Dynamic Introductions: The Affective Role of Melodic Ascent and Other Linear Devices in Selected Song Verses of Irving Berlin

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Irving Berlin (1888–1989) played a leading role in the development of popular song in the U.S., and enjoyed a recognition and success that was perhaps unparalleled. He made his songwriting debut (as a lyricist) in 1907 and actively composed for at least six decades thereafter, contributing to the world approximately 900 copyrighted songs[1] and becoming one of the few artists of his time to write both melody and lyric.[2] Despite his influence and talents, however, his music has seldom been treated to analytic or theoretic attention; Charles Hamm has engaged in extensive historiographic work on Berlin and his oeuvre,[3] but Allen Forte is one of the few who has analyzed the songs in explicitly musical terms.[4] The dearth of analysis is

[1]A song listing is provided in Steven Suskin, *Berlin, Kern, Rogers, Hart, and Hammerstein: A Complete Song Catalogue* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 1990). Although some (especially early) songs may have been lost, the actual number of Berlin's copyrighted songs—which surely includes most of what he ever wrote, even birthday songs for his grandchildren—contradicts frequently encountered exaggerations which place his output as high as 2000–3000 songs. Such elevated numbers may be partly attributable to the show-business boasts of Berlin himself, who once claimed to have composed as many as five songs a day (see Laurence Bergreen, *As Thousands Cheer: The Life of Irving Berlin* [New York: Penguin Books, 1990], 58).

[2]Cole Porter is another notable example. Yet others who wrote both music and lyrics include Noel Coward, Jerry Herman, Frank Loesser, Harold Rome, and Meredith Willson.

[3]See Charles Hamm, *Irving Berlin: Songs from the Melting Pot* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), which subsumes and/or refers to the author's earlier Berlin investigations.

[4]Allen Forte, *The American Popular Ballad of the Golden Era: 1924–1950* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995). Chapter 9 (86–116) is devoted to the "Ballads of Irving Berlin" and offers analyses of six songs: "Blue Skies," *"How Deep Is the Ocean," "Isn't This a Lovely Day," "Now It Can Be Told," *"Say It Isn't So," and "They Say It's Wonderful." Forte does not analyze the songs' introductory verses, which are the focus of the present essay (two of his

unfortunate, as many of Berlin's songs are ingeniously crafted, especially in terms of their melody–lyric coordination and design. These properties will be the focus of this essay. Of particular interest will be introductory verses in which there is an affective complementation of large-scale melodic ascent and the general meaning and purpose of the lyric. I will examine several songs from this perspective, addressing other significant elements of text painting and defining idiomatic features of the repertory as I progress. I will then consider the connotations of the analyses for the aesthetic issues of form and balance, as well as for performance.

I.

Regarding Urtexts

I begin with comments about the musical texts to be examined. What constitutes the "Urtext" of a Berlin song, the purest representation of the songwriter's own intentions and contributions? Berlin was a self-taught songwriter who could not read or notate music, and he was not a proficient pianist. He would compose his own melodies and lyrics, perhaps working at the keyboard, remembering every alteration as he shaped a song into the form he wanted. But afterward he had to rely on one of his "musical secretaries" to help harmonize, arrange, and notate the material. Helmy Kresa had by far the longest tenure in this capacity: beginning in the late 1920s, he assisted Berlin for six decades, retiring from Berlin's publishing company only a year before Berlin's death (roughly two decades *after* Berlin discontinued active composition).[5] Many others were brought in

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selections, marked with asterisks, were published without verses anyway). An earlier examination of Berlin's songs is found in Alec Wilder, *American Popular Song: The Great Innovators: 1900–1950*, ed. James T. Maher (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), 91–120.

[5]Kresa was an occasional songwriter himself: his "That's My Desire" topped "Your Hit Parade" in 1947. Given the importance of Kresa to Berlin over such a long period of time, he deserves much greater treatment than the literature on Berlin has accorded him thus far.

from time to time, including musical luminaries such as Johnny Green (the songwriter of such standards as "Body and Soul") and Robert Russell Bennett (a composer best known as the leading Broadway orchestrator of the 1920s–60s). They and others have offered strong anecdotal evidence that Berlin was very involved in crafting the piano-vocal scores that introduced his new songs to the world.[6] He would, for example, request constant changes of harmonization until his arranger seized upon the accompaniment that Berlin felt was "correct" for his melodies. Berlin's judgements about harmony were at least of a general kind—that is, whether or not he thought the given chord (or chord succession) "fit" the melody well; his attention to and influence over bass–melody coordination and chord voicings has been attested to less strongly. Accordingly, one may be tempted to assert that the "authentic musical text" of a Berlin song consists of melody, lyric, and basic harmonies, in "leadsheet" fashion.[7]

However, the simple fact is, Berlin (through his musical secretaries) rarely released any leadsheets; even the versions of songs he submitted for copyright tended to be complete piano/vocal scores. One may craft leadsheets "in reverse," based upon the completed sheet music, but this is precarious as there is no way of knowing exactly what Berlin's conception was of particular harmonies—i.e., did he tend to think in terms of chords *per se*, or at times was he accepting (or rejecting) an arrangement due to bass–melody interaction (e.g., as per linear intervallic patterns) or other factors that might not be adequately expressed in typical leadsheet notation? Whatever the case, we know for a fact that Berlin himself highly privileged the completed sheet music: it was not only published by his own company, under his authority and supervision, but it even served as the basis for subsequent arrangements made with Berlin's blessing. As Jay Blackton, conductor of Berlin's post-World War II musicals, affirmed: "When Irving wrote a song and dictated it

[6]See, e.g., Wilder, 93; and Bergreen, 476–77.

[7]A leadsheet consists of just those elements: melody, lyric, and chord symbols; the last are notated alpha-numerically (e.g., "G7" for G dominant-seventh, "Dm7" for D minor-seventh).

to Helmy Kresa, that piano part was sacred, that was the way Irving wanted the orchestra to play it...."[8]

There is also an additional reason for sanctioning the original sheet music, although it transcends the issue of authorship: for most of Berlin's career, sheet music was widely circulated and enjoyed by many for its own merits; it was a (and often *the*) major format in the dissemination of popular songs. Several of Berlin's songs sold a million copies or more of sheet music each ("Always," "Blue Skies," "What'll I Do?," et al.),[9] and frequently his songs were among the weekly and yearly best-sellers as listed in *Variety*. Accordingly, to study the sheet music issued by Berlin's company is to examine his songs in forms that would have been familiar to countless people at the time, above even certain recordings.[10]

All things considered, and despite lingering uncertainties as to the extent of Berlin's input, the originally published sheet music will, of necessity, serve as the "Urtexts" for the present essay. Given that the primary goal of the essay is to investigate melody–lyric coordination as effected by Berlin—and that

[8]Mary Ellin Barrett, *Irving Berlin: A Daughter's Memoir* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), 238–39.

[9]Specific (and accurate) sales figures for period sheet music are difficult to find. As part of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP), *Variety* devoted one page to a list of "Million Copy Songs, Authors, Composers and Publishers," compiled by Sam Kopp (31 July 1940, p. 71). Berlin had 10 entries: "All Alone," "Always," "Blue Skies," "Marie," "Remember," "Russian Lullaby," "The Song Is Ended," "What Does It Matter," "What'll I Do," and "You'd Be Surprised." His listing is clearly incomplete: not only are these songs drawn from only 1919–28 (beginning a dozen years into Berlin's career, even though earlier songs by other composers are listed), but such notable best-sellers as "Alexander's Ragtime Band" (1911) are omitted. Alexander Woollcott has provided sales figures which add two additional Berlin songs to the million-seller list: "All By Myself" and "Nobody Knows" (Woollcott, *The Story of Irving Berlin* [New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1925], 147).

[10]During Berlin's time, concurrent competing recordings of hit songs were common. In cases where there were numerous recorded versions on the market—as opposed to the wide dissemination of a single version of sheet music—it is possible that more people were familiar with the sheet music than with any single recording.

melodies and lyrics are elements of the sheet music that are indisputably his—the use of these texts will be more than adequate.

Regarding Formal Design

The songs to be considered consist of two principal parts: a verse and a refrain, a familiar schema in works of the U.S. musical theater and Tin Pan Alley. The verse occurs first. In songs of the period under investigation (i.e., those of the second quarter of the twentieth century), relative to the refrain, the verse is usually shorter (often 16 measures in length) and not as distinctive melodically (frequently being in a declamatory style). It serves an introductory role: lyrically, it sets up the scenario of the subsequent refrain, which is considered the main section; and this open-endedness is often reinforced harmonically by a finishing half cadence. The refrain is melodically more memorable than the verse and provides the musical "hook," which typically contains the title phrase. Conventionally, the refrain is 32 measures long; if there is a melodically contrasting section it is called the "bridge" (or "release") and is often the third of four eight-bar phrases, thus forging an AABA design. One may find many exceptions to the defined formal scheme. For example, Berlin's well-known "Cheek to Cheek," introduced in the 1935 film *Top Hat*, includes *no* verse, and is cast in an $A^{16}A^{16}B^{8}B^{8}C^{8}A^{16}$ form (the superscripted numbers denote the measure lengths of each section). In this case, the patter-like B sections offer a break from the more melodically-interesting A sections,[11] and the C section, dramatically set in the parallel minor and featuring a return to longer melodic note values, assumes the role of a bridge and presages the final A section. Despite such alternative forms, however, most songs of the period include verses which serve introductory roles.[12]

[11]Indeed, these B sections are melodically similar to the section explicitly labelled "Patter" in "Heat Wave," a song to be analyzed later.

[12]Songs from earlier in the century often had multiple verses (i.e., multiple stanzas of lyric set to the same verse melody); in the second decade of the

Purposes and Procedures

Thinking about melodies in terms of their general contours, one commonly perceives *descent* (especially if by step) as a more musically conclusive motion, while *ascent* is thought to increase tension.[13] Accordingly, it is both intriguing and meaningful to consider how these different stimuli are used in Berlin's songs, and how they can influence the expectations of the listener. Small-scale rising and falling motions can be of local importance and may relate to certain words or short segments of the song's lyric. Especially interesting are large-scale manifestations of these motions, and their relation to the conveyance of an entire section's lyric. As mentioned, the songs presented in this essay consist of a verse and a refrain, each different in terms of the function of its lyric. I will show that these sections differ as well in their underlying melodic structures, and that, moreover, there is a complementation of melody and lyric within each section that supports its overall objective.

This essay utilizes Schenkerian analytic graphs to illustrate how attributes of Berlin's melodies match the implications of the corresponding section's lyric. To summarize, in the songs I examine, the primary tone (Schenker's *Kopfton*) occurs at or near the beginning of the refrain—a logical location due to the greater melodic import given the section, which is sometimes performed alone (*sans* verse) and may be thought of as "the song" (*in toto*) by

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century, two verses were standard for the sheet music (although more might be added in performance). Also, in earlier songs the verse and refrain might be of equal length (often 16 bars each), or the verse might even be longer. Despite the redistribution of formal balance in such songs, the verses still served to introduce the refrains.

[13]Recall that even the notion of a cadence, by its name, implies descent: the word comes from the Latin *cadere*, "to fall." Fred Lerdahl writes: "why do we experience closure in a linear descent to the tonic rather than, say, in a disjunct rising pattern? Because only the former combines progression by step, the Gestalt principle of good continuation, the physical relaxation of descending, and termination on a stable endpoint" (Lerdahl, "Underlying Musical Schemata," in *Representing Musical Structure*, ed. Peter Howell, Robert West, and Ian Cross [San Diego: Academic Press, 1991], 288).

many listeners.[14] It is left to the preceding verse melody to prolong the primary tone in some manner. It could accomplish this in more than one fashion; e.g., the primary tone might also appear near the beginning of the verse, and serve therein as the headtone of various middleground lines. However, I wish to focus on a species of prolongation with particular implications for the type of lyric used in verses: a prolongation in which the structural melodic line rises from the beginning of the verse to the refrain's primary tone; i.e, one in which the verse serves as an "initial ascent."[15] Such an ascent gives the primary tone a strong melodic impulse as the climax of the escalation, intensifying its entrance and making it more perceptible. Moreover, as Forte and Gilbert state, "[a]scending motion in general, whether linear or arpeggiated ... creates a feeling of expectation, of tension, which the [subsequent] descending motion will presumably resolve."[16] A verse melody that negotiates a structural ascent represents perfectly the dynamic of its lyric. Just as the verse lyric prepares or sets up the arrival of the refrain (which begins the main lyrical idea), so does the verse's structural melodic line anticipate the refrain by ascending to its primary tone (which begins the main musical idea). Just as the verse's melodic ascent serves psychologically to create anticipation, so does its lyric employ the language of preparation, its main function being to lead the listener to the "hook" line of the refrain. The ensuing analyses develop these ideas, demonstrating a direct relation between the objectives of the selected verse lyrics and the implications of their linear/melodic formulations.[17]

[14]Performers also may think of the refrain alone as "the song": consider that "fake books" (leadsheet compendiums) often include only a song's refrain.

[15]I use the term generally, to refer to an ascent to the first note of the fundamental line via stepwise motion (Schenker's *Anstieg*), arpeggiation, or a combination of both, due to the analogous function of these configurations.

[16]Allen Forte and Steven E. Gilbert, *Introduction to Schenkerian Analysis* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1982), 155.

[17]Though unrelated to the specifics of the present study, a previous consideration of ascent and its implications for a song's text may be found in David Schwarz, "The Ascent and Arpeggiation in 'Die Stadt', 'Der Doppelgaenger', and 'Der Atlas' by Franz Schubert," *Indiana Theory Review* 7/1

Before proceeding, I should underscore two important points:

First, as mentioned above, different verse melodic structures are possible, of which an "initial ascent" is but one. By concentrating on this species of verse melody I do not mean to suggest that it has statistical priority within Berlin's own body of work or in his songs vis-à-vis those of other songwriters of the period; I am interested in the particular affective role it plays in a song's design, however often it is found. Furthermore, although my analyses are of songs by Berlin, who I will show demonstrated an acute sensitivity to text painting on various hierarchic levels, the more general ideas I will develop, about the connotations of large-scale melodic ascent for the purposes and meanings of a lyric, might be applicable to songs by various composers and of different periods and styles.

Second, the appropriateness of and rationale for applying a Schenkerian analytic technique to the repertory should be further clarified. To interpret large-scale linear structures, such as of an entire song or one of its principal sections, a set of preference rules is necessary to differentiate melodic tones; some must be viewed as structurally integral to the underlying line and/or basic contour, and others as embellishing it. Although other methodologies are viable,[18] I hold as musically satisfying an interpretation based on Schenker's theories, in which harmonic support and stepwise continuation are important criteria for determining melodic hierarchy.[19] The melodies to be examined

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(1986): 38–50. More tangentially related is the investigation of the structural and expressive functions of melodic peaks in Zohar Eitan, *Highpoints: A Study of Melodic Peaks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997).

[18]See, e.g., the use of the analytic techniques of Leonard B. Meyer and Eugene Narmour (which are based on Gestalt psychology as well as concepts of formal hierarchy and closure) in J. Kent Williams, "Archetypal Schemata in Jazz Themes of the Bebop Era," *Annual Review of Jazz Studies* 4 (1988): 49–74.

[19]Of course, in Schenkerian interpretations of the "common-practice" tonal repertory, a melodic tone must have more than just "harmonic support"; it must form, with the bass, an acceptable two-voice counterpoint. However, the popular-song repertory is arguably much more concerned with harmony than with outer-voice counterpoint; and even when such counterpoint is considered, one has to allow some intervals—the products of idiomatic harmonies—that would be inappropriate in the earlier repertory. (For the most obvious example,

are eminently suitable to this type of analysis, containing as they do inherent tonal implications (making inevitable much of the harmonization found in the sheet music), and frequently employing sequence and other melodic patterning by which larger lines are suggested through the concatenation of smaller units. Indeed, as will be shown, the notes emphasized as phrase or motivic boundary tones, metric downbeats, and/or by the generally regular rate of harmonic change that is characteristic of the repertory, are often those very notes that are part of structural lines in the Schenkerian sense. While Schenkerian theory was developed to explain structural characteristics of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century "art music," it can also reveal much about the underlying features of twentieth-century popular song, as several analysts have demonstrated.[20]

II.

Verses of Ascent

In this section I will examine five Berlin songs whose verses exhibit some manner of large-scale melodic ascent: "I Left My Heart at the Stage Door Canteen," "Heat Wave," "I Got the Sun in the Morning," "White Christmas," and "Because I Love You."

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consider that the analytic graphs in Forte's *The American Popular Ballad* routinely admit outer-voice ninths even in middleground interpretations; these usually originate in root-position dominant-ninth chords.)

[20]See, e.g., the analyses of: (1) Walter Everett, who has authored various studies, including "Swallowed by a Song: Paul Simon's Crisis of Chromaticism," in *Understanding Rock: Essays in Musical Analysis*, ed. John Covach and Graeme M. Boone (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997): 113–53, and idem, *The Beatles as Musicians:* Revolver *through the* Anthology (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); (2) Allen Forte, "Secrets of Melody: Line and Design in the Songs of Cole Porter," *The Musical Quarterly* 77/4 (1993): 607–47, and idem, *The American Popular Ballad*; and (3) Steven E. Gilbert, *The Music of Gershwin* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), and idem, "Reflections on a Few Good Tunes: Linear Progressions and Intervallic Patterns in Popular Song and Jazz," in *Music Theory in Concept and Practice*, ed. James M. Baker, David W. Beach, and Jonathan W. Bernard (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 1997), 377–92.

The songs were chosen partly because they share this general and significant feature; but each has unique traits that demonstrate different facets of melody–lyric coordination. Structural variety was thus another criterion for their selection, and each will reveal additional elements of design.

"I Left My Heart at the Stage Door Canteen" was one of several songs widely circulated as sheet music from the World War II musical *This is the Army* (1942): the sales totals for the production as a whole reached around one million, making it perhaps the first music-comedy score to attain that number; and "I Left My Heart..." was the first to climb *Variety*'s weekly chart of the top fifteen sheet-music sellers, where it lingered for fourteen weeks, including two consecutive weeks at no. 2, its peak position.[21] The song also reached no. 2 on "Your Hit Parade," a standard national survey of its time,[22] and was disseminated through popular recordings such as on the Victor label by Sammy Kaye and His Orchestra (Don Cornell, vocalist), and on the Columbia label by Charlie Spivak and His Orchestra (Garry Stevens, vocalist).

Its verse melody (**Figure 1a**) demonstrates a rather straightforward example of ascent.[23] In **Figure 1b**, conventional

[21] *Variety*, 9 December 1942, p. 34, reported that the score (including songs for the stage production as well as for the subsequent movie treatment) was approaching the million-sales mark, and that it would be the first to do so, "at least since 1929." The article adds, however, that a "fertile operetta score" like "Show Boat," "New Moon," or "Desert Song" could possibly have reached one million in sales, over the years, with various hit songs.

[22] "Your Hit Parade" was broadcast 1935–59, first on radio and then (beginning in 1950) on television; its rankings were based on various factors including sales of records and sheet music. The number of songs listed each week changed several times (from a high of fifteen to a low of five), and thus citing the number of weeks a song was on the list can be misleading, as some had a greater opportunity for longevity than others. A compilation and index of the weekly lists is found in John R. Williams, *This Was "Your Hit Parade"* (Rockland, Maine: Courier-Gazette, 1973), which provides the full survey list for each week, even if fewer songs were actually broadcast.

[23] To conform to the guidelines of the "fair use" clause of the U.S. copyright law (17 USC 107), I will extract only as much of the sheet music as is necessary. Verse melodies will be given, as they are frequently unknown even by those

stem-and-slur notation shows my interpretation of melodic structure in accordance with the piano/vocal score of the sheet music.[24] (In musical examples and in verbal references, measures are numbered beginning with the entry of the vocal part.[25]) As in most subsequent analyses, here I include also a middleground graph (**Figure 1c**), and throughout this essay the reader should cross-reference corresponding graphs as is necessary.

The verse lyric provides an example of Berlin's characteristically natural and unaffected writing style:

> Old Mister Absent-minded, that's me.
> Just as forgetful as I can be.
> I've got the strangest sort of a mind.
> I'm always leaving something behind.

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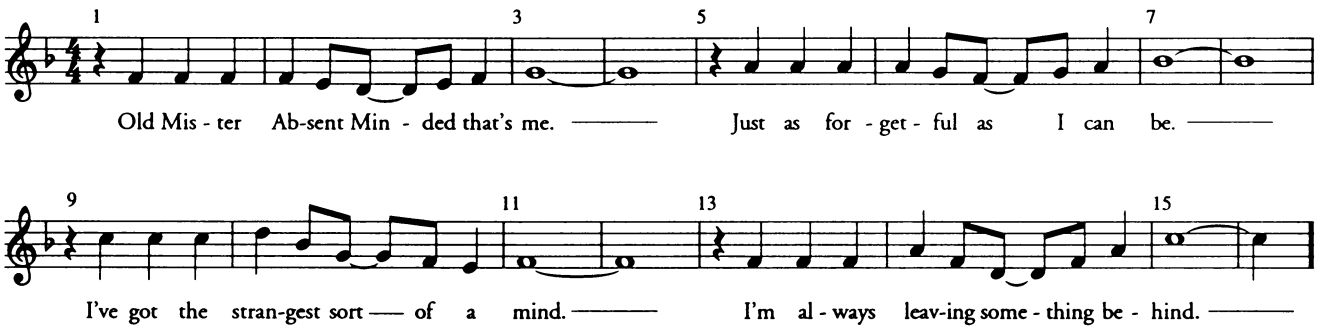
familiar with the repertory. But, in other cases, I may only provide a middleground graph of a section. Or perhaps a foreground graph will be provided, including measure lines to clarify phrase structure, but with no intra-measure rhythms indicated (and immediately-repeated pitches not shown); segments of the lyric may be aligned underneath their respective measures. While all musical examples will be as complete as is required by my commentary, those wishing to examine the music in its entirety (which is strongly encouraged) should consult the 6-folio series, *The Songs of Irving Berlin* (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard Publishing Corp. [published under the Irving Berlin Music Co. imprint], 1991).

[24]In representing harmonies via Roman numerals, upper and lower cases denote major and minor triads, respectively; brackets enclose secondary (or applied) leading-tone chords when the subsequent chord provides the appropriate resolution; and "+6" denotes a triad with "added sixth." Also, I will adopt Forte's convention (as in *The American Popular Ballad*) of beaming together those bass notes which are part of a successive-fifths chain.

[25]Conventionally, the sheet music includes a brief piano introduction which I will not include in my numbering; I will discuss this section in a later portion of the essay.

Figure 1a. Berlin, "I Left My Heart at the Stage Door Canteen" (1942): verse melody and lyrics



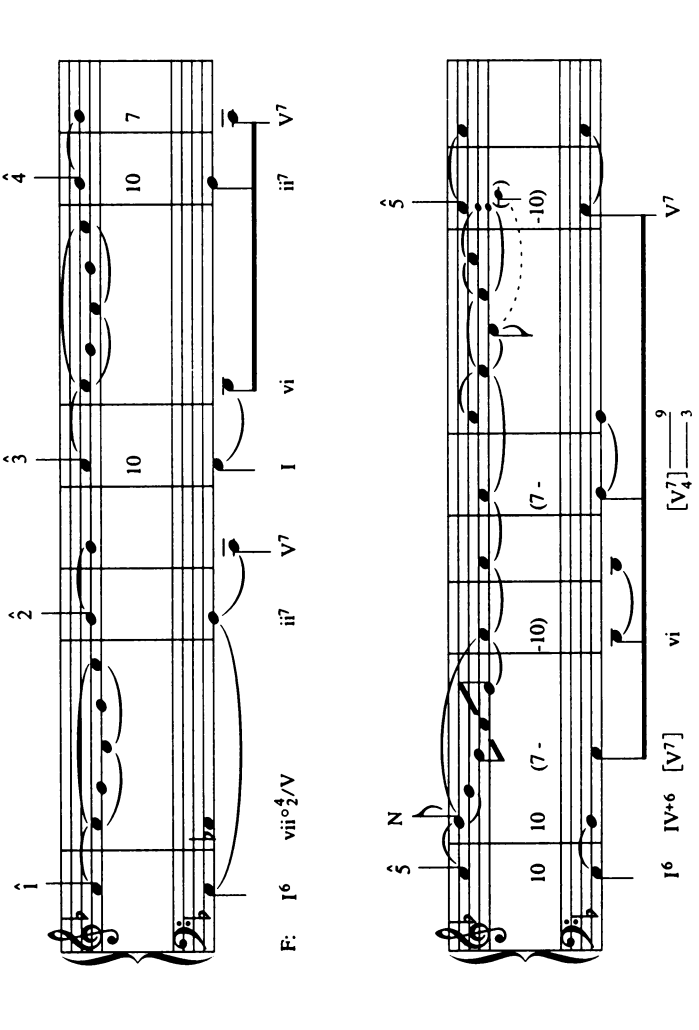
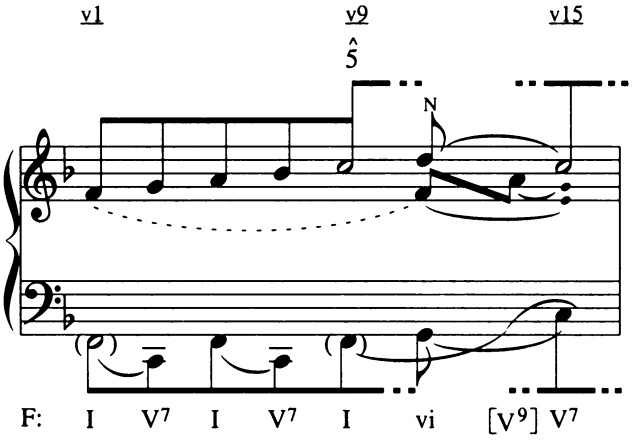


Figure 1b. Berlin, "I Left My Heart at the Stage Door Canteen" (1942): verse (foreground)

Figure 1c. Berlin, "I Left My Heart at the Stage Door Canteen" (1942): verse (middleground)



The lyric demands elaboration only the subsequent refrain can provide; these opening lines require an answer, even though not a single interrogative statement is issued. The implied questions are clear—"what has been forgotten?" and "what was left behind?"—and only with the title phrase, offered at the refrain's beginning, do we discover to what the love-lorn soldier is referring: "I left my *heart* at the stage door canteen."

In keeping with the verse lyric's disquieted uncertainty, the melodic structure fosters anticipation by ascending to the song's primary tone, C5 ($\hat{5}$).[26] The first four notes of the ascent occur as the boundary pitches of the two opening, sequential four-bar phrases. The primary tone arrives at the beginning of the subsequent phrase: when $\hat{4}$ moves to $\hat{5}$ it is as an ascending seventh in the harmonic progression V^7–I, a type of voice-leading not uncommon in the repertory.[27] The primary tone's pitch-class,

[26]Register is designated such that middle C is C4.

[27]Repertory examples of chord resolutions with ascending sevenths (e.g., $\hat{4}/V^7-\hat{5}/I$) include Gershwin's "Embraceable You" (refrain mm. 6–7: "...you ir-re-place-a-ble you!"), Porter's "I Get a Kick Out of You" (refrain mm. 2–3: "I get no kick from cham-pagne..."), et al. This type of voice leading would

C, is the only member of the diatonic collection unused melodically in the first two phrases, making its appearance in m. 9—as the highest pitch thus far—particularly prominent. The primary tone is then embellished by its upper neighbor, D5, which is prolonged until the verse-ending reappearance of C5. In the foreground, the final C5 is approached in an idiomatic manner, by skips of thirds above a dominant-ninth chord; as a result, the last four-bar phrase projects a "minor-seventh chord" melodic outline: a pentatonic subset, set-class 4-26 [0358] in Fortean nomenclature.[28] The use of the pentatonic collection and its subsets is another idiomatic feature of the repertory.[29] 4-26 [0358] is especially notable; not only does it represent both the frequent major triad with "added sixth" and the minor-seventh chord, but it appears in a variety of melodic guises, including at cadences as the result of consonant skips around and/or toward the goal tone (as in the current example).[30]

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generally be inappropriate in a "common-practice" tonal-contrapuntal context, although it can be found in certain circumstances; e.g., an ascending chord seventh will arise when V^4_3 connects I and I^6 such that there are parallel 10s (less commonly parallel 3s) above the bass. Some irregular resolutions of the seventh of V^7 are described and illustrated in the harmony textbook of Rudolf Louis and Ludwig Thuille (*Harmonielehre*, 4th ed. [Stuttgart: Carl Grüninger, 1913], trans. Richard Isadore Schwartz as *An Annotated English Translation of "Harmonielehre" of Rudolf Louis and Ludwig Thuille* [Ph.D. dissertation, Washington University, 1982]); see the first part of chapter 3. In general, the authors show that the seventh (mainly in inversions) moves up by step (or leaps away) in contexts in which another note (often in an outer voice) takes the customary note of resolution.

[28]Set-class names are taken from Allen Forte, *The Structure of Atonal Music* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973).

[29]Berlin's melodies feature not only pentatonic subsets, but often a complete, unadorned pentatonic collection will serve as the basis for a phrase; see, e.g., the verse of "The Song Is Ended" (1927), and the verse and refrain of "Blue Skies" (1927).

[30]I use the more general set-class designation precisely because the tetrachord occurs in many different harmonic and (especially) melodic configurations; conventional chord names are often inaccurate or misleading. True, such melodic "arpeggiations" often form "vi^7" (or "I+6") chords—here, at the verse ending of "I Left My Heart...," and in countless other songs, such as at the refrain endings of Gershwin's "Nice Work If You Can Get It" (lyric:

Certainly other attributes of the song's melodic design are significant. For example, the prolongation of D5 in the verse, as the primary tone's neighbor, looks ahead to the refrain's B section (within its $A^8B^8A^8C^8$ form), in which D5 is again prolonged as upper neighbor to a section-ending appearance of C5; compare **Figures 1b** and **2**, and note that the more immediate skip from D5 to F4 in the former is expanded by a gradual stepwise descent in the latter. For present purposes, however, the primary point is that the verse's melodic structure manifests an increase of tension appropriate to its lyric by ascending to and prolonging C5. The definitive descent back to a tonic-harmonized F4 will ultimately occur in the refrain: as the lyric offers its semantic conclusion, so will the musical line attain closure.

A different pattern of ascent is found in the verse of "Heat Wave," a song that originated in Berlin's 1933 musical, *As Thousands Cheer*. It was further disseminated not only by sheet music, but through three popular recordings: by the Glen Gray Orchestra (Mildred Bailey, vocalist) on the Brunswick label; by the Meyer Davis Orchestra (Charlotte Murray, vocalist) on Columbia; and especially by Ethel Waters, also on Columbia, who had introduced the song on Broadway.[31] As shown in

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"...won't you tell me how?") and "Love Is Here To Stay" (lyric: "...our love is here to stay."); but to label such melodic figures with chord (or Roman numeral) names belies their pentatonic-intervallic origin as consonant skips.

[31]"Your Hit Parade" rankings did not exist in 1933. However, *Variety* offered a monthly survey of the six top-selling discs from each of the three leading phonograph companies (Brunswick, Columbia, and Victor) in each of the three major markets (New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles). For October–November 1933, the list featured the three cited recordings: Ethel Waters was Columbia's NY no. 4 (October and November); Meyer Davis was Columbia's Chicago no. 4 (October) and LA no. 3 (November); and Glen Gray was Brunswick's Chicago no. 3 and NY no. 4 (November). *Variety* also provided monthly (and sporadic weekly) rankings of the six top-selling sheet-music titles in each of these markets. "Heat Wave" did not place on these lists, although another famous song from the same musical did: "Easter Parade" was reported among January 1934's leading sheet-music sellers, as no. 6 in NY and LA (but not Chicago).

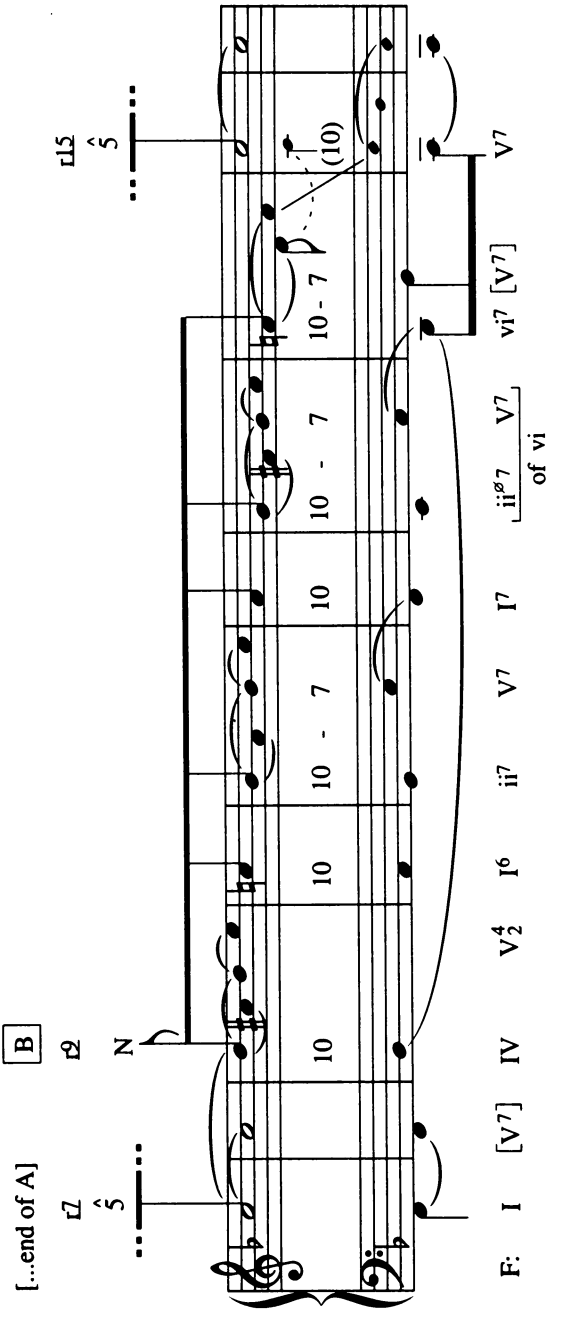


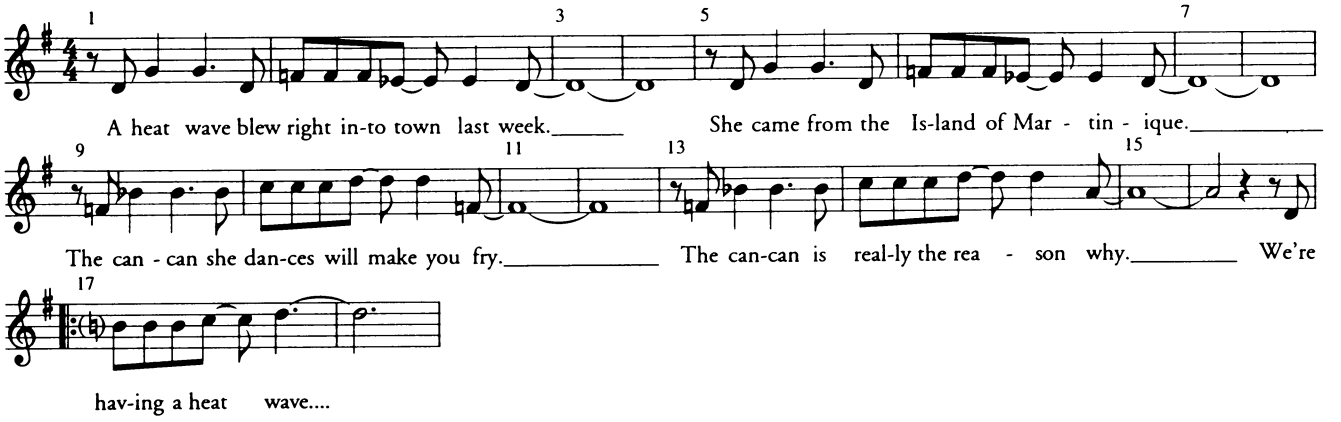
Figure 2. Berlin, "I Left My Heart at the Stage Door Canteen" (1942): refrain "B section" (second 8-bar phrase; foreground)

Figures 3a–c, the verse melody emphasizes the minor mode: in addition to the descending tetrachords of the first eight bars, harmonized with the minor tonic, there is also the use thereafter of $\flat\hat{3}$, a common "blue note" in the repertory. (Regarding this note, B♭, the reader will observe that the distinctive ascending fourths that begin each phrase and demarcate its pitch-space—first D–G then F–B♭—together project the ubiquitous set-class 4-26 [0358].) Structurally, $\flat\hat{3}$ serves as a neighboring tone, embellishing the larger-scale melodic motion from $\hat{1}$ to $\hat{2}$; primary-tone $\natural\hat{3}$ is then attained with the refrain's first pitch. The pitch-classes of both $\hat{2}$ and $\hat{3}$ (A and B) occur melodically for the first time at these moments of structural ascent, making their arrival more conspicuous; primary-tone $\hat{3}$ is especially striking, given that the preceding eight bars featured its chromatically lowered version.[32] At the beginning of the refrain there is foreground passing motion from $\hat{3}$ to $\hat{5}$; at the end of the refrain's first phrase, when the ascent is repeated, Berlin metaphorically relates it to the corresponding lyric: "the temp'rature's rising."[33]

[32]Both versions of $\hat{3}$ (the flatted and the natural) initiate otherwise-identical ascending-third motives; this association further encourages a comparison of B♭ and B♮.

[33]There might be disagreement as to which is the primary tone, $\hat{3}$ or $\hat{5}$. Certainly the melody often passes from one to the other, and both are harmonically supported. Also, $\hat{4}$—the scale degree that could pose problems in a 5-line interpretation—is supported as part of the $\hat{5}$–$\hat{3}$ descent (it is not supported as strongly as part of the $\hat{3}$–$\hat{5}$ *ascent*). However, the continuous emphasis of $\hat{3}$ as the downbeat melodic tone every two bars ascribes to it an "initiating tone" status that $\hat{5}$ does not obtain. The bridge also supports the interpretation of $\hat{3}$ as primary tone: it is mostly devoted to a prolongation of IV in which $\hat{6}$ twice initiates a 3-line whose goal is $\hat{4}$ (the neighboring tone of $\hat{3}$; $\hat{5}$ appears only within the IV prolongation, as a "consonant passing tone"); the goal-tone $\hat{4}$ descends to $\hat{3}$ near the bridge's ending.

Figure 3a. Berlin, "Heat Wave" (1933): verse melody and lyrics



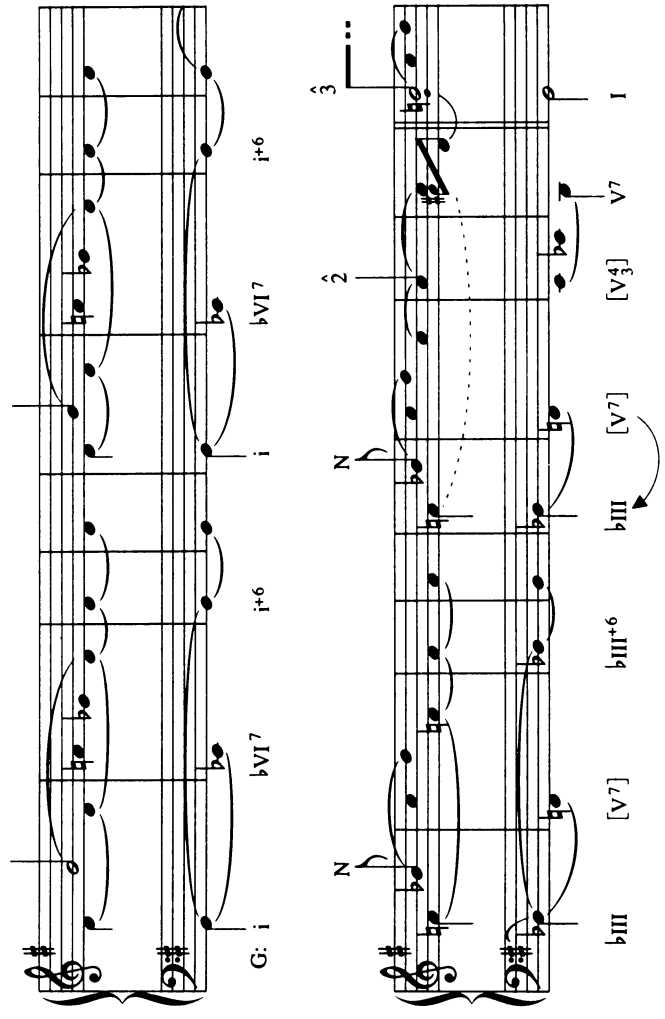
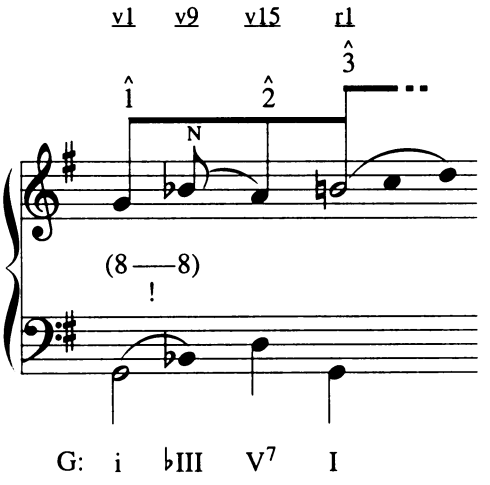


Figure 3b. Berlin, "Heat Wave" (1933): verse (foreground)

Figure 3c. Berlin, "Heat Wave" (1933): verse (middleground)



The climb to the onset of the refrain's melody is again in service of the lyric, which is ambiguous and in need of clarification only the second section can provide. The verse lyric reads:

> A heat wave blew right into town last week.
> She came from the Island of Martinique.
> The can-can she dances will make you fry.
> The can-can is really the reason why.

The first couplet hints that the subject is something other than the weather condition of the title: the use of the personal pronoun "she," rather than "it," is suggestive. The second couplet then refers to a dance, which could be interpreted metaphorically, but with the last line's insistence that the "can-can is really the reason why" there is the imputation of something else, and one can sense the implicit colon at the end of the sentence, pointing from statement to explanation. Only the refrain, the musical as well as semantic goal of the opening passage, will reveal the actual subject of the song: a woman capable of such erotic dance moves that a "heat wave" overcomes men whenever her "seat waves."

There is an interesting analogue to the verse later in the song. After a conventional 32-measure AABA complex, there is a 16-measure section labelled "Patter." Its lyric seems like a superfluous interpolation: four lines of colorful clichés about how hot it is. However, musically it serves as prelude to a repeat of the refrain, and so a comparison with the verse is apt. As shown in **Figure 4a**, the foreground of the Patter section has little in common with the verse. First, the Patter's four-bar phrases tonicize harmonies foreign to the verse: C and E♭.[34] Second, the melodies of the two sections appear unrelated in both their individual motives and pitch-class collections used: the verse opens with a minor tetrachord that features a half-step descent (set-class 4-11 [0135]), while each transpositionally-related phrase of the Patter utilizes pentatonic subset 4-26 [0358] and has particular emphasis of the pentatonic token 3-7 [025].[35] Nonetheless, both Patter and verse suggest a large-scale projection of 4-26 [0358], and the phrase-initiating tones of both sections are the same: G4 and B♭4;[36] the sections thus enjoy a slightly concealed association. The Patter section completes a middleground arpeggiation of the minor tonic, connecting with the refrain's primary tone as shown in **Figure 4b**. Although Berlin moves to the same refrain with both the Patter and the verse, only his verse employs *stepwise* melodic motion to connect more directly with the arrival point; in contrast, the Patter's arpeggiation outlines space rather than fills it, and, moreover,

[34]"Tonicize" is technically imprecise. A pentatonic melody is accompanied by ascending and descending thirds in the bass, and by another stepwise-moving voice, all of which is confined to either the C- or E♭-major diatonic collections. In short, it is a tonally non-functional, "pandiatonic" accompaniment that departs from and returns to C- or E♭-major triads. Incidentally, the "Patter" section bears harmonic similarity to the bridge, in that both tonicize/prioritize C major (IV).

[35]Set-class 3-7 [025] can be found in the pentatonic collection in four different configurations, more than any other subset and as many times as the characteristic perfect fifth can be found in the same collection.

[36]These pitches are not literally first in the verse, but due to registral differentiation and subsequent stepwise descent they assume the role of "initiating" tones, while their actual predecessors sound as inner-voice and/or anacrustic notes.

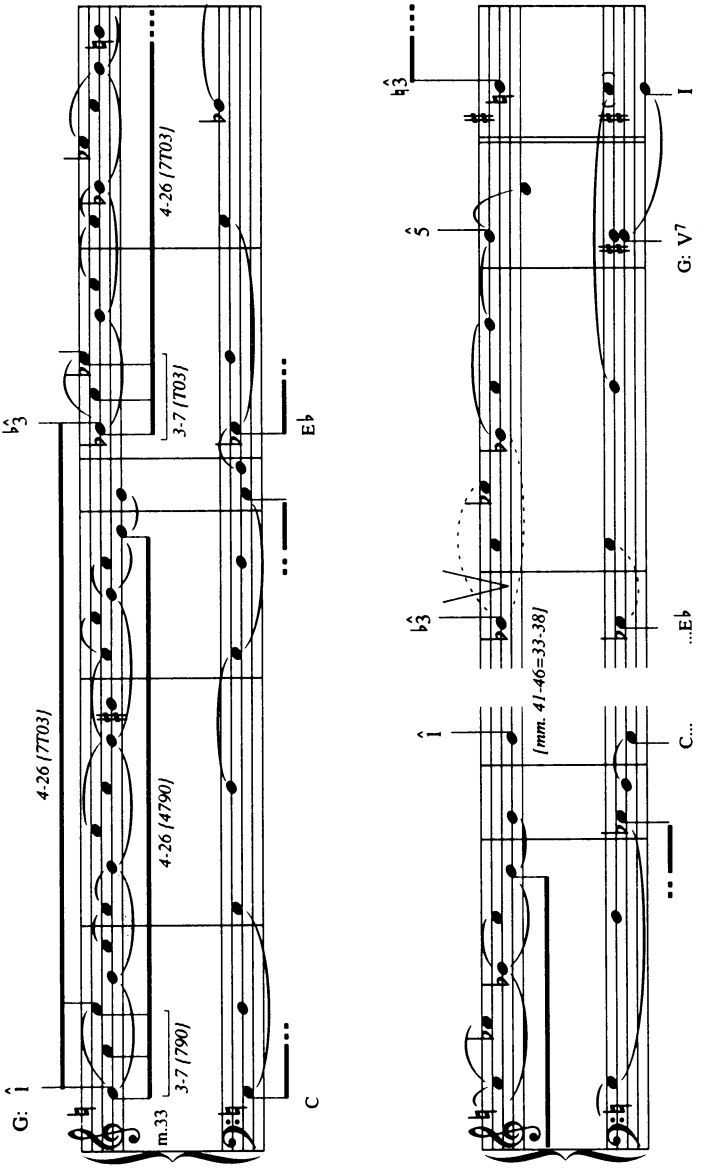
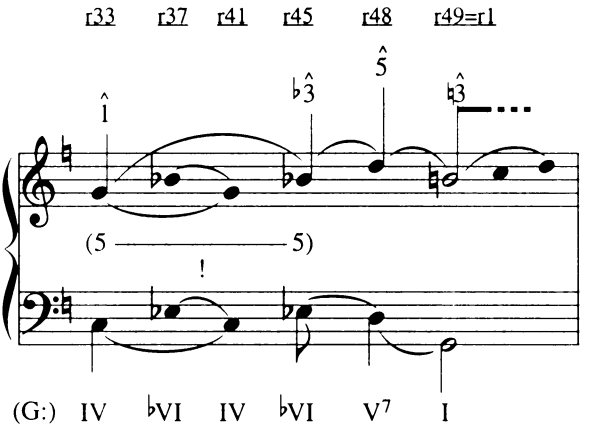


Figure 4a. Berlin, "Heat Wave" (1933): "Patter" (foreground)

Figure 4b. Berlin, "Heat Wave" (1933): "Patter" (middleground)



the arpeggiation *surpasses* the primary tone.[37] Accordingly, of all the sections in the expanded song, the verse has the greatest anticipatory function—one which matches the implications of its lyric.

Extensions of the coordination of melodic and lyric tension are demonstrated by the verse of "I Got the Sun in the Morning" (**Figure 5a**), a song introduced by Ethel Merman in Berlin's longest-running musical, *Annie Get Your Gun* (1946).[38] Sheet music from this production sold extremely well in the year of its premiere: "Doin' What Comes Naturally," "The Girl That I Marry," and "They Say It's Wonderful" each placed on *Variety*'s best-sellers list, in addition to "I Got the Sun in the Morning," which peaked at no. 6. The last song also reached no. 4 on "Your Hit Parade," and was featured on recordings such as by Les Brown and His Orchestra (Doris Day, vocalist) on Columbia,

[37]I am speaking here of the *middleground* arpeggiation of the Patter section. In the foreground one can find notes that "fill in" the gaps between G–B♭–D; however, such notes are not supported harmonically, and, furthermore, it is the nature of pentatonic melodies to have "gaps" (when thought of vis-à-vis the complete diatonic collection—see n.39).

[38]The show opened 16 May 1946 and ran for 1147 performances. Revivals were produced in 1966 and 1999.

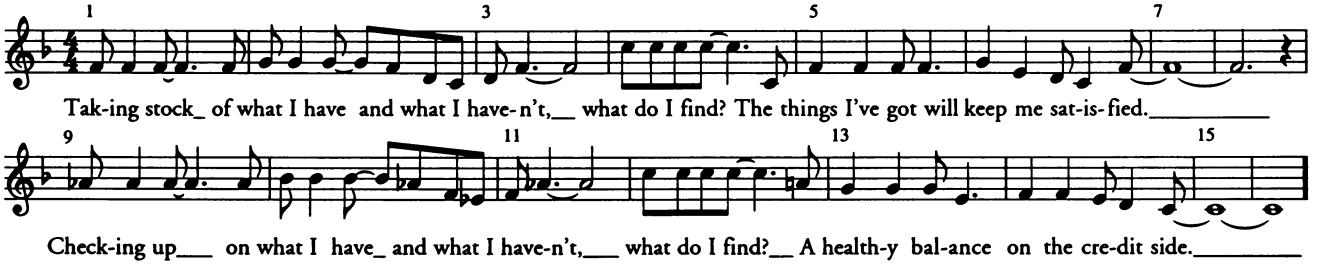
and by Artie Shaw and His Orchestra (Mel Tormé, vocalist) on Musicraft.

As shown in **Figure 5b**, the verse's initial four-bar phrase (and its transposition beginning in m. 9) uses that manifestly-pentatonic subset, 4-23 [0257]—the tetrachord famously employed for the title lyric of Gershwin's 1930 classic, "I Got Rhythm."[39] The only pitch-class added between the first and second four-bar phrases is the leading-tone, E4, which strengthens the return to the prolonged tonic, F4, at the end of the first period. In the opening of the second period, there is the familiar emphasis of $\flat\hat{3}$;[40] but this time it is part of a large-scale minor-tonic arpeggiation. The ascent is completed with the skip to $\hat{5}$, and the verse ends with the lower-octave image of the scale degree. In descending from C5 to C4, the latter note is approached by its own 5-line: the octave descent is a durationally expanded and "filled-in" version of the one encountered in m. 4, where C5 leapt directly to C4. The mode mixture highlighted in the verse is not present later: $\flat\hat{3}$ does not appear in the refrain's melody and, in fact, $\natural\hat{3}$ is stressed in the bridge. Accordingly, the verse–refrain complex might be interpreted not only as tensing–relaxing in terms of linear motion, but as "darker–brighter" in terms of the traditional affective differentiation of minor and major tonic triads. Admittedly, $\flat\hat{3}$ is harmonized in the verse foreground with (major) $\flat$III, not (minor) i, but nonetheless the semitonal inflection of the verse's middleground F–A$\flat$–C arpeggiation, into the middleground F–A$\natural$–C arpeggiation that begins the refrain, does suggest a coloristic "brightening."

[39]"Manifestly pentatonic" in two senses: first, like the pentatonic collection itself, the tetrachord may be derived from the stacking of notes in perfect fifths (and thus the set contains more of its interval-class than any other); second, as a scalar configuration, it may be thought of as two major seconds separated by a minor third, and this minor-third "gap" is characteristic of the pentatonic scale.

[40]The shift from $\hat{1}$/I to $\flat\hat{3}$/$\flat$III between opening and subsequent phrases seems to have been a favorite device of Berlin's. In addition to its use in "Heat Wave" and "I Got the Sun...," it is found in the verses of "Steppin' Out With My Baby" (1947), "This Is the Army, Mr. Jones" (1942), et al.

Figure 5a. Berlin, "I Got the Sun in the Morning" (1946): verse melody and lyrics



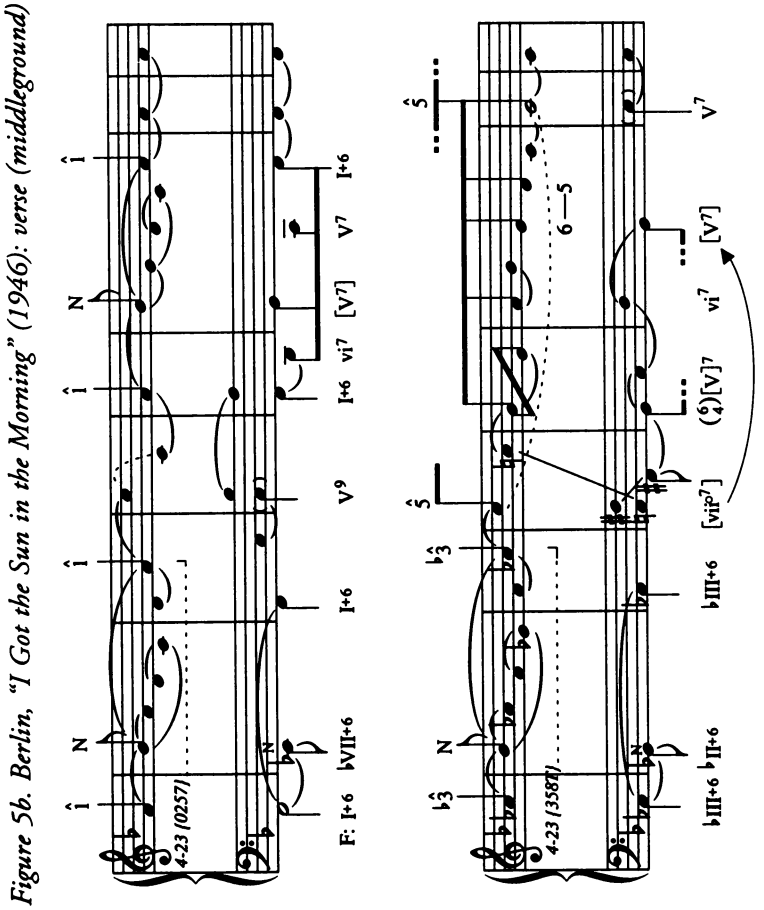


Figure 5b. Berlin, "I Got the Sun in the Morning" (1946): verse (middleground)

"I Got the Sun in the Morning" also features localized mappings of certain phrases and word-pairs onto appropriately higher or lower pitches. For example, first considering text-painting of a larger span, note that the verse lyric presents two synonymous question-and-answer couplets:

> Taking stock of what I have and what I haven't, what do I find?
> The things I've got will keep me satisfied.
> Checking up on what I have and what I haven't, what do I find?
> A healthy balance on the credit side.

In each case, the melody sets the actual question, "what do I find?," with the verse's apex pitch, C5. When the answer is delivered, there is motion downward that in both instances includes or rests upon the nadir tone, C4 (these events are marked in **Figure 5c** with "Q" and "A"). The rise and fall of the melody matches the natural inflection of the speaking voice when asking and answering questions. Also, notice that the first "answer" ("The things I've got will keep me satisfied") is itself a complete thought and accordingly is set with an authentic cadence, ending with Î/I—a conclusion that does, from a tonal perspective, "satisfy." Conversely, the second "answer" ("A healthy balance on the credit side"), when taken alone, is not as conclusive; thus, it is the statement assigned to the half cadence that (here as in many songs) ends the verse. Constricting the focus now to individual word/tone relations, notice the decorative upper neighbor, G4, near the beginning of the graph, and its analogue after m. 9, B♭4; these set the phrase "what I *have*," while the return downward signals "and what I *haven't*." And, in refrain mm. 4–6 (shown at the end of **Figure 5c**), the phrase "sun in the morning" places "sun" at the apex, while the subsequent phrase "moon at night" comes to rest a fifth lower. In both cases—"have"/"haven't," "sun"/"moon"—the more positive or brighter word of the pair is given to the higher pitch. Through such examples as these, we see that Berlin apparently was sensitive to text-to-tone tension on different hierarchic levels.

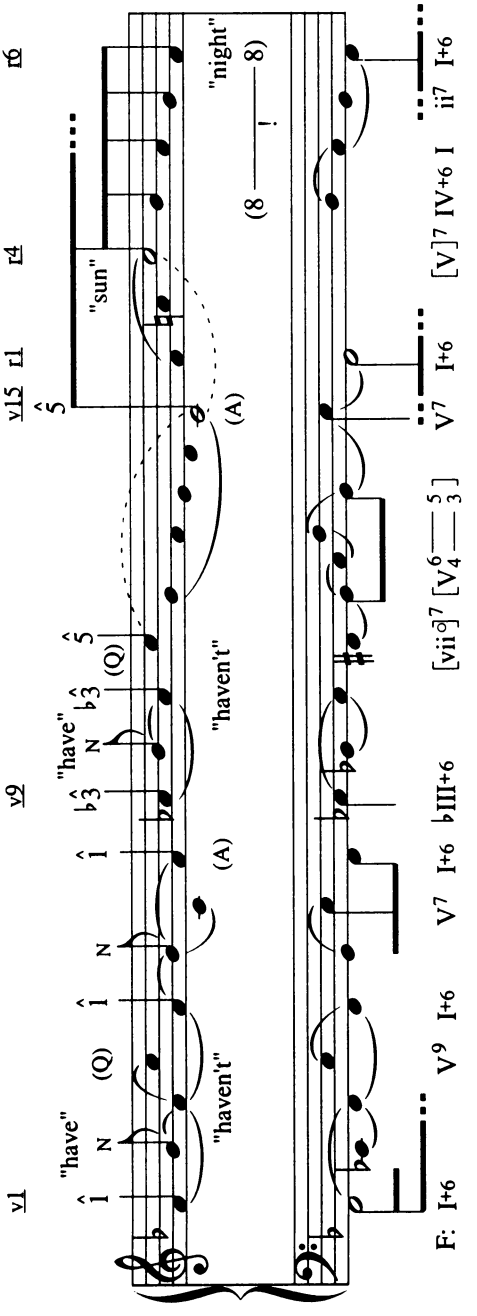


Figure 5c. Berlin, "I Got the Sun in the Morning" (1946): verse (middleground)

As alluded to in earlier analyses, the implications of a verse's ascent can be supported by or otherwise impact upon the refrain's subsequent prolongations. Accordingly, my final two examples will consider the latter section in more detail.

I turn first to what is perhaps Berlin's best-known song, and surely one of the most famous songs of the twentieth century: "White Christmas." Although Bing Crosby actually introduced the song, on the radio, on Christmas Day of 1941, it became well-known only in the last half of the following year, as one of several songs Berlin composed around holiday themes for the musical film *Holiday Inn* (1942).[41] When the film was released, there was initial uncertainty as to which song (if any) would become the breakout hit; another candidate, "Be Careful, It's My Heart," reached no. 2 on "Your Hit Parade" and no. 5 on *Variety*'s sheet-music chart. However, by the end of 1942—the close of the first full year of U.S. combat in World War II—"White Christmas" had captured the sentiment of U.S. soldiers overseas, who frequently requested it on Armed Forces Radio Services.[42] Concurrently, its popularity soared at home: it topped "Your Hit Parade" for ten weeks, from 31 October to 2 January. In addition to appearing on several period recordings—most notably that of Bing Crosby (with the Ken Darby Singers) on Decca, which became the biggest-selling record of all time[43]—the song was tremendously popular as sheet music: it spent 13 weeks at no. 1 on *Variety*'s sales chart during the last three months of 1942, and became the first million-selling title since the late 1920s, when the music-publishing business had enjoyed generally greater successes. Sheet-music

[41]According to Philip Furia, the song was actually composed in the Christmas season of 1937 (Furia, *Irving Berlin: A Life in Song* [New York: Schirmer, 1998], 202).

[42]Aspects of the song's history, design, and success are recounted in Furia, 198–206; and Bergreen, 407–10.

[43]The recording sold so well that multiple pressings of the disc were required, and by 1947 the die stamp had become worn from overuse. Bing Crosby and the original singers and conductor came together and re-recorded the song using the same orchestral arrangement (and many of the same orchestra members).

sales would continue to climb seasonally thereafter; e.g., the title placed among *Variety*'s yearly best sellers of 1944–46.[44] A crowning accomplishment that must have pleased Berlin was its selection as "best song" at the 1943 Academy Awards, providing the songwriter with his only career win in the category.[45]

Despite the timeless appeal of "White Christmas," and its Yuletide ubiquity, its verse (**Figure 6a**) languishes in obscurity; indeed, most people surely believe that the refrain represents the song *in toto*. Examination of the verse lyric will reveal the reason for its usual dismissal:

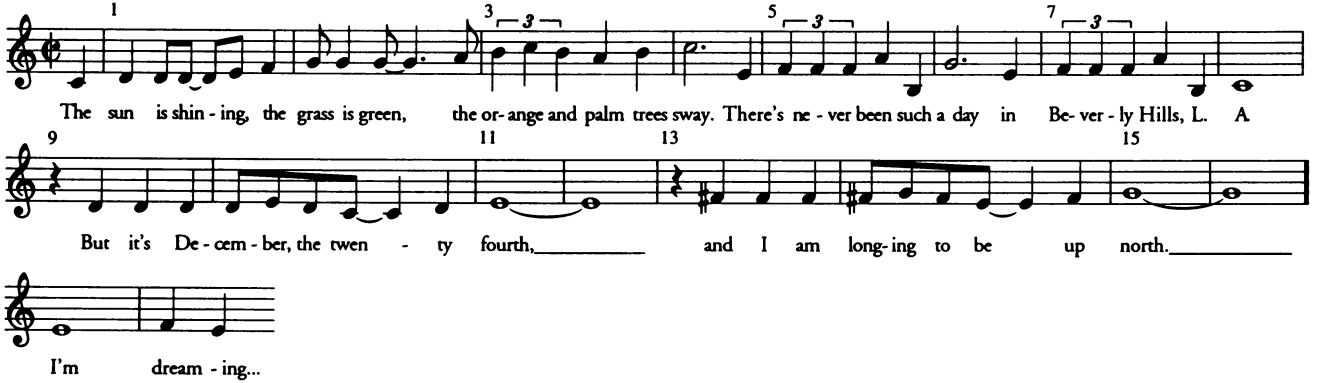
> The sun is shining, the grass is green, the orange and palm trees sway.
> There's never been such a day in Beverly Hills, L.A.
> But it's December the twenty-fourth,
> And I am longing to be up north.

At the beginning of the refrain, the song's protagonist affirms that he or she is "dreaming of a white Christmas." As explained by the verse, this reverie is prompted by being in sunny and green southern California on Christmas Eve, when the seasonal yearning for snow (one that recalls bygone Christmases for the protagonist) is especially strong. Considered generally, the contrast of the verse lyric is appropriate for establishing the motivation of the refrain, and it leads convincingly to the titular phrase. However, the verse is far too particular in its details: the protagonist is not only in a warmer clime, but in Beverly Hills (!); and it is not merely the Christmas season, but December 24th. This scenario would have been appropriate for Berlin's original

[44]It should be noted that the yearly lists were expanded: in 1942 (when the song first placed) and 1943 (when it did *not*), the lists had fifteen entries; in 1944–46, when the song returned to the lists, the entries totalled twenty, thirty-five, and thirty-four, respectively.

[45]He was nominated seven times: "Cheek to Cheek" (1935), "Change Partners and Dance With Me" (1938), "Now It Can Be Told" (1938), "I Poured My Heart Into a Song" (1939), "White Christmas" (1942), "You Keep Coming Back Like a Song" (1946), and "Count Your Blessings Instead of Sheep" (1954).

Figure 6a. Berlin, "White Christmas" (1942): verse melody and lyrics



(but unused) conception of the song as "a mournful carol [sung] by a group of sophisticates gathered around a Hollywood swimming pool,"[46] but it is inappropriate for most other contexts. The appeal of the refrain is that *anyone* may wish for Christmas snow (and/or reminisce about holiday snows of yesteryear), no matter his or her location or the date. The refrain conjures a yearning based upon cultural conventions about how Christmases should look, sound, and feel, and thus the verse's contrasting physical particulars are not only unnecessary but limiting. This reality was not lost on Berlin, especially that first year, when homesick soldiers helped popularize the song; he realized that the introductory line about California's warm Christmases meant little to GIs abroad, and so he ordered the verse to be cut.[47] In fact, the verse's premise seems to have fitted in nowhere; even the song's debut in *Holiday Inn* was performed *sans* verse, as were its appearances in the 1954 film *White Christmas*.[48]

Despite the obsolescence of the verse, it was composed to introduce the refrain, and it is interesting to evaluate how it accomplishes this, and how its inclusion changes the

[46]As described in Furia, 202.

[47]Berlin's order that "From now on, that song goes without a verse," is reported in Bergreen, 409. The mandate must have been directed toward performances by song pluggers, as period copies of the sheet music still included the verse. Incidentally, another view, put forward a few years after the song's release, forges a sympathetic connection between the verse and the plight of U.S. soldiers (although it conveniently ignores the "Beverly Hills" connection): the song "had a verse that made it clearly a homesick expression of disgust with the green tropics where so many of our boys were still in uniform at the time" (Sigmund Spaeth, *A History of Popular Music in America* [New York: Random House, 1948], 461).

[48]In *Holiday Inn*, there are two performances of "White Christmas," by Bing Crosby and Marjorie Reynolds; these occur at the approximate timings 0:27 and 1:36. In a case of art imitating Berlin's life, the second time the song is sung, the scene is a Hollywood movie set; however, the scene-within-a-scene is of the same Connecticut inn at which the song was sung the first time, and thus the verse's reference to Los Angeles would still have been inappropriate. In *White Christmas*, the song bookends the film as its first and last song (approximate timings 0:03 and 1:56). Here its first performance is as troop entertainment during World War II; its second is in a Vermont inn several years later. Again, the verse lyric would have been inappropriate for both settings.

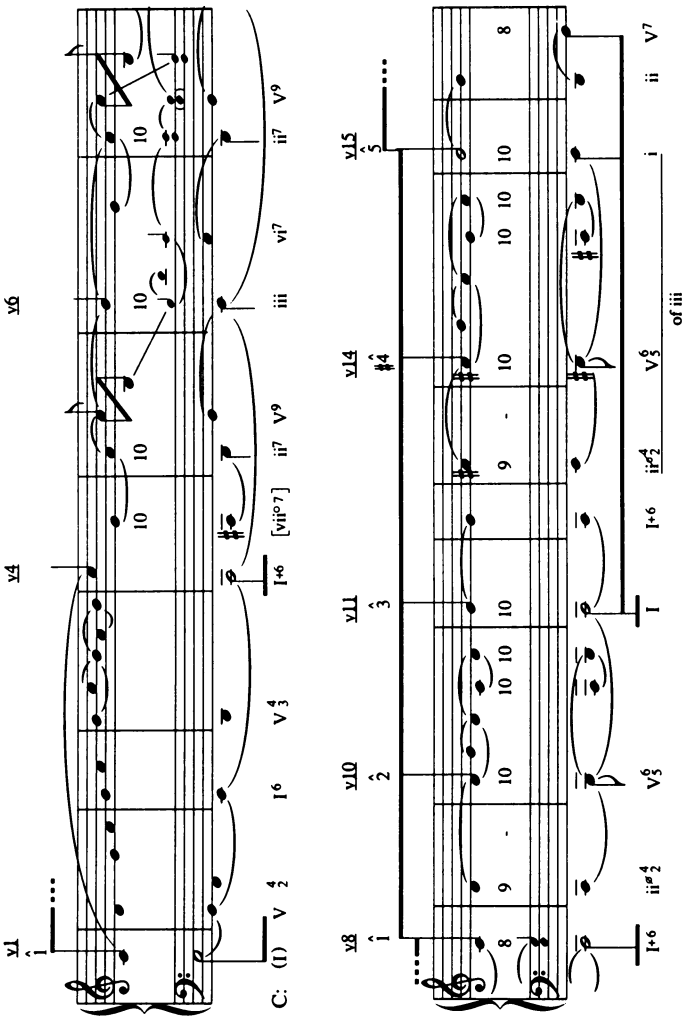


Figure 6b. Berlin, "White Christmas" (1942): verse (foreground)

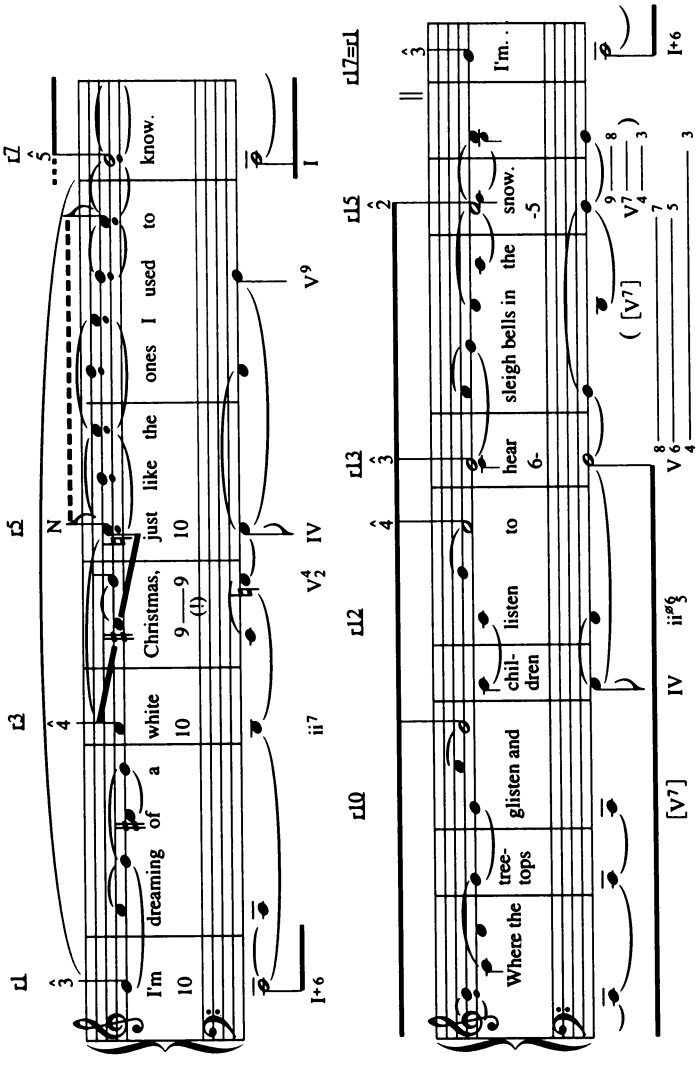


Figure 7. Berlin, "White Christmas" (1942): first half of refrain (foreground)

interpretation of the refrain's beginning. In **Figures 6b** and 7, I offer graphs of the verse and the first half of the refrain. Before continuing, and in contrast to my standard practice, I would like to direct attention briefly to the bass line, which illustrates what can be accomplished by a sensitive arranger (apparently the ubiquitous Helmy Kresa, in this case[49]): far from consisting of a simple succession of chord roots, Kresa's bass artfully enhances Berlin's melody by reflecting the passing motions and neighboring motives which characterize it.

Returning to the melody, those familiar with the refrain will notice immediately its motivic relations with the verse: the refrain's opening turn figure ("I'm dreaming of a white...") is encountered in verse mm. 3, 10, and 14; and the distinctive descending minor seventh from the penultimate measure of the refrain ("...Christmases be white," not shown in the graph) is encountered on the same scale degrees ($\hat{6}$–$\hat{7}$) in verse mm. 5 and 7, the latter instance closing on $\hat{1}$ as at the refrain's ending. As for the verse's own structure, it consists of two eight-bar phrases. The first of these divides into halves: it begins with an ascent (only slightly embellished at its end) from C4 ($\hat{1}$) to C5; it ends with a more skeletal descent back to C4, first approaching G4 by its upper neighbor in mm. 5–6, and then C4 by its lower neighbor in mm. 7–8; the tonic harmony is prolonged throughout. The opening eight-bar phrase thus completes a melodic and harmonic arch: anticipation is followed by relaxation and so tension does not accrue (a changelessness much like the weather in Los Angeles!). In contrast, the next eight-bar phrase directs the melody upward by step to the song's primary tone: G4 ($\hat{5}$), harmonized by V^7 in the verse's final measure. The phrase leaves us in need of melodic and harmonic continuation and so necessitates the refrain; its expression of expectation and longing is reflective of the lyric. Indeed, the verse lyric employs that very word—"longing"—when its only chromatically altered pitch, $\sharp\hat{4}$, is introduced, commanding as it does an ascending resolution. The antecedent function of the verse's second phrase is actually

[49]Bergreen (386) states that Kresa was called in to transcribe the song after Berlin had written it.

increased by the melodic and harmonic closure of its first phrase: the verse's opening arch structure, departing from and returning to $\hat{1}$, makes explicit both the contour and the *Zielton* of the large-scale melodic motion that will follow the verse's ending.

The graph of **Figure** 7 clarifies many features of the ensuing refrain. Here too there is ascent at the beginning, now proceeding from $\hat{3}$. G4 ($\hat{5}$) is first reached at the end of the opening four-bar phrase, but it is *not* the goal of the melodic motion; it serves as a passing tone between F4 and A4 ($\hat{4}$ and $\hat{6}$), the latter of which is prolonged as upper neighbor to the structural $\hat{5}$ of refrain m. 7 (an expansion of the $\hat{6}$–$\hat{5}$ motion encountered in verse mm. 5–6, and again in refrain m. 10). The setting of G4 in m. 4 makes emphatic its role as a passing (and thus active) tone: its V^7 harmonization is given in third inversion, with the bass note retained for the following IV chord, resulting in 9–10 melodic motion over a stationary bass (a registral inversion of the 9–10 patterns in the *verse*'s second half, in which the bass moved under a stationary melodic tone). The arrival of structural $\hat{5}$ in m. 7 is highlighted not only metrically, durationally, and by the definitive IV–V–I cadence leading to it, but also by the fact that this is the first time in the song (verse included) that $\hat{5}$ has been harmonized by a root-position tonic chord (iii having been $\hat{5}$'s harmony at two strong arrival points in the verse). In summary, the opening of the refrain is quite active: there is no relaxation of melodic–harmonic tension until the primary tone returns in m. 7—an appropriate affect for a lyric that expresses yearning. But even this relaxation is but temporary: subsequently there is descent to the "divider" ($\hat{2}$/V) at the end of the refrain's first half, where the fundamental structure is interrupted.[50] Thought of as a form-articulating "half cadence," the moment offers some degree of repose (however inconclusive); but thought of in terms of the interruption of bass and melodic motions, it causes *more*

[50]"Interruption" (Schenker's *Unterbrechung*) is achieved when the fundamental structure (*Ursatz*) breaks off its progress after the arrival of $\hat{2}$/V; a return to the beginning of the *Ursatz* then follows, and the progression to $\hat{1}$/I is completed. See also comments later in the main text, when "Because I Love You" is examined.

tension to accumulate, which will not fully dissipate until the end of the song, after the melody has retraced its steps and attained the closure of Î/I.[51]

Both verse and refrain have been shown to ascend to the primary tone; however, the verse offers the *complete* motion Î–5̂, while the refrain abbreviates it to 3̂–5̂. In the abstract, either initial ascent can be effective, although the former perhaps offers the song greater balance due to its large-scale melodic arch having identical boundary tones (a point to which I will return later in the essay). However, the refrain's beginning takes on new meaning when the verse precedes it. Sung alone, the refrain's initial 3̂/I is a convincing point of consonant departure. But when the verse has been performed first, 5̂ has already been defined (or at least strongly suggested) as the primary tone. Thus the refrain's opening 3̂ no longer sounds like a point of departure, but rather a mediating tone: a refrain-opening Î would suggest local repose and the start of another ascent; an opening 5̂ would suggest a continuation of the primary tone; but, in this context, 3̂ can only be thought of as a relatively *active* tone, bound to move to either Î or 5̂. It abides restlessly "in between" Î and 5̂, much as one's "dream" of a white Christmas transpires between consciousness and unconsciousness. So we see that not only does the refrain offer no temporary melodic–harmonic relaxation until m. 7, but even its starting event is now perceived as less serene. The opening of the refrain is redefined by the inclusion of the verse, much as the refrain of "Heat Wave," in which 3̂ is the primary tone, gains new meaning if its verse, which emphasizes ♭3̂, is performed first.

For my final example of how Berlin's melodic designs can appropriately match their lyrics' meaning(s), I turn to the 1926 waltz ballad "Because I Love You." The song was a minor hit of its time, unassociated with a film or stage show; in addition to

[51]Schenker himself recommended the term "dividing dominant" (or simply "divider") instead of "half cadence" precisely to differentiate these notions. For him, 2̂/V did not effect closure in the sense suggested by the term "cadence"; "interruption," on the other hand, conveyed the sense that there was a delay or retardation *en route* to the ultimate goal (Î/I). (See Heinrich Schenker, *Free Composition*, trans. and ed. Ernst Oster [New York: Schirmer, 1979], § 89.)

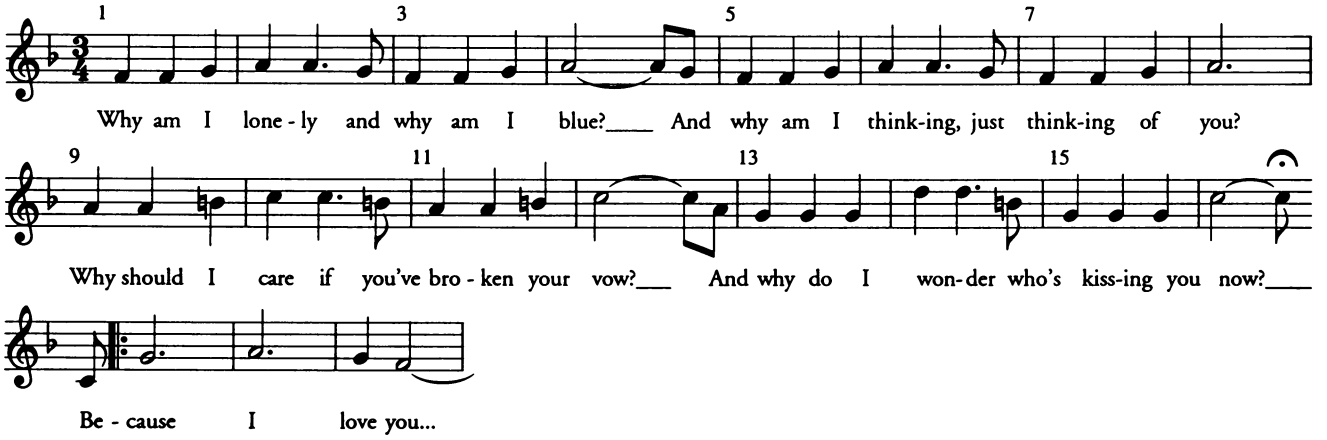
sheet-music sales, it was popularized in part by a Victor-label recording by Henry Burr, a leading recording artist in the first quarter of the twentieth century.[52] Its verse lyric is furnished with a litany of "why"s: musings on why one should care about a lost love "still in my heart."[53] As shown in **Figures 8a–b**, these single-minded meanderings are represented musically by oscillating motions that fill first the tonic triad's lower third, then its upper third. Even without considering accompanying harmony or explicitly Schenkerian preference rules, a large-scale arpeggiation of the tonic triad seems clear: in the first eight-bar phrase, $\hat{1}$ is repeatedly departed from and returned to; when $\hat{3}$ is reached the last time, in m. 8, it is retained and initiates similar melodic motion in the second phrase; finally, a V/V melodic arpeggiation leads to $\hat{5}$ at the end of the verse. The harmonization only makes clearer the moments of structural ascent: by making dissonant all appearances of $\hat{3}$ in the first phrase (excepting the last),[54] it reinforces the sense that $\hat{1}$ (not $\hat{3}$) is the prolonged tone. $\hat{3}$ will gain its structural weight in the second phrase, which tonicizes iii;

[52]"Your Hit Parade" and *Variety* rankings did not exist at this time. Conjecture as to the song's ranking can be found in Joel Whitburn, *Pop Memories 1890–1954* (Menomonee Falls, WI: Record Research Inc., 1986), however there is much misinformation to be found in books like this, which offer single-number chart positions for songs from the early years of the twentieth century. "Hit lists," as we think of them today, mostly did not exist in this period, and so rankings tend to be based on sources that may have reported company-biased or only regional information (in extreme cases, information may be based on mere anecdotes). A detailed critique of Whitburn's book and its methodological shortcomings is found in Tim Brooks, *ARSC Journal* 21/1 (1990): 134–41.

[53]In contrast to the single verses of other songs I examine, here Berlin harkens to a slightly earlier style (see n.12) and offers a second lyric for the verse (each verse is to be followed by the refrain). I will consider only the first verse stanza here, as it is the one that literally introduces the refrain.

[54]In m. 2, $\hat{3}$ is part of V^7/IV; although it is a consonant third above the harmonic root, it is in a tritone relationship with the chord seventh. In m. 6, $\hat{3}$ appears as the ninth of a dominant-ninth chord; although such ninths are common in the repertory and are perhaps "softer" dissonances than the sevenths of dominant-seventh chords, they are still compound seconds, and so are placed in the dissonance category.

Figure 8a. Berlin, "Because I Love You" (1926): verse melody and lyrics



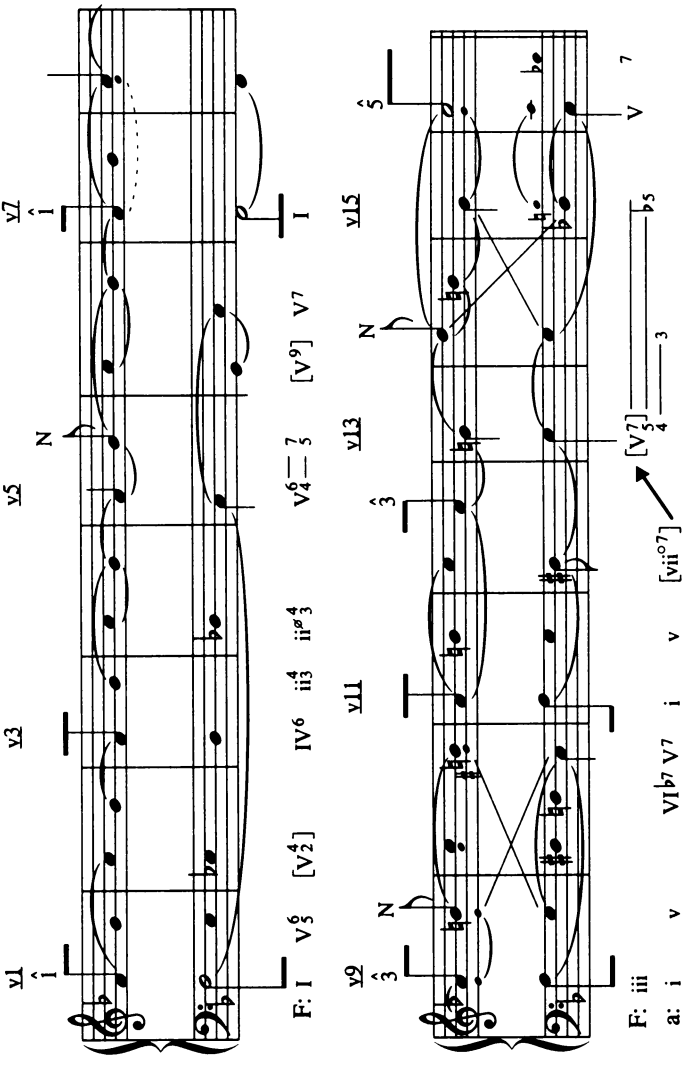
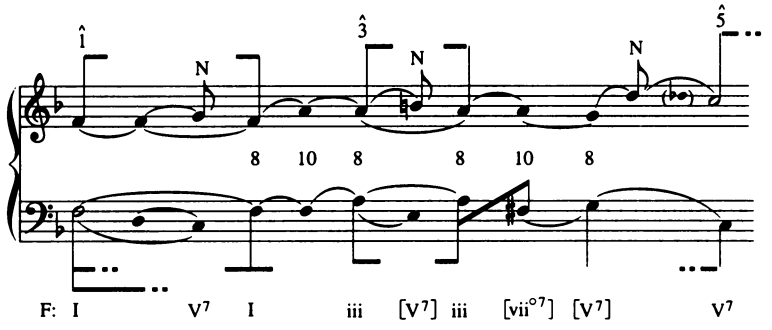


Figure 8b. Berlin, "Because I Love You" (1926): verse (foreground)

Figure 8c. Berlin, "Because I Love You" (1926): verse (middleground)



there, $\hat{5}$ is initially treated as an unstable tone and is made consonant only at the end, when it is supported by V. The harmony's connotations for melodic hierarchy are further supported by the arranger's bass line. As shown in the middleground graph of **Figure 8c**, the end result is that, in the first phrase, $\hat{3}$ is an entirely foreground event (and so is not included), while $\hat{2}$ is ultimately supported as neighbor to $\hat{1}$; the neighbor-prolongational complex is then transposed to A minor for the beginning of the next phrase; the ending $\hat{5}$ (the primary tone) is likewise embellished by its upper neighbor. The verse's melodic ascent fosters an increase in tension appropriate for the series of vexing questions asked by its lyric; such tension, induced by the sequence of words as well as that of notes, also necessitates the answer(s) that will surely follow. Fittingly, the primary tone is reached not only with the last verse pitch, but at the end of the last question the song poses (no further questions are broached in the refrain). Immediately afterward, all the "why"s are answered by the opening line of the refrain: "Because I love you." This statement features a return to the tonic pitch, and so conveys a local sense of resolution to the building tensions of the verse.

The refrain's lyric, however, does not suggest quick and abiding repose: it speaks of the constant anxiety of unrequited love with lines such as "I've tried so hard but can't forget," and "you linger in my mem'ry." The lyric intimates a tension that is

persistent, and this affect is realized by the structure of the song's large-scale line. As shown in the analytic graph of **Figure 9**,[55] the refrain consists of four eight-bar phrases, cast in the formal scheme $A^8A'^8B^8C^8$. The initial phrase conveys the unsettledness of the protagonist by expanding the neighboring motions of the verse: but for a single moment's resolution to $\hat{1}$, the phrase prolongs $\hat{2}$ as its upper neighbor. This neighboring tone is used effectively to highlight the keyword "love" (all three of the word's occurrences are set in this manner), and its local resolution to 1 occurs only upon completion of the title phrase and the word "you," the object of song's (perhaps misplaced) affection. The second phrase begins as did the first, but ends with a return to the primary tone, $\hat{5}$.[56] The whole of the third phrase is devoted to prolonging $\hat{5}$, principally by its upper neighbor (which, in turn, is prolonged by its own upper neighbor: the melody's apex pitch, E5). The third phrase's expansive and melodically-peaking setting comports with the different meaning now ascribed to the lyric word "because."[57] Before it was affirmation: "Because I love you" was the answer to the many "why"s of the verse, and so the corresponding music led to a tonic resolution. Now the word expresses yearning: the lyric reads, achingly, "Yet because I miss you I often wish we'd never met," and so the melodic resolution is to the innate tension of the prolonged primary tone. The fourth phrase finally effects a descent to $\hat{1}$, with the concluding note

[55]In the piano's arrangement/accompaniment, the first half of the refrain's melody is given as the lowest voice (with chords above), and thus there is no "bass line" in the customary sense of the term; the melody's second half is transferred to the more-common position of upper voice. Accordingly, the bass line I provide in the first half (which is enclosed within editorial brackets) is of my own design and consists primarily of chord roots; the bass of the second half is from the sheet music.

[56]C5 ($\hat{5}$) was present in the former phrase, but as part of a foreground consonant skip harmonized by a diminished-seventh chord; this dissonant unit embellished a chord supporting the expanded neighbor tone, $\hat{2}$. It is interesting to note that the lyric phrase "you linger in my mem'ry" accompanies the return of the "lingering" primary tone, in refrain m. 15—a tone which, in fact, is set with the word "mem'ry."

[57]A fascinating feature is that all three "because..." phrases in the refrain are initiated by neighbor notes, as shown in Figure 9.

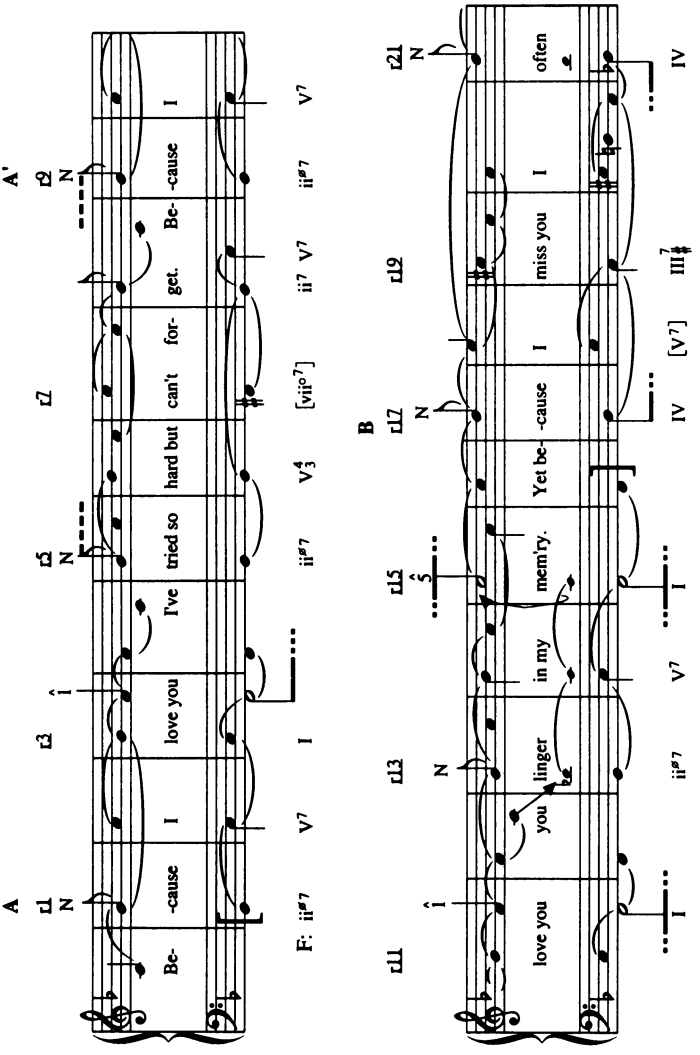


Figure 9. Berlin, "Because I Love You" (1926): refrain (foreground)

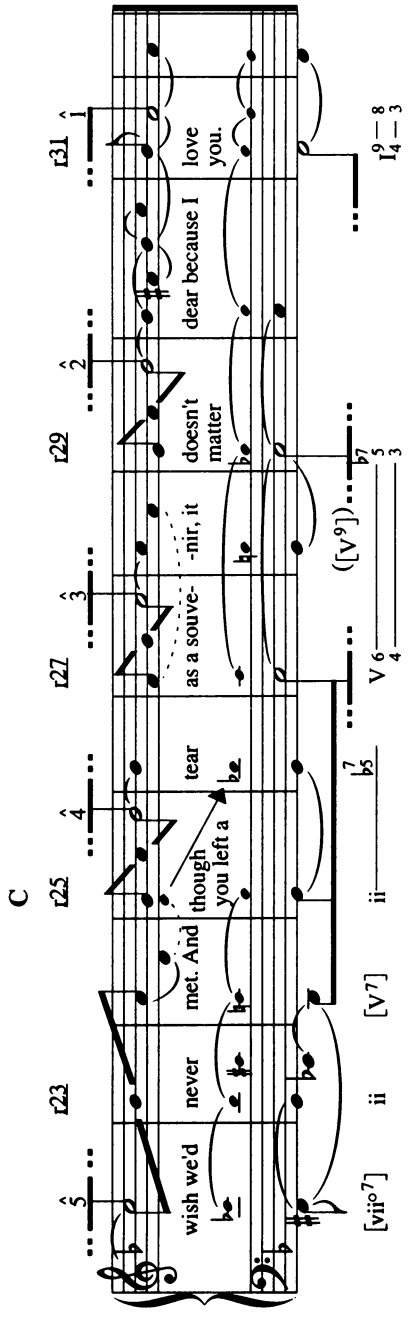


Figure 9. (continued).

decorated once more by the characteristic upper-neighbor figure, appearing here as an embellished 9–8 suspension.

The song's resulting fundamental structure is different from that of many other songs in the repertory. As shown in the "White Christmas" graph, frequently there is an interruption at some point in the refrain, as the fundamental line descends only as far as $\hat{2}$/V; the refrain's remaining section(s) will then repeat the opening descent before completing the motion to $\hat{1}$/I.[58] In songs of the repertory, interruption may occur at different points: after the first A section of an AABA formal scheme; at the refrain mid-point (i.e., around m. 16 of a 32-bar structure, as in "White Christmas"); or at the end of the bridge. However, as **Figure 9** illustrates, the refrain of "Because I Love You" embodies no interruption; it represents an "undivided" or truly "one-part" form. If the divider is thought of as a form-defining, temporary resting point on the way to a full close, then the song lacks such internal semi-repose.[59] The refrain's melodic tension is thus sustained at a higher degree than it was in the other songs I examined[60]—a condition that reflects its lyric. The fundamental

[58]I should mention that not all songs of the repertory conform to a Schenker-normative stepwise-descending fundamental line, as is demonstrated by some of Forte's analyses in *The American Popular Ballad*. For example, about Berlin's "Blue Skies" (1926), with its E-minor refrain and bridge in the relative major (G), Forte writes: its "large-scale melodic design ... is nothing more or less than a projection of the added sixth chord of G major" (90).

[59]As for the conflicting "meanings" of interruption—does it offer a temporary repose or create more tension?—see my earlier comments on "White Christmas" and in n.51. Schenker wrote that interruption "opens the way to two- or three-part forms, a_1–a_2 or a_1–b–a_2," and thus one might hold that the resultant formal sections do offer some sense of repose at their ends; but he also emphasized that "[i]nterruption has the quality of heightening the tension toward $\hat{1}$" (*Free Composition*, § 94; see Schenker's full discourse on interruption in *Free Composition*, § 87–§ 101). Incidentally, Forte and Gilbert refer to the pre-interruption divider as a "point of rest" (202–03).

[60]Figure 11 provides middleground graphs for the five songs analyzed; among these, only "White Christmas" shows a clearly interrupted form (the low frequency of this structure here should not be taken as representative of its commonness in the repertory as a whole). However, the manner in which the other songs are *un*interrupted differs from "Because I Love You." The structure of "I Left My Heart..." *could* be reinterpreted such that a divider occurs at the

line begins its descent only in the last phrase, when the protagonist finally concludes that none of his complaints matter, "because I love you." The composite middleground of the song is an appropriate match for the affect of its lyric: ascent to, prolongation of, and a late and relatively brief descent from the primary tone, with copious neighboring-tone displacements along the way for added tension.

III.

Schenker wrote, "every linear progression is comparable to a pointing of the finger—its direction and goal are clearly indicated to the ear."[61] The verse melodies I have examined clearly point to—are surely aimed at—their refrains; thus, though sometimes considered patter-like and inessential, they are in fact dynamic and integral parts of their songs. Indeed, they have "embodied meaning," as described by Leonard B. Meyer:

> From this point of view what a musical stimulus or a series of stimuli indicate and point to are ... other musical events which are about to happen. That is, one musical event (be it a tone, a phrase, or a whole section) has meaning because it points to and makes us expect another musical event....
>
> Embodied musical meaning is, in short, a product of expectation. If, on the basis of past experience, a present stimulus leads us to expect a more or less definite consequent musical event, then that stimulus has meaning.[62]

---

end of its first half (looking back to Figure 2, this would involve hearing C5 of m. 10 as a restatement of the primary tone, then following the descent to $\hat{2}$ as shown, but with the latter tone prolonged through the dominant harmony of mm. 15–16 via its own 3-line descent, at the end of which $\hat{3}$ is superposed). "Heat Wave" has a lower-level divider in its A section, but it and "I Got the Sun..." do not feature an interruption of the fundamental line. Yet, unlike "Because I Love You," these two songs suggest sectional *closure* in the refrain: each A section (of their AABA forms) features stepwise descent to $\hat{1}$/I, and thus tension does not accrue over the length of the song, as in "Because I Love You."

[61]Schenker, *Free Composition*, 5.

[62]Leonard B. Meyer, *Emotion and Meaning in Music* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), 35.

Such "meaning" exists in two dimensions, creating a song's dynamic arc: Just as the verse lyric serves to prepare or set up the arrival of the refrain's lyric, so does the verse's fundamental melodic line ascend (or aspire) to the first structurally significant note of the refrain, whereupon the descent to tonic begins. Preparatory tension begets consummate repose both in melody and lyric. This understanding carries many connotations; in the following, I will address two of these.

Implications of Verse Ascent for Formal Balance

Concerning the aesthetic issues of form and balance in these songs, let us reflect again on the nature of initial ascent. Carl Schachter characterized it as the greatest counterforce to the descending fundamental line.[63] That is, the initial-ascent/descending-fundamental-line complex represents the deepest level of melodic *Wellenspiel* a composition exhibits.[64] Consequently, works that employ initial ascent perhaps are endowed with a greater equilibrium than those that begin on the primary tone—those that "only descend." This assessment is not intended to ascribe value, but it does define a particular class of compositional design, apropos of melodic structure. As a counter-illustration, consider **Figures 10a–b**, which excerpt and interpret

[63]Carl Schachter, "A Commentary on Schenker's *Free Composition*," *Journal of Music Theory* 25/1 (1981), 135.

[64]Though unrelated to the Schenkerian *Wellenspiel* contemplated here, a consideration of the attendant notion of melodic-arch structure is found in David Huron, "The Melodic Arch in Western Folksongs," *Computing in Musicology* 10 (1995–96): 3–23. Huron's computer examinations of a large database of mostly European folksongs "provide considerable evidence consistent with the notion of a [prevalent] melodic arch" design in vocal phrases of Western folksongs (19).

Figure 10a. Berlin, "They Say It's Wonderful" (1946): verse melody and lyrics

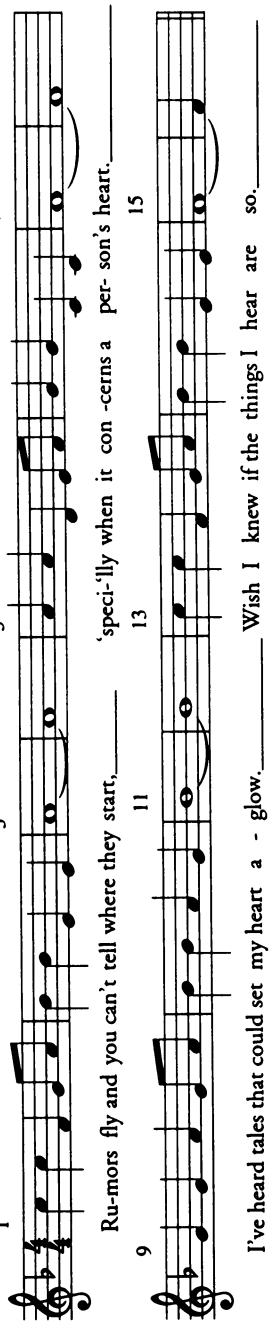
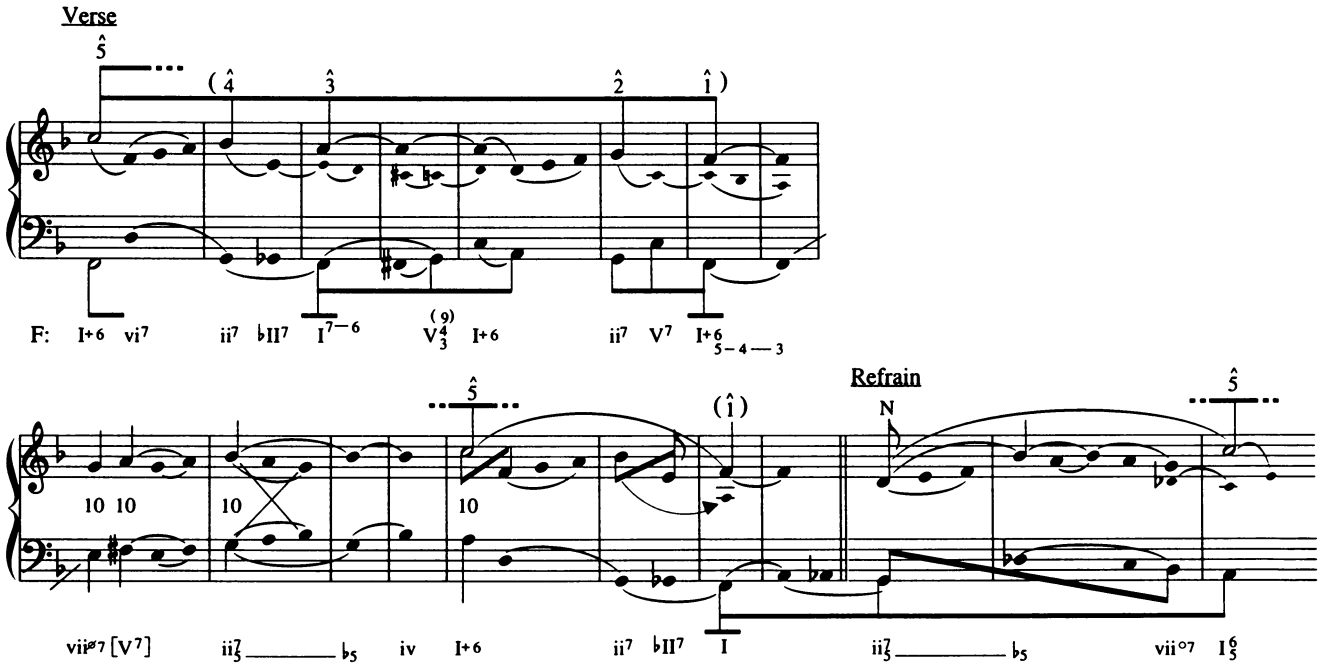


Figure 10b. Berlin, "They Say It's Wonderful" (1946): verse and beginning of refrain (foreground)



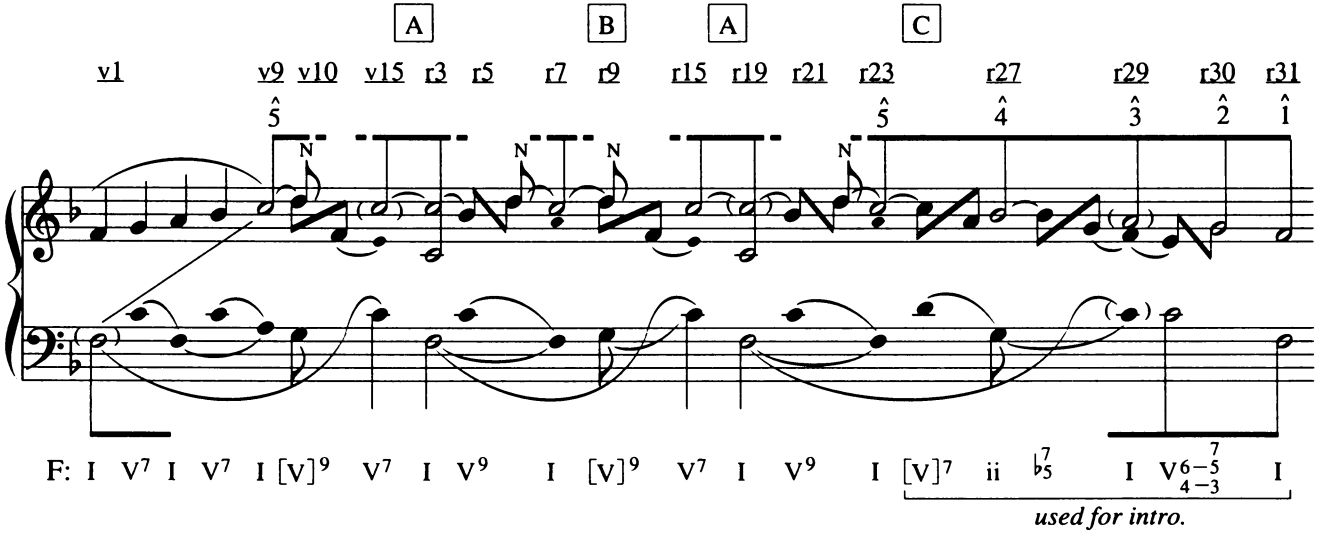
the verse of "They Say It's Wonderful," another song from *Annie Get Your Gun* (1946)—and one which was both a top sheet-music seller of 1946 (according to *Variety*'s year-end list) and no. 1 on "Your Hit Parade." In contrast to the songs examined before, here the *first* note is the primary tone ($\hat{5}$), and a descent to $\hat{1}$ occurs during the opening eight bars (a motion foretold by the descending fifths which recur as a prominent melodic motive). Following an ascent back to $\hat{5}$, the verse ends again on $\hat{1}$. The refrain then reattains the primary tone in its third measure, after prolonging the octave-displaced neighbor, $\hat{6}$.[65] Personal taste aside, there is nothing that makes the structure of this verse superior or inferior to the others I have examined. However, the closure of its descent to $\hat{1}$/I certainly places it in a separate category from those songs whose verses ascend (and end on V) and therefore more strongly necessitate the tonic-directed descent of a following refrain. (It is also in a different category in terms of its verse lyric: it is not explicitly anticipatory, hence one possible reason for the different melodic design.)

The songs I have examined fit the following paradigm: the verses rise from structural pitches x to y, causing a tensing and anticipation, and the refrains descend from y to x, resulting in a relaxing and resolution; these traits are concisely illustrated in the middleground graphs of **Figure 11**. In each song, the initial ascending motion is "complete" (i.e., starting from $\hat{1}$) rather than "abbreviated" (e.g., beginning on $\hat{3}$ when the primary tone is $\hat{5}$); in this way, the musical boundaries of each structural line are the same, from apex to nadir pitches. There is balance. According to Markand Thakar, this match of impulse and resolution is necessary to apprehend a melodic structure as a "whole enclosed unit." Using the diagrams of **Figure 12** to illustrate, Thakar adds, "it is only when the descent matches the ascent that the [musical] boundaries can be formed and the figure can be perceived as an indivisible unity."[66] To state it another way: only

[65]An analysis of the complete refrain (but not the verse) is found in Forte, *The American Popular Ballad*, 112–16.

[66]Markand Thakar, *Counterpoint: Fundamentals of Music Making* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 15. Figure 12 is a reprint of

Figure 11a. Berlin, "I Left My Heart at the Stage Door Canteen" (1942): complete song (middleground)



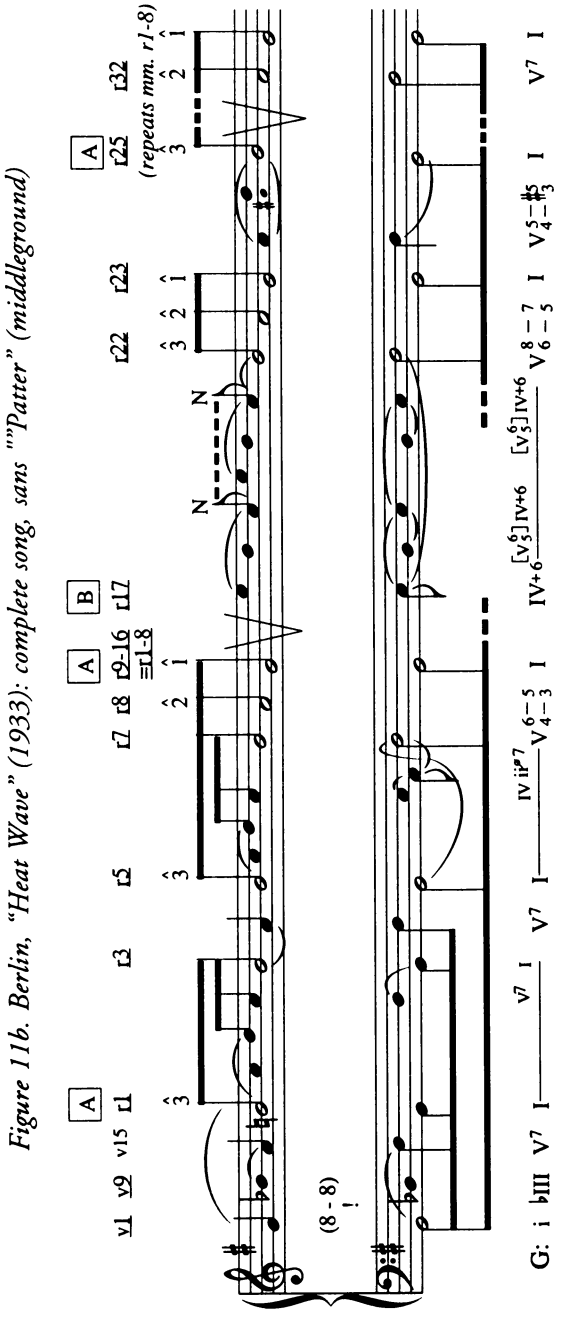
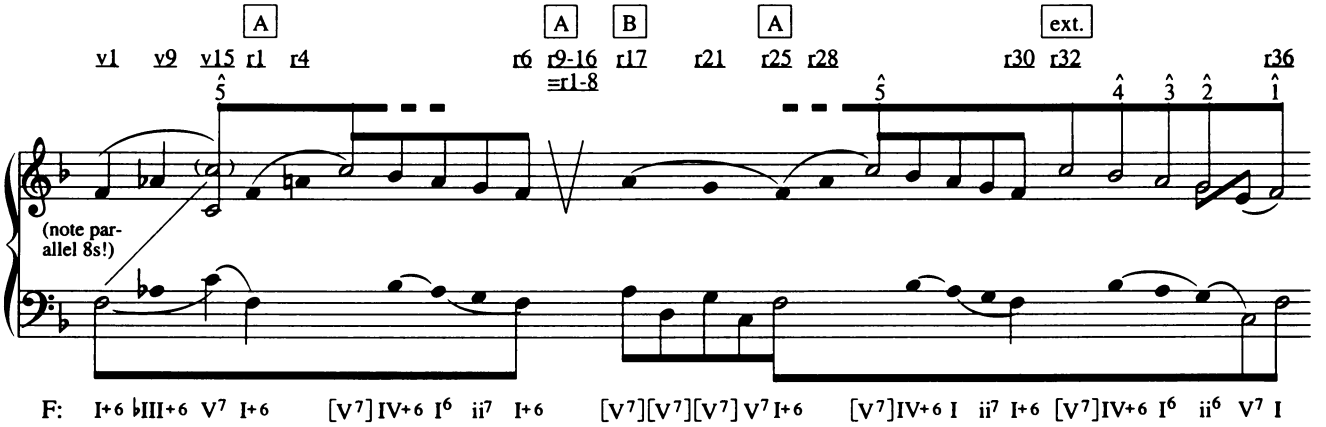


Figure 11b. Berlin, "Heat Wave" (1933): complete song, sans ""Patter" (middleground)

Figure 11c. Berlin, "I Got the Sun in the Morning" (1946): complete song (middleground)



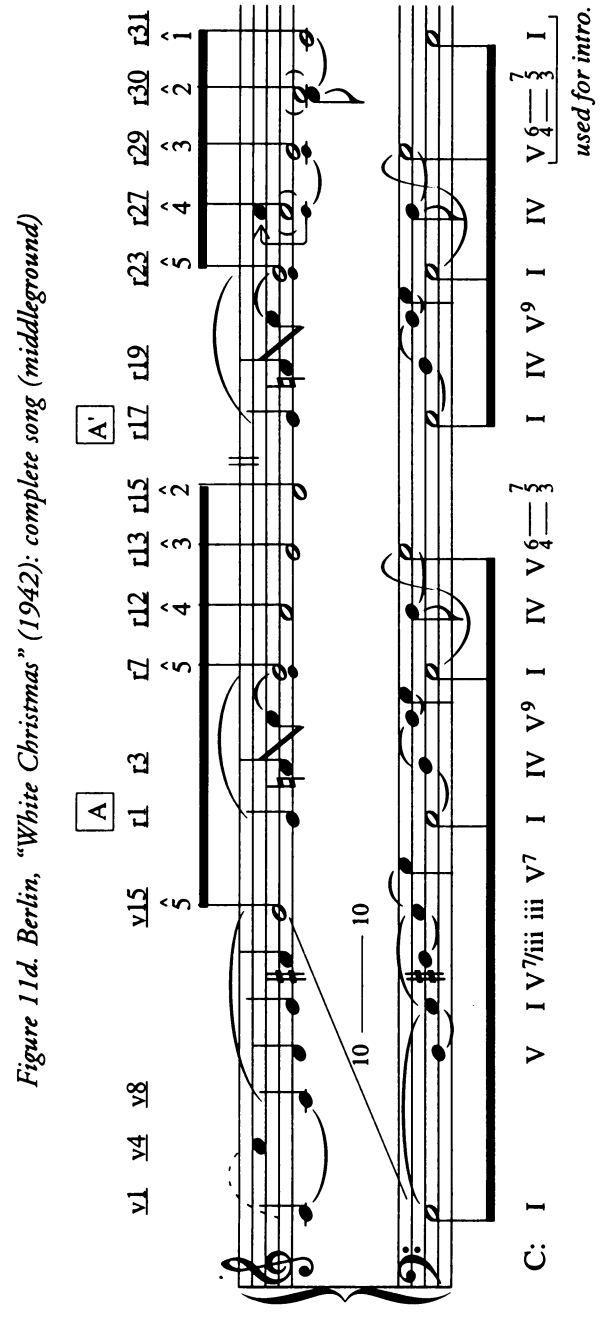
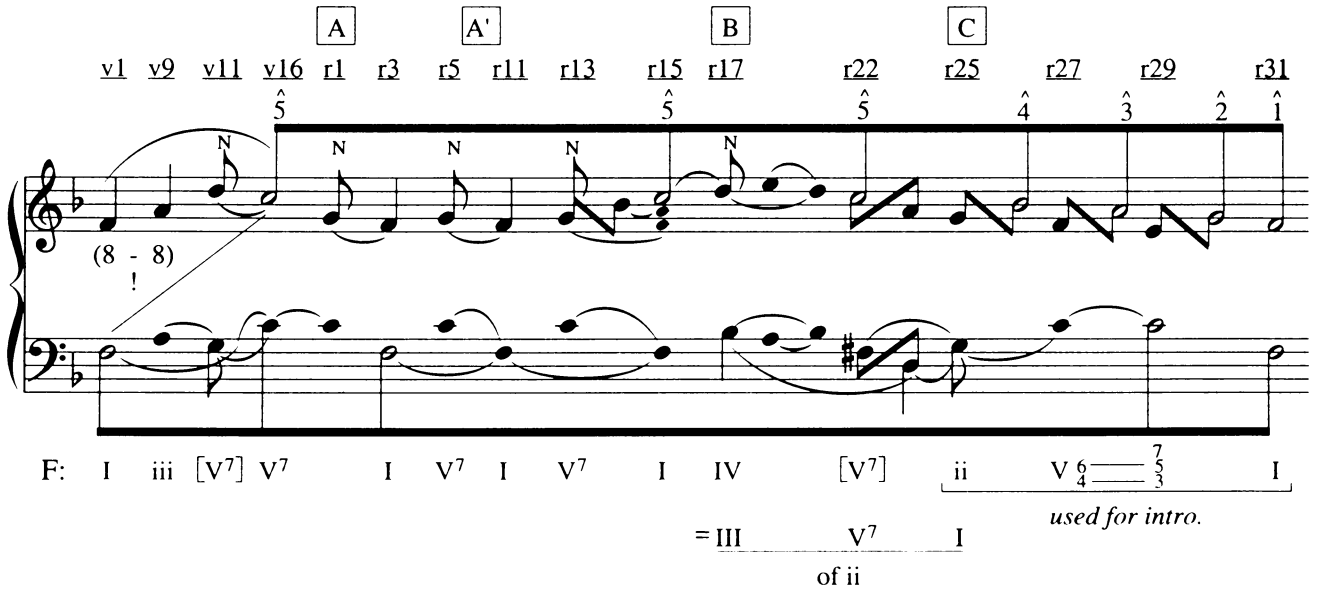


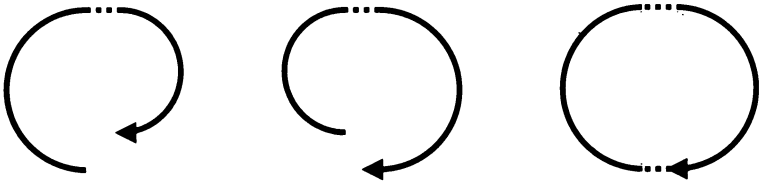
Figure 11d. Berlin, "White Christmas" (1942): complete song (middleground)

Figure 11e. Berlin, "Because I Love You" (1942): complete song (middleground)



by beginning on Î is the maximum tension of the ascent achieved and does the descending motion so clearly necessitate closure on Î.

Figure 12. Correspondence of impulse and resolution (from Thakar).



The tensing and relaxing endemic to the paradigm can be thought of in another way: Felix Salzer posited that an initial ascent creates a sense of expectation by insinuating "an architectonic principle of delay."[67] That is, by postponing the entrance of the primary tone, while at the same time maintaining linear continuity, the ascent keeps us in suspense. An interpretation of the verse as an instrument of delay is often fortified by the pre-vocal piano introduction that conventionally begins the sheet music. This section of usually four or eight measures consists not of "new" music, but of material drawn from another part of the song: it often quotes the closing bars of the refrain—the very part of the song in which stepwise descent from the primary tone to Î is likely to occur.[68] Accordingly, the piano introduction often announces in advance the primary melodic space in which the song will operate, and so afterward, when the verse's melody begins on Î and starts its path upward, the verse suggests a delayed unfolding of that melodic space. This feature is illustrated most clearly by **Figure 11a**'s graph of "I

Thakar's Figures 1.3-1.5, p. 15. He is referring explicitly to smaller melodic patterns, but there are definite larger-scale implications.

[67]Felix Salzer, *Structural Hearing: Tonal Coherence in Music* (New York: Dover, 1962), 1:141.

[68]Alternatively, the introduction may be derived from the first phrase of the verse or refrain, or from one of the distinctive motives of these sections.

Left My Heart...." The section of the song appropriated as the introduction is bracketed and labelled, and consists of the definitive $\hat{5}$–$\hat{1}$ descent; its use as an instrumental prelude implies C5 ($\hat{5}$) as the primary tone eight measures before the voice enters with F4 ($\hat{1}$). "White Christmas" and "Because I Love You" also feature introductions taken from endings; the *complete* descent of the fundamental line is not captured in either case, but when contrasted with the $\hat{1}$ that begins the verse melody, the higher scale degrees and pitch material of the instrumental introduction do suggest an upward-bound vocal line. Even when the introduction is taken from a section other than the ending, the suggestion may be present; for example, "I Got the Sun..." uses as its piano introduction the "what do I find" motive of the verse: a repeated C5, which will become the vocal melody's primary tone.

Just as the verse's postponement of the primary tone via melodic ascent keeps the listener in suspense musically, so a similar description may be applied to the verse *lyric* of one of the analyzed songs: it quite literally exists to delay the entrance of the refrain lyric and its more explicit meaning, and in so doing it holds us in a state of anticipation. (And just as the piano introduction often reveals, in advance, the primary tone of the melody, the song's very title may foretell the goal of the lyric, as it is usually taken from the refrain's principal line.) Thus, the species of melodic structure I have examined is not only one of balance, but it is also a most appropriate match for the type of lyric structure I have appraised.

Implications of Verse Ascent for Performance Interpretation

The relationship between musical analysis and performance has been the topic of numerous essays.[69] The extent to which analysis

[69]See, e.g., Wallace Berry, *Musical Structure and Performance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989); Charles Burkhart, "Schenker's Theory of Levels and Musical Performance," in David Beach (ed.), *Aspects of Schenkerian Theory* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983): 95–112; Janet Schmalfeldt, "On the Relation of Analysis to Performance: Beethoven's Bagatelles Op. 126, Nos. 2 and 5," *Journal of Music Theory* 29/1 (1985): 1–31; Nicholas Cook, "Structure and Performance Timing in Bach's C-major Prelude (WTC I): An Empirical

"should" influence performance (or, conversely, the extent to which a "good" performance depends upon analysis, even if the latter is implicit) will likely never be settled; but Janet Schmalfeldt seems reasonable in claiming that "[p]erformers and analysts will generally agree that a fine performance of a work expresses a unique understanding of its essence."[70] I believe the preceding analyses reveal much about the "essence" of the selected song verses, and that they foster an understanding of the material that does have ramifications for performance practice. Although tacitly addressed to the *listener*-interpreter, my prior discussion of the affective roles of linear/melodic devices and their correspondence with the lyric also has relevance for performers, in that they, like listeners, will (presumedly) want to be sensitive to such details. In the following, however, I will summarize specific ways in which my analyses relate to the *performer*-interpreter.

Wilhelm Furtwängler, a conductor interested in and influenced by Schenker's theories, asserted that Schenker's great accomplishment was the discovery of *Fernhören* ("long-range hearing"), a concept predicated on being able to perceive larger-scale linear features, those controlling structures that coordinate and direct the sum of the melodic components.[71] Although

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Study," *Music Analysis* 6/3 (1987): 257–72; Robert W. Wason, "Webern's Variations for Piano, Op. 27: Musical Structure and the Performance Score," *Intégral* 1 (1987): 57–103; George Fisher and Judy Lochhead, "Analysis, Hearing, and Performance," *Indiana Theory Review* 14/1 (1993): 1–36; and essays in John Rink (ed.), *The Practice of Performance: Studies in Musical Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), of which those by Nicholas Cook, Joel Lester, and William Rothstein deal in large part with Schenkerian theory/analysis. Conferences, too, have been organized around similar themes; e.g., dozens of presenters and panelists will assemble in April 2000 for "Performance 2000," a conference which (according to the paper call) "will allow participants the opportunity to present work that offers new understanding of the relationship between scholarship and performance." The conference will be hosted by the University of Southampton (U.K.) on behalf of the Royal Musical Association.

[70]Schmalfeldt, 1.

[71]See Furtwängler's essay "Heinrich Schenker: Ein Zeitgemasses Problem," in his book *Ton und Wort* (Wiesbaden, Germany: F.A. Brockhaus, 1954):

Berlin's songs, due to their relative brevity, do not require a hearing of such "long range" as would, for example, a Beethoven symphonic movement, nonetheless a grasping of their sectional trajectories can be important. Apprehending such melodic coordinates might help one perform Berlin's songs more effectively because, as Schenker states, these coordinates provide the performer with a sense of direction, serving a function much like that of a trail-map to a mountain climber.[72] If a performer is unaware of the broader goals, how is the music to be understood fully, let alone compellingly conveyed? If a tension span toward the primary tone has an expressive role to play in a song but it goes unrecognized, then one's interpretation of the music would be lacking an essential catalyst.[73]

Recognizing the opposing yet complementary melodic vectors of verse and refrain not only clarifies the sections' functional and expressive purposes, it demonstrates the necessity of keeping the system intact in performance. When songs of the repertory are performed, verses are frequently omitted; this is by no means a recent trend: Charles Hamm asserts that, ever since the single-verse song became standard in the 1920s, performances separated

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198–204; trans. by Jan Emerson as "Heinrich Schenker: A Contemporary Problem," *Sonus* 6/1 (1985): 1–5. A correlation between Schenker's theories and Furtwängler's conducting is demonstrated in Nicholas Cook, "The Conductor and the Theorist: Furtwängler, Schenker and the First Movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony," in *The Practice of Performance*, 105–25.

[72]"To the performer, the *Urlinie* is above all a means of orientation, much the same as a trail-map to a mountain climber..." (*Das Meisterwerk in der Musik*, vol. 1 [1925]: "Fortsetzung der Urlinie-Betrachtungen," 195; trans. John Rothgeb in *The Masterwork in Music*, vol. 1, ed. William Drabkin [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994], 109). It should be noted that the *Urlinie*—the "trail-map" to which Schenker refers—included at this stage in its conceptualization what would later be thought of as middleground lines.

[73]Characteristically, Schenker's assessment is more severe. In discussing Chopin's Etude in A♭, op. 25, no. 1, which begins with an ascending melodic arpeggiation to the primary tone as well as a bass arpeggiation, he wrote: "Anyone who lacks conceptual mastery of both arpeggiations, of both structural tensions, will necessarily miss the point of the composition" (*Das Meisterwerk in der Musik*, vol. 2 [1926]: "Fortsetzung der Urlinie-Betrachtungen," 18; trans. John Rothgeb in *The Masterwork in Music*, vol. 2, ed. William Drabkin [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996], 5).

from the contexts of a musical film or play have often deleted the section.[74] Surely the practice has something to do with the perception of the verse melody as "less musically interesting," and its lyric as "dispensable." However, verses are more essential than one might initially believe. In terms of lyrics, they often provide the broader context necessary for better understanding the refrain. For example, although the verse lyric of "Heat Wave" might seem dismissible, it would be difficult to understand the refrain's opening lines without the prior (albeit oblique) reference to a dancing *femme fatale*.[75] And, despite its already-discussed problems, the verse lyric of "White Christmas" certainly changes one's interpretation of the refrain: rather than a sweet, reminiscent wish for snow, the refrain becomes a virtual lament when one realizes that the hope is being expressed on a verdant Christmas Eve! From a musical standpoint, performing a refrain without its verse has different (but still unfortunate) consequences: first, it would deprive the listener of significant motivic connections between the sections;[76] second, the act of expurgation could very well remove the musical means of *attaining* the refrain. Beginning a piece on its primary tone, without approaching it by an initial ascent, was considered by Schenker to be a chordal "abbreviation"—a compression of what "should" be, from the standpoint of compositional art, a diachronic presentation.[77]

[74]Charles Hamm, *Yesterdays: Popular Song in America* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1979), 359.

[75]The refrain begins: "We're having a heat wave, a tropical heat wave. The temp'rature's rising, it isn't surprising. She certainly can can-can." If read without the preceding verse, the last sentence's reference to "she" is abrupt and perhaps confusing.

[76]I cited two such connections in my discussion of "White Christmas." The briefly-addressed "They Say It's Wonderful" offers an example of a developmental motivic connection: the descending fifths of the verse are expanded into the distinctive descending sixths of the refrain.

[77]See Schenker, *Free Composition*, § 122. Schenker's views on the status of initial ascent embody an apparent contradiction, as discussed in Schachter, 134–35: when Schenker refers to the *Ursatz*'s first vertical interval (including the primary tone), he says if it is *not* composed-out by an initial ascent it is a chordal "abbreviation" or "anticipation"; but he also describes initial ascent as a "retardation" or "delay." Schachter reconciles these statements in this way:

Having seen how the selected verse melodies are clearly directed toward their refrains, this last notion is especially fitting: beginning with the refrain seems tantamount to materializing at a destination without having travelled there.

As an encapsulating thought, it may be useful to imagine the examined verses as providing a metaphorical "inhalation" that can only be released with their subsequent refrains, the "exhalation." Interpreting these sections in terms of a breathing analogy—relating them to a physiological activity—might help a performer better realize the musical dynamic of a complete song. Also, this reading of the respective roles of verse and refrain further underscores the necessity of retaining both sections in performance, for one cannot exhale without first inhaling—at least, not without weakening the effort.

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In closing, I hope that this study has cultivated an appreciation for the ways in which large-scale melodic ascent impinges upon the interpretation of a song, relating as it does to the conveyance of its lyric, aspects of form, and even performance mode. More generally, I hope that this study has expanded the reader's awareness of the expressive design of Berlin's songs. Certainly there is much to be found in his music that is beyond the scope of the present inquiry. But, within the prescribed purlieus, I have endeavored to demonstrate a coordination of melodic and lyric tension on various levels, from foreground correspondences of word and pitch, to phrase-level associations of melodic wave-play and vocal inflection, to song-length representations of tension and relaxation. Berlin seems to have had an intuitive understanding of how melodic structures of various scales could complement his lyrics' intentions, and because of this his songs are all the more eloquent.

"From the perspective of 'nature' the initial ascent effects a delay in the entrance of $\hat{3}$ or $\hat{5}$; from the perspective of 'art' the unprolonged opening interval compresses into a simultaneity what 'ought' to be a melodic entity."