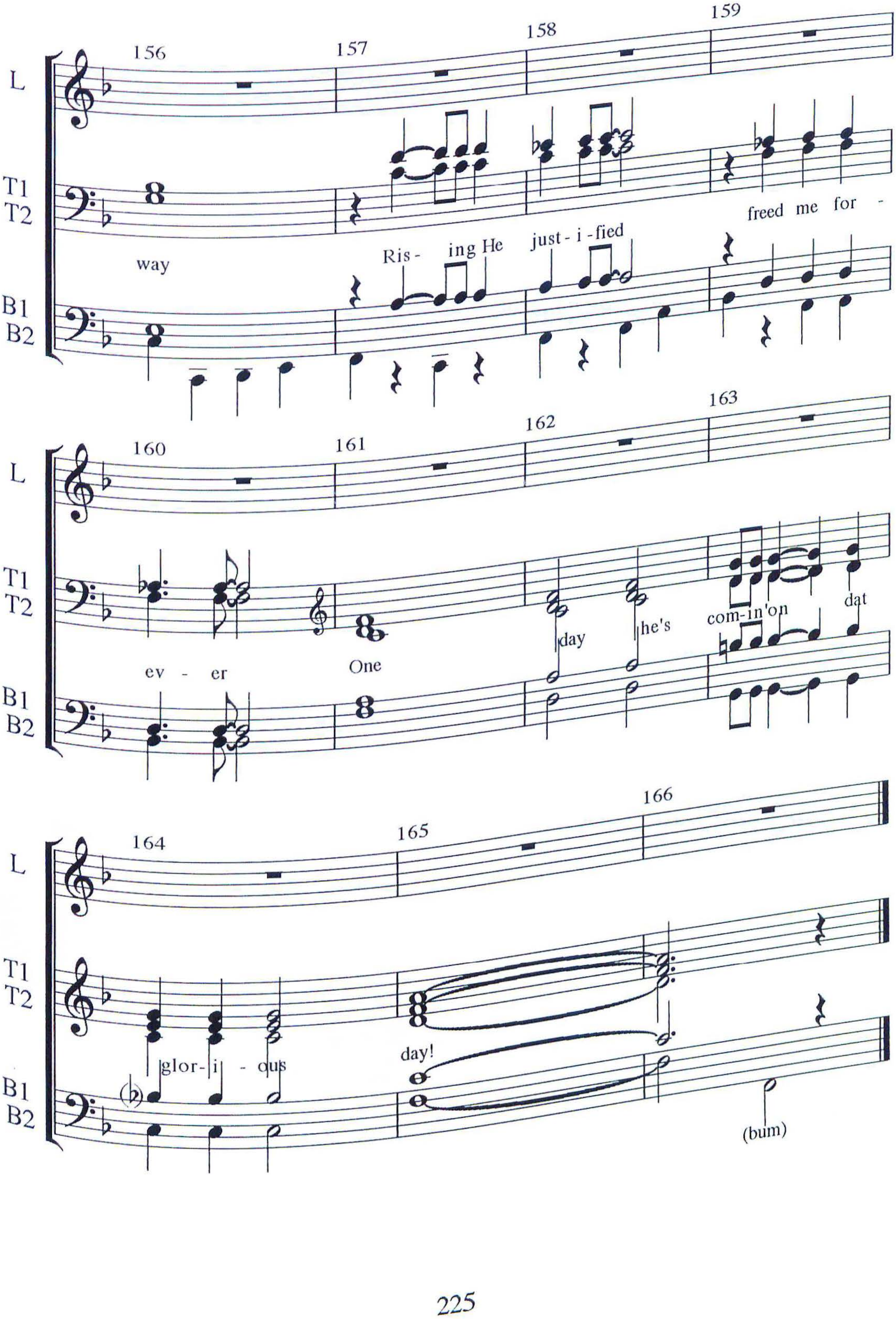

96
97
98
99
L
T1
T2
B1
B2
Lived and He loved me died and He
(thank God then lived and He lived He loved then died
100
101
102
103
saved me bur - ried He car - ried my sins far a -
bur___ ied He car - ried my sins far -
104
105
106
107
way Ris - ing He just - i - fied freed me for -
thank God then ris___ ing He just - i - fied and freed me for -


108
109
110
111
Oh
T1
T2
ev - er (well) One day He's com- in' on o'dat glor- i - ous day
B1
B2
ev - er one day He's)
112
113
114
115
L
T1
T2
mm - bah mm -bah mm-bah mm-bah etc.
B1
B2
bum bum bum bum bum etc.
116
117
118
119
L
lived and He loved me died He
T1
T2
B1
B2

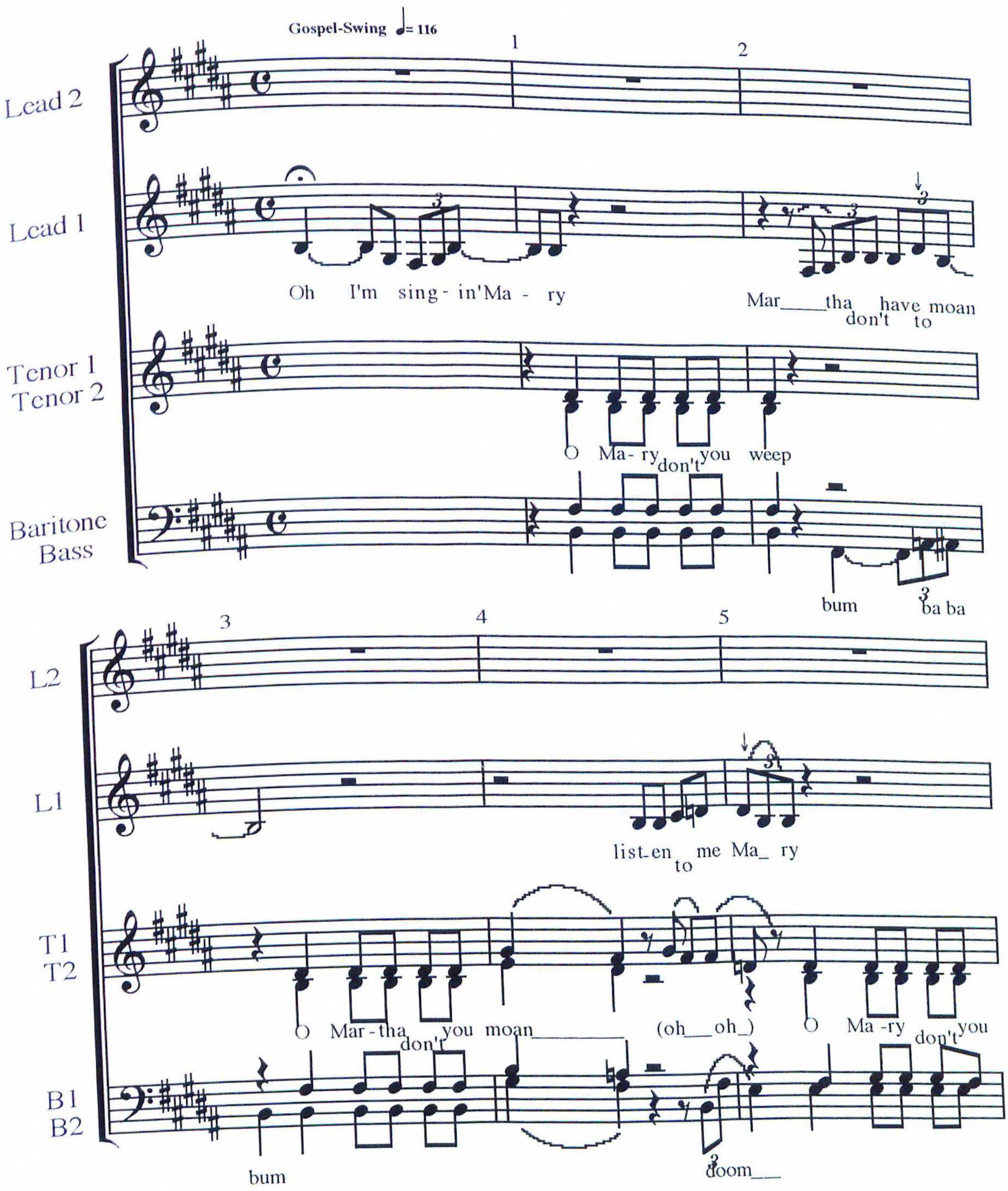

120
121
122
123
L
T1
T2
B1
B2
saved me bur - ied He carried my sins far a - way
124
125
126
127
L
T1
T2
B1
B2
Ris - ing He just - i- fied freed me for -
128
129
130
131
L
T1
T2
B1
B2
ev - er One day He's com- in'on dat glor- i - ous day

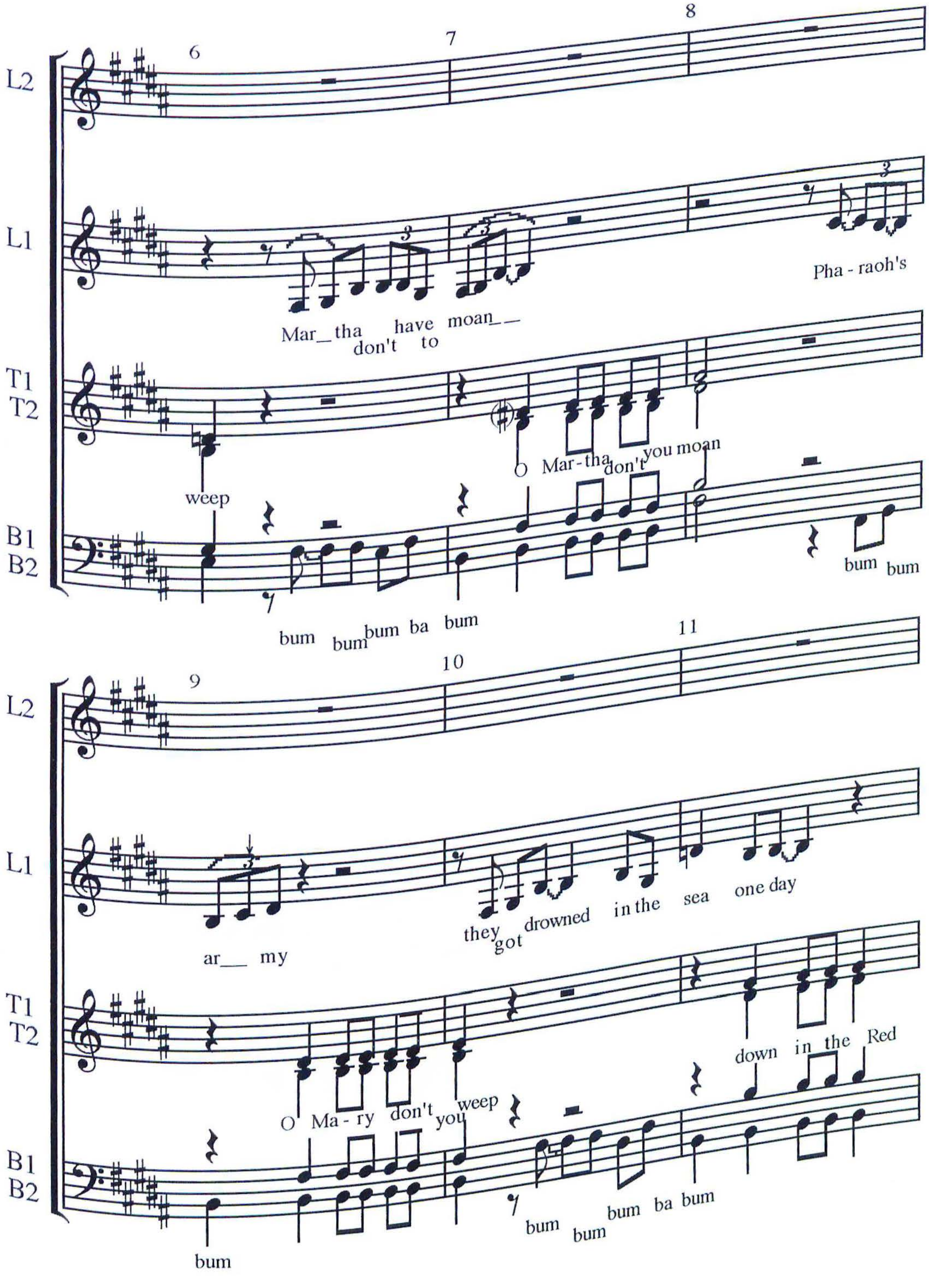

L
T1
T2
B1
B2
_ Lived and He loved me died He
saved me bur - ied He carried my sins far a - way
_ Ris - ing He just - i - fied freed me for -

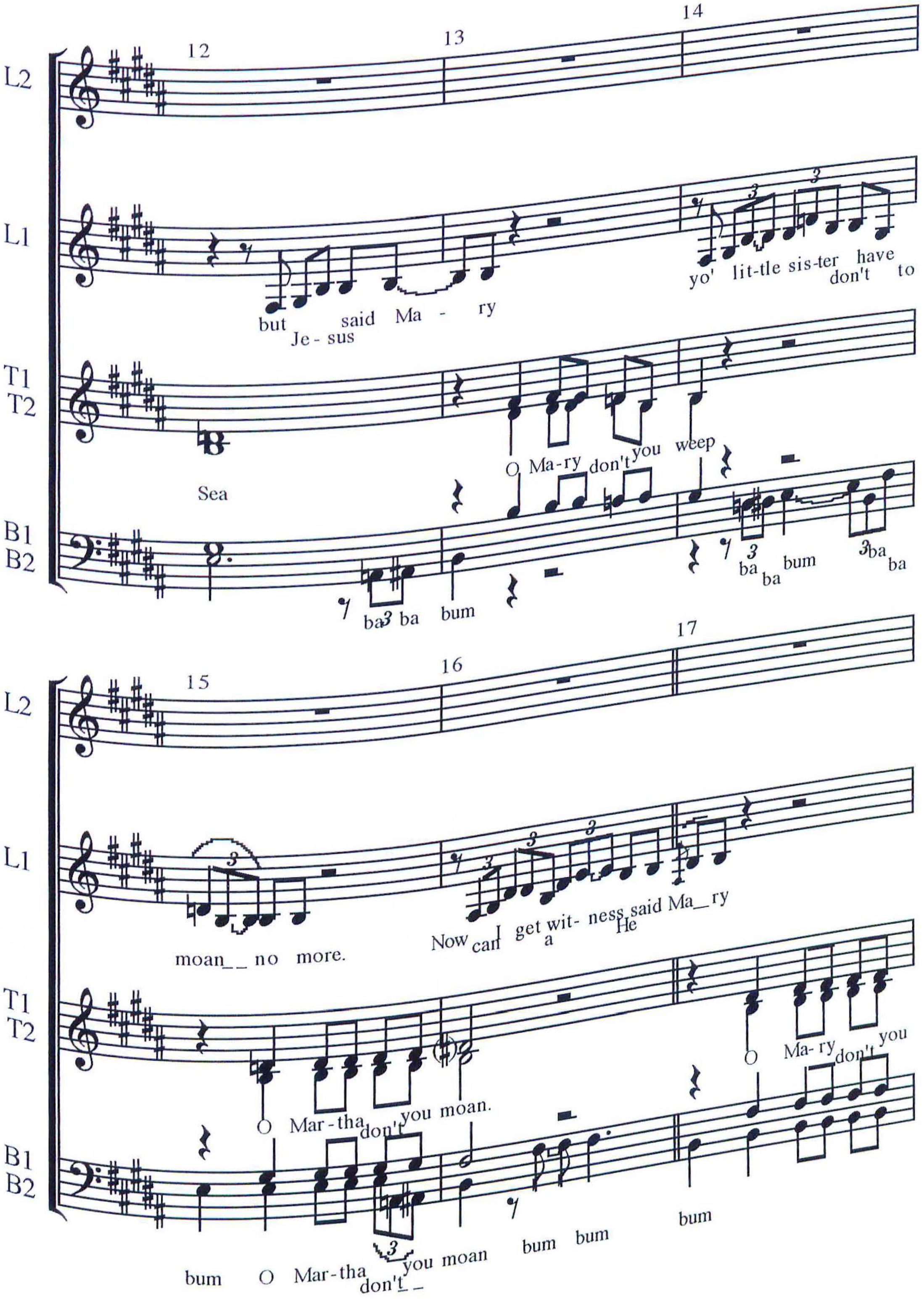

L
T1
T2
B1
B2
144
145
146
147
ev - er One day He's com- in'on dat glor - i - ous day
148
149
150
151
Lived and He loved me died and He
bum bum bum bum etc.
152
153
154
155
saved me bur - ied He car-ried my sins far a -

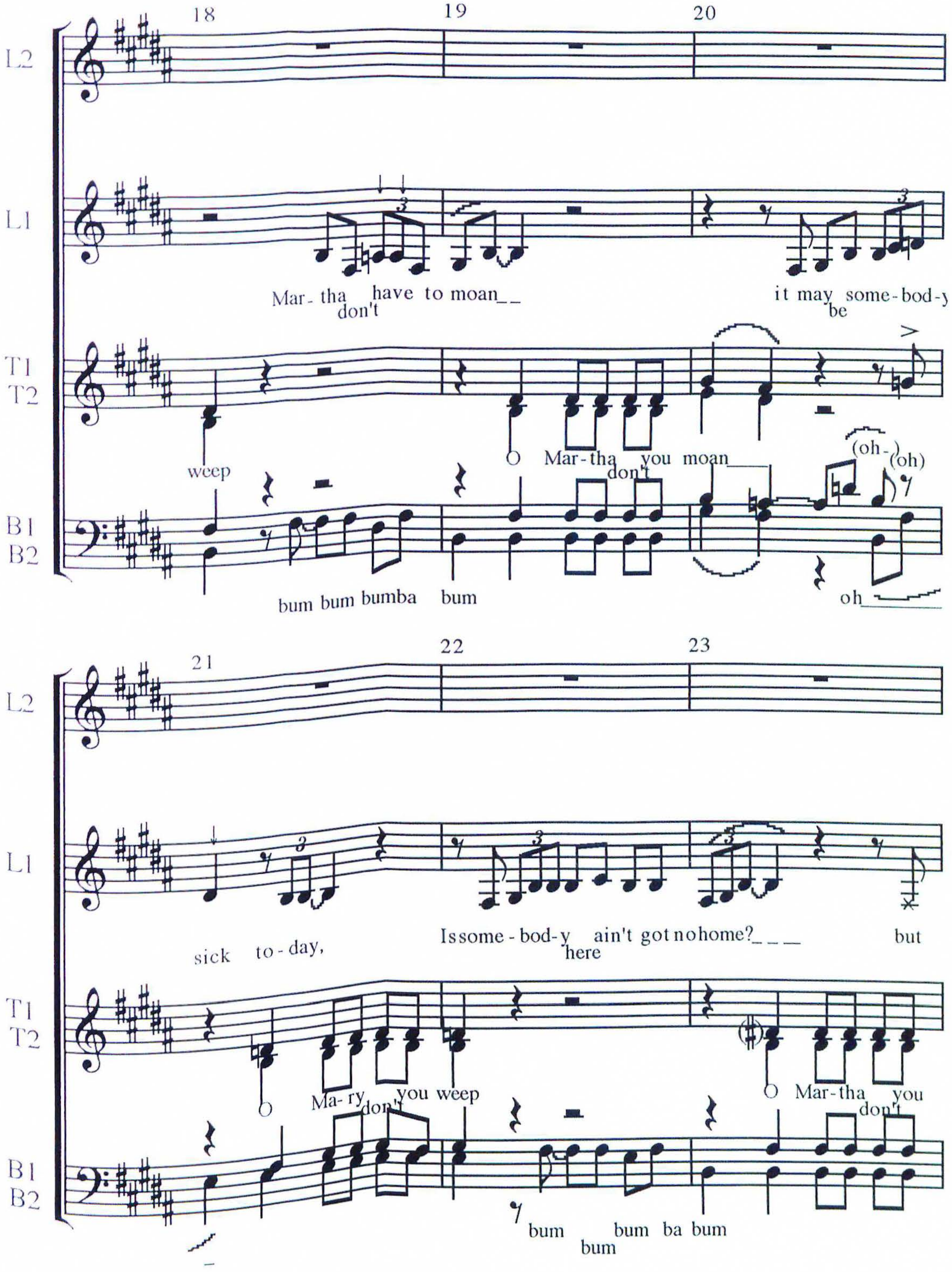

156
157
158
159
L
T1
T2
B1
B2
way
Ris - ing He just - i - fied
freed me for -
160
161
162
163
ev - er
One
day
he's
com-in'on
dat
164
165
166
glor - i - ous
day!
(bum)

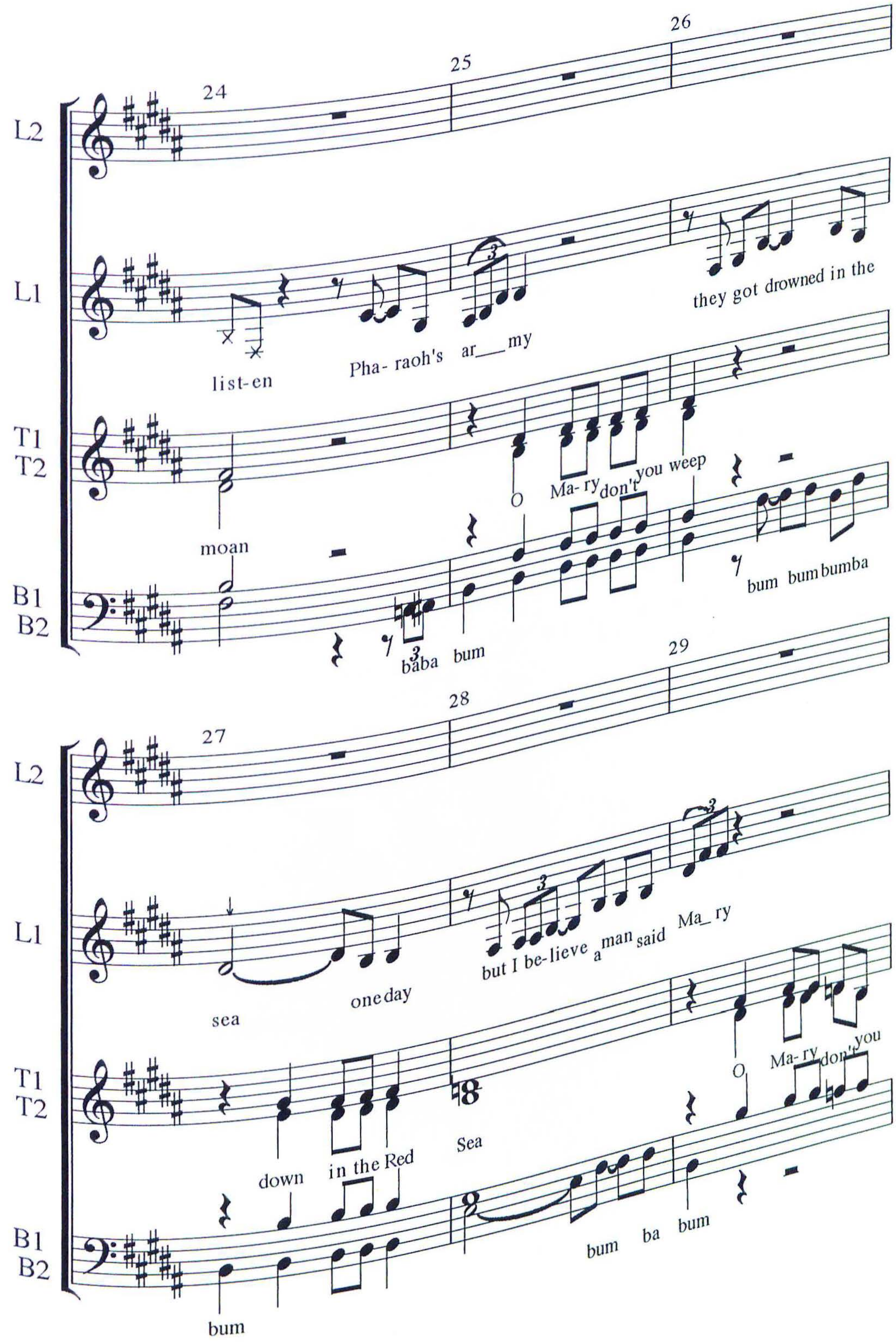
"Mary Don't You Weep," Swan Silvertones (1959)

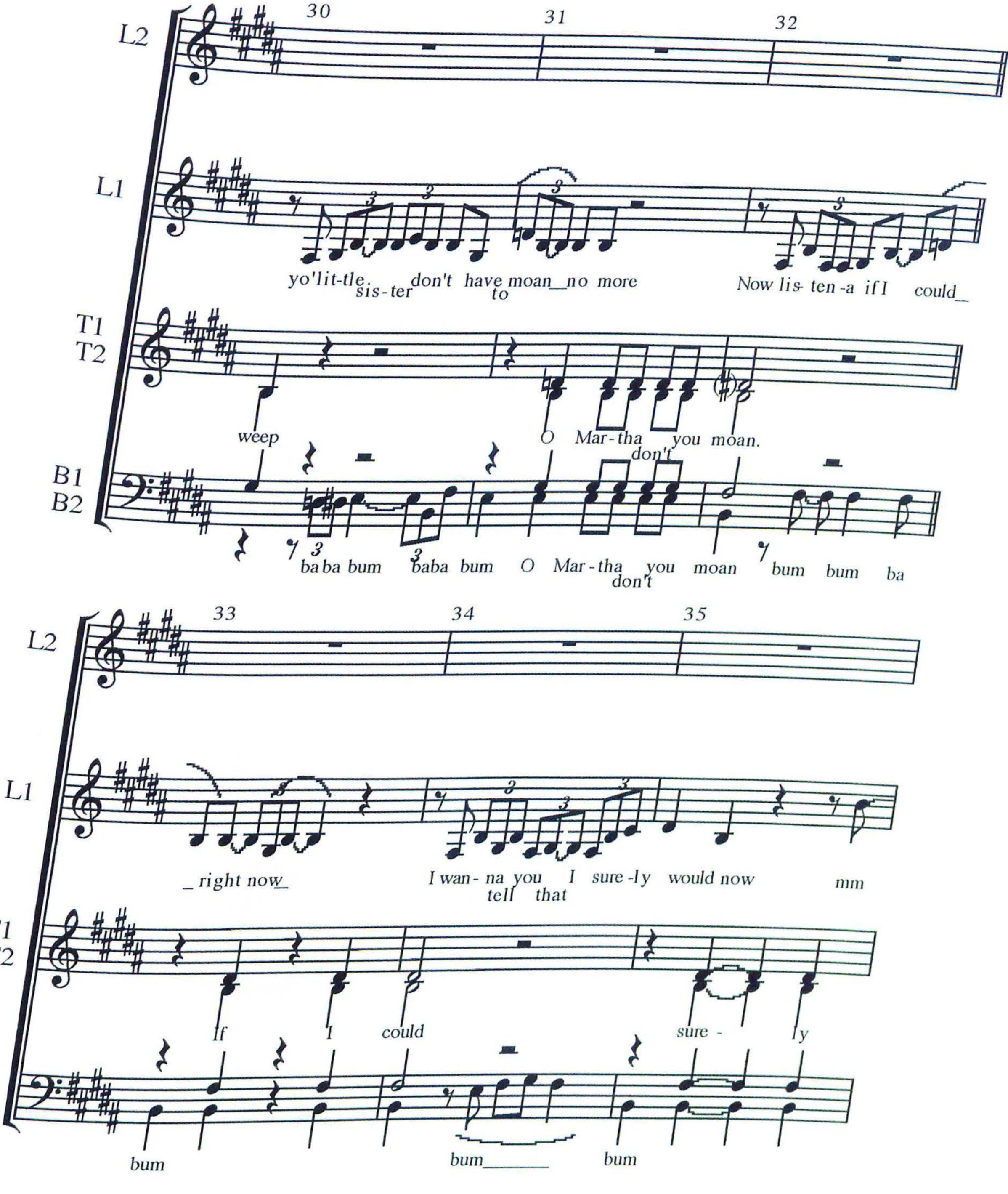

Gospel-Swing ♩= 116
1
2
Lead 2
Lead 1
Oh I'm sing-in'Ma - ry
Mar___tha have moan
don't to
Tenor 1
Tenor 2
O Ma- ry don't you weep
Baritone
Bass
bum ba ba
3
4
5
L2
L1
list-en to me Ma_ ry
T1
T2
O Mar-tha don't you moan_______ (oh__oh_) O Ma -ry don't you
B1
B2
bum
doom__

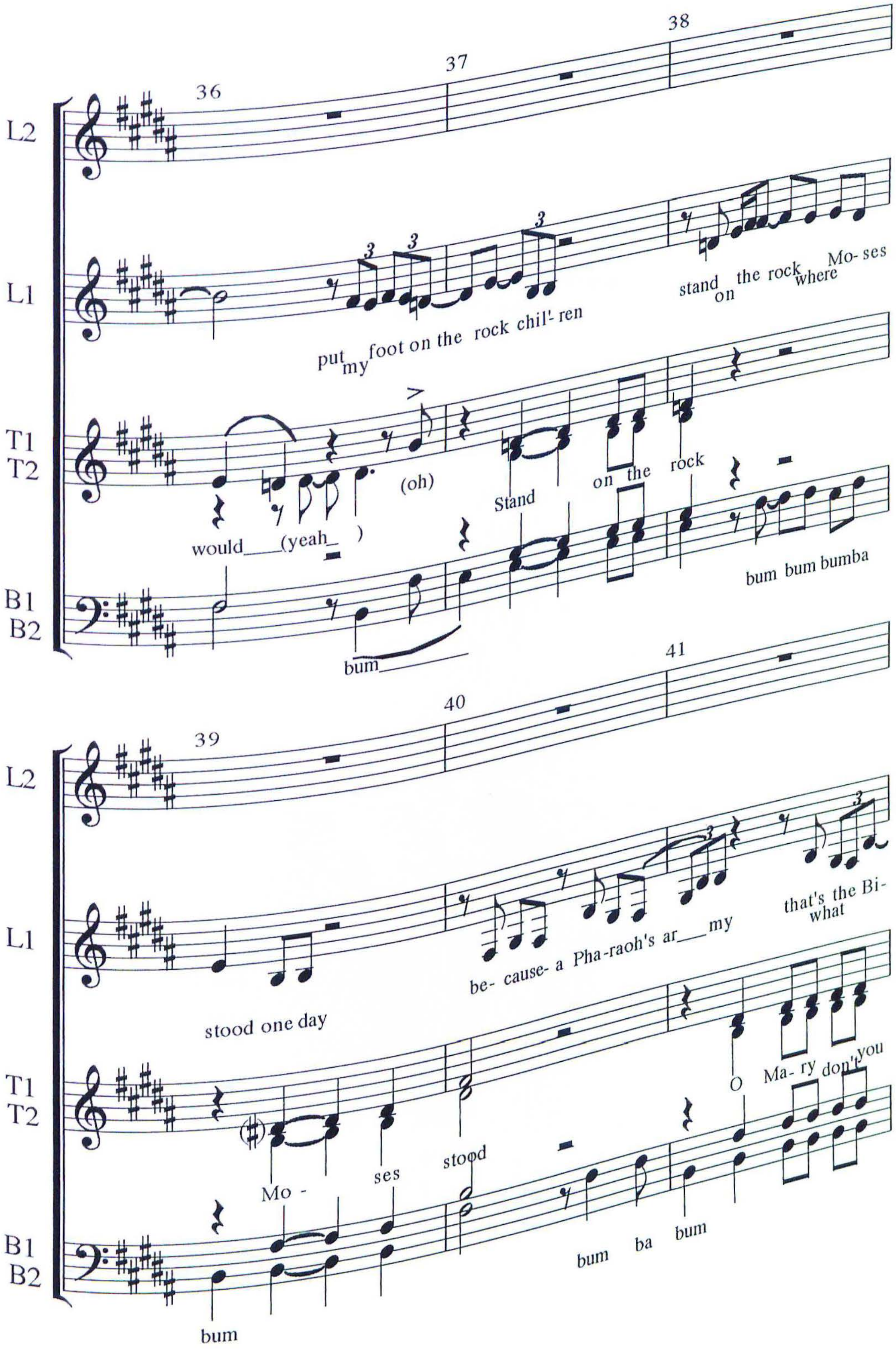

L2
L1
T1
T2
B1
B2
6
7
8
Mar_ tha have moan__
don't to
Pha - raoh's
weep
O Mar-tha don't you moan
bum bum bum ba bum
bum bum
9
10
11
ar__ my
they got drowned in the sea one day
O Ma - ry don't you weep
down in the Red
bum
bum bum bum ba bum

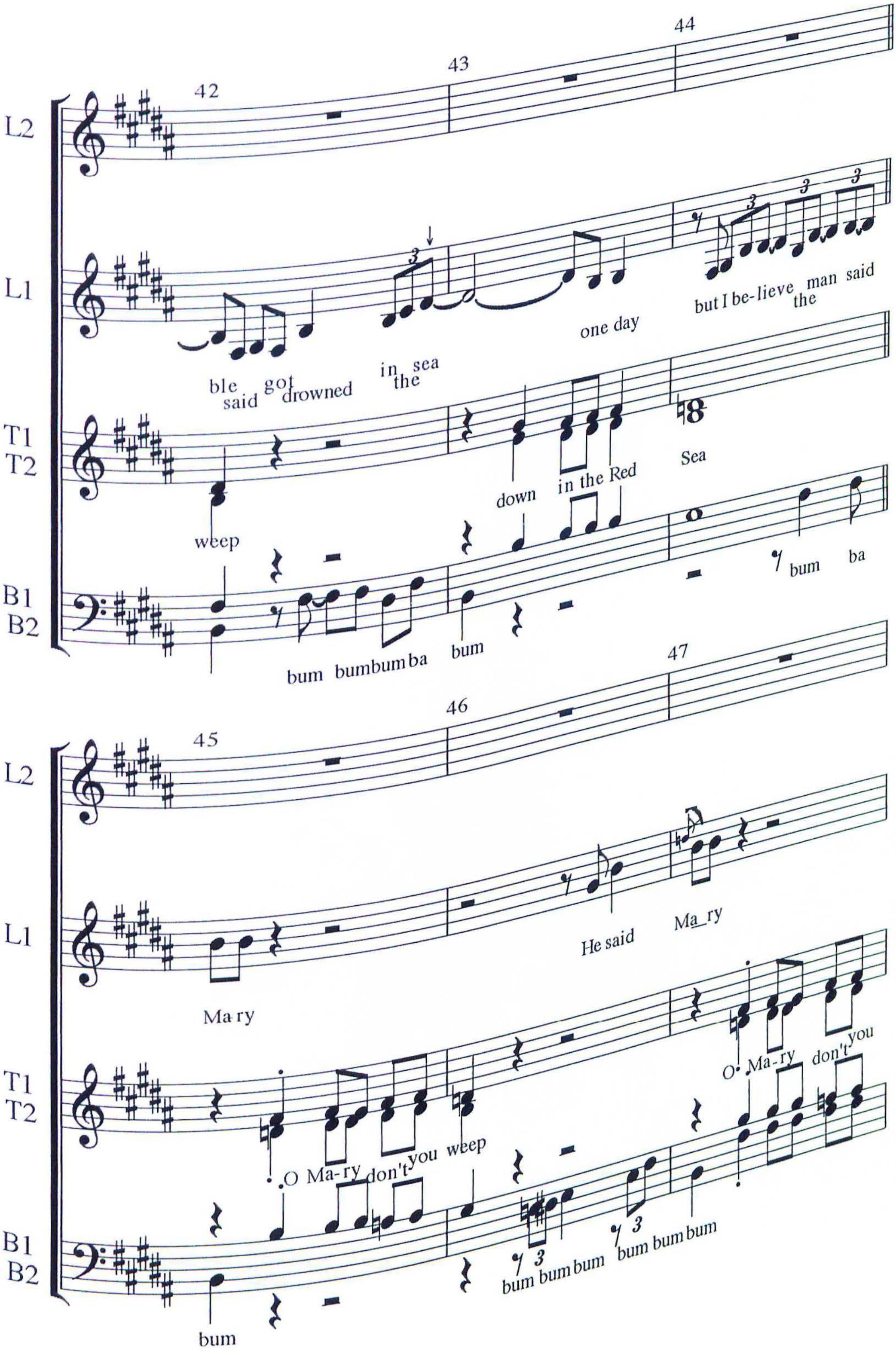

L2
L1
T1
T2
B1
B2
12
13
14
but said Ma - ry
Je - sus
yo' lit-tle sis-ter have
don't to
Sea
O Ma-ry don't you weep
ba ba bum
ba ba bum ba ba
ba
15
16
17
moan_ _ no more.
Now can I get a wit- ness said He Ma_ ry
O Mar-tha don't you moan.
O Ma-ry don't you
bum O Mar-tha don't_ _ you moan bum bum bum

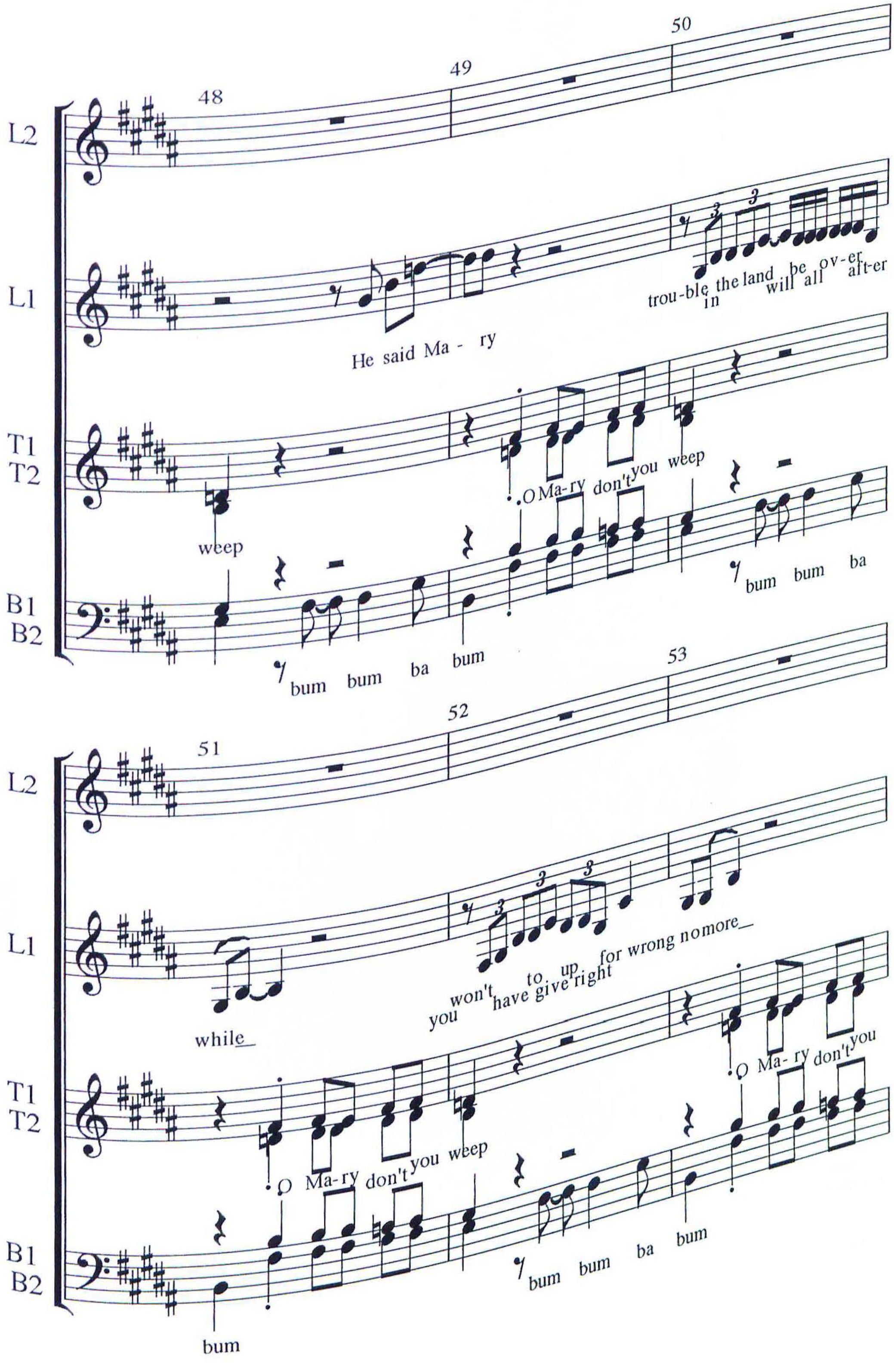

18
19
20
L2
L1
Mar- tha don't have to moan__
it may be some-bod-y
T1
T2
weep
O Mar-tha don't you moan___
(oh-) (oh)
B1
B2
bum bum bumba bum
oh___
21
22
23
L2
L1
sick to-day,
Is some-bod-y here ain't got no home?___
but
T1
T2
O Ma-ry don't you weep
O Mar-tha don't you
B1
B2
bum bum bum ba bum

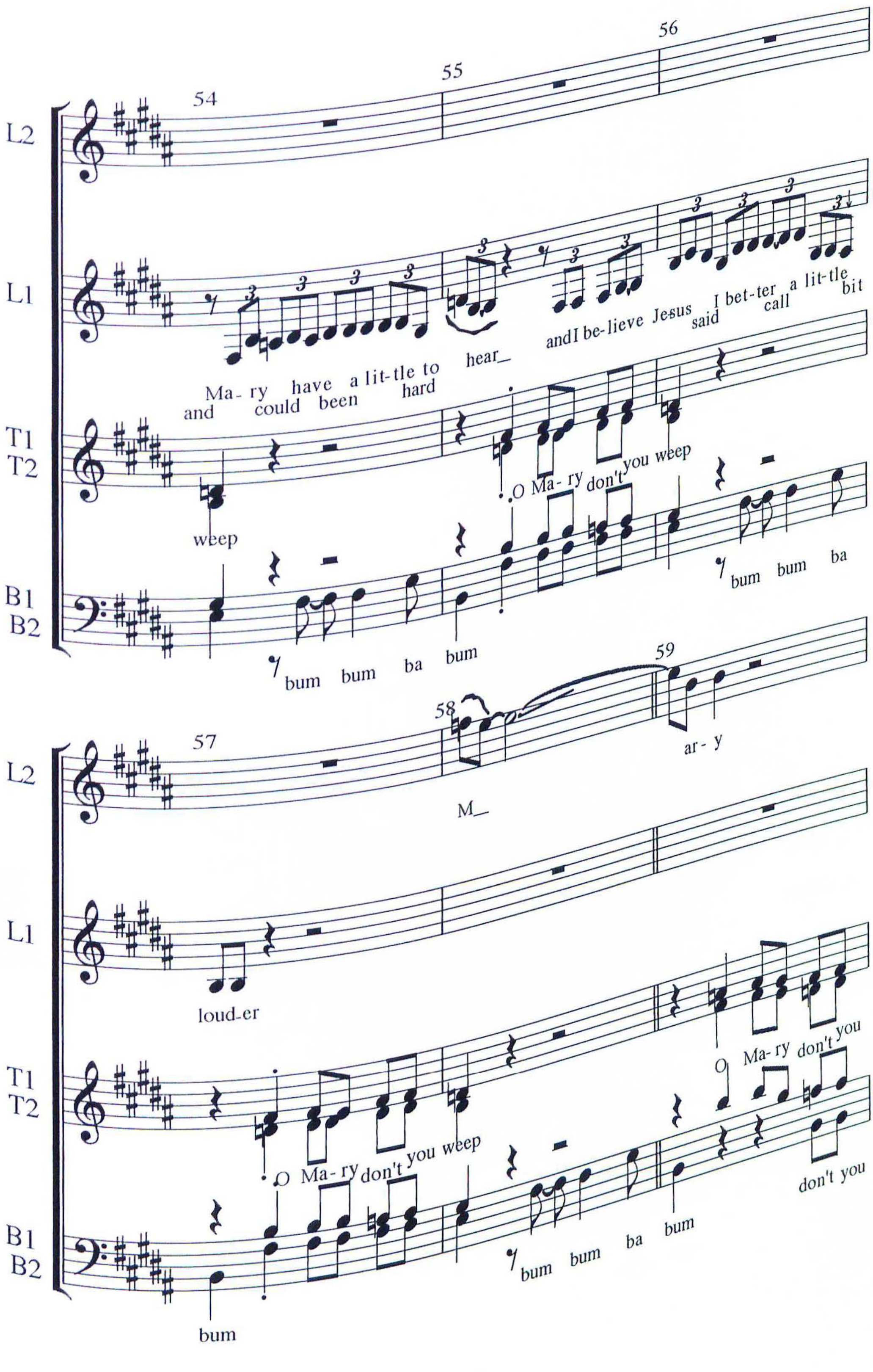

24
25
26
L2
L1
T1
T2
B1
B2
list-en Pha- raoh's ar__ my they got drowned in the
moan O Ma- ry don't you weep
bum bum bumba
baba bum
27
28
29
sea one day but I be-lieve a man said Ma_ ry
down in the Red Sea O Ma- ry don't you
bum bum ba bum

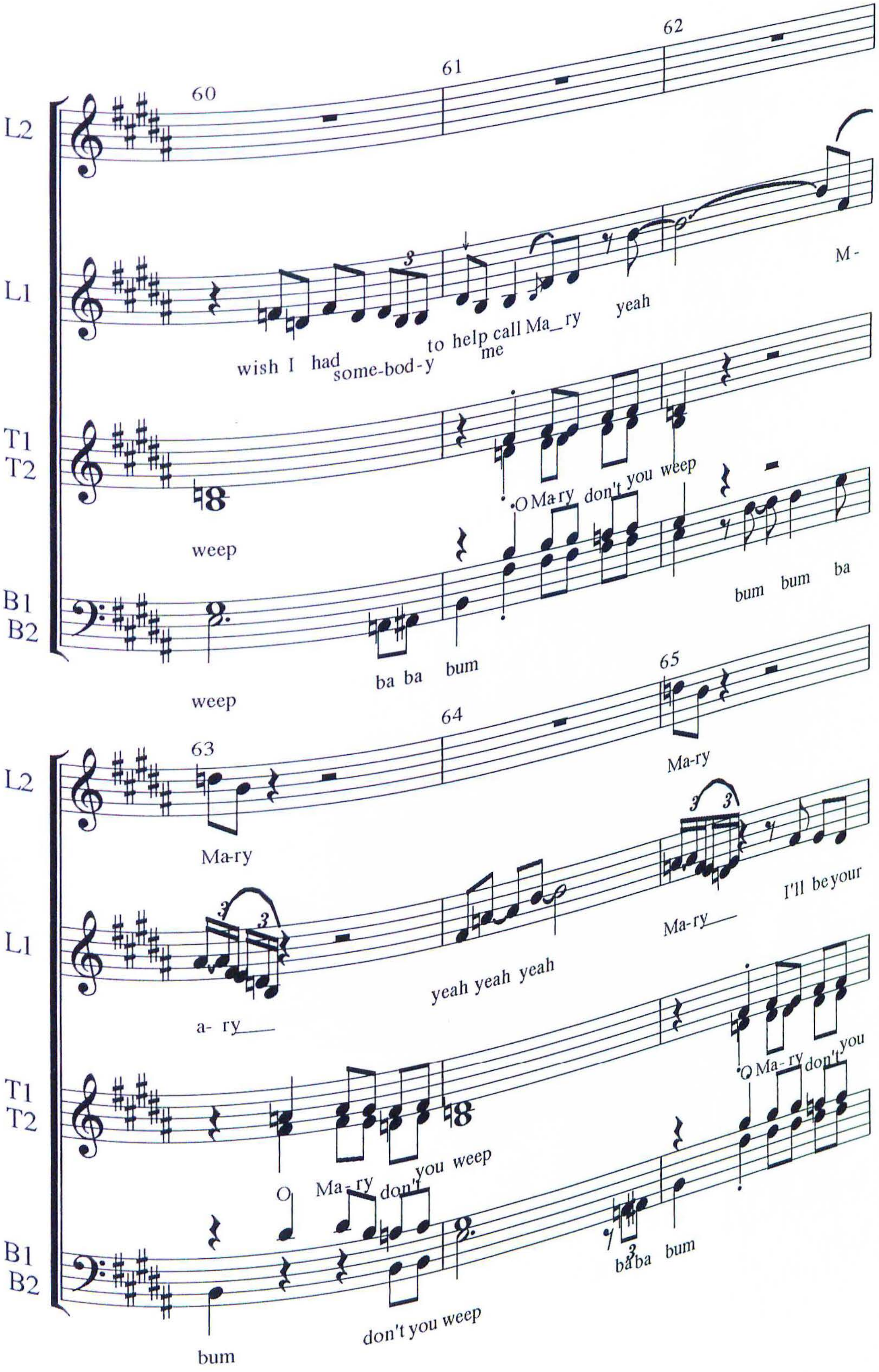

L2
L1
T1
T2
B1
B2
30
31
32
yo'lit-tle sis-ter don't have to moan no more
Now lis-ten-a if I could_
weep
O Mar-tha don't you moan.
ba ba bum ba ba bum O Mar-tha don't you moan bum bum ba
33
34
35
right now
I wan-na tell you that I sure-ly would now
mm
If I could
sure - ly
bum
bum_____
bum

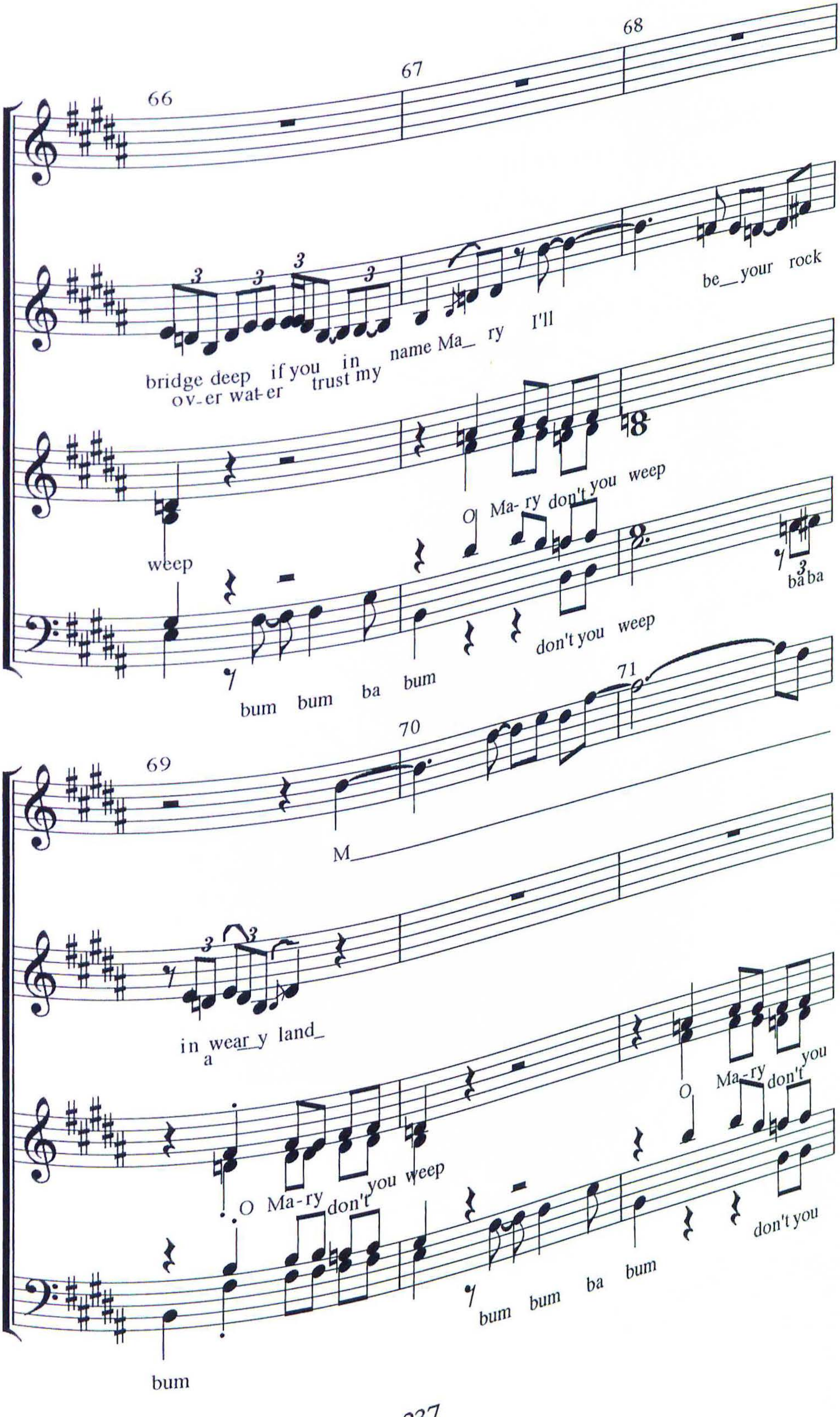

36
37
38
L2
L1
put my foot on the rock chil'- ren
stand on the rock where Mo- ses
T1
T2
(oh)
Stand on the rock
would___(yeah_)
bum bum bumba
B1
B2
bum___
39
40
41
stood one day
be- cause- a Pha-raoh's ar___my
what that's the Bi-
O Ma- ry don't you
Mo - ses stood
bum ba bum
bum

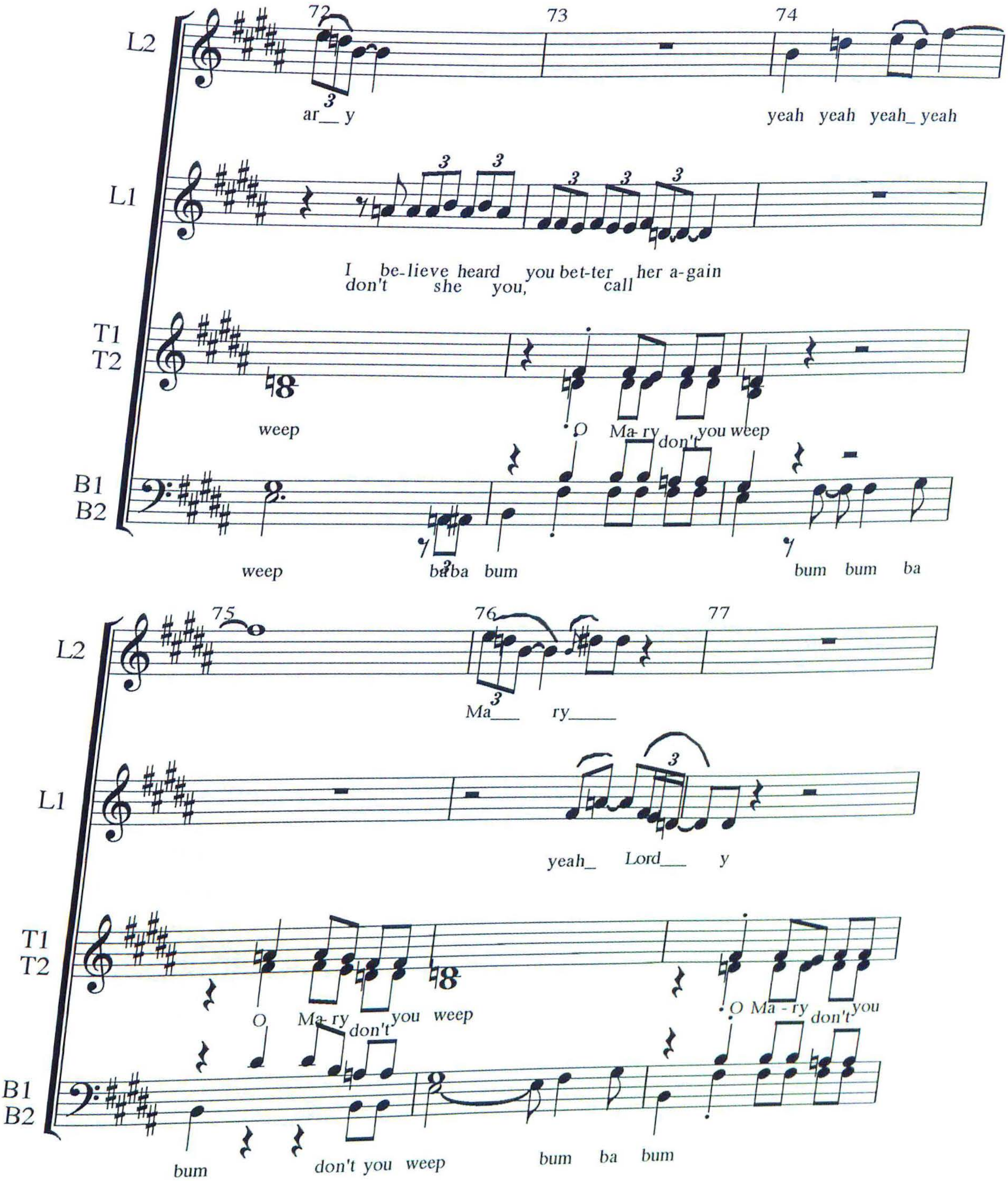

42
43
44
L2
L1
ble said got drowned in the sea
one day
but I be-lieve the man said
T1
T2
weep
down in the Red
Sea
B1
B2
bum bum bum bum ba
bum
bum ba
45
46
47
Ma-ry
He said
Ma_ry
O Ma-ry don't you weep
O Ma-ry don't you
bum
bum bum bum
bum bum bum
3
3

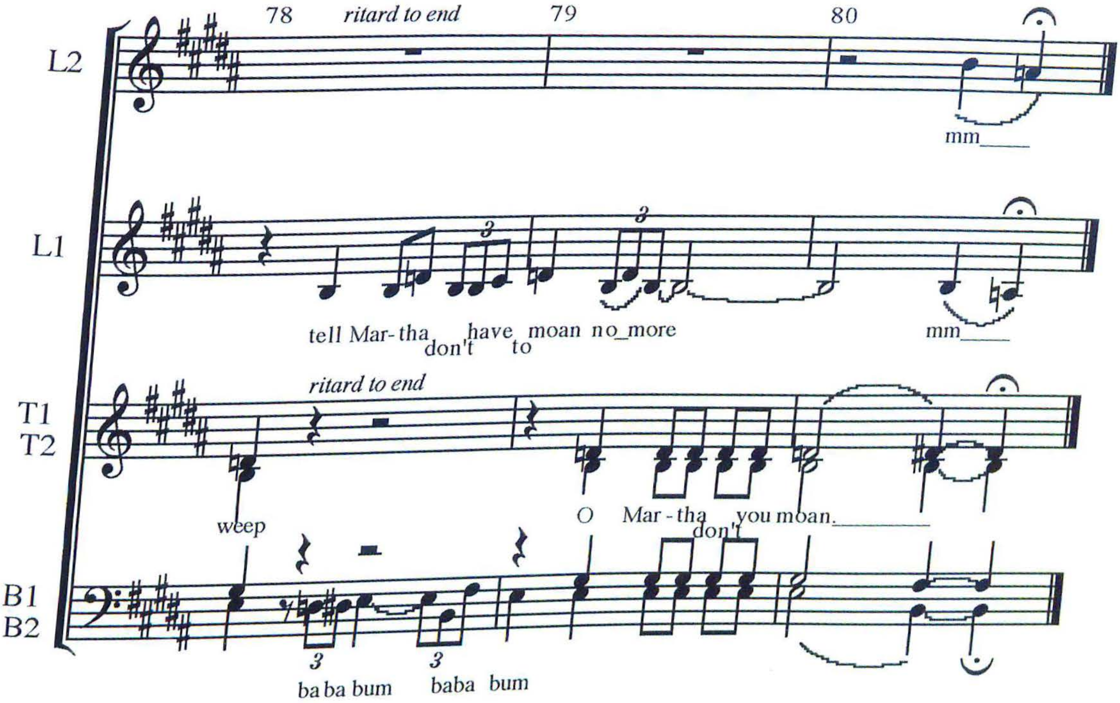

48
49
50
L2
L1
He said Ma - ry
trou-ble the land be ov-er
in will all aft-er
T1
T2
weep
O Ma-ry don't you weep
B1
B2
bum bum ba bum
bum bum ba
51
52
53
while
you won't have to give up right for wrong no more
O Ma-ry don't you weep
O Ma- ry don't you
bum bum ba bum
bum


L2
L1
T1
T2
B1
B2
54
55
56
Ma- ry have a lit- tle to hear_ and I be- lieve Jesus said I bet- ter a lit- tle bit
and could been hard call
weep
O Ma- ry don't you weep
bum bum ba bum
bum bum ba
57
58
59
M_
ar- y
loud- er
O Ma- ry don't you weep
O Ma- ry don't you
bum
bum bum ba bum
don't you

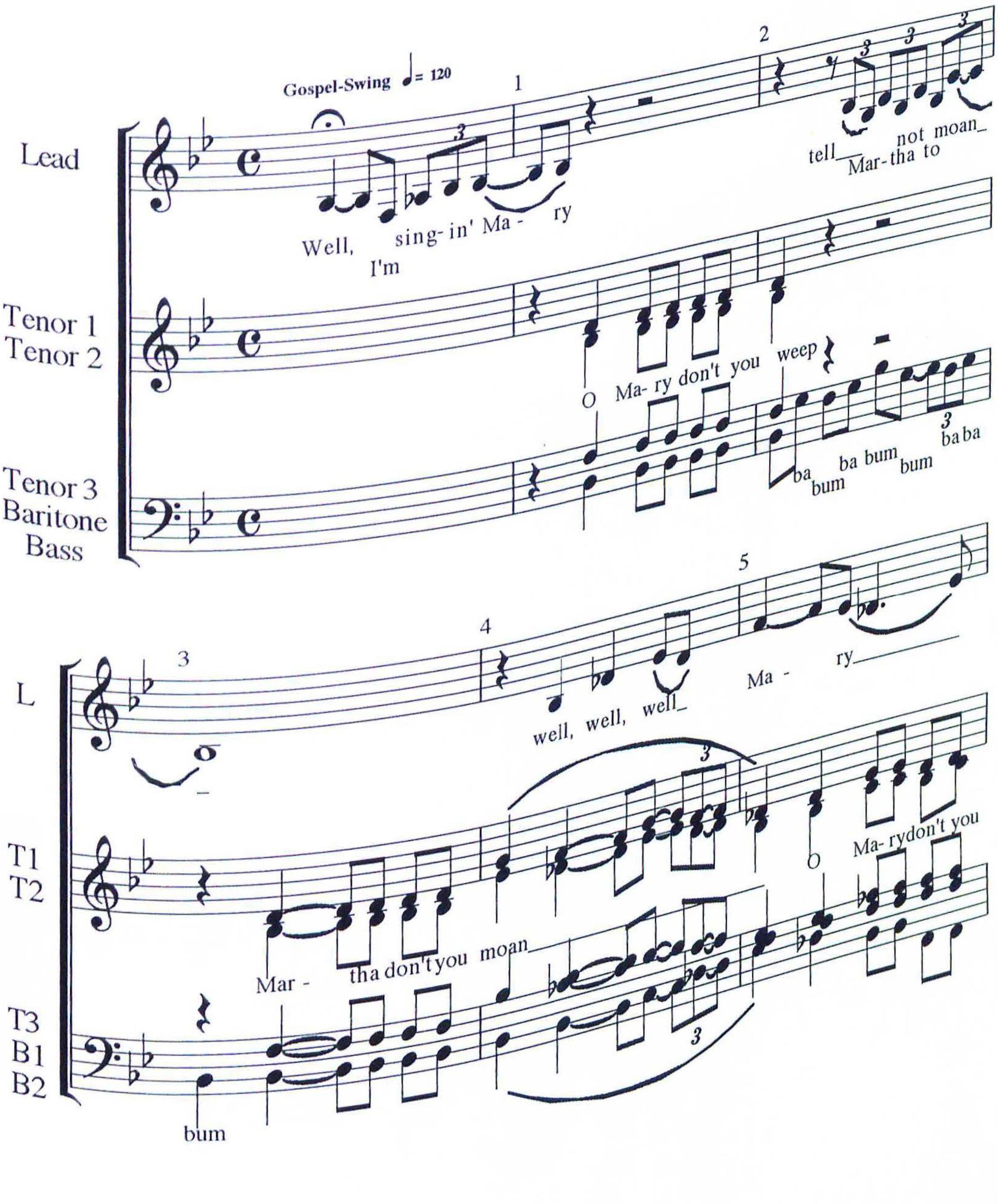

60
61
62
L2
L1
T1
T2
B1
B2
wish I had some-bod-y to help me call Ma_ry yeah
M-
weep
O Ma-ry don't you weep
weep
ba ba bum
bum bum ba
63
64
65
Ma-ry
Ma-ry
a- ry
yeah yeah yeah
Ma-ry
I'll be your
O Ma-ry don't you weep
O Ma-ry don't you
bum
don't you weep
ba ba bum
3

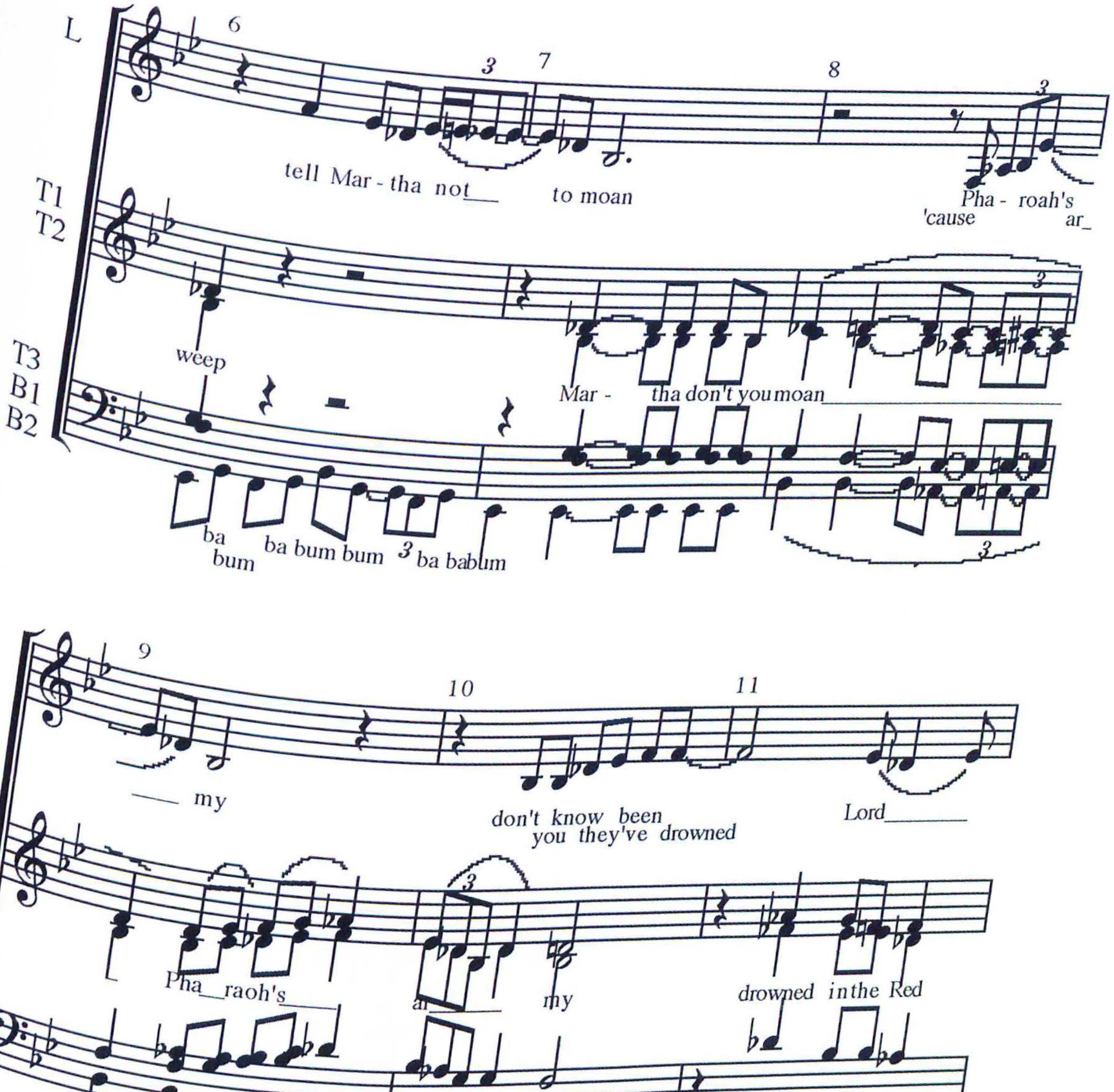

L2
L1
T1
T2
B1
B2
66
67
68
bridge deep if you in name Ma_ ry I'll
ov-er wat-er trust my
be__ your rock
weep
O Ma-ry don't you weep
ba ba
3
bum bum ba bum
don't you weep
69
70
71
M
in wear_y land_
a
O Ma-ry don't you weep
O Ma-ry don't you
bum
bum bum ba bum
don't you

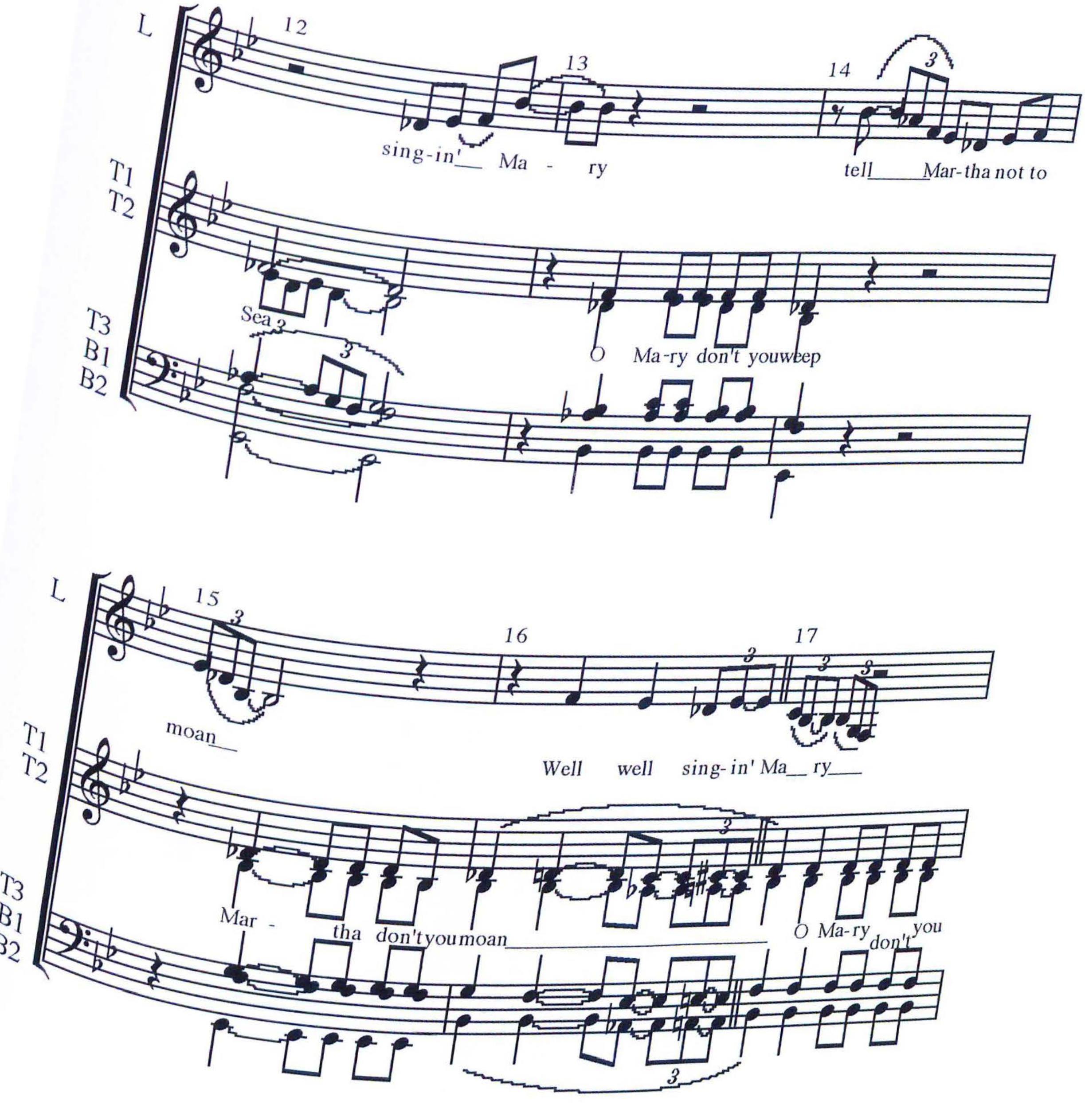

L2
L1
T1
T2
B1
B2
72
73
74
ar_ y
yeah yeah yeah_ yeah
I be-lieve heard you bet-ter her a-gain
don't she you, call
weep
O Ma-ry you weep
don't
weep
baba bum
bum bum ba
75
76
77
Ma_ ry_
yeah_ Lord_ y
O Ma-ry you weep
don't
O Ma - ry you
don't
bum
don't you weep
bum ba bum

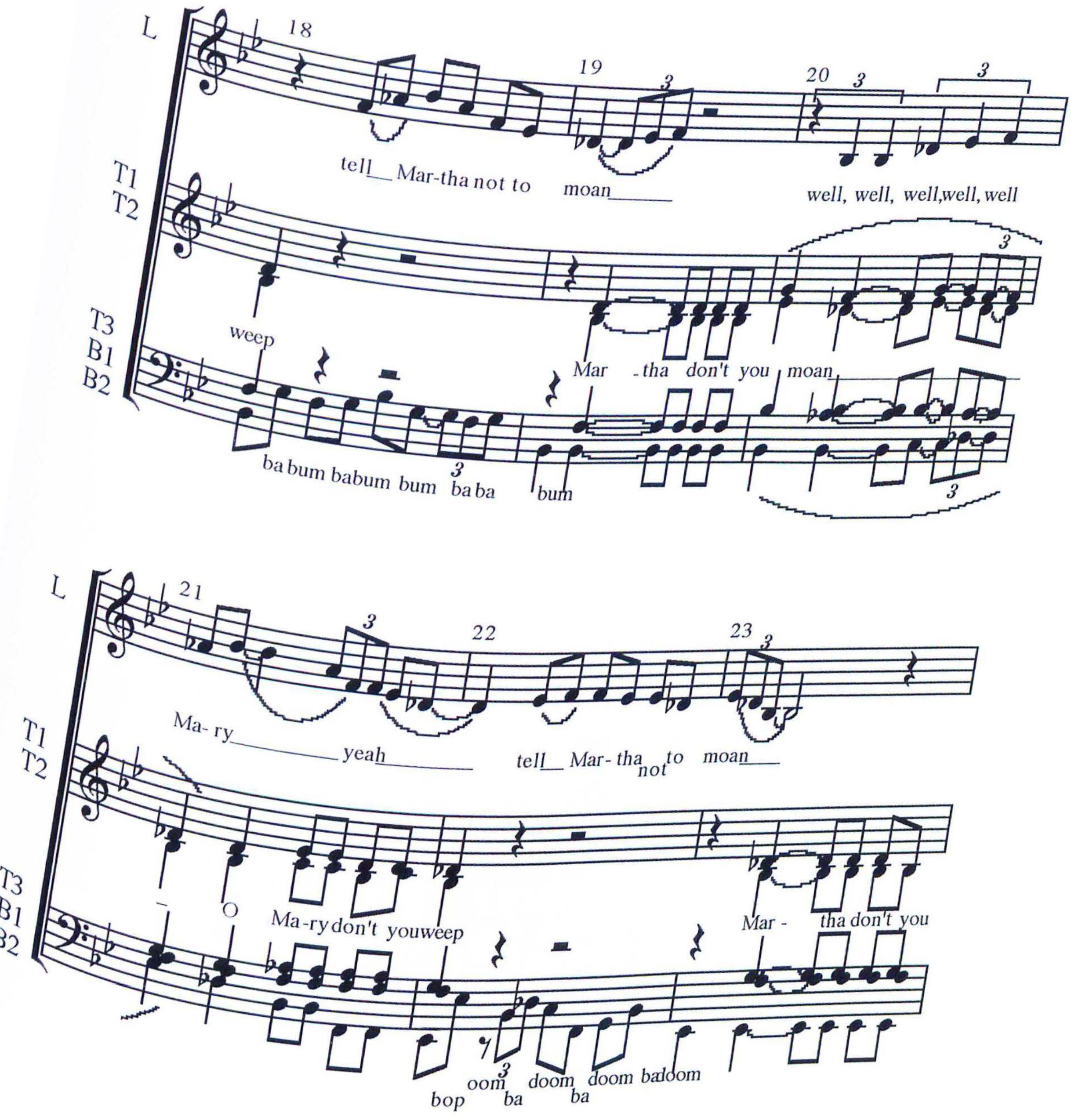

78
ritard to end
79
80
L2
mm____
L1
tell Mar-tha don't have to moan no_more
mm____
T1
T2
ritard to end
weep
O Mar-tha don't you moan.________
B1
B2
3
3
ba ba bum baba bum

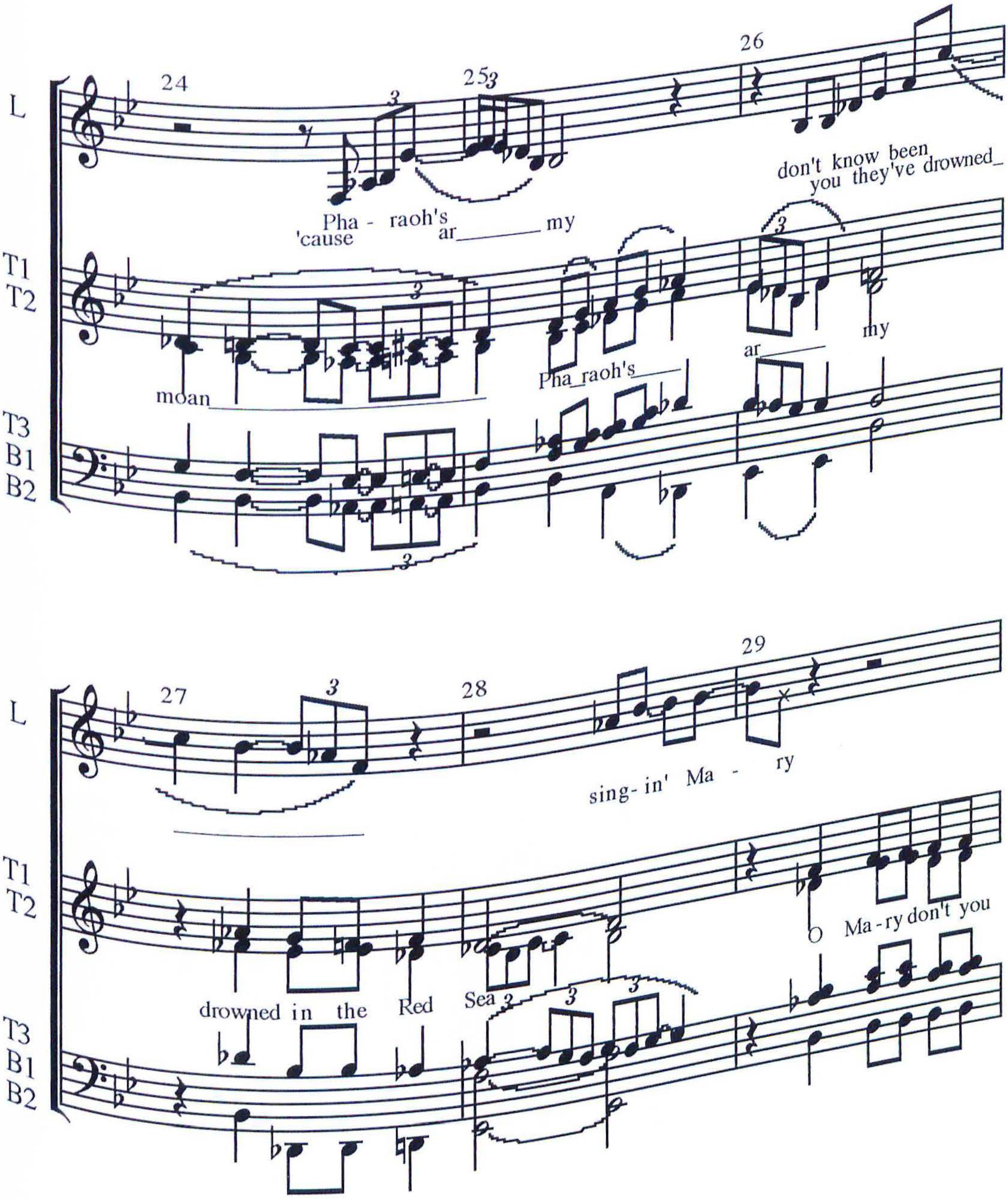
"Mary," TAKE 6 (1988)

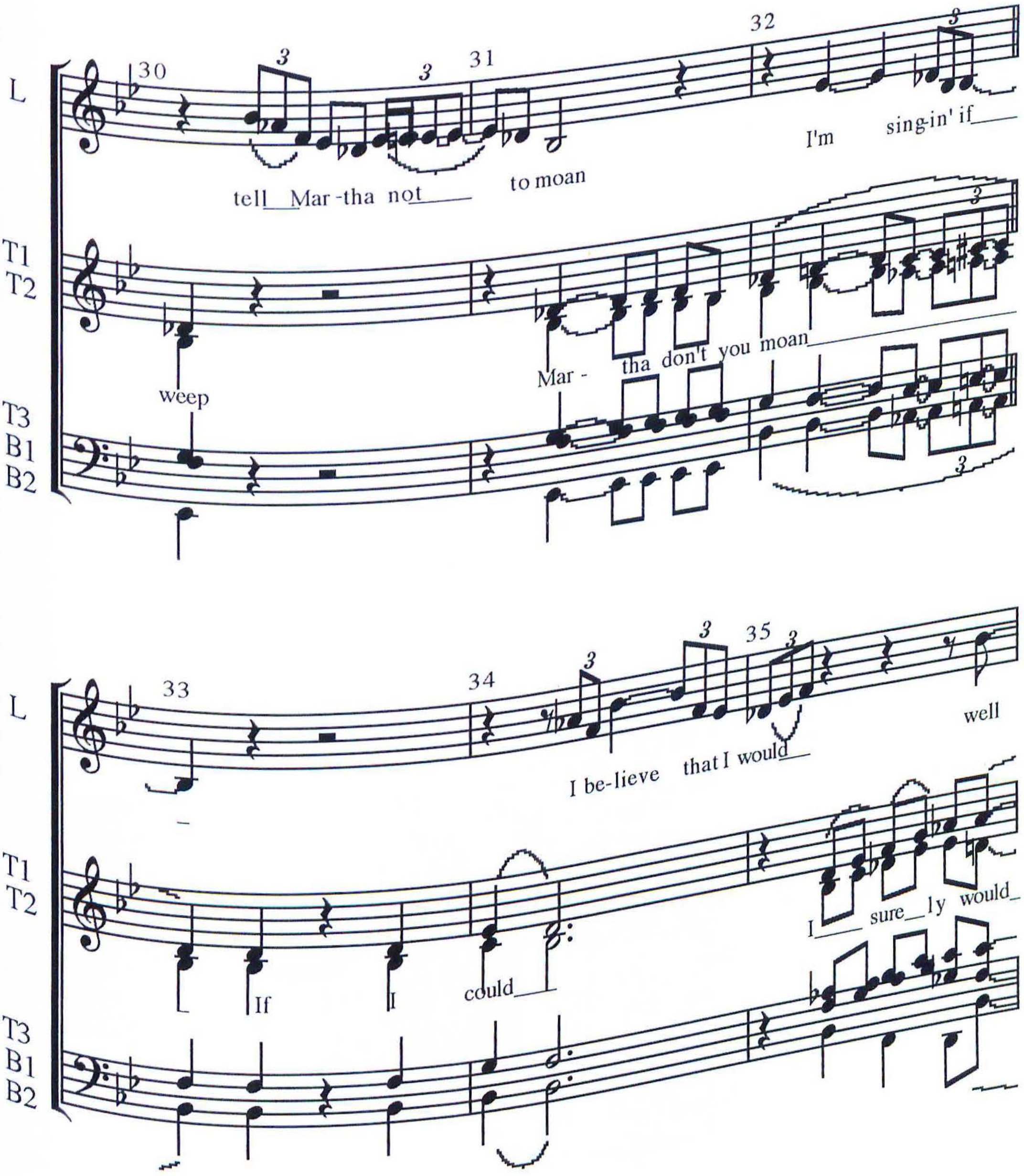

Gospel-Swing ♩= 120
Lead
Tenor 1
Tenor 2
Tenor 3
Baritone
Bass
1
2
3
4
5
Well, I'm sing-in' Ma-ry
tell_ Mar-tha to not moan_
O Ma-ry don't you weep
ba bum ba bum bum ba ba
L
T1
T2
T3
B1
B2
well, well, well_ Ma - ry_
Mar - tha don't you moan_
O Ma-ry don't you
bum

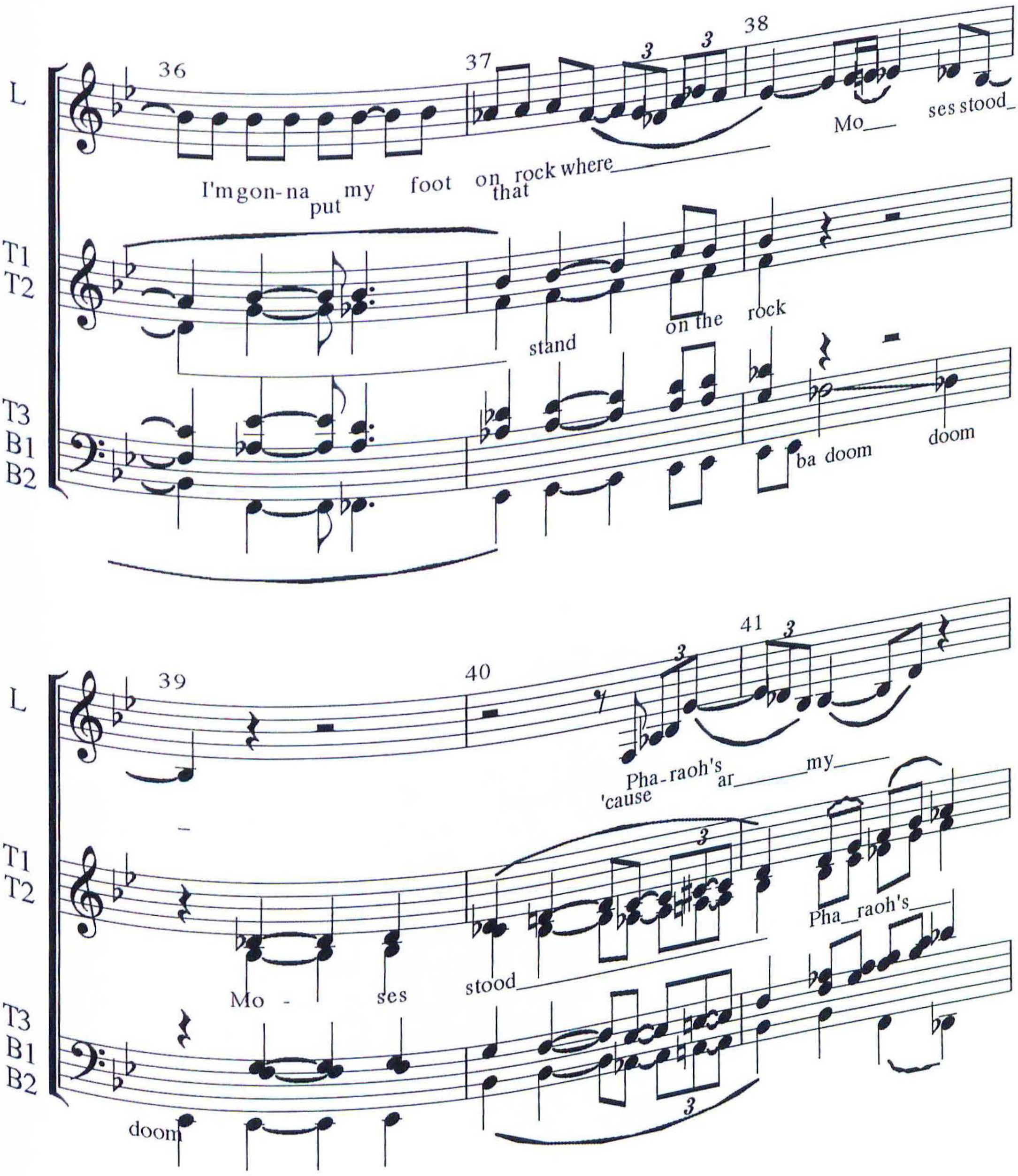

L
T1
T2
T3
B1
B2
6
7
8
3
tell Mar - tha not__ to moan
Pha - roah's
'cause ar_
weep
Mar - tha don't you moan
ba
bum
ba bum bum
3
ba babum
9
10
11
__ my
don't know been
you they've drowned
Lord
Pha_raoh's
a
my
drowned in the Red

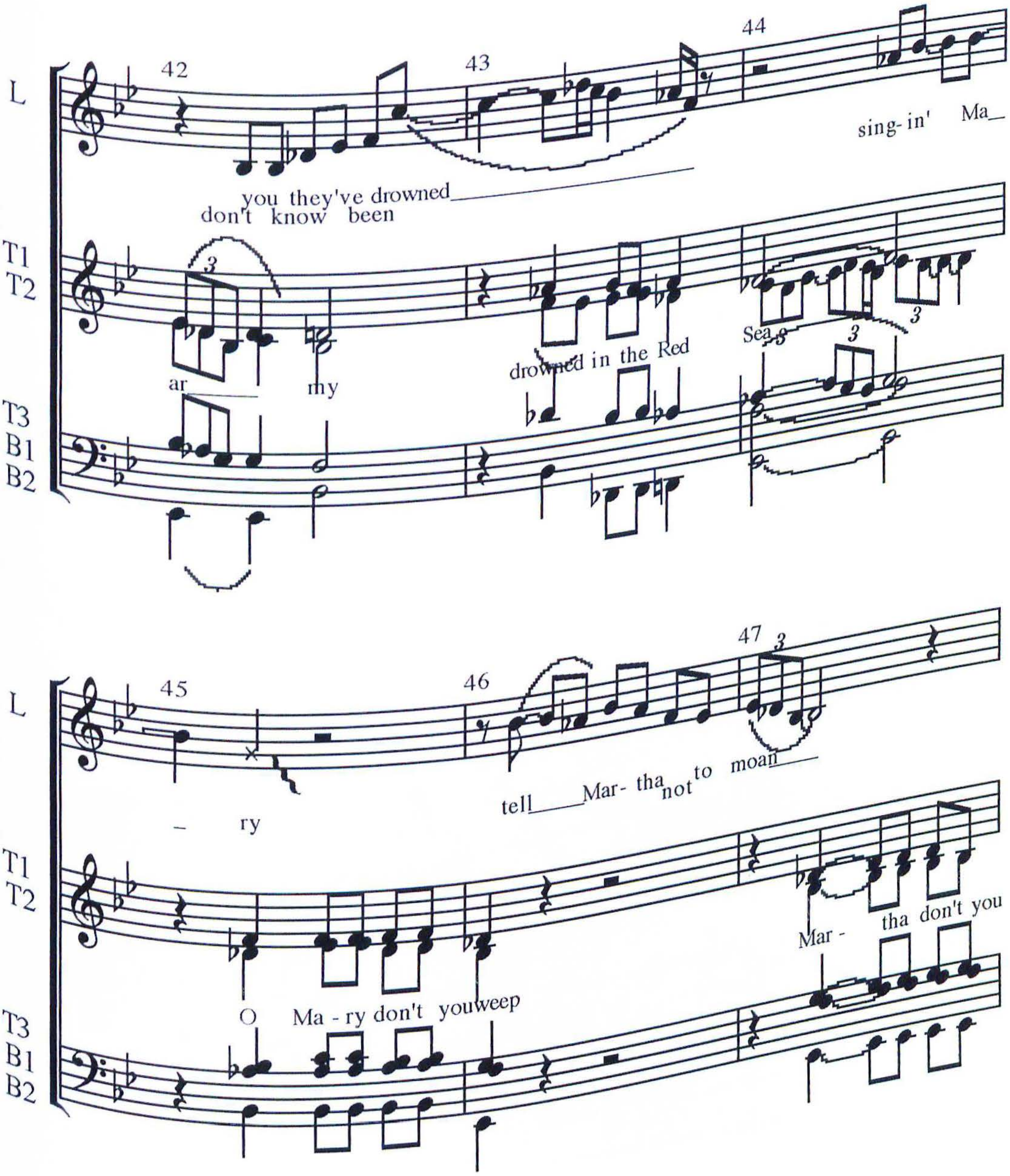

L
T1
T2
T3
B1
B2
12
13
14
15
16
17
sing-in'__ Ma - ry
tell____Mar-tha not to
Sea
O Ma-ry don't youweep
moan__
Well well sing-in' Ma__ry__
Mar - tha don't you moan
O Ma-ry don't you

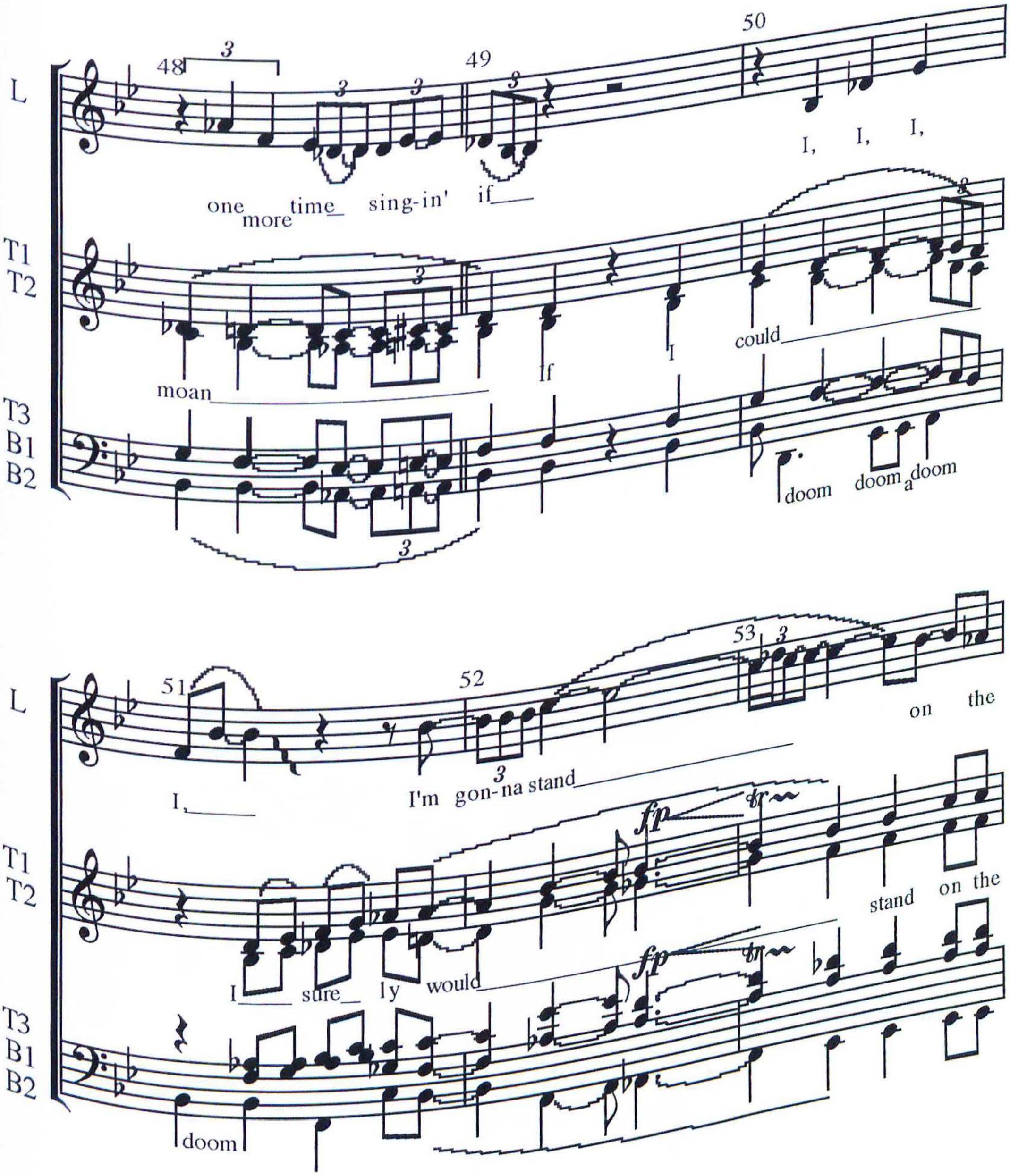

L
T1
T2
T3
B1
B2
18
19
20
3
tell__ Mar-tha not to moan______
well, well, well,well, well
weep
Mar -tha don't you moan______
ba bum babum bum ba ba bum
21
22
23
Ma- ry_________ yeah_______
tell__ Mar- tha not to moan___
O Ma-ry don't you weep
Mar - tha don't you
bop oom ba doom ba doom baloom

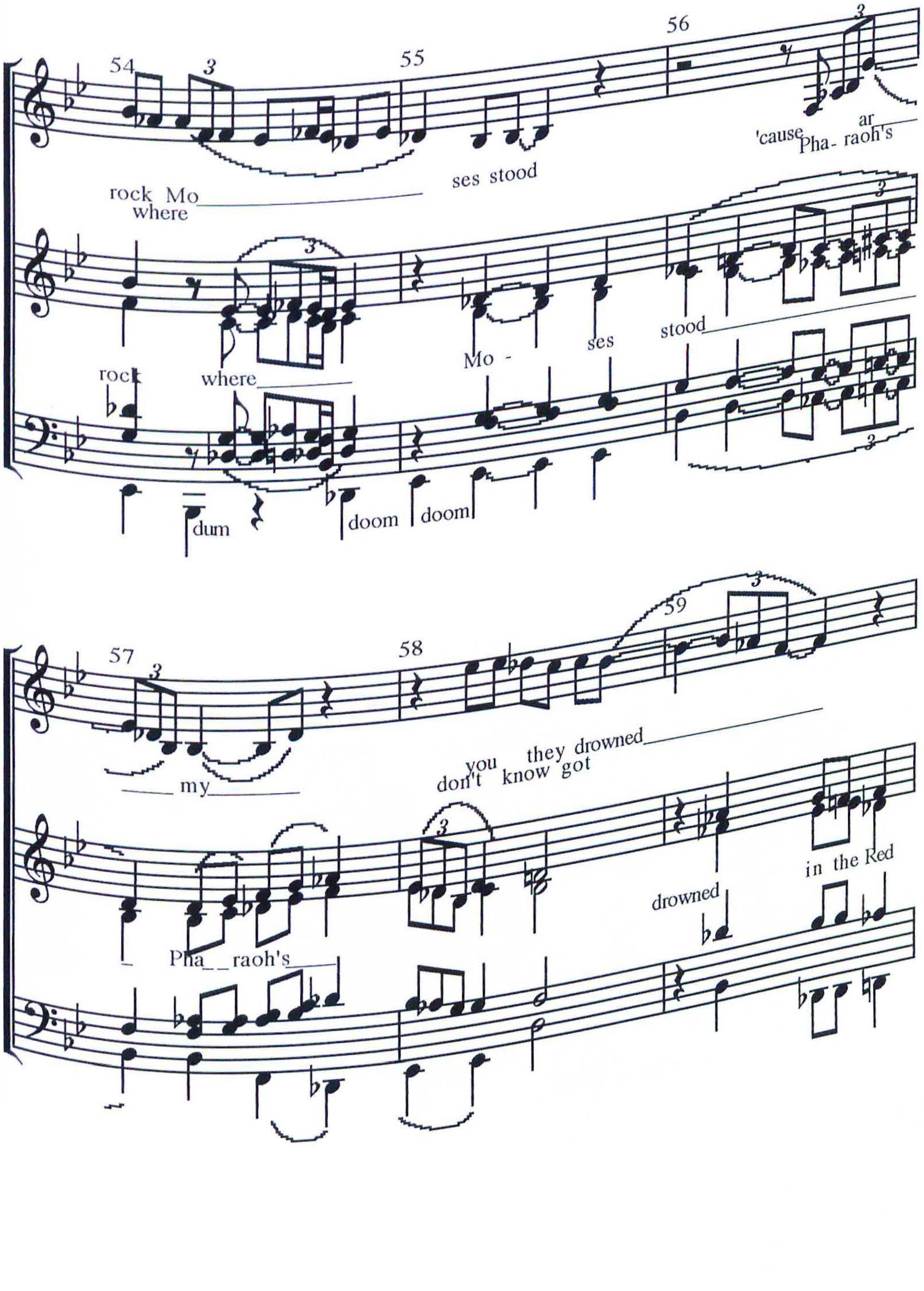

L
T1
T2
T3
B1
B2
24
25
26
27
28
29
3
Pha - raoh's
'cause ar_____ my
don't know been
you they've drowned_
moan
Pha_raoh's
ar
my
drowned in the Red Sea
sing- in' Ma - ry
O Ma - ry don't you

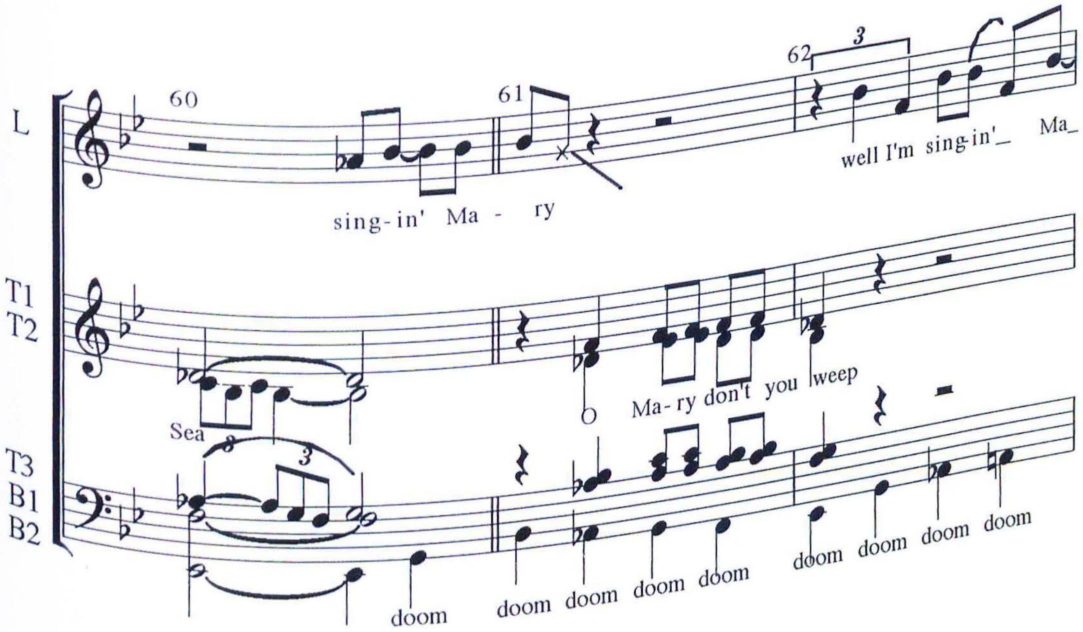

L
T1
T2
T3
B1
B2
30
31
32
tell Mar-tha not to moan
I'm sing-in' if
weep
Mar - tha don't you moan
33
34
35
I be-lieve that I would
well
If I could
I sure ly would

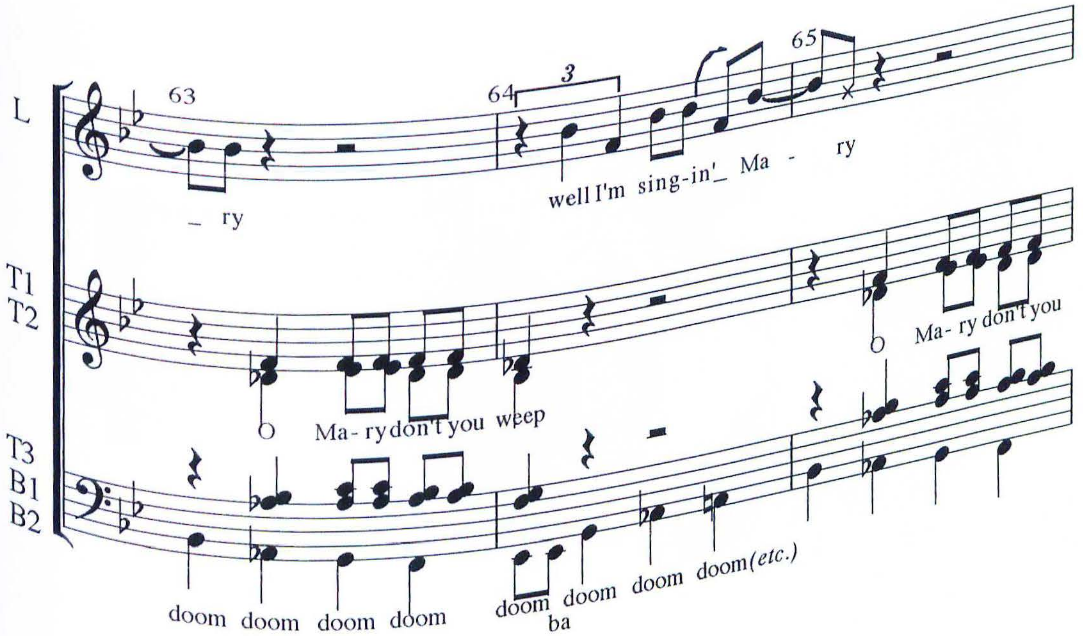

L
T1
T2
T3
B1
B2
36
37
38
3
3
I'm gon-na put my foot on that rock where___
Mo___ ses stood_
stand
on the rock
ba doom
doom
39
40
41
3
3
3
'cause Pha-raoh's ar___ my___
Mo - ses stood___
Pha_raoh's___
doom

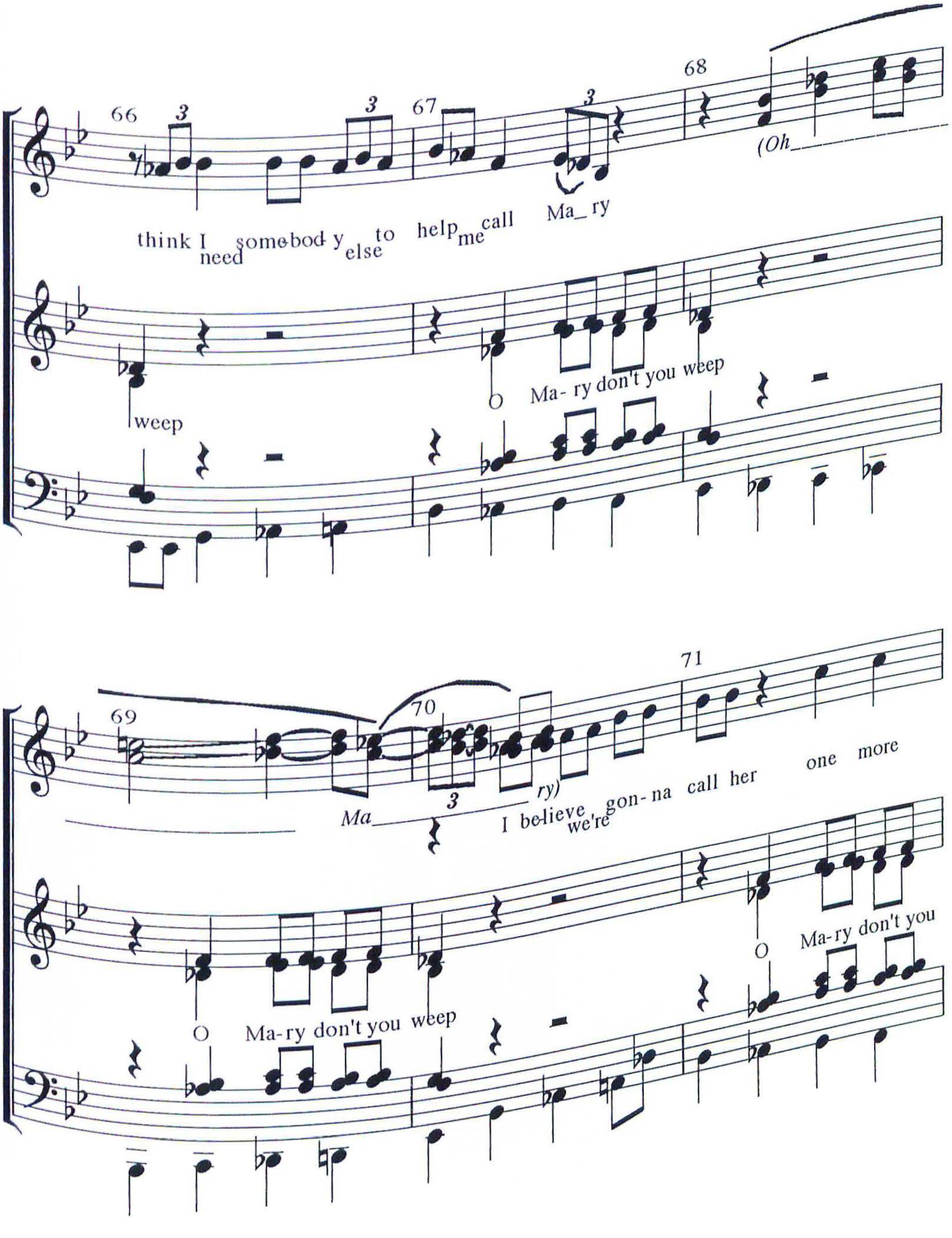

L
T1
T2
T3
B1
B2
42
43
44
you they've drowned
don't know been
sing- in' Ma
ar my
drowned in the Red Sea
3
3
3
3
45
46
47
ry
tell Mar- tha not to moan
O Ma - ry don't you weep
Mar - tha don't you

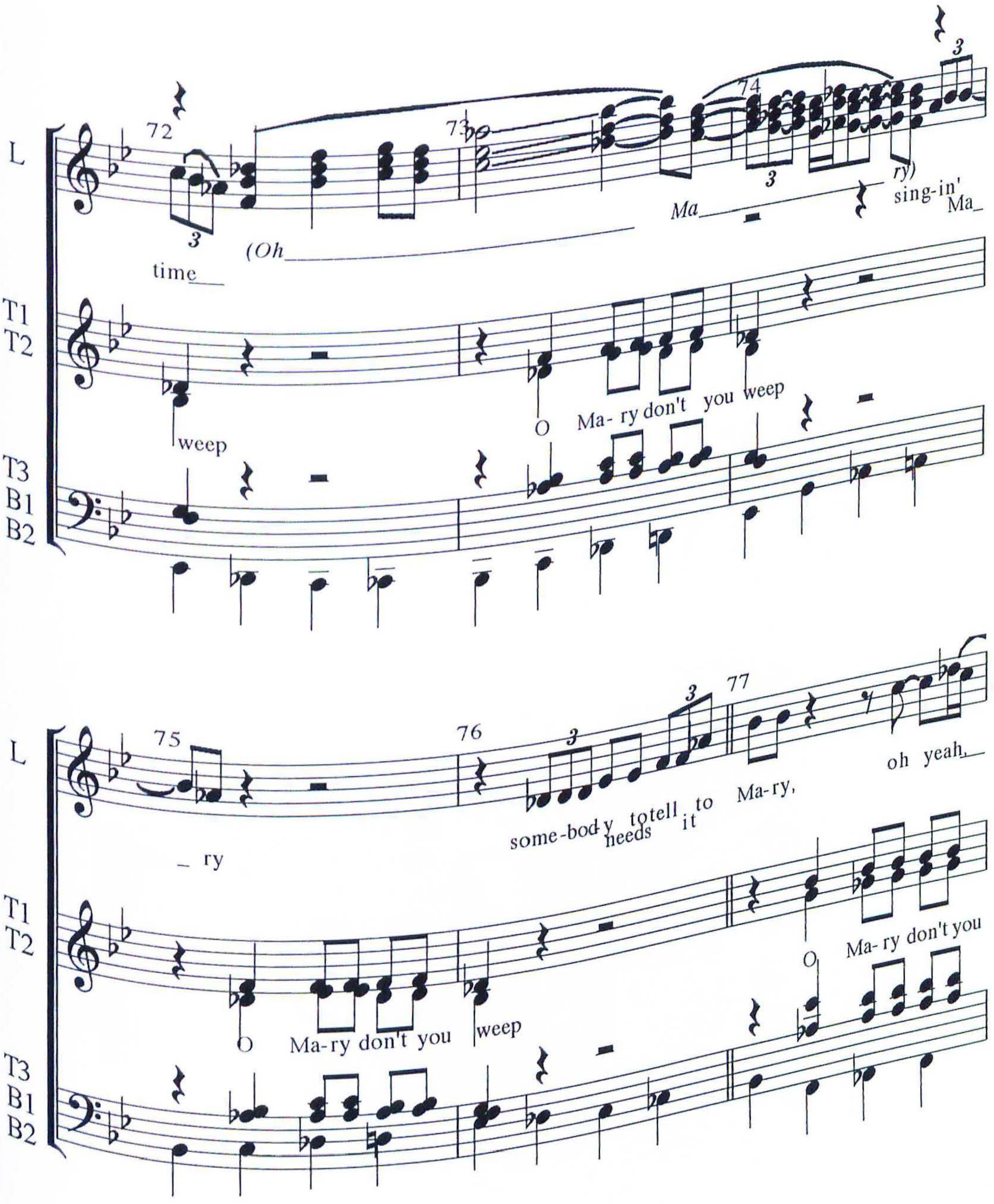

L
T1
T2
T3
B1
B2
48
49
50
3
one more time_ sing-in' if___
I, I, I,
moan___
If
I
could___
doom doom a doom
51
52
53
I,___
I'm gon-na stand___
on the
fp
tr
I___ sure___ ly would___
stand on the
doom

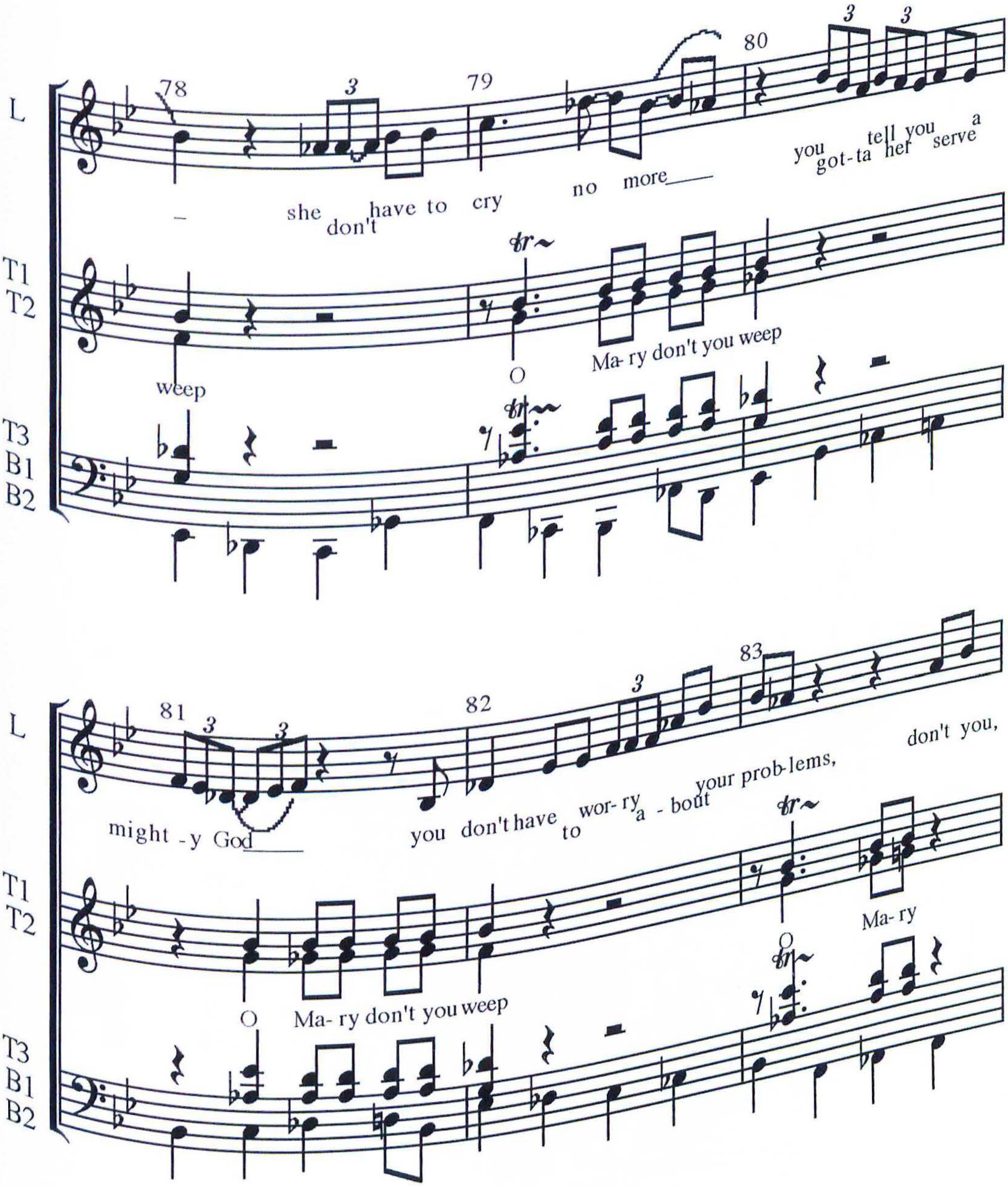

L
T1
T2
T3
B1
B2
54
55
56
rock Mo
where
ses stood
'cause Pha - raoh's
ar
rock
where
Mo - ses stood
dum
doom
doom
57
58
59
my
you they drowned
don't know got
Pha _ _ raoh's
drowned
in the Red

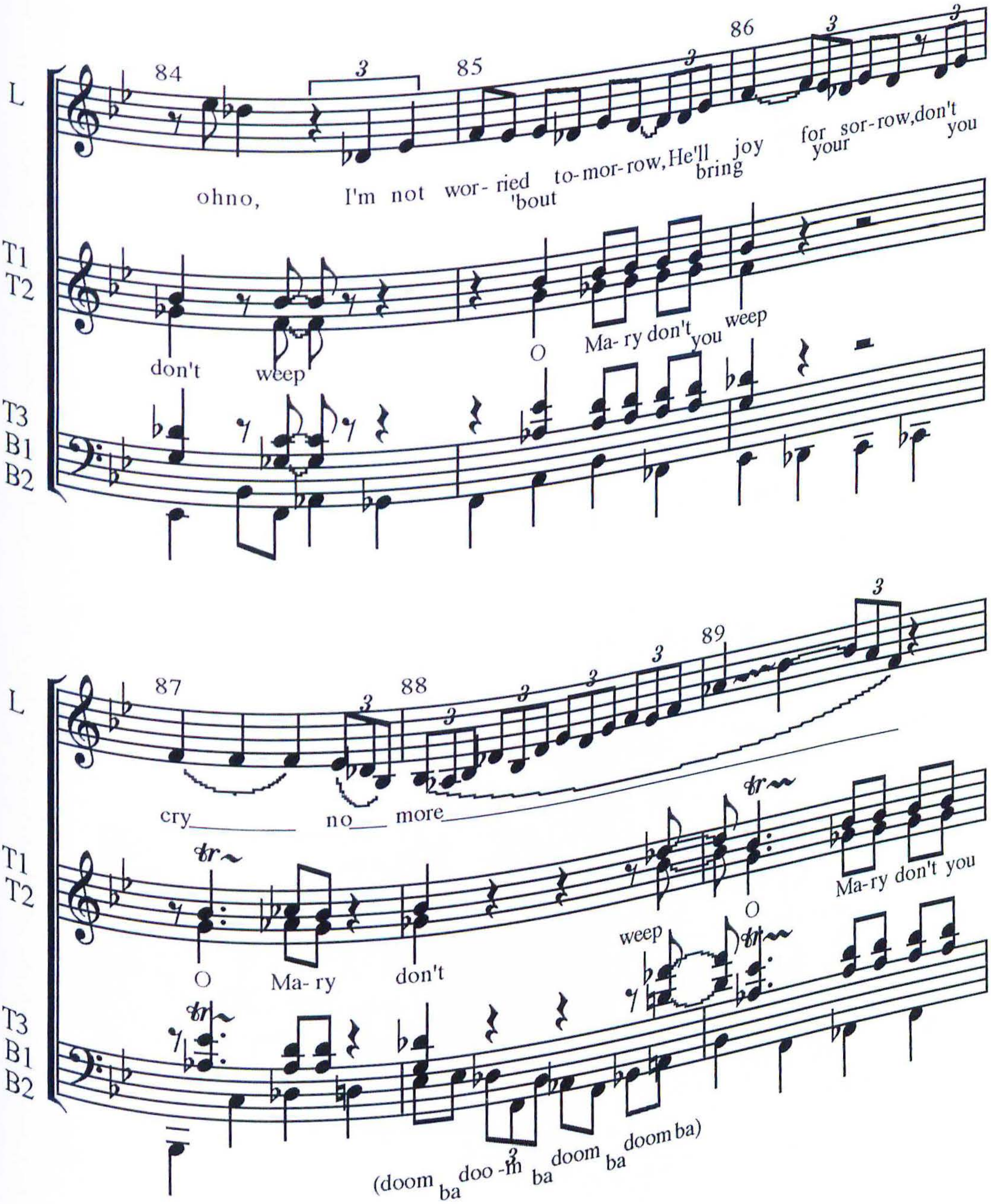

60
61
62
3
L
T1
T2
T3
B1
B2
sing-in' Ma - ry
well I'm sing-in'_ Ma_
Sea
O Ma-ry don't you weep
doom doom doom doom doom
doom doom doom doom

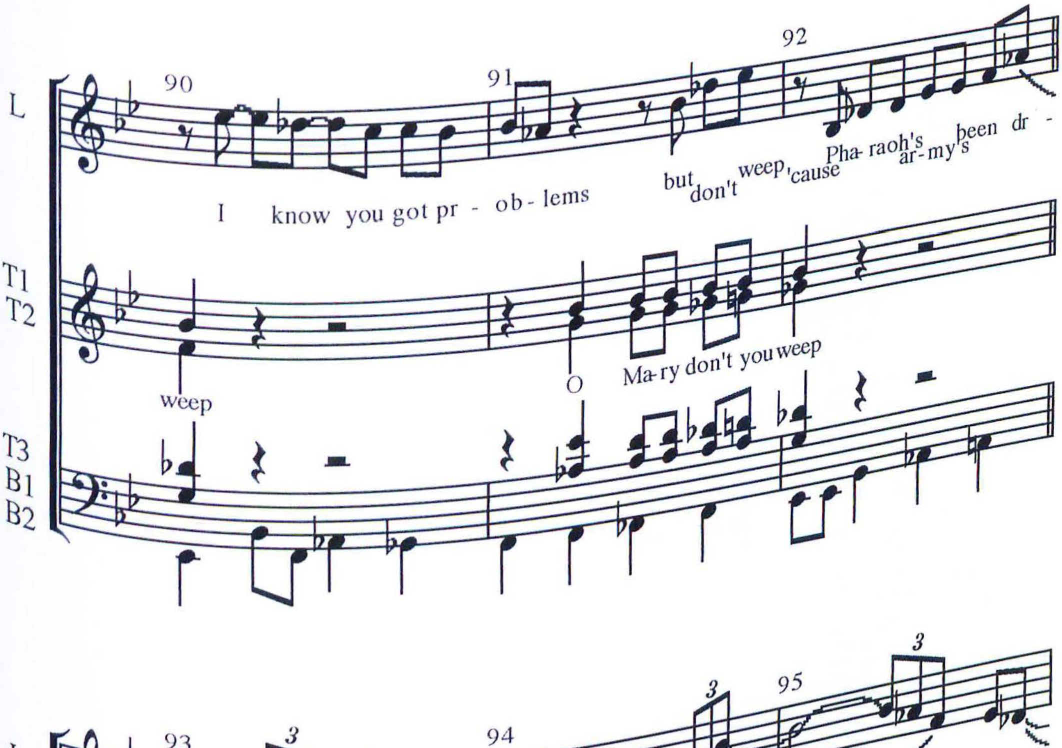

63
64
65
3
L
T1
T2
T3
B1
B2
_ ry
well I'm sing-in'_ Ma - ry
O Ma-ry don't you weep
O Ma-ry don't you
doom doom doom doom
doom doom doom doom(etc.)
ba

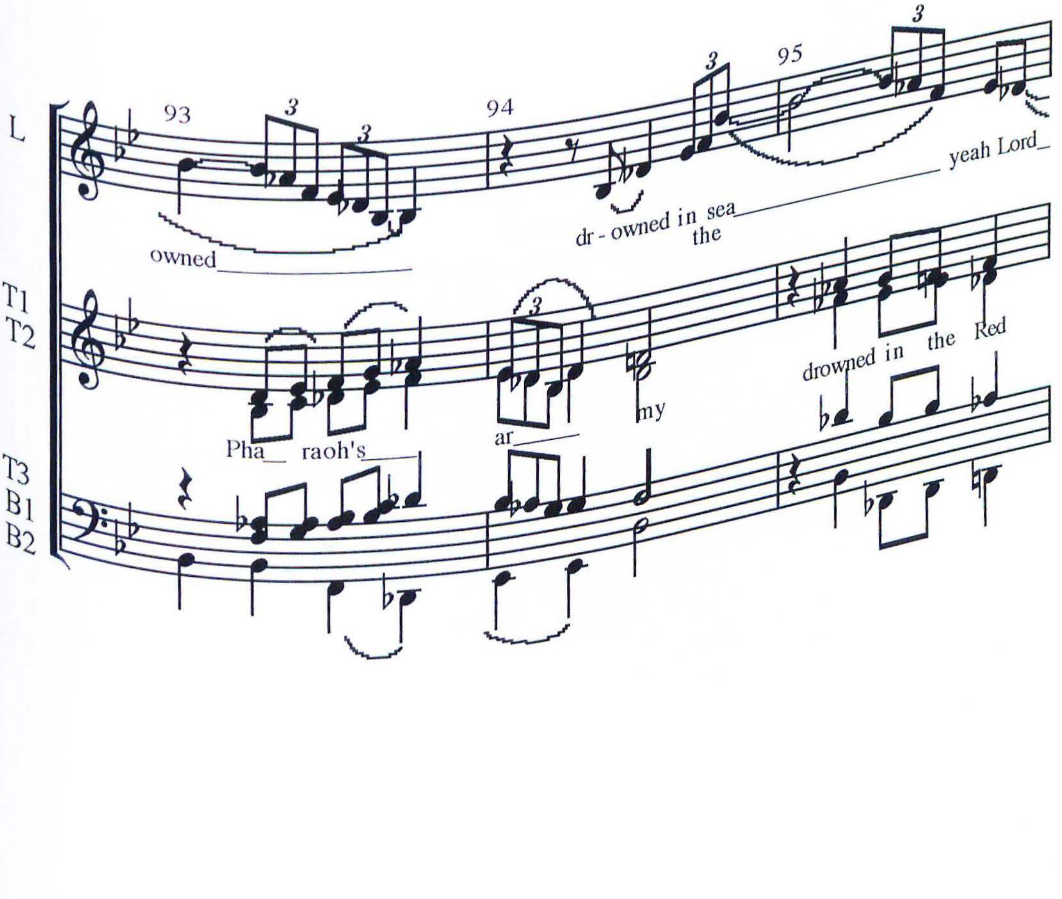

66
67
68
69
70
71
L
T1
T2
T3
B1
B2
think I need somebody else to help me call Ma_ry
(Oh
Ma
ry)
I believe we're gon-na call her one more
weep
O Ma-ry don't you weep
O Ma-ry don't you weep
O Ma-ry don't you
3

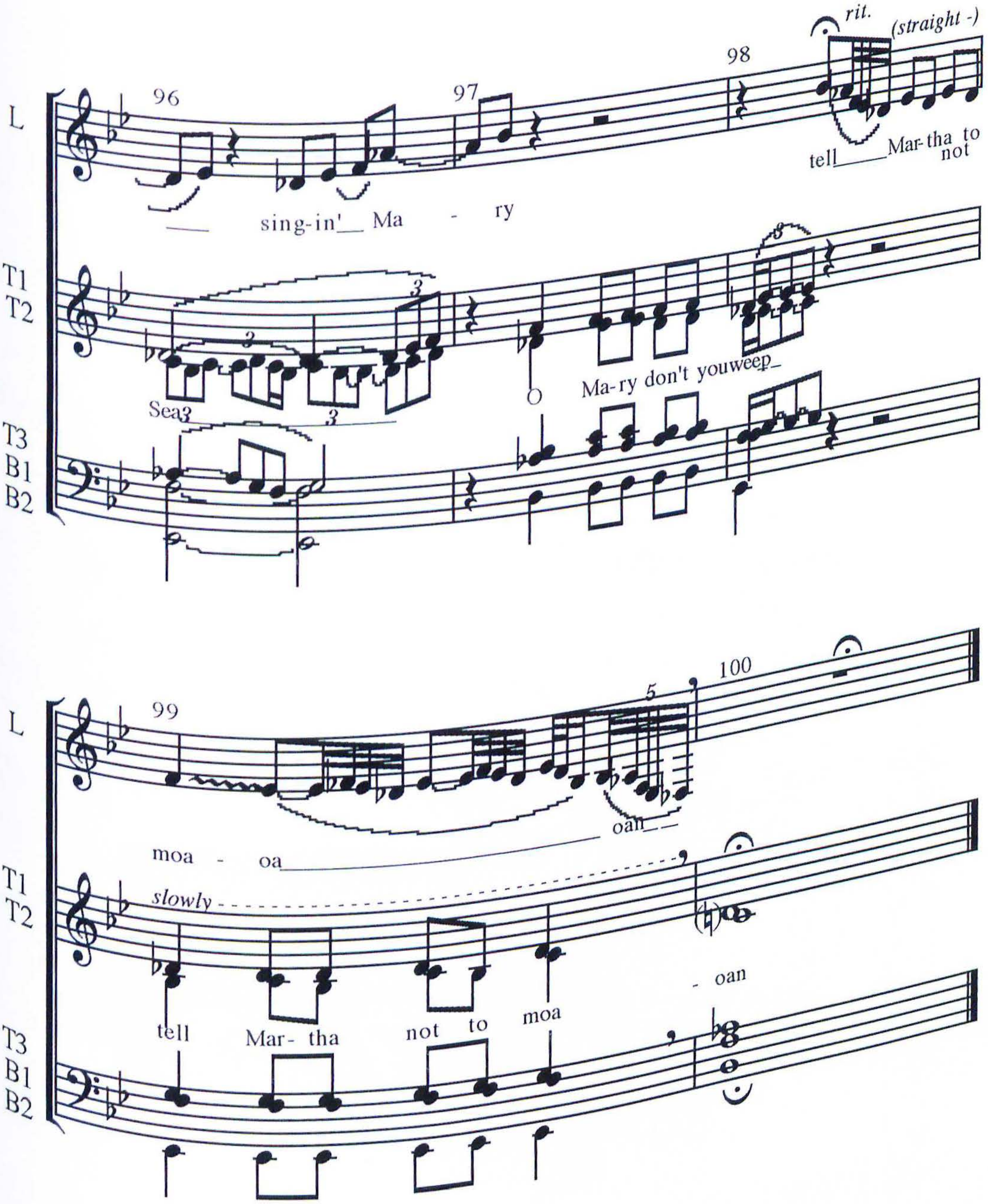

L
T1
T2
T3
B1
B2
72
73
74
75
76
77
time
(Oh
Ma
ry)
sing-in'
Ma
weep
O Ma-ry don't you weep
ry
some-bod-y needs it to tell to Ma-ry,
oh yeah,
O Ma-ry don't you weep
O Ma-ry don't you


L
T1
T2
T3
B1
B2
78
79
80
– she don't have to cry no more___ you got-ta tell you her serve a
weep
O Ma-ry don't you weep
81
82
83
might -y God___ you don't have to wor- ry a - bout your prob-lems, don't you,
O Ma-ry don't you weep
O Ma-ry


L
T1
T2
T3
B1
B2
84
85
86
3
ohno, I'm not wor- ried 'bout to-mor-row, He'll bring joy for your sor-row, don't you
don't weep
O Ma-ry don't you weep
87
88
89
cry no more
O Ma-ry don't
weep
O
Ma-ry don't you
tr
(doom ba doo -m ba doom ba doom ba)


90
91
92
L
T1
T2
T3
B1
B2
I know you got pr - ob - lems but don't weep, 'cause Pha- raoh's ar - my's been dr -
weep
O Ma-ry don't you weep


93
94
95
3
L
T1
T2
T3
B1
B2
owned dr - owned in the sea yeah Lord
Pha raoh's ar my
drowned in the Red


rit.
(straight -)
96
97
98
L
T1
T2
T3
B1
B2
sing-in' Ma - ry
tell Mar-tha not to
Sea
O Ma-ry don't you weep
99
100
slowly
moa - oa
oan
tell Mar- tha not to moa
- oan

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