

**RESHAPING AMERICAN MUSIC: THE QUOTATION OF SHAPE-NOTE HYMNS BY
TWENTIETH-CENTURY COMPOSERS**

by

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Lqcppc'Twj 'Uo qmq.'Rj F
".....Wpk>uky{ 'qh'Rkwudwti j .'422; "

Throughout the twentieth century, American composers have quoted nineteenth-century shape-note hymns in their concert works, including instrumental and vocal works and film scores. When referenced in other works the hymns become lenses into the shifting web of American musical and national identity. This study reveals these complex interactions using cultural and musical analyses of six compositions from the 1930s to the present as case studies. The works presented are Virgil Thomson's film score to *The River* (1937), Aaron Copland's arrangement of "Zion's Walls" (1952), Samuel Jones's symphonic poem *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* (1974), Alice Parker's opera *Singers Glen* (1978), William Duckworth's choral work *Southern Harmony and Musical Companion* (1980-81), and the score compiled by T Bone Burnett for the film *Cold Mountain* (2003). Utilizing archival sources and interviews with composers, this study draws from a number of methodologies and disciplines in order to present a kaleidoscopic view of the meanings and contexts of these compositions, including cultural, religious, American, and music history, as well as musical and textual analysis. Through this thick-history approach, the study demonstrates the ways in which shape-note quotations evoke American regional and national history, and the composers' personal memories and identities.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

What makes music “American”? What elements give American music its distinctive identity? How does music reflect and shape American culture? To address these questions, this study explores concert works—both instrumental and vocal—and film scores of the twentieth century that quote eighteenth- and nineteenth-century shape-note hymns. The hymns, praised as authentic American music by scholars, when referenced by numerous composers become lenses into the shifting web of American musical and national identity during the twentieth century, spilling into the opening of the following century. This research explores these complex interactions using cultural and musical analyses of six case studies from the 1930s to the present.

The analysis of compositions and scores quoting shape-note hymns across the twentieth century brings a few central issues into focus. First, the study shows the changing interpretations of American history as composers react to and interpret music and traditions rooted in the past. Second, it reveals the complex interactions of music and culture in the new compositions’ own time period. Third, it demonstrates the preservation and reinterpretation of the shape-note tradition across the twentieth century, a tradition that in its own right has been renewed and revived. And finally, as a thread that ties many of these issues together, this study uncovers the interwoven relationship between American vernacular, popular and classical musics that gives American music its vibrant and variegated texture.

1.1 BRIEF HISTORY OF SHAPE-NOTE HYMNODY

The term “shape-note” is derived from the mnemonic device in which the note-heads used in these hymns are given different shapes corresponding to solfège syllables, a didactic device which enabled even the musically illiterate to sing parts easily.¹ This notational device influenced the new compositions that were written using the system, allowing minimally educated songwriters as well as those with training to write and arrange hymn tunes. In this dissertation, “shape-note hymns” designates the repertory of music preserved within hymnals using this notational style, primarily those created in the early to mid-nineteenth century.² These earliest shape-note hymnals, beginning with *The Easy Instructor* (1801), used four shapes.

These hymnals include eighteenth-century tunes that preceded shape-note notation, particularly hymns by New England composers such as William Billings (1746-1800) and Daniel Read (1757-1836). The use of shape-notes began in the northern United States, but as the nineteenth century progressed, the shape-note traditions in the North were replaced by movements towards more “refined” hymnody, with tunes and harmonies situated within common-practice tonality, initiated by musicians such as Lowell Mason. The tradition moved southwards and westwards, accruing new tunes and contrafacta of folk songs and instrumental tunes. Eventually, the tradition moved into more rural areas, especially in the South, where the performance practices were preserved through the twentieth century and into the twenty-first

¹ For an overview of the tradition, see Harry Eskew and James C. Downey, “Shape-note Hymnody” in *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.proxy-remote.galib.uga.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/25584#S25584.2> (accessed February 18, 2009).

² Other terms such as “white spirituals” and “Sacred Harp hymns” have also been used to describe these works, but each of these terms is problematic, the first implying a relationship to black spirituals that has been proved inaccurate, and the second limiting the scope to the contents of a single hymnbook. See Dena J. Epstein, “A White Origin for the Black Spiritual? An Invalid Theory and How It Grew,” *American Music* 1, no. 2 (Summer 1983): 53-59.

century. In particular, the hymnal *The Sacred Harp* (first published in 1844) had a strong following throughout the nineteenth century and continuing throughout the twentieth century, with certain distinctive cultural practices growing around the tradition. It was in the deep South that the tradition was rediscovered by scholars such as George Pullen Jackson, and lauded as an authentic American folk music.

Harry Eskew and James C. Downey give an excellent summary of the musical repertoires and stylistic characteristics of the hymns contained within these shape-note hymnals, from preserving hymns from the earlier New England traditions to the later additions primarily made in the South. They write,

Much of the music in the shape-note hymnbooks was written by the late 18th-century singing-school composers of New England, who also introduced the practice of including a pedagogical preface to a tune book, and were responsible for its oblong format. To the New England repertory of psalm and hymn tunes, fusing-tunes, set-pieces and anthems the shape-note hymnbook compilers made a significant addition—folk hymns and spirituals drawn from oral tradition. All these types of music were set for three or four voices, with the principal melody in the tenor and the other parts composed quite independently to produce a rugged, harmonically crude, ‘archaic’ style that has reminded some...of medieval polyphony.³

The texts of the hymns likewise reflect this wide diversity of traditions, including those from older British traditions of psalmody, eighteenth-century hymn-writers such as Isaac Watts, John Newton and William Cowper, and newer texts, particularly those influenced by the American camp meetings of the Second Great Awakening.⁴ In the performance practice of shape-note hymns, all parts are sung using a loud, clear vocal quality without vibrato, with the tenor or air, as well as the treble or soprano sung by both male and female singers. The hymns are

³ Eskew and Downey, “Shape-note Hymnody.”

⁴ For further information on the influence of the nineteenth-century camp meetings, see Ellen Jane Lorenz, *Glory Hallelujah! The Influence of the Campmeeting Spiritual*, rev. ed. (Nashville, TN: Parthenon Press, 1980).

traditionally sung by singers seated in a square formation, known as the “hollow square”—all parts face inwards, while one singer beats time in the middle.

Although eighteenth-century tunes are part of the shape-note tradition through their preservation and dissemination in these hymnals, this dissertation focuses on compositions that quote nineteenth-century shape-note hymns, or ones that quote hymns from both periods, thereby contextualizing the older hymns within the shape-note tradition. This study excludes hymns by composers such as Lowell Mason (1792-1872) and his contemporaries whose works fit neatly and deliberately into cultured and refined “common-practice” tonality, as well as later gospel hymns whose chromatic inflections distinguish them from the highly modal practice of the four-shape-note hymns.

1.2 METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES

I have used several methodologies to explore six case studies, combining these scholarly tools to bring out the individuality of each work. For each composition, I used musical analysis in conjunction with other analytical tools to tease out the ways in which the music encapsulates historical and cultural meaning. These approaches include the history of culture, religion, and music in the United States, musical and textual analysis, and interviews with composers.

This work is situated in a crux between the musicological subfields of musical borrowing and American studies. The study of the ways in which American composers have turned to shape-note hymns in their compositions demonstrates a porous relationship between American “vernacular” and “classical” streams of music. The story told, retold and varied throughout this study is that of a composer who discovers shape-note hymnody, through the work of a scholar or

through first-hand experience, and explores it through the act of composition. Through the act of composition, through scholarly writing, and often through participation in the tradition itself, the composer brings attention to shape-note hymnody, and thereby fosters its continuance as a living performance tradition. This cross-pollination between traditions contributes to the diverse—yet interconnected—nature of American music across the twentieth century, and into the next.

This study is indebted to the methodologies for studying musical borrowing delineated and employed by the musicologist J. Peter Burkholder.⁵ This dissertation's title refers to "quotation" rather than the broader term "borrowing" as defined by Burkholder. Burkholder's definition of borrowing incorporates a multiplicity of possible relationships between the source work and the new work, from allusion to a particular style through the creation of variations on a theme.⁶ This study uses the term "quotation" to limit the scope of the study to those compositions that overtly reference shape-note hymns using the melody, harmony and/or texture of specific hymns, and acknowledged by the composer.⁷ Because musical borrowing is foundational to this study, the field of semiotics—especially in work by scholars such as Thomas Turino and Michael L. Klein who have adapted methodologies for musical analysis—provides valuable models for understanding the symbolic functions of quotation.⁸ In general, I have not

⁵ See especially J. Peter Burkholder, "The Uses of Existing Music: Musical Borrowing as a Field," *Notes* 50, no. 4 (March 1994): 851-70; and his *All Made of Tunes: Charles Ives and the Uses of Musical Borrowing* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995). In this article and book, Burkholder systematically describes the multiplicity of relationships that can occur between a source work and the work which borrows from the source work.

⁶ See J. Peter Burkholder, "Borrowing," in *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.proxy-remote.galib.uga.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/52918pg1#S52918.1> (accessed January 21, 2009).

⁷ This use of the term varies slightly from the one proposed by J. Peter Burkholder in his article, "Quotation." His definition of quotation includes quotations that are not openly acknowledged by the composer, and excludes compositions that use a theme and variation form. See J. Peter Burkholder, "Quotation," in *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.proxy-remote.galib.uga.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/52854> (accessed January 21, 2009).

⁸ See Thomas Turino, "Signs of Imagination, Identity, and Experience: A Peircian Semiotic Theory for Music," *Ethnomusicology* 43, no. 2 (Spring/Summer 1999): 221-255; and Michael L. Klein, *Intertextuality in Western Art Music* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005).

used the terminology of semiotics in the study; however, semiotics provide the foundational groundwork for this study: the idea that musical quotations encode and create meaning, meanings that can be unearthed through musical and cultural analysis. The study also draws on the historiography of American culture, exploring approaches to history within a time period, such as the new approaches to social history that blossomed in the 1970s. In addition, it works within current reassessments of political history, such as new research into and interpretation of documents related to the McCarthy Era.

I rely heavily on the composers' written interpretations of their compositions presented in their own books, articles and interviews. Several of the composers examined in this work kindly gave interviews via e-mail. The full interviews are included in Appendix A. Though authorial intent is not the sole source of meaning in these works, it is important to consider the cultural meanings of shape-note hymns for the composers who employed them. Further, the composers' sources for the hymns—whether through written, oral, or aural traditions—are important for understanding their interpretation and use of the hymns. Some of these composers, such as Samuel Jones and William Duckworth, have childhood memories of singing these hymns. Others, such as Virgil Thomson and Aaron Copland, first encountered the tradition through scholarly literature, especially the seminal writings of George Pullen Jackson. Coupled with these sources, recordings created by Alan Lomax also provided entrances into the tradition for several composers, including T Bone Burnett.⁹

⁹ Additionally, Charles Ives's use of hymns in his compositional output surely was an influence on the work of these composers. Though never using explicitly shape-note hymns himself, his combination of hymns with other American musics, such as concert band music, helps to create Americanist overtones for the quotation of hymnody by subsequent composers.

1.3 DISSERTATION STRUCTURE AND CHAPTER OVERVIEWS

The dissertation is divided into three chronological chapters, each comprised of two case studies: “1930s-1950s,” “The 1970s,” and “1980s-2000s.”¹⁰ This grouping allows for the comparison and contrasting of compositions within subsequent eras. Each chapter is preceded by an introduction to the time-period addressed within it. The second chapter, “1930s-1950s,” and the final chapter, “1980s-2000s,” feature concluding sections that tie together the issues addressed in the subsections of the chapter, while the middle chapter, “The 1970s,” opens with an in-depth historical introduction to the period to contextualize both works. Interviews with four of the composers featured in these chapters are included in Appendix A.

1.3.1 1930s-1950s

The 1930s-1950s saw a growing awareness of the shape-note tradition, sparked by the extensive research of folklore scholar George Pullen Jackson. During this period, composers used quotations of shape-note hymns to react to changing roles of government, and to explore the complexity of American identity, especially regarding issues of race. In the 1930s, Virgil Thomson used shape-note hymns in his film score to *The River* to highlight the government’s appeal for assistance for farmers along the Mississippi River. The hymns give a religious foundation to the appeal, as the government increasingly took over roles—especially in regards to alleviating poverty—previously filled by religious communities. In the same film, Thomson also uses shape-note hymns to represent African-Americans, “bluesing” a hymn during the

¹⁰ Surprisingly, I found little evidence of the use of shape-note hymns during the 1960s; however, the impact of movements and ideas stemming out of the 1960s, such as the Centennial celebrations of the Civil War and philosophies stemming out of counter-cultural thinking, are discussed in the 1970s chapter.

depiction of an African-American farmer. This association reflects the contemporaneous misinterpretation of shape-note hymns as the direct predecessors of black spirituals. Aaron Copland navigated both his Jewish and American identities through his arrangement of the hymn “Zion’s Walls” in his *Old American Songs, Set II* (1952). His alteration of its words to highlight the metaphor “Zion” and to deemphasize overtly Christian references is significant in light of Copland’s 1951 trip to the newly reconstructed Israel and his expressions of support for the controversial Zionist cause. At the same time Copland faced many pressures as a politically leftist artist during the McCarthy era, and in some ways his overtly Americanist works—such as the *Old American Songs*—were a response to these pressures.

1.3.2 The 1970s

During the 1970s, composers responded to the unrest about the Vietnam War and social injustice (despite Civil Rights legislation) in the midst of celebrating the American Bicentennial. They dealt with a fractured sense of national identity in several ways: through an extreme idealization of the past, through emphasizing the history of a region or a community rather than the nation as a whole, or by turning to personal family history as the locus of identity. Samuel Jones’s orchestral work *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* (1972) invokes his childhood memory of his grandmother—a tenant farmer in her younger days—singing a shape-note hymn, then uses shape-note hymns to commemorate the settlers and farmers of the Shenandoah Valley region. In her opera *Singer’s Glen* (1974), Alice Parker recreates the life of a nineteenth-century Mennonite community, using shape-note hymns to honor the ordinary activities of ordinary people. This emphasis on common men and women reflects the growing concerns of the social history movement. Interviews with both of these composers give insight into their work.

1.3.3 1980s-2000s

The period of the 1980s through the present has been marked by a blossoming of the shape-note tradition, from internal revivals of the tradition to a new appreciation of it within the university to representations of it within mainstream popular culture. Outside of the university, practitioners of the shape-note tradition have composed new hymns in the shape-note style, and have used older hymns as the basis for new concert works. Inside the university, composers have interpreted the hymns through current compositional methodologies, from extended techniques to the use of electroacoustic media, but especially through new tonal approaches to music.

William Duckworth's choral work *Southern Harmony and Musical Companion* (1993) demonstrates a synthesis between shape-note hymns and a musical style influenced by minimalism, alternating movements consisting of repetitive textual and musical fragments with more traditional arrangements of hymns. Interviews with William Duckworth and his mentor Neely Bruce contextualize his work.

Shape-note hymns have also worked their way into major motion pictures, most prominently in the film, *Cold Mountain* (2003). Its soundtrack was produced by T Bone Burnett, who also created the soundtrack to *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* (2000), composed of performances of traditional Southern music (though not including shape-note hymns). The best-selling soundtrack was an integral part of an American "Roots" music revival, and helped pave the way for the inclusion of shape-note hymnody within this resurgence as shape-note hymns joined alongside American roots music in the soundtrack to *Cold Mountain*. *Cold Mountain*, in its novel and film form, demonstrates a post-Vietnam sensibility of war, reassessing the Civil War not as a noble battle on both sides, but as a bloody and horrific travesty. The hymns are used in the soundtrack to reinforce a sense of realism, as well as a sense of apocalyptic doom. The

chapter concludes with a brief overview of current approaches to the quotation of shape-note hymns as composers in the twenty-first century continue to plumb the depths of the hymns and their surrounding traditions.

2.0 1930s-1950s

Virgil Thomson's film score to *The River* (1938) and Aaron Copland's several settings of "Zion's Walls," especially that in his second set of *Old American Songs* (1952), illustrate how the quotation and arrangement of shape-note hymns intersects with other musicocultural issues in the United States during the 1930s-1950s, and particularly the ways in which composers wrestled with their own complex and sometimes conflicted cultural heritage.

The documentary film *The River*, directed by Pare Lorentz, was commissioned by the Farm Security Administration, a government branch initiated in Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal. From the outset of the film, it was intended for a wide audience,¹¹ and after viewing it, President Roosevelt enthusiastically encouraged its release to the general public.¹² The film portrays damage along the Mississippi River, climaxing with a flood, and details governmental plans to provide aid. Thomson's film score to *The River* is heavily influenced by his Baptist upbringing, though as an adult, Thomson distanced himself from the Baptist denomination or the practice of any kind of Christianity. The film score reflects nostalgia for the hymns of his childhood, as well as a longing for an imagined "Old South" that had been planted in his mind as a child through songs and stories. Copland's setting of "Zion's Walls" in *Old American Songs*

¹¹ Peter C. Rollins, "Ideology and Film Rhetoric: Three Documentaries of the New Deal Era (1936-1941)" in *Hollywood as Historian: American Film in a Cultural Context*, ed. by Peter C. Rollins (Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press, 1983), 40.

¹² Richard Meran Barsam, *Nonfiction Film: A Critical History* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1973), 106.

reflects a convergence of his Jewish and American identities, as well as the conflicts that he faced when his left-wing politics came into tension with the conservative majority. This chapter will examine the influence the composers' individual backgrounds had on both their choice of shape-note hymns as well as how the hymns were restructured and recontextualized in their compositions.

Before examining the individual works, it is important to understand the role of scholarship in mediating composers' access to shape-note hymns during this period. American vernacular materials became much more widely available through published research, allowing composers to access and reuse these materials in their work. Barbara Zuck notes the increasing fascination with "rural American folk music," especially Anglo-American music, beginning in the 1930s, a direction distinct from the earlier studies of jazz and "American-Indian" music.¹³ This surging interest had its roots in earlier publications, such as John Lomax's *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads* (1910),¹⁴ which included text and music. However, prior to the 1930s most publications on folk music only included the song text. John Lomax, Cecil Sharp, and Carl Sandburg were pioneers in making Anglo-American folk music available through printed publications that included both music and text, as well as through widely available recordings.¹⁵

The collecting of Anglo-American vernacular music and subsequent publication in books and recordings by scholars such as Alan Lomax, Charles Seeger, and George Pullen Jackson gave composers a new level of access to American vernacular materials. In their compositions, Copland and Thomson place shape-note hymnody in a broader framework of American

¹³ Barbara A. Zuck, *A History of Musical Americanism* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1980), 140.

¹⁴ John Lomax, *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads* (New York: MacMillan, 1910).

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 146-147.

vernacular music, much of which was newly accessible through scholarship. Thomson's film score uses a variety of American vernacular sources, while Copland's setting of "Zion's Walls" is included in his second set of *Old American Songs, Newly Arranged* a collection of American songs culled from diverse sources.

Scholarship did not act as a passive mediator, but instead shaped the ways in which composers received and interpreted the music. Barbara Zuck argues that the study of Anglo-American folk music during this period was directly tied into the socialist movements of the time, citing especially the work of Charles Seeger. Specifically, this interest in folksong was connected to an idealized America, tied to an imagined American landscape. Zuck writes,

The interest in folk music and folklore was part of an ongoing idealization of the common man that had accompanied the leftward swing in the early 1930s and had been heightened by the Popular Front's increased Americanism after 1935. Now, late in the decade, this idealization became connected more specifically with America's "unspoiled" countryside. The American West and its inhabitants, especially, held a fascination as being untainted and ruggedly "American."¹⁶

Copland's idealization of the American West is broadly discussed in the literature, as well as his representations of the common man. Though in words and actions Thomson carefully separates himself from the American political left, he too evokes an idealized America, focused not primarily on the American West but on an idealized American South. Thomson and Copland both drew on newly available sources to project their own unique perspective on American music and culture.

¹⁶ Ibid., 140-141.

2.1 VIRGIL THOMSON, FILM SCORE TO *THE RIVER*: SHAPE-NOTE HYMNS AND THE SOCIAL GOSPEL

2.1.1 Thomson's previous use of American hymnody

Because of his Baptist upbringing as well as his teenage training as an organist, Thomson from childhood was saturated in the musical language of hymns. He returned to hymnody in his work *Variations on Sunday School Tunes* (1927), a compilation of organ variations on hymn tunes. Anthony Tommasini suggests that Thomson's use of hymns in *Variations* reflected his ambivalent feelings towards his past work in church music:

The pieces are variations only in that the music is various. Familiar tunes become fodder for works that riotously go haywire with wrong-note harmonies, out-of-sync part writing, musical non-sequiturs, tone clusters, absurdly pompous and meandering fugues—music that no proper church organist could actually perform. During college Thomson himself had been a professional church organist. The *Variations on Sunday School Tunes* represent his door-slamming on even the possibility of becoming one again.¹⁷

The *Variations* did not, however, represent a “door-slamming” on the use of hymnody as an active part of Thomson's compositional vocabulary. On the contrary, it initiated Thomson's fruitful exploration of the use of hymns in large-scale compositions. While he was writing *Variations*, Thomson was also working on his *Symphony on a Hymn Tune* (1928), which despite its title uses *two* hymn tunes as source material, “Foundation” and “Jesus Loves Me,” hymns traceable to his childhood experiences in the Baptist church.¹⁸ Though “Foundation” is derived from the shape-note tradition of hymnody in America, it is likely that Thomson's first exposure to the hymn was through a “properly” reharmonized version, with the unusual part-writing and

¹⁷ Anthony Tommasini, *Virgil Thomson: Composer on the Aisle* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1997), 154-155.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 155.

polyphonic accompaniment ironed out into common practice four-part harmony.¹⁹ Thomson notes that at the time he composed this work, he did not realize that “Foundation” was a “white spiritual” (i.e., shape-note hymn).²⁰

Even though Thomson loved hymnody, he politely but decisively separated himself from Christianity as a practiced religion. In his autobiography, he writes of his work as a church musician,

Professional status was at all times a joy, as was indeed, for the most part, church music itself. But I never at any time took to religion. In the Baptist view I am not even a Christian, having never experienced conversion or undergone baptism. I have never felt inferior to believers, or superior; I simply am not one. Churches are not my home. In the choir room or in the organ loft I earn my fee. But I cannot be a customer; this was always so, is still so.²¹

In this way, Thomson carefully navigated his relationship to the Christian religion: though not a practitioner of the religion, he recognized it as a part of his heritage and practice, a heritage that he drew upon in his musicocultural language.

2.1.2 Nostalgia

Clearly, Thomson’s interest in hymnody from childhood onwards influenced his subsequent interest in shape-note hymnody. Hymnody had left an indelible mark on his musical language, a mark that he did not attempt to erase or suppress. Albert Weisser cites an interview in which

¹⁹ The hymn reform efforts in America begun in the nineteenth century by Lowell Mason attempted to replace vernacular hymnody with more “refined” hymns, properly harmonized in accordance with European traditions. American shape-note hymns that continued to remain popular despite the reform movement (such as “Foundation” and “New Britain,” also known as “Amazing Grace”) were altered and reharmonized to match the European tradition. Especially in an urban church such as Thomson’s childhood church, Calvary Baptist Church (Kansas City, Missouri), “properly” harmonized hymns would have been the standard. (See Mark Rhodes, “Fixing New Britain: Folk-Hymn Makeovers in America’s ‘Better Music’ Movement,” paper presented at the *Conference on American Hymnody* at Belmont University, Nashville, TN, September 9, 2005).

²⁰ Virgil Thomson, *Virgil Thomson* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1966), 273.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 19-20.

Thomson stated, “When you reach down into your subconscious, you get certain things. When Aaron reaches down, he doesn’t get cowboy tunes, he gets Jewish chants. When I reach down I get Southern hymns....”²² Thomson reached down and found not just ordinary hymns, but *Southern* hymns. In addition to his nostalgic attitude towards church music, Thomson also had a deep-rooted nostalgia for an imagined Antebellum South. As a small child, his aunt’s performance of nineteenth-century American songs evoked a yearning for this South. Thomson writes,

My mother’s sister Aunt Lillie Post could play, with all their pearly runs intact, variations on “Old Black Joe” and “Listen to the Mocking Bird.” She did not consent to do this very often, being out of practice; but when she did, she evoked a nostalgia that I could know to have some connection with the prewar South. ...These souvenirs of an earlier Kentucky...had over me a power so intense that...I could almost not bear for it either to go on or to stop.²³

Even as a child, Thomson was discreet in his expression of this nostalgia. He writes, with a chagrined awareness of his romanticization of the South,

Naturally, in a place as Yankee-versus-Rebel conscious as Kansas City, I kept mostly to myself what nostalgia I may have felt for a way of life I had not known anyway and which certainly had never existed in quite the way that anybody still remembered it.²⁴

Sometimes Thomson’s idealization of the South took controversial turns. He idealized the relationship of slaves and slave-owners in the Antebellum South: “But slave-owners anywhere, I think, do have, like their slaves, a ‘tragic sense of life,’ a fullness in courage and compassion that has made of so many Southerners good soldiers and good judges.”²⁵ Without

²² John Rockwell, “A Conversation with Virgil Thomson,” *Parnassus: Poetry in Review* 5, no. 2 (Spring-Summer 1977): 423. Cited in Albert Weisser, “Jewish Music in Twentieth-Century America: Four Representative Figures” (Ph.D. diss., Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1980), 138.

²³ Thomson, *Virgil Thomson*, 13-14.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 20.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 20. Despite controversial statements like this, Thomson did much to aid black performers with whom he had contact. He worked together with Orson Welles in producing an all-black cast version of *Macbeth* (1934), and used Harlem performers for his opera *Four Saints in Three Acts* (1934).

condoning the institution of slavery, he expresses an admiration for the human qualities of both slaves and slave-owners, sensing parallels between them. His idealistic statement reflects a view of the Antebellum South in which both whites and blacks made valuable cultural contributions.

Thomson highlights this viewpoint in his film score to *The River* through his use of Anglo-American folk tunes associated with the South, and through the use of musical elements bearing African-American associations such as the banjo and the dialect song *Carry Me Back to Old Virginy*.²⁶ Even more significant is his sonic transformation of a white shape-note hymn into an African-American spiritual, which will be discussed later. He viewed both the Anglo-American and the African-American traditions as elements of authentic Southern folklore. In the film score to *The River*, Thomson synthesized his nostalgia for hymnody and for the South, especially through shape-note hymns.

2.1.3 Thomson's contact with George Pullen Jackson

As Thomson narrates, the scholarship of George Pullen Jackson led him to explore shape-note hymnody. Thomson's interest in shape-note hymns was sparked as he was researching regional musics for use in the score for *The River*. After reading Jackson's scholarship on shape-note hymns, Thomson contacted Jackson who lent him several of his sources²⁷ as well as field

²⁶ See Neil Lerner, "Damming Virgil Thomson's Music for *The River*," in *Collecting Visible Evidence*, ed. Jane M. Gaines and Michael Renov (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 109-110.

²⁷ Thomson, *Virgil Thomson*, 271. Thomson does not specify which works he had read by Jackson. The prominent discussion of the hymnbooks *The Southern Harmony* and *The Sacred Harp* in Jackson's *White Spirituals in the Southern Uplands: The Story of the Fiddle Folk, Their Songs, Singings, and "Buckwheat Notes"* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1933) as well as its early publication date suggest that this book was probably Thomson's primary source.

recordings.²⁸ Later, Jackson visited Thomson and played field recordings of the hymns. In his writings, Thomson stresses Jackson's identification of these hymns as "authentic folklore."²⁹

Their authenticity lent legitimacy to his musical exploration of the South, giving him the means by which he could enter into the South he had envisioned since childhood. Even his account of the search for a copy of *The Southern Harmony* bears marks of imaginative recreation of the region: "Maurice Grosser, painting in Tennessee, went out to the hills to look for more such books [shape-note hymnals] and found a plowing clergyman willing to lend, since it was 'for educational purpose,' his precious copy of the century-old *Southern Harmony*."³⁰

Thomson's use of *The Southern Harmony* alongside *The Sacred Harp* as a main source of hymnody for his film score to *The River* may have been influenced by the way in which this hymnal was found: obtaining an ancient, tattered hymnal from a man plowing his fields out back in the hills of Tennessee adds to the aura of authenticity surrounding the hymnal. Though Thomson does not specify which edition of either hymnal he used, we can infer from his discussion of the tattered "century-old" copy of *The Southern Harmony* that he used the original, 1835 edition of that text.³¹

2.1.4 Influence of the Social Gospel

Moving beyond Thomson's personal background, how was it that he found hymnody to be a culturally meaningful form of expression within the public media of concert performances and

²⁸ See Claudia Joan Widgery, "The Kinetic and Temporal Interaction of Music and Film: Three Documentaries of 1930's America" (Ph.D. diss., University of Maryland, 1990), 202.

²⁹ Ibid., 271.

³⁰ Ibid., 271.

³¹ Lacking other evidence, I have consulted the original 1844 edition of *The Sacred Harp* as the conjecturable source that Thomson used.

film scores? In the 1930s, American culture in general had a different relationship with public religion than is commonly found today. Though its influence was waning, the Social Gospel that emerged in the 1890s was still an important cultural force. In the Social Gospel movement, some Protestant denominations and churches avoided an emphasis on historic doctrines of the church and instead emphasized the church's role of affecting society in a positive way. Liberal Christians paired up with the Socialist Party and other organizations in quests to pursue the greater good of society.³² Activists such as Woody Guthrie still used religious imagery to call for radical political and social activism.³³ In the age of the Social Gospel, especially as it was married with increasing liberalism and skepticism towards historically held doctrines (such as the Virgin birth and miracles of Christ), the use of religious imagery and symbolism could be directed towards a wider audience than the subsection of the American population that actively practiced Protestant Christianity.

Partially because of the residual influence of the Social Gospel at this time, social and political dogma was often framed in religious terms.³⁴ As the role of the Social Gospel began to diminish, and as the poverty escalated around the country with the Great Depression, the U.S. government increasingly took on roles that had been filled by organized religion, especially through Franklin D. Roosevelt's "New Deal." Cushing Strout writes,

³² For a detailed discussion of the connections between liberal Christians, the Socialist parties, and other organizations, see Barbara E. Addison, "Pragmatic Pacifist: Devere Allen and the Interwar Peace Movement, 1918–1940," *Peace & Change* 29, no. 1 (January 2004): 81-105.

³³ Ron Briley, "The Christian Left's Vision (Remember Woody Guthrie?)" in *History News Network*, August 8, 2005, <http://hnn.us/articles/13445.html> (accessed January 11, 2006).

³⁴ Davis W. Houck and Mihaela Nocasian's article "FDR's First Inaugural Address: Text, Context, and Reception," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 5, no. 4 (Winter 2002): 649-678, provides an interesting backdrop for understanding the way religious language was used to frame political rhetoric in this time period. The authors discuss the overt Judeo-Christian metaphors used within Roosevelt's 1933 inaugural speech, as well as further religious meanings read into the speech by the American public.

Increasingly the Protestant churches accepted the idea that money for social services should come not from religious but from secular sources. Whereas in 1903 a third of benevolent institutions were church-connected, by 1940 in thirty-four urban areas more than 90 percent of relief, health, and welfare funds came from public agencies.³⁵

The use of religious terminology to describe the government's new functions eased the transfer of responsibility in the minds of the American public. And the U.S. government's assumption of responsibilities previously filled by religious organizations is an important backdrop to Thomson's use of hymns—shape-note and other—in the film score to *The River*.

2.1.5 Film-music theory

A brief summary of recent models for film-music analysis will set the stage for understanding Thomson's musical choices in the score to *The River*. Film scholars and musicologists have provided contrasting models for analyzing the relationship created between music and visual image in film. Early models view music as either reinforcing (paralleling) or creating tension with (counterpointing) the visual images. More recent scholars such as Claudia Gorbman question this older model because it implies that images are autonomous, with music playing a subservient role.³⁶ Gorbman suggests instead a model in which visuals, music, and other elements of the film come together in a role of "mutual implication" in service of the overall narrative.³⁷ She writes, "Image, sound effect, dialogue, and music-track are virtually inseparable during the viewing experience; they form a *combinatoire* of expression."³⁸ To further define the

³⁵ Cushing Strout, *The New Heavens and New Earth: Political Religion in America* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1974), 266.

³⁶ Claudia Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 15.

³⁷ Ibid., 15.

³⁸ Ibid., 15-16.

relationship between music and visuals, she suggests a semiotic analysis modeled on the work of Roland Barthes in which music plays a role of *ancrage*.

The primary semiotic function of music, then, is what Barthes calls *ancrage* in connection with the photograph caption. Music, like the caption, anchors the image in the meaning, throws a net around the floating visual signifier, assures the viewer of a safely channeled signified.³⁹

Two tools used by many current scholars for the analysis of film scores are the analysis of musical *topoi* and leitmotiv analysis. According to David Neumeyer and James Buhler, the analysis of musical *topoi* or “style topics” in a film score is more appropriate than resorting solely to traditional tonal analysis aimed at “absolute” instrumental music.⁴⁰ Neumeyer and Buhler define the stages of style-topic analysis: “The analysis of style topics in film scores operates on three distinct levels: the traits characteristic of a topic in general; the degree and manner in which a particular cue invokes the topic; and how the topics are deployed dramatically in the film.”⁴¹ By using a set of stock, easily recognizable conventions, the film score can help define characters, psychological moods, time and place, and plot development.

Leitmotifs use style topics to define specific elements, such as individual characters, in the narrative. Neumeyer and Buhler also provide insight into the task of leitmotiv analysis:

Leitmotiv analysis can be applied on two distinct levels: the musical characterization in the leitmotiv itself and its pattern of recurrence in the film. The first mode is very much concerned with technical analysis of musical detail, showing, for example, how a motif relates to a particular style topic (which can say something important about the character with which it is associated). The second deals with how the recurrence of a motif marks shifts in character and articulates large formal spans in the film; it is this mode that allows one most readily to tie the musical score into a narrative analysis.⁴²

³⁹ Ibid., 58.

⁴⁰ David Neumeyer and James Buhler, “Analytical and Interpretive Approaches to Film Music (I): Analysing the Music,” in *Film Music: Critical Approaches*, ed. by K. J. Donnelly (New York: The Continuum International Publishing Company, 2001), 19.

⁴¹ Ibid., 24.

⁴² Ibid., 29.

In the film score to *The River*, Thomson uses several kinds of previously existing music—such as folk songs, dialect songs, gospel hymns, shape-note hymns, and parlor music—as recognizable style topics to define place, time, and characters. He also uses a newly composed leitmotiv to delineate the Mississippi River, which is transformed over the course of the film, chromaticized to represent the increasing tragedy in nature and humanity along the river’s path.⁴³

Thomson’s use of shape-note tunes slightly transgressed the convention of recognizability in style topic as many of these hymns were not already familiar to the film’s audience, but had been recently discovered by the scholarly community. This “transgression” was probably recognized by director Pare Lorentz who complained about Thomson’s “overuse” of “back-country hymns” in the score until Thomson threatened to quit unless he was given artistic license to use whatever material he found most appropriate.⁴⁴ We may infer two reasons for his use of the hymns despite Lorentz’s opposition. First, as mentioned above, the shape-note hymns fused his nostalgia for hymnody and for the Old South. Second, Thomson’s film score created and advocated a *new* and “authentic” style topic for the representation of Southernness and Americana. Subsequent generations of composers, perhaps influenced by Thomson, have continued to use shape-note hymns to evoke these ideas, in film, program music, or song.

2.1.6 Overview of the film and score

Pare Lorentz’s documentary film *The River* traces the path of the Mississippi, beginning with the many tributaries that spill into it. His script’s distinctive narrative style features long strings of

⁴³ Neil Lerner analyzes the use of this motive in his “Damming Virgil Thomson’s Music for *The River*,” 109-110.

⁴⁴ Thomson, *Virgil Thomson*, 272.

nouns—lists of rivers, lists of mountains, lists of regions, lists of cities. In this way, he is able to Americanize what would at first seem to be a Southern problem: by naming familiar regions or natural landmarks all over the U.S., he invests people throughout the nation in the flooding problem that occurred only in the Mississippi River's valleys and Delta. He traces the historical commerce along the river, the rise and fall of the South, and the eventual destruction of natural resources as a direct result of the commerce. In the film's climax, Lorentz incorporates footage of the great flood of 1937, showing both the raw physical power of the flood as well as poignant scenes of people whose lives were destroyed by the flood. He then shows the problems of present-day itinerant workers, with personal and intimate glances into a family's daily life. The film concludes by narrating the government's solution to the many problems presented in the film, using dams and levees to control the Mississippi River, and offering grants and other kinds of support to farmers living on the ravaged land.

Much of the film score to *The River* is made up of pre-existing music. In their biography of Thomson, Kathleen Hoover and John Cage reproduce Thomson's program notes to the concert version of *The River* listing the pieces that he employed in the score.⁴⁵ Here, Thomson also provides invaluable information for understanding the musical style topics that he invoked in the score. Below are the tunes Thomson used in his score, with the tunes from the shape-note repertoire in bold type. The titles are as Thomson identifies them in his program notes to the work, even in cases in which another name is more frequently used for the tune:

⁴⁵ Program notes by Virgil Thomson, reprinted in Kathleen Hoover and John Cage, *Virgil Thomson: His Life and Music* (New York: Thomas T. Yoseloff, 1959), 180.

- *How Firm a Foundation, or Convention.*⁴⁶
- *My Shepherd Will Supply My Need, or Resignation*⁴⁷
- *Rose of Alabama, or Carry Me Back to Old Virginny*⁴⁸
- *What Solemn Sound the Ear Invades, or Death of Washington*⁴⁹
- *Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight*⁵⁰
- *The Eagles They Fly High in Mobile, or Captain Kyd*⁵¹
- *When Gabriel's Awful Trump Shall Sound, or Mississippi*⁵²
- *Go Tell Aunt Rhody the Old Gray Goose is Dead, or Saviour, Visit Thy Plantation*⁵³
- *Yes, Jesus Loves Me*⁵⁴
- *There's Not a Friend Like Lowly Jesus*⁵⁵

⁴⁶ Thomson's italicization. This folk tune was first found in Joseph Funk's *A Compilation of Genuine Church Music* (Winchester, VA: Published at the Office of the Republican: J.W. Hollis, printer, 1832). The text has been attributed to "K" or "Keen." Alternate titles include "Foundation" and "Bellevue." See James Nelson Gingerich and Matthew Lind, *The Harmonia Sacra Handbook* (Goshen, IN.: J.N. Gingerich and M. Lind, 1994), <http://www.entish.org/hs/handbook.html> (accessed February 6, 2009).

⁴⁷ According to Gingerich and Lind in *The Harmonia Sacra Handbook*, this folk tune first appeared in Freeman Lewis's *The Beauties of Harmony* [Pittsburgh: Cramer and Steel, ca. 1828]. The text is by Isaac Watts and was first published in his *The Psalms Of David: Applied To The Christian State And Worship, With Hymns And Spiritual Songs; With An Index To The First Line Of Every Verse* (London: Bagster, 1719).

⁴⁸ James A. Bland, "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny" (Boston: John F. Perry & Co., 1878).

⁴⁹ Also titled "Mt. Vernon." According to David Warren Steel, this tune composed by Stephen Jenks first appeared in Jenks's *The New England Harmonist* (Danbury, CT: Douglas & Nichols, for the author, 1799). No author has been identified for the text. See Steel, *Stephen Jenks: Collected Works*, Recent Researches in American Music 18 (Middleton, WI: A-R Editions, 1995), liv.

⁵⁰ Theodore August Metz and Joe Hayden, "A Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight" (New York: Willis Woodward & Co., 1896).

⁵¹ The tune family associated with "Captain Kyd," or more frequently "Captain Kidd," preceded the broadside text written for Captain Kidd's execution in 1707. See David Kidd, *Captain Kidd's Music: The History of a Melody*, <http://www.davidkidd.net/11music.htm> (accessed February 4, 2009). The tune was used frequently in the shape-note tradition as George Pullen Jackson discussed in several of his books (for example, *White Spirituals in the Southern Uplands*, 169). It is likely that Thomson, from his study of and correspondence with Jackson, was aware of the dual sacred-secular resonances in the history of this tune. "The Eagles They Fly High in Mobile" refers to a bawdy folk text set to this tune family. See Vance Randolph and Gershon Legman, "Unprintable" *Ozark Folksongs and Folklore, Volume I: Folksongs and Music* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1992), 266.

⁵² This hymn was first published in William Walker's *The Southern Harmony and Musical Companion* (Spartanburg, SC: William Walker, 1835), with "Bradford" cited as its source.

⁵³ David W. Music summarizes the early stages of this tune: "SWEET AFFLICTION originated as an instrumental pantomime in Jean Jaques Rousseau's *Le devin du village*, composed in 1752 and performed (in Paris) and published in 1753. An adaptation of the melody entitled ROUSSEAU'S DREAM was published by the Englishman Thomas Walker in the fourth edition of *Walker's Companion to Dr. Rippon's Tunebook* and in the *Second Supplement to Walker's Companion*, both of 1819. ...Its first known appearance as a hymn tune in America was in the second edition of Lowell Mason's *Boston Handel and Haydn Society Collection of Church Music* (1823) where it was entitled Greenville...and it first appeared in the southern United States in Funk 1832 [*Genuine Collection of Church Music*]." Music, ed. *A Selection of Shape-Note Folk Hymns from Southern United States Tune Books, 1816-61*, Recent Researches in American Music 52 (Middleton, WI: A-R Editions, 2005), liii.

⁵⁴ The text of this hymn is by Anna B. Warner, first published in Susan Warner's novel *Say and Seal* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1860). The tune and chorus were composed by William Bradbury, first published in *Bradbury's Golden Shower of S.S. Melodies* (New York: Ivison, Phinney & Co., 1862).

In the film score, Thomson preserves various levels of the shape-note hymns' musical language, including:

- pentatonic (five-note scale) or diatonic (seven-note scale) melody and harmony
- Aeolian or natural minor scale (occasionally Dorian) for hymns in the minor mode, marked by a lack of the leading tone
- independent melodic lines in all voices
- emphasis on open fifths, and quartal-quintal harmonies (built from stacked fourths and fifths)
- parallel motion between voices, especially at the perfect fifth and octave
- dissonances unprepared and unresolved according to the rules of common practice tonality
- fugue-like passages with the lines echoing and intertwining with each other

In certain places, such as the score's opening (0:10)⁵⁶ and the concluding use of "How Firm a Foundation" (30:25), Thomson's triadic harmonies partially replace the original harmonies of the hymn. These sections are derived from Thomson's four-movement orchestral work *Symphony on a Hymn Tune* (1928), in which he had used the tune without an awareness of its origins.⁵⁷ However, in other parts of the score, Thomson pays special attention to the peculiar musical style of the hymns. His settings of "Mount Vernon" ("What Solemn Sound the Ear Invades") and "Mississippi" especially evidence the preservation of shape-note elements.

⁵⁵ Tune by George C. Hugg and text by Johnson Oatman Jr. The first source I have found containing this hymn is Charles Davis Tillman's *The Revival, No. 3: Suitable for all Kinds of Religious Meetings* ([Atlanta, GA]: Charles Tillman, 1889).

⁵⁶ The track numbers refer to the DVD release of *The River* included on the collection *Our Daily Bread and Other Films of the Great Depression*, produced by David Shepard (Film Preservation Associates, 1999). This film has also been recently released with a recreation of the soundtrack by the Post-Classical Ensemble, with Angel Gil-Ordóñez music director, Joseph Horowitz artistic director, and Floyd King narrator: *The Plow that Broke the Plains and The River: The Original Pare Lorentz Films with Newly Recorded Soundtracks of the Classic Scores by Virgil Thomson* ([Hong Kong]: Naxos 2.110521, 2007).

⁵⁷ Thomson, *Virgil Thomson*, 273. Since Thomson uses the tune with an awareness of its origins in the score to *The River*, it can be argued that even though he has made little change from its setting in *Symphony on a Hymn Tune*, he is using the hymn as a shape-note hymn.

“Mount Vernon” appears as the narrator discusses the ravaged people and land following the immense destruction of the Civil War and the ensuing collapse of the Southern economy (orchestra mark IVB)⁵⁸ (7:22). Scenes of desolate land and rickety shacks illustrate the poverty. The doleful Aeolian/natural minor key of the hymn conveys the sorrow of the narrative, but also can be read as Thomson’s own mourning for the lost South that he idealized. “Mount Vernon” is a fugal tune, with a verse in three-part harmony and a chorus consisting of constant imitation between the voices (beginning at “Where shall our country”) (Figure 1).⁵⁹ In his setting, Thomson closely preserves the melodic, harmonic and polyphonic features of the hymn. He lengthens note values occasionally, avoiding the predictable phrase lengths of the hymn setting.

110 MOUNT VERNON. L. M. D.

What sol-lemn sound the ear invades, From heaven the awful mandate flies, The Father of his coun-try dies. Where
What wraps the land in sorrow's shade?

Where shall our country

What help, &c. Our, Our, &c.

shall our country turn its eye, Our friend, protector, strength, and trust, Lies low and mould'ring in the dust.
What help remains beneath the sky?

turn its eye, What help remains be-neath the sky? Our friend, protector, strength, and trust, Our. &c

Figure 1. *The Sacred Harp*. “Mount Vernon”

⁵⁸ The orchestral marks cited refer to editorial marks on the manuscript score of Virgil Thomson’s score to *The River* located at The Philadelphia Free Library, call number 3731.

⁵⁹ B. F. White, and E. J. King, compilers, *The Sacred Harp: A Collection of Psalms and Hymn Tunes, Odes and Anthems, Selected from the Most Eminent Authors...* (Philadelphia: for the proprietors, White, Massengale, Hamilton, GA, 1844).

The hymn “Mississippi” is in F# natural minor, or Aeolian. In general, energetic motion is created through the frequent rhythmic independence of the lines. The melody, in the middle voice, is surrounded by two independent lines of harmony. Parallel octaves, fifths and fourths frequently occur between the voices, for example in mm. 2 and 4. Cadences are marked by the absence of the third of the chord. Note also how the parallelism between the outer voices sometimes reduces the texture to two lines (mm. 2, 4, 6, 16), contrasting with the contrary motion between the outer voices in other measures (such as mm. 1, 5, 7, 9) (Figure 2).⁶⁰

148 MISSISSIPPI. 8, 8, 8, 7, 8, 8, 3, 3, 3, 3, 8. *Braashaw.*

When Gabriel's awful trump shall sound, And rend the rocks, convulse the ground, Ye dead, arise to judgment; See lightnings
And give to time her ut - most bound,

Flash and thunders roll, See earth wrapt up like parchment scroll; Dread amaze, The guilty sons of Adam's race, Unsav'd from sin by Jesus.
Comets blaze, Sinners raise, Horrors seize

The Christian fill'd with rapturous joy, Midst flaming worlds he mounts on high, To meet the Saviour in the sky, And see the face of Jesus;
The soul and body reunite. And fill'd with glory infinite. Blessed day. Christians say! Will you pray. That we may All join the happy company, To praise the name of Jesus

Figure 2. *The Southern Harmony.* “Mississippi”

Courtesy of the Pitts Theology Library, Candler School of Theology, Emory University.

⁶⁰ William Walker, *The Southern Harmony and Musical Companion; Containing a Choice Collection of Tunes, Hymns, Psalms, Odes, and Anthems ... Also, an Easy Introduction to the Grounds of Music, the Rudiments of Music, and Plain Rules for Beginners* (Spartanburg, SC: William Walker, 1835).

Thomson first invokes the tune as the river begins to flood (14:40). Slow and *pianissimo*, with a timpani ostinato on a low F# throughout, the hymn conveys impending tragedy.⁶¹ Thomson lingers on cadential notes, adding rests between the phrases. The melody of the hymn verse is first performed by a solo English horn (orchestra mark VIIa mm. 1-16) (Figure 3).⁶²



Figure 3. Thomson, *The River*. Orchestra Mark VIIa, mm. 1-16
Used by permission of the Virgil Thomson Foundation, Ltd., copyright owner.

An oboe takes over the melody line in the chorus, with the English horn performing a new melody against it (Figure 4). Note that even though Thomson does not preserve the original harmony of the hymn, he does retain the characteristic parallel fifths between the voices.

⁶¹ Thomson preserves the key of the hymn as printed in *The Southern Harmony*. However, in the shape-note tradition, key is relative and not determined by the score's notated pitch. In a singing, a leader determines the key by sounding a pitch that will give all singers a comfortable range in which to sing their parts. Thomson's choice to use the key notated in *The Southern Harmony* possibly reflects his primary exposure to this tradition through scores, rather than through direct contact with oral-tradition performances.

⁶² Except for the original hymns used as examples, and where otherwise noted, I created the musical examples used here and elsewhere in the dissertation using the Finale notation software.



Figure 4. Thomson, *The River*. Orchestra Mark VIIa, mm. 17-24.

Used by permission of the Virgil Thomson Foundation, Ltd., copyright owner.

Thomson adds a bassoon to the texture, doubling the English horn line an octave lower (m. 25-36). This sound is analogous to the practice in the shape-note tradition of having men and women double the higher parts (tenor and treble) in shape-note performance traditions, creating a denser texture (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Thomson, *The River*. Orchestra Mark VIIa, mm. 25-36

Used by permission of the Virgil Thomson Foundation, Ltd., copyright owner.

Thomson then transforms the hymn into a kind of “fuging tune,” with the imitation between the voices increasing as the flood swells. At the same time, the narration lists years, from the beginning of the twentieth century to a climax with “1937,” the year of the flood footage. The narration also lists the tributaries overflowing into the Mississippi River, almost as if the river itself were becoming a fugue, with these lines of water overtaking and overlapping each other to culminate in a flood. The overlapping of the fugal entrances in the score mirrors the visuals of the fierce breaking waves. The orchestration becomes fuller and the dynamics swell as the flood grows in force. At certain points in the film, blaring sirens completely obscure the sound of the hymn (see 16:30-16:45, for example), but as the clamor subsides, the hymn continues on like the currents in the water. The hymn ends as scenes of stormy darkness appear, with newly composed, highly chromatic music taking its place (orchestra mark VIIc).

Thomson highlights the similarities of “Mount Vernon” and “Mississippi” through the preservation of the harmonic language common to both hymns (particularly “forbidden” parallelism between the voices, perfect fifths and octaves, as well as quartal-quintal sonorities), as well as through his transformation of “Mississippi” into a fuging tune similar to “Mount Vernon.” Through these hymns, Thomson creates a powerful aural link between two crucial moments in the film: “Mount Vernon” accompanies the destruction of the South following the Civil War, while “Mississippi” foreshadows the re-devastation of the South through the onrushing flood.

2.1.7 Thomson, Jackson, and music as historiography

The use of another shape-note hymn in *The River*—namely “Resignation”—deserves special attention, as Thomson consciously develops the tune in a way that reflects George Pullen

Jackson's presuppositions about music history. Jackson represented the "white spirituals" as the predecessors to the "Negro spirituals," a theory that Thomson accepted. In his program notes to the arrangement of *The River* as an orchestral suite, Thomson writes that the "so-called Negro spirituals" are offshoots of the white spirituals.⁶³ More recent scholars, such as Dena Epstein, have demonstrated the error in this widespread view of Negro spirituals as the direct descendants of "white spirituals."⁶⁴

Virgil Thomson composes out his perception of the spiritual's family tree through his transformation of a "white spiritual" into a "Negro spiritual" in the score of *The River*. "Resignation" ("My Shepherd Will Supply My Need") first appears in the score after Pare Lorentz has traced the tributaries that spill into the Mississippi River. Its pentatonic melody, major diatonic harmony and full orchestration reflect the joyous rushing of the water as the Mississippi river visually appears for the first time in all its strength (Figure 6).

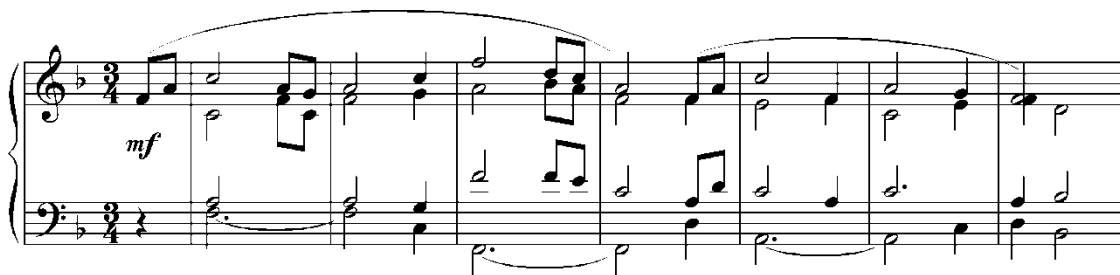


Figure 6. Thomson, *The River*. Orchestra Mark IIIb, mm. 1-7. Diatonic rendition of "Resignation," first phrase. Reduced score from full orchestration

Used by permission of the Virgil Thomson Foundation, Ltd., copyright owner.

⁶³ Reprinted in Kathleen Hoover and John Cage, *Virgil Thomson*, 180.

⁶⁴ See Dena J. Epstein, "A White Origin for the Black Spiritual? An Invalid Theory and How It Grew," *American Music* 1, no. 2 (Summer 1983): 53-59. Epstein points out two basic errors in Jackson's theory, flaws that did not originate with Jackson, but characterized much of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century scholarship on black music. First, Jackson uses the publication dates of white and black spirituals as evidence of their lineage, an approach that is flawed in regards to oral-tradition music. Second, Jackson ignores performance practices unique to the black spiritual tradition that did not originate in the performance of shape-note hymns.

Transitioning away from the rushing river, the film turns to narrate the history of commerce alongside the Mississippi, beginning with the cotton trade. Black men are shown, each working with a mule and a small plow (3:13). The full texture of the earlier diatonic rendition of *Resignation* gives way to a solo English horn, with timpani—perhaps a musical style topic of African drums—throbbing in the background. The melody for the most part retains its pentatonic outlines, but now it hovers around the tonality of D-minor. The end of the phrase jolts to a close, with two chromatic notes (the first chromatic event in “*Resignation*”) perhaps evoking the lowered pitches in the blues or in jazz, (Figure 7).⁶⁵

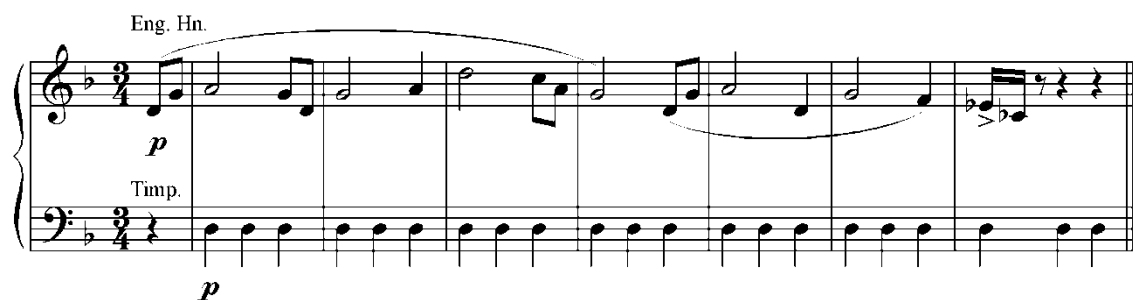


Figure 7. Thomson, *The River*. Orchestra Mark IIIc, mm. 1-7. “*Resignation*” with chromaticism, first phrase

Used by permission of the Virgil Thomson Foundation, Ltd., copyright owner.

The two flattened notes evoke African-American styles of music, such as Negro spirituals, the blues, and jazz. In an even more dramatic imitation of sounds associated with African-American musical genres, especially spirituals, Thomson fragments the melody between voices, creating a call-and-response dialogue between the first clarinet and the strings, adding syncopations reminiscent of ragtime rhythms to the strings’ response to the clarinet’s call (Figure 8). The

⁶⁵ In the blues scale, the third and sixth degrees of the scales are flatted.

pairing of these musical gestures with the depiction of black fieldworkers come together in what Gorbman would label a “*combinatoire* of expression”⁶⁶ to create the powerful transformation of the hymn from a “white” to a “black” spiritual.



Figure 8. Thomson, *The River*. Orchestral Marking III d, mm. 1-8. Call-and-response and syncopated treatment of “Resignation.” Reduced score

Used by permission of the Virgil Thomson Foundation, Ltd., copyright owner.

2.1.8 The Government loves me, this I know?

There has been some discussion in the scholarly literature on Thomson’s score to *The River* of the connections between the narrative of *The River* and the texts of the hymns used in Thomson’s score. The narrative presents the course of a river, the devastation of a flood, and finally, reparations made through governmental assistance. Neil Lerner suggests, “To write music for a film discussing redemption after flooding, why not find melodies whose texts talk about

⁶⁶ Gorbman, 15-16.

redemption after flooding?”⁶⁷ The hymn “Convention” used in the opening and conclusion of the film includes a verse specifically referencing flood imagery (“When through the deep waters you call me to go”), while the apocalyptic imagery of “Mississippi” with “rending rocks” and “convulsing ground” underscores the floodwaters breaking loose in the film.⁶⁸

Continuing with the imagery in texts reinforcing the themes of the film, the tune Lerner identifies as “Go Tell Aunt Rhody” (citing its appropriateness because of its images of death—“the old grey goose is dead”)⁶⁹ has a contrafactum⁷⁰ in *The Southern Harmony* titled “Sweet Affliction” (Figure 9), whose text by Samuel Pearson further reinforces the water and flood imagery that permeates this score.⁷¹ This tune appears in the score immediately following the climactic flood scenes, as damage to the land is surveyed (20:55).

Though Thomson himself identifies this contrafactum as “Saviour, Visit Thy Plantation,” referencing another text associated with this tune, the evidence points to Thomson’s awareness of the text-tune combination found in “Sweet Affliction,” and his deliberate evocation of the imagery of the text.⁷² The earliest examples of this tune in Southern tunebooks—Joseph Funk’s *A Compilation of Genuine Church Music* (1832),⁷³ *The Sacred Harp* (1844),⁷⁴ and the second⁷⁵

⁶⁷ Neil Lerner, “Damming Virgil Thomson’s Music for *The River*,” 109.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 107, 112.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 113.

⁷⁰ In its broadest sense, “contrafactum” (“contrafacta,” plural) refers to a substitution of a new text for a previously existing text in a work of music. However, in a stricter sense, it can be used to refer to a sacred text substituted for a secular text. See Martin Robert Falck and Martin Picker, “Contrafactum.” In *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online* <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.proxy-remote.galib.uga.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/06361> (accessed April 7, 2009).

⁷¹ Gingerich and Lind identify this text as first appearing in Samuel Pearce’s *Memoirs of the Late Rev. Samuel Pearce, A.M. Minister of the Gospel in Birmingham*, compiled by Andrew Fuller (Clipston: Printed by J.W. Morris, 1800). *The Harmonia Sacra Handbook*, <http://www.entish.org/hs/handbook.html> (accessed February 6, 2009).

⁷² Hoover and Cage, *Virgil Thomson*, 180.

⁷³ Joseph Funk, *A Compilation of Genuine Church Music* (Winchester, VA: Published at the Office of the Republican: J.W. Hollis, Printer, 1832).

and third editions⁷⁶ of *The Southern Harmony* (1847 and 1854)—all use Samuel Pearce’s text “In the Floods of Tribulation” and the tune title “Sweet Affliction.”⁷⁷ The scholarship that I have read to this point has not taken into account the meanings created by understanding Thomson’s use of this tune in the light of this widely used text-tune pairing. In this text, flood imagery appears in the very first line: “In the floods of tribulation, while the billows o’er me roll.” In the conclusion of the first verse, “Jesus whispers consolation, and supports my fainting soul,” the text could serve as a transition to redemption (Figure 9).⁷⁸



Figure 9. *The Southern Harmony*. “Sweet Affliction”

Courtesy of the Pitts Theology Library, Candler School of Theology, Emory University.

The text of this contrafactum hymn, therefore, plays an important role in the flood, destruction, and reparation narrative of the film, one that would not be adequately filled by the dead goose in “Aunt Rhody” suggested by Lerner; the text of the hymn reinforces the transition Lerner suggests in the film from the destructiveness of the flood to “redemption” through governmental

⁷⁴ B. F. White and E. J. King, compilers, *The Sacred Harp* (Philadelphia: for the proprietors, White, Massengale, Hamilton, GA, 1844).

⁷⁵ William Walker, *The Southern Harmony*, 2nd ed. (Spartansburg, SC: William Walker, 1847).

⁷⁶ William Walker, *The Southern Harmony, and Musical Companion*, 3rd ed. (Philadelphia: Miller & Burlock, 1854).

⁷⁷ Music, *A Selection of Shape-Note Folk Hymns from Southern United States Tune Books*, liii.

⁷⁸ Walker, *The Southern Harmony and Musical Companion* (1835).

aid.⁷⁹ Its flood-centered text strengthens the water narrative employed by Thomson and Lorentz in the film, and the minor key that Thomson employs in the setting of the tune mourns the damage by the flood just portrayed in the film, as well as pointing forward to the “consolation” to be initiated by the U.S. government.

Lerner argues persuasively that Thomson’s score uses hymns with strong images of Jesus as redeemer to underscore the role of government agencies in restoring the damage created by the flood. He writes,

As the film moves on to show the rebuilding efforts of the FSA, CCC, and TVA, the music continues with consonant harmonizations of the hymns “Yes, Jesus Loves Me,” “There’s Not a Friend Like the Lowly Jesus,” and “My Shepherd Will Supply My Need.” Once again, divine and governmental agencies occupy different levels of the same narrative, both of which find subtle support through the ever-flowing musical score.⁸⁰

However, these hymns do not appear synchronously with governmental rebuilding efforts in the film. “Yes, Jesus Loves Me,” “There’s Not a Friend Like the Lowly Jesus,” and “Resignation” appear during poignant images of the squalor and suffering of the itinerant farming families (scene beginning in 22:14). The government may be an *implicit* character in these scenes, but the characters explicitly portrayed through image and narration are the suffering farm workers and their children. Two of these hymns are not shape-note hymns, but are instead popular gospel hymns probably learned during Thomson’s Baptist upbringing. Through the combination of hymns and visual imagery Thomson appears to be reaching beyond the immediate help of governmental agencies to issue a broader social plea. Through the hymns, to use terminology

⁷⁹ Thomson also identifies this as a contrafactum hymn “Saviour, Visit Thy Plantation,” another text that would fit appropriately with the film’s narrative. Program notes by Thomson, reprinted in Hoover and Cage, *Virgil Thomson: His Life and Music*, 180.

⁸⁰ Lerner, “Damming Virgil Thomson’s Music for *The River*,” 113.

associated with the Popular Front, Thomson creates an appeal to the common man on behalf of the common man.

John Cage noted Thomson's technique of using songs of the people in Thomson's later score for Lorentz's film *The Louisiana Story* (1948) in scenes focused on human elements, reserving original music for scenes depicting more abstract imagery such as landscapes.⁸¹ Like the score to *The River*, Thomson's score to *The Louisiana Story* employs simple hymns that were probably familiar to many tenant farmers, to convey their humanity.

Returning to the score of *The River*, the metaphor "lowly Jesus" invokes several layers of imagery. First, his "lowliness" parallels the poverty-stricken circumstances of the migrant workers, and evokes the humanity of Jesus. Especially in the Socialist rhetoric of the time, Jesus was portrayed in his role as the defender of the poor: "Jesus was the champion of the poor and meek, who would inherit the earth and drive the money changers out of the temple."⁸² Second, the "Jesus" imagery calls for a response from the viewer. Lorentz uses heart-rending footage, such as the depiction of a woman preparing meager stews for her clearly malnourished children, to engage the viewer's sympathies. At the height of the Social Gospel movement, through his book *In His Steps* (1896) Charles Sheldon asked people to consider "What would Jesus do?" in the case of current social problems. In this film, in the context of the secular New Deal, the question echoes in a call for "What should *humanity* do?" especially, though not exclusively, through the tools of governmental intervention. The sequence concludes with the use of "Resignation," (23:59) whose text, again, begins with "My Shepherd will provide my need..." again setting up the governmental aid that will be provided. The hymn also provides a transition

⁸¹ Hoover and Cage, *Virgil Thomson*, 206.

⁸² Ron Briley, "The Christian Left's Vision (Remember Woody Guthrie?)," in *History News Network*, August 8, 2005, <http://hnn.us/articles/13445.html> (accessed January 11, 2006).

back to the Mississippi River, this time a calm and peaceful river, perhaps reflecting the pastoral imagery of the hymn.

To understand Thomson's use of hymns during these scenes more fully, it is useful to look at another part of the Farm Security Administration, the photography branch, and how it depicted religious activity. Colleen McDannell addresses this in her book on the photography of the FSA, *Picturing Faith: Photography and the Great Depression*.⁸³ The FSA photographs of poverty-stricken people in religious situations are used to evoke empathy for their plights, and through that, support for governmental intervention. Here, again, to convey a social message, the FSA used religious terms or imagery to invoke a cultural response beyond that of a limited social/religious order.

McDannell discusses several levels of cultural work performed by the photographs of people engaged in religious activities. First, they created a personal connection between the viewer of the picture and the problems depicted. She writes, "[F]ew Americans would be moved by a set of dry facts. If Americans *saw* the lives of the poor, they would be more concerned about poverty in the United States."⁸⁴ Second, people participating in religion were people participating in *culture*. Their religious activities humanized them in the eyes of the viewer. She writes,

Picturing religious behaviors communicated the idea that the lives of the migrants were richer than the ramshackle collections of old cars, mattresses, and tents indicated. Including religion made the photographs look "real" because religion introduced a dimension of life beyond that of hard work. These were not merely laboring animals living in squalid conditions; these were people—like us—who had a recognizable way of life.⁸⁵

⁸³ Colleen McDannell, *Picturing Faith: Photography and the Great Depression* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004).

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 34.

Finally, these photographs serve to underscore the connections between Populism and the Social Gospel, and could draw in support for social change from religious practitioners viewing the photographs.

Populism and evangelism share a pragmatic concern for reform, an anti-big business orientation, and the belief that Americans can successfully improve their society because of their Christian commitments. ...Farmers met in churches and used biblical language to articulate their concerns. ... “Getting religion” for many Americans has been a politically radicalizing experience.⁸⁶

Though the workers portrayed in *The River* are not engaged in specifically religious activities, the use of hymns in the score provides a religious framework analogous to that used by the photographers of the FSA. The poignancy of the hymns in Thomson’s contemplative setting, paired with the visual imagery of a migrant family engaged in ordinary activities (preparing supper, tucking the children into bed) serve to humanize the family represented, and engage the sympathies of the viewer.

2.1.9 Conclusion

Thomson’s use of shape-note hymns in the film score to *The River* took place within a complex time in American history, in a culture particularly conflicted in regards to the issues of religion and race. Neil Lerner argues that Thomson’s use of shape-note hymns, and more broadly, his choices of vernacular tunes, in the film score to *The River* create a subtext of “racial friction” and “southern fundamentalism.”⁸⁷ He writes, “The religious music Thomson uses as a launching point for his film score comes from a source identifiable in terms of race (white), class (generally lower), and religion (Protestant). ...The words sung to these melodies reflect a specific set of

⁸⁶ Ibid., 11.

⁸⁷ Lerner, “Damming Virgil Thomson’s Music for *The River*,” 113.

religious values, one that does not speak either for or to all American citizens.”⁸⁸ Lerner has created an argument for an exclusivist meaning for the film score, arguing that the hymns would be meaningful primarily for white Protestant Americans familiar with them. Lerner’s point is important: those who were familiar with the hymn-texts could read the film in a different way than those unfamiliar with the hymns.

However, when viewed both through Thomson’s personal background as well as through the larger sociopolitical framework of the time, the label of “exclusivism” becomes problematic. By reading the film score through the lens of Thomson’s idealization of the South, as well as the complex relationship between the Social Gospel and other political movements of the time, a different landscape comes into sight. Thomson’s romanticized view of the Antebellum South, in which whites and blacks cooperated together in culture-making, is reflected in his use of music associated with black communities as well as music associated with white communities in this film, and especially with the transformation of a “white spiritual” into a black spiritual. Though Thomson’s perspectives on the Old South were naïve at best, he certainly was not striving for a cultural representation that was exclusivist in its appeal. Likewise, the invocation of hymns to represent social intervention through governmental aid is not a plea directed exclusively towards white American Protestants. The residual Social Gospel influences were being transformed at this time into broader pleas for social justice, especially through Roosevelt’s New Deal. Thomson’s choice of several tunes that were contrafacta thereby situated in a space both religious and secular, mirrors this interaction between the sacred and the secular in the time period. Further, hymns by their very nature are created to be sung by a community; their communal nature highlights the appeal to the common people made by Lerner’s documentary.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 107.

In *The River*, the hymns function similarly to the visual and narrative depictions of the Mississippi River within the film. Clearly, the Mississippi River occupies a specific geographical landscape, and the film depicts the particular damage done to the riverscape and the resultant floods through the misuse of natural resources. However, the film is not titled *The Mississippi River*, but simply *The River*. The title generalizes and universalizes the struggles depicted in the film. Through the title and the nearly mythic quality of the narration, the Mississippi River becomes a more general symbol of the poverty and suffering of the American people during the Depression. Likewise, though the hymns were created for an altogether different purpose by a particular geographical, religious, and racial group, in the film they come to symbolize a broad cooperation of religious and non-religious groups in alleviating the distress in the aftermath of the Great Depression.

2.2 AARON COPLAND, “ZION’S WALLS”: A SHAPE-NOTE HYMN AS A JEWISH-AMERICAN ANTHEM

2.2.1 McCarthyism and Zionism

For Aaron Copland, the period between 1949 and 1953 was a time of turmoil and change. The onset of McCarthyism within American culture created increasing difficulties for many composers, authors, filmmakers and others who were publicly involved with the arts. In April 1949, *Life* magazine published an article exposing Copland and others as communist sympathizers or at the very least “dupes” who played into the communists’ sinister plans.⁸⁹ The pressure of these kinds of accusations increased for Copland, resulting in the last-minute removal of his *Lincoln Portrait* from Eisenhower’s inaugural concert in January 1953, and culminating in Copland’s subpoena to appear before the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, headed by Senator Joseph McCarthy, in May 1953. Clearly, the rumors, allegations, and accusations of unpatriotic and anti-American behavior impelled Copland to emphasize his American identity on several levels, framing his identity in words (in letters to friends, adversaries, and the public), but especially through his music. During this period, Copland used a strategy of emphasizing the *ephemeral* quality of politics compared to the lasting quality of music. In a statement released to newspapers in 1953, he writes (shrewdly distancing himself from Communist Russia at the same time),

⁸⁹ “Red Visitors Cause Rumpus,” in *Life Magazine* 26, no. 14 (April 4, 1949): 39-43. Cited by Howard Pollack, *Aaron Copland: The Life and Work of An Uncommon Man* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1999), 451.

Bad as our situation may be, no American politician has yet called for the banning of an American composer's work because of its aesthetic content, as is the case in Russia today. I'd a thousand times prefer to have my music turned down by Republican congressman on political grounds...than have it turned down for aesthetic reasons. It is easy to see why this is so: My "politics"—tainted or untainted—are certain to die with me, but my music, I am foolish enough to imagine, might just possibly outlive the Republican Party.⁹⁰

During this same period, in the spring of 1951, Copland traveled to the newly formed nation of Israel for the first time, at the invitation of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra.⁹¹ The visit impressed him deeply. He wrote to Victor Kraft that visiting Israel would convince even Hitler to become a Zionist.⁹² Though often reticent about his Jewish heritage, his accounts of this time in Israel emphasize a strong sympathy with the Zionist movement. Copland did not actively practice any form of Jewish religion as an adult, but throughout his life he had sympathy for the concerns of the Jewish community, even writing several works using Jewish forms and themes. Howard Pollack elaborates on the affinity that Copland felt towards Zionism, especially as it was strengthened through this visit to Israel:

Although, like many progressive Jewish artists and intellectuals of his time, he worried about the dangers of a theocratic state, [Copland's compositions] "My Heart is in the East" and "We've Come" suggested some early sympathy for Zionism. His first trip to Israel in 1951 thoroughly converted him to the cause; the country, he wrote to friends, would make Zionists out of both Hitler and the old guard American composer Daniel Gregory Mason.⁹³

A brief look at the history of Zionism will clarify Copland's relationship to the movement. The Zionist movement, having its roots in nineteenth-century Nationalism, had been controversial from its outset, in Jewish and non-Jewish communities. Its Nationalism was

⁹⁰ Copland, "Undated Press Release" [1953], reproduced in Aaron Copland and Vivian Perlis, *Copland Since 1943* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), 186.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 171.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 173.

⁹³ Pollack, *Aaron Copland*, 27. Daniel Gregory Mason (1873-1953) was an American composer whose remarks on Jewish composers sometimes bordered on anti-Semitism. See David Z. Kushner, "Ernest Bloch, Daniel Gregory Mason and the Jewish Question," in *American Music Teacher* 38, no. 6 (June-July 1989): 16-19.

unique, since Jews lacked both a nation and a common language.⁹⁴ Its primary goal was to rebuild the nation of Israel; some of its proponents worked from a secular viewpoint, wanting to establish a place of refuge from the anti-Semitism experienced by Jews all over the world, while others longed to rebuild Israel in order to fulfill a biblical prophecy and usher in the Messiah. The reactions from Jewish communities and sects around the world varied. At one end of the spectrum were those who vehemently opposed the movement because they saw it as replacing a heavenly Kingdom with an earthly, secular one. At the other end were those who supported it completely and incontrovertibly. Between the two ends were many other reactions to it, including those who were uneasy on religious grounds, but who saw it as a pragmatic solution to the problems of worldwide anti-Semitism, especially as the horrors of Nazism gradually were revealed.⁹⁵

The Zionist movement received particular support from American Jews, through money, sponsoring organizations, and political activism. American Zionism was greeted with vacillating levels of support from the wider American public. At some historical moments, many treated the movement with disdain, sometimes with virulent anti-Semitism driving the opposition to the movement.⁹⁶ At other times, however, the movement was treated as equivalent to Americanism, with attention given to shared ideals such as their common concern for “philanthropy.”⁹⁷ This view was especially propagated by Louis Dembitz Brandeis, an American politician of Jewish heritage, who publicly championed the causes of Zionism as the head of the Provisional

⁹⁴ Naomi W. Cohen, *American Jews and the Zionist Idea* (New York: Ktav Publishing House Inc., 1975), xi.

⁹⁵ For a thorough discussion of the reaction to Zionism by different Jewish sects, see Aviezer Ravitsky, *Messianism, Zionism, and Jewish Religious Radicalism*, trans. Michael Swirsky and Jonathan Chipman (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

⁹⁶ Cohen writes “Anti-Semitism at the end of the war [World War II] was largely the trade of the guise of anti-Zionism,” 87.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 32.

Executive Committee for General Zionist Affairs, beginning in 1914.⁹⁸ Naomi Cohen writes that Brandeis “interpreted the essence of both the American and Zionist dreams to mean equal justice, political democracy, and economic opportunity for the little people.”⁹⁹

The early 1950s, the time of Copland’s visit to Israel, marked a particular highpoint in the Zionism-as-Americanism equation. First, the United States had officially recognized Israel immediately upon the announcement of its independence as a nation in 1948. Second, the land of Israel appeared to be an appropriate guilt offering for the devastation of the Jews in Europe. Finally, in the midst of Cold War politics Israel was treated as a symbol and possible defender of democracy in the Middle East. Cohen writes, “Supporters of Israel...stressed its industrial potential, scientific progress, and proved military capacity. With American aid, they said, Israel could become a vital link in the democratic chain of defense.”¹⁰⁰

It would seem, therefore, that the end of the 1940s through the beginning of the 1950s marked a convergence of identities in Copland’s life: a heightened pressure to emphasize his American identity coupled with a more public identification with his Jewish heritage through his visit to Israel. Copland’s two sets of *Old American Songs* written during this period can easily be read as a heightened marker of American identity, featuring songs from diverse American traditions (including play songs, work songs, ballads and minstrel songs with offensive language removed). But particularly, Copland’s setting of the shape-note hymn “Zion’s Walls” in the second set marks the convergence of his Jewish and American identities.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 14-18.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 16.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 97.

2.2.2 Copland's sources

Copland gathered the material for his two sets of *Old American Songs* from several sources, doing much of his score study within the Harris Collection of American Poetry and Plays at Brown University, studying score.¹⁰¹ He also listened to recordings, such as those created by John Lomax.¹⁰² Pollack notes that except for the undated folk songs, the songs Copland selected date from the 1830s-1860s.¹⁰³ The hymn "Zion's Walls" was first published in John G. McCurry's *The Social Harp* (1855). Though most of the songs he set are secular, Copland arranged two other sacred songs in addition to "Zion's Walls" within these sets: "Simple Gifts" (Shaker tune, ca. 1837-47) and "At the River" (Christian revivalist song, 1865). As will be seen in "Zion's Walls" as well, the verses which Copland sets in these hymns are optimistic and cheerful, yet avoid theological specificity or exclusivity.

Copland's contact with "Zion's Walls" preceded his use of it in the *Old American Songs* by about ten years. Copland originally arranged this in 1945 as music for the play *Tragic Ground*.¹⁰⁴ But the play failed, and the music was never published.

Copland almost certainly came in contact with this material through the publications of George Pullen Jackson and possibly only through the work of Jackson, as only a few original copies of *The Social Harp* appear to be extant.¹⁰⁵ On the sketch for *Tragic Ground*, Copland

¹⁰¹ Copland and Perlis, *Copland Since 1943*, 166.

¹⁰² Ibid., 166. The Harris Collection of American Poetry and Plays does not appear to have had copies of Lomax's recordings; it is possible that Copland listened to recordings by John Lomax housed at the Library of Congress.

¹⁰³ Pollack, *Aaron Copland*, 468.

¹⁰⁴ Unpublished sketches for *Tragic Ground* in the Aaron Copland Collection of the Music Division of The Library of Congress, Box 117-A/1-6.

¹⁰⁵ Daniel W. Patterson and John F. Garst, "Foreword" to John Gordon McCurry, *The Social Harp*, eds. Daniel W. Patterson and John F. Garst, reprinted from the 1855 edition (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1973), v-vi. No original copy has been located in the Brown University collection where Copland did much of his research for the *Old American Song* cycles. However, the Harris Collection at Brown University does include a

cites “Jackson, 213,” the number assigned to the hymn in *Down-East Spirituals* that contains “Zion’s Walls.”¹⁰⁶ The program notes for *Old American Songs, Set Two* again cites, “Zion’s Walls. A revivalist song. Original melody and words credited to John G. McCurry, compiler of *The Social Harp*. Published by George P. Jackson in *Down-East Spirituals*.”¹⁰⁷

The most conclusive evidence of Jackson’s influence on Copland is the way in which Copland’s several versions of the hymn preserve the extensive rhythmic changes to the hymn which George Pullen Jackson created in *Down-East Spirituals*. In making these changes, Jackson sought to correct “the very faulty notation of the editor of *The Social Harp*.”¹⁰⁸ The effect of Jackson’s changes will be discussed later, but it is clear that Copland preserves, oftentimes exactly, the changes that Jackson initiated in the hymn.

2.2.3 Analysis of “Zion’s Walls”

In order to understand Copland’s setting of the hymn more fully, it is worthwhile to examine George Pullen Jackson’s transcription as Copland’s source (Figure 10).¹⁰⁹ Jackson’s transcription only includes the melody of the hymn, thus excluding the unusual part-writing that sets shape-note hymnody apart from other hymnody. To correct, in his words, his source’s “very

copy of George Pullen Jackson’s *Down-East Spirituals and Others: Three Hundred Songs Supplementary to The Author’s “Spiritual Folk-Songs of Early America”* (New York: J.J. Augustin Publisher, 1939), in which Jackson spends many pages discussing *The Social Harp*, and includes several transcriptions of hymns from it.

¹⁰⁶ Jackson, *Down-East Spirituals*, 211.

¹⁰⁷ Aaron Copland, *Old American Songs (Newly Arranged) Second Set* (New York: Boosey & Hawkes, 1954), 5.

¹⁰⁸ Jackson, *Down-East Spirituals and Others*, 211.

¹⁰⁹ Used with permission from George Pullen Jackson’s granddaughters, shared copyright holders. See **Error! Reference source not found.** for copyright permission letters.

faulty notation” Jackson extensively changes the rhythmic layout of the hymn from McCurry’s edition in *The Social Harp*.¹¹⁰ I have included McCurry’s version for comparison (Figure 11).

Rather than the 6/8 meter of the original, Jackson frequently shifts between 6/8 and 9/8. The effect of this change is two-fold. First, he smoothes out the strange and ambiguous scansion of the original hymn. Second, through consistently lengthening the note on the word “come,” his resetting emphasizes the call or invitation of the text to join in the community.

The hymn has three distinctive elements: a call to gather, a persuasive question, and a declaration:¹¹¹

Call to gather: Come, fathers and mothers, come, sisters and brothers,
Come join us in singing the praises of Jesus.

Persuasive question: O fathers, don’t you feel determin’d
To meet within the walls of Zion?

Declaration: We’ll shout and go round, We’ll shout and go round,
We’ll shout and go round the walls of Zion!”

Each section of the hymn contains distinctive melodic patterns that highlight the syntax of the text, while retaining a similar motive for the phrases “walls of Zion” and “praises of Jesus,” and overall forming an ABA’ pattern. The melody of the call sweeps upwards to the last high note on “singing,” increasing the urgency of the call before, descending at the end of the call. The higher register of the persuasive question further increases the intensity. “We’ll shout and go round” begins at a low register rising higher and becoming more emphatic with each repetition before dropping to the final repetition of the Zion motive.

¹¹⁰ McMurry, *The Social Harp*, 147.

¹¹¹ I have included the punctuation capitalization used by Jackson for the text, as this appears to be Copland’s source for the hymn.

No. 213
ZION'S WALLS, SOC 137

Pentatonic, mode 3 (I II III — V VI —)

Come, fath-ers and moth-ers, come, sis-ters and broth-ers, Come join us
in sing-ing the prais-es of Je-sus. O fath-ers,
don't you feel de-ter-min'd To meet with-in the
walls of Zi-on? We'll shout and go round, We'll shout and
go round, We'll shout and go round the walls of Zi-on.

Figure 10. *Down-East Spirituals*. George Pullen Jackson's edition of "Zion's Walls"

ZION'S WALLS. Set piece. JOHN G. MCCURRY, 1853. 137

Come, fathers and mothers, Come, sisters and brothers, Come, join us in singing the praises of Jesus; O, fa-thers, don't you feel de-ter-mined,
To meet with-in the walls of Zi-on. We'll shout and go round, We'll shout and go round, We'll shout and go round the walls of Zi-on.

Figure 11. *The Social Harp*. "Zion's Walls"

2.2.4 Theology in “Zion’s Walls”

The text and music of “Zion’s Walls” are attributed to John G. McMurry (1821-1886), compiler of *The Social Harp*. However, it is possible that this is a folk hymn, or a camp-meeting text, as compilers of shape-note hymnals frequently put their names on tunes that they collected; attribution of authorship, in cases such as these, does not necessarily imply that the compiler composed the tune and text, rather that he gathered and/or arranged it. Theologically, the text of “Zion’s Walls” is most clearly related to passages in the book of the prophet Nehemiah, part of the *Nevi'im* (prophets) in the Jewish *Tanakh* and the Christian Old Testament. In this book, some of the Israelites have been allowed to return to Jerusalem after years of exile. Through Nehemiah’s influence, King Artaxerxes allows the Israelites to begin rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. After many difficulties and opposition from outsiders, the walls were completed. To celebrate its rebuilding, large choirs and many instrumentalists marched around the top of the walls. The noise was very great: “Also that day they offered great sacrifices, and rejoiced: for God had made them rejoice with great joy: the wives also and the children rejoiced: so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off” (Nehemiah 12:43).¹¹²

“Zion’s Walls” parallels the events recorded in Nehemiah on several levels. Zion symbolizes the city of Jerusalem, the city that was being rebuilt in the book of Nehemiah. The joining of praises by the entire community in the passage intersects with the hymn’s call to fathers, mothers, sisters, and brothers to join in the singing. The loud singing of praises in the book of Nehemiah corresponds with the singing and shouting in the hymn text. And the most unusual activity of the passage, walking around the walls, is clearly reflected in the final

¹¹² *The Holy Bible: King James Version*. The events taking place in the book of Nehemiah occurred in the 5th century, BCE.

declaration of the hymn, “We’ll shout and go round the walls of Zion.” The parallels between the Biblical passage and the hymn are clear, but the hymn text adds another level to the story: a Christological interpretation is overlaid onto the event. In the hymn text, the people shout “the praises of Jesus.” Here as in many of the vernacular hymn texts associated with camp-meeting hymnody and shape-note hymnody, New Testament theology interprets Old Testament imagery, perhaps becoming symbolic of the experience of present-day believers. Thus the hymn in the Christian tradition could symbolize Christ as the builder of his church, in parallel to the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem.¹¹³

2.2.5 Text and music issues

As noted on the sketches for the unpublished musical play *Tragic Ground* (1945), Copland intended “Zion’s Walls” to be used as an instrumental “Ballet.” The brief sketch of “Zion’s Walls” demonstrates seeds of ideas more fully explored in Copland’s later settings of the hymn, including a dotted-quarter-note counter-melody against the hymn tune. It reflects, as well, George Pullen Jackson’s rhythmic and metric changes.¹¹⁴ As this was an instrumental ballet, Copland did not yet have to address the tricky issues involved in setting the text, either the Jewish resonances or the explicitly Christian message of the hymn.

¹¹³ I have found no concrete evidence that Copland was familiar with the text of Nehemiah. However, as it has been preserved in both the Jewish and Christian traditions, it was likely that he at least knew the outlines of the story. Howard Pollack notes that Copland, though not an active practitioner of the Jewish religion as an adult, set several songs tied to Judaism and using Biblical texts. Further, Pollack notes that Copland had ties with Christianity through his setting of several hymns, and his appreciation for several Christian writers, such as Gerald Manley Hopkins. (Pollack, *American Copland*, 27)

¹¹⁴ Unpublished sketches for *Tragic Ground* in the Aaron Copland Collection of the Music Division of The Library of Congress, Box 117-A/1-6.

Copland's choice to use the hymn's text in his setting for the *Old American Songs* (1952) is important at several levels. Not only did he choose a hymn that uses the metaphor "Zion," Copland alters the text to highlight this metaphor. In the original hymn text, people are called to gather and sing the "praises of Jesus." Copland changes one word, calling the family to sing the "praises of Zion," rather than Jesus. I have italicized the change.

Come, fathers and mothers, Come, sisters and brothers,
Come, join us in singing the praises of *Zion*;
O, fathers don't you feel determined,
To meet within the walls of Zion.
We'll shout and go round, We'll shout and go round,
We'll shout and go round the walls of Zion.¹¹⁵

This small but extremely important alteration serves several purposes. First, it suppresses the overt Christian nature of the hymn. The elimination of the word "Jesus" creates a song that is ecumenical within the Judeo-Christian religions rather than specific to Christianity, and is truer to its Nehemiah source. Second, Copland's alteration heightens the metaphor of Zion, which clearly has specific connotations for the Christian community that created the hymn but has far-reaching resonances within Jewish communities of Copland's time. In particular, as noted earlier, Copland's recent trip to Israel marked his public acknowledgement of his Jewish identity, as well as his private and vehement support of the Zionist cause expressed through personal letters.

Copland's deletion of the Christological reference from the text reworks the text into one that could more closely mirror the concerns of his Jewish contemporaries. Just as Nehemiah and the Israelite people returned from exile to rebuild the city of Jerusalem, so the greater family of Jews were returning from the Diaspora to rebuild the nation of Israel in the 1940s-1950s. As the

¹¹⁵ Copland, "Zion's Walls," from *Old American Songs (Newly Arranged)*, *Second Set*.

shouts of the Biblical Israelites had been heard “even afar off,” so the rebuilding of the nation of Israel had become an international concern.

2.2.6 Analysis of “Zion’s Walls” in *Old American Songs*

The music in Copland’s arrangement of McMurry’s hymn “Zion’s Walls” in *Old American Songs* is thoroughly grounded in the shape-note style, and has no traits of Jewish liturgical or secular music. Copland’s setting of this hymn preserves the rhythmic and pentatonic dimensions of the hymn, as well as much of the melodic shape of George Pullen Jackson’s transcription. Harmonically, Copland emphasizes sonorities created out of 4ths, 5ths, 2nds and 7ths, thus creating a harmonic language very similar to that of shape-note hymnody. For example, in the piano introduction (mm. 1-6), 10 out of 18 strong-beat simultaneities between the right hand and the left consist of 2nds, 5ths, 7ths, and octaves. In addition, the contrapuntal interaction between the melody and the countermelody also echoes the intertwining vocal lines in shape-note hymnody. However, at this point, I have found no evidence whether or how Copland studied the harmonic language of shape-note hymns: as noted earlier, Jackson’s *Down-East Spirituals* only includes the melody of “Zion’s Walls.”

To Jackson’s version of the hymn, Copland adds a striking diatonic countermelody, which is present along with the melody from the piano introduction (mm. 1-6) (Figure 12).¹¹⁶

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 10.

Counter melody -----

f (clear sonority--r. and l. hand with equal intensity)

Melody -----

[c.m.] -----

[mel.] -----

Figure 12. Aaron Copland, *Old American Songs, Set II*. “Zion’s Walls,” mm. 1-6. Piano introduction

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Here, the counter melody is given to the right hand in *forte* octaves, reminiscent of church bells in its timbre and registration, with perhaps even the melody itself recalling the patterns of bell-ringing. The dotted quarter notes of the counter melody allow it to ring out, while the left hand (called to play with “equal intensity”) introduces the jubilant hymn tune. This equality of voices is quite suggestive of the performance practice of shape-note hymnody, where every voice joins in equal and tremendous intensity. This equality of voices could also metaphorically represent the presence of Jewish and Christian religion and cultures within the United States. Further, the stately progression of the dotted-quarter-note rhythm symbolically reflects the act of walking around the walls presented in the texts.

As the voice enters with the hymn tune, the counter melody is continued in the right hand of the piano, which also doubles the melody (Figure 13).

Figure 13 shows the musical score for Copland's "Zion's Walls" (mm. 6-11). The score is in 3/8 time and features a vocal melody and piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic and includes the lyrics "Come fa - thers and mo - thers come. Sis - ters and bro - thers come." The piano accompaniment includes a counter-melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The score is divided into two systems, each with measures 9 and 10 marked. The piano part includes markings for *sub mf* and *f* dynamics, and the vocal part includes markings for *f* and *mf* dynamics. The score ends with a double bar line.

Figure 13. Copland, "Zion's Walls." Mm. 6-11. Opening text

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The countermelody continues throughout the first part of the hymn melody, "the call" (mm. 6-12), but drops out during the second and third sections. In the second section, a *forte* dynamic level emphasizes the persuasive question (mm. 12-16). The indication of "less loud" at the beginning of the declaration (m. 16) allows Copland to build intensity during this section. Copland intensifies the "declaration" of the hymn text through an extra repetition of the words "We'll shout and go round" (4x total) and a repetition of "the walls of Zion" (mm. 22-23).

At the conclusion of the verse, a piano interlude suddenly shifts the tonality into the area of A-flat major (mm. 23-27). This interlude and its parallel interlude (mm. 36-40) are the only moments when a pure diatonic/pentatonic F major tonality is violated in Copland's setting. In his analysis of Copland's *Piano Variations* (1930), Lawrence Starr notes an element of Copland's style that is especially evident in works (such as "Zion's Walls") with limited pitch content,

To achieve some variety within the tautly limited pitch world of the *Variations*, Copland, understandably, at times transposes the basic thematic material. This tends to happen suddenly and sporadically, rather than gradually and predictably, in order to yield an effective and welcome feeling of surprise at its occurrence.¹¹⁷

The sudden key change in "Zion's Walls" is luminous, its suddenness and its pull into a higher register evocative of some divine intrusion into earthly reality. The absence of text during these interludes is also intriguing. Could the wordlessness of the interludes point to a dance of joy, perhaps Israelites dancing as they "go round the walls," symbolizing the triumph of the Jewish nation? Or perhaps its wordlessness could evoke mystical wordless chants, such as the Jewish *niggunim*?¹¹⁸ In any interpretation, these interludes suggest moments of jubilation, feelings of exuberance corresponding to the visceral acts of shouting and celebration called for in the hymn.

The two A-flat major interludes frame a section in which the opening text is sung to Copland's countermelody (mm. 27-36). In an ingenious bit of invertible counterpoint, the longer note values of the counter-melody (mostly dotted-quarter notes) emphasize the "call" element of the opening text, while the original melody is played by the right hand of the piano.

¹¹⁷ Lawrence Starr, "Copland's Style," *Perspectives of New Music* 19, no. 1/2 (Autumn 1980-Summer 1981): 73.

¹¹⁸ Eliyahu Schleifer, "Jewish Liturgics: Chant Development, Liturgical Music, Part III," in *Sacred Sound and Social Change: Liturgical Music in Jewish and Christian Experience*, ed. Lawrence A. Hoffman and Janet R. Walton (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992)
<https://www.liturgica.com/html/litJLitMusDev3.jsp> (accessed January 11, 2006).

Following the second A-flat major interlude (mm. 36-40), the tonality returns to F major. The hymn is repeated (mm. 40-59), for the most part similar to its first rendition (mm. 6-24), but with a few noticeable changes. The counter-melody in the opening of the hymn is again in octaves, recreating the bell-like sonority of the opening (mm. 41-45). The hymn concludes with a three-fold repetition of “the walls of Zion,” with the final repetition at a dramatic *fortissimo* dynamic level, ending on an unquestionable note of triumph.

2.2.7 Copland’s later use of “Zion’s Walls”

This hymn has an important place in Copland’s *oeuvre*: in addition to its use in *Tragic Ground* and the *Old American Songs* (both the original piano version as well as the later orchestral version), Copland reused the hymn yet again in his opera *Tender Land* (1954).¹¹⁹ Taking its inspiration from a renowned series of photographs by Walker Evans, *Tender Land* narrates the story of the coming-of-age of a teenage girl in a small, Midwest community.

“The Promise of Living,” in the Finale of Act I, takes the hymn tune as well as Copland’s earlier counter-melody as its basis. Though the text to this quintet is not directly derived from the original text of the hymn, there are significant relationships. The most striking parallel is the transformation of the “call.” Instead of a call to sing the praises of “Jesus” or “Zion,” people are called to offer thanksgiving for the crops:

Oh let us be joyful, Oh let us be grateful,
Come join us in thanking the Lord for his harvest.¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ Copland and Perlis, *Copland Since 1943*, 220. Copland notes that in the arrangement of the hymn for *Tender Land* he became so fascinated with his own counter-melody that he gave it more importance musically than the original hymn melody.

¹²⁰ Aaron Copland, *The Tender Land: Opera in Three Acts*, with libretto by Horace Everett (New York: Boosey & Hawkes, 1956), 80-81. Orchestra mark 102.

The new “Thanksgiving” hymn makes brief mention of “Lord” and “Providence,” words with Christian associations, but more broadly, with non-specific theistic associations.¹²¹ The hymn focuses, however, on the cooperation of neighbors, and a joy in “the promise of living.”¹²² Copland (through the work of his librettist Horace Everett) navigates the realms of the sacred and the secular: though drawing on Christian resonances and using a hymn-tune as the basis of a new work, he creates a work that is universal and optimistic, resonating with broadly held “American” ideals such as hard work, cooperation, and community. Here, along with the avoidance of any overt Christian symbols, Copland also avoids the Jewish symbols of the earlier hymn. In relationship to the McCarthy Era, Vivian Perlis suggest that nostalgia for a simpler time may have inspired Copland’s work. She writes,

Except for one moment in the plot [of *Tender Land*], there is no trace of the bitter taste left from the McCarthy hearing and its aftermath. The music for the opera is in Copland’s “accessible” style. However, ten years after *Appalachian Spring*, the music and plot seemed nostalgic for a more innocent time in America, a time before the Cold War and Senator Joseph McCarthy.¹²³

Perhaps in 1954, following the pressures of the accusations of the early 1950s, Copland found safety in creating an opera unambiguously and undilutedly Americanist.

¹²¹ “Lord” is also the English equivalent for the Hebrew “Adonai.”

¹²² Copland, *The Tender Land*, 83. Orchestra mark 104.

¹²³ Copland and Perlis, *Copland Since 1943*, 202-203.

2.3 CONCLUSION

In each of Copland's three settings of "Zion's Walls," he navigates a path between musical Americanism and religious expression. Copland recognized the Judeo-Christian influences within American culture, influences that are acknowledged even through the use of a hymn tune without the text, as in his first arrangement of "Zion's Walls" for *Tragic Ground*; it is probable that his attraction to using the hymn tune in *Tragic Ground* was influenced by a reading of the hymn in light of its Jewish metaphors, yet at that time Copland chose not to set the text, thereby avoiding an overt Zionist/Jewish statement. It is clear that his 1952 setting in the *Old American Songs* took place in a unique historical moment in which Copland felt free to express his Jewish identity through song and his sympathy for the controversial Zionist movement, with only a thin veil over his self-expression. In his final setting, a hymn of praise to the broad American ideals of community and working together replaces the text of "Zion's Walls" altogether, omitting any distinctively Jewish or Christian referents.

Clear differences can be seen between Thomson's and Copland's encounters with shape-note hymnody. Copland, attracted to a single hymn for several reasons, turned to the same hymn several times in his *oeuvre*, with no evidence that he researched the shape-note tradition as a whole or engaged with it in any significant way. The mediation of scholarship on his setting is clearest in his use of the rhythmic changes introduced by Jackson.

Thomson, on the other hand, called the shape-note tradition a "gold mine," and continued to use shape-note hymns in several of his works, including the film score to *The Louisiana Story* and in multiple choral arrangements.¹²⁴ He also intensively researched the scholarship on these

¹²⁴ Thomson, *Virgil Thomson*, 271.

hymns, as is demonstrated in his discussion of the music, and through his correspondence with George Pullen Jackson. Particularly, Jackson's research gave Thomson access to shape-note hymns and influenced his view of their significance as "authentic Southern folklore," as well as his belief that shape-note hymns were the direct ancestors of black spirituals. To continue Thomson's metaphor, Copland found a nugget that he polished, set and reset, but Thomson spent years in his gold mine, digging, exploring and sorting, and afterwards emerging with many treasures.

The strongest parallel between Thomson and Copland is their use of shape-note hymns within a larger context of folk and vernacular musics in their works. "Zion's Walls" is set in the midst of many kinds of American songs, while the shape-note hymns in *The River* are surrounded by other regional musics of the South. Through setting the hymns in the context of secular songs, Thomson and Copland both create a cultural dialogue in which religious music is an active participant.

In Thomson's work as well as Copland's, sacred music is composed in dialogue with other musics in rich, multi-textured conversations. At the same time, the sacred music (as well as the secular) is changed within this dialogue. Copland's use of "Zion's Walls" leaves the hymn intact for the most part, but the change of a single word reshapes the direction of the hymn. The small but significant change does not destroy the previous meanings the hymn had for its Protestant practitioners, but it broadens its impact to include the broader American public, and in addition, creates specific undertones for American-Jewish communities. In Thomson's score to *The River*, several of the hymns' texts, such as "Yes, Jesus Loves Me" would probably have been familiar to many within the audience of the time, even to those who did not practice the Christian religion. His use of the hymns was a way for him to reflect his own nostalgia about an

imaginary Old South, but also were avenues of nostalgia for listeners familiar with many of the folk songs and for some of the hymns in the film score. His use of music associated with white performers (such as the “white spirituals”) as well as black musicians (banjo tunes, “bluesing” the white spiritual) creates a broad atmosphere rather than an exclusivist one. Thomson and Copland each use the flavors of the nineteenth-century shape-note hymns to bind together diverse elements in the complex racial and religious stew bubbling in the twentieth-century American “Melting Pot.”

3.0 THE 1970s

The conflict between the intense patriotism engendered through the approaching Bicentennial of the United States and the anxiety surrounding national crises such as the Vietnam War and the recent Civil Rights battles created a profound identity crisis in the early 1970s, a crisis reflected in the music, art, film, and other cultural artifacts of the period. The Bicentennial was approaching, but a mood of unambiguous patriotism was not the order of the day.

During the 1970s, numerous composers availed themselves of American vernacular and popular musics within their “classical” or concert compositions. Composers such as William Schuman continued in their long-time exploration of American idioms of music, while other composers such as Robert Russell Bennett and John Cage were inspired or commissioned to write works specifically celebrating the American Bicentennial.¹²⁵ This use of American musical idioms was fueled by the upcoming Bicentennial, the continuing revivals of folk music, and through a growing interest in American music by academic communities demonstrated in

¹²⁵ One of the musical tropes within concert music of the 1970s, especially that which was composed especially for Bicentennial celebrations, was the use of music by William Billings and his contemporary hymn-composers. Prominent composers such as John Cage, William Schuman, and Robert Russell Bennett employed these tunes in their concert works during the 1970s. New attention and access was given to the work of William Billings through the four volume work *The Complete Works of William Billings* (Boston: The American Musicological Society & The Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1971-1990). These hymns, though preserved in the shape-note hymnals of the nineteenth-century and through the continuing performance practices of shape-note hymnody, were composed before the advent of the shape-note tradition. To avoid getting entangled in the thorny relationship between the eighteenth-century songsmiths and the nineteenth-century shape-note hymnals that have preserved them, I have chosen to analyze two works that use nineteenth-century “folk” hymns as part of their musical fabric. Another dissertation—or two—could be written about the invocation of William Billings during the Bicentennial spectacles.

such books as Gilbert Chase's *America's Music: From the Pilgrims to the Present* (1955)¹²⁶ and H. Wiley Hitchcock's *Music in the United States: A Historical Introduction* (1969).¹²⁷

This chapter will examine as case studies two concert works written during this period that quote shape-note hymns: Samuel Jones's orchestral work *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* (1972) and Alice Parker's opera *Singer's Glen* (1978). These compositions were written within the flurry of Bicentennial preparations that had been going on since the late 1960s. Each composer consciously uses a distinctive tonal/modal language within these works, incorporating multiple shape-note hymns into a new musical environment. This chapter explores these two works in the light of complicated views of America's past and present during the period, as especially demonstrated in historiographic approaches of the time, and through the shifting rhetoric of what American music was and should be. This general discussion, opening with an overview of folk music during the time, precedes an analysis of the two pieces as case studies, showing the ways in which the cultural ideas relate specifically to each piece. Jones and Parker both granted interviews for this study which illuminate their own viewpoints of their pieces and the period in which they were created. The full interviews are included in Appendix A.

¹²⁶ Gilbert Chase, *America's Music: From the Pilgrims to the Present* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1955).

¹²⁷ H. Wiley Hitchcock, *Music in the United States: A Historical Introduction* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1969).

3.1 CELEBRATION AND CRITIQUE IN THE BICENTENNIAL ERA

3.1.1 Folk music in the 1970s

During the 1970s, traditional American musics were flooding the consciousness of Americans. One of the most monumental testaments to this heightened awareness of America's musical heritage was the 100 LP set *Recorded Anthology of American Music* released by New World Music (1976-78), which included everything from field recordings to jazz to operatic performances.¹²⁸ Dale Cockrell writes,

A pivotal moment in canon formation and identity came in the nation's bicentennial year of 1976 with the production of the Recorded Anthology of American Music, a one-hundred-LP set of recordings that organized and presented some of the rich diversity of the nation's music. Underwritten by the Rockefeller Foundation, it was distributed without cost to libraries and media centers across the nation, providing scholars, students, teachers, and radio stations, and others access to hundreds of examples of American music, many for the first time.¹²⁹

This work was distributed to nearly 7,000 institutions,¹³⁰ bringing widespread attention to diverse streams of American musics, from its vernacular, popular and classical traditions, including American performance traditions of European classical music.

The writings on American folk music in the earlier decades of the century eventually paved the way for the popular folk music revival (also sometimes termed the "Urban Folk Revival") of the 1950s-1960s, in which traditional words and music were transformed into the

¹²⁸ *The Recorded Anthology of American Music* (New York: New World Records, 1978).

¹²⁹ Dale Cockrell, "Can American Music Studies Develop a Method?," *American Music* 22, no. 2 (Summer 2004), 274.

¹³⁰ Elizabeth A. Davis, *Index to the New World Recorded Anthology of American Music: A User's Guide to the Initial One Hundred Records* (New York and London: W. W. Norton and Co., 1981), vii.

mouthpiece of a new generation.¹³¹ Voices from the past gave a sense of purpose to the youth, allowing them to reach back into a seemingly idyllic time as well as giving them a voice in changing the future. The use of folk music as a form of protest, especially during the 1930s-1950s with its association with leftist movements and unionization, separated American folk music from functioning as a simple celebration of national identity, and allowed the younger generation to adopt it for their own means.

However, by the 1970s the popular folk-revival had become increasingly commercialized and distanced from its original sources. Groups such as Peter, Paul and Mary were carefully groomed to fit a certain image of what folk music should be; many viewed the movement as becoming inauthentic, having lost its potency as protest and critique of the culture. The most dramatic and public break from the movement is the infamous moment at the 1965 Newport Folk Festival in which Bob Dylan came onstage with a band and electronically amplified instruments. Here, Dylan broke away from the intimate, personalized sound frequently idealized in the popular folk music revival of a single singer-songwriter with an acoustic instrument (or two) with which the singer accompanies him- or herself. Some view the 1970 Isle of Wight festival, with the riotous and entitled behavior of fans combined with the harsh methods of crowd control by the festival producers, as symbolic of the end of the popular folk music revival and its associated lifestyles as significant political discourse.¹³²

¹³¹ For example, in his book *Which Side Are You On? An Inside History of the Folk Music Revival in America* (New York: Continuum Press, 2005), Dick Weissman discusses the adoption of traditional African-American musics by white urban folk revivalists who supported the Civil Rights Movement (140-142).

¹³² One of the participating musicians, Ian Anderson of the group Jethro Tull, later commented on his experience at the festival, "It was just a great chance to see a lot of weird stuff going on and be there at the kill, because this was the end of the hippie ideal, this is where the whole thing imploded." *Jethro Tull, Nothing is Easy: Live at the Isle of Wight, 1970*, DVD, directed by David Byrne (London: Eagle Vision, 2004); see also Cotten Seiler, "The Commodification of Rebellion: Rock Culture and Consumer Capitalism," in *New Forms of Consumption: Consumers, Culture, and Commodification*, ed. Mark Gottdiener (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000), 209-210.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, groups such as the New Lost City Ramblers, though springing out of and influenced by the popular folk revival, deliberately distanced themselves from what they viewed as the commodification of folk music. Instead, they sought out rural musicians (particularly those living in the Appalachian regions) practicing outside of the mainstream tradition, to be mentored by them and to record them.¹³³ This was the beginning of what has now been termed the old-time music revival. Some musicians even embarked on “pilgrimages” to the South. Many in this movement were influenced by ethnomusicological practices, and modeled themselves as “musician-folklorist-scholars.”¹³⁴ Also distinguishing the old-time revival from the popular folk revival was its continuing emphasis on group participation, by amateurs as well as by more skilled musicians.¹³⁵ Though group participation was originally an element of the popular folk revival, in such events as sing-alongs in the 1950s, by the late 1960s, the emphasis had shifted to “superstars” performing for an audience or featured in mass-marketed LP recordings.

Though occasionally featured at folk festivals, such as in the 1970 Smithsonian Folklife Festival, *Sacred Harp* and other streams of shape-note hymnody were situated outside the mainstreamed popular music revival. In fact, John Bealle cites the revival of Sacred Harp singing as occurring in the 1980s, decades after the popular folk revival.¹³⁶ The use of shape-note hymns by composers in the 1970s, undoubtedly influenced by the attention given to American folk music through the revivals, was still outside the norm. In many ways, the practice

¹³³ Amy Suzanne Wooley, “Conjuring Utopia: The Appalachian String Band Revival” (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2003), 53-58.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 56.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 65-66.

¹³⁶ John Bealle, *Public Worship, Private Faith: Sacred Harp and American Folksong* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1997), 202. This will be discussed further in the following chapter, but some of the markers of the Sacred Harp revival that Bealle cites include an increase in the number of singings and conventions, recordings, and the republication of a number of tunebooks during the 1980s.

of shape-note singing had much more in common with the old time revival: group participation is emphasized, even to the point of not having an audience during shape-note singings; it was primarily a non-commercial endeavor; it was characterized by its roots in and association with the American South (and also, later inspired a similar phenomenon of pilgrimages); and it was not generally used overtly as a form of protest. It also was attractive to scholars and composers searching for authentic forms of American music-making. Composers borrowing from the shape-note tradition could thus take advantage of the widespread interest in folk music brought about in part through the popular folk revival. At the same time, however, by using music outside of the mainstreamed canon, they could avoid the strong associations with protest and counterculture that much of American folk music then carried.

3.1.2 Reactions to a fractured nationalism

Preparations for the upcoming Bicentennial year clashed with the multiple national crises of the early 1970s—the Vietnam War, the Watergate scandal, the continuing civil rights battles, and the energy crisis among many others—to create a convoluted sense of national identity. Of the years from the 1960s to the early 1970s, between the celebrations of the Centennial of the Civil War and the Bicentennial of the American Revolution, John Bodnar writes,

[T]he period began and ended with two large celebrations that attempted to foster order and national unity. The language and activities of these celebrations seldom referred directly to arguments over civil rights or Vietnam, for instance. ...But the commemorations of the Civil War and the Revolution were never far removed from the disunity that was manifested in the era. They stood as massive cultural bookends that attempted to contain volumes of dissent and indifference to the civic message of leaders.¹³⁷

¹³⁷ John Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 206.

The official celebrations and the commentary on them by public officials often invoked an idealized past to help reconcile people to a present in which a sense of American national identity was fragmented and confused.

Bodnar continues that “ordinary people” used the officially sanctioned activities in ways that authorities never intended, frequently ignoring messages of national unity to focus instead on “the celebration of a past that was mostly local, ethnic, or personal, and for other unintended purposes.”¹³⁸ The focus on local, ethnic or personal pasts provided strategies to navigate the muddy waters of the present.

Specifically, three general strategies were employed to travel through the confusion: an extreme idealization of the nation’s past, an emphasis on regional or community identity frequently connected to an idolization of rural life, and a turning to family and ethnic history as a way of tracing one’s own identity. These strategies are clearly reflected in the historiographical approaches becoming popular during the time, particularly in the fresh perspectives presented in the field of social history, as well as in the frequently connected field of public history. A brief overview of the fields of social history and public history and their intersection in the 1970s will pave the way for a more detailed analysis of these three strategies of identity. This will be followed by a discussion of the ways in which these trends influenced the quotation of shape-note hymns during this period.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 206.

3.1.3 Social history and public history

The new social history emerging in the 1960s asserted that for a comprehensive understanding of historical eras, the study of common people and their everyday activities is as important, if not more important, than the study of great leaders. Four groundbreaking works published in 1970 marked a turning point in developing the shared concerns of many historians into a coherent field.¹³⁹ This change in historical focus also entailed a shift in the kind of materials that were used as historical evidence, a shift demonstrated in each of these four works. Nicole Eustace writes,

The most important aim trumpeted by these four new social historians in 1970 was to write the history of the daily rhythms of ordinary people. To do so they relied on the scientific precision promised by quantitative data and the theoretical underpinning provided by social sciences from anthropology to psychology to demography.¹⁴⁰

Another step in the formalization of social history as a discipline was the creation of a journal specifically tailored to the concerns of social historians, *The Journal of Social History*, initiated in 1974 and published through the present.

In discussing the historiography of the new social history, William Hamilton Sewell states that social history privileged quantitative data, as historians borrowed tools and

¹³⁹ Eustace elaborates, "...the exact timing of the advent of the now old 'new social history' is itself debatable. Still, so many have identified the year 1970 as a remarkable turning point that it seems a most reasonable starting point. It was in that year that four books on early American history, widely hailed as path-breaking then and since, first broke on the historical scene. These four studies, John Demos's *A Little Commonwealth*, Philip Greven, Jr.'s *Four Generations*, Kenneth Lockridge's *A New England Town* and Michael Zuckerman's *Peaceable Kingdoms* each announced, with greater and lesser degrees of fanfare, that history was about to undergo an irrevocable change. Indeed, the revolutionary nature of the new social history, at least within the field of early American studies, was considerably advanced by the self-conscious nature of this activist collaboration." Nicole Eustace, "When Fish Walk on Land: Social History in a Postmodern World," *Journal of Social History* 37, no. 1 (Fall 2003): 77.

¹⁴⁰ Eustace, "When Fish Walk on Land," 77-78.

methodologies from the social sciences.¹⁴¹ He continues, “The kinds of people that social historians studied were often illiterate, and even those who could read or write rarely left papers about their lives.”¹⁴² However, these people still had to come into contact with public authorities—in the state or church—for a variety of reasons (including taxes and tithes), and through that contact, information on them was recorded and preserved. Through examining these kinds of records “social historians were able to reconstruct the patterns of these otherwise anonymous lives.”¹⁴³ Social history thus prioritized quantifiable data as a means of unearthing the stories of those who did not have the power—whether through lack of literacy or by other means—of writing their own histories. This is frequently referred to as a “bottom-up” approach to history in contrast to earlier approaches that usually privileged a “top-down” approach.

As the field developed, some social historians prioritized this kind of “hard data” almost exclusively, while others combined this data with “verbal accounts culled from archives, memoirs or newspapers.”¹⁴⁴ It was the latter combination—of hard data and records of memory—that comes through most clearly in the public displays of history becoming more prominent in the 1970s. A clear example of this approach is Ken Burns’s premiere documentary *The Brooklyn Bridge* (1982), which he began work on during the 1970s. In the documentary, he uses first-hand personal accounts in journals, letters and the like combined with statistics and photography to narrate the building of the Brooklyn Bridge, an approach to documentary filmmaking that continues to influence the ways in which history is told through film.¹⁴⁵

Scholars and teachers called for new approaches to teaching American history in the classroom,

¹⁴¹ William Hamilton Sewell, *Logics of History: Social Theory and Social Transformation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 27.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 27.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 27.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 29.

¹⁴⁵ For further discussion of Burns’ documentary style, see Gary R. Edgerton, *Ken Burns’s America* (New York: Palgrave, 2001).

using original sources to supplement and supplant the primarily linear and “top down” approach found in elementary and high school textbooks.¹⁴⁶ From museums to historical reenactments, from classrooms to documentaries, many historians during and since this time have used new social-history approaches to public-history displays in the attempt to recreate the lives of ordinary people.

In the period between the Centennial celebrations of the Civil War and those celebrating the American Bicentennial, communities throughout the United States celebrated their local and national heritage through battle recreations, plays, outdoor events, musical celebrations, festivals and fairs. For example, in their four-volume document, *The Bicentennial of the United States of America: A Final Report to the People*, the American Revolution Bicentennial Administration lists over 64,000 Bicentennial-related events and activities, organized by state and county.¹⁴⁷ The role of music in these celebrations should not be underestimated: many events centered on public concert performances, while others mingled music with other activities—what would a recreation of a Revolutionary War battle be without a fife and drum?

To understand better how social history intersected with public display of history during this time, it is helpful to look at the changes within Colonial Williamsburg. In their book *The New History in an Old Museum*, Richard Chandler and Eric Gable provide a clear case study of the transformation of Colonial Williamsburg as a result of the new emphasis on social history during the 1960s through the 1970s.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ Maxine Seller and Andrew Trusz, “High School Textbooks and the American Revolution,” *The History Teacher* 9, no. 4 (August 1976): 535-555.

¹⁴⁷ American Revolution Bicentennial Association, *The Bicentennial of the United States of America: A Final Report to the People* (Washington, DC: The Administration, 1977).

¹⁴⁸ Richard Handler and Eric Gable, *The New History in an Old Museum: Creating the Past at Colonial Williamsburg* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997).

When social history came to fruition in Colonial Williamsburg, it brought with it two crucial transformations. First, it changed whose story was being told through the public history presentations. Before the 1970s, the main story being told was the story of great men, great triumphs, and great America. Through the social history transformation, the museum began to tell the stories of common people, particularly highlighting the role of slavery within the economic structures of the Colonial period.¹⁴⁹ The second change that the social history movement brought to Colonial Williamsburg was a radical shift in the understanding of why history was told. Handler and Gable write,

The new social history challenged established history making in another, perhaps more profound way. It was more explicitly “constructionist” or “relativistic” than the histories it sought to supplant. Its proponents argued that historical truths are socially produced by particular people with particular interests and biases. The truths embodied in historical stories are thus not absolute or universal, but relative to the cultural context in which they are made. Other people elsewhere, might use the same events and facts to tell different histories or, prompted by the desire to tell different stories, might work to discover previously overlooked facts.¹⁵⁰

The shift for Colonial Williamsburg meant a new emphasis on the lives of ordinary people, and it painted a much less rosy picture than found in the previous history-telling at the site. The history-making at Williamsburg exemplifies the enormous shift created through the new social-history approaches within the overall study and writing of history, approaches that germinated new historiographies of American history and radiated out into the self-awareness of Americans, even those unfamiliar with historical theories currently in vogue.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 4.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 4-5.

3.1.4 Idealistic re-creation of the past

The first strategy for grappling with a shattered sense of national identity was the idealist re-creation of the past. It took place on several levels, primarily through idolizing the nation's founding in the distant past. It also took place through romanticizing more recent eras, including the time of the Civil War,¹⁵¹ the 1930s, especially in turning back to populist ideas of the time, and the 1950s—viewed as an innocent time, free from the conflicts of the present, an attitude demonstrated in popular television shows such as *Happy Days*. In the cheerful light of an imagined past, the present—filled with scandals, tragedies, and uncertainties—seemed less gloomy. On the idealization of the nation's founding, David Lowenthal writes,

Historians have shown that isolation and monotony, scarcities and shortages, hard toil and early death were the common lot two centuries ago. Yet the picture that Bicentennial celebrations convey is one of frugal but joyous lives filled with jolly pastimes. In this mythical past Americans realize the unachieved dreams of the present: green and smiling countrysides, unpolluted skies and waters, pure and wholesome food, inspired leadership, togetherness and cooperation.¹⁵²

The past was thus transformed to suit the needs of the present, whether it was the needs of public officials to create a sense of security during troubled times, or the needs of ordinary people to create a sense of order out of the tangled present. A tangible transformation took place within public presentations of history, in museums as well as the historical reenactments so popular during the time. Rather than faithfully representing the past, many of these reenactments altered the historical facts to fit a patriotic atmosphere. Some communities “reproduced” battles that had never been fought, while others altered the outcome of the battle: American troops that

¹⁵¹ I will discuss in more detail the portrayal of the Civil War during this time-period in the section on the idealization of the South as part of American identity.

¹⁵² David Lowenthal, “The Bicentennial Landscape: A Mirror Held Up to the Past,” *Geographical Review* 67, no. 3 (July 1977): 267.

should have lain slaughtered gleefully routed the British army.¹⁵³ It should be noted that this idealization of the past, often downplaying conflicts in America's past to highlight the unity of the nation, was frequently in conflict with the ideas promoted in the field of social history.

The two works examined in this chapter do not promote an unexamined idealization of the past. In both works, conflict and suffering are shown to be an integral part of the history portrayed. However, the past is presented as something positive, something to be celebrated, and in some ways, something to be emulated in the present.

3.1.5 Regionalism

For the second strategy, I use the term regionalism to refer to three interconnected kinds of regional identification present during the time period. First is the focus on a region or a community *by* that particular region or community. Second, there was an idealization of a particular kind of community culture, namely, the idea of life in rural regions, a life that had been largely lost by the 1970s through the increasing industrialization of America. Finally these two streams of regionalism fed into a strong identification of the region of the American South as symbolic of the nation as a whole.

3.1.5.1 Regionalism (I): Regional and community focus

Regions, states, counties and cities used the Bicentennial as a springboard to celebrate their own unique identities. Events within political spheres fanned the fires of community zeal, especially in relationship to the Bicentennial. In keeping with the historical precedent of the Centennial

¹⁵³ Ibid., 259.

celebration (1876), the original plan for the Bicentennial was to centralize its celebration in the city of Philadelphia.¹⁵⁴ Because of budget restrictions and suspicions of partisanship on the part of Richard Nixon in the selection of the original planning committee (the American Revolution Bicentennial Committee), the original committee was replaced with a new committee (the American Revolution Bicentennial Administration).¹⁵⁵ This new committee turned over much of the planning and funding responsibility for the celebration to local groups, emphasizing that the Bicentennial *celebrations* would be “hometown” affairs.¹⁵⁶

This celebration of the Bicentennial on the regional and community level created a shift in emphasis: rather than focusing on the celebration of America as a whole, frequently these celebrations focused on the contributions by the individual community, state or region’s contributions to the nation as a whole. Bodnar recounts numerous Bicentennial activities that emphasized and frequently supported the communities creating the celebrations, such as oral-history projects, preservation projects, and historical reenactments pertaining to local culture, handicrafts, and battles.¹⁵⁷ These celebrations served both to support local economies and to strengthen the individual’s identification with a local context, whether at the community or regional level.

¹⁵⁴ Christopher Capozzola, “‘It Makes You Want to Believe in the Country’: Celebrating the Bicentennial in the Age of Limits,” in *America in the Seventies*, ed. Beth Bailey and David Farber (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2004), 31.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 31-32.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 32.

¹⁵⁷ Bodnar, *Remaking America*, 238-239.

3.1.5.2 Regionalism (II): Rural life

The idealization of rural life permeated American culture during the 1970s. At the opening of the decade, Joni Mitchell sang, “We’ve got to get back to the garden,” encapsulating the longing for an ideal, rural lifestyle shared by many.¹⁵⁸ The idealized rural lifestyle was viewed as having a moral dimension (according to Lowenthal, “What they [most Americans] like about the country is the notion that it is more natural, hence more virtuous than the city”¹⁵⁹), as well as a redemptive dimension (as when Joni Mitchell continues, she’s “gonna try to get [her] soul free”¹⁶⁰).

This yearning continued throughout the 1970s. The urban lifestyle had become increasingly dominant throughout the earlier part of the twentieth century, with 69% of the population living in cities or their immediate metropolitan areas by 1970, contrasted with the mere 28% of the population only sixty years earlier.¹⁶¹ Planned communities beginning in the late 1940s led to an overwhelming increase in suburban lifestyles. Lowenthal writes,

Little more than a century ago, a majority [of Americans] were still rural people; today they are city folks. Thus most urbanites’ parents or grandparents had immediate roots in the countryside. This massive displacement intensified city dwellers’ commonly professed revulsion for urban forms and social institutions and their nostalgia for rural scenes.¹⁶²

This nostalgia for the rural life was quite separate from the rough day-to-day realities characterizing “real” rural lifestyles. Lowenthal again writes, noting the intersection between idealized ruralness with the idealized past,

¹⁵⁸ Joni Mitchell, “Woodstock” from *Ladies of the Canyon*, Reprise RS 6376. 33 rpm. Stereo. 1970.

¹⁵⁹ Lowenthal, “The Bicentennial Landscape,” 255.

¹⁶⁰ Mitchell, “Woodstock.”

¹⁶¹ Frank Hobbs and Nicole Stoops, *Demographic Trends in the Twentieth Century*, U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Special Reports, Series CENSR-4 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2002), 32, <http://www.census.gov/prod/2002pubs/censr-4.pdf>. (accessed August 28, 2007).

¹⁶² Lowenthal, “The Bicentennial Landscape,” 254.

As urbanites of rural antecedents, many Americans consider the revisited countryside their rightful heritage, to be preserved from modern encroachments. At the same time, we either idealize or overlook the rural social fabric, which is now quite unlike the remembered rural past and is in any case largely invisible. Thus our image of the countryside tends more and more to lie in the realm of the past.¹⁶³

Here, Lowenthal is emphasizing a confluence of ideas: the past and the pastoral come together in a comforting—albeit unrealistic—image, a vision that a person could turn to even in the midst of a noisy, bustling, gritty, uneasy present.

3.1.5.3 Regionalism (III): The unique case of the South

A mythologizing of the American South tied together the focus on rural life and community during the 1970s. While individual communities, regions and states sought to find their own significance in the history of the nation, the idealization of the South was a trend that began to sweep the nation. The mythology of the South was promoted in part through Centennial celebrations of the Civil War promoted throughout the 1960s, again, a turbulent time in which national leaders sought to unify the nation through an imagined past. In the official celebrations of the Centennial of the Civil War, both the soldiers of the North and the South were portrayed as nobly fighting for what they believed was right. The idea of “heroism” was used to describe the participation of both sides of the Civil War, and allowed both the South and the North to take pride in their contributions to the past, and to celebrate the unity of the present.¹⁶⁴ Sometimes, the recreation of history to promote the idea of a unified nation turned the actual historical events on their heads. Bodnar describes a reenactment of the first battle of Bull Run, taking place in Manassas, Virginia in July 1961, “In the actual first battle of Bull Run, Union troops had broken

¹⁶³ Ibid., 254.

¹⁶⁴ Bodnar, *Remaking America*, 208-209.

and fled in disorder toward Washington, D.C. In the reenactment, Northern and Southern units came together on the field of battle at the end to sing ‘God Bless America.’”¹⁶⁵

As John G. Cawelti discusses, the mass media contributed to the idealization of the South through the 1970s in shows such as *The Beverly Hillbillies* and *The Waltons*, and even through fast-food advertising with the rise in popularity of Kentucky Fried Chicken, and its associated images of a respectable southern plantation.¹⁶⁶ Further, the publication of *The Foxfire* book series (1972-) fueled the positive image of the South, through its promotion of the food, handicrafts, culture, oral traditions, and independent mindset of the Appalachian people.¹⁶⁷ As racism was seen more and more as a national problem rather than a southern problem, the South was viewed as an icon of an idealistic symbol of an America—a kind of America based on a rural, tight-knit community center—that had been lost. The culmination of the 1970s myth of the South, according to Cawelti, took place with the presidential election of Jimmy Carter. Cawelti writes, “Carter’s association with farming made him a representative of rural America and of its tradition of honesty, simplicity, family, and local heritage.”¹⁶⁸

However, despite this prevalent romantic view of the South, the cultural imaging of the South still frequently embodied images of otherness and primitivism. One only has to watch the film *Deliverance* (1972) to see—and hear—the other-ing of the South, particularly the rural South during this time. Though not addressing directly the image of the South during the 1970s,

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 214.

¹⁶⁶ John G. Cawelti, “‘That’s What I Like about the South’: Changing Images of the South in the 1970s,” in *The Lost Decade: America in the Seventies*, ed. Elsebeth Hurup (Aarhus, Denmark: Aarhus University Press, 1996), 13, 16.

¹⁶⁷ The book, edited by Eliot Willington, is entitled *The Foxfire Book: Hog Dressing; Log Cabin Building; Mountain Crafts and Foods; Planting By The Signs; Snake Lore, Hunting Tales, Faith Healing; Moonshining; and Other Affairs of Plain Living* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1972)

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 17.

Kiri Miller summarizes many of the key and often conflicting images associated with the South.

She writes,

As scholars of Appalachian cultural history have shown, the population derided as hillbillies and squirrel-eaters have from time to time been called upon as the standard-bearers for American racial purity, family values, and old-fashioned God-fearing religion—or, depending on who you ask, for aesthetic authenticity, the “simple life,” spirituality, and ecological stewardship. The stereotype seems infinitely malleable and therefore infinitely politically useful. Both liberals and conservatives have attributed an emphasis on community (or clannishness) and rugged individualism (or ignorant xenophobic backwardness) to rural Southerners, as explicitly American values or as selfish provincial prejudice.¹⁶⁹

Even during this period that primarily emphasized the South as a positive symbol, the South still acted as a complex metaphor for American identity as a whole, encompassing both the more positive aspects of American culture (such as community) as well as the unsavory (such as racism and xenophobia).

The two works examined in this chapter weave together these three facets of regionalism. They celebrate and commemorate small, rural communities, and the close ties of kinship and friendship enabled and encouraged through life in a small town. Both works examined in this chapter were premiered as part of larger festivals, festivals that celebrated the community life within a particular region in the South, the Shenandoah Valley in both works, and in Parker’s opera, a small town within that region, Singers Glen. Parker invokes the South through reenacting life in a small, Southern community, while Jones memorializes the common people and the land on which they lived.

¹⁶⁹ Kiri Miller, *Traveling Home: Sacred Harp Singing and American Pluralism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 147.

3.1.6 Personal history: family and ethnic history

A third strategy for coming to grips with a fractured nationalism was a turn to personal history, comprised of both a blossoming interest in family history as well as a broader interest in the ethnic histories within American culture. Sheila O'Hare notes a resurgence of interest in genealogies and personal histories during the 1970s, tied into—on the academic front—the emphasis on the new social history.¹⁷⁰ O'Hare also notes that Alex Haley's novel *Roots: The Saga of An American Family* (1976) and the subsequent mini-series *Roots* based on it (1977) contributed strongly to the surging interest in the study of family and ethnic histories.¹⁷¹

The Bicentennial itself served as an impetus for studying and preserving family history. The regional and community focus of the Bicentennial celebrations led many to feel a new investment in their own personal history. Across the country, families put together and buried time capsules, containing such varied items as “family photos, footballs, mugs, money, toys, fishing licenses, street signs, cookbooks, city council minutes, and local newspapers.”¹⁷²

Again, the shattering of a coherent national identity was part of this new focus on family history. David Lowenthal writes,

The national chronicle is too large-scale and too abstract to carry the freight of personal identification. With a national past so brief and apparently so irrelevant to the modern ethos, we not surprisingly focus on the more private past, finding our heritage in childhood and parental memories as we trace the history of our own localities and lineages.¹⁷³

This search for a personal and family identity frequently was tied to a broader search for ethnic identity. Activities celebrating particular ethnicities were an important part of the canvas of

¹⁷⁰ Sheila O'Hare, “Genealogy and History,” in *Common-Place* 2, no. 3 (April 2002), <http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/cp/vol-02/no-03/ohare/> (accessed January 20, 2009).

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Bodnar, *Remaking America*, 238.

¹⁷³ Lowenthal, “The Bicentennial Landscape,” 256.

Bicentennial celebrations. For example, Bodnar notes that, “over half a million dollars went through state bicentennial commissions to 156 separate programs involving blacks.”¹⁷⁴ As we will see below, composer Samuel Jones’s work *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* in particular brings out the theme of family identity. A childhood memory of a hymn sung to him by his grandmother is the nucleus of the composition, from its inception to its program.

3.1.7 Religion and spirituality in the 1970s

As the idealization of the South encompasses a cluster of other cultural ideologies within it, so the ideas and practice of religion and spirituality in the 1970s also assimilates many of the cultural ideas of the same period. Though attendance at traditional church services had declined significantly during this period, spirituality in general as well as Christianity in particular were inextricably tied to the events and attitudes of the time.¹⁷⁵

The emphasis on the personal (the “me” generation) during the 1970s led to more individualized quests for spirituality, frequently leading to alternate paths of spirituality, including Hippie communes,¹⁷⁶ Eastern mysticism (frequently modified through Western stereotypes), cults (the most notorious of which in the 1970s were Jim Jones and the Peoples Temple), and new approaches to traditional religions (such as the combination of hippie identity

¹⁷⁴ Bodnar, *Remaking America*, 241. Bodnar cites numerous other groups also using the Bicentennial as a springboard to celebrate ethnic identity, citing specific events that celebrated Jewish, Scotch, Irish, Chinese, Japanese, Turkish, Mexican, and Lithuanian identities.

¹⁷⁵ Donald E. Miller, *Reinventing American Protestantism: Christianity in the New Millennium* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999), 70. Miller writes, “Church attendance peaked in the 1950s, when 49 percent of the U.S. population indicated that they had attended religious services in the last 7 days. Beginning in the 1960s, attendance slowly declined until it had bottomed out at about 40 percent in the 1970s, and it has remained at approximately this level until the present.”

¹⁷⁶ See Albert Bates and Timothy Miller, “The Evolution of Hippie Commune Spirituality: The Farm and Other Hippies that Didn’t Give Up,” in *America’s Alternative Religions*, ed. Timothy Miller (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), 371-376.

and Christianity in the “Jesus Freak” movement).¹⁷⁷ The search for spiritual meaning outside the traditional religious frameworks was closely tied to the search for meaning and community by many within American sub- and counter-cultures. Douglas T. Miller writes,

Most of the search for spiritual solace took place within the framework of organized Christian churches. But this quest also spawned various new sects and cults, generally headed by charismatic leaders. Buffeted by international and domestic crises, alarmed at apparent social and moral chaos, some Americans surrendered their personal wills to spiritual masters.¹⁷⁸

Concurrent with the search for new forms of religious and spiritual meaning was a movement to return to “that old-time religion,” deeply connected with the idealization of an American past, tied to the growing influence of the South, and also connected with a desire for community. At the same time attendance in mainline churches was decreasing, attendance in denominations that had their roots in the South was increasing.¹⁷⁹

This movement was most publicly realized in the emergence in the political sphere of the “Christian right.” This political movement has been characterized by its emphasis on “family values” (and its use of religious rhetoric in the civil sphere). Again, through its emphasis on “family” values, this movement places priority on the family unit as a primary source of identity. This movement issued calls for a return to the past, which was in their view, a Christian nation characterized by moral and national purity.

Neither one of the compositions examined in this chapter endorses either a political movement, or an individualistic approach to religion. Both share a more general concern for religion and spirituality as an integral part of community. In Parker’s work, especially, the

¹⁷⁷ This combination of hippie identity with Christian themes is perhaps most memorably encoded in Andrew Lloyd Weber’s musical *Jesus Christ Superstar* (1971). Especially in its filmic version (1973), it interprets Jesus as a contemporary Eastern-influenced-mystic-hippie-guru.

¹⁷⁸ Douglas T. Miller, “Sixties Activism in the ‘Me Decade’,” in *The Lost Decade: America in the Seventies*, ed. Elsebeth Hurup (Aarhus, Denmark: Aarhus University Press, 1996), 137.

¹⁷⁹ Mark A. Shibley, *Resurgent Evangelicalism in the United States: Mapping Cultural Change since 1970* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1996), 27.

hymns have an overtly religious presence—through the preservation of the hymn texts, and through their use in religious services. In Jones’s work, the hymns embody a spiritual component of his family history (songs sung by his grandmother and his later encounter with them at his father’s church), as well as their importance in the culture of the Shenandoah Valley region.

3.1.8 Why shape-note hymns?

In light of these new approaches to American history, music became a tangible link to the past, whether used to support national agendas (note the use of “God Bless America” mentioned in the discussion of Southern regionalism), or to emphasize family, regional, or ethnic identities, identities often in conflict with the idealistic picture of a united American nation. The popular folk music revival (as well as other folk revivals) emphasized music “of the people,” and idealized the rural lifestyle. Shape-note hymns through their history (provenance) and through their representation within scholarly literature carry with them cultural ideas prioritized in the 1970s, such as community, rurality, Southernness, spirituality, and the adulation of the common man (and woman!).

When viewed in the light of social history, the motivations for the use of these hymns become clear. Many of these hymns—and hymnals—were created by poor or undereducated people—from William Billings, the eighteenth-century tanner and musician who died in poverty, to the many unnamed composers and authors of the nineteenth-century hymns. Further, the preservation of these hymns by ordinary people within “backwoods” Southern churches during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries adds to their allure as historical documents of ordinary people.

The works by Samuel Jones and Alice Parker discussed below can also be viewed as public displays of history. As when museums—under the influence of social history—displayed artifacts from everyday life, so Parker and Jones use these ordinary, vernacular, folk hymns as historical artifacts or found objects that represent the communities that participated in creating and performing the hymns. Each work draws upon regional identity as a central part of its narrative. Jones's orchestral work *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* focuses on the Shenandoah Valley region in general, weaving in hymns associated with the region in some way, while Parker's opera *Singer's Glen* focuses on a particular community within that region—Singer's Glen, Virginia—narrating the story of the community's hymn-book compiler and publisher Joseph Funk. Each work explicitly celebrates the lives of ordinary people living within tight-knit, somewhat rural communities, a celebration in line with the concerns of social historians of the time. In the next section of this chapter, these two works will be analyzed as case studies, demonstrating the ways in which the ideas and concerns of the time-period are woven together in distinctive ways in each of the pieces—in their genesis, program, reception, and above all, through their quotation of shape-note hymns.

3.2 SAMUEL JONES, *LET US NOW PRAISE FAMOUS MEN*: SHAPE-NOTE HYMNS AS MEMORY AND MEMORIAL

The American composer Samuel Jones (1935-) has written numerous works quoting American folk hymns, including some that incorporate shape-note hymns.¹⁸⁰ His musical life has involved conducting many symphony orchestras, including the Rochester Philharmonic, founding and working as a dean of Rice University's Shepherd School of Music, and composing, for the past eleven years, serving as the Composer-in-Residence to the Seattle Symphony Orchestra.¹⁸¹ His symphonic poem *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* exhibits a telescoping view of the past, using shape-note hymns to signify historical strata: their significance in his and his family's past, their regional significance within eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Shenandoah Valley communities, and their significance as a national American idiom. Rather than a historical recreation or reenactment, this piece acts as memory and memorial. The past is not acted out, but recalled. The elusiveness and fragmentary quality of human memory is reflected in the narrative of the work, particularly through the orchestration, fragmentation and layering of hymn tunes in this work. Musical and historical analysis will be used to reveal the intertwining of personal history, regionalism and Americanism in the genesis, program and musical structures of *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*.

¹⁸⁰ Jones's works incorporating shape-note hymns include *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* (New York: Carl Fischer, 1974); *Roundings: Musings and Meditations on Texas New Deal Murals* (premiered April 8, 2000 by the Amarillo Symphony Orchestra, Amarillo, Texas; Campanile Music Press, Carl Fischer Agent, 2000); and an unpublished set of variations on the hymn tune "Murillo's Lesson" written in preparation for the composition of *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* (Samuel Jones, interview with author, e-mail, May 30-June 30, 2007).

¹⁸¹ Samuel Jones, "Biography" <http://samueljones.net/longbio.html> (accessed April 9, 2009).

3.2.1 Genesis of *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*

Though *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* was the most-performed orchestral work in the 1976-1977 seasons that had been commissioned for bicentennial celebrations (here, envisioned both as a celebration of the bicentennial of the Shenandoah Valley region as well as the United States Bicentennial),¹⁸² little has been written about it in scholarly literature.¹⁸³ However, Samuel Jones has kindly participated in extensive interviews for this dissertation (via e-mail), which provide much insight into the work.¹⁸⁴ The complete interview is found in Appendix A.¹⁸⁵

Let Us Now Praise Famous Men was commissioned in 1972 by the Shenandoah Valley Bicentennial Committee together with the American Symphony Orchestra League.¹⁸⁶ The twenty-five members and contributors of the Shenandoah Valley Bicentennial Committee planned numerous events during each month of 1972, the bicentennial year of the founding of the Shenandoah County, Virginia.¹⁸⁷ Other events included carnivals, arts, crafts, a battle recreation, music, dramas, parades, pageants, hymn-sings, bell ringing, and Belsnickling.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸² Samuel Jones, interview with author, e-mail, May 30-June 30, 2007. He cites the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) as the source for the information. I attempted to contact ASCAP regarding numbers of performances, and received no response to my query. The complete interview is included in Appendix A.

¹⁸³ This piece is also discussed by Cathryn Wilkinson-Thompson in her Ph.D. dissertation "The Significance of Borrowing Sacred Materials in Three Twentieth-Century American Works for Orchestra" (University of Iowa, 1993), "Chapter III: Passing the Torch: Shape-Note Hymns in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*," 12-50.

¹⁸⁴ Unless otherwise noted, statements about Jones's activities, memories and motivations are drawn from Samuel Jones, interview with author.

¹⁸⁵ Samuel Jones reworked excerpts from this interview into an essay, which was published in *Growing Up in Mississippi*, edited by Judy H. Tucker and Charline R. McCord (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2008), 57-62.

¹⁸⁶ Jones, interview.

¹⁸⁷ E-mail from Katherine Wilkins, Virginia Historical Society. May 1, 2006.

¹⁸⁸ "Schedule of Events for Bicentennial," unpublished paper produced by the Shenandoah Valley Bicentennial Commission. Belsnickling was a Germanic Christmas tradition that was preserved by the communities in the Shenandoah Valley. For more information on the preservation of the Belsnickling tradition in the United States, see Alfred L. Shoemaker, *Christmas in Pennsylvania: A Folk-Cultural Study, 40th Anniversary Edition* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1999), 75-90.

Since the early 1960s The American Symphony Orchestra League had been involved in the Shenandoah Valley region through an annual conducting workshop, The Eastern Institute of Orchestral Studies.¹⁸⁹ The artistic director of this workshop, Richard Lert, attracted many outstanding musicians, and under the leadership of Helen M. Thompson, Executive Officer of the American Symphony Orchestra League, the Institute became involved with local Festival concerts.¹⁹⁰ Jones's involvement with the festival led to the commission. He writes,

During those years I began my annual summer pilgrimages to the Shenandoah Valley, first as a student of Lert then later, for a decade or so, as an assistant to him. In the course of those years I, too, became very close to many of the local citizens who formed the nucleus of the Festival's community support. From time to time various works of mine were presented on Festival concerts, including a Festival Fanfare which Helen Thompson asked me to write to open each Festival. Thus, it developed quite naturally that I was asked in early 1972 to compose the bicentennial commemorative piece, to be premiered on August 12, 1972. The Committee used its own funds and procured matching funding from the National Endowment for the Arts.¹⁹¹

A member of the Bicentennial committee, Kathryn Benchoff, sent Samuel Jones research materials on the history of music in the Shenandoah Valley, and became an inspiring force behind the creation of the piece. Jones writes,

This material was an eye-opener for me, leading me to realize how important the Valley was to the development and spread of the rural church singing school movement of the nineteenth century. The Shenandoah Valley was both a publishing center, where many of the shaped-note hymnals were produced, and a dissemination center, where summer retreats and singing schools were held. This immediately began to loom as important information for me and for my new piece, as I could sense the strong possibility of some kind of orchestral fantasia based on some of these old hymns.¹⁹²

Even at this early point in the work's genesis, it is clear that Jones sensed at least a double trajectory of the hymns' history: their connection with the regional history of the

¹⁸⁹ Jones, interview.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Ibid.

Shenandoah Valley, as well as with his own family history. The shape-note hymns triggered his childhood memory of his first exposure to a shape-note hymn, as well as other childhood experiences of attending “singings” with his father.¹⁹³ His grandmother, Elizabeth Knight Jones (1882-1974), who with her husband had lived many years as a sharecropper, sang a hymn to him when he was a child, and the experience was indelibly printed in his memory. He writes, “One of my earliest memories of my grandmother was of her bouncing me as a very young boy on her knees and singing something in syllables I didn’t understand. The tune, though, I remembered, [and the syllables].”

Though he admittedly reconstructed some of the syllables in his mind over the years, the tune stayed with him, even though he didn’t know its name. After his commission, he quickly went to work, using the old hymn as his starting place.

Almost immediately, as I was thinking about finding some of these old hymns, the tune my grandmother had bounced me to as a little boy came back to my consciousness. I sat down right then and quickly composed seven variations on that old tune, still unnamed in my mind but intensely vivid in my memory after some 35 years. Though I didn’t quite know how it would ultimately be used, I sensed strongly that this was the start of my new piece.¹⁹⁴

Material created in these variations was eventually used in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*. Following the composition of these variations, Jones entered into extensive research on shape-note hymns at the Sibley Library of the Eastman School of Music.¹⁹⁵ Here, he studied numerous shape-note hymnals, and especially studied George Pullen Jackson’s research on shape-note hymns. To his joy, he uncovered the song his grandmother sang to him in the *Sacred Harp*, discovering its name, “Murillo’s Lesson” (Figure 14).

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Follow-up to interview with composer, via e-mail, July 15, 2008. See Appendix A.1.2 Follow-up to interview: July 15, 2008.

¹⁹⁵ Jones, interview.

As down a lone val-ley with ce-dars o'er-spread, From war's dread con-fu-sion I pen-sive-ly stray'd, } Per-fumes as of
 The gloom from the face of fair hea-ven re-tired, The winds hush'd their murmurs, the thunders ex-pir'd; }

E-den flow'd sweetly a-long, A voice as of an-gels en-chant-ing-ly sung, A voice as of an-gels en-chant-ing-ly

Figure 14. *The Sacred Harp*. “Murillo’s Lesson”

Courtesy of the Pitts Theology Library, Candler School of Theology, Emory University.

As will be seen in the later analysis, this hymn plays a crucial structural and symbolic role in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*. Out of the many hymns he studied, Jones chose six additional hymns as the basis of his orchestral work, hymns that either have historical ties to the Shenandoah Valley, or else, as “Murillo’s Lesson,” resonate with his own past history. Some of these hymns had been disseminated through publishing houses in the Shenandoah Valley region during the nineteenth century, but he also wanted to use hymns that reached further back into the region’s history. He writes,

Although the hymnals were published on the dates indicated, I could tell from external clues (the way the tunes were credited, their modality, in some cases their titles, etc.) and from some of G. P. Jackson’s commentary that all of these tunes were actually folk tunes transported from the British Isles and kept alive in the memories of countless immigrants. The nineteenth-century singing masters

shrewdly used this memory bank of tunes, substituting religious words, and re-taught them using the Fa-Sol-La mnemonic shortcuts to new generations of singers. It was important to me to use these older tunes, because for a bicentennial celebration I wanted to use melodic material that was (as closely as I could determine) in actual use 200 years ago.¹⁹⁶

Thus, Jones uses the hymns to represent the early history of the Shenandoah Valley region, its musical life and contributions in the nineteenth century, and on a more personal note, the people in the twentieth century (such as Jones's grandmother) who reflected the ideals and lifestyles of the earlier settlers of the region.

As much as the personal and regional significance of these hymns were almost inextricably intertwined in the genesis of the work, Jones was also looking at *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* as a celebration of national identity, anticipating the American Bicentennial as another platform for the work. Jones's foresight was—in his own words—partially a practical matter (a work previously composed with score and parts finished would have more opportunities for performance in the 1976-77 season).¹⁹⁷ The work achieved resounding acclaim during the American Bicentennial celebrations. Its success as part of a national celebration attests to the American public's growing concern with the use of personal and regional history as ways to break down the complexity of national identity.

¹⁹⁶ Jones, interview.

¹⁹⁷ Jones, interview.

3.2.2 Hymns used in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*

The seven hymns Jones quoted and the source hymnals¹⁹⁸ that he cites are identified below in order of their appearance in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*:

- “Davisson’s Retirement” (*Kentucky Harmony*, 1816)¹⁹⁹
“Murillo’s Lesson” (*The Sacred Harp*, 1860)²⁰⁰
“Montgomery” (*The Sacred Harp*, 1860)²⁰¹
“Leander” (*Southern Harmony*, 1835)²⁰²
“Mississippi” (*Supplement to Kentucky Harmony*, 1820)²⁰³
“Virginia” (from *Missouri Harmony*, 1846)²⁰⁴
“Pisgah” (from *Harmonia Sacra*, 1866)²⁰⁵

¹⁹⁸ Note: Jones did not always use the first published edition of the hymnals as his source.

¹⁹⁹ Although Jones’s research notes cite Ananias Davisson’s *Kentucky Harmony* (Harrisonburg, VA: Davisson, 1816), I was unable to locate the hymn in this edition of *Kentucky Harmony*. According to James Nelson Gingerich and Matthew Lind, the tune to *Davisson’s Retirement* was composed by Henry Harington, c.1775. They write, “Harington’s (1727-1816) ‘Beneath the silent rural call,’ c. 1775, was converted to ‘Retirement’ by Thomas Williams; in Ananias Davisson’s *Supplement to the Kentucky Harmony*, 1820.” *The Harmonia Sacra Handbook* <http://www.entish.org/hs/handbook.html> (accessed February 3, 2008). The date of this tune corroborates Jones’s deduction that the hymns he chose for this piece were 18th-century tunes preserved within 19th-century hymnals.

²⁰⁰ White and King, *The Sacred Harp*, 4th ed. The hymn was first found in the original 1844 edition of the *Sacred Harp* (Philadelphia: for the proprietors, White, Massengale, Hamilton, GA, 1844) according to Andrew Kuntz at *The Fiddler’s Companion*. http://www.ibiblio.org/fiddlers/MUR_MUT.htm (accessed October 25, 2008).

²⁰¹ White and King, *The Sacred Harp*, 4th ed. The tune was composed by Justin Morgan and first published in Asahel Benham’s *Federal Harmony* (New Haven, CT: Abel Morse, 1790). See Mark Rhoads, *Anthology of the American Hymn-Tune Repertory* <http://www.bethel.edu/~rhomar/TunePages/Montgomery.html> (accessed October 27, 2008).

²⁰² William Walker’s *The Southern Harmony and Musical Companion* (Spartansburg, SC: William Walker, 1835). Jones’s notes cite New Haven as the city in which the edition he consulted was printed; however, I was unable to locate a source for this imprint. This tune was first published in Alexander Johnson’s *Tennessee Harmony* (Cincinnati, OH: Morgan, Lodge and Co., 1818). See “Indexes for The Sacred Harp: 1991 Edition” *Fasola.org*. <http://www.fasola.org/indexes/1991/?p=71> (accessed October 25, 2008).

²⁰³ Ananias Davisson, *Supplement to the Kentucky Harmony*. ([Harrisonburg, VA]: Ananias Davisson, 1820). This hymn was first published in William Walker’s *The Southern Harmony and Musical Companion* (Spartansburg, SC: William Walker, 1835), with “Bradford” cited as its source.

²⁰⁴ Allen D. Carden, *The Missouri Harmony*, facsimile of the 9th ed. (1840), from its 1846 reprinting, with an introduction by Shirley Bean (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1994). The tune was composed by Oliver Brownson, and according to Richard Crawford, it was first published in Simeon Jocelin’s *The Chorister’s Companion* (New Haven, 1782). Richard Crawford, ed. *The Core Repertory of Early American Psalmody*, Recent Researches in American Music 11-12 (Madison, WI: A-R Editions, 1984), lxi.

²⁰⁵ Joseph Funk, compiler, *Harmonia Sacra*, 11th ed. (Singers Glen, VA: Joseph Funk’s Sons, 1866). The tune is credited to J. C. Lowry, and first appeared in Ananias Davisson’s, *Kentucky Harmony*, 2nd ed. (Harrisonburg, VA.: Ananias Davisson, 1817). David W. Music, ed., *A Selection of Shape-Note Folk Hymns from Southern United States Tune Books, 1816-61*, Recent Researches in American Music 52 (Middleton, WI: A-R Editions, 2005), xv.xv.

Jones uses several techniques in arranging the hymns in the work.²⁰⁶ Among them are:

- Fragmentation of hymn melodies into motivic segments
- Rhythmic alterations of hymn melodies, including alteration of phrase length, changing meters, and the use of freer rhythmic patterns
- Chromatic harmonization of hymns
- Polytonal layering of hymn melodies
- Canonic treatment of hymn melodies
- Juxtaposition of two or more hymns through layering or call-and-response treatment
- New material and/or variations on hymn material used between phrases of a hymn
- Use of instrument families homophonically to create a choral effect

This symphonic poem is wordless, and the words of the hymns have not been included in liner notes or program notes that Samuel Jones has published. The words of the hymns themselves, as attested to by these details and by Jones himself, would then have less programmatic significance in the overall program than in a texted work (such as Copland's or Parker's). He writes, "The texts did not figure at all in my choices. The musical content was paramount in all the choices, but the titles did influence several of those choices."²⁰⁷ He continues,

I just want to emphasize that, as with all my programmatic music, it is a given that the musical values of the piece are paramount. That is to say that the piece must work—and can be experienced completely—as a piece of music, wholly on musical terms. But, in addition to that, there are often these strong connections beyond the music, connections that, if the interested listener wants to know of them, can only deepen the overall experience.

Some of these "strong connections" have been unpacked through the preceding analysis of the genesis of the work, and the following section will further explore these associations in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* through examining the works for which the symphonic poem is entitled, the titles of the hymns, Jones's own commentary on the work, and its musical structures.

²⁰⁶ For further discussion of the musical techniques used in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, see "Chapter III: Passing the Torch: Shape-Note Hymns in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*" in Cathryn Wilkinson-Thompson's Ph.D. dissertation "The Significance of Borrowing Sacred Materials in Three Twentieth-Century American Works for Orchestra" (University of Iowa, 1993).

²⁰⁷ Follow-up to interview with composer, via e-mail, July 16, 2008.

3.2.3 The Program of *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*

Why entitle the symphonic poem, “*Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*”? There appears to be no one-to-one correlation between the book by Walker Evans and James Agee and Jones’s music. I have found no evidence that Jones is trying to directly represent in any way events that take place in the book, or to directly mirror the narrative trajectory of the book. However, the two works share much in their tone and approach to the shared culture which they represent, the subculture of Southern tenant farms. Their shared approaches include using objects and landscapes to represent people, and the blending of their own memories and pasts with the celebration of a regional group of people. The following section explores the ideas connecting the book and the music, opening with an overview of the sources for the title, and continuing with an exploration of the connections between the book and the musical structures of *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*.

3.2.3.1 *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*: The Apocryphal passage

Jones explains his use of the title, intertwining personal history with broader issues, “First of all, there is a tremendous amount of irony in the title. It is not about men; it is about women and men. And it is not about famous people; it is about the common people.”²⁰⁸ Jones’s emphasis here on the common people reflected the profound shift in historical inquiry mirrored in and disseminated through the field of social history. The title dually refers to the James Agee and Walker Evans’s eponymous book about 1930s tenant farmers, and to a passage in the

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

Apocrypha, namely, Ecclesiasticus (or Sirach) 44:1-15, from which the book derives its name.²⁰⁹

As the text of the Apocryphal passage is crucial to the understanding of both Agee and Walker's work as well as Jones's composition, I have reproduced it in its entirety here:

Let us now praise famous men, and our fathers that begat us.
The Lord hath wrought great glory by them through his great power from
the beginning.
Such as did bear rule in their kingdoms, men renowned for their power,
giving counsel by their understanding, and declaring prophecies:
Leaders of the people by their counsels, and by their knowledge of
learning meet for the people, wise and eloquent are their instructions:
Such as found out musical tunes, and recited verses in writing:
Rich men furnished with ability, living peaceably in their habitations:
All these were honoured in their generations, and were the glory of their
times.
There be of them that have left a name behind them, that their praises
might be reported.
And some there be which have no memorial; who perished, as though they
had never been; and are become as though they had never been born; and
their children after them.
But these were merciful men, whose righteousness hath not been
forgotten.
With their seed shall continually remain a good inheritance, and their
children are within the covenant.
Their seed standeth fast, and their children for their sakes. Their seed
shall remain forever, and their glory shall not be blotted out.
Their bodies are buried in peace; but their name liveth for evermore.²¹⁰
[The people will tell of their wisdom, and the congregation will shew forth their
praise.]²¹¹

²⁰⁹ James Agee and Walker Evans, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men: Three Tenant Families* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1941).

²¹⁰ As found in Agee and Evans, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, 393.

²¹¹ King James Version. The verse in brackets completes the passage as cited by Jones, but is not included in Walker and Agee. Jones purposefully chose the same translation cited by Agee noting that, "Later translations of this passage rob it of this broadening purpose, that of including the nameless, faceless mass of goodhearted, common people in the eulogy. However, the ringing words of the traditional translation, which so moved Agee and myself that we borrowed them as our title, express such a powerful truth and do it with such literary force that they continue to have their own life, even if later translators feel they go beyond the original meaning of Jesus, son of Sirach, the author of Ecclesiasticus." (Jones, interview)

The segment—“such as found out musical tunes, and recited verses in writing”—with its celebration of the work of artists surely resonated with Jones, Walker and Agee. Jones was especially interested in the “abrupt turn” that the passage takes about two-thirds of the way through the passage beginning with “And some there be which have no memorial.” He writes,

It was clearly this latter portion which spoke with such blinding force to James Agee that he quoted the entire passage on one of the last pages of his great meditation on poor Southern tenant farmers in Alabama in the 1930’s. Indeed, he used its opening words as the title of his book. For these last lines clearly encapsulate what his entire book was about: they eulogize the countless numbers of the forgotten who live without achieving fame, but whose lives provide the continuity for and the inheritance of our common human heritage.²¹²

Thus Jones and Agee both interpret the text as an ode to the common man and woman, even if they go beyond, as Jones implies, the meaning and purpose of the original text.²¹³

3.2.3.2 *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*: the book

Let Us Now Praise Famous Men, with text by James Agee and photographs by Walker Evans is a complex narrative of Agee and Evans’s trip to document the lives of white sharecroppers. John P. Hussey summarizes the work’s genesis,

In 1936, Agee and the photographer Walker Evans, both in their late twenties, were commissioned by *Fortune* [magazine] to go to rural Alabama and produce a photo-essay on the economic plight of white sharecroppers. After several weeks trying to find appropriate subjects for the piece, Agee and Evans finally met and they lived for a time with three tenant families whom they came to know and love. Afterward, they found they could not compress or dilute their experience within the journalistic formulae of *Fortune*. So, instead, they produced a book which Houghton Mifflin finally published in 1941. In its present edition are found more than sixty of Evans’ photographs and more than 400 pages of Agee’s text.²¹⁴

²¹² Jones, interview.

²¹³ Ibid.

²¹⁴ John P. Hussey, “Agee’s *Famous Men* and American Non-Fiction,” *College English* 40, no. 6 (February 1979): 677.

This experimental work combines a thoroughness of detail with intense introspection on Agee's part. Its polystylistic writing featuring a nearly Joycean play of language, and its combination of politics and aesthetics have led some to label it as a precursor to postmodernist realism.²¹⁵

Throughout the book, Agee uses a self-reflexive tone. From the outset of the narrative, Agee is a character in the work, rather than an impersonal or omniscient narrator. By structuring the book this way, Agee strives to avoid a paternalistic relationship with the families he portrays, seeking to reach beyond the merely aesthetic and even beyond a politically motivated charity towards the people, to give a sense of the reality of their day-to-day lives. T. V. Reed writes, "Agee especially makes himself a character in *Praise*; he objectifies himself and subjects his character to all manner of misreading.... This would seem to bring him to the level of Gudger and the other tenants as a representation, especially since his confessional obsession makes him a less than sympathetic character."²¹⁶ This "confessional obsession" echoes the world of memory created in Marcel Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu* ("In Search of Lost Time"), through its engagement of the author/character's memory. As much as the book commemorates a people, it also probes Agee's own heritage and memory.

Though writing in the 1930s, Agee's attention to detail correlates well with the concerns of the social history movement of the 1970s. To recreate the culture of the people with whom he interacted, Agee describes every aspect of their lives meticulously—their land, animals, houses, equipment, utensils, clothing, furniture, schools, churches, stores, music, food, relationships, and opinions. His comprehensive writing could be a future social historian's dream, providing

²¹⁵ T. V. Reed, "Unimagined Existence and the Fiction of the Real: Postmodernist Realism in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*," *Representations* 24 (Autumn 1988): 156-176. Also see Paula Rabinowitz, "Voyeurism and Class Consciousness: James Agee and Walker Evans, 'Let Us Now Praise Famous Men'," *Cultural Critique* 21 (Spring 1992): 143-170.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 171.

insight into the detail of everyday life. These sorts of minutiae found an honored place in the social history of the 1970s, in research as well as in public history displays and celebrations. In Evans's photographs, as well, we see common objects framed: a pair of well-worn boots, or the corner of a cabin with a broom and a ragged cloth. Surely the vividness with which Agee describes the ordinary attracted Jones to the work, especially in light of the Ecclesiasticus quotation honoring unnamed heroes. But how does Jones's work reflect these themes of Evans and Agee's work? The following sections explore a few of these intertwining themes in the program of Jones's *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, both through Jones's articulation of the work's meaning, and through the musical structures themselves.

3.2.3.3 Hymns as cultural artifacts

Jones discusses the ways in which the sonority of the hymns reflect aspects of the communities that created them, qualities that correspond clearly with the respectful tenor of Evans' and Agee's portrayal of community life in the South. Jones writes,

Instead of sounding "country," it sounded to my ears now as sturdy, honest, unadorned, open, strong, rhythmically direct—all qualities which reflected the people of the soil from which this music (and my family and myself) had sprung.²¹⁷

In Jones's articulation, then, the hymns act as sound objects that evoke the people who created and preserved them, much as the ordinary objects depicted in Evans's photographs and listed in Agee's text evoke a realistic sense of the life of the families who owned and used the artifacts.

One musical moment in Jones's work that particularly evokes a hymn as a community object is in the opening of the hymn "Montgomery," performed by an off-stage flute choir (Figure 15).

²¹⁷ Jones, interview.

Con moto animato

Flute 1

Flute 2 & 3

Flute 4
Alto in G

f *f* detached

f *f* detached

f *f* detached

Figure 15. Jones, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, mm. 141-145. “Montgomery,” off-stage flute choir

Used by permission of Samuel Jones

In the opening of this excerpt symbolizes the process in shape-note singings of a leader “keying the pitch” (flute 3, m. 141) and the congregation following (m. 143), evoking the sound of the hymn as performed by a community. Jones directly addresses his choice both of “Montgomery” and its setting in an off-stage flute choir. He writes,

This was the tune I first heard on the Library of Congress recording of tunes collected by Alan Lomax.²¹⁸ The quality of the timbre of the Sacred Harp singing of this tune was haunting and a powerful influence on the whole work. I especially labored to find a sonority to suggest the original sound, but as if filtered spectrally through the mesh of intervening years. As you know, the sound I arrived at (for orchestrating this tune) was the offstage flute choir, of which the Alto Flute provides an important floor. I later found the tune in the Sacred Harp.²¹⁹

In this apparently simple excerpt, Jones evokes both the hymn as it may have been performed in the nineteenth-century community, as well a sense of peering back through time at the community. In this way, too, Jones echoes the complex interaction of the viewer (Agee and Evans) and those being viewed (the families) in the book *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*.

²¹⁸ Alan Lomax, *All Day Singing from “The Sacred Harp,”* Prestige International Records 25007, 33 rpm, Mono. 1959.

²¹⁹ Jones, follow-up to interview, e-mail.

As noted in Chapter Two, the book *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* also inspired Copland's *Tender Land*, a work that also quotes a shape-note hymn.²²⁰ The correlations between the shape-note tradition and this book are many, attracting the attention of Copland and Jones. The families that James Agee and Walker Evans chronicle in their book evoke the kinds of communities that practiced and preserved the shape-note hymn tradition, namely, poor rural groups in the American South. No shape-note singings are specifically described in the book; however, the descriptions and photographs of the people and their surroundings reflect the same stark, rugged beauty that characterizes many of the hymns within the shape-note tradition. Further, hymns function as a powerful symbol in these works as a metaphor: as people joined together to sing these hymns, so too did they come together to work the land, raise their families, and build their towns.

3.2.3.4 Evocation of place

In his symphonic poem and his writings about it, Jones finds a close connection between the land and the people who lived on it. He felt a profound connection to the residents of the Shenandoah Valley through his own experiences growing up in the South. He writes,

I felt a deep interaction between the message of Agee's book—which eulogizes the bitter joys and weeps for the unrelenting difficulties of these unsung yet heroic women and men—and the generations of sturdy folk who sang in their country churches the honest, straightforward hymns of *The Sacred Harp*. And I wanted my music to reflect this interaction. Obviously, I had a close personal relationship to all this, from both my Mississippi upbringing and my Virginia closeness to both people and land. The music was a deep outpouring which—as music, perhaps better than anything else we humans have found, can so often do—expresses meaning deeper than words.²²¹

²²⁰ See 1930s-1950s chapter, discussion under 2.2.7 Copland's later use of "Zion's Walls".

²²¹ Ibid.

Here, Jones identifies himself with the common people of the texts, using place—Virginia, Mississippi, the land—as markers of identity. For this work, Jones chose two hymns with place-names as their titles: “Mississippi” and “Virginia.” The two hymn titles encompass personal memory and the commemoration of the people who lived in those regions. The title of the hymn “Mississippi” evokes Jones’s childhood home and church, as well as the place in which he first experienced shape-note hymns. He writes,

The earliest contact with shaped-note notation that I can remember was seeing those “strange” sharply-angled notes in hymnbooks. I grew up in Indianola, Mississippi (population, 5,000) in the 1940’s, and my family went to church in the Indianola First Baptist Church. Most of the hymnals had regular notation, but quite a few shaped-note versions of the hymnals were peppered throughout the seat-backs of the pews. These shaped-note hymnals used seven-note shapes.

Jones writes of the tune, “Virginia,”

[It] of course represented the Shenandoah Valley itself. But let me share with you a deeper extramusical meaning I ascribed to it. The Shenandoah Valley Music Festival, and the (as it was then known) American Symphony Orchestra League’s Conductors Workshop (officially known as the Eastern Institute of Orchestral Studies) had been an important part of my life for over a decade, and the person who drew us all there was the great musician, conductor, teacher, and human being named Richard Lert. So I let this tune, Virginia, symbolize Lert in my mind. You will notice that it first appears in the bass, symbolizing how Lert’s teaching was an underpinning foundation for so many of us. You will also notice that about midway through, the tune moves up into the middle of the orchestra, sung now by the horns. This symbolized to me the internalization of Lert’s teaching in me and in all his students.

So, by using “Mississippi” and “Virginia,” Jones represents both the region and his own experiences in that place.

In the work, he symbolically brings together these two places by overlapping them in a fugue-like passage. With its opening in a heavy, low register, its pounding *fortissimo* dynamics, and its B-minor key, the passage symbolizes the “unremitting difficulties” that the people on the land had to face (Figure 16).

fls., vns. "Mississippi"

obs.

tpts.

bsns, cbn., vc., db. "Virginia"

ff *legato*

fls. **ff**

vns. **f**

obs. **ff**

cls. **ff** **f** **mf**

ff **f** **mf**

Figure 16. Jones, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, mm. 307-316. "Virginia." Orchestral reduction

Used by permission of Samuel Jones.

Jones evokes another sense of place—not land, but water—in constructing *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* by using seven hymns to numerically represent the Shenandoah River. He writes,

One might note the preponderance of the number seven in this work: seven hymn tunes, seven variations on “Murillo’s Lesson,” the motivic use of the seven notes of the descending major scale, derived from “Murillo’s Lesson.” This was not accidental: from the beginning of my work on this composition I was preoccupied with that number because of the seven fabled bends of the Shenandoah River.²²²

Rivers are frequently evoked to symbolize place—whether national or regional—in literature and in music. The archetypal example of this in western art music is, of course, Bedřich Smetana’s *The Moldau* (1875). In this work, the listener is taken along a journey, “viewing” scenes along the river bank, leading through the swollen rapids into Prague. Through this journey, Smetana creates both a sense of a particular place, and a sense of identification with that place. Through this identification, Smetana sought to create a sense of national consciousness for the Bohemian people.

Likewise, rivers have had a significant place in the national consciousness of the American people, particularly in the South. What would Mark Twain’s *Huckleberry Finn* (1885) be without the Mississippi River? What better symbol of personal journey and growth, as well as the conflicted social environment of the time, than a journey down the Mississippi River? In Chapter Two, we have seen Virgil Thomson reign in the symbolic power of the Mississippi River within his film score.

Jones avoids the literalist quality of *The Moldau* (for example, there is no “river” theme binding together the whole work), and the combination of music and film footage in *The River*. He invokes the Shenandoah River to represent the Shenandoah Valley region, but he wanted to

²²² Samuel Jones, “Program Notes to *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*,” <http://samueljones.net/notes.html> (accessed August 22, 2008).

use the particular to point to the universal. He continues, “It was my intent, however, that the music depict much more than the local color of a single region. I wanted to make this music reflect the universal qualities of struggle, of joy, and of devotion which characterize our predecessors.” Through the image of the Shenandoah River, he creates a metaphor for the coming together of the personal and the regional to create an understanding of the national, yes, but even further than that, to invoke the universal experiences of humanity.

3.2.3.5 Personal memory

As Agee’s self-reflections construct the shape of the book, so Jones’s personal memories permeate the structure of the symphonic poem. Like composers such as J. S. Bach and Dmitri Shostakovich who used motifs as musical signatures, Jones “signs” this work through the use of the hymn “Leander,” his middle name. The hymn’s continuing significance for Jones is seen in his subsequent use of the hymn in the third movement of his orchestral work *Roundings: Musings and Meditations on Texas New Deal Murals* (2000).²²³

However, the most pervasive symbol of personal memory in this work is the use of the hymn “Murillo’s Lesson.” As previously discussed, it had a special significance in Jones’s personal history as the hymn that his grandmother sang to him as a boy. “Murillo’s Lesson” imprints itself throughout the development of the work. This hymn acts on a Proustian level: even in its briefest fragments, it evokes an entire world, symbolizing Jones’s childhood memories (acting almost as a maternal presence through its evocation of his grandmother), as

²²³ Another hymn with a personal (and until now veiled) significance is “Pisgah,” of which Jones writes, “It was a favorite of Katherine Benchoff, a great lady and dear friend (daughter of the founder of Massanutten Military Academy in Woodstock, VA) and one of the mainstays of the Festival. She spearheaded the effort to commission me to write the bicentennial composition.” (Follow-up to interview)

well as the world in which his grandmother existed, again, situated in a particular geographical place (the rural American South).

The opening and ending of the first phrase from “Murillo’s Lesson” become motives used frequently throughout the piece, sometimes together and sometimes treated individually. See the hymn in its entirety in Figure 14 as well as the Figures 17-19 below, excerpting the melody and illustrating the motivic material quoted from it.



Figure 17. Original melody to “Murillo’s Lesson”



Figure 18. Murillo motive 1



Figure 19. Murillo motive 2

Note the triadic quality of motive 1, outlining the tonic chord before moving upwards through a sequence of thirds (pick-up through end of excerpt). Jones often fragments this motive further, utilizing the pick-up measure through the first beat of the second measure. This further fragmentation will be referred to as Motive 1a. This further fragmentation will be referred to as Motive 1a. For example, Motive 1a is used in chromatically varied sequences between phrases of “Montgomery” (mm. 157-160; 169-175, 184-195); see Figure 20 for one example of its use, where a bracket labeled “1a” designates the motive and broken brackets labeled “1a fragment” designate the fragmented sequences of the motive.

The musical score is for a section titled "Andante" in 4/4 time. It features four staves: E. Hn. (Euphonium), B♭ Cls. (B-flat Clarinets), B. Cl. (Bass Clarinet), and Bsns. (Bassoons). The key signature has one sharp (F#). The score illustrates the use of Motive 1a and its fragments. Motive 1a is first shown in the E. Hn. staff, marked *mf*, spanning measures 157-160. It is then fragmented and used by other instruments: B♭ Cls. (measures 169-175, marked *p*), B. Cl. (measures 184-195, marked *mf*), and Bsns. (measures 169-175, marked *mf* and *mp*). Brackets labeled "1a" and "1a (fragment)" indicate the specific musical phrases being discussed.

Figure 20. Jones, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, mm. 157-160. Murillo motive 1a

Used by permission of Samuel Jones.

The second motive (beginning in m. 6 of “Murillo’s Lesson”) opens with an upward leap of a perfect fourth before descending in a scalar motion. In mm. 81-92, for example, the scalar motion of this motive is highlighted in a canonic passage, allowing the scalar passage to continue to descend in the woodwinds and bells (mm. 86-92) against the opening phrase of the hymn in the first violins (mm. 81-92) (Figure 21).

At a structural level, these motives work to transition between sections, sometimes transforming into modulatory material. Beyond the musical-structural level, this hymn and its associated motives are also laden with meaning on a psychological or symbolic level. Becoming part of the integral fabric of the piece, they function as operatic “motives of remembrance,” always hearkening back to Jones’s childhood memory.²²⁴ Thus the return of fragments of this hymn or the hymn in its entirety signifies Jones’s memory of his past as well as his personal identification with the communities creating and preserving these hymns.

²²⁴ According to the *New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, this term is used for the simpler use of returning melodic structures, especially those in nineteenth-century operas prior to Wagner’s extensive and pervasive use of *leitmotiv*. I use this term rather than *leitmotiv*, because I believe it highlights the musical evocation of memory present in this work. “Reminiscence Motive,” in *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, edited by Stanley Sadie, *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/O009217> (accessed September 17, 2008).

The image displays a condensed musical score for the piece "Let Us Now Praise Famous Men" by Samuel Jones, specifically measures 81-92. The score is organized into two systems of staves. The first system includes parts for Flute, Oboes, English Horn, Clarinets in Bb, Trombones and tuba, Bells, and Violins. The second system includes parts for Flute, Oboes, English Horn, Clarinets in Bb, Trombones and tuba, Bells, and Violins. The score features various musical notations including dynamics (mf, mp, f, p), articulation (dolce, expr.), and performance instructions (Murillo Motive 2, "Murillo's Lesson" sul G). The Flute part in the first system is marked *mf dolce* and features a melodic line. The Clarinets in Bb part is also marked *mf dolce* and features a similar melodic line. The Trombones and tuba part is marked *mp dolce* and features a harmonic accompaniment. The Bells part is marked *p* and features a rhythmic accompaniment. The Violins part is marked *mf expr.* and features a melodic line. The second system continues the development of these themes, with the Flute, Oboes, English Horn, and Clarinets in Bb parts marked *f expr.* and the Trombones and tuba part marked *f cresc.*

Figure 21. Jones, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, mm. 81-92. Murillo motive 2, Condensed score

Used by permission of Samuel Jones.

Jones reserves the final phrase of the melody (mm. 23-30; see Figure 22) for the last section of *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* (mm. 423-430, 444-450, 468-470).



Figure 22. “Murillo’s Lesson,” final phrase

Fragments of the final phrase of “Murillo’s Lesson” (mm. 431-438) precede the full phrase introduced by the violins (mm. 447-452), and answered by the trumpets and the flute (mm. 451-454) cascading to complete the phrase (Figure 23).

Figure 23. Jones, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, mm. 440-447. Final phrase of “Murillo’s Lesson”

Used by permission of Samuel Jones.

Through the postponement of the final phrase of “Murillo’s Lesson” until the conclusion of this composition, Elizabeth Knight Jones, Jones’s relationship with her, and his host of childhood memories hover in the background throughout the work, even at moments when the melody is not featured in the foreground as it frequently recurs throughout the piece.

The work concludes with an overlap between “Montgomery,” which evokes a sense of a past community, and “Murillo’s Lesson” which celebrates Jones’s own heritage and past. At an *adagio* tempo, the cello initiates a descending C major triad, a distillation of Murillo motive 1a, concluding on a low C (mm. 463-464). The ghostly offstage flute choir returns briefly, stating two phrases of “Montgomery,” in A-flat major (mm. 461-462, mm. 466-468) concluding with a repeated A-flat chord without its third (mm. 467, 469). The cello repeats its triadic motive, with the other strings building on it to create a final *pianissimo* C major triad, reinforced by the brass instruments. Meanwhile, the on-stage woodwinds bring the major third into the open A-flat chord stated by the off-stage flutes, concluding on a ghostly *pianississimo* A-flat major triad (Figure 24). As the piece finishes, the hymns’ presence in two different keys (C-major for “Murillo’s Lesson” and A-flat major for “Montgomery”) as well as their performance in two different locations (off-stage and on-stage, respectively) allows the metaphorical levels in this work to linger unresolved, almost as a double-exposed photograph portraying both Jones’s personal memory and his memorial to a nearly-forgotten people.

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Adagio

Con moto

Fls.
Obs.
E. Hn.
Cls.
B. Cl.
Bns.
Cbn.
Hns.
Trps.
Trbs.
+ Tuba
Timp.
I
FLUTE
II, III
CHOIR
AHO
Harp
Vns.
Vlas.
Vc.
D.B.

lunga
rit.
sf
Adagio
Con moto
Bra bassa
ppp dolce
ppp dolce
sf > p
sf > p
sf > p

NG186

85

Adagio

Fls.
Obs.
E. Hn.
Cls.
B. Cl.
Bns.
Cbn.
Hns.
Trps.
Trbs. & Tuba
Timp.
FLUTE I
II, III
CHOIR Alto
Harp
Vlns.
Vlas.
Vc.
DB.

Adagio

sord.

sord.

div.

NOTES

Figure 24. Jones, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, mm. 462-471

Used by permission of Samuel Jones.

3.2.4 Conclusion

In their book, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, Agee and Evans humanize families living in desperate poverty through words and photographs. The book commemorates and celebrates the basic humanity of the many who lived in poverty during the Depression Era in the United States, but filters it through detailed description of the lives of particular individuals. Who can forget Evans's iconic black and white images in this book, photographs not of masses, but of lovingly framed individuals and small family groups? Likewise Jones, in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, memorializes through music "those who have no memorial," the pioneers and settlers in the Shenandoah Valley in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the rural workers in the twentieth century who continued to struggle, but he focuses this commemoration on an individual, his grandmother. From the genesis of the composition to its internal structure, "her" hymn "Murillo's Lesson" permeates this work as a very personal tribute.

Though the work was well-received from its premiere, and has continued to be performed to the present, one performance stands out in Jones's memory. After the work's premiere, he played a recording of the piece for his grandmother:

[I]n the summer of 1973, a year before my grandmother died, I was able to travel to visit her and play for her a tape of the previous summer's premiere performance. She was very frail then, but she found the energy to sit up and listen. When the music began to play the song she had sung to me, a great slow smile spread over her face. Her eyes lit up as of old, and she said, "That's Murillo's Lesson!" That the notes of that melody would be returning to her, now in full orchestral and variational garb, in a composition by her grandson was almost too much to take in. It was—and remains—one of the most touching moments of my life to be able to share it with her and thank her for the gift of her music.

The work had come full circle.

3.3 ALICE PARKER, *SINGERS GLEN*: SHAPE-NOTE HYMNS AS LIVING HISTORY

As a composer, conductor, teacher and singer, Alice Parker (1925-) has promoted and engaged with American folk and vernacular materials throughout her career, showing a particular interest in American traditions of sacred music. In her opera *Singers Glen* (1978) Alice Parker recreates the musical life of a nineteenth-century Mennonite community in Singers Glen, Virginia (a small town within the Shenandoah Valley) using shape-note hymns as the foundation of the opera. The opera centers around the musician and composer Joseph Funk—compiler of multiple hymnals across the nineteenth century, including *A Collection of Genuine Church Music* (1832) and multiple editions of *The Harmonia Sacra*—and his family. Written in the decade following the exhibits, demonstrations, and reenactments for the centennial of the Civil War and on the tail of the nation's Bicentennial, this work can be examined as an example of public history, parallel to other displays during the period.

In the second and third acts of *Singers Glen*, Alice Parker uses hymns that Joseph Funk arranged and compiled, as well as letters and other primary documents to reenact two nineteenth-century singing schools. It is clear that she strives for a great deal of historical accuracy in this depiction. Yet she writes, “If I have a chance to arrange tunes from a certain time and place I learn about them from working with them—but my impulse is never to create a ‘historical setting’. The tune ends up being filtered through my 20th/21st-century musical ideas.”²²⁵

In this section, I will examine *Singers Glen*, particularly Parker's representation of two singing schools, to understand the interaction of accurate historical representation and twentieth-century musical ideas. In these scenes, Parker uses shape-note hymns and the performance

²²⁵ Alice Parker, interview by author, e-mail, April 26, 2006. The interview is included in Appendix A.

practice surrounding them to recreate dynamically a historical tradition. The hymns—music and texts—can be seen to represent the tensions between tradition and progress within individuals, the community, and the singing tradition itself.

3.3.1 Alice Parker and the preservation of the past

As an educator and a composer, Parker consistently emphasizes the importance of the past and of preserving traditions. Parker's choice to use tonal and modal materials as the basis of her musical language demonstrates her connection to longstanding musical traditions, a conscious and philosophically nuanced choice on her part. In addition to the use of traditional musical idioms and styles, Parker frequently references the past through direct quotation and arrangement of existing works. Much of her work has consisted of arrangements of preexisting songs and hymns.²²⁶

Parker critiques composers in academia who reject the tonal, modal and melodic underpinnings of Western art music and many folk musics around the world. She feels that the temptation, especially in academic circles, is to privilege the composer above the performer and the listener, displacing the primacy of the listener in music-making. Rather than the future-driven aesthetic of modernism, embraced by many academic composers across the twentieth century, Parker chooses instead to emphasize connections to traditional music (whether folk musics or Western art music) to strengthen the connections between composers, performers, and listeners. She writes, "Some people say the composer is the most important element in the

²²⁶ However, Parker does not view arranging and composing as two separate activities. She writes, "I don't draw a distinction between composition and arranging. Arranging uses all the tools of composition to set a 'pre-existing' melody; if I use the same tools on a melody I've written, it's called composing." (Alice Parker, interview via e-mail, April 26, 2006).

listener-composer-performer triangle. They ask, ‘Doesn’t it all start with the composer?’ I say absolutely not. None of us could be doing anything without the listener. Listening always has to come first.²²⁷

In Parker’s framework, “listener” is not a synonym for “audience,” but rather is a role that encompasses all of the participants in music-making: a composer is a listener, a performer is a listener, an audience member is a listener. By referencing traditional music and tonality, and through quoting and arranging traditional music, Parker speaks in a language that emphasizes the role of the listener in music-making.

This sense of community music-making, Parker argues, has frequently been lost in the twentieth century both in sacred and secular contexts. In fact, her self-conscious rejection of the expected academic path of composition, as well as her eschewing of atonal and serial styles as the basis of her personal style has its roots in these same concerns.²²⁸ She writes,

In our society we have become separated from the way sound makes connections in the physical world and creates unity with the spiritual realm. The twentieth century seems to have brought vast separations. As scientific knowledge advances, and the world shrinks, we know less and less about relating to our neighbors and preserving communal activities.²²⁹

Parker’s concern for community echoes widespread concerns in the 1970s as traditional community structures were often lost in the urbanization/suburbanization of the time.

²²⁷ Elayne Robinson Grossman, “Alice Parker: Composer, Conductor, Educator,” *Music Educator’s Journal* 79, no. 8 (April 1993): 55.

²²⁸ Alice Parker studied composition as an undergraduate at Smith College. She considered pursuing graduate studies in composition at Eastman University, but was frustrated because she would have been pushed into a serial and atonal framework for composition. Instead, she chose to study choral conducting at Julliard. Here, she began her study with Robert Shaw. Her work and training under Robert Shaw helped develop her melody-based, text-centered, tonal/modal language. See Joseph A. Mussulman, “Alice Parker: Riding a Surfboard,” *Music Educator’s Journal* 66, no. 7 (March 1980): 42-43.

²²⁹ Alice Parker, *Melodious Accord: Good Singing in Church* (Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1991), 14.

Parker's goal in much of her writings about music, seminars, and even in the music she composes and arranges is to reforge the links between past traditions and present, and thereby to strengthen connections during the present time. Understanding the culture from which a hymn (or other piece of music) originates allows one to translate the symbols on the page into a vivid, communicative aural experience. She writes,

A quick glance at the dates and geographic origins of the hymns [in today's hymnals] demonstrates that there can be no such thing as one common hymn style. These tunes and texts are as diverse as the societies which produced them, and with a little imaginative effort, we can begin to recreate their original function and sound, and thereby make the music live again.²³⁰

Parker neither rejects the tonal and modal structures of the musical past she works with, nor attempts a static preservation of the raw materials with which she works. Instead, she strives for a "re-creation" of a musical style. She explains,

The process of [re-creating a musical style] is rather like a game of 20 questions. We ask the tune: Who are you? Where are you from? When and how are you used? What vocal or instrumental music do I know from that time and place which will help me to recreate you?²³¹

Again, Parker is striving for a "re-creation," not a reproduction. She continues,

Actually, there's no way we can reproduce it exactly. If we know its style and function, we can make wise choices about how to perform it. We must have respect for the melody as it is before we transform it into another style. It is easy to trivialize a melody by singing it in an unsuitable way; people do it all the time.²³²

The practice of living history—whether in museums, battle reenactments or here, in an operatic form—is most eloquent and meaningful when these principles are observed: the past cannot be reproduced, but we can interact with it in creative ways. Along with the best of living history

²³⁰ Alice Parker, *Creative Hymn-Singing: A Collection of Hymn Tunes and Texts with Notes on Their Origin, Idiom, and Performance, and Suggestions for Their Use in the Service*, 2nd ed. (Chapel Hill, NC: Hinshaw Music, 1976), 6.

²³¹ Parker, *Melodious Accord*, 39-40.

²³² *Ibid.*, 40.

practitioners of this time, Alice Parker creates an engaging piece of living history in *Singers Glen*, a work that causes us to reconsider a historical moment and perhaps challenges us to reexamine our presuppositions about the past.

3.3.2 Alice Parker and shape-note hymns

Alice Parker has frequently turned to the body of hymnody found in shape-note hymnals as a resource. She began to explore these hymns while working on arrangements for Robert Shaw's chorale. She writes,

My Tennessee husband (baritone soloist with the Shaw Chorale) had introduced me to Wondrous Love and How Firm A Foundation, and it sent me searching for similar songs. I found a wonderful collection of shape-note tune-books in the New York Public Library's Americana collection. I found George Pullen Jackson at about the same time, and started my own collection.²³³

The first recording to feature her arrangements of these hymns was *What Wondrous Love*, performed by the Robert Shaw Chorale and published in 1959.²³⁴ Since then she has created many arrangements of shape-note hymns, using them as the basis of several larger works, including the cantata *Melodious Accord* (1974) and her opera *Singers Glen* (1978). *Singers Glen* was commissioned by her friend and colleague Hiram Hershey, a Mennonite choral director.²³⁵

When Alice Parker talks about her experiences with shape-note hymnody—frequently with hymns stemming from Mennonite traditions—her words convey almost an ecstatic or visionary experience. She writes,

My own idea of what a congregation might be asked to do changed radically after I heard Mennonite singing in the late 1950s. One voice began a familiar hymn.

²³³ Alice Parker, interview by author.

²³⁴ *What Wondrous Love*, Robert Shaw Chorale, RCA Victor LM/LSC-2403, 33 rpm. Mono. 1960.

²³⁵ Mussulman, "Alice Parker," 91.

On the second note, the entire room joined in the most beautiful four-part hymn singing I had ever heard. It gave me a vision of what hymn singing must have been in days past and could be again in days to come.²³⁶

Parker values the ways in which these shape-note hymnals record the community traditions of music, music made by and for the community, a priority that resonates with her philosophy of music. She writes, “Love songs, ballads, fast and slow dances all found their way into the shape-note hymnals, and were a vital part of the musical life in rural communities.”²³⁷ Parker believes that the loss of sense of community and history in hymnody has resulted in a bland, homogenized style that has no respect for the community and culture that produced the hymns. She continues, concerned with the present state of hymnody, that these hymns

...disappeared from 20th-century hymnals when we were laboring under the Victorian ideal of a hymn as moderate in tempo, temperate in mood, harmonized according to strict rules (Baroque) and performed in a Romantic style (lush sound, exaggerated dynamics, automatic ritards) with all respect paid to the text (musical values taking second place to theology).²³⁸

Prior to composing *Singers Glen*, Alice Parker also attended a *Harmonia Sacra* singing school at Weaver’s Church near Harrisonburg, VA, the same church that George Pullen Jackson describes as the site of a New Year’s Day Singing taking place in 1930.²³⁹ After citing Jackson’s glowing commentary on the music and food present at the singing, Parker writes, “On New Year’s Day, 1969, I attended an All Day Sing at the same church. The music and food were just as good.”²⁴⁰ Through this statement, Alice Parker situates herself within the ongoing

²³⁶ Parker, *Melodious Accord*, 5.

²³⁷ Parker, *Creative Hymn-Singing*, 48.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, 48.

²³⁹ George Pullen Jackson, *White Spirituals in the Southern Uplands: The Story of the Fasola Folk, Their Songs, Singings, and “Buckwheat Notes”* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1933), 346.

²⁴⁰ Alice Parker, *Singers Glen: An Opera in a Prologue and Two Acts*, piano and vocal score (Chapel Hill, NC: Hinshaw Music, 1978), Afterword. For ease of reference, I have referred to the piano and vocal score except for cases in which instruments are important for the example cited.

performance practice traditions of the *Harmonia Sacra* and within the scholarly traditions receiving, reshaping, and retransmitting the music and its surrounding traditions.

Alice Parker's creative treatment of these hymns demonstrates her view of the hymns as part of a dynamic historical process. These are not objects to be hermetically sealed in order to preserve them, but are objects that we too should actively engage as we filter them through our "20th/21st-century lenses." In Parker's quotation of hymns, the past is treated interactively—both invigorating our present understanding of history through interacting with historic materials, but also, in a sense, changing the past. David Lowenthal writes,

Every act of recognition alters survivals from the past. Simply to appreciate or protect a relic, let alone to embellish or imitate it, affects its form or our impressions. Just as selective recall skews memory and subjectivity shapes historical insight, so manipulating antiquities refashions their appearance and meaning. Interacting with a heritage continually alters its nature and context.²⁴¹

Just as the field of social history transforms previous senses of the past through its study of people whose voices were previously unheard, Alice Parker arranges hymns (and other previously composed materials) in a way that encourages the listener to reconsider their sense of history.

In *Singers Glen*, Parker engages in the "re-creative" process, using the dramatic possibilities inherent in the operatic genre to recreate a community life, and thus give the performers and audience members in *Singers Glen* a taste of the community producing the hymns. Ideally, this leads to both a greater understanding of the hymns at hand, and an appreciation for creative community music-making of the kind frequently lost in our time.

²⁴¹ David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 263.

3.3.3 Use of shape-note hymns in *Singers Glen*

In *Singers Glen*, hymns taken from the first three editions of Joseph Funk's hymnal *A Compilation of Genuine Church Music* form the fabric of every scene.²⁴² The hymns alternate with and sometimes accompany aria- and recitative-like sections, as well as sections of spoken dialogue. Analogous to film scoring, sometimes the hymns function as underscoring, sometimes providing instrumental accompaniment to recitative-like musings, but more frequently, they appear as source music, as the community of Singers Glen participate in various forms of music-making. Parker uses numerous techniques to recompose the hymns within the opera, including

- Hymn tune sung in unison
- Hymn tune and its accompanying harmonic lines, usually slightly altered
- Hymn tune with new harmonies
- Hymn melody treated as imitative polyphony
- Hymn sung antiphonally or call-and-response fashion
- Hymn tune in instruments, underscoring recitative or new melody in the voices
- Hymn tune in instruments as an independent piece
- Hymn tune used as a vocal solo or duet over instrumental accompaniment with new harmonizations

Throughout the opera, Parker plays with the materials at hand, molding them, shaping them, and stretching conventions; yet she arranges the hymns always with a sense of their origins, and with attention to the meaning of the texts. The hymns Parker uses in the opera are:

²⁴² Parker conducted much of her research at the Historical Library at Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, VA (interview with author). Except where noted, all hymns are from the first three editions of *A Compilation of Genuine Church Music*: Joseph Funk, *A Compilation of Genuine Church Music* (Winchester, VA: Published at the Office of the Republican: J.W. Hollis, Printer, 1832); Joseph Funk, *A Compilation of Genuine Church Music*, 2nd ed. (Winchester, VA: Robinson & Hollis, Printers, 1835); Joseph Funk, *A Compilation of Genuine Church Music*, 3rd ed. (Harrisonburg, VA: Henry T. Wartmann, Printer, 1842). She writes, "The opera tells of Joseph's life...in the years which saw the publication of the first three editions of *Genuine Church Music*. The hymns used throughout the opera are all from these volumes." However, Parker does not specify the edition from which individual hymns are taken.

Prologue

“Wir nur dem lieben Gott lässt”²⁴³

“Resignation”²⁴⁴

“Saint Olaves”²⁴⁵

“Resignation”*

Act I, Scene 1

“Invocation”²⁴⁶

“Daughter of Zion”²⁴⁷

“Social Band”²⁴⁸

“Resignation”*

“Limehouse”²⁴⁹

Act I, Scene 2

“Confidence”²⁵⁰

“Sweet Affliction”²⁵¹

“Greenwood”²⁵²

²⁴³ Joseph Funk, *Ein Allgemein nützliche Choral-Music* (Harrisonburg, VA.: Gedruckt bei Lorentz Wartmann, 1816). Thomas Braatz and Aryeh Oron note that the first documented printing of this chorale is in *Fortgeplantzter Musikalisch-Poetischer Lustwald* (Jena: Sengenwald, 1657), though it can be traced earlier. See Braatz and Oron, “Chorale Melodies Used in Bach’s Vocal Works: *Wer nur den lieben Gott last*,” <http://www.bach-cantatas.com/CM/Wer-nur-den-lieben-Gott.htm> (accessed February 10, 2009).

²⁴⁴ See discussion of “Resignation” in Footnote 47.

²⁴⁵ In the score, Parker designates this hymn “St. Olives.” However, this appears to be a typographical error as all other sources I have found for this hymn title it “St. Olaves.” Gingerich and Lind (*The Harmonia Sacra Handbook*) cite this tune’s first appearance in Joseph Funk’s *A Compilation of Genuine Church Music*, 1832, with text by Charles Wesley, first printed in John and Charles Wesley’s *Collection of Psalms and Hymns*, [2nd ed.] (London: Strahan, 1741).

²⁴⁶ According to Gingerich and Lind (*The Harmonia Sacra Handbook*), this hymn (without an attributed author or composer) first appeared in Joshua Leavitt’s *The Christian Lyre*, vol. 2 (New York: Joshua Leavitt, 1831).

²⁴⁷ This hymn with tune by Lowell Mason and unattributed text was first found in Lowell Mason’s *The Boston Handel and Haydn Society Collection of Church Music: Being a Selection of The Most Approved Psalm and Hymn Tunes, Anthems, Sentences, Chants, &C Together with Many Beautiful Extracts from the Works of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and Other Eminent Composers: Harmonized for Three and Four Voices with a Figured Base [Sic] for the Organ and Piano Forte*, 10th ed. (Boston: Richardson, Lord and Holbrook, 1831), with music by Lowell Mason and no author attributed. (Ibid.)

²⁴⁸ According to David W. Music, the text to this hymn attributed to Campbell first appeared in Elisha Battle’s *A Collection of Hymns & Spiritual Songs, for Public and Family Worship* (Raleigh, NC: Minerva Press, 1814), and the music, apparently of folk origins, first appeared as a hymn tune in Jeremiah Ingalls’ *Christian Harmony, or Songster’s Companion* (Exeter, NH: Printed by Henry Ranlet, for the compiler, 1814). David W. Music, ed. *A Selection of Shape-Note Folk Hymns from Southern United States Tune Books, 1816-61*, Recent Researches in American Music 52 (Middleton, WI: A-R Editions, 2005), xxv.

²⁴⁹ Gingerich and Lind (*The Harmonia Sacra Handbook*) note that this anonymous tune first appeared in Funk’s *A Compilation of Genuine Church Music* (1832), with text by Isaac Watts, from his *Psalms of David* (1719).

²⁵⁰ Gingerich and Lind (*The Harmonia Sacra Handbook*) identify the tune of this hymn as first appearing in Funk’s *A Compilation of Genuine Church Music* (1832); they cite the text as first appearing in T. Beaman’s *Selections* (I was unable to find further bibliographic information for this source).

²⁵¹ See Footnote 53 for discussion of the hymn’s provenance.

Act I, Scene 3

“Invocation”*
“Infinite Delight”²⁵³
“Farmington”²⁵⁴
“Mt. Carmel”²⁵⁵
“Invocation.”*
“Wesley”²⁵⁶
“Hiding Place”²⁵⁷
“Idumea”²⁵⁸
“Social Band”*
“Christian Farewell”²⁵⁹
“Transport”²⁶⁰
“Christian Farewell”*

²⁵² According to Gingerich and Lind, this tune first appeared in Funk’s *A Compilation of Genuine Church Music* (1832). The text is by John Newton and first appeared in Newton and William Cowper’s *Olney Hymns: In Three Books* (London: T. Tegg, 1779).

²⁵³ The tune was composed by Nicolaus Herman in 1554. Thomas Braatz and Aryeh Oron state that it tune was probably a contrafactum of a secular tune that Herman used for his hymn text (see “Bach Cantatas: *Lobt Gott Ihr Christen*” <http://www.bach-cantatas.com/CM/Lobt-Gott-ihr-Christen.htm> [accessed February 10, 2009]). The text by Isaac Watts first appeared in his *Horae Lyricae: Poems Chiefly of the Lyric Kind* (London: Printed by J. Humfreys, for N. Cliff, 1709). (Ibid.)

²⁵⁴ According to Gingerich and Lind, this tune first appeared in Funk’s *A Compilation of Genuine Church Music* (1832). The text by Anne Steele first appeared in her *Poems on Subjects Chiefly Devotional* (London: Printed for J. Buckland and J. Ward, 1760).

²⁵⁵ This tune first appeared in Funk’s *A Compilation of Genuine Church Music* (1832), with a text by Isaac Watts from his *Psalms of David* (1719). (Ibid.)

²⁵⁶ This hymn with music by Lowell Mason and text by Thomas Hastings first appeared in Mason and Hastings’ *Spiritual Songs for Social Worship* (Boston: Richardson, Lord & Holbrook, 1831). (Ibid.)

²⁵⁷ According to Music, the text by Jehoida Brewer first appeared in *The Gospel Magazine* (October, 1776). Additions and changes were made by Ananias Davisson when it appeared in his *Kentucky Harmony* 2nd ed. (1817). The tune is probably a folk tune, and has been attributed to L.M. Smith, and to John Wyeth. Music, *A Selection of Shape-Note Folk Hymns*, xxxii.

²⁵⁸ The tune of this hymn attributed to Ananias Davisson, first appeared in his *Kentucky Harmony* ([Harrisonburg, VA]: 1816). Its text was written by Isaac Watts, appearing in his *Psalms and Hymns* (1707).

²⁵⁹ According to Music, the text and music to this hymn were attributed to Ananias Davisson in *A Supplement to the Kentucky Harmony* (1820). Music, *A Selection of Shape-Note Folk Hymns*, xxxiv.

²⁶⁰ According to Gingerich and Lind (*The Harmonia Sacra Handbook*), this unattributed tune first appeared in Davisson’s *A Supplement to the Kentucky Harmony* (1820), and the unattributed text first appeared in Andrew Broaddus, *The Dover Selection of Spiritual Songs* (Philadelphia: Barrington & Haswell, 1828).

Act II, Scene 2

“Portsmouth”²⁶¹
“Greenfields”²⁶²
“Mount Ephraim”²⁶³
“Daughter of Zion”*
“Greenwood”*
“Greenfields”*
“Christian Hope”²⁶⁴
“Mt. Carmel”*
“Farmington”*
“Divine Goodness”²⁶⁵

3.3.4 *Singers Glen*: public history, preservation and change

Singers Glen eschews common elements of narrative in Western opera (especially the nineteenth-century variety): absent are villains, passionate love scenes, or sudden deaths. Instead, we have an opera more in line with the ideals of *verismo*, but much more realistic than the kind of *verismo* found in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century operas. Household chores, ordinary conversations (on the weather or the price of hymnals, for example), community

²⁶¹ According to Gingerich and Lind, this unattributed tune was first found in Funk’s *A Compilation of Genuine Church Music* (1832) with text by Charles Wesley, first printed in his *Hymns for the New Year’s Day* (London: Printed by R. Hawes, [1750]).

²⁶² Music writes, “The origins of GREENFIELD has been traced to an aria in J.S. Bach’s ‘peasant’ cantata *Mer hahn en neue Oberkeet* (BWV 212)...The melody was printed in America as early as 1786 in Chauncy Langdon’s *Select Songster*.” The text by John Newton was first printed in Newton and Cowper’s *Olney Hymns: In Three Books* (1779). Music, *A Selection of Shape-Note Folk Hymns from Southern United States Tune Books*, xxxii.

²⁶³ According to the Gingerich and Lind, this unattributed tune first appeared in Funk’s *A Compilation of Genuine Church Music*, 4th ed. (Mountain Valley, near Harrisonburg, VA: Joseph Funk, 1847), and the text of this hymn was written by Augustus Montague Toplady in 1772. According to the *Dictionary of North American Hymnology*, the text of this tune by Augustus Montague Toplady first appeared in John Rippon’s *Selection of Hymns from the Best Authors Intended to be an Appendix to Dr. Watts’ Psalms and Hymns*, 1st Am. ed. (New York: William Durell, 1792). *Dictionary of North American Hymnology*, created by The Hymn Society in United States and Canada, <http://dnah.org/04-RecordDisplay.jsp?recordChoice=3234> (accessed February 12, 2009).

²⁶⁴ The unattributed tune was first published in Funk’s *A Compilation of Genuine Church Music*, 2nd ed. (1835), and the text written by Joseph Steward first appeared in Nathan Strong, Abel Flint, and Joseph Steward’s *The Hartford Selection of Hymns, Compiled from the Most Approved Authors: To Which are Added a Number Never Before Published* (Hartford: John Babcock, 1799). (Ibid.)

²⁶⁵ The unattributed tune was first published in Funk’s *A Compilation of Genuine Church Music*, 2nd ed. (1835), and the text written by Joseph Steward first appeared in Nathan Strong, Abel Flint, and Joseph Steward’s *The Hartford Selection of Hymns, Compiled from the Most Approved Authors: To Which are Added a Number Never Before Published* (Hartford: John Babcock, 1799). (Ibid.)

events, and strong yet understated emotions create the drama in the work. Even Parker's stage directions place an emphasis on the ordinary. For example, her instruction for the set-up of the first singing school calls for lively conversation among younger people, sedate elderly, rowdy children, and "a baby or two."²⁶⁶ But why this choice of subject matter? Why choose the ordinary, the nearly mundane, as the basis of a dramatic production?

Parker's choices reflect changes evident in contemporaneous public displays of history as transformed by the new social history. As under the influence of the new social history, the historical reenactments at Colonial Williamsburg taught its audience about the lives of ordinary people, so *Singers Glen* teaches the audience the music and history of the nineteenth-century community as the drama progresses. At first it may seem that by focusing on the story of Joseph Funk—composer, musician, tunebook compiler—she embraces the "great man" approach to history, an approach repudiated by many social historians. However, repeatedly throughout the opera, Joseph Funk is shown to be working in *and* with a community, the kind of rural community that people longed for and felt they had lost in the increasing urbanization and suburbanization of 1970s America. Parker conveys this community as being in a state of flux, being pulled both towards the past and towards the future. This tension between preservation and progress is the central conflict within the work, especially between the creative individual (Joseph Funk) and tradition (the church). In the discussion of the genesis of the work, she writes, "Fact and fiction are mingled to illustrate the basic conflict of the work, that between the artist as visionary, and the restraints of the traditional church."²⁶⁷ That conflict is especially evident in the contrast between the use of instruments by Joseph and his family and the dominant view of

²⁶⁶ Parker, *Singers Glen*, piano and vocal score, 60.

²⁶⁷ Unpublished program notes quoted in John Yarrington, "A Performance Analysis of 'Martyrs' Mirror,' 'Family Reunion' and 'Singers Glen,' Three Operas by Alice Parker" (DMA diss., University of Oklahoma, 1985), 121-122.

the Mennonite church at the time, namely, that instrumental music should not be used in worship, and further, that musical instruments reflect a worldliness that should not be present within the religious community.²⁶⁸

In *Singers Glen*, as will be seen in the final act, there is no simple either/or answer to the tensions between the preservation of tradition and the processes transforming the tradition. Instead, Parker portrays almost a dialectical relationship between the processes of preservation and change. Both the community (the Mennonite Church) and the creative individual (Joseph Funk) are portrayed as necessary parts of a whole: without growth, the community and its music would wither; without roots, the new would have no meaning. Alice Parker writes that one of the purposes of this work is to explore the fact that “Joseph’s path led in one direction—ecumenicism, a preoccupation with the art which unites people, rather than the words which divide them; and the Church’s led in another—the wish to preserve the way of life which was and is of such value.”²⁶⁹

This tension is portrayed in the music and texts of the hymns, the dialogue between characters, and frequently, through the presence or absence of musical instruments in the performance of the hymns. A brief overview of the opera will be followed by a more in-depth analysis of the two singing schools in Act Two, scene 2 and the final scene of Act Three.²⁷⁰ The overview and the analyses of the singing schools will focus on the moments of tension between progress and tradition, the individual and the community.

²⁶⁸ Even to this day, some of the most conservative Mennonite denominations and communities discourage or forbid the use of musical instruments—in worship or the home—because of their “worldly” qualities. See Cornelius Krahn and Orlando Schmidt, “Musical Instruments,” in *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online*, <http://www.gameo.org/encyclopedia/contents/M876ME.html/> (accessed March 10, 2008).

²⁶⁹ Unpublished program notes, quoted in Yarrington, “A Performance Analysis,” 121-122.

²⁷⁰ For a more in-depth discussion of the opera in its entirety see Yarrington, “A Performance Analysis.”

3.3.5 Overview of *Singers Glen*

The “Prologue” of the opera opens with the funeral of Joseph Funk’s wife, in 1833, the year after the first publication of *A Collection of Genuine Church Music*. After an instrumental prelude, the first hymn “Wer nur den lieben Gott lässt” (from Funk’s earlier collection *Choralmusik* [1816]) is sung in its original German, immediately referencing the heritage of the Mennonite community. The multicultural aspect of American communities was a widespread concern in scholarly literature of this time, receiving increasing notice since the Civil Rights Movements, and frequently highlighted in Bicentennial celebrations of the period.²⁷¹ The presence of this hymn in German also underscores the opera’s theme of tradition and change. In fact, it was Joseph Funk’s publications that created the transition for Mennonite hymns to be sung in English rather than German in Virginia, and eventually led to entire services to be conducted in English. As Joseph Yoder notes, Joseph Funk’s hymnal *A Compilation of Genuine Church Music* (1832) was the first English language publication created by an American Mennonite.²⁷²

At the funeral, the hymn “Resignation” is sung, with striking new harmonies. Parker especially emphasizes the latent quartal-quintal qualities of the hymn by creating harmonies with stacked seconds and sevenths. This hymn plays a central role in the drama of the opera, recurring

²⁷¹ John E. Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 241.

²⁷² Paul Marvin Yoder, “Nineteenth Century Sacred Music of the Mennonite Church in the United States,” (Ph.D. diss., The Florida State University, 1961), 101. Yoder writes, “Joseph Funk probably recognized that it was only a matter of time before the Mennonites would accept the English language into their religious services. ...Funk’s decision to follow this plan [print his hymnal in the English language] was an important factor in the [Virginia] Mennonites adopting the English language for us both in the church services and in daily life before the use of German was relinquished in other Mennonite colonies.”

instrumentally at the end of the funeral service as the community offers assistance to Joseph and his family, and in Act I, Scene 1 as Joseph reminisces about his wife.²⁷³

This prologue also introduces “Brother Peter,” a respected elder in the community, one who advocates preserving traditions and the ways of the forefathers. The interaction between Joseph Funk and Brother Peter represents the central tension within the opera. Joseph is shown as a mediator of progress and change, especially through the publication of hymnals and the use of musical instruments in his family. In contrast, his respected friend and mentor, Brother Peter is portrayed as a preserver of the old ways. Brother Peter sings heavy, contemplative hymns throughout the opera, often with texts focused on death and judgment, as will be seen in the later discussion of the singing schools.

Act I, Scene 1 opens nine years after the scene in the Prologue, with Joseph and his son Timothy discussing the popularity of *A Compilation of Genuine Church Music*. The hymn “Daughter of Zion” is used instrumentally to introduce Joseph’s daughter Hannah. References to actual letters punctuate their conversation.²⁷⁴ This use of letters as a primary source reflects the priorities of social history; social history literature often draws upon letters and journals as they reflect the thoughts and ideas of common people. The abundance of letters in reference to the hymnbook leads Joseph and his son to speculate on bringing in a post office, and thus necessitating a name for the community. The hymn “Social Band” creates the instrumental structure over which the conversation continues, as they debate what their town should be named, finally settling on “Singers Glen.”

²⁷³ Parker, *Singers Glen*, piano and vocal score, 106.

²⁷⁴ Parker conducted extensive research on the papers and letters of Joseph Funk located at Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Virginia as part of the process of composing this opera. (Interview with author.)

Brother Peter arrives, and during their conversation, Joseph reminisces about his wife and his past, as “Resignation” is played by the orchestra. In this scene, the hymn functions as a motive of reminiscence, instantly evoking his wife’s funeral through its repetition here. The scene concludes with Brother Peter chiding Joseph on being distracted from his spiritual duties by his music business, as well as allowing “worldly” musical instruments into the house.

Act I, Scene 2 opens with Joseph’s oldest daughter Hannah cleaning house. As she cleans, she sings “Confidence”—a hymn focused on the story of Hannah in the Old Testament, the prophet Samuel’s mother. Lines of the hymn are interspersed with commentary Joseph’s daughter makes to herself about the day. Timothy’s girlfriend Susan arrives with a fiddle, upon which Timothy haltingly plays the hymn “Sweet Affliction” as Susan sings along. Seemingly inconsequential, this moment marks a turning point in the drama: Timothy’s performance on the fiddle is the first moment in which a musical instrument is played onstage, as source music. As noted before, instrumental music—even outside of the church service—was controversial within many Mennonite circles. This hymn is followed by “Greenwood,” played by Timothy and Susan as a duet on the fiddle and a flute. This use of “Greenwood” in instrumental guise anticipates its use in the final scene of the opera, in which instruments accompany the voices.

Scene 3 features a meticulous depiction of a traditional singing school taking place within the Funks’ barn. This scene will be discussed in detail in the next section.

Act II, Scene 1 opens with Joseph again reminiscing about his blessings, and his hope for the future. In contrast, he soliloquizes Brother Peter’s veneration of the past and his emphasis on the judgment of God. This is followed by the final scene, Act II, Scene 2, entitled “Singing and Playing School,” again taking place within the Funks’ barn. This time, rather than a traditional singing school, Joseph Funk’s son Timothy incorporates musical instruments into the school. In

this, as will be seen in the detailed discussion, the sacred singing school transforms itself into a secular barn dance.

3.3.6 Detailed analyses of the singing schools

3.3.6.1 The “traditional” singing school

As Act I, Scene 2 begins, the hymn “Invocation” is played by the orchestra as people come in and get into order. Snippets of everyday conversation sound over a series of hymns played by the orchestra—weather, politics, bookselling, even snippets of dialogue in German used to characterize the older members of the community. Again, this scene emphasizes everyday life, the commonplace realities too frequently ignored in veins of historical narrative prior to the new social history.

Joseph calls the singing school together by inviting the community to sing “Invocation.” Parker sets this hymn with the first verse in two voice parts, and the next verse in three voice parts, both verses using the original vocal lines (all transposed down a step from the original hymn).²⁷⁵ The melody is given to the tenor part, while the altos and sopranos take the descant.

After the hymn, Joseph instructs the newcomers in the art of singing using shapes and syllables. Parker instructs that a large chart be used to show these shapes and syllables.²⁷⁶ The largeness of the chart, and the relatively substantial chunk of time that Alice Parker has set aside in the opera for Joseph to teach thoroughly the use of solfège and shape-notes points to the fact that Joseph is not only teaching singing school, he is also teaching the audience the tradition. Or,

²⁷⁵ *A Compilation of Genuine Church Music* as well as editions of *The Harmonia Sacra* until its 12th edition in 1867 were set using three-part harmony.

²⁷⁶ Parker, *Singers Glen*, piano and vocal score, 60.

in other words, as Joseph teaches the community, Alice Parker teaches the audience *and* the performers. This direct involvement of the audience in the tradition, history and music of the community situates the opera firmly in the context of other public history presentations. As visitors become participants in public displays of history when they meander through reenactments at places like Colonial Williamsburg, so the audience—even though they do not actually sing—become participants in this opera.

Following Joseph’s lesson, “Wesley” is sung first on solfège syllables, in unison, notated in the score with the original shaped notation.²⁷⁷ Again, Parker creates a teaching moment: even though the audience never sees the score, the use of shaped-notes in the performance score educates the performers as they learn the parts (Figure 25).

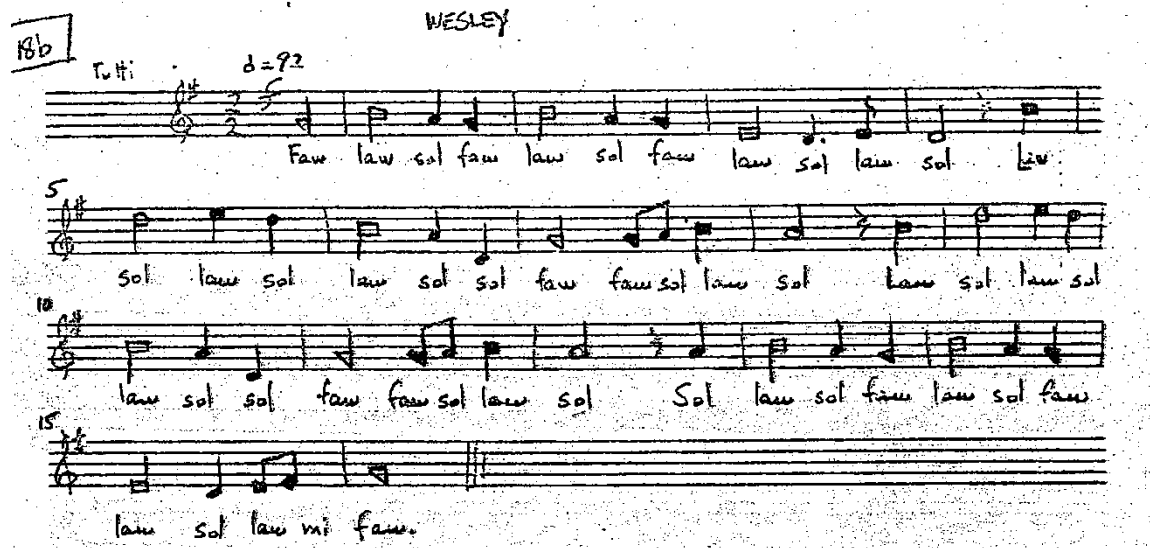


Figure 25. Parker, *Singers Glen*, Act I, Scene 3. “Wesley”

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²⁷⁷ Ibid., 72.

All singers are taught the melody before the harmony and text are added. This embodies Alice Parker's melody-centered approach to composition, conducting, and music education. She believes all parts should be taught the melody in order for all the participants to understand its structure. Elayne Grossman asked her in an interview, "Why do you have *everyone* sing the melody?" Alice Parker replied,

I do this so the singers are not just sensing their own part, but rather learn where the melody is and how the whole piece is constructed. They should see and hear what is going on around the melody. If the singer does not distinguish between the importance of the vocal lines, and know their functions, the music comes out muddy and confused. I try to make people see and sing the clarity of the structure.²⁷⁸

Once the melody is learned, the group sings "Wesley" with its text. Parker again uses an additive process to build the texture to its original three-part harmony, with the exception of a slightly altered bass line.²⁷⁹

Joseph then teaches the minor mode, using the hymn "Hiding Place." The hymn begins with unison voices, but quickly transforms, using fugal textures as well as paired imitation between voices. The passage evokes fusing tunes found in many shape-note hymnals (including Joseph Funk's publications), but is more drawn out and freer in its imitative passages. In the following excerpt, note the alteration of the answer in the alto voice (Figure 26).²⁸⁰ Again, Parker develops these hymns, exploring their melodic, harmonic and polyphonic possibilities, rather than treating them as objects to be preserved unchanged and intact.

²⁷⁸ Grossman, "Alice Parker: Composer, Conductor, Educator," 55.

²⁷⁹ Parker, *Singers Glen*, piano and vocal score, 74. Parker indicates this change in the score.

²⁸⁰ Ibid., 77-78.

Firmly $\text{♩} = 84$

f (melody)

Soprano
A - gainst the God that built the sky, I fought with hands up - lift - ed high;

Alto
A - - - gainst the God that - built the sky, I fought with hands up -

Tenor
8

Bass

S
Des - pised the man - sions of his grace,

A
lift - ed high; *f* (melody) Des - pised the man - sions of his grace,

T
8 Des - - - pised the man - sions of his grace, Too

B

Figure 26. Parker, *Singers Glen*, Act I, Scene 3. “Hiding Place,” mm. 14-22

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After Joseph teaches harmony through a round, Brother Peter, perhaps irritated at the innovative use of imitative polyphony in the preceding hymns, suggests singing one of the old hymns. One of the elders chooses “Idumea,” its heavy text and minor mode creating a reflective mood. The groups sings it first on syllables (emphasizing the traditional mode of performance), again with shaped-notes given in the score. A verse using the original harmony (with slight modifications) is followed by imitative polyphony. The men and women double the treble and tenor, reflecting the performance practices of the hymns, and creating a dense, interwoven texture.

The singing continues with “Social Band,” followed by “Christian Farewell” suggested for the closing hymn. As the group sings “Christian Farewell,” most of the people exit, leaving only a handful behind. At this point, Timothy Funk’s fiancée Susan proposes that they sing another song. Hannah Funk’s fiancé Jacob asks Timothy to play the flute, but Timothy declines. This moment foreshadows the incorporation of instruments into the singing school in the final act, a crucial moment in the tradition-versus-change tension of the opera. For the moment, however, the traditional mode of performance wins out over more innovative additions.

Timothy instead suggests that Susan and he sing a duet for them, “Transport.” Alice Parker notes in the score that, “Timothy and Susan sing ‘Transport,’ which is, in spite of the text, a love song.”²⁸¹ Again, Parker evokes the secular/sacred tension present in the history of the hymns. Whether or not the hymn is an actual contrafactum of a secular tune (a question that has not been engaged in the scholarly literature), Parker’s arrangement highlights the reality that many of these hymns were contrafacta of earlier secular folk songs and dance tunes.

²⁸¹ Ibid., 105.

In actuality, the text itself *is* a love song, a Soul-to-God love song reminiscent of the kinds of texts and treatments J. S. Bach used in his cantatas. The author of the text and the composer of the tune are unknown. The hymn first appeared in Ananias Davisson's *Supplement to the Kentucky Harmony* (1820).²⁸² The text is florid, expressive, and full of vivid metaphors, as would be expected in a love song. Alice Parker chooses two verses that are particularly ecstatic:

One spark, O God, of heav'nly fire
Awakes my soul with warm desire
To reach the realms above.
Immortal glories round me shine,
I drink the streams of life divine,
And sing redeeming love.

O could I wing my way in haste,
Soon with bright seraphs would I feast,
And learn their sweet employ.
I'd glide along the heav'nly stream
And join their most exalted theme
Of everlasting joy.

She transforms this hymn into an operatic love duet through vocal scoring as a duet between lovers, as well as through instrumentation, harmonization, and particular expressive devices.

At its opening, Parker marks the hymn to be performed "sweetly." Timothy and Susan's voices are accompanied by offstage legato strings. The falling motion of the violins creates almost a sighing motif present in the opening and underneath the vocal parts. Timothy opens the hymn, singing the first few lines of the first verse before Susan's voice echoes and intertwines with his (Figure 27).

²⁸² Ananias Davisson, *A Supplement to the Kentucky Harmony* ([Harrisonburg, VA]: Ananias Davisson, 1820).

Sweetly $\text{♩} = 66$

Soprano

Tenor

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

S

T

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

mp

p

mf

poco marc.

sim.

One spark, O God, of heav'nly fire A - wakes my soul with warm de-

To reach the realms a - bove. Im -

Figure 27. Parker, *Singers Glen*, Act I, Scene 3. “Transport,” mm. 1-10.

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The voices continue to counterpoint each other: at times Timothy takes the lead and Susan echoes, at other times the roles are reversed. The second verse opens using exact imitation between the voices (Figure 28).

The musical score for Figure 28 consists of six staves. The vocal parts are for Susan (S) and Timothy (T), both in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The instrumental parts include Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.) in bass clef, all with a key signature of one sharp. The score is divided into four measures. In the first measure, Susan sings 'O, could I wing my way in haste,' and Timothy sings 'O, could I wing my way in haste, Soon with bright seraphs would I'. The second measure continues the vocal lines with 'Soon with bright seraphs would I' for Susan and 'Soon' for Timothy. The instrumental parts provide accompaniment, with dynamics like *mp* (mezzo-piano) and *p* (piano) indicated. The Viola part has a *pizz.* (pizzicato) marking. The Violoncello part starts with a *mp* dynamic.

Figure 28. Parker, *Singers Glen*, Act I, Scene 3. "Transport," mm. 22-25.

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The music builds to its climax at m. 33, with both voices building to a *forte* dynamic level and reaching to a high G in each of their ranges (Figure 29).

Figure 29. Parker, *Singers Glen*, Act I, Scene 3. “Transport,” mm. 31-35

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Following this moment, the music gently fades to the end. In this duet, Parker successfully re-creates two levels of history: the previous existence of many tunes like this as secular music, and the presence of the hymn as a sacred work in the community of *Singers Glen* during Funk’s lifetime. Parker’s arrangement of the hymn creates a dual sense of time and place, simultaneously reenacting different performance contexts for this hymn.

After a moment of silence when Timothy and Susan finish singing, a reprise of “Christian Farewell” concludes the singing school. Though this is the more traditional singing school, deep tensions have been introduced: new songs versus old songs, a suggestion to use a musical instrument, and a hymn transformed into a love duet. Parker probes deeper into these tensions in the second scene of the final act.

3.3.6.2 The “progressive” singing *and* playing school

In Act II, Scene 2, Parker brings the sense of living history to a new level, as we see progress and creativity come into increasing tension with tradition, heightening the sense of history and hymnody as dynamic processes. In this scene, she focuses on moments in which the performance of hymns symbolizes and enacts the transformation of a tradition through the actions of a creative individual.

Act Three, Scene 2 begins with preparations for the “Singing and Playing School.” The school is led this time not by Joseph, but by his son Timothy, and includes the young people of the community, several of whom bring their instruments. Parker calls for the string quartet that has previously performed off-stage as part of the orchestra to join the school onstage, and allows for a variety of other instruments, according to the performers’ abilities. She directs, “Other casual instruments are brought by chorus members who play when they wish: recorders, dulcimers, zithers—all very informal.”²⁸³ “Casual,” here, connotes the daily rhythms of life emphasized in social history. In this scene, Alice Parker showcases vigorous tunes, especially emphasizing the dance-like qualities of the hymns. The young people bring the organ to the barn to accompany the music, and in a recitative, Timothy quotes a Psalm text (Psalm 92:32) to justify the use of instruments, “We will sing praises to his Name, upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the psaltery; upon the harp with a solemn sound.”²⁸⁴

With Timothy encouraging the instrumentalists to begin, the young people begin to sing “Mt. Ephraim.” The text of the hymn itself joins in the argument for the use of instruments, as well as underscoring the nervousness of the musicians, beginning with the lines “Your harps, ye trembling saints, Down from the willows take” (Figure 30).

²⁸³ Parker, *Singers Glen*, piano and vocal score, 124.

²⁸⁴ Ibid., 131-132.

With joyful dignity ♩ = 112

mf

Soprano
Your harps, — ye trem - - - bling — saints...

Alto
Your harps, — ye trem - - - bling — saints...

Tenor
8 Your harps, ye trem - - - bling saints...

Bass
mf Your harps, ye trem - - - bling saints...

Violin I
Timothy (to the strings): Well? Come on, don't be frightened. Let's hear the beginning.

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Figure 30. Parker, *Singers Glen*, Act II, Scene 2. “Mount Ephraim,” mm. 1-3

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The instrumentalists hesitantly (perhaps even guiltily?) follow the voices before joining together with them. They quietly echo the melody just sung (Figure 31).

Figure 31 shows a musical score for four instruments: Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., and Vc. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 4/4. The score spans four measures. Vln. I and Vc. start with a half rest followed by a quarter note G4 (marked *p*), then play a descending eighth-note melody. Vln. II and Vla. start with a half rest followed by a quarter note G3 (marked *p*), then play a descending eighth-note melody. The melody in all parts is: G (quarter), F# (eighth), E (eighth), D (quarter), C# (half).

Figure 31. Parker, *Singers Glen*, Act II, Scene 2. “Mount Ephraim,” mm. 4-7

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After echoing the vocal line a couple of times, the instruments join with the voices. For the most part the instruments simply reinforce the vocal lines, or intertwine with them polyphonically, rather than taking on independent musical gestures. In the next hymn “Daughters of Zion,” however, the instruments take more of an independent role, using gestures specific to each instrument. Note the following examples taken from Parker’s arrangement of “Daughters of Zion”: the guitar uses chords underneath a melody made up of broken chords; the flute leaps through the G-major triad into a high range; and the cello uses pizzicato notes and octave leaps to establish a strong bass line (Figure 32).

The image displays three staves of musical notation for the instrumental gestures in "Daughters of Zion" from Act II, Scene 2 of *Singers Glen* by Alice Parker. The music is in 3/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#).

- Guitar (Mm. 1-4):** The first staff shows a melodic line with four measures. Chords G, A m/D, G, and A m/D are indicated above the staff. The notes are G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F#6, G6, A6, B6, C7, D7, E7, F#7, G7, A7, B7, C8, D8, E8, F#8, G8, A8, B8, C9, D9, E9, F#9, G9, A9, B9, C10, D10, E10, F#10, G10, A10, B10, C11, D11, E11, F#11, G11, A11, B11, C12, D12, E12, F#12, G12, A12, B12, C13, D13, E13, F#13, G13, A13, B13, C14, D14, E14, F#14, G14, A14, B14, C15, D15, E15, F#15, G15, A15, B15, C16, D16, E16, F#16, G16, A16, B16, C17, D17, E17, F#17, G17, A17, B17, C18, D18, E18, F#18, G18, A18, B18, C19, D19, E19, F#19, G19, A19, B19, C20, D20, E20, F#20, G20, A20, B20, C21, D21, E21, F#21, G21, A21, B21, C22, D22, E22, F#22, G22, A22, B22, C23, D23, E23, F#23, G23, A23, B23, C24, D24, E24, F#24, G24, A24, B24, C25, D25, E25, F#25, G25, A25, B25, C26, D26, E26, F#26, G26, A26, B26, C27, D27, E27, F#27, G27, A27, B27, C28, D28, E28, F#28, G28, A28, B28, C29, D29, E29, F#29, G29, A29, B29, C30, D30, E30, F#30, G30, A30, B30, C31, D31, E31, F#31, G31, A31, B31, C32, D32, E32, F#32, G32, A32, B32, C33, D33, E33, F#33, G33, A33, B33, C34, D34, E34, F#34, G34, A34, B34, C35, D35, E35, F#35, G35, A35, B35, C36, D36, E36, F#36, G36, A36, B36, C37, D37, E37, F#37, G37, A37, B37, C38, D38, E38, F#38, G38, A38, B38, C39, D39, E39, F#39, G39, A39, B39, C40, D40, E40, F#40, G40, A40, B40, C41, D41, E41, F#41, G41, A41, B41, C42, D42, E42, F#42, G42, A42, B42, C43, D43, E43, F#43, G43, A43, B43, C44, D44, E44, F#44, G44, A44, B44, C45, D45, E45, F#45, G45, A45, B45, C46, D46, E46, F#46, G46, A46, B46, C47, D47, E47, F#47, G47, A47, B47, C48, D48, E48, F#48, G48, A48, B48, C49, D49, E49, F#49, G49, A49, B49, C50, D50, E50, F#50, G50, A50, B50, C51, D51, E51, F#51, G51, A51, B51, C52, D52, E52, F#52, G52, A52, B52, C53, D53, E53, F#53, G53, A53, B53, C54, D54, E54, F#54, G54, A54, B54, C55, D55, E55, F#55, G55, A55, B55, C56, D56, E56, F#56, G56, A56, B56, C57, D57, E57, F#57, G57, A57, B57, C58, D58, E58, F#58, G58, A58, B58, C59, D59, E59, F#59, G59, A59, B59, C60, D60, E60, F#60, G60, A60, B60, C61, D61, E61, F#61, G61, A61, B61, C62, D62, E62, F#62, G62, A62, B62, C63, D63, E63, F#63, G63, A63, B63, C64, D64, E64, F#64, G64, A64, B64, C65, D65, E65, F#65, G65, A65, B65, C66, D66, E66, F#66, G66, A66, B66, C67, D67, E67, F#67, G67, A67, B67, C68, D68, E68, F#68, G68, A68, B68, C69, D69, E69, F#69, G69, A69, B69, C70, D70, E70, F#70, G70, A70, B70, C71, D71, E71, F#71, G71, A71, B71, C72, D72, E72, F#72, G72, A72, B72, C73, D73, E73, F#73, G73, A73, B73, C74, D74, E74, F#74, G74, A74, B74, C75, D75, E75, F#75, G75, A75, B75, C76, D76, E76, F#76, G76, A76, B76, C77, D77, E77, F#77, G77, A77, B77, C78, D78, E78, F#78, G78, A78, B78, C79, D79, E79, F#79, G79, A79, B79, C80, D80, E80, F#80, G80, A80, B80, C81, D81, E81, F#81, G81, A81, B81, C82, D82, E82, F#82, G82, A82, B82, C83, D83, E83, F#83, G83, A83, B83, C84, D84, E84, F#84, G84, A84, B84, C85, D85, E85, F#85, G85, A85, B85, C86, D86, E86, F#86, G86, A86, B86, C87, D87, E87, F#87, G87, A87, B87, C88, D88, E88, F#88, G88, A88, B88, C89, D89, E89, F#89, G89, A89, B89, C90, D90, E90, F#90, G90, A90, B90, C91, D91, E91, F#91, G91, A91, B91, C92, D92, E92, F#92, G92, A92, B92, C93, D93, E93, F#93, G93, A93, B93, C94, D94, E94, F#94, G94, A94, B94, C95, D95, E95, F#95, G95, A95, B95, C96, D96, E96, F#96, G96, A96, B96, C97, D97, E97, F#97, G97, A97, B97, C98, D98, E98, F#98, G98, A98, B98, C99, D99, E99, F#99, G99, A99, B99, C100, D100, E100, F#100, G100, A100, B100, C101, D101, E101, F#101, G101, A101, B101, C102, D102, E102, F#102, G102, A102, B102, C103, D103, E103, F#103, G103, A103, B103, C104, D104, E104, F#104, G104, A104, B104, C105, D105, E105, F#105, G105, A105, B105, C106, D106, E106, F#106, G106, A106, B106, C107, D107, E107, F#107, G107, A107, B107, C108, D108, E108, F#108, G108, A108, B108, C109, D109, E109, F#109, G109, A109, B109, C110, D110, E110, F#110, G110, A110, B110, C111, D111, E111, F#111, G111, A111, B111, C112, D112, E112, F#112, G112, A112, B112, C113, D113, E113, F#113, G113, A113, B113, C114, D114, E114, F#114, G114, A114, B114, C115, D115, E115, F#115, G115, A115, B115, C116, D116, E116, F#116, G116, A116, B116, C117, D117, E117, F#117, G117, A117, B117, C118, D118, E118, F#118, G118, A118, B118, C119, D119, E119, F#119, G119, A119, B119, C120, D120, E120, F#120, G120, A120, B120, C121, D121, E121, F#121, G121, A121, B121, C122, D122, E122, F#122, G122, A122, B122, C123, D123, E123, F#123, G123, A123, B123, C124, D124, E124, F#124, G124, A124, B124, C125, D125, E125, F#125, G125, A125, B125, C126, D126, E126, F#126, G126, A126, B126, C127, D127, E127, F#127, G127, A127, B127, C128, D128, E128, F#128, G128, A128, B128, C129, D129, E129, F#129, G129, A129, B129, C130, D130, E130, F#130, G130, A130, B130, C131, D131, E131, F#131, G131, A131, B131, C132, D132, E132, F#132, G132, A132, B132, C133, D133, E133, F#133, G133, A133, B133, C134, D134, E134, F#134, G134, A134, B134, C135, D135, E135, F#135, G135, A135, B135, C136, D136, E136, F#136, G136, A136, B136, C137, D137, E137, F#137, G137, A137, B137, C138, D138, E138, F#138, G138, A138, B138, C139, D139, E139, F#139, G139, A139, B139, C140, D140, E140, F#140, G140, A140, B140, C141, D141, E141, F#141, G141, A141, B141, C142, D142, E142, F#142, G142, A142, B142, C143, D143, E143, F#143, G143, A143, B143, C144, D144, E144, F#144, G144, A144, B144, C145, D145, E145, F#145, G145, A145, B145, C146, D146, E146, F#146, G146, A146, B146, C147, D147, E147, F#147, G147, A147, B147, C148, D148, E148, F#148, G148, A148, B148, C149, D149, E149, F#149, G149, A149, B149, C150, D150, E150, F#150, G150, A150, B150, C151, D151, E151, F#151, G151, A151, B151, C152, D152, E152, F#152, G152, A152, B152, C153, D153, E153, F#153, G153, A153, B153, C154, D154, E154, F#154, G154, A154, B154, C155, D155, E155, F#155, G155, A155, B155, C156, D156, E156, F#156, G156, A156, B156, C157, D157, E157, F#157, G157, A157, B157, C158, D158, E158, F#158, G158, A158, B158, C159, D159, E159, F#159, G159, A159, B159, C160, D160, E160, F#160, G160, A160, B160, C161, D161, E161, F#161, G161, A161, B161, C162, D162, E162, F#162, G162, A162, B162, C163, D163, E163, F#163, G163, A163, B163, C164, D164, E164, F#164, G164, A164, B164, C165, D165, E165, F#165, G165, A165, B165, C166, D166, E166, F#166, G166, A166, B166, C167, D167, E167, F#167, G167, A167, B167, C168, D168, E168, F#168, G168, A168, B168, C169, D169, E169, F#169, G169, A169, B169, C170, D170, E170, F#170, G170, A170, B170, C171, D171, E171, F#171, G171, A171, B171, C172, D172, E172, F#172, G172, A172, B172, C173, D173, E173, F#173, G173, A173, B173, C174, D174, E174, F#174, G174, A174, B174, C175, D175, E175, F#175, G175, A175, B175, C176, D176, E176, F#176, G176, A176, B176, C177, D177, E177, F#177, G177, A177, B177, C178, D178, E178, F#178, G178, A178, B178, C179, D179, E179, F#179, G179, A179, B179, C180, D180, E180, F#180, G180, A180, B180, C181, D181, E181, F#181, G181, A181, B181, C182, D182, E182, F#182, G182, A182, B182, C183, D183, E183, F#183, G183, A183, B183, C184, D184, E184, F#184, G184, A184, B184, C185, D185, E185, F#185, G185, A185, B185, C186, D186, E186, F#186, G186, A186, B186, C187, D187, E187, F#187, G187, A187, B187, C188, D188, E188, F#188, G188, A188, B188, C189, D189, E189, F#189, G189, A189, B189, C190, D190, E190, F#190, G190, A190, B190, C191, D191, E191, F#191, G191, A191, B191, C192, D192, E192, F#192, G192, A192, B192, C193, D193, E193, F#193, G193, A193, B193, C194, D194, E194, F#194, G194, A194, B194, C195, D195, E195, F#195, G195, A195, B195, C196, D196, E196, F#196, G196, A196, B196, C197, D197, E197, F#197, G197, A197, B197, C198, D198, E198, F#198, G198, A198, B198, C199, D199, E199, F#199, G199, A199, B199, C200, D200, E200, F#200, G200, A200, B200, C201, D201, E201, F#201, G201, A201, B201, C202, D202, E202, F#202, G202, A202, B202, C203, D203, E203, F#203, G203, A203, B203, C204, D204, E204, F#204, G204, A204, B204, C205, D205, E205, F#205, G205, A205, B205, C206, D206, E206, F#206, G206, A206, B206, C207, D207, E207, F#207, G207, A207, B207, C208, D208, E208, F#208, G208, A208, B208, C209, D209, E209, F#209, G209, A209, B209, C210, D210, E210, F#210, G210, A210, B210, C211, D211, E211, F#211, G211, A211, B211, C212, D212, E212, F#212, G212, A212, B212, C213, D213, E213, F#213, G213, A213, B213, C214, D214, E214, F#214, G214, A214, B214, C215, D215, E215, F#215, G215, A215, B215, C216, D216, E216, F#216, G216, A216, B216, C217, D217, E217, F#217, G217, A217, B217, C218, D218, E218, F#218, G218, A218, B218, C219, D219, E219, F#219, G219, A219, B219, C220, D220, E220, F#220, G220, A220, B220, C221, D221, E221, F#221, G221, A221, B221, C222, D222, E222, F#222, G222, A222, B222, C223, D223, E223, F#223, G223, A223, B223, C224, D224, E224, F#224, G224, A224, B224, C225, D225, E225, F#225, G225, A225, B225, C226, D226, E226, F#226, G226, A226, B226, C227, D227, E227, F#227, G227, A227, B227, C228, D228, E228, F#228, G228, A228, B228, C229, D229, E229, F#229, G229, A229, B229, C230, D230, E230, F#230, G230, A230, B230, C231, D231, E231, F#231, G231, A231, B231, C232, D232, E232, F#232, G232, A232, B232, C233, D233, E233, F#233, G233, A233, B233, C234, D234, E234, F#234, G234, A234, B234, C235, D235, E235, F#235, G235, A235, B235, C236, D236, E236, F#236, G236, A236, B236, C237, D237, E237, F#237, G237, A237, B237, C238, D238, E238, F#238, G238, A238, B238, C239, D239, E239, F#239, G239, A239, B239, C240, D240, E240, F#240, G240, A240, B240, C241, D241, E241, F#241, G241, A241, B241, C242, D242, E242, F#242, G242, A242, B242, C243, D243, E243, F#243, G243, A243, B243, C244, D244, E244, F#244, G244, A244, B244, C245, D245, E245, F#245, G245, A245, B245, C246, D246, E246, F#246, G246, A246, B246, C247, D247, E247, F#247, G247, A247, B247, C248, D248, E248, F#248, G248, A248, B248, C249, D249, E249, F#249, G249, A249, B249, C250, D250, E250, F#250, G250, A250, B250, C251, D251, E251, F#251, G251, A251, B251, C252, D252, E252, F#252, G252, A252, B252, C253, D253, E253, F#253, G253, A253, B253, C254, D254, E254, F#254, G254, A254, B254, C255, D255, E255, F#255, G255, A255, B255, C256, D256, E256, F#256, G256, A256, B256, C257, D257, E257, F#257, G257, A257, B257, C258, D258, E258, F#258, G258, A258, B258, C259, D259, E259, F#259, G259, A259, B259, C260, D260, E260, F#260, G260, A260, B260, C261, D261, E261, F#261, G261, A261, B261, C262, D262, E262, F#262, G262, A262, B262, C263, D263, E263, F#263, G263, A263, B263, C264, D264, E264, F#264, G264, A264, B264, C265, D265, E265, F#265, G265, A265, B265, C266, D266, E266, F#266, G266, A266, B266, C267, D267, E267, F#267, G267, A267, B267, C268, D268, E268, F#268, G268, A268, B268, C269, D269, E269, F#269, G269, A269, B269, C270, D270, E270, F#270, G270, A270, B270, C271, D271, E271, F#271, G271, A271, B271, C272, D272, E272, F#272, G272, A272, B272, C273, D273, E273, F#273, G273, A273, B273, C274, D274, E274, F#274, G274, A274, B274, C275, D275, E275, F#275, G275, A275, B275, C276, D276, E276, F#276, G276, A276, B276, C277, D277, E277, F#277, G277, A277, B277, C278, D278, E278, F#278, G278, A278, B278, C279, D279, E279, F#279, G279, A279, B279, C280, D280, E280, F#280, G280, A280, B280, C281, D281, E281, F#281, G281, A281, B281, C282, D282, E282, F#282, G282, A282, B282, C283, D283, E283, F#283, G283, A283, B283, C284, D284, E284, F#284, G284, A284, B284, C285, D285, E285, F#285, G285, A285, B285, C286, D286, E286, F#286, G286, A286, B286, C287, D287, E287, F#287, G287, A287, B287, C288, D288, E288, F#288, G288, A288, B288, C289, D289, E289, F#289, G289, A289, B289, C290, D290, E290, F#290, G290, A290, B290, C291, D291, E291, F#291, G291, A291, B291, C292, D292, E292, F#292, G292, A292, B292, C293, D293, E293, F#293, G293, A293, B293, C294, D294, E294, F#294, G294, A294, B294, C295, D295, E295, F#295, G295, A295, B295, C296, D296, E296, F#296, G296, A296, B296, C297, D297, E297, F#297, G297, A297, B297, C298, D298, E298, F#298, G298, A298, B298, C299, D299, E299, F#299, G299, A299, B299, C300, D300, E300, F#300, G300, A300, B300, C301, D301, E301, F#301, G301, A301, B301, C302, D302, E302, F#302, G302, A302, B302, C303, D303, E303, F#303, G303, A303, B303, C304, D304, E304, F#304, G304, A304, B304, C305, D305, E305, F#305, G305, A305, B305, C306, D306, E306, F#306, G306, A306, B306, C307, D307, E307, F#307, G307, A307, B307, C308, D308, E308, F#308, G308, A308, B308, C309, D309, E309, F#309, G309, A309, B309, C310, D310, E310, F#310, G310, A310, B310, C311, D311, E311, F#311, G311, A311, B311, C312, D312, E312, F#312, G312, A312, B312, C313, D313, E313, F#313, G313, A313, B313, C314, D314, E314, F#314, G314, A314, B314, C315, D315, E315, F#315, G315, A315, B315, C316, D316, E316, F#316, G316, A316, B316, C317, D317, E317, F#317, G317, A317, B317, C318, D318, E318, F#318, G318, A318, B318, C319, D319, E319, F#319, G319, A319, B319, C320, D320, E320, F#320, G320, A320, B320, C321, D321, E321, F#321, G321, A321, B321, C322, D322, E322, F#322, G322, A322, B322, C323, D323, E323, F#323, G323, A323, B323, C324, D324, E324, F#324, G324, A324, B324, C325, D325, E325, F#325, G325, A325, B325, C326, D326, E326, F#326, G326, A326, B326, C327, D327, E327, F#327, G327, A327, B327, C328, D328, E328, F#328, G328, A328, B328, C329, D329, E329, F#329, G329, A329, B329, C330, D330, E330, F#330, G330, A330, B330, C331, D331, E331, F#331, G331, A331, B331, C332, D332, E332, F#332, G332, A332, B332, C333, D333, E333, F#333, G333, A333, B333, C334, D334, E334, F#334, G334, A334, B334, C335, D335, E335, F#335, G335, A335, B335, C336, D336, E336, F#336, G336, A336, B336, C337, D337, E337, F#337, G337, A337, B337, C338, D338, E338, F#338, G338, A338, B338, C339, D339, E339, F#339, G339, A339, B339, C340, D340, E340, F#340, G340, A340, B340, C341, D341, E341, F#341, G341, A341, B341, C342, D342, E342, F#342, G342, A342, B342, C343, D343, E343, F#343, G343, A343, B343, C344, D344, E344, F#344, G344, A344, B344, C345, D345, E345, F#345, G345, A345, B345, C346, D346, E346, F#346, G346, A346, B346, C347, D347, E347, F#347, G347, A347, B347, C348, D348, E348, F#348, G348, A348, B348, C349, D349, E349, F#349, G349, A349, B349, C350, D350, E350, F#350, G350, A350, B350, C351, D351, E351, F#351, G351, A351, B351, C352, D352, E352, F#352, G352, A352, B352, C353, D353, E353, F#353, G353, A353, B353, C354, D354, E354, F#354, G354, A354, B354, C355, D355, E355, F#355, G355, A355, B355, C356, D356, E356, F#356, G356, A356, B356, C357, D357, E357, F#357, G357, A357, B357, C358, D358, E358, F#358, G358, A358, B358, C359, D359, E359, F#359, G359, A359, B359, C360, D360, E360, F#360, G360, A360, B360, C361, D361, E361, F#361, G361, A361, B361, C362, D362, E362, F#362, G362, A362, B362, C363, D363, E36

Firmly, not too fast ♩. = 84

Flute

Cello

Chorus

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

How te-dious and taste-less the hours When Je-sus no long-er I see: Sweet

Figure 33. Parker, *Singers Glen*, Act II, Scene 2. “Greenfields,” mm. 1-11

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The hymn's "secular" sound is commented on in the following discussion:

Girl: I visited my cousins in Ohio. They sang like this—but game songs. And they called it a play-party.

Solomon: We can't do game songs. Just hymns.

Girl: I don't see the difference, if we're moving about.

Hannah (virtuously): I call it dancing, and it comes from the devil.

Timothy: Oh, Hannah—if we're singing God's words, and praising him with instruments, it can't come from the devil. Let's sing "Christian Hope."²⁸⁵

As noted earlier Timothy's view of the music reflects Parker's own. For Alice Parker, the use of a secular tune as the basis of a hymn is in no way sacrilegious or even contrary to the text. Instead, she believes that both the text and the music attest to a mystical reality beyond themselves. She writes,

A folk dance with a hymn text must still dance, and a love song speak with passion. The words to a hymn are no more an end to themselves than the pitches and rhythms: both seek to define the Indefinable, know the Unknowable, and celebrate the central mystery of life. For a congregation with ears, the music may speak more eloquently to the abstract than any words: we must learn to respect the musical values again, and let these songs sing.²⁸⁶

In her arrangement of "Christian Hope, Parker fully realizes the transformation from sacred *back* to secular music. Its lively tempo and 6/8 meter attest to its roots in Anglo-American dance music, specifically its qualities as a jig. The rhythm patterns of the strings in the opening measures (mm. 1-5) emphasize the bouncy quality of the meter (Figure 34).

²⁸⁵ Ibid., 100.

²⁸⁶ Parker, *Creative Hymn-Singing*, 48.

#32b Hymn: Christian Hope

Cheerfully ♩ = 104

The musical score is for a hymn titled "Christian Hope" (#32b). It is marked "Cheerfully" with a tempo of 104 beats per minute. The score is in 6/8 time and B-flat major. The instruments and vocal parts are as follows:

- Flute:** Starts with a triplet eighth-note figure (B-flat, A, G) followed by a quarter rest, then continues with a steady eighth-note pattern. Dynamic: *f*.
- Guitar:** Starts with a triplet eighth-note figure (B-flat, A, G) followed by a quarter rest, then continues with a steady eighth-note pattern. Dynamic: *f*.
- Trumpet in B♭:** Starts with a triplet eighth-note figure (B-flat, A, G) followed by a quarter rest, then continues with a steady eighth-note pattern. Dynamic: *f*.
- Trombone:** Starts with a triplet eighth-note figure (B-flat, A, G) followed by a quarter rest, then continues with a steady eighth-note pattern. Dynamic: *f*.
- Organ:** Plays a steady eighth-note pattern in both hands. Dynamic: *p*.
- Soprano:** Silent.
- Alto:** Silent.
- Tenor:** Enters in the second measure with the lyrics "My soul would fain in - dulse a hope To reach the heav'n - ly shore, — And". Dynamic: *mp*.
- Bass:** Enters in the second measure with the lyrics "My soul would fain in - dulse a hope To reach the heav'n - ly shore, — And". Dynamic: *mp*.
- Violin I:** Starts with a triplet eighth-note figure (B-flat, A, G) followed by a quarter rest, then continues with a steady eighth-note pattern. Dynamic: *f* then *p*.
- Violin II:** Starts with a triplet eighth-note figure (B-flat, A, G) followed by a quarter rest, then continues with a steady eighth-note pattern. Dynamic: *f* then *p*.
- Viola:** Starts with a triplet eighth-note figure (B-flat, A, G) followed by a quarter rest, then continues with a steady eighth-note pattern. Dynamic: *f* then *p*.
- Cello:** Starts with a triplet eighth-note figure (B-flat, A, G) followed by a quarter rest, then continues with a steady eighth-note pattern. Dynamic: *f* then *p*.

Figure 34. Parker, *Singers Glen*, Act II, Scene 2. "Christian Hope," mm. 1-6

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The sacred-secular connection reaches its pinnacle in this scene as the folk tune “Irish Washerwoman”²⁸⁷ (noted in the score as not being found in the hymnal) is interpolated into “Christian Hope.” During this interpolation, Parker instructs that “the dance takes shape.” The visual dance reflects a crucial moment in the opera: the sacred and the secular have clearly merged (Figure 35).

Figure 35. Parker, *Singers Glen*, Act II, Scene 2. “Irish Washerwoman,” mm. 41-49

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Sacred song becomes dance, vocal music becomes instrumental music. Sharing the same meter and some of the same rhythmic patterns, the similarity between the tunes is remarkable. Through this transformation, Parker makes the roots of the hymn transparent. Again, Parker is playing with layers of history: the earlier presence of many shape-note hymns as jigs and secular folksongs, and their presence in this community as sacred songs. The moment could be jarring, even to present-day listeners, but through it, Parker forces us to examine hymns themselves as living history, works that are re-created each time they are sung, hopefully in a manner that reflects their origins and subsequent history.

²⁸⁷ For a discussion of the tune’s possible origins, see Andrew Kuntz, “Irish Washerwoman,” in *The Fiddler’s Companion*, http://www.ibiblio.org/fiddlers/IP_IZ.htm#IRISH_WASHERWOMAN (accessed April 3, 2008).

The jig continues, until interrupted by Brother Peter and the Old Couple. The music comes to a “ragged halt” as the musicians become aware of Brother Peter’s presence. Timothy goes to bring his father Joseph from the house, who is strongly reprimanded by Brother Peter for “following the world’s pattern.” He then introduces “Mount Carmel,” its text, slow tempo and E-minor tonality reinforcing the text’s caution of judgment. Its opening verse encapsulates this message (Figure 36).

Sternly $\text{♩} = 60$
marc.

Trombone

Brother Peter *mp* *legato*

"I am the Sa-viour, I th'Al - might - y God;

Tbn.

Br. Pet.

I am the Judge, ye heav'ns pro-claim a - broad My just e-ter - nal sen-tence, and de -

Tbn. *cresc.*

Br. Pet.

clare those aw - ful truths that sin - ners dread to hear."



Figure 36. Parker, *Singers Glen*, Act II, Scene 2. “Mount Carmel,” mm. 1-18

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Joseph responds saying, “Your text is a strong one Brother Peter. I can answer you best with another hymn, from the New Testament.” The following hymn, “Waverly,” strongly contrasts with the previous hymn, instead focusing on peace and brotherly love. Note the contrast between its opening verse and that of the previous hymn:

And is the gospel peace and love!
Such let our conversation be;
The serpent blended with the dove,
Wisdom and sweet humility.²⁸⁸

In the final conversation of the opera, Joseph states his philosophy, that for him, music is in no way contrary to his beliefs, “My Church, *or* my Music? Surely the Lord of Love, who gave us the gift of song, cannot require that I cease to sing!” But rather than setting out a new course through a complete break with tradition and his community, he tells his son Timothy, “We must learn to live at peace with our neighbors and friends. Let us pray for guidance in the days to come.” The opera concludes with the community joining in the hymn “Divine Goodness.” Peace and reconciliation prevail, even in the midst of very real conflict and tensions.

3.3.7 Conclusion

In *Singers Glen* Alice Parker reenacts an American musical tradition. History is not treated as a static point, but as a dynamic process even within this short period of time in a small community. Change is present, yet it takes place within an established tradition. More broadly, these tensions between progress and preservation, the community and the individual correlate with tensions in American culture in the 1970s.

²⁸⁸ Parker, *Singers Glen*, piano and vocal score, 176.

Parker presents two vastly different singing school scenes. John Yarrington summarizes the contrast between the opera's first and second singing schools, writing, "Unlike the unaccompanied singing of the first school scene, the tunes here are all accompanied, underscoring the basic tension of the opera: sacred versus secular, instruments versus no instruments, dancing and moving to music versus the religious injunctions against such movement."²⁸⁹ However, as noted in the introduction, Parker doesn't leave the audience, or even the characters she has recreated in her opera, with a simple either/or answer to these difficult tensions. The characters of Brother Peter and Joseph Funk represent the two ends of the spectrum, and both are treated thoughtfully throughout the opera. Though Brother Peter is stern, he is well-respected and loved by the community. Though Joseph is innovative, he respects the members of his community.

Parker complicates the issue of a sacred-secular dichotomization of music through exploring the hymns' histories. In the first singing school, a hymn is treated as and demonstrated to be a love song. In the second singing school, a hymn historically sung *a cappella* has words that extol the use of instruments in worship, and a hymn is treated as and demonstrated to be a jig. The ambiguities and contradictions abound, and Parker revels in these moments. To understand these tensions, Parker argues that one must pay attention to the history and style of both tunes and text, as well as their relationship to each other. She suggests several questions that can be used to probe the relationship of the "voice" of the music with the "voice" of the text: "Do these two voices reinforce or contrast? Is attention paid to the matching of accents and loaded syllables?" She continues, asking what is created when an old tune is paired with a new

²⁸⁹ Yarrington, "A Performance Analysis," 155-156.

text, “or a prayerful text to a jiggling tune?”²⁹⁰ Only through knowing the history of these hymns can the dialectical pulls between the sacred and secular, between preservation and change be understood.

The 1970s were years of extreme tension within American culture, a time of critique and celebration, patriotism and protest. Alice Parker does not provide an answer to the problems in America at the time, either explicitly or implicitly in this opera. However, she does give an example of a process in which change and progress come about peacefully, on the whole, without destroying the people involved or the musical tradition. Preservation and progress are oppositional forces clearly at work in the opera and in the events on which the opera was based, but *Singers Glen* ends with a call for changes to be initiated with both respect for the past and love for the community.

Significantly, since its premiere, *Singers Glen* has been performed as part of ongoing community celebrations in the city of Singers Glen. The Music and Heritage Festival of Singers Glen, taking place approximately every five years, still incorporates the opera as a crowning point in its festival, the most recent one taking place on September 15-16, 2007.²⁹¹ Thus the opera has been incorporated into the very traditions that it celebrates, demonstrating that through respect for tradition and community, the “vast separations” of the twentieth-century can indeed be bridged.²⁹²

²⁹⁰ Parker, *Melodious Accord*, 23.

²⁹¹ See <http://gleneco.blogspot.com/2007/09/music-like-sublime-scriptural-poetry-is.html> (accessed August 19, 2008).

²⁹² Parker, *Melodious Accord*, 14.

4.0 1980s-2000s

As the twentieth century drew to a close, there was a groundswell of interest in shape-note singing. Scholars such as John Bealle and Stephen Marini cite numerous markers that evidence a widespread Sacred Harp revival, and with it, a burgeoning interest in other traditions of shape-note hymnody. As interest in these traditions grew, a growing multitude of composers turned to shape-note hymns as a resource in their compositions. Rather than a survey of the many compositions using shape-note hymns during this period, I focus on two seminal works, one near the beginning of this period, and the other, reaching slightly beyond the limits delimited in the title of this dissertation into the twenty-first century. The first work I will analyze is William Duckworth's choral piece *Southern Harmony and Musical Companion* (1980-81). This work demonstrates the growing use of tonal materials by composers in academia. It also shows the influence of the increasing presence and awareness of American-music studies in the university, and its influence on the composition of new works. In this work, Duckworth combines the stylistic palette of postminimalism with extended techniques that mirror the performance practice of shape-note singing. Interviews with the composer along with musical and textual analysis will illuminate the fusion of postmodern compositional techniques with the traditional sounds and practices of shape-note singing.

The soundtrack to the film *Cold Mountain* (2003) demonstrates a different trend in the use of shape-note hymns, namely, their incorporation into motion pictures. In the soundtrack, we

can read the hymns as part of a present-day “folk” or “roots music” revival, signaled most notably by the astounding popularity of the soundtrack to *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* (2000) whose music was also compiled by T Bone Burnett. Not only have soundtracks such as these gained a larger listening audience, but they have also inspired further interest into folk performance traditions. In *Cold Mountain*, the hymns are paired with images of a church service and a Civil War battlefield, the words and the music becoming filters through which the viewer interprets the scenes. Rather than the idealization of the Civil War seen in the 1960s-1970s in the preparation for the Centennial of the Civil War and the American Bicentennial (see the discussion in the previous chapter), *Cold Mountain* portrays the war as ugly, vicious and brutal on both sides.

4.1 WILLIAM DUCKWORTH, *THE SOUTHERN HARMONY*: SHAPE-NOTE HYMNS IN THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

William Duckworth (1943-), composer, professor at Bucknell University, and advocate for other American composers through his many books, composed his *a cappella* choral work *Southern Harmony and Musical Companion* (1980-81) during a time of renewed interest in *Sacred Harp* and other shape-note traditions of hymnody. The late 1970s through the early 1980s is now understood to be a period of budding interest in *Sacred Harp* hymnody that blossomed into a widespread revival. The work was commissioned by the composer, conductor, performer, and scholar Neely Bruce (1944-), Professor of Music and American Studies at Wesleyan University, who was deeply involved in drawing attention to this tradition during the period. *Southern Harmony* uses postminimalist techniques of musical composition to evoke the sounds and traditions of shape-note hymnody. It is particularly important in that it uses extended techniques to recreate the sound of the hymns in performance, not merely the notes on the page. Written in the academy, it also reflects a growing interest in the support of American-music studies within the American university system. A discussion of each of these broader movements, American-music studies and the Sacred Harp revival, will contextualize the compositional process of this work. This will be followed by musical analysis that will elicit the ways in which Duckworth used compositional techniques to represent the sound of shape-note singing. The final section will briefly discuss Duckworth's work in the context of continuing streams of shape-note hymnody. Interviews with William Duckworth and Neely Bruce have been included in Appendix A.

4.1.1 American-music studies within American universities

Duckworth's *Southern Harmony and Musical Companion* was written at a time when the practice of American-music studies in the American university system was blossoming. Further, I would argue that a work such as this was substantially enabled through the interdisciplinary approach to American music that was coming to characterize the study of American music. In his article "Can American Music Studies Develop a Method?" Dale Cockrell traces a series of markers evidencing the growing presence of American-music studies within university music programs in the United States.²⁹³ The time preceding and surrounding the composition of *Southern Harmony* was a particularly fruitful era in the development of new approaches to studying American music.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, some of the first landmarks of American music scholarship were Gilbert Chase's *America's Music: From the Pilgrims to the Present* (1955) and H. Wiley Hitchcock's *Music in the United States: A Historical Introduction* (1969). Each of these works discusses American vernacular and "classical" musics, bringing together subject areas traditionally subdivided and separated respectively into the areas of ethnomusicology and traditional musicology. The multiplicity of musics called for the diversity of approaches that developed in American-music studies.

Cockrell notes the work of H. Wiley Hitchcock as continuing the thread of American-music studies as Hitchcock worked towards the formation of the Institute for Studies in American Music at Brooklyn College, City University of New York, in 1971.²⁹⁴ Scholars then came together to form the Sonneck Society for American Music, renamed in 2000 as the Society

²⁹³ Cockrell, "Can American Music Studies Develop a Method?," 272-283.

²⁹⁴ Ibid., 274.

for American Music. Cockrell notes that the society has held annual meeting since 1976, and began a journal dedicated to the study of American musics in 1983, simply entitled *American Music*.²⁹⁵

Though difficult to document, Cockrell also notes a growing presence of courses dedicated to American musics. He writes,

The hard evidence for the wide-scale teaching of courses in American musics is not easy to come by. Up through the 1960s, only isolated courses were offered, with the one taught by Ross Lee Finney at Smith College in the mid-1930s the first I can document. My impression is that courses in American musics became much more common in the 1970s and burgeoned in numbers during the 1980s.²⁹⁶

The growth of American-music studies in the 1970s and 1980s has led in the past few years to a prominent place for these studies in the university system, evidenced by the plethora of popular and rock music courses available at many universities, and the large percentage of music faculty job openings that specify an American music specialization.²⁹⁷

In Cockrell's brief but valuable study, he limits himself primarily to discussing the ways in which American-music studies differs from, yet incorporates, methodologies of historical musicology and ethnomusicology. He writes, "American music studies would be different from traditional musicology for its emphasis on ethnographies and contexts and unlike ethnomusicology because of its fundamental historical nature."²⁹⁸ Continuing in the same vein, performance groups and composition/theory studies also take part in this wide milieu of American-music studies. As the eclecticism of American-music studies takes in historical musicology and ethnomusicology, so too it embraces the areas of music performance and

²⁹⁵ Ibid., 275. In 2007, publication of this journal was severed from *The Society for American Music*, though it continues. The organization has introduced a second journal entitled, *The Journal for the Society of American Music* (2007-).

²⁹⁶ Ibid., 276. Cockrell supports this impression through responses garnered from the Society for American Music listserv in May, 2002. (282)

²⁹⁷ Ibid., 276.

²⁹⁸ Ibid., 278.

composition/theory. The next section will discuss performing groups and composers who were instrumental in the revival of *Sacred Harp* hymnody, especially in the northern United States.

4.1.2 Creative ethnomusicology and American studies

How do we understand music composition as a participant in American-music studies? One model for understanding this interaction is presented by the ethnomusicologist and composer Akin Euba. He coined the term “creative ethnomusicology” to designate the transformation of research into composition, rather than into scholarly writing. He discusses the process of creative ethnomusicology,

In normal ethnomusicology, the end result of research and analysis is the publication of essays in scholarly journals or of monographs in which speech language is used to explain aspects of music. By contrast, the end result of research in creative ethnomusicology is the composition of music in which elements derived from the research are employed. In short, research in normal ethnomusicology leads to scholarly writing while research in creative ethnomusicology leads to composition.²⁹⁹

Euba frames the discussion of creative ethnomusicology through summarizing the compositional process that Béla Bartók outlined for the absorption of “peasant” music, “Composers need to collect and absorb folk music at its source and to experience the context in which it is performed.”³⁰⁰ Euba compares this compositional process to the kind of field work done by ethnomusicologists. He writes,

[C]omposers, like ethnomusicologists, are required to do field work, even though their selection of materials and their field methods may not be exactly the same. Secondly, composers, like ethnomusicologists, need to analyze materials collected in the field, even though the information that they look for may not exactly be

²⁹⁹ Akin Euba, “Creative Ethnomusicology: A Transformational Zone between Research and Composition,” Unpublished Inaugural Lecture (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 2000), 3.

³⁰⁰ Ibid., 9.

identical. It is only after the analytical process that composers and ethnomusicologists diverge.³⁰¹

This transformational process is unique for each composer, and ranges from the study of a musical tradition to invoke local color, to new compositions quoting from the tradition studied, or as in the case of Bartók, the nearly complete absorption of a musical style. Euba's approach can lend insight into works like Duckworth's in which the composer has extensively studied a particular tradition—whether in the past or present—and has then incorporated elements of the style into new compositions.

Euba lists a number of composers and compositions that employ creative musicology. Most of the composers he discusses are from Africa, Eastern Europe and Asia, regions in which music scholars (often for financial reasons) frequently have to work in multiple fields of music (composition, performance and scholarship).³⁰² Euba infers that the necessity of working in multiple fields leads individuals to find convergences between the fields, resulting in creative ethnomusicological pursuits.

These convergences echo the diversity—in subject area and in methodology—found in American studies. Further, Euba's definition of creative ethnomusicology gives insight into a stream of musical borrowing by American composers throughout the twentieth century. In his article "Introduction: Historicism in American Music Since 1980," Robert Carl discusses American forms of musical borrowing as distinctive from European approaches.³⁰³ Though, as he states, "No single composer fits exactly with another in a particular 'school of recomposition,'" he suggests a peculiarly American attitude towards the use of preexisting

³⁰¹ Ibid., 10.

³⁰² Ibid., 4.

³⁰³ Robert Carl, "Introduction: Historicism in American Music Since 1980," *Contemporary Music Review* 20, no. 4 (2001): 1-7.

musics.³⁰⁴ He writes of three shared attitudes across the diversity of American composers who overtly reference preexisting music in their own compositions,

First, the use of prior materials seems to be a practice that is employed across the stylistic board, from the most traditional modernists to the most experimental. It is not a marker of “tradition” or “quality” so much as a source of musical ideas for all. Second, these Americans seem to take on the burden of the past quite lightly. For them, it seems to be a source material like any other. True, it has associations, but they do not seem overwhelming. There is a surprising lack of self-consciousness in the use of pre-existing materials...perhaps we can say, above all, there is a certain fearlessness in the way these composers approach the art of their predecessors, and appropriate it for their own purposes.³⁰⁵

Though Euba is primarily addressing the incorporation of preexisting folk and popular traditions into new works of “art” or “classical” music, and Carl is surveying the use of music from the past (whether classical, folk or popular music) in recent classical music, there is a significant intersection between the themes that they address. In his article, Euba focuses on musical “outsiders” to the European classical tradition, such as composers from Africa, Asia, and Eastern Europe who have frequently employed the methodology of creative ethnomusicology; in Carl’s article, he contextualizes American approaches to musical borrowing or “recomposition” similarly, noting in a discussion of Stravinsky’s neoclassicism that “it is interesting how much more the ‘outsiders’ of Western European music pursue this approach.”³⁰⁶

How does Duckworth’s work fit into American-music studies and the model of creative ethnomusicology proposed by Akin Euba? In his compositional process, Duckworth reenacts, to a certain extent, the research process suggested by Bartók. He participated in singings directed by Neely Bruce, singings that absorbed and replicated traditional *Sacred Harp* performing practices. He also spent months totally saturating himself in the sound of the hymns by singing

³⁰⁴ Ibid., 4.

³⁰⁵ Ibid., 7.

³⁰⁶ Ibid., 2.

through every part in the hymnal *Southern Harmony and Musical Companion*.³⁰⁷ This level of intense participation with the music points to something deeper than quoting a hymn or style for color, but instead mirrors the kind of stylistic absorption modeled by Bartók. Further, he creates a synthesis between *Sacred Harp* hymnody and new compositional styles. Carl writes, “William Duckworth sees the plainness of *Sacred Harp* vocal harmony as an ideal template on which to impose a series of classical minimalist techniques. In doing so, he hopes to demonstrate the close links of minimalism to fundamentally American folk music traditions.”³⁰⁸ Duckworth’s composition, then, explores the connections and similarities between traditions in a way analogous to the process an ethnomusicologist or historical musicologist might use to tease out their similarities in a scholarly article.

4.1.3 *Sacred Harp* revival

The *Sacred Harp* revival blossoming at the time of the work’s composition enabled and encouraged the stylistic absorption and subsequent fusion of styles in Duckworth’s *Southern Harmony*. Numerous scholars have pointed to the early 1980s as the time of a *Sacred Harp* revival, evidenced by the increased number of singers, new locales for singings (particularly Chicago and New England), new recordings (particularly, the Word of Mouth Chorus’s *Rivers of Delight*), and a series of conventions drawing in singers from all over the country. A brief survey of influential people and documents will help illustrate the importance of this revival for understanding the context of Duckworth’s *Southern Harmony*.

³⁰⁷ William Duckworth, interview with author.

³⁰⁸ Carl, “Introduction: Historicism in American Music Since 1980,” 5.

4.1.3.1 Neely Bruce

Neely Bruce is a key figure for understanding Duckworth's work, and the incorporation of shape-note hymns into the broader arena of American-music studies. As a composer, he has incorporated many American musics into his own compositions, including the quotation of shape-note hymns in concert works, as well as through composing new hymns in a shape-note style.³⁰⁹ As the director and founder of both The America Music Group at the University of Illinois (formed in 1969) and The American Music/Theater Group at Wesleyan University (formed in 1977), he has brought shape-note hymns to the attention of many through performances and recordings,³¹⁰ and in the case of *Southern Harmony*, through commissions. And, as will be elaborated in the following section, he also helped to create an annual *Sacred Harp* convention in the Northeastern United States, using his skills as a scholar and music director to help disseminate the tradition.

But how did Bruce come in contact with shape-note hymns himself? As in the case of many of the composers in this study, his first contact with this tradition came during his childhood, though for Bruce, the contact was brief. He writes,

Many people believe that I grew up with this music (this speculation even appears in print). However, I did not. Before 1967 my only exposure to "The Sacred Harp" was when I was a boy, living in Fultondale AL. My father worked in Birmingham at the time and came home one day and said "There's a big Sacred Harp singing in Birmingham." I said, "Daddy, what's Sacred Harp singing?" He replied "It's a bunch of old people who get together and sing old music."³¹¹

Bruce's subsequent contact with shape-note hymnody came as a graduate student. He continues,

³⁰⁹ See Marini, *Sacred Song in America, Sacred Song in America: Religion, Music, and Public Culture* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003), 279.

³¹⁰ For example, in 1972, The American Music Group released a four LP set, one of which dedicated to shape-note hymns and entitled *Hymns, Fuguing Tunes, and Anthems from the Original Sacred Harp* ([University of Illinois], LP 260-04, 1972).

³¹¹ Neely Bruce, interview with author. He elaborates, "I later realized that this little conversation took place either in 1950, 51 or 52, but I don't know which year. I thought for some time that it coincided with the big singing that Lomax and George Pullen Jackson recorded, but that took place before I was born."

In graduate school at the University of Illinois I earned some money as the director of the choir at St John's Chapel, the university Catholic center. Taking this job coincided with Charles Hamm teaching the first course in American music at the U of IL. This was, if memory serves me, the fall of 1967, the beginning of my second year there. There was considerable buzz among the graduate students about the revelations occurring in Hamm's class on a regular basis. I was looking for music for a little Christmas concert, so I checked out "Southern Harmony" from the library and began looking through the book, playing everything on the piano. I was stunned, of course, and fell in love with the music. I was convinced that there was more to the style than the notes on the page.

So I looked at these little pieces from "Southern Harmony" [that] I was playing on the piano, mostly in three parts, and I was convinced this was the tip of the iceberg. There had to be more to it. I had the unmistakable impression that singing this music off the page would be like performing American pop songs straight out of the printed sheet music, i.e. a misrepresentation of what the music really was.³¹²

Here, we have the combination of childhood experience (albeit, brief), scholarship (through the work of Charles Hamm), and the written score bringing the music to Bruce's attention. However, it was the sound of the hymns in recorded performance that captivated him. He writes,

My friend Bill Brooks was in Charles Hamm's class. I said "Bill, I'm playing these pieces from 'Southern Harmony' and there has to be more to it than the notes on the page." Bill said there was a recording in the library of that kind of music, he thought it was called "The Sacred Harp." I went to the music library, at that time still in Smith Hall, and checked out the LP of Alan Lomax's recording of the all-day singing in Fyffe, AL in 1956....It was part of the "Southern Journey" series, and has been reissued by New World Records.

By this time I was married, with two small children. I took the recording home and played it over and over again for two weeks. (I thought I might wear out the grooves, but I couldn't be concerned with the material object. The piece of vinyl that, however sacred it might be, could be replaced.) My family thought I had lost my mind.³¹³

³¹² Interview with author.

³¹³ Ibid.

He describes the experience in nearly ecstatic terms. For Bruce, the music wove together discrete strands from his past, converging his past and the sound of the music into an ecstatic experience. He continues,

Hearing Sacred Harp singing was like a conversion experience. (I had had such a musical epiphany once before, when I listened for the first time to a recording of “Tristan and Isolde.” I’ve not had such an intense introduction to any music since.) It encapsulated whole aspects of my life, whole areas of my memory. My church-going experience was extensive, growing up in a good Southern Baptist home. But I had been in churches in small towns and big cities. I dimly remembered other churches, however. We went to them when a distant relative died, or we visited friends and relatives in other parts of the South. These churches were beautiful white boxes in the woods, surrounded by green, difficult of access, no electricity, no indoor plumbing. I instantly realized that “The Sacred Harp” was the music of these churches, these distant relatives, the part of the South on the fringes of Fultondale and Birmingham, just a couple of generations removed from the wilderness most of Alabama and Georgia was two hundred years ago.

I was in love with this music, and still am. It’s like coming home to a home I never experienced first-hand, but home nonetheless.³¹⁴

In his own compositional output, Bruce has returned repeatedly to shape-note hymnody as a source. In works such as his multi-media compositions *Convergences: Some Parades for Charlie’s Dad* (2000), he quotes shape-note hymns within larger works.³¹⁵ At the same time, he has made significant contributions to new works within the shape-note traditions. Bruce’s *Hamm Harmony* (1988-1992),³¹⁶ dedicated to his former teacher Charles Hamm, is a set of thirty-six new hymns in what Bruce terms “the Sacred Harp style.”³¹⁷ His hymns have been

³¹⁴ Ibid.

³¹⁵ Neely Bruce, *Convergences: Some Parades for Charlie’s Dad* (Neely Bruce, 2000). In this work, Bruce creates an homage to the composer Charles Ives, who frequently used American hymnody as a source in his works.

³¹⁶ Neely Bruce, *Hamm Harmony: Shaped-Note Music* (Middletown, CT: Neely Bruce, 1992).

³¹⁷ Neely Bruce, “A Brief Descriptive Catalogue of His Compositions: Revised and Expanded August 2006,” 21. Available online at <http://www.neelybrucemusic.com/catalogue2005.pdf> (accessed February 16, 2009).

included in several newer collections of shape-note hymns including *The Sacred Harp: 1991 Edition*³¹⁸ and *The Northern Harmony* (1987).³¹⁹

But what led Bruce to commission Duckworth's work? Prior to its commissioning, Bruce was familiar with Duckworth's early ventures into the shape-note tradition. Bruce writes,

His interest in shaped note hymnody was evident since we had been in graduate school together. He wrote a percussion piece called "A Whispering..." (1972) that has been performed at the U of IL and elsewhere many times. It is based on a tune found both in "Southern Harmony" and "The Sacred Harp" [entitled "Family Circle"] [that] has the text "Come thou fount of every blessing." He also sang shaped note music sometimes with me and others, and heard the concerts of the American Music Group, which regularly featured tunes from "The Sacred Harp."³²⁰

He was especially impressed with Duckworth's treatment of the source material in *A Whispering...*,³²¹ which employed compositional processes prefiguring those used in Duckworth's *Southern Harmony*. He continues,

"A Whispering..." is not an unimportant little piece. The compositional method is additive—the music builds up a complex texture out of the tune, one note (one beat?) at the time, a procedure quite similar to that of many of the choral pieces in "Southern Harmony." So it is clear that the idea of using shaped note hymns to generate more abstract pieces of music was in Duckworth's mind for almost a decade before he produced a major choral work along these lines.³²²

The commission itself was part of a series of commissions initiated by Bruce and his colleague, Alvin Lucier. Bruce writes,

The commission to Bill Duckworth to do "Southern Harmony" was straightforward enough. When I was the choral director at Wesleyan I initiated a series of commissions of new choral music. The first one was "Wobbly Music" by Christian Wolff, premiered in 1976. Alvin Lucier and I walked around the

³¹⁸ Hugh McGraw, ed. *The Sacred Harp: 1991 Edition* (Bremen, GA: The Sacred Harp Publishing Company, 1991).

³¹⁹ Anthony G Barrand, Larry Gordon, and Carole Moody Crompton, *The Northern Harmony: Plain Tunes, Fuging Tunes, and Anthems from The New England Singing School Tradition*, 2nd ed. (Plainfield, VT: Northern Harmony Publishing Company, 1990).

³²⁰ Interview with author.

³²¹ William Duckworth, *A Whispering...* (Urbana, IL: Smith Publications, 1974).

³²² Interview with author.

Wesleyan campus thinking out loud about the best composer to inaugurate the series. Christian was actually Alvin's suggestion. "Rose Moon" by Pauline Oliveros, premiered in the fall of 1977. This was followed by "The Voice of the Dharma" by Gerald Shapiro. The third was "Southern Harmony" by Duckworth. (The other commissions went to James Fulkerson for "He was silent for a space" and Henry Brant for "Meteor Farm.")³²³

William Duckworth elaborates on the commission. He writes,

Neely has spent most of his teaching career at Wesleyan University in Connecticut. During the 1980s he directed the Wesleyan Singers. And much as he had done earlier at the University of Illinois, he engaged in adventurous programming, including a long history of commissioning new works. I was one of four composers commissioned for this particular project. He asked for a 15-minute piece, but I got carried away and gave him a 60-minute one.³²⁴

The first two sets (Books I & II) of hymns in *Southern Harmony* were performed at Wesleyan University in subsequent years (1980-81). Bruce was pleased with the work, stating that "It is a work of great emotional power, and the cumulative effect of twenty pieces composed in this manner is remarkable."³²⁵

4.1.3.2 Crossing the Mason-Dixon Line: The Word of Mouth Chorus and 1976 conventions

Larry Gordon's Word of Mouth Chorus was a significant player in the geographical movement northwards of the *Sacred Harp* tradition. John Bealle recounts the history of the group, "Based on a Vermont commune, the group was thoroughly steeped in countercultural values. It had coalesced loosely as a choral ensemble around several early 1970s performances of early American music."³²⁶ Gordon had used some *Sacred Harp* hymns in performances, and had

³²³ Ibid.

³²⁴ Duckworth, interview with author.

³²⁵ Ibid.

³²⁶ John Bealle, *Public Worship, Private Faith: Sacred Harp and American Folksong* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1997), 192.

become curious about its living performance tradition in the South. Bealle continues, “Gordon contacted Hugh McGraw, then executive secretary of the Sacred Harp Publishing Company, and arranged to attend the 1976 Georgia State Convention in April as one of several performing and singing stops. Their transportation was a bus, painted in psychedelic designs.”³²⁷ Here again, we see shape-note hymns paralleling 1970s countercultural values, such as life on the land and in communes. Gordon expresses a countercultural interpretation of the convention in the liner notes to the “Rivers of Delight” recording, “We were moved by the deep fellowship among the participants, a fellowship that reached out to include us, bridging vast boundaries of age, culture, politics, and religion.”³²⁸

This contact led in turn to an inversion of the group’s trip across the Mason-Dixon line: southern singers came to a northern singing. At the convention, Gordon talked to McGraw about a “performance” of *Sacred Harp* hymns that Neely Bruce and others had organized for the upcoming October to take place at Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut.³²⁹ McGraw announced it to the southern singers as the first regional “convention” to be taking place there, and 40 southern singers decided then and there to attend it.³³⁰ By reframing the event as a convention rather than a performance, McGraw accomplished two things: he validated the event and the singers involved as legitimate participants in the tradition, and he paved the way for bringing traditional practices into the new environment.

³²⁷ Ibid., 192.

³²⁸ Buell E. Cobb and Larry Gordon, liner notes to Word of Mouth Chorus, *Rivers of Delight: American Folk Hymns from the Sacred Harp Tradition*, Nonesuch Records, H-71360, 33 rpm, Stereo. 1979. Quoted in Bealle, *Public Worship, Private Faith*, 193.

³²⁹ Marini states that the convention was organized by Neely Bruce, Larry Gordon, Poppy Gregory, and Juanita Kyle in *Sacred Song in America*, 83.

³³⁰ Susan L. Garber, “The Sacred Harp Revival in New England: Its Singers and Its Singings” (MA Thesis, (Wesleyan University, 1987), 226. Quoted in Bealle, *Public Worship, Private Faith*, 193.

The presence of southern singers at the convention led to the incorporation of traditional performance practices into the new northern traditions then sprouting.³³¹ Bealle, describing the kinds of performance practices that the southern singers in the framework of a “convention” could bring to the northern singers, lists the following, “hollow square seating, opening and closing prayers, elected officers, equitable distribution of opportunities to lead, recorded minutes, dinner-on-the-grounds, the practice of singing the shapes with each song, and the fellowship that attends all this...”³³² Bealle continues on the significance of this geographical criss-cross, “But surely the most enduring legacy was the beginning of a meaningful dialogue between southern traditional and northern folk revival singers and the establishment of a means of spreading Sacred Harp among folk revival singers in a way suitable to the singing tradition.”³³³ It was the start of an annual New England-based convention. Stephen Marini states that it draws in 200-300 singers annually, “rotating on a three-year cycle from Wesleyan to churches and grange halls around Montpelier, Vermont, to Wellesley College and Andover Newton Theological School near Boston.”³³⁴

These experiences in 1976 helped pave the way for the 1979 recording “Rivers of Delight” by Larry Gordon’s Word of Mouth chorus. Marini describes the recording as a unique presentation of *Sacred Harp* hymnody. He writes, “Neither southern field recording, nor professional studio work, it presented a distinctive style of precision singing by a talented amateur chorus performing traditional tunes in non-traditional choral arrangements and vocal groupings.”³³⁵ The recording featured performances that reflected some of the practices of

³³¹ Bealle, *Public Worship, Private Faith*, 195.

³³² *Ibid.*, 195.

³³³ *Ibid.*, 196.

³³⁴ Marini, *Sacred Song in America*, 83

³³⁵ *Ibid.*, 84.

traditional *Sacred Harp* singing, such as its use of amateur rather than professional singers, while diverging from it in significant ways. The pared down texture and rubato singing style of many hymns on the recording contrasts strongly with the fast tempos and full-texture of the traditional *Sacred Harp* choral sound. Of some of its divergences, Kiri Miller writes,

[I]t would be an extraordinary occurrence for any Sacred Harp tune to be sung with only the tenor and bass parts, as is the case for “Idumea” on this recording, or with a new part entering at each verse, as with ‘Northport.’ These renditions give Sacred Harp a high and lonely sound—closer to the isolated, eerie, soloistic sound that characterizes Appalachian ballads in the popular imagination. But the success of a Sacred Harp convention is often measured by the number and volume of its participants: the sound is loud and full.³³⁶

For a recording of its kind, “Rivers of Delight” sold widely. Bealle writes, “Between 1979 and 1987, royalty payments to the Sacred Harp Publishing Company reflected sales of nearly 6,000 copies.”³³⁷ Besides bringing wider attention to the tradition, the recording also seems to have influenced the choice of hymns sung at northern conventions and singings. Bealle continues,

During this period, the recording had considerable impact on the repertoire and style of singers in revival areas. This is partly an observation of my own on informal singings in the Midwest. Sometimes it seemed an obligation to reproduce the *Rivers of Delight* in performances, even more so in informal settings. By the time the convention system came to the Midwest in the mid-1980s, folk revival singers had expanded their repertoire considerably, but still favored these songs.³³⁸

In *The Rivers of Delight*, traditional singers influenced a new group of singers and new approach to the hymns, and subsequently, the recording introduced more singers to the tradition, as well as influencing which songs were performed within traditional settings.

³³⁶ Kiri Miller, *Traveling Home: Sacred Harp Singing and American Pluralism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 164.

³³⁷ Bealle, *Public Worship, Private Faith*, 196.

³³⁸ *Ibid.*, 196-197.

4.1.3.3 Buell Cobb, *The Sacred Harp: A Tradition and Its Music*

Another important document drawing attention to the shape-note traditions during this period was Buell Cobb's book *The Sacred Harp: A Tradition and Its Music*.³³⁹ In this book, Cobb provides an "insider-outsider" discussion of the tradition, approaching it both from the view of a lifelong singer within it, as well as assessing it from a historical perspective. The book has helped foster the continuance of *Sacred Harp* traditions. It continues the scholarly written tradition around *Sacred Harp* primarily initiated by George Pullen Jackson, and like Jackson's work, it has been a strong force in introducing many to the tradition. Cobb's informal writing style is approachable by the general public as well as scholars. In the book, he not only describes the hymns in *The Sacred Harp*, he spends much time in describing the performance traditions surrounding the hymns: the conventions and local singings, the arrangement of the square, the dinner on the grounds, and so forth. His description of the performing practices has contributed to their preservation and continuance. In fact, Ron Pen credits this book as having a pivotal role in the continuance of the tradition, especially in the new Northern-based singings and conventions. He writes,

Although Cobb's *Sacred Harp* is the definitive documentation of the movement's past, the book also has served as a force for the future development of the tradition. Because he has so accurately described and codified traditional practice, a generation of revivalist singers has employed the book as an instruction manual of "correct" performance practice. In the absence of bred-in-the-bone understanding, the new breed of Sacred Harp singers has turned to Cobb's book as a resource for simulating all the values, attitudes, and techniques of traditional cultural context.³⁴⁰

³³⁹ Buell E. Cobb Jr., *The Sacred Harp: A Tradition and Its Music* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1978).

³⁴⁰ Ron Pen, "Review: *The Sacred Harp* by B.F. White, rev. ed. by the Sacred Harp Music Committee (Bremen, GA: Sacred Harp Music Publishing Company, 1991) and *The Sacred Harp: A Tradition and Its Music* by Buell E. Cobb Jr. (Athens, GA: Brown Thrasher Books, University of Georgia Press, 1989)," *American Music* 12, no. 1 (Spring 1994): 95.

The subsequent republication in 1989 and its continued usage by scholars and participants alike attest to its continuing significance in preserving the *Sacred Harp* tradition and fostering its continuance.³⁴¹

4.1.3.4 First National Sacred Harp Singing Convention

The interactions begun by these boundary crossings led eventually to the first National Sacred Harp Singing Convention, taking place in Birmingham, AL. In the program notes to “National Sacred Harp Convention, 23rd Session: June 13-15, 2002,” John Bealle describes the genesis of the convention.³⁴² He writes, “The convention was founded in 1980 by Hugh McGraw and others in response to a burgeoning interest in *Sacred Harp* singing and was intended as a gathering for all singers. In recent years, under the chairmanship of Buell Cobb, it has accumulated a loyal and enthusiastic following and has become one of the most highly regarded Sacred Harp conventions.”³⁴³ The idea was suggested to McGraw by a lifelong singer. Bealle writes,

According to Hugh McGraw, the idea to hold the convention was suggested to him by Maxine Aaron, a blind singer and member of the Denson family of singers, whose devotion and contributions to Sacred Harp singing were an inspiration to him and others. Her intent was to establish a venue where everyone could come together to sing.³⁴⁴

Even in its first year, the convention reflected the diversity for which its organizers strived. It included traditional singers and scholars, singers from numerous states, North and South, and

³⁴¹ Buell E. Cobb Jr., *The Sacred Harp: A Tradition and Its Music*, Reprint edition, with new introduction (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1989).

³⁴² John Bealle, liner notes to “Traditional Musics of Alabama, Volume 3: 2002 National Sacred Harp Singing Convention,” recorded June 14th, 2002 at the National Sacred Harp Convention at Trinity United Methodist Church, Birmingham, Alabama, *Alabama Center for Traditional Culture*, <http://www.arts.state.al.us/actc/vol3all.pdf> (accessed November 26, 2008).

³⁴³ Bealle, liner notes to “Traditional Musics of Alabama, Volume 3: 2002 National Sacred Harp Singing Convention,” [1].

³⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, [4].

even singers from diverse traditions of *Sacred Harp* singing, such as the African-American Wiregrass Singers,³⁴⁵ and the “Cooper” revision of *The Sacred Harp*.³⁴⁶ Bealle continues, “The first year, the Convention drew singers from fourteen states: Alabama, Georgia, Texas, Florida, Mississippi, Massachusetts, Michigan, North Carolina, New York, Tennessee, Virginia, Minnesota, Missouri, and California.”³⁴⁷

4.1.3.5 Cross-country *Sacred Harp* communities

The diversity enabled through the convergence of traditional Southern practices and new Northern groups has continued to characterize the new face of *Sacred Harp* singing. Broadly, the singers in the different regions encompass widely different lifestyles and value systems. Laura Clawson writes,

The new northern singings are concentrated in urban areas and college towns, and the new singers are a religiously diverse group composed largely of highly educated professionals. Whereas southern singers are farmers, secretaries, career military, and construction contractors, northern ones are more like librarians and

³⁴⁵ The Wiregrass Singers are a distinct interpretative tradition of Sacred Harp singing. The singing tends to be slower and more ornamented than other traditions. The group has used editions of *The Sacred Harp* as well as Judge Jackson’s *The Colored Sacred Harp* (Ozark, AL: J. Jackson, 1934). For more information, see “The Wiregrass Singers” <http://www.arts.state.al.us/actc/compilation/pisgah.html> (accessed December 4, 2008).

The *Colored Sacred Harp* tradition has experienced a revival of interest parallel to that of other shape-note traditions. Jerrilyn McGregory writes, “Ironically, in the 1990s, with a steadily decreasing number of African American Sacred Harp singers, *The Colored Sacred Harp* is enjoying its greatest popularity to date. Scholars and the African American community have discovered it simultaneously. It has been reprinted three times since 1973. ...With the gradual waning of the singing tradition, *The Colored Sacred Harp* has become a source of pride among Alabama’s African American shape note singing community.” McGregory, *Wiregrass Country* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2007), 61. This hymnal and the distinctive singing style associated with the Wiregrass tradition would be a goldmine for contemporary composers to explore and employ in new compositions. For more information on the tradition, see Doris Dyen, “The Role of Shape-Note Singing in the Musical Culture of Black Communities in Southeast Alabama” (Ph.D. diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1977).

³⁴⁶ Malinda Snow writes, “The B. F. White Sacred Harp, known as “the Cooper book,” descends from a 1902 revision by W. M. Cooper of Dothan, Alabama. It is widely used in south Georgia, north Florida, and the Gulf region extending to Texas. It has a strong following among white singers but is also favored by African American singers in that area.” Malinda Snow, “The Sacred Harp,” *New Georgia Encyclopedia* <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/nge/Article.jsp?id=h-549> (accessed November 26, 2008).

³⁴⁷ Bealle, liner notes to “Traditional Musics of Alabama, Volume 3: 2002 National Sacred Harp Singing Convention,” [9].

college professors or students; there are exceptions in both cases, but on average, these characterizations hold.³⁴⁸

Kiri Miller defines the new *Sacred Harp* tradition(s) as a diasporic subculture particularly reflecting the fragmented character of life in the United States today. She writes that her travels have led her to,

...resist the suggestion that new Sacred Harp conventions have to be viewed as well-meant dilutions, corruptions, or flawed reenactments of Southern traditional practice. Instead I approach conventions around the country with different forms of localism and authenticity. I have come to think of this dispersed landscape of singing communities as a “Sacred Harp diaspora.”³⁴⁹

This diasporic culture is deeply dependent on media. Miller writes,

The Sacred Harp diaspora could not exist without modern media, just as the regional networks of Southern conventions in the first century of Sacred Harp singing could not have existed without a mass-produced tunebook. The national community comprises close-knit local groups of singers with a high degree of awareness of the activities of other groups in far-flung parts of the country, an awareness achieved not only through reciprocal travels but also through the production and circulation of media. Singers represent themselves and communicate among themselves in every media format currently available.³⁵⁰

This kind of communication in between singings paves the way for a deeper sense of community as singers from all over the nation (and some outside the borders of the U.S.) come together in singings and conventions. In a beautiful simile, Miller discusses the hollow square as symbolic of the coming together of this diasporic community through a real and symbolic space. She writes,

Travel constructs the hollow square as a destination that can afford transcendent experiences, in part because the places through which singers must travel—the inevitable airports, interstates, and strip malls of the American landscape—raise

³⁴⁸ Laura Clawson, “‘Blessed Be the Tie that Binds’: Community and Spirituality among Sacred Harp Singers,” *Poetics* 32, no. 3-4 (June-August 2004): 314.

³⁴⁹ Miller, *Traveling Home*, 28.

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 140.

expectations that the hollow square will be different: a marked and distinctive place at the end of the line.³⁵¹

In Duckworth's *Southern Harmony*, we see a "diasporic" convergence metaphoric of the diversity within this new tradition. *Southern Harmony* was written in the North, and reflected values of "northern" performers, its complexity and incorporation of Western art music approaches to music testifying to its roots within a scholarly approach. Nonetheless, it reworks the *Southern Harmony*, and reflects traditionally Southern performance practices preserved within the continuing revival of *Sacred Harp* hymnody.³⁵²

4.1.4 Duckworth's *Southern Harmony* and *Musical Companion*

4.1.4.1 Genesis of the work

How did William Duckworth first encounter shape-note hymns? Like Samuel Jones, his first experience with shape-note hymns stemmed from his childhood. He writes, "Until I was five or six years old...my family went to a rural Methodist church [in North Carolina] where they did shaped-note singing. My grandfather was one of the leaders, a big, bullfrog bass."³⁵³ His

³⁵¹ Ibid., 220.

³⁵² Though it does not appear to be as seminal an influence as the *Sacred Harp* revival on his composition, Duckworth was also aware of and possibly participated in the traditional singing practices of *The Southern Harmony*, centered around the annual "Big-Singing Day" in Benton, Kentucky. (Interview with William Duckworth) *Sacred Harp* and *Southern Harmony* singing traditions preserve many similar elements, such as the singing of hymn on the fa-so-la syllables, and the dinner-on-the-grounds. However, the *Southern Harmony* tradition differs from many *Sacred Harp* traditions in its frequent use of slower tempos, and sometimes its alteration of the traditional hollow square formation. Further, it did not experienced the same cross-country revival in the twentieth century that the *Sacred Harp* tradition did, and partly because of that, the singings are closely tied to the families who have passed down the traditions, and less populated by new-comers to the tradition. For more information on the *Southern Harmony* traditions of singing, see Ron Pen, "Triangles, Squares, Circles and Diamonds: The 'Fasola Folk' and Their Singing Traditions" in *Musics of Multicultural America: A Study of Twelve Musical Communities*, Kip Lornell and Anne K. Rasmussen, eds. (London: Schirmer Books, 1997), 209-232, and Deborah Carlton Loftis, "Big Singing Day in Benton, Kentucky: A Study of the History, Ethnic Identity and Musical Style of Southern Harmony Singers," (Ph.D. diss., University of Kentucky, 1987).

³⁵³ Quoted by Kyle Gann in his program notes to *The Southern Harmony and Musical Companion*, William Duckworth/Monroe Street Music, LCD 2033, CD. 1994.

memory was retriggered when he encountered them again through the work of Neely Bruce. He writes,

I was a student at the University of Illinois in the late 1960s when Neely Bruce was organizing regular (and authentic) Sacred Harp singings on campus. I thought then that I was hearing the style for the first time. But as I reflected on the experience, I came to realize that my family had attended a rural church in Salem, NC until I was about 5, where the congregation sang in shape-note style. So the memory was planted early and then vividly recreated and recalled two decades later.³⁵⁴

More specifically, he believes that he was first introduced to the *Southern Harmony* through plans that Neely Bruce and he had made to attend an annual singing. He writes, “Neely Bruce brought William Walker’s *Southern Harmony* to my attention while we were at the University of Illinois together. I believe we were planning to go to the once-a-year singing in Kentucky, and I bought a facsimile edition in anticipation of the trip.”³⁵⁵ Duckworth was intrigued by the primarily three-voice arrangements in the *Southern Harmony*, in contrast to the four-voice arrangements in more recent editions of *The Sacred Harp*.³⁵⁶ He writes, “I was immediately attracted to William Walker’s work. Unlike *The Sacred Harp*, Walker’s arrangements were often in 3 parts, and the music itself sounded ‘purer,’ as if coming from a parallel primary source.”³⁵⁷

In preparation for composing this work, Duckworth immersed himself in the hymnal, singing through every part for hours each day. He explains, “I wrote *Southern Harmony* in Syracuse, NY, while on sabbatical from Bucknell. So I had the entire day to write. I would begin each day by singing through *Southern Harmony* a line at a time for an hour or more. At

³⁵⁴ Duckworth, interview with author.

³⁵⁵ Ibid.

³⁵⁶ Though most of the music in the first editions of *The Sacred Harp* was in three-part harmony, by the 1902 edition most of the hymns had been given a fourth (alto) part. For more information see Wallace McKenzie, “The Alto Parts in the ‘True Dispersed Harmony’ of ‘The Sacred Harp’ Revisions,” *Musical Quarterly* 73, no. 2 (1989): 153-171.

³⁵⁷ Duckworth, interview with author.

first I did it to familiarize myself with the music, but by the third or fourth time through it became more of a meditation.”³⁵⁸ To Kyle Gann he recounted, “Every day, before I started writing, I would put myself in the right frame of mind by singing through (the original) *Southern Harmony* for at least an hour, soprano, then alto, tenor, bass. In the course of the year I sang through the book several hundred times.”³⁵⁹

Duckworth’s process correlates with the methodology that ethnomusicologists take when submerging themselves in the culture and music that they study. However, Duckworth did not see this as a venture into unfamiliar musics, but as a journey into his own past. He writes,

Like other composers who grew up with the stylistic varieties of the 1960s, I was fascinated by world music. But I don’t think that interest played much part in *Southern Harmony*. The material there—those old hymns I’d heard in childhood—seemed more personal and from my own past; not exotic and from another world.³⁶⁰

American-music studies gather in the techniques of ethnomusicology and other fields of musical studies, applying them to music inside (and outside) the composer’s background. In fact, Cockrell believes that the “self-reflexivity” of applying scholarly methodologies to music from one’s own background should increasingly characterize American-music studies. He writes, “A personal and intellectual regard for one’s own place in American music would be a strength, not a weakness. Self-experienced musical worlds would frequently constitute the primary subject of study: cases [sic] studies of inevitably complex musical selves.”³⁶¹ *Southern Harmony* brings together diverse aspects of Duckworth’s “complex musical self” from his childhood memories through his studies of new music and encounters with shape-note performances in the university.

³⁵⁸ Ibid.

³⁵⁹ Gann, program notes to *The Southern Harmony and Musical Companion*.

³⁶⁰ Interview with author.

³⁶¹ Cockrell, “Can American Music Studies Develop a Method?,” 278.

4.1.4.2 Overview of *Southern Harmony and Musical Companion*

Completed in 1981, *Southern Harmony and Musical Companion* consists of twenty choral works, all individually based on hymns found in William Walker's *Southern Harmony and Musical Companion* (1835).³⁶²

Book One:

- "Consolation"
- "Wondrous Love"
- "Hebrew Children"
- "Solemn Thought"
- "Rock of Ages"

Book Two:

- "Cheerful"
- "War Department"
- "Condescension"
- "Holy Manna"
- "Bozrah"

Book Three:

- "The Mouldering Vine"
- "Mear"
- "Leander"
- "Sardina"
- "Windham"

Book Four:

- "Distress"
- "Nashville"
- "Turtle Dove"
- "Primrose"
- "Social Band"

³⁶² I have provided the provenance for the three hymns studied in-depth under "4.1.5 Three case studies from Duckworth's *Southern Harmony*." For information on the provenance of the other hymns in this collection, see "Index to the Sacred Harp, 1991 edition" at www.fasola.org/indexes (accessed April 21, 2009), Gingerich and Lind, *Handbook to the Harmonia Sacra* and Glenn Wilcox's "Introduction" to *The Southern Harmony*, reprint edition of the 1854 edition (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1987), i-xiii.

Individual pieces from Duckworth's *Southern Harmony and Musical Companion* were performed throughout the 1980s. However, they were not performed together until February 20th, 1992 at Merkin Hall in New York City, by the Gregg Smith Singers and Bucknell University's Rooke Chapel Choir.³⁶³ They were subsequently recorded by the Gregg Smith Singers, and released on CD in 1994.³⁶⁴ More recently, a number of the sections were recorded by Boston Seccession and released on a recording entitled *Surprised by Beauty: Minimalism in Choral Music*.³⁶⁵

4.1.4.3 The musical style of Duckworth's *Southern Harmony*

In *Southern Harmony*, Duckworth uses the palette of minimalism/postminimalism to evoke the sounds of shape-note hymns. The work has been recognized as one of the first postminimalist compositions. Duckworth asserts,

In order to understand my particular relationship to minimalism/postminimalism, I think it is also necessary to look at the music I wrote just before *Southern Harmony*, *The Time Curve Preludes*. Those 24 pieces for piano, along with *Southern Harmony*'s 20 pieces for chorus, define, I think, the postminimalist style. For me, these two sets of pieces bring together my various musical interests for the past 20 years, including the use of rhythm to generate form.³⁶⁶

But what exactly is "postminimalism"? The word itself is ambiguous: "post" as in "after in time" or "post" as in moving beyond that which was designated by the word "minimalism"? Two scholars offer definitions from slightly different perspectives that begin to define the style: Jonathan W. Bernard discusses it in his article, "Minimalism, Postminimalism, and the

³⁶³ Gann, program notes to *The Southern Harmony and Musical Companion*.

³⁶⁴ William Duckworth, *Southern Harmony*, performed by the Gregg Smith Singers, Lovely Music, LCD 2033, CD. 1994.

³⁶⁵ *Surprised by Beauty: Minimalism in Choral Music*, performed by the Boston Seccession, directed by Jane Ring Frank, Brave Records, BRAV0720, CD. 2007.

³⁶⁶ Duckworth, interview with author.

Resurgence of Tonality in Recent American Music”³⁶⁷ and Kyle Gann discusses it in his book, *Music Downtown: Writings from The Village Voice*.³⁶⁸

Jonathan Bernard reads minimalism in the context of contemporaneous art forms, understanding it primarily as an “aesthetic stance” rather than a style.³⁶⁹ Works now labeled “postminimalist” move away from that stance, sometimes in ways that fundamentally contradict the aesthetic motivations of the movement. Bernard writes,

The possibility that minimalism has somehow fed into a present-day pattern of stylistic retrenchment is all the more poignantly ironic when one considers that minimalism in its early stages, much like the visual art that in large part inspired it and much like other avant-garde movements in the twentieth-century arts, was intended as a clean break from what preceded it in almost every respect.³⁷⁰

He continues, chronicling the historical move away from its roots,

One way to tell the story of what happened after this initial establishment of minimalism might proceed through four basic stages: (1) Pieces became more complicated, which soon provoked (2) a greater concern with sonority in itself; as a result (3) pieces began sounding more explicitly “harmonic,” that is chordally oriented, though not, at this point, necessarily *tonal* in any sense. Eventually, however, (4) harmony of an ever more tonal (or neotonal, or quasi-tonal) aspect assumed primary control. As this occurred, the hallmark devices of minimalism—repetition in a buzzing or bustling texture, explicitly projected pulse, the pantonal sonorous profile that was originally the product of a basic indifference to sonority per se—were pushed into the background, where they became stylistic objects.³⁷¹

For Bernard, then, the “post” in “postminimalism” indicates a fundamental move away from the roots and aesthetic priorities entailed in minimalism, and stylistically, an increasing incorporation of non-traditional tonal elements. Duckworth’s work certainly reflects the

³⁶⁷ Jonathan W. Bernard, “Minimalism, Postminimalism, and the Resurgence of Tonality in Recent American Music,” *American Music* 21, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 112-133.

³⁶⁸ Kyle Gann, *Music Downtown: Writings from The Village Voice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

³⁶⁹ Bernard, “Minimalism, Postminimalism, and the Resurgence of Tonality in Recent American Music,” 113-114.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 114.

³⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 114.

increased reliance on tonal and modal elements. However, his work still employs the kinds of processes, albeit modified as he sees fit, that characterize minimalism. Perhaps in upcoming years, a greater historical distance from the movements of minimalism and postminimalism may allow for a more comprehensive view of the ways in which postminimalism continued the aesthetic of minimalism and the ways in which it diverged into other paths.

Unlike Bernard, who views postminimalism as a break from the aesthetics of minimalism, Gann seems to view the move from minimalism towards postminimalism as a process of accretion, combining the styles and sounds of the former with new influences.³⁷² Gann defines postminimalism, discussing its stylistic tendencies and specific composers and works that exhibit its tendencies,

The term *postminimalism* has been used by many writers to refer to music that reminds them of minimalism but is somehow different, usually less strict. My use of it is much more specific. In the late 1980s I began to notice a tremendous amount of music that used steady pulse throughout, simple but nontraditional diatonic harmony, and simple but not obvious numerical structures. That this music was a spin-off from minimalism was clear, but it also incorporated influences from older classical music and several world traditions, including bluegrass, gamelan, African drumming, Japanese gagaku, and others. The first examples of this well-defined style include William Duckworth's *Time Curve Preludes* (1978-79), Janice Giteck's *Breathing Songs from a Turning Sky* (1980), Peter Gena's *Beethoven in Soho* (1980), and Daniel Lentz's *The Dream King* (1980). Spread geographically from coast to coast and mostly born in the 1940s, the exponents of this style formed no unified scene and mostly didn't know one another (I introduced many of them to one another). The ideas of postminimalism, though, were clearly "in the air."³⁷³

Here, Gann defines the stylistic characteristics of minimalism preserved in postminimalistic works (such non-traditional diatonic harmonies and a steady pulse) and enumerates the other influences that fuse with these elements (including the use of techniques and sounds of classical

³⁷² In fact, Bernard critiques Gann's stance towards minimalism, stating that he has been quite "liberal" in his application of the term. (133)

³⁷³ Gann, *Music Downtown*, 13.

music, and influences from a number of world musics). The incorporation of world music into postminimalist styles reflects a creative ethnomusicological impulse, enabled in part through the availability of world music and ethnomusicology classes within the American university system. Duckworth's work particularly reflects the growing presence of American-music studies in the university, particularly at the University of Illinois with Duckworth's contact with Neely Bruce and his American Music Group.

Gann's stance seems particularly useful for the discussion of Duckworth's work in that it emphasizes the eclecticism present within postminimalism. In fact, Gann views Duckworth's *Southern Harmony* as situated in a critical juncture between minimalism and postminimalism. He writes,

Dating from 1980-81, the piece occupies a pivotal historical moment, the moment at which minimalism (the repetitive style spearheaded by Steve Reich and Philip Glass) had lost its steam, and at which the succeeding postminimal style (which Duckworth pioneered) hadn't yet gone public. Minimalist tendencies persist; six of the songs, nos. 1, 3, 5, 10, 13, and 20, contain passages literally repeated. However, while *Southern Harmony's* transformative processes take the phase-shifting of Reich's Piano Phase as their starting point, they renounce minimalism's obvious surface structures.³⁷⁴

Adam B. Silverman echoes the use of traditional minimalist structures in the work,

In *Southern Harmony*, Duckworth utilized a process of melodic abstraction in which a tune, once stripped of its rhythms and its context as a line in counterpoint with others, is manipulated with typically "minimalist" procedures: cycling notes, subtracting or adding them in successive repetitions, and phasing a melody in canon against itself. He then used the result as his basic material for new choral songs which are, in turn constructed methodically.³⁷⁵

At the same time, he discusses the ways in which the work goes beyond the traditional limits of minimalism. He writes that, in contrast to stylistic tendencies of true minimalism,

³⁷⁴ Gann, program notes to *The Southern Harmony and Musical Companion*.

³⁷⁵ Adam B. Silverman, "Stylistic Combination and Methodical Construction in William Duckworth's *Southern Harmony*," *Contemporary Music Review* 20, no. 4 (2001): 46.

Duckworth's textures are often simply backgrounds upon which a traditional melody is imposed. Perhaps the most important distinction between Duckworth's music and that of the minimalists is his predilection for interfering with a process set in motion. He will alter notes, delete beats or change register at will, even if it interferes with the strict employment of a musical process. This intuitive intervention in the minimalist process is perhaps the defining feature of "postminimalism" as exemplified by Duckworth's music.³⁷⁶

This adaptation of the minimalist palette reflects Duckworth's own personal style, but more than that, it reflects the confluence of influences in *Southern Harmony*: the shape-note style could be read as a modulation of minimalist elements or even vice-versa. Duckworth has achieved a true fusion of styles: the separate threads can be discussed and examined, but never completely unwoven.

Gann describes the elements of shape-note hymnody highlighted in Duckworth's *Southern Harmony*,

Shaped-note hymns are full of contrapuntal tendencies considered awkward by European art-music standards: voice crossings, pungent dissonances, odd phrase lengths, and parallel fifths, octaves and unisons. Duckworth preserves and exploits these anomalies, driving home their exotic qualities through reiteration and variation.³⁷⁷

Even the scoring of this work—for unaccompanied chorus—reflects the shape-note tradition. In fact, Adam B. Silverman persuasively argues that the composition works well because of the stylistic similarities between the shape-note style and minimalism/postminimalism. He writes,

The mapping of Duckworth's minimalist procedures onto Old Harp³⁷⁸ music is more than an arbitrary mixture; these styles blend well together because they share the qualities of modal diatonicism, repetitive rhythms, and textural consistency. In shape-note music, Duckworth found an affinity with minimalism and other modernist styles. These features include the use of lines that are

³⁷⁶ Ibid., 48.

³⁷⁷ Gann, program notes to *The Southern Harmony and Musical Companion*.

³⁷⁸ Silverman uses "Old Harp" as one of the synonyms for "shape-note" hymns. He also mentions the use of "fasola," "Sacred Harp" as other terms used. I use "shape-note hymns" as the primary designation for this repertoire, reserving "Sacred Harp" for the particular tradition stemming from the eponymous hymnal. Silverman, "Stylistic Combination and Methodical Construction in William Duckworth's *Southern Harmony*," 45.

contained within a small registral band. Often long and without climax, these lines would not be considered “melodies” in the traditional sense.³⁷⁹

Duckworth’s presentation of these hymns reflects the sound of the hymns in performance practice, not just as notes on the page. In a number of the movements, he preserves the “fa-sol-la’s” that precede the hymns in performance practice. The fast-paced and insistent rhythms in some of the movements mirror the energetic renditions of the hymns within some performance traditions of *Sacred Harp*, the relentless pulse signaled by the waving hand of the leader in the middle of the square. The densely interwoven texture in some of the movements, with men and women doubling parts, reflects the practice of women and men singing the treble and tenor (lead) parts. Duckworth heightens the sense of movement in physical space created through the traditional square in which *Sacred Harp* is sung through his use of imitative entrances (a la fugal tunes) and through dividing melodies between parts. The following analyses focus on the junctures between the shape-note hymns, on the written page and in performance, and Duckworth’s minimalist/postminimalist stylistic palette.³⁸⁰

4.1.5 Three case studies from Duckworth’s *Southern Harmony*

4.1.5.1 “Wondrous Love”

The tune to “Wondrous Love” is a folk tune traced to a family of folk hymns known as the “Captain Kidd” ballads.³⁸¹ It was arranged by James Christopher, as credited by William

³⁷⁹ Ibid., 46.

³⁸⁰ For a close analysis of several of these pieces, see Silverman “Stylistic Combination and Methodical Construction in William Duckworth’s *Southern Harmony*,” which analyzes “Cheerful,” “Consolation,” and “War Department,” 48-57.

³⁸¹ For more information on the Captain Kidd ballads and their use in shape-note hymns, see Ellen Jane Porter and John F. Garst, “More Tunes in the Captain Kidd Meter,” *The Hymn* 30, no. 4 (1979): 252-62.

Walker.³⁸² As seen in the following example, the tune family is characterized by internal repetitions of phrase endings (i.e., “oh! my soul! oh! my soul!,” and “for my soul, for my soul”), as well as repetition of entire phrases (“What wondrous love is this, oh! my soul!” and “To bear the dreadful curse for my soul”). This kind of internal repetition corresponds well with the processes of repetition characterizing minimalist/postminimalist music (Figure 37).

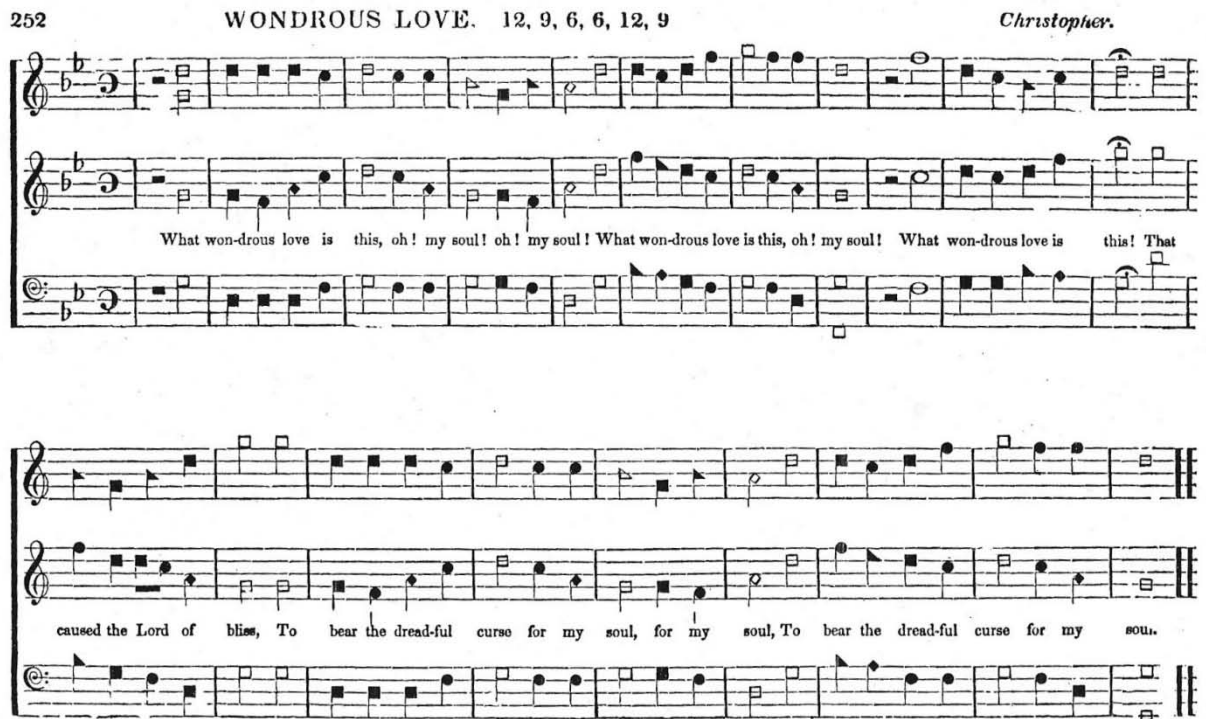


Figure 37. *The Southern Harmony* (1835). “Wondrous Love”

Courtesy of the Pitts Theology Library, Candler School of Theology, Emory University.

Rather than the fast, regular pulse typical of the performance practice of “Wondrous Love,” Duckworth instead chooses to set this hymn as “legato, almost without vibrato” at a very slow

³⁸² Harry Eskew, “Introduction: *Southern Harmony*,” in *Christian Classics Ethereal Library*, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/walker/harmony/files/intro.html> (accessed December 4, 2008).

tempo. Duckworth's setting opens with the first verse sung by a soprano soloist (mm. 1-19). These compositional choices parallel the kinds of performances found on "Rivers of Delight" more than indigenous Southern shape-note singings. For example, on "Rivers of Delight," the setting of "Parting Friends" opens with a female soloist, singing slowly and lamentingly, before a male voice joins in to create a duet. The tempo and style of Duckworth's setting likewise reinforces the lamenting quality of the text that he chose, allowing space for contemplation by the singers and listeners. The soprano solo in Duckworth's setting is quite melismatic, in contrast to the strictly syllabic setting in the traditional text-music pairing of "Wondrous Love." It begins with the text of the hymn, excluding the solfège prelude of traditional performances. Note Duckworth's use of three-four rather than the cut-time of the original hymn. See the opening phrase of the setting (Figure 38).

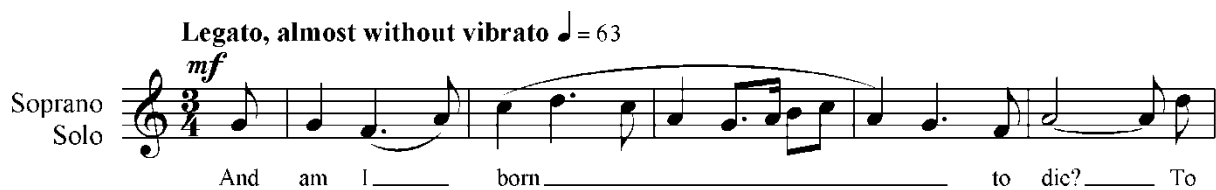


Figure 38. Duckworth, *Southern Harmony*, "Wondrous Love," mm. 1-5

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The solo in "Wondrous Love" is followed by a two-part setting of the second verse, this time for the first and second soprano sections (mm. 19-38). The first sopranos sing the text while the seconds accompany with "loo"—a singing syllable, but not one included in the four- (or seven-) note solfège systems.

In the third verse, Duckworth creates a homorhythmic setting of the hymn for full chorus. It is this middle section that most resembles *Sacred Harp* hymnody. The dense, interwoven lines

echo the texture of the source hymn. Duckworth highlights and heightens the quartal-quintal harmonies of the hymn. Note the predominance of chords built on stacked fifths throughout the following example (Figure 39).

The musical score for Figure 39 is written for four voices: Soprano I & II, Alto I & II, Tenor I & II, and Bass. The time signature is 3/4. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are: "Soon as from earth I go. I go. What". The dynamics are marked *mp* (mezzo-piano) at the beginning and *mf* (mezzo-forte) at the end of each line. The music features a mix of single notes and chords, with a focus on stacked fifths in the harmony.

Figure 39. Duckworth, *Southern Harmony*, "Wondrous Love," mm. 39-42

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To open the final verse, the chorus sustains the chord that finishes the third verse built on fifths (G, D, A) at a *pianississimo* level. Over this, the soprano soloist reprises the melismatic solo that opened the setting. The movement from a soloist to two-part writing to full chorus and finally, back to a soprano soloist creates a beautifully expressive arch, a shape neither derived directly from minimalist processes or from the source hymn, but emerging from Duckworth's imaginative sculpturing of his source materials.

4.1.5.2 “Holy Manna”

Duckworth’s setting of “Holy Manna” explores a correlation between the relentless rhythmic pulse characterizing much minimalist/postminimalist music and the similar drive characterizing shape-note hymns, on the page and in performance practice. The tune “Holy Manna” first appeared in William Moore’s *Columbian Harmony* (1825),³⁸³ and is attributed to Moore;³⁸⁴ the text with which it was paired, “Brethren, We Have Met to Worship,” first appearing in *The Spiritual Songster* (1819)³⁸⁵ is attributed to George Atkin.³⁸⁶ See the following example for its imprint in *The Southern Harmony* (Figure 40).

The hymn itself, in a simple ABA form, is characterized by a repeated rhythmic motive consisting of a quarter-note, followed by two eighth-notes. This motive initiates the motion of the hymn in the A phrase, and continues the second half of the phrase, as well as being imbedded in the middle of the B phrase. In his setting, Duckworth highlights the rhythmic drive imbedded in the hymn, with a performance marking of “Energetic,” and a consistent 2/2 meter. The following musical example shows the melody (without repeats) with brackets designating the appearance of the rhythmic motive (Figure 41).

³⁸³ William Moore, *Columbian Harmony* (Cincinnati: Printed by Morgan, Lodge, and Fisher for the author, 1825). Music notes that all editions of this hymn attribute it to Moore, except for William Walker who attributes it to “More,” as seen in this facsimile. *A Selection of Shape-Note Folk Hymns from Southern United States Tune Books, 1816-61*, xxxii.

³⁸⁴ Paul Westermeyer, *Let the People Sing: Hymn Tunes in Perspective* (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2005), 275.

³⁸⁵ George Kolb, *The Spiritual Songster Containing a Variety of Camp-Meeting and Other Hymns* (Frederick-Town, MD: George Kolb, 1819).

³⁸⁶ Music, *A Selection of Shape-Note Folk Hymns from Southern United States Tune Books*, xxxii.

Brethren, we have met to wor - ship, And a - dore the Lord our God ; ? All is vain, unless the Spirit Of the Holy One come down ; Brethren, pray, and
Will you pray with all your power, While we try to preach the word. }

ho - ly man - na Will be shower'd all around

2 Brethren, see poor sinners round you,
Trembling on the brink of wo ;
Death is coming, hell is moving ;
Can you bear to let them go ?
See our fathers—see our mothers,
And our children sinking down ;
Brethren, pray, and holy manna
Will be shower'd all around.

3 Sisters, will you join and help us ?
Moses' sisters aided him ;
Will you help the trembling mourners,
Who are struggling hard with sin ?
Tell them all about the Saviour,
Tell them that he will be found ;
Sisters, pray, and holy manna
Will be shower'd all around.

4 Is there here a trembling jailer,
Seeking grace, and fill'd with fears
Is there here a weeping Mary,
Pouring forth a flood of tears ?
Brethren, join your cries to help them
Sisters, let your prayers abound ;
Pray, O ! pray, that holy manna
May be scatter'd all around.

5 Let us love our God supremely,
Let us love each other too ;
Let us love and pray for sinners,
Till our God makes all things new
Then he'll call us home to heaven.
At his table we'll sit down .
Christ will gird himself, and serve us
With sweet manna all around.

Figure 40. *Southern Harmony* (1835). “Holy Manna”

Courtesy of the Pitts Theology Library, Candler School of Theology, Emory University.

A B

A

Figure 41. “Holy Manna,” melody with rhythmic motives

The use of solfège also highlights the rhythmic drive imbedded in this hymn; in his setting, Duckworth eschews the text of the hymn, choosing to use fa-so-la syllables for the entire piece. Duckworth intensifies the “minimal” quality of the fa-so-la syllables, and the rhythmic drive

created through their repetition, through further reducing the text to the single syllable “la” for extended sections of phrases. Again, the use of syllables correlates both to the performance practice of *Sacred Harp*, singing the hymn “on the notes” before adding the text, and mirrors the slowly varied repetition that characterizes minimalism and postminimalism.

The opening phrase begins with the sopranos in unison, and cadences with the harmonies of the source hymn, with men and women doubling parts as would happen in performance practice of these hymns (Figure 42).³⁸⁷

In this setting, Duckworth stays close to the source melody of the hymn, despite his alteration of phrase lengths and entrances, and he incorporates harmonies from the source as well. Varying the texture and entrances of the parts, Duckworth continues a similar process throughout the setting. The only deviation from the hexatonicism of the setting (neither the source tune or Duckworth’s setting uses the leading tone) is the frequent alternation of E and Eb as the third note of the scale (see measures 2 and 7 in the previous musical example). Duckworth discusses his use of the alternating third degrees of the scale in this work, “I became interested in major and minor seconds as consonant sounds with *The Time Curve Preludes*. That, in turn, probably came from my interest in jazz, which developed at an early age.”³⁸⁸ This vacillation corresponds with the sometimes ambiguous thirds in *Sacred Harp* performance practice, and is evocative of African-American performance traditions of *Sacred Harp*, such as the Wiregrass Singers. It also evokes Virgil Thomson’s chromatic treatment of “Resignation” discussed in Chapter Two, “2.1.7 Thomson, Jackson, and music as historiography.”

³⁸⁷ However, in his setting, the alto doubles the bass; in shape-note practice it is unusual to have women’s voices doubling the bass.

³⁸⁸ Duckworth, interview with author.

d = M.M. 84
Energetic **Phrase 1**

S₁ *pp* 2/2

S₂ *pp* 2/2

A 2/2

T₁ 2/2

T₂ 2/2

B 2/2

*Sing all unmarked pitches on "La".

The image shows a musical score for four voices: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The score is divided into two main sections: 'Phrase 2' and 'Phrase 3'. 'Phrase 2' is marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic and 'Phrase 3' is marked with a crescendo (*cresc.*). The lyrics are 'la sol fa' for Soprano, Alto, and Bass, and 'la sol fa' for Tenor. The score includes musical notation with notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Phrase 2

p

cresc. **Phrase 3**

cresc.

pp

p

cresc.

pp

p

cresc.

pp

pp

1

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4.1.5.3 “Primrose”

Duckworth’s setting of “Primrose” combines both the preservation of solfège syllables seen in “Holy Manna” and the use of a traditional hymn text in “Wondrous Love” (albeit another text than the one frequently used with the tune). The text is by Isaac Watts (1707)³⁸⁹ and the tune is credited to [Amzi] Chapin (1812)³⁹⁰ (Figure 43).



Figure 43. *The Southern Harmony* (1835). “Primrose”

Courtesy of the Pitts Theology Library, Candler School of Theology, Emory University.

Duckworth’s setting differs significantly from anything found in traditional shape-note singing, but reflects the spatiality of the hymns in performance within the traditional square formation, particularly, the feeling of physical motion created in fusing tunes. In this movement, Duckworth sets the text using a technique similar to the *Klangfarbenmelodie* techniques used by Arnold Schoenberg and further developed by Anton Webern. The hymn tune is split between different voices and registers. By holding out the pitches of the tune as new ones are added,

³⁸⁹ Isaac Watts, *Hymns and Spiritual Songs: In Three Books* (London: Printed by J. Humfreys, for John Lawrence, 1707).

³⁹⁰ The source and composer of the tune have been debated. It first appeared in an untitled set of papers created by Andrew Law in 1812. For further discussion see David W. Music, *A Selection of Shape-Note Folk Hymns from Southern United States Tune Books*, xvi, xlvi.

Duckworth transforms melody into harmony and texture. Unlike “Holy Manna,” this setting does not preserve the relentless pulse associated with *Sacred Harp* hymns in performance, or with many minimalist works. Instead, Duckworth marks this to be performed “Unhurried, quiet, suspended in time.”

Overall, the form of this work is in three sections: opening with a verse sung on solfège syllables, followed by the first verse sung on the same succession of notes, and finished with a final verse on solfège syllables, this time inverting much of the melodic motion presented in the first two iterations. In its harmonic language, derived from the motion of the melody, the movement particularly emphasizes seconds and fourths. In the opening of the movement, Duckworth imitates the melodic motion of the hymn closely (Figure 44). The source melody is on the top staff, while the bottom shows the notes used by Duckworth in the first eleven measures of the piece. Asterisks mark notes in the Duckworth that differ from the source melody; in the case of simultaneous notes, the asterisk is placed above or below the respective note on the staff. A rest near the end indicates a note omitted from the Duckworth version of the melody.

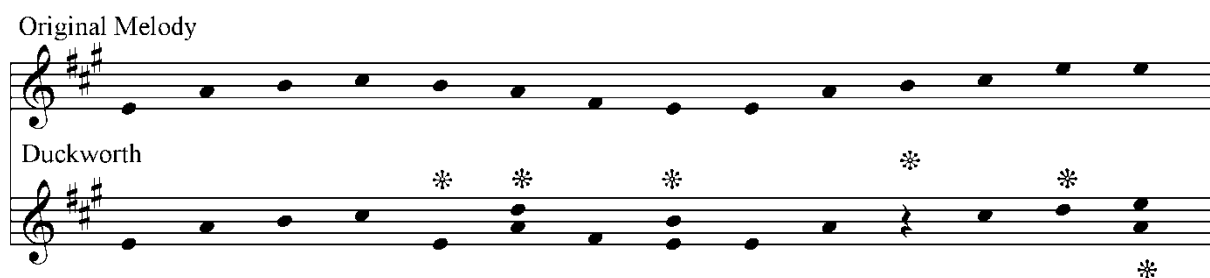


Figure 44. “Primrose.” Comparison of Duckworth’s setting with source melody

It is clear that in the opening, the new setting stays close to the original melody. However, even in this portion of Duckworth's setting, it is difficult to hear the progression of pitches as a melody in a similar way to how one would hear the melody in the source hymn: the slow tempo and the division of the notes between the voice parts abstract the notes of the melody from its original context. See the opening of Duckworth's setting of "Primrose" in Figure 45. Also note the movement in physical space (especially in live performance, although this can also be heard in recordings) that happens as the notes are passed from part to part. Except for a few isolated stacks of sound (usually only of two voice parts), the parts enter and exit individually.

When the text of the hymn enters, the melody sounds a little less abstracted as the syllables of the words help to connect the pitches and registers. At the same time, the division of words between the parts and the slow "timeless" quality indicated by Duckworth come together to create a feeling of distance and stillness that interprets the words of the text,

Salvation! O the joyful sound! 'Tis pleasure to our ears;
A sovereign balm for every wound, A cordial for our fears.

Rather than a setting that emphasizes "joyful sounds," this one instead reinforces the idea of a "sovereign balm" through the peaceful stasis created through the setting. In some ways this setting resembles the free-floating, nearly pulseless minimalist/postminimalist styles in works by composers such as Arvo Pärt and Pauline Oliveros than the strongly pulsed styles more often associated with minimalist composers such as Philip Glass and Steve Reich.

Primrose

♩ = M.M. 66
Unhurried, quiet, suspended in time

The musical score for "Primrose" consists of two systems of six staves each, representing different vocal parts: S₁, S₂, A₁, A₂, T₁, and T₂. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The tempo/mood is "Unhurried, quiet, suspended in time" with a tempo marking of ♩ = M.M. 66. The score includes vocal lines with lyrics "Fa", "Sol", and "La" and dynamic markings such as *p*, *mp*, and *pp*. The first system covers measures 1-4, and the second system covers measures 5-8.

Figure 45. Duckworth, *Southern Harmony*, "Primrose," mm. 1-12

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4.1.6 Conclusion

Each of the three settings analyzed in this chapter explores unique junctures between postminimalism and elements of shape-note hymnody. Duckworth creatively explores the rhythm, harmonies, textures, tempos, melodies, and spatial elements of these hymns through melding them with postminimalist techniques, transforming both in the process. Through this synthesis, Duckworth opens up new sound possibilities within postminimalism, as well as within shape-note traditions of music. Silverman summarizes the synthesis created by Duckworth,

Southern Harmony acts as a setting in which two American styles co-mingle. Whether this piece is minimalist or Old Harp, classical or folk is an issue that does not require resolution. The important conclusion is that in Duckworth's *Southern Harmony*, styles and procedures coexist by illuminating the salient features of each other.³⁹¹

It is this “illumination” that demonstrates *Southern Harmony*'s participation in a larger field of American studies. Through exploring, merging, and juxtaposing two distinct traditions, it serves as a model by which composition can participate as an exploration of music.

More specifically, Duckworth's *Southern Harmony* sits at a critical juncture between a tradition in revival and in flux (*Sacred Harp*) and new approaches to music composition. As the *Sacred Harp* revival continued from the 1980s to the present, new works have continued to make use of *Sacred Harp* and other traditions of shape-note hymnody. Inside the singing tradition, new hymns have been composed in the traditional shape-note style and incorporated into traditional singings. For example, the 1991 edition of *The Sacred Harp* includes thirty-seven newer compositions. The hymnal *The Norumbega Harmony*, stemming from new Northern traditions of shape-note singing and emphasizing the contributions of historic and modern New

³⁹¹ Silverman, “Stylistic Combination and Methodical Construction in William Duckworth's *Southern Harmony*,” 45.

England composers includes thirty new compositions.³⁹² Many composers participating in traditional singings and creating new works for performance within these settings also have composed concert works using these works. The composer P. Dan Brittain (1971-) has composed new hymns for performance inside the *Sacred Harp* tradition, as well as quoting shape-note hymns within band and choral works.³⁹³

Outside of the singing practice, many composers have continued to quote hymns in concert works, frequently in combination with new compositional techniques. To give a few examples, John Adams, also associated with postminimalism, used the hymn “Perilous Shore” as the basis of the first movement of his chamber work *Gnarly Buttons* (1996). John Beall (1942-) has composed several instrumental chamber works using shape-note hymns, several of them featured on a recording entitled “Wondrous Love: Appalachian Chamber Music” (1994).³⁹⁴ Along the same vein of Duckworth’s incorporation of shape-note hymns with progressive compositional techniques is the work of Jesse Pearlman Karlsberg, who has incorporated shape-note hymns into electroacoustic, multimedia installations.³⁹⁵

³⁹² Stephen A. Marini and Nym Cooke, *The Norumbega Harmony: Historic and Contemporary Hymn Tunes and Anthems from the New England Singing School Tradition* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi: 2003).

³⁹³ P. Dan Brittain, e-mail correspondence, June 5th, 2005.

³⁹⁴ John Beall, *Wondrous Love: Appalachian Chamber Music*, Morgantown, WV: West Virginia University, WVUPRESS-SA5, 2 CD set. 2004. The works using shape-note hymns on the CD include *Wondrous Love: Variations for Viola and Piano* (1999), and *Terra Firma for Flute, Violoncello and Piano* (2001).

³⁹⁵ Jesse Pearlman Karlsberg, e-mail correspondence, June 13th, 2005. For example, see notes on the work “Rapture/Rupture” (2005) <http://jpk.silversand.org/artwork/rapture-rupture.php> (accessed December 4, 2008).

4.2 FILM SCORE TO *COLD MOUNTAIN*: SHAPE NOTE HYMNS IN AN AMERICAN ROOTS MUSIC REVIVAL

4.2.1 Introduction

“[Sacred Harp singing] was the most extraordinary sound of the South. Once I heard it, I knew there was a movie to write and a movie to make.”³⁹⁶

—Director and screenwriter Anthony Minghella on the movie *Cold Mountain*

The film *Cold Mountain* (2003) directed by Anthony Minghella and released by Miramax Films is based on Charles Frazier’s novel *Cold Mountain* (1997). The book and film narrate the story of Confederate soldier-turned-deserter W. P. Inman and his quest to return across the Blue Ridge Mountains to his home and to Ada Monroe, the woman he briefly knew and loved. On his journey, he has many strange and generally horrifying adventures. In his book, Frazier weaves together a number of influences, including Homer’s *The Odyssey*, poetry by the ninth-century Buddhist monk Hanshan (“Cold Mountain”), his research on the culture of Appalachia and the history of the Civil War, and the markings on a few gravestones, including his ancestor, W. P. Inman.³⁹⁷

The soundtrack to the film is a hybrid of two approaches to music in film: it combines an orchestral score by Gabriel Yared with previously composed music: modern performances of music from the Civil War Era and music styled to sound as if it came from that era. Working together with musician T Bone Burnett, Minghella used performances by contemporary shape-

³⁹⁶ Climbing “*Cold Mountain*,” DVD recording, directed by Tim Bricknell and Laura Luchetti, *Cold Mountain: Two Disc Collector’s Edition* (New York City: Miramax, 2004).

³⁹⁷ Paul Ashdown, “‘Savage Satori’: Fact and Fiction in Charles Frazier’s *Cold Mountain*,” in *Memory and Myth: The Civil War in Fiction and Film from Uncle Tom’s Cabin to Cold Mountain*, ed. David B. Sachsman, S. Kittrell Rushing, and Roy Morris, Jr. (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2007), 207-209.

note singers at two key structural points in the film. “Idumea” poignantly sounds over the opening battle scene of the film, and later in the movie “I’m Going Home” is sung at a church, abruptly interrupted by the announcement of the beginning of the war.

Before launching into a discussion of the film, an important question needs to be asked—*who* is the composer of this film soundtrack? In contrast to other works studied in this dissertation, the soundtrack of *Cold Mountain* directly incorporates the sound of *Sacred Harp* singing unchanged in one scene (“I’m Going Home”), and layered against battle sounds in the other (“Idumea”). If the hymns are left intact and substantially unchanged, why analyze them in a dissertation surveying “compositions” or “composers”? Where does this soundtrack fit into the story?

I would argue that through the process of putting these hymns in the context of a larger soundtrack and the process of pairing these hymns with narrative and visual imagery, the compiler of the score (T Bone Burnett), the director (Anthony Minghella) and the film editor (Walter Murch) all function on some level as composers.³⁹⁸ In other words, the soundtrack functions as a collaborative composition. Furthermore, it draws on the digital-age practice of sampling, by incorporating a previously recorded sound into a new arrangement or composition. Even though the musical materials in themselves are not altered, the placement of these hymns in a new narrative, visual, and cultural context is a transformative process parallel to that of composing an original musical work.

To explain the hymns’ multivalent meanings within the *Cold Mountain* soundtrack, the following analysis will take place in four sections. The first will address the hymns’ musical

³⁹⁸ In a sense, Gabriel Yared also would be one of the composers in the use of these hymns. However, it is clear in the documentary *Climbing “Cold Mountain”* (included on *Cold Mountain: Two Disc Collector’s Edition*, DVD) that he intensely disliked the sound of these hymns when they were presented to him. It was the collaboration of the others in this group that led to the incorporation of the hymns in the score.

context. Within the soundtrack, the hymns are placed in the context of contemporary performances and interpretations of Civil-War era music. In the broader context of recent film music, we see that the hymns are present in a current American roots music revival, particularly exemplified in the film *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* (2000). Discussion of this revival, as well as the use of shape-note hymns in recent soundtracks will give insight into the use of shape-note hymns in *Cold Mountain*.

The second section explores how *Cold Mountain* works as a filmic portrayal of history. A discussion of Robert Rosenstone's theories on how film works as historical narrative will provide a framework for understanding the particular ways that *Cold Mountain* constructs the Civil War. Rather than the idealistic view of the South reflected in Virgil Thomson's work, as well as in portrayals in the 1970s, the book and film *Cold Mountain* address the stark realities of the Civil War and present, at best, an ambivalent view of the Old South.

The third section will bring together music and film in a discussion of how music shapes historical narrative. Two case studies taken from *Apocalypse Now* (1979) and *Platoon* (1986) will illustrate how music has been used in the recent past to shape the narration of history in film, in these cases, the Vietnam War. This will set up the analysis of the two hymns in *Cold Mountain*. At the level of the film's structure and narrative, the hymns affect the pacing, drama, and the audience reception of the events, and provide a textual commentary. Particularly, they reinforce the anti-war narrative that Minghella consciously wrote into the film.

A final section will explore threads of influence that *Cold Mountain* already has had on the reception of *Sacred Harp* and other streams of shape-note music. This film and the other film featuring shape-note hymns discussed in the chapter have brought widespread attention to

the *Sacred Harp* tradition, enticing new singers into the practice, and paving the way for a recent documentary on the tradition.

4.2.2 The soundtrack of *Cold Mountain* in context

The *Cold Mountain* soundtrack surrounds the shape-note hymns with modern performances of Civil War music, or in the case of Sting's song, "You Will Be My Ain' True Love," newly composed music modeled after the songs of the Civil War period. Charles Koppelman summarizes the kinds of music used in *Cold Mountain*, as well as the process of their incorporation into the film:

There are two categories of music for *Cold Mountain*: original "score" composed solely for the film by Gabriel Yared and recorded at Abbey Road Studios in London, and "source music" from the Civil War era chosen by music producer T. Bone Burnett and recorded at his direction in Nashville with musicians such as Ralph Stanley, Alison Krauss, Stuart Duncan, Dirk Powell, and The Sacred Harp Singers. Yared and Burnett work independently of each other, but under Minghella's direction. Yared first provided musical sketches early on during productions, as did Burnett. Once Murch had a first assembly and scenes became more defined, the music was elaborated.³⁹⁹

Performers of these songs, such as Ralph Stanley and Alison Kraus, are tied in many ways to the revival of American roots music. To analyze the hymns' presence in this film, it is useful first of all to come to an understanding of what is meant by American "roots" music. This is best done through a discussion of the seminal film *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* (2000).⁴⁰⁰ Though *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* does not contain shape-note hymns, it brought an enormous amount of attention to the roots revival, and signaled its commercial viability. Another path to

³⁹⁹ Charles Koppelman, with a foreword by Anthony Minghella, *Behind the Seen: How Walter Murch Edited Cold Mountain Using Apple's Final Cut Pro and What This Means for Cinema* (Berkeley, CA: New Riders, 2005), 298.

⁴⁰⁰ *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*, DVD, directed by Joel and Ethan Coen (Burbank, CA: Touchtone Pictures, 2000).

understanding the use of shape-note hymns in *Cold Mountain* is to survey films of the past twenty years also using shape-note hymns in their soundtrack, beginning with *Amazing Grace with Bill Moyers* (1990)⁴⁰¹ and continuing through *The Ladykillers* (2004).⁴⁰²

4.2.2.1 *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* and the American “roots” music revival

The soundtrack to *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*, a film directed by Joel and Ethan Coen, consists of recordings of American music—from Lomax field sessions to modern performances—compiled by T Bone Burnett. Bradley Hanson’s master’s thesis entitled “T Bone Burnett, Roots Music, and the *O Brother* Phenomenon” discusses the astonishing public response to the soundtrack. The soundtrack outpaced video and DVD sales, becoming a phenomenon in its own right, winning along the way, the Grammy award for the “Soundtrack of the Year” (2001).⁴⁰³

The soundtrack incorporates music from many American traditions: the blues, gospel music, bluegrass, work songs, humor songs, and music derived from Anglo-American folk balladry. This diversity recalls the variety of American musics reworked in Copland’s arrangements of *Old American Songs*. Some of the songs are new performances created for the film, and others were taken from older recordings, including Alan Lomax’s field recordings. What kind of category could encompass such a broad cross-section of American musics?

Hanson argues for the use of the term “American roots music” or just simply “roots music.” He discusses the history of the term from its roots in journalistic writing, its propagation

⁴⁰¹ *Amazing Grace with Bill Moyers*, VHS (Beverly Hills: PBS Home Video, 1990).

⁴⁰² *The Ladykillers*, DVD, directed by Joel and Ethan Coen (Burbank, CA: Touchtone Pictures, 2004). The most recent film to use shape-note hymns, the recent documentary on the Sacred Harp tradition, *Awake, My Soul: The Story of the Sacred Harp* (2006) will be discussed in the conclusion to this chapter.

⁴⁰³ Bradley Hanson, “T Bone Burnett, Roots Music, and the “O Brother” Phenomenon” (MM thesis, University of Missouri-Kansas City, 2005), ii.

through its use as a commercial category, and eventually, its use in scholarship.⁴⁰⁴ Hanson acknowledges that like its antecedent term “folk music,” the term “American roots music” is problematic and cannot be completely defined or boundaried, even though it is commonly used in marketing and academia. He writes of the term “roots music,”

Though it absorbed much of the same American musical history and mythology coveted and promulgated during the mid-century pop culture “folk” movement, the new “roots” classification, launched in the politically correct, globalized, information age of the 1990s, was inherently “bulked up” when compared to its commercial ancestors.⁴⁰⁵

This term, therefore, encompasses commercialized and popularized materials and newly written compositions influenced by traditional musics, thereby including more genres of music than often implied in the term “folk music.” By using the term “American roots music,” Hanson also implies a distinction between the more recent revival of American musics, and the “folk revivals” of earlier decades. The term encompasses the continuing performances of “folk” music preserved from earlier periods as well as newly composed musics within the style of folk traditions, such as blues, bluegrass, old-time string band music, and other American traditions.

Hanson presents a complex musicocultural picture to explain the viability and survival of the performance tradition of roots music. The picture includes dedicated if small fan bases for the various traditions, a return to bluegrass roots by numerous “mainstream” country musicians (including Alison Krauss), and support through organizations such as The Blues Foundation in Memphis.⁴⁰⁶

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid., viii-ix. Hanson notes, for example, Benjamin Filene’s use of this term as part of a book title, *Romancing the Folk: Public Memory & American Roots Music* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000). (ix)

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid., viii.

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid., 51-52.

How did this American roots music become adopted into a major motion picture? T Bone Burnett was in a large part responsible for this move. His influence is especially significant here as he was also responsible for compiling the scores to *Cold Mountain* and *The Ladykillers*, both containing shape-note hymns as part of their soundscapes. Throughout his career, T Bone Burnett (b. 1948) has juggled multiple musical roles—singer and songwriter, music producer, and in recent years, working as a collaborator or compiler on film scores. His earliest film collaboration was with the Coen brothers on the film *The Big Lebowski* (1998).⁴⁰⁷ Through Burnett’s work, the soundtrack incorporated a diversity of musical styles. Hanson writes, “With Burnett as ‘musical archivist,’ the unusual soundtrack featured an eclectic mix of tracks compiled from popular, opera, jazz, country, and world music recordings.”⁴⁰⁸

Like *Cold Mountain*, the film *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* narrates an American odyssey. Here, the hero Ulysses Everett McGill (George Clooney) is joined by two friends as he takes a journey through the Depression-era South encountering strange equivalents to Odysseus’s journey along the way, including an oracle, Cyclops, and a trio of Sirens. In many ways, the film is *about* music, especially its preservation and marketing, as the trio joins together to record a song under the name of “The Soggy Bottom Boys.” The use of vintage recordings and field recordings in the soundtrack points back to the 1920s-1930s as a golden era in the recording of “hill-billy music” and “race records.”

Though the narrative is surreal at times, the music is used to reinforce a realistic sense of the geocultural landscape traversed, especially in its portrayal of the rural American South. For example, the film opens with a chain gang working on a railroad accompanied by a field recording of a work song, “Po Lazarus,” sung by James Carter and the Prisoners, recorded at the

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid., 48.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid., 48.

Mississippi State Penitentiary by Alan Lomax.⁴⁰⁹ The field recording incorporates the sound of prisoners chopping logs, which is interpreted by the film viewer as the sounds made by the workers in the film. Another important music and narrative pairing, one that resonates with the referents frequently seen in this dissertation, is seen in the baptism at the river, accompanied by a traditional gospel hymn, “Down to the River to Pray,” sung by Alison Krauss. Geography, music, and religion all come together in the representation of the South.

Although *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* does not include shape-note hymns in its soundtrack, it establishes a precedent for the use of American roots music in a film soundtrack, a precedent that has brought attention to a wide variety of American musics, and has influenced numerous movies following it. The next section will survey film scores that use shape-note hymns in their soundtracks to contextualize the soundtrack to *Cold Mountain*, and to demonstrate the public attention shown to shape-note hymnody in recent years.

4.2.2.2 Shape-note hymns in other films

The first major film production in the last twenty years to include shape-note hymns was the television special *Amazing Grace with Bill Moyers*. In this documentary, Moyers uses a “thick history” approach, creating a kaleidoscopic view of the meaning of “Amazing Grace.” The film features interviews discussing the history of “Amazing Grace,” various (and frequently personal) interpretations of its meaning, excerpts from modern performances of the hymn in many styles and contexts, including Jessye Norman performing it at a celebration of Nelson Mandela’s release from prison, excerpts from a 1970s era concert by Judy Collins, a deep South family

⁴⁰⁹ See Oliver Trager, *Keys to the Rain: The Definitive Bob Dylan Encyclopedia* (New York: Billboard Books, 2004), 494. Also see “James Carter and the Prisoners” at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Carter_and_The_Prisoners (accessed November 7, 2008).

reunion, and two shape-note renditions of it. Bill Moyers introduces the shape-note singings by discussing the “primal” quality of their sound. The first is a *Sacred Harp* singing that takes place in Holly Springs, Georgia, and is led by Hugh McGraw, a revered singing school teacher, and the chairman of the board of editors creating the 1991 edition of *The Sacred Harp*. The second is a Black *Sacred Harp* singing by the Wiregrass Singers, in Ozark, Alabama. The placement of these two singings back-to-back highlights some of the contrasts between the singings; the first singing has a more “hollow” sound, while the second singing features florid vocal ornamentations as part of its singing style.⁴¹⁰

Alan Lomax’s film *American Patchwork: Dreams and Songs of the Noble Old* (1990) sets shape-note hymn traditions within the diversity of many kinds of American music, as emphasized by the series title.⁴¹¹ This particular episode highlights the contributions of the elderly to the preservation and transmission of American musics. It features footage of the Alabama Sacred Harp Convention in Fyffe, Alabama. As in *Amazing Grace*, Hugh McGraw is seen leading a *Sacred Harp* singing, and here, a singing school as well. Just as Alice Parker teaches the tradition through her inclusion of a singing school, Lomax teaches the audience through the inclusion of excerpts from a singing-school lesson, by showing the shapes and the solfège syllables in the lesson, and subsequently, the traditional opening of hymns by singing the tune on the syllables.

Moving away from the documentary approach, we have films that use shape-note hymns as part of their soundtrack. *The Gangs of New York* (2002) creates a soundscape for Civil War

⁴¹⁰ Disappointingly, to this point in my research, I have found no reference to new compositions overtly referencing black traditions of Sacred Harp. In fact, to this date I have only found one composition quoting shape-note hymns by an African-American composer, Adolphus Hailstork’s *Bellevue: Prelude for Orchestra* (1974).

⁴¹¹ *American Patchwork: Dreams and Songs of the Noble Old* (Association for Cultural Equity, 1991) <http://www.media-generation.net/Films/LOMAX/Patchwork/Patchwork.htm> (accessed November 7, 2008).

era New York City. In it, the producers sought to create an authentic sound for the city, using music recordings for the most part as “source music.” Similar to the mix of musics in *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* before it, *The Gangs of New York* uses fragments of archival recordings, new music (by performers such as U2 and Peter Gabriel), and modern performances of traditional Irish and American music (by performers such as The Chieftains) to create a complex aural space in the movie. The shape-note hymns used are credited as “Hallelujah/Amazing Grace” performed at the Alabama Sacred Harp Convention, recorded by Alan Lomax and George Pullen Jackson.⁴¹² Although the archival recordings obviously are not from the period depicted on the film, the apparent age of the recordings simulates a sense of historical accuracy. A production assistant consulted with Deane Root and the Center for American Music as they researched musical styles and archival recordings that could be used as part of the soundtrack.⁴¹³

The shape-note hymns in particular are used to highlight the role of a revival preacher in the midst of a chaotic culture characterized by extreme violence and anarchy. In the context of the film, the first shape-note hymn is a “mission dance” put on by the local protestant church, where rival gang members threaten each other. *Gangs of New York* parallels *Cold Mountain* in its use of shape-note hymns to create a sense of the Civil War era, and like *Cold Mountain*, the hymns are placed in the context of a film specializing in violent realism.

Unlike *Cold Mountain*, however, *Gangs of New York* does not use shape-note hymns to highlight Southern identity. In fact, shape-note hymns probably would not have been used

⁴¹² <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0217505/soundtrack> Recorded by Alan Lomax and George Pullen Jackson, *Sacred Harp Singing*, recorded at the 37th annual session of the Alabama Sacred Harp Singing Convention at Birmingham, AL, August 1942, Library of Congress Archive of Folk Culture, Rounder CD 1503, 1998.

⁴¹³ Deane Root, “Your question about Gangs of New York,” e-mail message to author, November 12, 2007. Root also notes that he guided them to Thomas Riis, director of the American Music Research Center at the University of Colorado for further sources of sacred music. (Comment to author, March 30, 2009)

within an urban, New York City church.⁴¹⁴ But the filmmakers were looking for an intense sound that would underscore the intensity of the scene, with the undercurrent of violence even within this sacred context. Root again writes that the production assistant who consulted with him said “they wanted a raw vocal power, or something to that effect, and I probably offered several kinds of vocal music and recordings that might provide that.” He continues, “I...told them about music that would have been used at religious camp-meetings or urban spiritual revivals in New York during different decades of the century, so they had more ‘authentic’ options to choose from than southern shape-note singing.” Ultimately, rather than precise authenticity in their musical choices, the filmmakers were looking for music to support the storytelling they were creating in the film. Root concludes, “Their concern in choosing music was not historical accuracy, but aural enhancement of their storytelling. This was not, after all, to be a documentary film or an accurate portrait of gang life, but a twenty-first-century film based on historical elements.”⁴¹⁵

The Ladykillers (2004) followed on the heels of *Cold Mountain*. In this twistedly dark comedy, directed by the Coen brothers and with a soundtrack compiled by T Bone Burnett, the drama of the film takes place in the Bayou area of Louisiana in modern times. Rather than invoking the many genres associated with roots music, as in *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*, the soundtrack revolves around gospel music and gospel-associated or influenced musics, sometimes juxtaposed against the sound of hip-hop musics.⁴¹⁶ Burnett, in particular, wanted to explore the dimensions of gospel music in a way that he had not before. He states,

⁴¹⁴ Ibid.

⁴¹⁵ Ibid.

⁴¹⁶ This juxtaposition is interesting as T Bone Burnett is treating gospel music as “pre” rock ‘n’ roll, and in many ways, hip-hop music can be viewed as “post” rock ‘n’ roll.

I've heard all my life that rock and roll was born from gospel music, but it wasn't until I went back and listened to the whole canon of gospel from the last century that I realized it actually was....Listening back, you can hear, in one form or another, almost every rock and roll song ever sung. So we've gone back and rediscovered for ourselves some of the great gospel music that people have left behind—The Soul Stirrers, Bill Landford and the Landfordaires, Blind Willie Johnson, Claude Jeter and The Swan Silvertones.⁴¹⁷

The single shape-note hymn used in this soundtrack is “Weeping Mary.” The soundtrack cites the group as the “Rosewell Sacred Harp Quartet,” but the actual source appears to be the Roswell Sacred Harp Quartet, from a 1940 recording released by Bluebird Records.⁴¹⁸ It features a vocal quartet, rather than a full choir: singers with powerful voices and strong Southern accents, making use of the flattened notes often used in shape-note singing that sometimes sound off-key to those outside of the tradition. The hymn is used non-diegetically in a scene that shows a would-be assassin creep up the stairs in the dead of night to strangle an elderly African-American woman. The hymn seems to be used both for its unearthly, eerie sound quality, and symbolically as a musical talisman protecting the elderly woman. The assassination is thwarted through divine intervention involving a Jesus figurine jumping out of a cuckoo clock, and dentures snapping at the assassin. This has to be the strangest pairing of shape-note hymn and narrative in film to date. The placement of a shape-note hymn within a score primarily made up of gospel hymns is interesting in that it reinforces a specific place (the South), and it also shows the shape-note hymns as existing in a wider context of American religious musics.

This survey has addressed shape-note hymns incorporated into a documentary approach, and into soundtracks of Hollywood films. Both approaches are helpful in identifying the context and interpretation of shape-note hymns as used in the soundtrack to *Cold Mountain*. The use of

⁴¹⁷ “Touchtone Pictures’ ‘The Ladykillers’ Production Information,” <http://media.movieweb.com/galleries/820/notes.pdf> (accessed November 6, 2008).

⁴¹⁸ Roswell Sacred Harp Quartet, “Weeping Mary,” Bluebird Records, B-8582-A, 78 rpm. Mono. 1940.

shape-note hymns in *Cold Mountain*'s score draws upon several layers of meaning seen in these other films: place (the South), time (the Civil War), and the religious overtones of the hymns.

Unlike *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*, *Gangs of New York*, and *The Ladykillers*, *Cold Mountain* does not use vintage recordings or field recordings, but instead uses new performances specifically made for the film. In some ways, in these previous films, the use of vintage and field recordings acts as a marker of authenticity—inscribing the soundtrack *and* the narrative of the film with a level of realism. In *Cold Mountain*, the incorporation of Civil War-era songs and the singing of a Sacred Harp hymn as part of a church service fulfill that authenticating role. The growing awareness of the Sacred Harp tradition both through internal growth (as discussed in the William Duckworth section) and through these films allows viewers who have had contact with the present-day practices of Sacred Harp to “read” the performance of “I’m Going Home” in the church service as genuine.

4.2.3 *Cold Mountain*: the film in context

In order to understand how shape-note hymns contribute to the filmic portrayal of the Civil War in *Cold Mountain*, it is important to understand the ways in which film narrates history. The historian Robert A. Rosenstone grapples with film as a medium of history in his book *Visions of the Past: The Challenge of Film to Our Idea of History*⁴¹⁹ and his more recent iteration of his theories in his book *History on Film, Film on History*.⁴²⁰ He argues that filmic portrayals of history, like written narratives of history, have their own inherent limitations. Because writing

⁴¹⁹ Robert A. Rosenstone, *Visions of the Past: The Challenge of Film to Our Idea of History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995).

⁴²⁰ Robert A. Rosenstone, *History on Film, Film on History* (Harlow, England: Longman/Pearson, 2006).

has been a primary mode of transmitting history, it is easy to forget its limitations. At the same time, it is easy to overemphasize the limitations of film because it is a relatively new form of narrating history. He writes,

Almost a century after the birth of the motion picture, film presents historians with a challenge still unseized, a challenge to begin to think of how to utilize the medium to its full capabilities for carrying information, juxtaposing images and words, providing startling and contrastive mixtures of sight and sound, and (perhaps) creating analytic structures that include visual elements. Because its own conventions are so strong and, to the historian, so initially startling, the visual media also serve to highlight the conventions and limitations of written history. Film thus points towards new possibilities that could allow narrative history to recapture the power it once had when it was more deeply rooted in the literary imagination.⁴²¹

Some of the strengths inherent in the genre of filmic history are that it personalizes history for the viewer, it allows for an experience of history in time, and it creates a multi-faceted view of the past, rather than abstracting a historic moment into many elements, as happens in written history.⁴²² Most importantly, it has the ability to “recover the past’s liveliness.”⁴²³ Yet filmic history has its limitations. It can create (especially in its documentary form) a “prepackaged emotion” of nostalgia (Rosenstone notes, for example, that the photographs and the clothing that look old-fashioned to us now were not old-fashioned in their own time).⁴²⁴ It also tends to simplify history, downplaying an analytic approach to history and often only presenting one viewpoint at a time. Further, it usually (especially in its traditional/Hollywood form) fits history into a teleological narrative: things are getting better, will get better, or have gotten better since the time presented.⁴²⁵

⁴²¹ Rosenstone, *Visions of the Past*, 41-42.

⁴²² See especially, Rosenstone, *Visions of the Past*, 41-42.

⁴²³ *Ibid.*, 26.

⁴²⁴ *Ibid.*, 52.

⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*, 56-59.

To explore the ways in which *Cold Mountain* presents history, the following section will survey the themes brought out in Civil War films throughout the twentieth century. This survey will set up a more in-depth discussion of the particular themes brought out in *Cold Mountain*.

4.2.3.1 “Causes” in the representation of the Civil War

In his book, *Causes Won, Lost and Forgotten: How Hollywood & Popular Art Shape What We Know about The Civil War*, Gary W. Gallagher sets up an insightful paradigm for understanding filmic portrayals of the Civil War, using it to analyze films depicting the Civil War throughout the twentieth century.⁴²⁶ In his paradigm, there are four overarching “Causes” represented in the portrayal of the Civil War: The Lost Cause, The Union Cause, The Emancipation Cause and the Reconciliation Cause.⁴²⁷ Though there can be some overlap of the causes in an individual film, each cause carries with it a set of distinctive emphases and themes.

The “Lost Cause” portrays the war from a Southern viewpoint, and began in its earliest forms as soon as the war ended. Gallagher writes, “Ex-Confederates sought to take something positive away from their catastrophic experiment in nation-building.”⁴²⁸ The “Lost Cause” incorporates a number of themes, including a portrayal of the Union as a massive and mechanist force invading the South, an emphasis on state’s rights and using rhetoric to convey the idea of a Confederate nation and to rename the Civil War as “The War Between the States.”⁴²⁹ In this viewpoint, slavery is portrayed as “incidental” to the war, and a veil of nostalgia blurs the horrors of slavery (the “loyalty” and “happiness” of slaves are invoked).⁴³⁰ The earliest attempts to

⁴²⁶ Gary W. Gallagher, *Causes Won, Lost and Forgotten: How Hollywood & Popular Art Shape What We Know about The Civil War* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2008).

⁴²⁷ Ibid., 4.

⁴²⁸ Ibid., 17.

⁴²⁹ Ibid., 18-20.

⁴³⁰ Ibid., 20-21.

portray the war in film were significantly influenced by the so-called “Lost Cause” narrative. The two most famous films in the early years were D. W. Griffith’s infamous *The Birth of a Nation* (1915), and the film depiction of Margaret Mitchell’s *Gone with the Wind* (1938). For the most part, citing the film *Gods and Generals* (2003) as a notable exception, the Lost Cause lost credence in filmic depictions of the Civil War from the 1970s onward. Gallagher ties this to a post-Civil rights worldview that has grown more uncomfortable with other public displays of Lost Cause sentiments (such as recent controversies over displays of the Confederate flag).⁴³¹

Gallagher coins the term “Union Cause” to address the equivalent to the Lost Cause as seen from the Union perspective. In this perspective, the Civil War is seen as a “War against the Rebellion.” This perspective was one of the most emphasized perspectives during the Civil War itself. Gallagher writes, “Conceptions of Union, the place of emancipation, the patriotic obligations of citizens, and the meaning of liberty and freedom all came into play on the northern side.”⁴³² However, this viewpoint has been significantly lacking within the portrayal of the Civil War in popular art and film. Gallagher credits this to the loss of a sense of national identity as a powerful force in the twentieth century,⁴³³ a theme discussed throughout Chapter Three of this study. He sees the loss of a sense of national identity as one reason that the Lost Cause has received a great deal of positive portrayal in the media. Rather than an emphasis on a Southern nation, the emphasis on twentieth-century portrayals of the Lost Cause is on “localism, state rights, personal valor and loyalty to family and friends.”⁴³⁴ Again, as seen in Chapter Three, especially following the conflicts in the 1960s-70s, family, ethnic and regional identities have provided a more secure locus of identity than the now murky waters of national identity. In

⁴³¹ Ibid., 11.

⁴³² Ibid., 14.

⁴³³ Ibid., 14

⁴³⁴ Ibid., 14.

some ways—despite the more seamy side of Lost Cause ideologies—these more particularized locations of identity resonate more with the Southern than the Northern cause, echoing the emphasis on local (state’s rights) that partially fueled the Civil War.

The Emancipation Cause, represented during the Civil War period by voices such as Frederick Douglass and Harriet Beecher Stowe, has frequently been featured in Hollywood depictions of the Civil War. Gallagher writes, “Its adherents almost always paid homage to the Union, but they considered the emancipation of more than 4 million slaves to be the conflict’s most important outcome.”⁴³⁵ Gallagher notes that this perspective has “become increasingly popular as an interpretive theme” in film, participating as a strong theme starting with the film *Shenandoah* (1965)—interesting in its release during the era of many civil rights struggles—and in recent years, most prominently in the film *Glory* (1989).

The final viewpoint presented by Gallagher is the Reconciliation Cause. This cause is aptly summed up on an advertisement for the film *Gettysburg* (1993) reprinted by Gallagher in his book: “Same Land. Same God. Different Dreams.”⁴³⁶ Films portraying this cause frequently feature friendships across the lines, emphasizing the commonalities between white Americans on both sides, and tending to downplay (either overtly or through the lack of representation) the viewpoint of African-Americans involved in the war. This cause is represented by films such as *The Red Badge of Courage* (1951), *Gettysburg* (1993), and *Gods and Generals* (2003).⁴³⁷

⁴³⁵ Ibid., 29.

⁴³⁶ Ibid., 3.

⁴³⁷ Ibid., 108-110.

4.2.3.2 *Cold Mountain*: the anti-war narrative

In *Cold Mountain*, slavery and the African-American experience of the war are not central themes, in either the film or the novel. Some see this absence of representation as reinforcing the “Lost Cause” narrative.⁴³⁸ However, Minghella’s intentionally brutal portrayal of war belies that notion. When asked about the lessons of the Civil War, Minghella responded, “The only lesson to extract from any civil war is that it’s pointless and futile and ugly, and that there is nothing glamorous or heroic about it. There are heroes, but the causes are never heroic. And I think that’s a real distinction to make.”⁴³⁹ This viewpoint is certainly different than the glamorized viewpoints frequently presented in the Lost Cause narrative, or the Union Cause narrative. In fact, the portrayal of the Southern soldiers in the film is deliberately unglamorous. We see dystopian battle scenes, rather than any kind of glorious, idealized view of war. Especially on the Confederate side, we see the wear and tear of war on their garments, and in their unkempt personal appearance. In the opening scene, one soldier comments that just like the tattered book that the character Inman carries, they too have been tattered by too much war.

As in the Reconciliation Cause, African-Americans play only a small role in the book and film, but unlike many representations of the Reconciliation Cause, neither side is portrayed as noble. Continuing with his thoughts on the Civil War, particularly on his representation of the Southern Appalachian viewpoint, Minghella states,

I wouldn’t for a second want to say that there weren’t brave and wonderful people fighting for causes they believed in, but I just don’t think that men from the mountains of North Carolina thought they were going to defend the right to hold slaves, because almost none of them had slaves. They were hoodwinked into

⁴³⁸ See Robert M. Myers, “‘It’s What People Say We’re Fighting For’: Representing the Lost Cause in *Cold Mountain*,” in *Why We Fought: America’s Wars in Film and History*, ed. Peter C. Rollins and John E. O’Connor (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2008), 121-133.

⁴³⁹ Ingrid Sischy, “Cold Mountain,” in *Interview* (December, 2003) http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1285/is_11_33/ai_111114552 (accessed November 7, 2008).

going to war on the basis that it was going to be recreational, that it was only going to take a few weeks, and that it would present opportunities to see other parts of the country, but also because they were told in no uncertain terms that their way of life was being threatened by an industrial force, and that somebody would come and steal their farms if they didn't respond. I think history has rewritten what the Civil War was about. Slavery was certainly at the heart of the conflict, but beyond that it was essentially a war between two types of economies.⁴⁴⁰

An interpretation that reinforces Minghella's discussion is presented by John C. Inscoe in his book, *Race, War, and Remembrance in the Appalachian South*.⁴⁴¹ Here, Inscoe argues that the book and film present the war from an Appalachian viewpoint, particularly the viewpoint of the very poor characters in the book and film whom an unnamed colleague of his satirizes as "trailer park trash before there were trailer parks."⁴⁴² He writes,

Minghella's film is unusually faithful to the book in recreating Inman's encounters with beleaguered widows, bushwhackers, Union renegades, fellow deserters, and the seemingly omnipresent Home Guard, who collectively suggest the disorder, desperation, and corruption that characterized southerners' struggle to survive in an increasingly lawless and dysfunctional society. One of the film's great strengths is that these struggles are presented in such graphic, unflinching form, more often than not with violent resolutions that genuinely shock. Rarely has the collective plight of a people at war been conveyed to movie audiences as effectively as in this series of disturbing and emotionally charged episodes.⁴⁴³

From this viewpoint, there is no noble Confederacy, as would be featured in a Lost Cause interpretation. In fact, as Gallagher notes, "Few appealing characters in *Cold Mountain* exhibit any pro-Confederate sentiments."⁴⁴⁴ In his interpretation, "*Cold Mountain* can best be understood as a feminist antiwar film that turns almost every Lost Cause convention on its head.

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁴¹ John C. Inscoe, *Race, War, and Remembrance in the Appalachian South* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2008).

⁴⁴² Ibid., 319.

⁴⁴³ Ibid., 312.

⁴⁴⁴ Gallagher, *Causes Won, Lost and Forgotten*, 82.

In the process, it distorts history....Virtually all white southern women in the film are either indifferent or deeply opposed to war.”⁴⁴⁵

Minghella intended this to be an anti-war film. He states that the “film investigates the virus of violence” which “silences arguments for awhile” but can never be a permanent solution. He continues that the war was *eventually* fought for a just cause, but it was a “just cause that didn’t need that kind of solution.”⁴⁴⁶ The extreme violence in the film is portrayed realistically and relentlessly. This realism in portrayal of violence is part of a broader trend than what is found in the portrayal of the Civil War. Films from the end of the Vietnam War through the present have presented the realities of war with an increasing focus on the brutality of war. *Apocalypse Now* (1979) and *Platoon* (1986) were two of the earliest commercially successful post-Vietnam War films to use realistic portrayal of violence as a critique of war. More recently, films such as *Schindler’s List* (1993) and *Saving Private Ryan* (1998) though not anti-war, present the extreme hardships of war in the kind of light that depicts war as a tool to be used only in the direst need.

One way in which Minghella drives his point home is through presenting the horrors of war through the lens of personal experience, a kind of narrative that the media of film lends itself to readily. Minghella strives for historical accuracy in his depictions, but even in the midst of the apocalyptic battle scene, the viewer experiences it through Inman’s eyes. This pulls the viewers into the brutal portrayals of violence, not allowing them to flinch away from the realities of war, but on the contrary, heightening their experience of the narrative through their identification with

⁴⁴⁵ Ibid. Gallagher interprets the film as inverting male-female stereotypes, through centering the film (in contrast, somewhat, to the novel) on the power, influence, and wisdom of women within the narrative. In some ways, the friendship of Ada and Ruby is portrayed as the central relationship in the movie, a friendship as fully developed, if not more so, than the romantic relationship between Ada and Inman.

⁴⁴⁶ *The Words and Music of “Cold Mountain”: Royce Hall Special Concert*, DVD, recorded at the University of California, Los Angeles, December 8, 2003. *Cold Mountain: Two Disc Collector’s Edition* (New York City: Miramax, 2004).

the main characters. Westwell, in discussing the monumental portrayal of the Normandy landings in *Saving Private Ryan*—which parallels the Battle of the Crater scene from *Cold Mountain* in many ways—refers to it as creating an “immersive sense of war.”⁴⁴⁷ This kind of portrayal, he continues, “encourages the viewer to have an intimate, lived sense of the event.”⁴⁴⁸ In Minghella’s own words, he was first attracted to this story not because of its Civil War setting, but because it worked on two levels, “the epic and the personal,”⁴⁴⁹ exploring “public issues against an intimate personal landscape.”⁴⁵⁰ As will be seen in the next section, the use of shape-note hymns at critical junctures in the film reinforces the experience of war at both individual and corporate levels.

4.2.4 Shape-note hymns in the narrative of *Cold Mountain*

Using the kaleidoscopic context presented so far in this chapter, touching separately on music and film, this section will analyze how the two shape-note hymns reinforce and shape the overarching themes and historical narrative of *Cold Mountain*. The readings I have found on the ways in which film narrates history omit a discussion of the manner in which music shapes historical narrative almost entirely, barring a rare sentence or two. Over twenty years after Claudia Gorbman’s groundbreaking book *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music*,⁴⁵¹ music still appears to be “unheard” by many film scholars and historians. Particularly lacking is the way in which previously existing music in soundtracks shapes and interprets time and place in

⁴⁴⁷ Guy Westwell, *War Cinema: Hollywood on the Front Line* (London: Wallflower Press, 2006), 92.

⁴⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 93.

⁴⁴⁹ *The Words and Music of “Cold Mountain.”*

⁴⁵⁰ *Climbing “Cold Mountain.”*

⁴⁵¹ Claudia Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987).

films. A few recent collections of musicological essays such as *Popular Music and Film*⁴⁵² and *Changing Tunes: The Use of Pre-existing Music in Film*⁴⁵³ are making headway in the discussion of previously composed music in film scores, but there is still much to be done in bringing the discussion of music, history and film studies together. To that end, I have included two brief case studies to further illustrate the use of music in the construction of war in film, as ways to contextualize the use of *Sacred Harp* hymns in *Cold Mountain*.

4.2.4.1 The “compositional” process of including shape-note hymns

How did shape-note hymns end up in this score featuring American roots music? It started with the immersion process that Anthony Minghella employed in preparing to write his script. He found over 300 books to research on the Civil War, and listened to over a thousand songs related to the time and place of the film. Through this intensive listening, the music became part of the film in an organic process. He said, “Before I could write, I listened to enormous amounts of music, and I started to fall in love with this indigenous music of the South. Gorgeous music.”⁴⁵⁴ Particularly, he fell in love with the sound of shape-note singing. He continues, “And one of the things that really, really first attracted me was I first heard this music, Sacred Harp music, shape-note singing and it’s the most extraordinary sound of the South, I think. And once I heard it, I knew there was a movie to write and a movie to make.” This process, and suggestions from his producers, also brought about the inclusion of T Bone Burnett into the creation of the film.

The process of including these hymns in the score continued with the work of Tim Erikson, lead singer of the band Cordelia’s Dad, a group that combines folk and punk-rock

⁴⁵² Ian Inglis, ed., *Popular Music and Film* (London: Wallflower Press, 2003).

⁴⁵³ Phil Powrie and Robynn Stilwell, eds., *Changing Tunes: The Use of Pre-existing Music in Film* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2006).

⁴⁵⁴ *The Words and Music of “Cold Mountain.”*

influences. He came to the production as the singing voice of Stobrod, and he saw that *Sacred Harp* singing was called for in the script. At that point, he started pushing for the inclusion of real *Sacred Harp* singers, since there was so much more to the sound than that which was written on the page.⁴⁵⁵ Not only were actual *Sacred Harp* singers used for the soundtrack, but through the encouragement of a lifelong singer, David Ivey, the sound recording was done in the singers' own space, taking place at Liberty Baptist Church in Henegar, Alabama, rather than in a Hollywood sound studio.⁴⁵⁶

4.2.4.2 The soundtrack as interpreter of history: two brief case studies

When the collaborators (Anthony Minghella, T Bone Burnett, Tim Erikson, Walter Murch, and the others involved in the decision process) decided to use “Idumea” for the battle scene, they drew upon moments in film history in which previously composed music has been used in the depiction of war to underscore and interpret moments of battle. One of the most well-known examples occurs in the film *Apocalypse Now* (1979) in which “The Ride of the Valkyries,” excerpted from Richard Wagner’s opera *Die Walküre*, accompanies the flight of helicopters as Americans prepare to destroy North Vietnamese troops and take over a beach in Vietnam. Here, the music provides kinetic energy through its fast tempo, and a sense of tension through its minor key. It also creates a sense of cognitive dissonance through its familiarity from its previous use

⁴⁵⁵ *Sacred Harp History*, DVD, *Cold Mountain: Two Disc Collector’s Edition* (New York City: Miramax, 2004).

⁴⁵⁶ Laura Clawson, “Going Hollywood: Participation, Performance, and the Commercialization of Sacred Harp Music,” paper presented at the annual meeting of the *American Sociological Association*, Hilton San Francisco & Renaissance Parc 55 Hotel, San Francisco, CA, August 14, 2004, 8, *AllAcademic Research* http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p_mla_apa_research_citation/1/1/0/4/9/p110499_index.html (accessed November 22, 2008).

in popular culture in tension with its sense of “otherness,” through its unusual timbre as a soprano eerily shrieks out her high notes.⁴⁵⁷ Guy Westwell writes of this moment,

The attack itself is a masterpiece of cinematic orchestration. The kinetic action of helicopters, napalm strikes and fierce ground fire is overlaid with a complex soundtrack that uses Wagner’s ‘Ride of the Valkyries’ and Carmine Coppola’s unsettling electronic score to shape the sense of combat. The viewer is caught up in the visceral thrill of the battle, and yet is also aware of participating in it from the point of view of a quasi-fascistic American military. This balance of elements creates a structure of ambiguity....⁴⁵⁸

The music reinforces the energy of the scene, and more subtly, provides a cultural critique of the American presence in Vietnam.

Arguably the most famous of these types of scenes occurs in the film *Platoon* (1986). In this film, Samuel Barber’s *Adagio for Strings* (1936) underscores the burning of a village in Vietnam, and later, the main protagonist’s (Chris Taylor, played by Charlie Sheen) reflections on the horrors he has witnessed and experienced during his tour of duty. In the first moment, the music distills and focuses the emotions of the scene: all of the background noises are eliminated, and the music becomes the thread through which we view the horrors. The slow pace of the music alters the sense of temporality, slowing and broadening the perception of the visual activity. It becomes a funeral song for the dead and dying through musical cues: its minor key, poignantly slow strings, rising and falling melodies, and long-held dissonances eventually resolved.⁴⁵⁹ Though the string-orchestra arrangement of the work is used, rather than Barber’s later choral arrangement of the work as an *Agnus Dei*, it still has resonances of a spiritual song of mourning and cry for mercy. Roger Hillman writes of this moment,

⁴⁵⁷ Even those not familiar with Wagner’s score have probably heard references to the music in popular culture, most notably in Chuck Jones’s cartoon short, “What’s Opera, Doc?” (1957).

⁴⁵⁸ Westwell, *War Cinema*, 68.

⁴⁵⁹ Barber’s *Adagio for Strings* had also been performed at John F. Kennedy’s funeral, further strengthening its association with mourning and lamentation.

In terms of the images it accompanies, most memorably, the torching of a village, the music functions at one level as a generalized lament, focusing neither on the fate of the occupied nor the progressive bestialization of the occupiers, but incarnating both. ...Beyond a mere universal lament, this music also resonates at a domestic level, as a mid-1980s reappraisal of a turning point in the psyche of the twentieth-century U.S. The musical commentary of the Barber achieves a synchronicity of a historical verdict on the soundtrack overlaid upon a visually evoked historical event.⁴⁶⁰

Here, the music both reinforces the sorrow latent in the scene and historical moment, and also critiques the event from the perspective of the 1980s. In a later moment, as Chris Taylor reflects on his experience during the war, we vicariously relive the horrors and the sorrows that he has witnessed and in which he has participated, and with him, become critics of the historical events portrayed in the film.

In both of these examples, the previously composed music acts on a complex level: interpreting and pacing the scene. We see both of these functions in the use of “Idumea” in *Cold Mountain*, but we have at least two other levels in which the music acts. It acts as an authenticator of the scene in its presence as music contemporary to the period (though performed in the present, as were the actors’ movements and lines), and it acts as a commentator on the scene through the hymn’s text. In the following section, the hymns “Idumea” and “I’m Going Home” will be analyzed in the context of their role in the film’s narrative, and I will discuss the ways in which the hymns shape our reception of the narrative, and reinforce the overarching themes in the film.

⁴⁶⁰ Roger Hillman, “Film and Music, or Instabilities of National Identity,” in *Globalization, Cultural Identities, and Media Representations*, ed. Natascha Gentz and Stefan Kramer (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006), 145-146.

4.2.4.3 “Idumea”: A hymn from the pit of hell

The first shape-note hymn, “Idumea,” appears in the opening sequence of the film. *Cold Mountain* opens with an overture, an orchestral score composed by Gabriel Yared. Seconds later, a woman’s voice (Ada Monroe, performed by Nicole Kidman) narrates a letter. The screen is covered in an abstract swirling blue, which transforms into mist through which we see Cold Mountain, the central metaphor of the film for home and belonging. The set changes, and we see Northern troops setting charges underneath Confederate soldiers. Captions alert the audience to what is going on, and then state when the battle happened, at Petersburg [Virginia], July, 1864. The scene shifts between the Northern and Southern viewpoints, including fragments of dialogue between Inman and his fellow soldiers, now accompanied by Alison Krauss humming over instrumental passages, as “My Ain’ True Love” (composed by Sting) begins. The charges are lit by the Union troops, and as the explosion bursts underneath the Confederate soldiers, some are in flames, while others are buried by the blast. The shot changes to show an enormous mushroom cloud. Though probably an accurate depiction of the smoke of the actual battle, it resonates with twentieth-century images of nuclear explosions.

Yared’s score provides a transition as the scene cuts to three years earlier, 1861, narrating Ada and Inman’s first meeting in the town of Cold Mountain. As Inman assists in constructing a house, his fellow workers mutter about the war, some expressing their disdain for the “Northern aggressors” while another protests that in going into battle, they would just be “fighting for a rich man’s slave.” After Inman and Ada meet, the scene cuts back to the battlefield; the Union soldiers begin their attack only to encounter a crater created by the explosion. Southern soldiers shout that the Union soldiers are “trapped in their own damn crater,” and that they have dug their own grave. In these moments, “Idumea” begins. As in traditional performance practice, the

hymn begins on solfège syllables, highlighting this as an authentic performance. As the battle sounds continue, the text of the hymn begins. See the following musical example, taken from *The Sacred Harp: 1991 Edition*, the edition from which the singers in the film performed (Figure 46).⁴⁶¹

IDUMEA. S.M.
"A time to be born and a time to die." -- Ecc. 3:2.

A Minor Charles Wesley, 1763. Ananias Davisson, 1816.

1. And am I born to die? To lay this bod-y down! And must my trem-bling spir-it fly In-to a world 'un-known? known?

2. A land of deep-est shade, Un-pierced by hu-man thought; The drear-y re-gions of the dead, Where all things are for-got! got!

3. Soon as from earth I go, What will be-come of me? E-ter-nal hap-pi-ness or woe Must then my por-tion be! be!

4. Waked by the trum-pet sound, I from my grave shall rise; And see the Judge with glo-ry crowned, And see the flam-ing skies! skies!

Figure 46. *The Sacred Harp, 1991 Edition.* “Idumea”

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The text, penned by Charles Wesley, layers faith and uncertainty in an eerily modern and existentialist way.⁴⁶² The melody, first found in Ananias Davisson’s *Kentucky Harmony* (1816),⁴⁶³ conveys the text flawlessly. Its Aeolian (natural minor) key and its melody that slowly circles up as the ultimate question is asked in the first verse, “And am I born to die? To lay this body down?” and returns down as the question is amplified, “and must my trembling spirit fly into a world unknown?” In the following verses, responses are formulated to the question, but the final answer to whether his lot is “eternal happiness” or eternal “woe” is left

⁴⁶¹ McGraw, ed. *The Sacred Harp, 1991 Edition*.

⁴⁶² Charles Wesley, *Hymns for Children* (Bristol: E. Farley, 1763).

⁴⁶³ Ananias Davisson, *The Kentucky Harmony* (Harrisonburg, VA: Davisson, 1816).

open in the hymn. The hymn, perhaps because of its nearly modern anxiety, seems appealing to twentieth-century composers by its presence in works studied here (its text and music in Alice Parker's *Singers Glen*, and its text in William Duckworth's *Southern Harmony*) and in other works outside the bounds of this document, such as Alan Shockley's *after Idumea* (2001).

Returning to the moment in the film, how do the sound and text of "Idumea" interpret the battle scene and set up some of the central themes of the movie? First of all, the hymn localizes the battle through its provenance, reinforcing the sense of the Civil War South through its historical associations with the same place and time. During the final planning stages, Minghella stated that Gabriel Yared's opening overture to the film "does something to the first five minutes...it generalizes it."⁴⁶⁴ In contrast, he wanted an "ethnic" song to set the scene for the battle, seemingly something to particularize the scene in contrast to the generalization that occurred through Yared's overture. In Minghella's discussion, it is unclear whether the "ethnic" music he refers to is filled by Alison Krauss's performance of Sting's "My Ain' True Love" or by "Idumea." However, in the realization of the scene, it is "Idumea" that invokes the quality of authenticity/ethnicity through its Southernness and history.

Second, we can look at the hymn's presence in the scene purely through its sonic qualities. The gritty timbre of the performance interleaves with the chaotic battle sounds and the groaning of the wounded. The somewhat slow tempo and the heavy accents on the downbeat—reflecting shape-note performance practice—paces and focuses the scene, relentlessly pulling the viewer into contact with the gore and horror of the war. Two apparent drum beats (or foot stomps) in the hymn's performance bring a sense of finality to the battle as the scene ends, cutting away to the next day, as the battlefield is cleared of its dead and wounded.

⁴⁶⁴ Koppelman, *Behind the Seen*, 298.

Third, the text of the hymn personalizes the scene. As the soldiers face unimaginable carnage, the text reflects internal questions in the face of a brutal reality. As a first-person narrator in the novel, or the voice-over in the film, the words of the hymn articulate the soldiers' loss. The text, discussing one's eternal home, intersects with the themes of home, place and belonging central to the film, and here signifies the loss of home, on a physical and spiritual level. As "Idumea" continues to sound, the scene is shot from Inman's viewpoint. The return to home, place, and community become Inman's personal quest. He watches the scene in horror and pity, not shooting at the Union soldiers, only watching the grim melee of death and destruction. He leaps into the pit himself to save a friend from the community of Cold Mountain. This act is interpreted through twentieth-century sensibilities: it is not motivated by nationalism or state's rights, but instead is an act of personal and community loyalty.

These three levels of locality, sonority, and text come together in the central irony of using a sacred hymn to accompany an unholy battle. Charles Koppelman recounts a discussion between Minghella and the film's editor Walter Murch,

Minghella muses that during the battle and hellish combat down in the pit, source music not only works well, it enhances and deepens those scenes. "Why is it, do you think, that the shape-note singing, 'Born to Die,' works in the battle?" he asks rhetorically.

"We earned it," Murch responds. "We have invested in the film and in the explosion, and we've gotten to know the people. And there's this incredible thing we're looking at we've never seen before. It's the juxtaposition of that imagery with the choral voices and seeing thousands of people—souls roasting in a pit of hell. There's a resonance between souls crying out in torment and the sound of the music, and that's what we're looking at."⁴⁶⁵

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid., 300.

In the ultimate reversal, that which was sacred now symbolizes hell as it accompanies a historically accurate depiction of a literal pit containing fire, brimstone, and unimaginable human suffering. It is indeed a “damn crater.”

4.2.4.4 “I’m [Not] Going Home”

At first glance, the use of the *Sacred Harp* hymn “I’m Going Home” does not seem nearly as intense or imbued with symbolism as the use of “Idumea” in the Battle of the Crater. However, when read in the context of a church service, the sequence here is ominous: three years prior to the battle that opens the movie, the church service creates a sense of inevitable movement towards the destruction seen in the film’s opening. Here, the Cold Mountain community joins together in a church service, with the pews set up in the square typical of contemporary and historical shape-note singings. Likewise, those sitting in the front of the square wave their hands to signify the beat, just as in contemporary practice. These gestures—familiar to anyone who has participated in *Sacred Harp* singings—signify authenticity. However, Tim Erikson (who, again, was heavily involved in getting actual *Sacred Harp* singing as part of the soundtrack) points out “Historically...a church in North Carolina ca. 1860 would have been more likely to house a singing from the Southern Harmony [rather than the Sacred Harp]...and there probably wouldn’t have been a hollow square.”⁴⁶⁶ His purpose in helping to construct the scene was to,

...give the audience as many clues as possible about Sacred Harp singing, increasing the likelihood that they’d check it out and see if it’s something they wanted to pursue. And for the movie I think it’s more effective to show the audience something that’s more “real” than speculatively and, I think, pointlessly “accurate.” That was my reasoning in any case.⁴⁶⁷

⁴⁶⁶ Letter from Tim Erikson posted to singings@fasola.org by Laura Clawson on October 10, 2003. Cited by Kiri Miller, *Traveling Home: Sacred Harp Singing and American Pluralism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 176.

⁴⁶⁷ Erikson in Miller, *Traveling Home*, 176.

The goal here was not to create a historical reenactment, in Erikson's mind at least, but again—to use Alice Parker's concept—to “filter” the past through twentieth/twenty-first-century lenses. A feeling of authenticity is created, whether or not the past is represented with pristine accuracy.⁴⁶⁸

The hymn sung is much more cheerful in its outlook and sound than the earlier “Idumea.” Its major key, fast light tempo, and the syncopation in the penultimate measures of the verse and the chorus reinforce the cheerful text. The hymn first appeared in *The Sacred Harp*, 2nd edition (1850); the tune is credited to Leonard P. Breedlove, 1850, with an unattributed text.⁴⁶⁹ See the following musical figure taken from *The Sacred Harp: 1991 Edition* (Figure 47).⁴⁷⁰

This text tropes the themes of “Idumea,” subverting the uncertainty and doubt present in the earlier hymn.⁴⁷¹ In the fourth verse, the pensive question of “Idumea,” “Am I born to die?” is transformed through the inversion of two words, “I’m glad that *I am* born to die” (emphasis mine). There is no question of where one is going in this hymn, even in the title, “I’m Going Home.” The text is much more reflective of the theology in mid-nineteenth-century “camp meeting” hymns than it is of the sterner and denser doctrines in earlier hymn texts penned by authors such as Charles Wesley and Isaac Watts. The text reflects an innocence and sincerity of belief, one that is reinforced by the earnest faces of the congregation as they join together in song. Unfortunately, as has already been seen in the film, this innocence will be shattered by the realities of war.

⁴⁶⁸ See Kiri Miller's discussion of the controversy in Sacred Harp circles over historical reenactments, *Traveling Home*, 178-179.

⁴⁶⁹ B. F. White and E. J. King, *The Sacred Harp*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: T.K. & P.G. Collins for the proprietors, B. F. White and E. J. King, Hamilton, Ga., 1850).

⁴⁷⁰ McGraw, ed., *The Sacred Harp: 1991 Edition*.

⁴⁷¹ See Ellen Jane Lorenz, *Glory Hallelujah! The Story of the Campmeeting Spiritual*, rev. ed. (Nashville: Parthenon Press, 1980). The book primarily addresses choruses that are adapted into various hymns; in “I’m Going Home,” the phraseology of an earlier hymn is invoked, but the process and influence are similar to processes discussed by Lorenz.

I'M GOING HOME. L.M.

"And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying." -- Isa. 65:19.

F Major Leonard P. Breedlove, 1880.

1. Fare - well, vain world! I'm go - ing home! My Sav - ior smiles and bids me come, And I don't care to stay here long!
Sweet an - gels beck - on me a - way, To sing God's praise in end - less day, And I don't care to stay here long!

2. I'm glad that I am born to die, From grief and woe my soul shall fly, And I don't care to stay here long!
Bright an - gels shall con - vey me home, A - way to New Je - ru - sa - lem, And I don't care to stay here long!

Right up yon - der, Chris - tians, a - way up yon - der; O, yes, my Lord, for I don't care to stay here long.

Right up yon - der, Chris - tians, a - way up yon - der; O, yes, my Lord, for I don't care to stay here long.

Figure 47. *The Sacred Harp*, 1991 Edition. "I'm Going Home"

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Suddenly, the hymn is interrupted by the announcement of the beginning of war. Starting with the men, all except for Ada empty out of the church, and the hymn fades quickly as the voices are silenced. Ada's remaining presence in the church symbolizes a home being left. As the film cuts to the area outside the church, many are shouting "We've got our war!" At a historical level, as John C. Inscoe notes, the embracing of war is unexplained and inexplicable in the context set up. He writes, "In *Cold Mountain* there is no...rationale for these highlanders' almost mindless revelry, the most distinguishable dialogue in the scene being, 'We got our war, man! We got our war.' (It's not even clear what spurs this particular moment: Is it the attack on Fort Sumter? Lincoln's call for troops to put down the rebellion? North Carolina's secession vote a month later?)"⁴⁷² No believable explanation is given to the complex question of why poor Appalachian mountaineers would join in a fight seemingly outside their interests.

However, on a mythological level, this scene is apocalyptic in content. One need not be a Baptist, or even to have the denomination specified in this scene to know that in a small, backwoods, Southern church, the final hymn will probably be followed by an altar call. Instead, we have a war call. War with the death, suffering, dislocation, and destruction of community that the viewers already have viewed as its inevitable consequence is violently substituted for the expected resolution of the sacred service. The irony is played out against the words of the fading hymn—"I don't care to stay here long...." A literal physical and geographical home is left in this film, never to be fully recovered by Inman. Through the interruption of a salvation narrative (in the hymn as well as in the imagined service), a more deadly loss here is the loss of spiritual and moral certitude. The question "am I?" that became the statement "I am" once again becomes a question. The silencing of voices in the hymn prefigures the death of many of those

⁴⁷² Inscoe, *Race, War, and Remembrance in the Appalachian South*, 313.

participating in the service, and also symbolizes a spiritual death, the loss of innocence and faith. Again, as Minghella emphasizes throughout this film, war *is* hell, destructive to the body and soul of the individual, and of the community.

4.2.4.5 Conclusion

In the discussion of these two hymns, it is clear that each plays an active role in the film's narrative and in the way it constructs history. The distinctive sound of the hymns, with their peculiar timbre unlike any other music used in the film, provides an aural connection between the two events in which they participate. The hymns reinforce a sense of accuracy in the film's depiction of history, as documents contemporaneous to the events at hand and through performances at least similar to the performance practice of the time. Simultaneously, they provide an early twenty-first-century perspective on the futility of war, particularly through their textual commentary on the scenes. The interplay of the texts from "I'm glad that I am born to die" in the community's pre-war innocence which leads to (in the order of events) the angst-filled "Am I born to die?" in the heat of battle reinforces the devastation that takes place in communities, Cold Mountain in particular, and within individuals as a result of the Civil War.

4.2.5 *Cold Mountain* and the future of shape-note singing

What significance does *Cold Mountain* have in the continuing presence of shape-note singing both as a practice and as a vivid and complex cultural symbol? It is too early to tell its long-term significance, but there are a few connections that can already be gleaned.

First, the attention given to the hymns through their presence in Hollywood films has funneled back to affect positively the practice of singing itself, a process Amy Suzanne Wooley

refers to as a “feed-back loop.”⁴⁷³ Many groups used the popularity of *Cold Mountain* as a referential point to advertise their singings and conventions.⁴⁷⁴ Gaston White, in charge of public relations for the National Sacred Harp Convention, attested to the record numbers attending the convention in 2004, the year following the release of *Cold Mountain*, attributable to the attention given to the tradition through the film, the participation of traditional singers in the film process, as well as by the nomination of the soundtrack for best score at the Oscars.⁴⁷⁵

Kiri Miller points out the irritation of singers within the Sacred Harp tradition who hear the talk of *Cold Mountain* as the salvation of the tradition when, on the contrary, they see a healthy growth and participation in the tradition outside of the influence of the film. Critiquing a particular account, she writes that it “like so many previous discoveries of a Sacred Harp tradition on the brink of vanishing, these accounts manufactured a crisis situation and its solution from the same cloth.”⁴⁷⁶ However, the film has undoubtedly brought an increased awareness of the *Sacred Harp* tradition, and also serves as an educational tool.⁴⁷⁷ The DVD version includes several documentary features that draw attention to the tradition, including “A Sacred Harp History” giving a brief overview of the tradition as a whole, the documentary “The Making of *Cold Mountain*” which gives attention both to the sound and place of Sacred Harp singing through its documentation of the church in which the hymns were recorded, and a recording of

⁴⁷³ Amy Suzanne Wooley, “Conjuring Utopia: The Appalachian String Band Revival” (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2003), 46.

⁴⁷⁴ For examples, see online event announcements “Rocky Mountain Shape Note Convention, Sunday September 24, 2006 - Monday September 25, 2006” <http://upcoming.yahoo.com/event/99282/> and here “Sacred Harp (shape-note) singing, January 7, 2007” <http://eventful.com/cincinnati/events/sacred-harp-shape-note-/E0-001-001407164-2@2007010706>, as well as the ad included by Kiri Miller, *Traveling Home*, 181.

⁴⁷⁵ Michael Huebner, “Sacred Harp Singing Going Strong with Younger, Non-Southern Devotees,” *Everything Alabama*, entry posted on June 8, 2008, http://blog.al.com/mhuebner/2008/06/sacred_harp_singing_going_stro.html (accessed November 18, 2008).

⁴⁷⁶ Miller, *Traveling Home*, 177.

⁴⁷⁷ In fact, when I tell people outside my field about my dissertation topic, one of the easiest ways to explain my topic clearly is to cite the use of shape-note hymns in *Cold Mountain*. I have received positive responses about the strangeness, beauty and haunting quality of the hymns within the soundtrack.

the event “The Words and Music of *Cold Mountain*” which again features Sacred Harp hymns as part of the performance.⁴⁷⁸

Second, there is a suggestion of a new popular reception of shape-note hymns coming in part through the use of the two hymns in *Cold Mountain*, as evidenced by many sources on the internet, including personal blogs and non-professional CD reviews. In a brief survey, I found a blog post that featured the observations of a singer who participated in the *Cold Mountain* recordings,⁴⁷⁹ a blog post that read the hymns in the soundtrack within the light of current American politics,⁴⁸⁰ and a narrative of a person’s first experience at a Sacred Harp singing, an experience directly influenced by his hearing the hymns in the *Cold Mountain* soundtrack.⁴⁸¹ Laura Clawson carefully researched the journalistic treatment of the Sacred Harp tradition before and after the film *Cold Mountain* was released, from the years 1991-2003.⁴⁸² She concludes that,

Before the release of Anthony Minghella’s film adaptation of *Cold Mountain*, which includes two Sacred Harp songs, Sacred Harp was not entirely obscure, but it was rarely given enough attention to allow it to be framed [in journalism] as a distinct tradition, rather than merely part of a folk or classical repertoire or of an encompassing category such as “church” or “history.”⁴⁸³

In other words, the attention given to Sacred Harp has moved beyond its inclusion in an American roots music revival discussed earlier, and into a widespread recognition of it as an independent tradition of music. Since the release of the movie and its soundtrack, Clawson cites a “dramatic shift in the type of attention Sacred Harp received,” citing both the “density” of news

⁴⁷⁸ *Cold Mountain: Two Disc Collector’s Edition*.

⁴⁷⁹ Eliza, “AD-D,” *The Wings of the Morning*, entry posted on January 27, 2006, <http://sixfootone.blogspot.com/2006/01/ad-d.html> (accessed November 18, 2008).

⁴⁸⁰ “January 21, 2007: Shape-note Sunday” <http://forthe love of bluegrass.blogspot.com/2007/01/shape-note-sunday.html> (accessed November 18, 2008).

⁴⁸¹ “October 13, 2006: Tim Hewitt, The Sacred Harp Tradition” http://commongroundsonline.typepad.com/common_grounds_online/2006/10/tim_hewitt_the_.html (accessed November 18, 2008).

⁴⁸² Clawson, “Going Hollywood,” 5.

⁴⁸³ *Ibid.*, 7.

coverage and the high praise given to the tradition through it.⁴⁸⁴ Certainly there are social history/reception history studies needed to assess the massive amounts of information on the Internet in reference to a new-found popularity of Sacred Harp and shape-note resources, and to new meanings attributed to the hymns and traditions through these means.

Finally, the use of shape-note hymns in *Cold Mountain* and the other soundtracks surveyed here surely helped pave the way for the positive reception and national broadcasting of the first feature-length documentary on Sacred Harp hymnody, *Awake, My Soul: The Story of the Sacred Harp* (2006).⁴⁸⁵ This film depicts the Sacred Harp community as a living tradition, narrating its story through photographs, interviews of life-long insiders to the tradition (including Hugh McGraw), newcomers to the tradition, and scholars, as well as including footage of contemporary Sacred Harp singings.

Awake, My Soul begins with a drive to a singing, winding through the woods to arrive at a small country church, echoing a nearly mythic journey narrated across the spectrum of those attending a singing for the first time. When Minghella discusses the finding of an “authentic sound of the South,” he echoes a collective experience of contact with Sacred Harp hymnody, and the sense of being in the midst of something vital. This strength has continued to express itself through the participants in shape-note tradition throughout the twentieth century, through the composers who have found in these hymns voices through which they can express their own voice, and through the listeners who have heard the hymns in traditional singings, film soundtracks, and new compositions.

⁴⁸⁴ Ibid., 13-14.

⁴⁸⁵ *Awake, My Soul: The Story of the Sacred Harp*, DVD, directed by Matt and Erica Hinton (Atlanta, GA: Awake Productions, 2006). There also has been a documentary made on the Wooten family, participants in Sacred Harp singing for generations, entitled *Sweet is the Day: A Sacred Harp Family Portrait*, directed by Jim Carnes and produced by Erin Kellin (The Alabama Folklife Association, 2001) *Folkstreams.net*, <http://www.folkstreams.net/film.44> (accessed November 18, 2008).

5.0 EPILOGUE

This study focuses on six works quoting shape-note hymns, exploring the meanings absorbed and created in them within their historico-cultural contexts. Clearly, this is only one of many ways to explore the intersections between shape-note hymns and compositions and film scores that quote them. At different points in this study, I have touched on other pieces that also quote shape-note hymns. In my research so far, I have identified dozens of composers who have turned to shape-note hymns as a rich musical source, and have found evidence of hundreds if not thousands of works quoting these hymns. A comprehensive list of composers and compositions using shape-note hymns would be an important follow-up to this study.

Most of the composers discussed in this study have used shape-note hymns in multiple compositions. Samuel Jones and William Duckworth have used shape-note hymns in a handful of compositions, while Virgil Thomson, Alice Parker, and Neely Bruce have used shape-note hymns in dozens of their works, with the style and sound of shape-note hymns becoming a central component of their musical language. Other composers such as Walter S. Hartley (1927-) and Alan Shockley likewise have used shape-note hymns many times. It would be worthwhile to do in-depth studies of individual composers such as these to explore the relationships between their works using shape-note hymns, as well as the elements of shape-note hymnody absorbed into or connecting with their musical language as a whole.

Further, some composers, like Neely Bruce and P. Dan Brittain (1971-), have been involved both in composing concert works that quote shape-note hymns as well as composing new shape-note hymns for use within traditional singings. Exploring the relationships between their new shape-note hymns and their other works quoting shape-note hymns would highlight the ways in which they have preserved historical stylistic elements of shape-note hymns as well as the ways that they continue to develop traditional elements of these hymns.

To study the use of an individual hymn within many works is another avenue of exploration. Sometimes, the hymns take on a life of their own, such as “New Britain,” the text and tune pairing more commonly known as “Amazing Grace.” In this case, the hymn itself has accumulated so much meaning outside of its shape-note context that unless the quotation overtly references the shape-note context, either through verbal reference by the composer or through musical means (such as evoking the texture or timbre of the hymns in performance practice), the connection to the shape-note tradition will be unclear. However, many hymns still retain close ties to the shape-note tradition, and are quoted by many composers. What new meanings are created through the use of a single hymn by many composers? What new intertextual relationships are created between the new compositions and their interpretations of the source hymn? Though the comparison of hymns used within multiple new compositions was not a primary theme in this study, these relationships are apparent even within the case-studies used here. See Table 1 for a comparison of the hymns used in each of these compositions. The six case studies are listed in the columns (abbreviated in some cases), while the hymn titles are listed in alphabetic order in the row.

Table 1. List of hymns used in six case studies.

	<i>The River</i>	<i>“Zion’s Walls”</i>	<i>Let Us Now Praise Famous Men</i>	<i>Singers Glen</i>	<i>Southern Harmony</i>	<i>Cold Mountain</i>
“Bozrah”					X	
“Cheerful”					X	
“Christian Farewell”				X		
“Christian Hope”				X		
“Condescension”					X	
“Confidence”				X		
“Consolation”					X	
“Convention”	X					
“Daughter of Zion”				X		
“Davisson’s Retirement”			X			
“Death of Washington”	X					
“Distress”					X	
“Divine Goodness”				X		
“Farmington”				X		
“Greenfields”				X		
“Greenwood”				X		
“Hebrew Children”					X	
“Hiding Place”				X		
“Holy Manna”					X	
“I’m Going Home”						X
“Idumea”				X	*	X
“Infinite Delight”				X		
“Invocation”				X		
“Leander”			X		X	
“Limehouse”				X		
“Mear”					X	
“Mississippi”	X		X			
“Montgomery”			X			
“Mount Carmel”				X		
“Mount Ephraim”				X		
“Murillo’s Lesson”			X			
“Nashville”					X	
“Pisgah”			X			
“Portsmouth”				X		
“Primrose”					X	
“Resignation”	X			X		
“Rock of Ages”					X	
“Sardina”					X	
“Social Band”				X	X	
“Solemn Thought”					X	
“St. Olaves”				X		
“Sweet Affliction”	X			X		
“The Mouldering Vine”					X	
“Transport”				X		
“Turtle Dove”					X	
“Virginia”			X			
“War Department”					X	
“Wesley”				X		
“Wondrous Love”					X	
“Zion’s Walls”		X				

* Text only

“Leander,” “Mississippi,” “Social Band,” “Resignation,” and “Sweet Affliction” are each used within two compositions, while the tune to “Idumea” was used twice, and its text has been referenced a third time.⁴⁸⁶ Even in these six works, complex interrelationships are created through the use of the same hymns. For example, both *The River* and *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* use the hymn “Mississippi” in the depiction of the Mississippi River, both works harnessing its minor key to create heavy, stormy passages. As more works are studied, scholars will find new relationships between the large body of work quoting shape-note hymns, and the meanings of these works will be deepened.

Another approach to this subject is to study whether the hymns frequently quoted in compositions reflect the frequency of their singing within the living traditions of shape-note hymnody. Resources such as the *Minutes and Directory of Sacred Harp Singings* published by the Sacred Harp Musical Heritage Association publish the hymns that are used in singings and conventions around the country each year.⁴⁸⁷ This kind of approach would highlight the connections between the continued living performance tradition of shape-note hymnody, and the importation of hymns into new contexts.

The topic is vast, and these are only a few methodologies for the continuing study of works quoting shape-note hymns. Whether through studying an individual composer’s interaction with the tradition or by studying the use of a single hymn as used by many composers, a continuing scholarly engagement with these ideas will bring to light the rich and mutually beneficial interactions between American musical traditions—film music, classical music, and the past and present traditions of shape-note hymnody.

⁴⁸⁶ The tune was also used in another composition mentioned in this study, Alan Shockley’s *after Idumea*.

⁴⁸⁷ Copies of minutes from the years 1995-2007 are available for PDF download on <http://fasola.org/minutes/> (accessed April 7, 2009).

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEWS WITH COMPOSERS

This appendix contains four interviews with composers, ordered by the chronology of their works studied in this dissertation: Samuel Jones, Alice Parker, Neely Bruce, and William Duckworth. The interviews were conducted via e-mail. The date on which the composer replied to the interview questions is listed for each composer. In the case of Samuel Jones and Neely Bruce, questions were answered in two subsequent occasions, and I have subdivided the interviews accordingly.

A.1 INTERVIEW WITH SAMUEL JONES

A.1.1 Primary interview: May 30, 2006

Joanna Smolko: How did you first come in contact with shaped-note hymns? Was it through performance, participation, scholarship (such as the work of George Pullen Jackson), or other means?

Samuel Jones: The earliest contact with shaped-note notation that I can remember was seeing those “strange” sharply-angled notes in hymnbooks. I grew up in Indianola, Mississippi (population, 5,000) in the 1940’s, and my family went to church in the Indianola First Baptist Church. Most of the hymnals had regular notation, but quite a few shaped-note versions of the hymnals were peppered throughout the seat-backs of the pews. These shaped-note hymnals used seven-note shapes. At that time, as a kid, I figured out the relationship of each shape to its diatonic place in the scale. Of course, at that point I had never heard the word solfège, much less anything about “fa-sol-la” notation. (I still can’t imagine why the old singing masters felt using four syllables and shapes was easier than using seven. Throwing out “do-re-mi” and having “fa-sol-la” stand for both the first through third as well as their own scale steps has to be immensely confusing at first.)

I suppose those shaped-note hymnals were available because some of the church members had moved to “town” from the surrounding rural areas, which we called the “country,” where the practice of All-Day Singings with dinner-on-the-grounds was still commonplace on certain Sundays. I am sure that just a few years earlier those Singings would have been exclusively Sacred Harp Singings, but by the ‘40’s the purity of the Sacred Harp tradition was being invaded by Stamps-Baxter hymnals and by seven-note instead of four-note shapes. But many of the Sacred Harp tunes were still being sounded out in these Singings by leaders and then sung by everybody in the traditional style—that is, as you probably know, first with the solmization syllables then with the words.

As a young boy I remember being taken by my parents to some of those old Singings. My father had grown up in the country, the son of a sharecropper who was also a well-regarded itinerant Baptist preacher. My dad liked to go back to his roots occasionally, and he also did it because he was by then in local county politics. He had worked himself through college (as you can imagine, his family was dirt poor, and he was the first of his family to pull himself out of the bondage of the almost-indentured servitude of the sharecropping system) and was at that time the Superintendent of Education of our county, so connecting with the people at the Singings was politically expedient as well as personally enjoyable to him.

As a young boy in the early grades of elementary school I had mixed feelings about the Singings. Instead of the standard, mainline church hymns I was used to, there were these “strange” hymns with often irregular rhythms. And instead of a more cultivated vocal sound with what I regarded as a natural vibrato, everybody was singing with what sounded to me then as a hard, punched,

no-vibrato sound. To my young, inescapably prejudiced ears, it sounded “country,” and I looked down on it and rather disliked it. I also remember that the texture was decidedly different. Only years later did I know why it sounded differently, namely, because I was accustomed to four-part SATB texture, with some doubling of the soprano line by some of the men, and what I was hearing at the Singings was the different vocal assignments of Sacred Harp singing, with the melody not in the top voice and with male and female voices doubling non-melodic as well as melodic lines. I remember other, non-musical things about the Singings vividly—the abundant food, endless piles of fried chicken, for example, and incredible pies and cakes.

And I remember the heat, and how everyone fanned themselves with a cardboard fan, usually with advertising on it from a funeral home. And I still remember one of the funniest sights of my young childhood: an old gentleman in his shirt-sleeves who was totally bald, with a large comb sticking prominently up from his shirt pocket!

My grandparents (my father’s parents, whom I often visited while they still lived on tenant farms, moving from one small farmhouse to another every two or three years) were regular attendees of the Singings, and they knew and loved many of the old Sacred Harp hymns. One of my earliest memories of my grandmother (Elizabeth Knight Jones [1882-1974]) was of her bouncing me as a very young boy on her knees and singing something in syllables I didn’t understand. The tune, though, I remembered, and the syllables: “So-mi-do....do..do-do, mi, re, fa, mi....mi..mi-mi, so, fa, la, so, Do, ti, la, so, fa, mi, re, do....do..do-do.” Of course, that’s the seven-syllable version of the opening phrase of the Sacred Harp tune, “Murillo’s Lesson.” OK, I admit I’ve reconstructed some of the syllables in my mind, although I remembered the melody vividly. I must have been three or four years old at the time. (That would have been around 1938 or ‘39, and my grandmother would have been in her mid-50’s.) I do distinctly remember my grandmother’s opening syllables, “So-mi-do....do..do-do.” That’s why I can say with certainty that she was using the seven-note version of the syllables instead of the Fa-So-La version; otherwise, it would have been “So-la-fa....fa..fa-fa.” Of course, I didn’t know what the tune was at the time and never knew its name until years later when I began working on “Let Us Now Praise Famous Men.”

I learned my do-re-mi’s from an elementary school music teacher, and I connected them with the shapes in my church hymnal, but I never thought about syllables or shaped notes again until I was in graduate school at Eastman. While there I learned about Fa-So-La notation in music history classes and began to acquire an expanded knowledge of notational history, solmization, American music history, and hymnology.

JS: Could you tell me a little bit more about why this work was commissioned, and how you came to use shaped-note hymns as part of the work?

SJ: “Let Us Now Praise Famous Men” was commissioned by the Shenandoah Valley Bicentennial Committee to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the founding of Shenandoah County, Virginia. The County was established in 1772, four years before the United States declared its independence from Great Britain. To prepare for the second-century milestone the county fathers and mothers formed a Bicentennial Committee to conceive and implement a number of programs and activities with which to celebrate the year. For one of its chief projects,

the Committee decided it wanted to collaborate with the American Symphony Orchestra League to have an orchestral work written and performed for the occasion, and therein lies a story.

During those years, from the early 1960's to the late 1970's, the American Symphony Orchestra League had been basing one of its conductor study workshops—the Eastern Institute of Orchestral Studies—in the Shenandoah Valley, at a picturesque but somewhat faded ante bellum hotel in the remote hamlet of Orkney Springs. Administered by the legendary Helen Thompson, the early guiding light of the ASOL, the Institute was built around its artistic director, the eminent conductor and conducting pedagogue, Richard Lert. Lert, who rose through the German opera houses to become the conductor of the Berlin Stadtoper, had emigrated to this country in the 1930's and settled in Pasadena, conducting its symphony orchestra for many years. He was in his 70's and 80's during his relationship with the Shenandoah Valley, and his magnetic personality and probing musicianship not only drew hundreds of musicians every summer to learn from and play under him but also sparked the formation of a series of Festival Concerts through which the leading citizens of the Shenandoah County and its surrounding valley came to be closely involved with him and all those associated with the Festival.

During those years I began my annual summer pilgrimages to the Shenandoah Valley, first as a student of Lert then later, for a decade or so, as an assistant to him. In the course of those years I, too, became very close to many of the local citizens who formed the nucleus of the Festival's community support. From time to time various works of mine were presented on Festival concerts, including a Festival Fanfare which Helen Thompson asked me to write to open each Festival. Thus, it developed quite naturally that I was asked in early 1972 to compose the bicentennial commemorative piece, to be premiered on August 12, 1972. The Committee used its own funds and procured matching funding from the National Endowment for the Arts.

I was greatly honored, of course, and looked forward to the creative process of conceiving and composing the work. I was also extremely busy. By this time I had worked myself up from assistant conductor to full conductor of the Rochester Philharmonic and was conducting some 85 concerts per year. But this new composition would be a labor of great love, due to my close association with the Valley, the League, and all the principals involved, and somehow I found the time to write the piece.

When the commissioning agreement was finalized, my dear friend, the late Kathryn Benchhoff (Mrs. Guy Anderson Benchhoff), who was a pillar of the Valley community and whose family was closely associated with the Massanutten Military Academy, where many Festival concerts were given, sent me some material researched by a fellow Bicentennial Committee member on the history of music in the Shenandoah Valley. This material was an eye-opener for me, leading me to realize how important the Valley was to the development and spread of the rural church singing school movement of the nineteenth century. The Shenandoah Valley was both a publishing center, where many of the shaped-note hymnals were produced, and a dissemination center, where summer retreats and singing schools were held. This immediately began to loom as important information for me and for my new piece, as I could sense the strong possibility of some kind of orchestral fantasia based on some of these old hymns.

Almost immediately, as I was thinking about finding some of these old hymns, the tune my grandmother had bounced me to as a little boy came back to my consciousness. I sat down right then and quickly composed seven variations on that old tune, still unnamed in my mind but intensely vivid in my memory after some 35 years. Though I didn't quite know how it would ultimately be used, I sensed strongly that this was the start of my new piece.

The next step was to go to the Sibley Library to do some research of my own. As you know, the Sibley Library of the Eastman School of Music is one of the great music libraries of the world, and not only was it convenient (just across the alley from my office in the Eastman Theater) but it was familiar to me from my graduate studies onward. I perused a number of the old shaped-note hymnals and read everything I could find on the subject, especially the writings of George Pullen Jackson. I found a number of old tunes that I considered as likely possibilities for melodic material for my new piece. And in the process I found my grandmother's tune! It was included in *The Sacred Harp* (p. 358). I had already composed my seven variations on the first half of the tune, the segment my grandmother had sung for me. I saved the second half for use later in my composition, to help close it out.

In the process of this research I discovered that these old tunes were much more interesting and sophisticated than my boyhood prejudices had allowed me to see. They were full of unusual rhythms and turns of phrase, and I could see that this material was a great resource for the contemporary composer. In addition to this, when I came across the Alan Lomax recordings of *Sacred Harp Singings* for the Library of Congress I gained a new appreciation for the sound of this style of singing. Instead of sounding "country," it sounded to my ears now as sturdy, honest, unadorned, open, strong, rhythmically direct—all qualities which reflected the people of the soil from which this music (and my family and myself) had sprung. I was particularly taken with the sonorities of the tune "Montgomery," and I resolved to try to recapture this in some way in my new piece. I ultimately decided to quote this tune in a ghostly chorus of offstage flutes, creating a sense of old *Sacred Harp* voices returning across the years. When this flute choir is placed above and behind the audience (which is my preference), it creates an eerie and compelling effect.

Eventually, I decided to use the following seven tunes:

Davisson's Retirement (from *Kentucky Harmony*, publ. 1814 in Harrisonburg, Va.)

Murillo's Lesson (from *The Sacred Harp*, publ. 1860 in Philadelphia, Pa.)

Montgomery (from *The Sacred Harp*)

Leander (from *Southern Harmony*, publ. 1835 in New Haven, Conn.)

Mississippi (from *Supplement to Kentucky Harmony*, publ. 1820 in Harrisonburg, Va.)

Virginia (from *Missouri Harmony*, publ. 1846 in Cincinnati, Ohio)

Pisgah (from *Harmonia Sacra*, publ. 1866 in Singers Glen, Va.)

(This is the order in which they appear in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*.)

All of them have some connection with the Shenandoah Valley or else with me personally.

Although the hymnals were published on the dates indicated, I could tell from external clues (the way the tunes were credited, their modality, in some cases their titles, etc.) and from some of G. P. Jackson's commentary that all of these tunes were actually folk tunes transported from the British Isles and kept alive in the memories of countless immigrants. The nineteenth century singing masters shrewdly used this memory bank of tunes, substituting religious words, and re-taught them using the Fa-Sol-La mnemonic shortcuts to new generations of singers. It was important to me to use these older tunes, because for a bicentennial celebration I wanted to use melodic material that was (as closely as I could determine) in actual use 200 years ago.

JS: Could you talk a little more about the significance of the title of your work "Let Us Now Praise Famous Men?"

SJ: First of all, there is a tremendous amount of irony in the title. It is not about men; it is about women and men. And it is not about famous people; it is about the common people.

The title comes, of course, from the first verse of the celebrated passage of the Apocrypha, from the book of Ecclesiasticus (44:1-15), "Let us now praise famous men, and our fathers that begat us." This passage is a foreword to a series of commemorative sketches, a veritable who's who of important figures in ancient Hebraic history. It refers to kings, prophets, poets, musicians. (Needless to say, as a composer I was pleased to see included in this passage those "such as found out musical tunes.") But at about the golden mean (a little less than two-thirds through) of this opening passage it takes an abrupt turn, saying, "And some there be which have no memorial; who perished, as though they had never been; and are become as though they had never been born; and their children after them. But these were merciful men, whose righteousness hath not been forgotten. With their seed shall continually remain a good inheritance, and their children are within the covenant. Their seed standeth fast, and their children for their sakes. Their seed shall remain for ever, and their glory shall not be blotted out. Their bodies are buried in peace; but their name liveth for evermore."

It was clearly this latter portion which spoke with such blinding force to James Agee that he quoted the entire passage on one of the last pages of his great meditation on poor Southern tenant farmers in Alabama in the 1930's. Indeed, he used its opening words as the title of his book. For these last lines clearly encapsulate what his entire book was about: they eulogize the countless numbers of the forgotten who live without achieving fame, but whose lives provide the continuity for and the inheritance of our common human heritage and to whom, as Arthur Miller says about Willy Loman, "attention must be paid."

(Later translations of this passage rob it of this broadening purpose, that of including the nameless, faceless mass of goodhearted, common people in the eulogy. However, the ringing words of the traditional translation, which so moved Agee and myself that we borrowed them as our title, express such a powerful truth and do it with such literary force that they continue to have their own life, even if later translators feel they go beyond the original meaning of Jesus, son of Sirach, the author of Ecclesiasticus.)

JS: Could you tell me any more about the connection between your work and the book “Let Us Now Praise Famous Men”? I’ve been reading it, and have found it dense and occasionally, heartbreakingly beautiful. I haven’t read anything like it. It reminds me a little of James Joyce, and a little of Proust, but James Agee has a prose style all his own. I’ve found it to be a challenging read. Could you share some of your thoughts on the book, as well as the way it connects to your music? Did you find that Walker Evans’ pictures or Agee’s prose had more influence on your music, or were they interconnected in your mind?

SJ: Obviously James Agee’s book, with the marvelous photographs of Evans, had a profound influence on my composition, just as it had on me. As you can probably surmise from what I have already said, it was inevitable that the book would stir many chords of memory regarding my own roots. Although my father’s family did not live in quite the total depths of poverty that was endured by the three Alabama families, my kinfolk were only one rung of the ladder higher, if that. The pictures stirred many familiar memories for me of quite similar sights. But the moving words were the most powerful. Quite simply, I believe Agee’s prose to be one of the great masterpieces of the last century, and Evan’s masterful photographs drive the point home all the more.

I felt a deep interaction between the message of Agee’s book—which eulogizes the bitter joys and weeps for the unremitting difficulties of these unsung yet heroic women and men—and the generations of sturdy folk who sang in their country churches the honest, straightforward hymns of The Sacred Harp. And I wanted my music to reflect this interaction. Obviously, I had a close personal relationship to all this, from both my Mississippi upbringing and my Virginia closeness to both people and land. The music was a deep outpouring which—as music, perhaps better than anything else we humans have found, can so often do—expresses meaning deeper than words.

As a postscript, let me add that in the summer of 1973, a year before my grandmother died, I was able to travel to visit her and play for her a tape of the previous summer’s premiere performance. She was very frail then, but she found the energy to sit up and listen. When the music began to play the song she had sung to me, a great slow smile spread over her face. Her eyes lit up as of old, and she said, “That’s Murillo’s Lesson!” That the notes of that melody would be returning to her, now in full orchestral and variational garb, in a composition by her grandson was almost too much to take in. It was—and remains—one of the most touching moments of my life to be able to share it with her and thank her for the gift of her music.

JS: I was very impressed by the statement on your website that this was the most performed work that was commissioned for the Bicentennial year. I remember that you said the statement was according to ASCAP. I’d like to talk about that fact in my dissertation. Is there any more citation information you could give me?

SJ: Just to clarify, it wasn’t the most performed American work that season; I think Copland’s Appalachian Spring and maybe one or two other established works beat it out. But yes, it is true that Let Us Now Praise Famous Men appeared more often in symphony programs in the 1976-77 season than any other work commissioned for bicentennial commemorations. Someone at ASCAP (I think my good friend Fran Richard) confirmed it for me. In all fairness I must say, however, that since Shenandoah County’s bicentennial came four years before the nation’s, my

piece was perfectly positioned to be disseminated and made available in time for conductors to consider it for their own programs. This obviously was a major factor in its preponderance of performances that season. Another factor was, I believe, a set of strong endorsements which Howard Hanson and Richard Lert wrote for the work. And also I believe the music spoke for itself. The tape of the premiere performance and the scores sent out by my publisher, Carl Fischer, made their own impact and ultimately convinced some 25 or 30 conductors to schedule the piece that year. But the piece was not a one-year wonder. It has continued to be performed, with some consistency and regularity, in the intervening years. It was recorded by the Houston Symphony, with myself conducting, in 1975, and it has been performed since then by the Seattle Symphony under Gerard Schwarz, the Utah Symphony under Keith Lockhart, and many, many others. Its most recent performance was last season (April 24, 2005) by the Warren Symphony under David Daniels, the well-known author of *Orchestral Music: A Handbook*.

A.1.2 Follow-up to interview: July 15, 2008

JS: How important were the text and titles of the hymns in your choice of hymns for LUNPFM?

SJ: The texts did not figure at all in my choices. The musical content was paramount in all the choices, but the titles did influence several of those choices.

I just want to emphasize that, as with all my programmatic music, it is a given that the musical values of the piece are paramount. That is to say that the piece must work—and can be experienced completely—as a piece of music, wholly on musical terms. But, in addition to that, there are often these strong connections beyond the music, connections that, if the interested listener wants to know of them, can only deepen the overall experience.

(You will remember, first of all, that all of the tunes I chose were ones which had the earmarks of originally having been folk songs of the British Isles and which had been brought to the New World.)

Here are the seven tunes, in order of their appearance in the piece:

1. **Davisson's Retirement**—I chose this just for its musical content.
2. **Murillo's Lesson**—I've already shared with you the special nature of my choice of this tune...it was the one my grandmother sung to me when she bounced me on her knee some seventy years ago.
3. **Montgomery**—This was the tune I first heard on the Library of Congress recording of tunes collected by Alan Lomax. The quality of the timbre of the Sacred Harp singing of this tune was haunting and a powerful influence on the whole work. I especially labored to find a sonority to suggest the original sound, but as if filtered spectrally through the mesh of intervening years. As you know, the sound I arrived at (for orchestrating this tune) was the offstage flute choir, of which the Alto Flute provides an important floor. I later found the tune in the Sacred Harp.

4. **Leander**—I loved the strength of this tune, but I especially wanted to use it because Leander is my middle name. (As you may know, I used this tune again in the Locomotive movement of my orchestral suite, “Roundings.”)
5. **Mississippi**—Again, a great tune, fantastically active and with fascinating rhythmic irregularities. But, being a native of Mississippi, how could I resist? Both “Mississippi” and “Leander” had obvious personal meaning for me.
6. **Virginia**—This of course represented the Shenandoah Valley itself. But let me share with you a deeper extramusical meaning I ascribed to it. The Shenandoah Valley Music Festival, and the (as it was then known) American Symphony Orchestra League’s Conductors Workshop (officially known as the Eastern Institute of Orchestral Studies) had been an important part of my life for over a decade, and the person who drew us all there was the great musician, conductor, teacher, and human being named Richard Lert. So I let this tune, Virginia, symbolize Lert in my mind. You will notice that it first appears in the bass, symbolizing how Lert’s teaching was an underpinning foundation for so many of us. You will also notice that about midway through, the tune moves up into the middle of the orchestra, sung now by the horns. This symbolized to me the internalization of Lert’s teaching in me and in all his students.
7. **Pisgah**—Again, a great tune. It was a favorite of Katherine Benchoff, a great lady and dear friend (daughter of the founder of Massanutten Military Academy in Woodstock, VA) and one of the mainstays of the Festival. She spearheaded the effort to commission me to write the bicentennial composition.

So, you can see that there were some very personal connections I had with some of these tunes. I alluded to these connections in my original program notes for the piece, but I’ve never written about all these thoughts to anyone. Knowing how close you are to this piece and to the subject matter, I would like to pass this on to you.

You mentioned you would be interested in the influence of “text and title.” There is one instance of the influence of text regarding my use of “Murillo’s Lesson” in a later composition. I realize this will not bear directly on your thesis, so I’ll just make mention of it, and if and when you are ready and have the time and inclination to go into it further, I’ll be happy to fill you in.

I hope this helps. It seems to tie in very much with your idea of exploring personal and regional history and what influences those might have had on the music.

A.2 INTERVIEW WITH ALICE PARKER: APRIL 26, 2006

Joanna Smolko: What was your first experience with shape-note hymnody? Was it through participation in a shape-note singing, through the scholarship of George Pullen Jackson, or through another source?

Alice Parker: No, through working with Robert Shaw on choral arrangements for recordings. My Tennessee husband (baritone soloist with the Shaw Chorale) had introduced me to Wondrous Love and How Firm A Foundation, and it sent me searching for similar songs. I found a wonderful collection of shape-note tune-books in the New York Public Library's Americana collection. I found George Pullen Jackson at about the same time, and started my own collection. My Harrisonburg, VA friends introduced me to their tunebook (Harmonia Sacra) in the mid 1960's, and I attended my first all-day-sing-with-dinner-on-the-grounds soon after that.

JS: Was there something in particular that attracted you to the shape-note repertoire?

AP: This was the 10th album that we worked on, so I'd had a lot of experience in researching melodies and finding ones that were right for our use. I immediately recognized the elemental strength of these tunes: pentatonic or modal, balanced in form, made for singing, and often with superb, unfamiliar texts.

JS: Were the arrangements with Robert Shaw on the 1959 recording "What Wondrous Love" your first arrangements of shape-note hymnody?

AP: Yes. But I continued my research into the tunebooks and this bore fruit in the 1967 recording "Sing to the Lord". Thereafter, several cantatas and many individual anthems have been based on these shape-note hymns—most notably the cantata "Melodious Accord", 1974.

JS: What drew you to tell the story of Joseph Funk and the surrounding Mennonite community?

AP: Those same friends who introduced me to Harmonia Sacra showed me that all of Funk's original letters (beautiful handwriting!) and many editions of the book were in the library of Eastern Mennonite University (then College) in Harrisonburg. The librarians there were extremely helpful, and I worked there for many days compiling the materials for the opera.

JS: As I was working through "Singer's Glen," my attention was drawn to the level of detail you included in the enactment of the singing school.

AP: The dialogue and format were almost verbatim from Funk's letters and the introductions to various editions of his book.

JS: How do you see your experience as a teacher of hymns expressed through your work as a composer in this opera?

AP: I could see Funk's enormous influence grow through both the collecting, publishing and editing of superior hymns, and the teaching through the singing schools. My own experience led me more and more to teaching 'by ear', weaning people away from the page rather than instructing them in reading. It was clear that the people of Funk's time were thoroughly familiar with the 'sound' and 'style' of their own hymns. People today don't have that familiarity, so that needs to be taught through the singing of the hymns. (We can't learn the notes first and then add the style—it's very inefficient!)

And all my arranging experience led me to start with just the tune and text in my settings—I rarely used the bass-line found in the source, and never the harmonization. So my settings don't attempt to be historically accurate: they try to be faithful to the sound and spirit of the core: that tune and text combination.

[Also, I don't draw a distinction between composition and arranging. Arranging uses all the tools of composition to set a 'pre-existing' melody; if I use the same tools on a melody I've written, it's called composing.]

JS: Do you see composition as a way of teaching history?

AP: Not really. I learn music history by studying and performing and teaching the music of that period. If I have a chance to arrange tunes from a certain time and place I learn about them from working with them—but my impulse is never to create a 'historical setting'. The tune ends up being filtered through my 20th/21st century musical ideas.

A.3 INTERVIEW WITH NEELY BRUCE

A.3.1 Part I: December 13, 2008

Joanna Smolko: Do you recall how you first encountered shape-note/Sacred Harp hymns?

Neely Bruce: Many people believe that I grew up with this music (this speculation even appears in print). However, I did not. Before 1967 my only exposure to “The Sacred Harp” was when I was a boy, living in Fultondale AL. My father worked in Birmingham at the time and came home one day and said “There’s a big Sacred Harp singing in Birmingham.” I said, “Daddy, what’s Sacred Harp singing?” He replied “It’s a bunch of old people who get together and sing old music.”

I later realized that this little conversation took place either in 1950, 51 or 52, but I don’t know which year. I thought for some time that it coincided with the big singing that Lomax and George Pullen Jackson recorded, but that took place before I was born. Somewhere in the minutes of Sacred Harp singings there is probably some mention of it. If you figure out when it might have been I’d like to know.

In graduate school at the University of Illinois I earned some money as the director of the choir at St John’s Chapel, the university Catholic center. Taking this job coincided with Charles Hamm teaching the first course in American music at the U of IL. This was, if memory serves me, the fall of 1967, the beginning of my second year there. There was considerable buzz among the graduate students about the revelations occurring in Hamm’s class on a regular basis. I was looking for music for a little Christmas concert, so I checked out “Southern Harmony” from the library and began looking through the book, playing everything on the piano. I was stunned, of course, and fell in love with the music. I was convinced that there was more to the style than the notes on the page.

Sidebar comment: I intended to write my DMA thesis on the piano works of Busoni. I found them beautiful and somewhat mysterious, since they were obviously fine pieces and the work of a great pianist, which meant in other cases (Mozart, Beethoven, Chopin, Liszt, Bartók ...) they would enter the piano repertory. But the Busoni pieces had not. So I figured there must be stylistic issues involved. I planned to investigate the way Busoni played the piano, to see if this would disclose the way in which these pieces should be performed. At the time there were a number of prominent Busoni pupils still alive—including Varese, Otto Luening and Cecile Genhardt (head of the piano program at Eastman for many years). More and more old recordings of Busoni, as well as Welte rolls, were coming to light. Most pianists knew by this time that you shouldn’t play Haydn like you would play Schumann or Schoenberg, and I figured “why not find out how to play Busoni.” Style was the key to everything, it seemed. (To me it still does.)

So I looked at these little pieces from “Southern Harmony” I was playing on the piano, mostly in three parts, and I was convinced this was the tip of the iceberg. There had to be more to it. I had the unmistakable impression that singing this music off the page would be like performing American pop songs straight out of the printed sheet music, i.e. a misrepresentation of what the music really was.

My friend Bill Brooks was in Charles Hamm’s class. I said “Bill, I’m playing these pieces from ‘Southern Harmony’ and there has to be more to it than the notes on the page.” Bill said there was a recording in the library of that kind of music, he thought it was called “The Sacred Harp.” I went to the music library, at that time still in Smith Hall, and checked out the LP of Alan Lomax’s recording of the all-day singing in Fyffe, AL in 1956 (I should check the year of the singing). It was part of the “Southern Journey” series, and has been reissued by New World Records.

By this time I was married, with two small children. I took the recording home and played it over and over again for two weeks. (I thought I might wear out the grooves, but I couldn’t be concerned with the material object. The piece of vinyl that, however sacred it might be, could be replaced.) My family thought I had lost my mind.

Hearing Sacred Harp singing was like a conversion experience. (I had had such a musical epiphany once before, when I listened for the first time to a recording of “Tristan and Isolde.” I’ve not had such an intense introduction to any music since.) It encapsulated whole aspects of my life, whole areas of my memory. My church-going experience was extensive, growing up in a good Southern Baptist home. But I had been in churches in small towns and big cities. I dimly remembered other churches, however. We went to them when a distant relative died, or we visited friends and relatives in other parts of the South. These churches were beautiful white boxes in the woods, surrounded by green, difficult of access, no electricity, no indoor plumbing. I instantly realized that “The Sacred Harp” was the music of these churches, these distant relatives, the part of the South on the fringes of Fultondale and Birmingham, just a couple of generations removed from the wilderness most of Alabama and Georgia was two hundred years ago.

I was in love with this music, and still am. It’s like coming home to a home I never experienced first-hand, but home nonetheless. I’ve since been to many such small white-box churches, but they are few and far between these days, and have changed in many ways. I was even able to meet, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, many of the singers who were on the “Southern Journey” recording. But that is a story for another time.

A.3.2 Part II: February 10, 2009

JS: Can you tell me about the commissioning of Duckworth's "Southern Harmony and Musical Companion?"

NB: The commission to Bill Duckworth to do "Southern Harmony" was straightforward enough. When I was the choral director at Wesleyan I initiated a series of commissions of new choral music. The first one was "Wobbly Music" by Christian Wolff, premiered in 1976. Alvin Lucier and I walked around the Wesleyan campus thinking out loud about the best composer to inaugurate the series. Christian was actually Alvin's suggestion. "Rose Moon" by Pauline Oliveros, premiered in the fall of 1977. This was followed by "The Voice of the Dharma" by Gerald Shapiro. The third was "Southern Harmony" by Duckworth. (The other commissions went to James Fulkerson for "He was silent for a space" and Henry Brant for "Meteor Farm." Each of these pieces has a story behind it, but that has to wait for another time.)

The idea behind "Southern Harmony" was to make a series of choral spin-offs based on various aspects of some of the original pieces. Bill told me that in preparation for writing the piece he sang through all of the parts of the entire book four times. (As he explained it to me at the time, this was a combination of musical exercise and meditation.)

His interest in shaped note hymnody was evident since we had been in graduate school together. He wrote a percussion piece called "A Whispering..." (1972) that has been performed at the U of IL and elsewhere many times. It is based on "Family Circle" a tune found both in "Southern Harmony" and "The Sacred Harp," which has the text "Come thou fount of every blessing." He also sang shaped note music sometimes with me and others, and heard the concerts of the American Music Group, which regularly featured tunes from "The Sacred Harp." He had some acquaintance with the music in his youth in North Carolina, according to the internet, but he never mentioned this to me. In any case, the choice of source material was no surprise.

Book One of the "Southern Harmony" consists of the first five pieces. They were performed premiered at Wesleyan around 1980. Book Two followed in the next season. Then ensued a frustrating period of time when I was unable to get Books Three and Four performed.

The complete work was first performed by Gregg Smith. I heard a public performance of the whole shooting match at Merkin Hall, the Gregg Smith Singers being joined by the Concert Choir of Bucknell. The entire piece, in live performance, is very powerful. (I must admit to feelings of regret that I was never able to mount the entire piece at Wesleyan, but that is water long over the dam.) I don't know if the piece has had many performances in its entirety in recent years. In any case, the piece comes across as rather cool and detached in recording, but it's quite a different experience live, I assure you. It is a work of great emotional power, and the cumulative effect of twenty pieces composed in this manner is remarkable.

JS: What led you to perform them in your American Music Group at the University of Illinois? When was that group founded?

NB: The American Music Group was founded in the late 1960s. I'd have to dig out the date. AMG grew directly out of the experience with my church choir, related in my earlier Email. In addition to shaped note music, we did glees from 1850s publications, miscellaneous anthems, some brand-new works, pieces by John Philip Sousa, choral works by Anthony Philip Heinrich, "The Beethoven of America," anthems by Billings, etc. We also did works for the stage—"Grandpa's Birthday" by C. A. White, "Four Saints in Three Acts" and the premiere of my own one-act opera "The Trials of Psyche."

JS: Do you have any comments on your involvement in the Sacred Harp revival of the early 1980s? I know you were influential in the beginnings of the first Northern Sacred Harp Convention.

NB: Make that "Phyllis and I started it." The year of the first New England Sacred Harp Singing Convention was 1976. (I had joined the Wesleyan faculty in 1974.) That's a story for another time as well.

JS: I know that you also have continued to use shape-note hymns within your own compositional output. I would love to hear your comments on your continuing contact with shape-note traditions.

NB: At this point composing in this style is like breathing. I teach a course at Wesleyan called "Hymnody in the United States Before the Civil War" that begins with "The Sacred Harp" and moves backwards. I run a monthly singing on the Wesleyan campus (first Sunday from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.) and I attend as many singings as I can, which isn't that many these days, alas. I have a great fondness for the Christian Harmony singing (Jeremiah Ingalls's book, put into shapes by Tom Malone) and have been to that several times. Tom and I have ideas for joint articles on various aspects of shaped note singing, but so far they haven't materialized.

A.4 INTERVIEW WITH WILLIAM DUCKWORTH (OCTOBER 1, 2008)

Joanna Smolko: When did you first come into contact with shape-note hymns, and more specifically, *The Southern Harmony*? In an academic context? At a singing? (It's been interesting so far to see how composers first stumbled on shape-note hymns—some have had childhood memories of them [Samuel Jones learned shape-note hymns sitting on his grandmother's knee], others discovered them through the work of George Pullen Jackson.)

William Duckworth: I was a student at the University of Illinois in the late 1960s when Neely Bruce was organizing regular (and authentic) Sacred Harp singings on campus. I thought then that I was hearing the style for the first time. But as I reflected on the experience, I came to realize that my family had attended a rural church in Salem, NC until I was about 5, where the congregation sang in shape-note style. So the memory was planted early and then vividly recreated and recalled two decades later.

Neely Bruce brought William Walker's *Southern Harmony* to my attention while we were at the University of Illinois together. I believe we were planning to go to the once-a-year singing in Kentucky, and I bought a facsimile edition in anticipation of the trip.

JS: What in particular did you find attractive about the repertoire? Were you able to attend any "singings" after you learned of the repertoire?

WD: I was immediately attracted to William Walker's work. Unlike the *Sacred Harp*, Walker's arrangements were often in 3 parts, and the music itself sounded "purer", as if coming from a parallel primary source.

JS: What led to the use of these hymns in your *Southern Harmony*? I know that Neely Bruce commissioned the work. Could you talk about what led to the commission?

Neely has spent most of his teaching career at Wesleyan University in Connecticut. During the 1980s he directed the Wesleyan Singers. And much as he had done earlier at the University of Illinois, he engaged in adventurous programming, including a long history of commissioning new works. I was one of four composers commissioned for this particular project. He asked for a 15-minute piece, but I got carried away and gave him a 60-minute one.

JS: I've been told that you sang through each of the parts in the entire hymnal *Southern Harmony*. I'm quite impressed! Could you describe that experience for me, and talk about how it shaped your creation of these arrangements?

WD: I wrote *Southern Harmony* in Syracuse, NY, while on sabbatical from Bucknell. So I had the entire day to write. I would begin each day by singing through *Southern Harmony* a line at a time for an hour or more. At first I did it to familiarize myself with the music, but by the third or fourth time through it became more of a meditation.

JS: How do you see this collection fitting into the paradigm of minimalism/post-minimalism? I was really interested in the way that you combined the repetitive nature of the fa-so-la's with repetition of other syllables in certain pieces, creating a real fusion

between two traditions. I'm wondering also how the polyphony/melody based lines of the hymns and modal harmonies intersected with minimalist/post-minimalist stylistic concerns.

WD: In order to understand my particular relationship to minimalism/postminimalism, I think it is also necessary to look at the music I wrote just before *Southern Harmony*, *The Time Curve Preludes*. Those 24 pieces for piano, along with *Southern Harmony's* 20 pieces for chorus, define, I think, the postminimalist style. For me, these two sets of pieces bring together my various musical interests for the past 20 years, including the use of rhythm to generate form.

JS: In a broader context, did the increasing presence and awareness of ethnomusicology and "world musics" in academia during the 1970s-1980s (as I understand it) influence your musical choices in this work? Did you feel that there were more opportunities at that time to use tonal (rather than atonal or serial) materials as the basis of a composition? [Perhaps these two questions are too broad]

WD: Like other composers who grew up with the stylistic varieties of the 1960s, I was fascinated by world music. But I don't think that interest played much part in *Southern Harmony*. The material there—those old hymns I'd heard in childhood—seemed more personal and from my own past; not exotic and from another world.

JS: The three arrangements that I am planning to analyze in closer detail are "Wondrous Love," "Holy Manna," and "Primrose." In my study so far "Wondrous Love" and "Idumea" have been frequent choices for composers who make use of shape-note hymns (which is quite understandable considering how lovely they are). I found it very interesting that you set the text of "Idumea" to "Wondrous Love." Could you talk about your choice there?

WD: There were many different (and widely varying) texts set to the *Wondrous Love* hymn tune over the years. I'm not sure if *Idumea* was ever used this way, but under the circumstances I felt it was suitable to use it. What I didn't want to do was an "arrangement"; the words are too well known for that.

JS: I thought the alternation of E/Eb in "Holy Manna" was beautiful. Did this reflect the bending of notes in the oral traditions of shape-note singings. More specifically, were you evoking African-American traditions of shape-note singing (such as "The Colored Sacred Harp")?

WD: I became interested in major and minor seconds as consonant sounds with *The Time Curve Preludes*. That, in turn, probably came from my interest in jazz, which developed at an early age.

APPENDIX B

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This appendix features copyright permission letters and other materials related to the use of examples in the dissertation. The letters are organized according to the appearance of the examples in the document.

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WESLEY YORK, FOUNDATION ADMINISTRATOR

November 19, 2008

Joanna Smolko
University of Pittsburgh

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The Virgil Thomson Foundation, Ltd.

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James M. Kendrick
Secretary

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Joanna Smolko

By: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

B.2 AARON COPLAND LETTER

BOOSEY & HAWKES

November 3, 2008

Joanna Smolko
245 Highland Park Drive
Athens, GA 30605

RE: ZION'S WALLS from OLD AMERICAN SONGS, SET II by Aaron Copland

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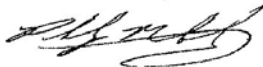
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At 01:49 PM 10/31/2008 -0400, you wrote:

Dear Ms. Hayes,

I am a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Pittsburgh, working on my dissertation entitled "Reshaping American Music: The Quotation of Shape-Note Hymns by Twentieth-Century Composers."

For this dissertation, I wish to use a hymn from The Social Harp as an illustration. I contacted John Garst, one of the editors, who suggested contacting UGA Press. His response is below. He states that the hymn is a "direct copy" from the 1855 hymnal, and wasn't sure if there would be any copyright issues involved.

The bibliographic information is as follows: "Zion's Walls" taken from John G. McCurry, The Social Harp, Reprint Edition, edited by Daniel W. Patterson and John F. Garst (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1973), 137.

If you could give me more information, and perhaps be willing to send a formal letter (I can send you a letter to sign if you would like) allowing me to use this hymn in my dissertation, it would be much appreciated.

Please let me know if you need any further information from me.

Thank you very much for your help!

Sincerely,

Joanna Smolko

Ph.D. candidate, University of Pittsburgh

11/4/08

Dear Joanna,

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Best,
Stacey

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B.4 GEORGE PULLEN JACKSON PERMISSION LETTERS

January 25, 2009

Joanna Smolko
245 Highland Park Drive
Athens, GA 30605
Joh10@pitt.edu
706-425-1933

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The excerpt to be reproduced is page 211, featuring Dr. Jackson's transcription of "Zion's Walls."

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Sincerely,

Joanna Smolko
PhD Candidate, University of Pittsburgh

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Josephine Pendleton
Josephine Pendleton

January 25, 2009

Joanna Smolko
245 Highland Park Drive
Athens, GA 30605
Joh10@pitt.edu
706-425-1933

Dear Ms. Jackson:

I am completing a doctoral dissertation at the University of Pittsburgh entitled "Reshaping American Music: The Quotation of Shape-note Hymns by Twentieth-Century Composers." I would like your permission to reprint in my dissertation excerpts from the following: *George Pullen Jackson, Down-East Spirituals and Others: Three Hundred Songs Supplementary to The Author's "Spiritual Folk-Songs of Early America"* (New York: J.J. Augustin Publisher, 1937).

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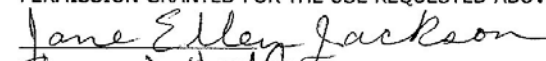
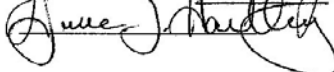
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Sincerely,

Joanna Smolko
PhD Candidate, University of Pittsburgh

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January 25, 2009

Joanna Smolko
245 Highland Park Drive
Athens, GA 30605
Joh10@pitt.edu
706-425-1933

Dear Ms. Martin:

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B.5 SAMUEL JONES PERMISSION LETTER

February 23, 2009

Joanna Smolko
245 Highland Park Drive
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706-425-1933

Samuel Jones
35247 34th Ave. S.
Auburn, WA 98001

Dear Dr. Jones:

I am completing a doctoral dissertation at the University of Pittsburgh entitled "Reshaping American Music: The Quotation of Shape-note Hymns by Twentieth-Century Composers." I would like your permission to reprint in my dissertation excerpts from the following:

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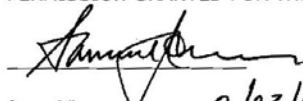
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B.6 ALICE PARKER PERMISSION LETTER

March 10, 2009

Joanna Smolko
245 Highland Park Drive
Athens, GA 30605
706-425-1933

Mrs. Roberta Whittington
President
Hinshaw Music, Inc.
P.O. Box 470
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Dear Mrs. Whittington:

I am completing a doctoral dissertation at the University of Pittsburgh entitled "Reshaping American Music: The Quotation of Shape-note Hymns by Twentieth-Century Composers." I would like your permission to reprint in my dissertation excerpts (as listed on Schedule A attached) from the following:

Singers Glen: An Opera in a Prologue and Two Acts, Orchestral Score (Chapel Hill, NC: Hinshaw Music, 1978).

Singers Glen: An Opera in a Prologue and Two Acts, Piano and Vocal Score (Chapel Hill, NC: Hinshaw Music, 1978).


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B.7 WILLIAM DUCKWORTH PERMISSION LETTER



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February 12, 2009

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Athens, GA 30605

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B.8 SACRED HARP, 1991 REVISION, PERMISSION LETTER

Joanna Smolko
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706-425-1933

November 6, 2008

Richard Delong
PO Box 385
Whitesburg, GA 30185
770.838.9335

Dear Mr. Delong:

I am completing a doctoral dissertation at the University of Pittsburgh entitled "Reshaping American Music: The Quotation of Shape-note Hymns by Twentieth-Century Composers." I would like your permission to reprint in my dissertation excerpts from *The Sacred Harp*, 1991 Revision (Bremen, GA: The Sacred Harp Publishing Company, Inc., 1991). The excerpts to be reproduced are "Idumea" (#47) and "I'm Going Home" (#282).

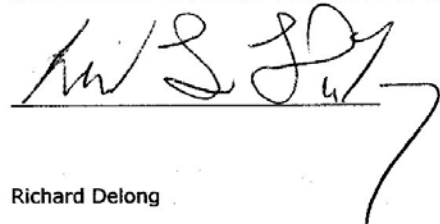
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