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This thesis analyzes how the Sacred Harp adapted to become a unique musical tradition culturally and geographically specific to the America South. By applying methods from the Geography of Religion and Music Geography fields with contributions from Atlantic History and Ecomusicology, an uncommon perspective emerges as a regional network of shape-notes reveal how it became Sacred Harp over time. Originating in England, psalter hymnals reach the American colonies through the Puritan culture. Once in the New England region the psalters become shape-notes. Eventually the Great Awakenings and Better Music Movement force shape-notes out of the North and they journey along the Great Wagon Road through the Appalachia backcountry. With their migration shape-notes become adopted in the Scots-Irish churches that are scattered throughout the region. The family ways of the Scots-Irish solidify the continuation of shape-notes which result in the emergence of the Sacred Harp. Due to the singing families that dominate this tradition Sacred Harp has survived to the present and has redistributed itself across the nation, practiced and loved by many others.

‘JOURNEY INTO THE SQUARE’ A GEOGRAPHICAL PERSPECTIVE
OF SACRED HARP

By

Michele Abee

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Committee Chair

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APPROVAL PAGE

This thesis has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of the
Graduate School at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Committee Chair _____

Committee Members _____

Date of Acceptance by Committee

Date of Final Oral Examination

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES	v
LIST OF FIGURES	vi
 CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Scope and Purpose	1
Terminology.....	5
A Brief History of the Sacred Harp	7
Objectives: Study Area and Methodology	10
II. LITERATURE REVIEW	16
Geography of Religion.....	16
Sacred Places and Spaces.....	18
Sacred Spaces and Nature.....	19
Music Geography.....	21
Diffusion and Adaption in Geography.....	23
Sacred Harp.....	24
Ecomusicology.....	28
III. METHODOLOGY	31
Overview	31
Textual Analysis	34
Cartographic Analysis.....	34
Interviews.....	35
Participant Observation.....	36
IV. ‘I’M GOING HOME’: A HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY OF THE SACRED HARP	40
Developing the Core: The Psalters.	40
Building the Network: English Emigration in the Atlantic World	42
From Psalms to the Sacred Harp.....	49

V. SHAPE-NOTES AND SACRED HARP: A GEOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVE	57
Shape-Notes in the Atlantic World	57
The Scots-Irish	63
New England and Pennsylvania.....	67
The South and Sacred Harp	72
VI. THE “SACRED” OF SACRED HARP: THE RELIGION AND NATURE INSIDE THE MUSIC	76
Untangling the “Sacred” of Sacred Harp.	76
Churches and Architecture.....	81
Sacred Harp and Ecomusicology	86
VII. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS.	96
Sacred Harp from a Geographical Perspective	96
Research Questions Conclusions.	97
REFERENCES	102

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 5.1 The Geographical Adaption and Evolution of Sacred Harp	62
Table 6.1 Table of Singing Locations and Totals (Highlighted Red shows sings that are not held inside a church) (Caudle, Ivey, Aldridge, and Sheppard 2011)	78
Table 6.2 Anglo-Celtic Ancestry Group (Census 2010).....	79
Table 6.3 Nature Terms Repeated in Hymns.....	91

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1.1 Sacred Harp Notes on a C Major Scale	3
Figure 1.2 The traditional Seven Shape-Notes on an F Major Scale.....	3
Figure 1.3 The Hollow Square.....	4
Figure 1.4 Psalters and Shape Notes come to the American colonies (Grove Music Encyclopedia 2011), Better Music Movement (Anderson and Powell 2006), and Sacred Harp (Jackson 1944)	11
Figure 1.5 Typical Catholic Cathedral floor plan with a red line marking where the laity was forbidden (Scott 2003)	13
Figure 1.6 At the Protestant O’Kelly Church of Christ Chapel, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, January 17, 2012. Photograph taken by Author.	14
Figure 4.1 The English Atlantic World in the Seventeenth Century (Games 1999:2)	45
Figure 4.2 “What a Fellowship” (<i>Songs of the Kingdom</i> 1999: 385)	52
Figure 4.3 “Leaning on the Everlasting Arms” in <i>A Portion for the Singers</i> (Drummond 1988:289-290).....	52
Figure 4.4 “Idumea” in <i>A Portion for the Singers</i> (Drummond 1988:248)	53
Figure 4.5 “Idumea” in <i>The Sacred Harp 1991 Edition</i> (McGraw 1991: 47)	54
Figure 4.6 “Wondrous Cross L.M.D” in <i>The Sacred Harp 1991 Edition</i> (McGraw 1991: 447)	54
Figure 4.7 “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross” (<i>Songs of the Kingdom</i> 1991: 382)	55
Figure 5.1 Core and Periphery	60
Figure 5.2 Diffusion.....	63
Figure 5.3 Settlement of Scots-Irish in America	66

Figure 5.4 The Fry-Jefferson Map 1751 (the Great Wagon Road in red)	71
Figure 5.6 The Original Sacred Harp.....	74
Figure 6.1 Dot Density of Sacred Harp Singings, 2010-2011, spots are randomized (Caudle, Ivey, Aldridge, Sheppard 2011).....	79
Figure 6.2 A typical cathedral floor plan	82
Figure 6.3 Canterbury Cathedral Choir (Scott 2003: 18)	82
Figure 6.4 Tetbury Church, Gloucestershire, England (Rebuilt 1777-81), (Fletcher 1987)	83
Figure 6.7 O’Kelly Church of Christ Chapel exterior, Chapel Hill, NC	84
Figure 6.8 O’Kelly Church of Christ Chapel interior	85

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Scope and Purpose

This thesis analyzes how the Sacred Harp adapted to become a unique musical tradition culturally and geographically specific to the American South. A thorough examination of the historical record and geographic migration of the practice of shape-notes from England to the northern American colonies, and eventually into Sacred Harp in the United States southern region, aids in defining how the Sacred Harp is currently synonymous with southern identity. The purpose of the research is to accumulate the geographies religion and music. Furthermore, by utilizing concepts from the field of Atlantic History and Ecomusicology possible information regarding Sacred Harp and apply the concepts of the a new perspective will be added to this geographic study of how the Sacred Harp portrays nature as a spiritual connection between singer and God. Also, the research will apply ecomusicology methods to evaluate the ecological influences in Sacred Harp. The research provides a new outlook regarding the relationship between how music defines a place, and how the place defines the music.

Sacred Harp music is based on a rudimentary form of shape-note hymnody originating from psalm book signings in Europe. Shape-notes became a popular style adopted by southern United States church congregations. Professor George Pullen Jackson (Jackson, 1944: 7) accurately described the Sacred Harp not as a church hymnal but its songs are nevertheless religious. The Sacred Harp is a vocal music tradition involving singing by individuals unaccompanied by instruments. This type of singing is named for the oblong hymnal that bears

its name, *The Sacred Harp*. It is a compilation of American hymns and anthems originally published by B.F. White and E.J. King in 1844 (Miller, 2004: 5). It is thus a method for practicing and gathering singers together in one space. There are few churches that still utilize Sacred Harp hymnals as their standard church hymnal, especially within the Primitive Baptist denomination (Drummond 1989; Anderson & Powell 2006). However, Sacred Harp's use of shape-notes is heavily practiced and accepted as its own musical group.

Traditional Sacred Harp is sung based on a four-syllable solmization. The musical notes on a page indicate a syllable that is to be sung and are arranged on a scale. Thus the Sacred Harp is more commonly referred to as "fasola" (pronounced 'fa,' 'so,' 'la,' the basic syllable sounds of music instruction), and those that sing it are the "fasola folk" (Grove Music Encyclopedia 2007). Each note within the music is assigned a shape, and the shape dictates the syllable sung (Garst, 1991: 13). A triangle is pronounced "Fa," an oval pronounced "So," a square is "La," and the diamond "Mi" (Garst, 1991: 13). On the page the notes are arranged on a five-line staff, following the tradition of western music, with four individual lines sung according to the treble, alto, tenor and bass corresponding parts as they are traditionally arranged on a European staff (Garst, 1991: 13). Eventually, the singers recognize the shapes by sight and become able to sing the music accordingly (Miller, 2008: 4). Below Figure 1.1 illustrate show the shape-notes appear as musical notation in the *Scared Harp*. For contrast, Figure 1.2 depicts the seven shape-notes traditional taught in shape-note music. The Sacred Harp is even further simplifying the system in an attempt to keep the music as easy to read and sing as possible (Grove Music Encyclopedia 2007).



Figure 1.1 Sacred Harp Notes on a C Major Scale



Figure 1.2 The traditional Seven Shape-Notes on an F Major Scale

Arranged for communal participation, Sacred Harp singers sit positioned in what is referred to as a “hollow-square.” Figure 1.3 portrays the hollow-square and how the sections for the singers are divided throughout the room.

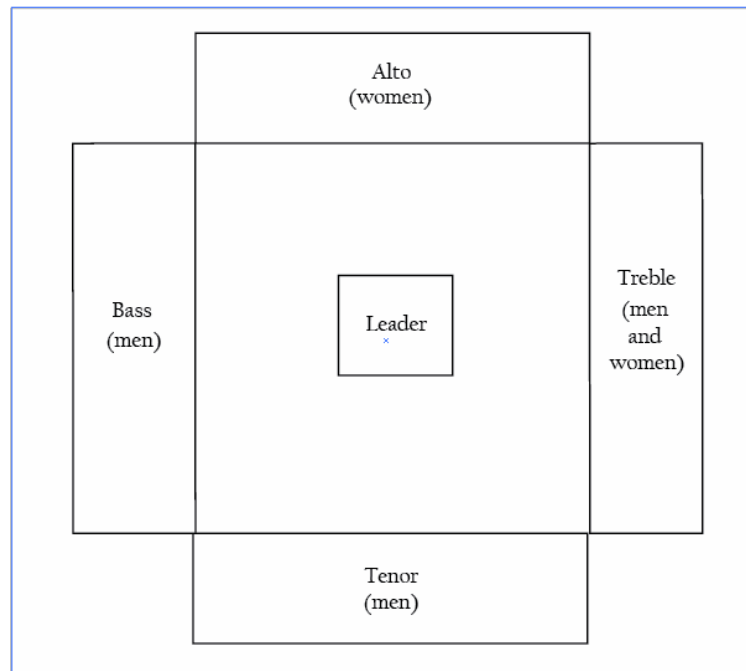


Figure 1.3 The Hollow Square

Basses (men) face the treble section (men and women), the alto's (women) face the tenors (men), and the leader stands in the center (Miller, 2008: 4). This ensures that all the sounds from the voices are concentrated into the center of the square where they merge to achieve the best possible sound. It is where the leader stands and the all of the music accumulates that is the true hollow-square of Sacred Harp music (Anderson and Powell 2006).

The South is considered to be the heart of Sacred Harp singings, where it is still heavily practiced to this day. Sacred Harp has also diffused back onto the national scene and it is practiced all across the nation. Currently all types of peoples with various backgrounds enjoy and practice the Sacred Harp (NPR 2003; Clawson 2011). However, the research's' intent is to analyze the evolution of Sacred Harp as a systematic process as a whole making no

differentiation of race, but does focus on the ethnicity of the English, Scots-Irish, and Irish as they were the culture to make the most impact upon Sacred Harp.

Since the Sacred Harp is a musical practice, an interdisciplinary approach is adopted to best analyze the topic using the geography of religion and the emerging field of ecomusicology, a sub field of musicology, which is defined and covered at length in the literature review chapter.

Terminology

Due to the diversity of fields covered within the research, the main key terms covered need to be carefully and clearly defined. The three terms that will reoccur are *sacred*, *spiritual*, and *scale*.

Sacred is a concept where the authority of a divine power is marked off by the emotion of fear or awe attached to a place where the substantial and essential character of a religious element are intertwined and considered sacred. It is the attempt of humans to confine a divine entity within bounds so it can be better understood (Tuan 2010). Inside this place the omniscient entity is assumed by individuals to be morally perfect because of its immortal qualities of nature (Hepburn 2005). The place or structure that is deemed sacred is therefore an area in which the divine spirit resides transforming the building or area into a significant spot where the divine and individuals of the same belief system can meet with one another.

The word *Spiritual* is defined as referring to the exercising, emotional, and psychological connection to religion versus the organized institution of a denomination. It is the individual and inner sense of the divine (Hardesty 2005). Spirituality is developed even further when applying it

to the church; therefore the “spirituality of the church” is in reference to the collective body of believers that relate to a similar culture and history (Farmer & Leith 2005: 759). Spiritual and spirituality will thus refer to the communion and individual connection of an individual to a divine entity.

Scale is the final dominant recurrent term that emerges throughout the research. Since this work involves both the geography and music fields, “scale” indicates two entirely separate systems of measurement to each respected discipline. Scale as it relates to cartography is “the relationship between a distance on a map or plan and the corresponding distance on the ground, shown as a numbered line or representative fraction” (Mayhew and Penny 1992). For human geographers scale can further be the idea of a hierarchy separating different levels of the worlds system or area being examined. The world systems concept emerged from Marxist ideals and mainly has mainly been debated by political geographers (Harrison 2010). In the 1980s scale was debated as separating the world economy, nation-state, and locality levels or separating the urban, regional, nation, and global areas (Harrison 2010). This research uses takes the latter definition. Geographic scale will be a model of analysis for the sake of organization to maintain levels of cohesion and relate ability. Scale to musicians accredits itself to the sequence of notes arranged in an ascending or descending linear order to convey a pitch (Drabkin 2007). A musical scale usually encompasses one or more octaves in order to provide a range of tone for the musician (Drabkin 2007). Therefore it will be noted when in the work a “geographic scale” analysis is being used versus a “musical scale” analysis in order to differentiate between the two areas of study.

A Brief History of the Sacred Harp

Since the Sacred Harp constitutes a specific form of music, a brief history of traditional music is needed in order to properly understand the direction of this work. The American tradition of the Sacred Harp originated with the *Bay Psalm Book* of the Puritans in New England. However, the origins of the music itself date back to Reformation Europe, corresponding to the vernacular translation of the Bible and increased use of metrical versions of the Psalms utilized by Protestant denominations (Haraszti 1956). Examples of European Psalter books, as they were called, included Luther's *Geystliche Gesangk Buckleyn* in 1524, and *Aulcuns Pseaumes* by Calvin, as well as Coverdale's *Goostly Psalmes* published in 1539 (Haraszti 1956).

The Puritans used a rendition of the Sternhold-Hopkins Psalter book to bring the concept of the Psalter to the American English colonies (Haraszti 1956: 5). The Sternhold-Hopkins Psalter was a unique adaptation specific to England. During the early 1500s, at the commencement of the Reformation in Europe, King Henry VIII of England discounted Martin Luther and his reforms against the Papacy. In his *Assertio septem sacramentorum* (Defense of the Seven Sacraments, against Martin Luther) King Henry VIII harshly rebuked Luther for denying the Pope's "Supremacy to be of divine Right, or Law" (Henry VIII 1522: 41). Henry VIII asserted that Luther foolishly contradicted himself by originally stating the "Bishop of Rome" was given unquestionable power over "the Universal church by human consent and for the public Good" (Henry VIII 1522: 41). Henry VIII's *Defense* established England's stance as Catholic. While England remained Catholic, King Henry VIII banned and burned any Protestant worship books, including the circulating Coverdale's version of *Psalmes* (Zim 1987: 112). It would not be until the "King's Great Matter" of 1525-1533, at which time Henry VIII divorced Queen Catherine of Aragon and married Anne Boleyn, that England would become Protestant.

Metrical psalms appeared in England during the time of King Henry VIII's sixth and final wife, Catherine Parr (Zim 1987: 113). As a result of Parr's constant religious devotions, Thomas Sternhold, a member of the royal household, began to compose his own psalter (Zim 1987: 113). Eventually the Sternhold-Hopkins Psalter became an integrated work of the *Book of Common Prayer* within the Anglican Church (Haraszti 1956: 4).

From the 1620s to roughly the 1650s, Puritans, or Separatists as they were known in England, moved to the New England colonies in an effort to practice their religious freedom in what became the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Bringing with them the traditions and knowledge of Psalter books, the founders confidently believed that the Sternhold-Hopkins Psalter was inadequate. They instead sought to revise a metrical Book of Psalms for use in their services in the colonies (Haraszti 1956: 6-7). Once Governor Winthrop established a printing house in the colony, the *Bay Psalm Book* was published under the full title of *The Whole Booke of Psalmes Faithfully Translated into English Metre*. It significantly became the first book to be printed in English America (Haraszti 1956: 11).

Later, the *Bay Psalm Book* came to the attention of musician and tanner William Billings of Boston. William Billings was an American composer and choral education teacher during the 1750s to 1800 (Kroeger 2011). Born in Boston in 1746, Billings received a public school education and practiced as a tanner during the early years of his life (Barbour 1960). In his youth William Billings, along with other children in America, sang the Psalter's and church hymns that became an integral part of the music educational fabric received by a child. Revisions of the *Bay Psalm Book* and Billings hymnals were inevitable. Gradually, hymns such as the *Christian Harmony* by Jeremiah Ingalls of Exeter, New Hampshire in 1805 began to appear in New England (Jackson 1944).

After teaching himself music, Billings published a variety of compositions including *The New England Psalm Singer*, *The Singing Master's Assistant*, *Music in Miniature*, *The Psalm Singer's Amusement*, *The Suffolk Harmony*, and *the Continental Harmony* (Barbour 1960). Altogether Billings composed sacred music pieces for four part harmonies with no musical instruments for singing schools and church services (Kroeger 2011). From his works in shape-notes Billings established a basic singing style that later inspired the future Sacred Harp composers. Billings followed a Renaissance type of music style when conforming all of his choirs together (Kroeger 2011). Billings started with the bases section, followed by the sopranos (Kroeger 2011). These two parts always were consistently matched together as a means of balancing the sound (Kroeger 2011). After establishing these two singing parts, the tenors and altos joined in to fill the missing pitches within the harmony (Kroeger 2011). This revolutionary idea provided the framework for Sacred Harp and its rudimentary harmony.

This singing movement became established in the South through the spread of singing schools accompanying the Second Great Awakening, approximately two-decades before the American Civil War (Cobb Jr. 2004). During the eighteenth century, singing schools became the vehicle by which this music would move into the Southeastern states (Miller 2004). Singing schools provided an advantageous way for children to learn music quickly, especially in primitive rural schools (Miller 2004). Eventually, due to the 'better music movement' in the New England states, singing schools grew into a more regimented way for students to receive their music education (Miller 2004). The Second Great Awakening is a religious movement that occurred in the 1790s. The movement engaged in revival meetings, evangelism and missionary work focused on Native Americans (Crawford 2001). The Second Great Awakening will be covered in greater detail in following chapters.

Inspired by the tradition contained within the singing schools, two southern schoolmasters by the names of Benjamin Franklin White and William Walker put together *The Southern Harmony and Musical Companion* (Jackson, 1944). B.F. White moved to Georgia in the 1830s shortly after the work's publication. There White worked in singing schools and composed his own musical works based on Isaac Watts, John Cennick, John Newton, and Jesse Mercer's *The Baptist Harmony* (Jackson, 1944). White's work eventually produced the *Sacred Harp* hymnbook. Widely accepted, it was rapidly adopted in the churches of Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama (Jackson, 1944: 23). The Carolina congregations utilized their own hymnal tradition in the *Southern Harmony* (Jackson, 1944). These two hymnals locked into existence the Sacred Harp method, which remained unique to the southern United States and Primitive Southern Baptists congregations. Since its migration southward, the Sacred Harp has been accepted and preserved in that region through singing-schools, traditional singing families, and rural church communities (Miller, 2004). The Sacred Harp has established itself within the fabric of the southern music tradition and become an interworked factor within American culture.

Objectives: Study Area and Methodology

One focus of this research is to analyze how the Sacred Harp became a tradition regionally identified with the South. In order to accurately portray how this evolved the study of the migration will begin in England, then shift to the northern American colonies and finally move towards the South. This is to ensure that an accurate historical and tracing of the Sacred Harp from one region to the next will convey the reasons as to why the South was to become the heartland of Sacred Harp music. Figure 1.4 below is a map detailing the event of the three main

movements and evolution of the Psalter books came to the northern colonies from Britain. Then how the psalters influence shape notes in the northern colonies. After years of the Psalter influence Boston, Massachusetts became an important core area for music and music education utilizing the techniques of shape-notes, as previously seen through the example of composer William Billings. During the early 1800s the “Better Music Movement” pushed shape-notes out of the northern states in an effort to learn proper European music, and not focused on what was deemed “backwards” music by professional music scholars (Anderson & Powell 2006). This effort forced shape-note music into the South, where in 1844 with the publication of *The Sacred Harp* as a hymnal, Georgia became the core area for the music.



Figure 1.4 Psalters and Shape Notes come to the American colonies (Grove Music Encyclopedia 2011), Better Music Movement (Anderson and Powell 2006), and Sacred Harp (Jackson 1944)

Secondly the research seeks to identify how the lyrics of Sacred Harp music portray the environment and the connection to the divine. The environment studied is two-fold: the human and the physical. The human environment is human's attempt to create a space for the divine to dwell in while its presence is on Earth. In the Christian tradition it is through cathedrals and church buildings that this predominately occurs (Scott 2003). Figure 1.5 is a basic floor plan of a cathedral illustrating how the Catholic Church separated the laity from the clergy through architecture. This spatially, liturgically and theologically forbid the laity direct contact with God, thus reinforcing the concept that in order to commune with God, one had to seek out a priest. After the Protestant Reformation this paradigm shifted, opening the pathway from God to all worshipers.

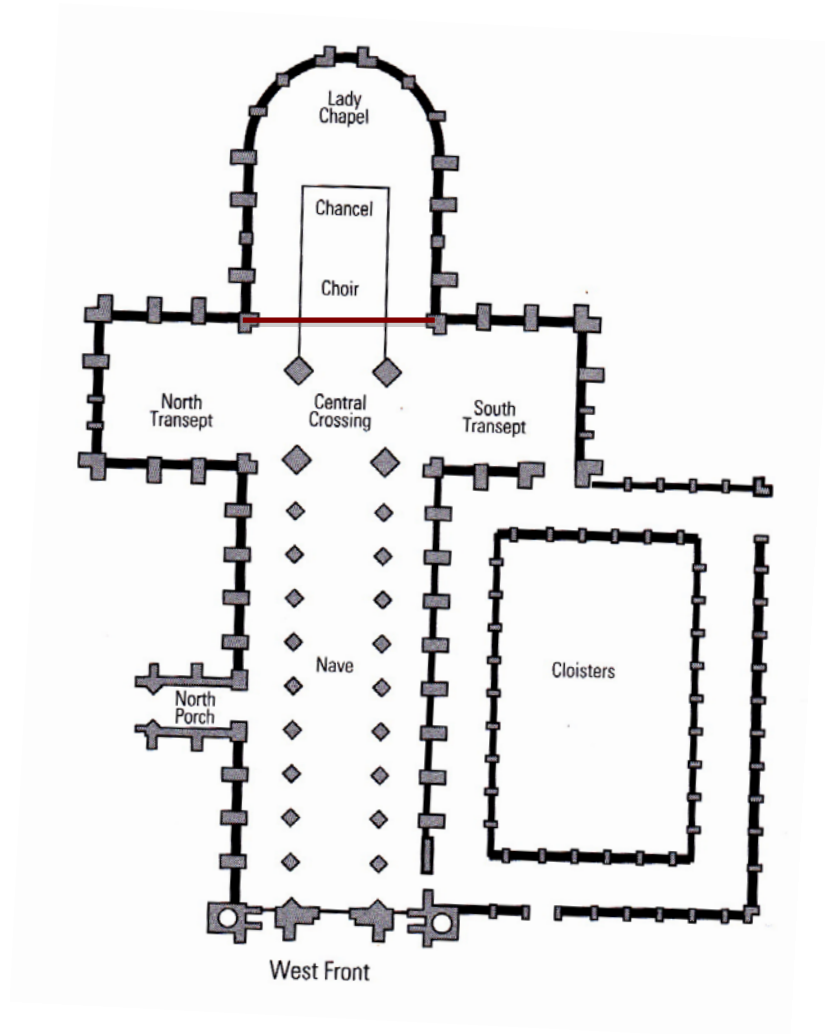


Figure 1.5 Typical Catholic Cathedral floor plan with a red line marking where the laity was forbidden (Scott 2003)



Figure 1.6 At the Protestant O'Kelly Church of Christ Chapel, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, January 17, 2012. Photograph taken by Author.

Once the connection between God and regular worshippers was opened, it became possible for an individual to connect with God in their own manner as spatially expressed in the church's interior architecture. Thus a great component in Sacred Harp music is its reference to nature and its use of nature as a vehicle to connect the singers with God. Sacred Harp composers wrote their songs in the outdoors in an attempt to find inspiration. As a result there are notes and sounds within the music that imitate animals and sounds found in nature (Anderson & Powell 2006). The Sacred Harp utilizes a lot of natural landscapes; therefore the latter part of the research pertains to how nature is used and how it attempts to connect people to the landscape in order to see the divine.

Given the breadth and diversity the research entails, multiple sources and methods are used. The literature review is a testament to the span of resources needed to be consulted to accurately portray the Sacred Harp as a cultural geographic entity and how ecomusicology aids in further interpreting the physical landscape. The methods of the research include archival research, unstructured conversations with professionals, and personal observation and participation in singing of the music. Also, numerous maps were examined and created in an effort to understand the spatial distribution of the Sacred Harp's past as well as its present. As such the results of the sources and methods will yield research that sheds light on the Sacred Harp tradition and how geography successfully lends itself to understanding the ways in which Sacred Harp began, evolved and resides within its present state.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

In ancient and modern times alike, theology and geography have often been closely related studies because they meet at crucial points of human curiosity. If we seek after the nature of God, we must consider the nature of man and the earth; if we look at the earth questions of divine purpose in its creation and of the role of mankind on it inevitably arise.

Professor C.J. Glacken, *Traces on the Rhodian Shore* (1967: 35)

Geography of Religion

The geography of religion explores the integrating ways of how humans connect to the world in which they have been placed. Throughout the literature of the geography of religion scholars seek to understand this underpinning alliance. The geography of religion explores integrating ways of how humans connect to their world, and how religious identity occurs in a spatially and culturally constructed place. It is essential to study religion and its impact upon the human landscape due religious significant influence upon the orchestrations and reorganizations of various societies (Brace, Bailey, and Harvey 2006).

In her article “Geography and religion: trends and prospects,” Lily Kong (1990) sets forth the foundational three part cycle in which religion and geography connect to one another following a thesis to antithesis to synthesis rotation. This step, Kong

recommends should then be followed by study of the settlement of the landscape. The analysis is completed once the geographer seeks to understand the underlying forces of the culture being studied and how they create religion within the society (Kong 1990). Although Kong puts forward a refutable statement here, the intent is noted. That a interdisciplinary approach is needed when analyzing religion. Kong's process follows the ways in which humans respond to their situations, how their responses affect their decisions based upon their understanding, and how the first two steps impacts human culture.

To further apprehend a culture a scholar must utilize ways to integrate multiple disciplines jointly with their own. By using elements from other disciplines such as: theology, classics, history, and anthropology, and applying them to the geography of religion research in the field would be enhanced (Kong 2001). Similar to the way in which Kong attempts to expand the minds of scholars to explore more disciplines than their own, it is essential to remember how the interaction of different places and interlinked situations affect one another (Ivakhiv 2006). Therefore space, as considered by the geographer, is always significant. As peoples migrate and move across space, so to do their ideals and values.

Since religion involves the beliefs of peoples, religious communities will interact with their spaces and territories in identifiable ways and patterns. This is the reason why religion is a "marker of identity or a broad category of society concern" (Ivakhiv 2006: 172). Ivakhiv analyzes the work of Kong and uses her argument to put forward his own. Taking these two academics' scholarship and applying it to further research are the

precedent for further study in the geography of religion. Thus the field has numerous ways in which to use disciplines that complement one another in order to achieve the end result of further understanding.

Author Adrian Ivakhiv (2006) describes the progression that has occurred even since Kong's work within the field. From Kong's previous research Ivakhiv is able to justify that the two most significant questions to ask while researching a topic is studying out the field are: (1) the ways of distributing sacred worth across a geographical space, and (2) what the different kinds of meaning present there are (Ivakhiv 2006). Ivakhiv is thereby assigning the task to the geographer to analyze the means in which significance and meaning are applied, articulated, contested, and conceptualized with a religion in a given sacred place under study.

Kong and Ivakhiv pushed the geography of religion subdiscipline into a new light. By encouraging an interdisciplinary approach they enforce the importance of keeping the discipline open to interpretation to allow for the advent of new research to have an impact. By utilizing their research questions and approaches mentioned above, viewing how the interaction between humans and culture interact in the treatment of the environment are two discernible ways for further analyzing the Sacred Harp tradition in the American South.

Sacred Places and Spaces

Before preceding forward the concept of the term "sacred" must first be defined within the Geography of Religion, especially explaining what is sacred and how it is

spatially constructed to practicing traditions. The sacred separates itself from what is in the secular and physical realm and the divine realm (Ivakhiv, 2006: 170). Sacred places are the boundaries people place to convey the separation between the human realm and divine entity (Tuan 2010: 5). Ivakhiv (2006) in “Toward a Geography of Religion,” provides the means for separating one sphere from the other, supporting the idea that between these two worlds there lays a known boundary dividing one from the other. Ivakhiv and Tuan are referring to the areas where individuals worship. This does not mean the core areas of religions change, such as Jerusalem and Mecca. Rather it is the people and the faith that they carry with them when they travel that erects new sacred places such as churches, mosques, and temples. People move due to either political situations, trade or pilgrimage (Tuan 2010). Thus they move in identifiable ways (Ivakhiv 2006). Since people leave markers through their sacred spaces it is thus a means of following the progression of how religion moves across of a given area. This will be applied to the Sacred Harp as a means for examining how Sacred Harp developed across its chosen landscape and how the landscape invoked concepts of divine purpose of the Earth’s creation that spilled over into the hymns of Sacred Harp music.

Sacred Spaces and Nature

In the Christian tradition, Church fathers built churches to be their sacred places. By enforcing the church as the holy residence for God on Earth, the Church formed the boundary between what was outside the church building unholy, versus what was inside holy. In doing so they fit themselves to a tradition that carries into the present day. Yi-

Fu Tuan's *Religion: From Place to Placelessness* (2010) explains why Christian theology separates the natural landscape from the human. Physical elements on the land such as mountains and streams generally considered relatively off limits except for traveling, and would often be considered dangerous (Tuan, 2010: 11). Although the educated held that these places were to be healthily respected rather than feared, the local peasantry did not take the same stance (Tuan, 2010:11). Tuan reminds his audience that peasants during the medieval to early modern historical times adopted folklore to explain that beyond the mountains or the streams are dark and dangerous lands, thereby discouraging any movement from outside of the known village or surrounding territories of the Lord (Tuan, 2010: 11). While the educated gentry were gifted with the knowledge that mountains were safe, just challenging, they nevertheless understood the magnificence of these natural objects.

The difference between the natural and the human landscapes became that although natural features are finite locations, it is the Christian church building that can be raised anywhere and be given all of the rites deemed valid by Christian authorities (Tuan, 2010: 11). Given the break between wealthy and impoverished, authorities like the Roman Catholic Church were able to erect architectural structures and establish that these buildings as holy structures, thereby creating a means of control upon the masses. Tuan's analysis is critical because while Sacred Harp utilizes traditional holy places for singings, the natural environment being sung about emphasizes the importance of recognizing the natural world as divinely crafted by God. Nature in the Sacred Harp is discussed in the Sacred Harp section of the literature review since the topics overlap.

Music Geography

Music Geography emerged during the 1960s and the 1970s as a sub field of Cultural Geography (Bell 2001). Originally concerned with the way places were represented in song lyrics, the field has now expanded to include the diffusion of musical style, and the consumer music market (Bell 2001). The greatest wealth of literature written for music geography concerns popular musical trends and how they became identified with cultural areas of the United States. Works such as *Music and Urban Geography* accent the emerging importance of representing the current social environment and its effect on social life (Krimms 2007). Much scholarship also focuses on written involving the current music market as a geographic music industry (Hudson 2006).

While the subject of music geography is flourishing, the more recent research concerned with in this review involves how new cultural developments in the geographic field contribute to studying older and more traditional music of a specific region. People greatly identify with the music of their area and therefore became deeply attached to it (Hudson 2006). The main thesis of the article “Music Regions and Mental Maps: Teaching Cultural Geography” (Shobe and Banis 2010) conveys primarily how to teach cultural geography by using the popular music industry; it also emphasizes an argument regarding how there are social and cultural links between the music of an area and its people (Shobe and Banis 2010). Music Geography’s role thus attempts to understand the bond between music and humans.

The literature with which this thesis is concerned consists of a mix of the above-mentioned traits of music geography and also the literature will be emphasizes as place studies as modeled by *The Place of Music* (Leyshon, Matless, & Revill 1998). A critical contributing work to music geography, *The Place of Music* provides a geographic framework for studying music produced by the Institute of British Geographers. It responds to a call for adding music as an integral part of the geographical imagination (Leyshon, Matless, & Revill 1998). The authors of this compilation assert that the nature of soundscapes, definitions of music and cultural value, the geographies of different music genres, and the place of music in local, national, and global cultures are essential to geographic understanding. *The Place of Music* emphasizes that “space and place [should be considered] not simply as sites” where music happens, but where it is created from its spatial realities (Leyshon, Matless, & Revill 1998: 4).

Also critical to further comprehending the importance of music in Geography is the significance of how a musical tradition is practiced. An editorial on “Practices of Music and Sound” in the *Journal of Social and Cultural Geography* (2005) proclaiming that musical practices were essential for further understanding the ways that “music’s are experienced, produced, reproduced and consumed” (Anderson, Morton, & Revill 2005). They thereby asserted that the way in which people engage in music and where they do so are geographic realities.

Diffusion and Adaption in Geography

Much of this research is lent to the classical geographic work from the Berkeley School as it is conceptualizing a cultural historical geography. The approach was developed by Carl Sauer and his students to convey the origins and the dispersals of culture and the processes involved in the diffusion and adaptation across landscapes (Hugill 2010). The local and micro-themes of places and their histories are the origins for which to begin analyzing spatial variations. The localized place is the region where peoples, places, natures, economies and various daily human interactions occur therefore making them good starting points of analysis (Short and Godfrey 2007; Naylor 2008). It is from these centralized areas where traditions begin and the start of diffusion and adaptation occur. The intent of diffusion is to convey the how humans select their innovations and traditions and in turn illustrate how they move to be rejected, adopted, and modified within a chosen cultural group (Hugill 2010). Humans give meaning to certain areas and assign regions based on traditions, values and the histories associated with various areas. These regions are implemented upon the mind and provide beginning points for answering the question of why one associates an area with a particular type of music or cultural process (Schobe and Banis 2010). Therefore in the research pertaining to the Sacred Harp the approach is used in an effort to examine each region the music influenced, beginning in Britain, then New England, and finally the South.

Sacred Harp

Literature on the Sacred Harp provides a limited source of information. Although scholarly research on the topic dates from the 1940s (Sabol 2005), research conducted since has been sparse and sporadic. Luckily, the advent of recent work aids in diminishing this void. Studies are mainly focused upon the cultural and historical development and preservation of the Sacred Harp music and practice. Thus their function in the research is in providing the core and periphery regions of the Sacred Harp and how it evolved within these areas. The most essential work for this paper will be an analysis of the hymnal *The Sacred Harp, 1991 Edition*. This volume has remained relatively unchanged since its original publication in 1844, with minor additions of new Sacred Harp songs within the twentieth century (Anderson & Powell 2006). It is also still used in the practice of contemporary Sacred Harp singings and few church congregations. Therefore the songbook is treated as a primary document of Sacred Harp songs and is applied in this way for the analysis of the research.

Sacred Harp literature took a significant step forward with George Pullen Jackson's work on southern hymnody music. *The Story of the Sacred Harp* (1944) details the development of the tradition in the south and from a few years prior to the *Sacred Harp* hymnal's production. Although one of the oldest texts on this topic, it is also one of the most valuable. Compiled by thorough research and documented personal accounts, the story of Sacred Harp's northern origins and integration into southern traditions and practices were preserved for future reference (Jackson 1944). Jackson's

inquiry provides a solid foundation in Sacred Harp history, particularly focusing on its early influences in the southern community.

Buell Cobb Jr. further preserved the Sacred Harp's historical tradition in his volume *The Sacred Harp: A Tradition and Its Music* (1978). Expanded on by Cobb from his Master's Thesis work, he takes great efforts to provide a scholastic approach examining the musical and social aspects of Sacred Harp provided by its enrichment with the Southern culture (Cobb Jr. 1978). Combined with Jackson's work, the early tradition of Sacred Harp historiography is fully detailed. The basics of the history are documented and provide areas of expansion for future researchers.

Kiri Millers' ethnographic work *Traveling Home: Sacred Harp Singing and American Pluralism* (2008) has become one of the more complete foundational works for Sacred Harp in recent years. Miller examines the musical tradition from an ethnographic perspective. Although it is not geographically fixed, the work highlights the important customs of the music, revealing its underlying culture. Miller's thesis revolves around legacy and the continuation of the tradition, its beginnings, evolution and finally its present day status. Part of Millers' observations lead her to synthesize the religious affiliation with the music itself, conveying the importance of Sacred Harp as individual singers' primary source of religious experience (Miller 2008). Also, Miller's stress upon the present Sacred Harp community conveys that while participating in Sacred Harp is a singer's main connection to religion, the tradition is losing its roots, as people do not understand the depth of Sacred Harp's tradition. So while the practicing of the music is continued, its original message is in danger of becoming lost.

Miller's *Traveling Home* is a slim volume with an overview of dense information that must be taken into account along with other works on the singing tradition that reveals the Sacred Harps complexity even more. John Bealle's *Public Worship, Private Faith: Sacred Harp and American Folksong* (1997) conveys how Sacred Harp is an American cultural tradition that is a factor in how the American folksong emerged. Bealle's first two chapters focus on this primary thesis as he weaves together the background story from the social, political and theological context of America during the 1800s (Bealle 1997). Thus affecting the evolution of Sacred Harp eventually evolved as its own unit, but also as part of a greater network of a southern folk identity (Bealle 1997).

Laura Clawson's (2011) *I belong to this band!* and Chloe Webb's *the Legacy of the Sacred Harp* (2010) address where the Sacred Harp tradition currently stands. Clawson's work focuses on the culture of the Sacred Harp in the modern community. Clawson is an active singer in Sacred Harp. Clawson is also an ethnographer. By combining these two perspectives Clawson works as an active participant in the work as a singer and uses her resources as an ethnographer to focus on the diversity felt between the singers in the South towards those in the North. From Clawson's perspective since the shift bringing the shape-note tradition to the South, the regional roles of area of origin and area of reception are now reversed. Northerner's are "distant cousins," while the main family unit of Sacred Harp now resides within the South (Clawson 2011). A great addition to the book is Clawson's explanation of the Hollywood production of *Cold Mountain*, which she adapted from a conference paper entitled "Going Hollywood: Participation, Performance, and the Commercialization of Sacred Harp Music" and

presented to the American Sociological Association (2004). The film placed Sacred Harp upon the national stage and drew new numbers into the traditional fold. It greatly helped general audiences to understand the music being utilized in the soundtrack and how it thrives in the present (Clawson 2011).

Likewise Chloe Webb (2010) weaves together a personal scholarly work as it details the account of her own singing family in Sacred Harp and their life in the South. Webb's work emphasizes the core of the Sacred Harp community: the family and the people (Webb 2010). Also, Webb reveals new research questions about Sacred Harp. Although the North is traditionally established as the origin of shape-notes in America, Webb focuses on the influence of Jamestown, Virginia settlers as well. Likewise of English origin as their future New England comrades, Jamestown settlers also brought with them, psalter and shape-note influences. An intriguing new issue to the story to uncover is to what extent was the influence. Webb reinforces the importance of family, music and community ingrained into the very fabric of this culture.

A unique read amidst the newest of Sacred Harp scholarship comes from the combined efforts of Warren Steel and Richard Hulan (2010). Both regularly participate in Sacred Harp singings. Their work that tracks the Sacred Harp through the composers of the songs emphasizing the composer's role in the tradition and the effects that their work had on the tradition to the present day (Steel and Hulan 2010). With creative archival research, the authors discuss composers of the Sacred Harp hymns according to their chronological date and significance in the *Sacred Harp 1991 Edition* hymnal. This work is best utilized when read with Cobb (1978) and Jackson (1944) for an accurate

background of the Sacred Harp and its evolution as a musical and cultural phenomenon. By focusing their work on the composers Steel and Hulan evaluates how they were influenced to write their music and the sources of inspiration they drew from. Many composers took to writing their compositions outside in the natural environment, thus many notes imitate animal sounds (Steel and Hulan 2010). An even greater image of Sacred Harp emerges before the research with this work. While its networking community fosters the Sacred Harp tradition, it is also inspired through its natural environment.

Part of culture is adapting and manipulating one's surroundings, of which the physical environment performs a significant role. Warren states a brief description of composers using nature in hymns in the documentary *Awake, My Soul: The Story of the Sacred Harp* (Anderson & Powell 2005). As composers sought solace and inspiration from writing their compositions in nature, it came to be reflected in the notes that they wrote on the musical scale. Animal sounds, and the deep groans of the cows in the field are represented throughout Sacred Harp hymns, particularly from the bass section (Anderson & Powell 2005). There is an underlying connection between nature and music, and although it has been relatively unexplored it is necessary to research if the connection can be established at all.

Ecomusicology

Similar to Music Geography in the discipline of geography, ecomusicology is an emerging subfield within Musicology. Since the 1970s when Ecomusicology was

introduced, numerous academics have taken great strides in better understanding the relationship between how nature and music impact and influence one another. Denise Von Glahn (2003) in *The Sounds of Place* puts forward an argument that American music realities emerge from their surroundings. Significantly, Von Glahn examines how place is emphasized through music and how “place pieces” produce a national voice and identity (Von Glahn 2003: 7). Von Glahn argues that music represents how Americans have produced their music to represent every part of who they are as a people and culture and the American landscape is a fundamental part of that description.

The most recent work published by the *Journal of the American Musicological Society (JAMS)* offers a colloquy on the topic that raises essential questions as to how to analyze ecomusicology, as well as questions to potentially ask when gathering research on the topic (Allen 2011). Questions include: What is the role of nature in musicology? How does it contribute to the role of humanity? What can the study of music tell scholars about the construction of the world? All of these are essential to pose in research and will be considered within this thesis.

Not only does the *JAMS* colloquy offer essential questions to pose when for Ecomusicology research, it also emphasizes the importance of an ecomusicological perspective. Grimley (2011) emphasizes the concept of landscape through the centuries. Landscape is central to the notion of Ecomusicology as it has traditionally been a visual concept where scenes of historical events and actors physically occur (Grimley 2011). Due to advancements in the Ecomusicology field, the landscape now functions as an

element to unpack historical cultural narratives and expose how ideas of nature music have been built through historical analyses (Grimley 2011).

There have been inconsistent attempts between various to accurately portray the scale, migration, and regional attributes of the Shape-note and Sacred Harp musical traditions. The Sacred Harp is an American musical evolution from British roots that grew in the Northern region of the country, but bloomed in the South. As such, the tradition can be identified as a Southern regional cultural occurrence with emphasis on the spiritual interaction through song. The natural environment continually reappears, thus emphasizing its significance in sacred music and places and thus its place within the Christian tradition. This thesis seeks to further contribute to the Sacred Harp record by combing various methods and theories to provide an original perspective to an old style of music.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Overview

Various sources and methods are used in this research in order to provide an accurate geographic insight into the creation of Sacred Harp as a characteristic cultural geographic feature within the United States, specific to the southern region. The sources utilized in this study include participant observation, cartographic analysis, and archival research. Previous research interpreting the specific culture and history of Sacred Harp music has only been conducted in the fields of sociology and musicology. While this research uses history as a predominate method of analysis, the geographical lens utilized constitutes a new approach to studying the Sacred Harp. Therefore, while these methods and sources may be deemed classical geography, it nevertheless provides the foundation for grounding the analysis.

The prevailing questions answered in the research are modeled after questions posed by Wilbur Zelinsky's examinations in cultural geography and D. W. Meinig's methods for evaluating the historical geography of America. The major proposed questions in this research and the method for answering each question are as follows:

- 1) How and why has Sacred Harp evolved as a cultural event through time and space (Zelinsky 1992)?

- Archival Research, Cartographic Analysis and Recreation, Core and Periphery analysis, and Meinig's transatlantic application (Meinig 1986).
- 2) What is the regional evolution of Sacred Harp as an American culture specific to the South?
- Archival research, interviews, participation, and observation of music practices.
- 3) What is *sacred* in the Sacred Harp and how is it identifiable as part of a geography of religion?
- Archival research including emphasis on architecture of churches and the contrast between church building practices and introductory analysis of Christianity doctrine, field research, interviews, and participation.
- 4) How is the physical environment utilized and represented as a space within the practices of Sacred Harp?
- Lyrical analysis and ecomusicology.

This research follows Zelinsky's (1992) process of tracing American cultural development by identifying the immigration of a select cultural group along with their cultural traits. This analysis examines the immigration of British Puritans and Scots-Irish cultural groups essential to the evolution of Sacred Harp from shape-note hymnology in America. These groups carried with them specific attributes that allowed for the development of Sacred Harp to emerge in the specific regions that it did and become a cultural trait of the South. Through a historical geographic analysis combining Zelinsky's (1992: 5) process of "long-distance transfer of people and their cultural

freight,” and Meinig’s geographic transect of the Atlantic World models, the cultural geography of Sacred Harp is explained and developed as a process that can be identified and followed through both space and time.

In order to properly address the physical nature of Sacred Harp through the physical places where the singings are held and the environment being sung of in the hymns two methods were primarily consulted. Through analyzing the churches where the singings take place it will be revealed how the places and the effect of sound upon the singer explains the intimate connection a singer has when singing Sacred Harp music. Developed by British geographers, the place music is developed in, and the emotional attachment, and the accumulation of the sound, provide a glimpse into how humans interact with their environment and the way they further impose themselves across their landscapes (Leyshon, Matless, & Revill 1998; Anderson, Morton, & Revill 2005).

To gain further understanding of how the environment is represented in a cultural element, like music, the emerging field of ecomusicology is used. Ecomusicology is a subfield that has recently developed in musicology that seeks to gain a further understanding of human interaction with the environment by using music and supplemented with outside academic fields to address the role of the environment in music through history (Allen 2011; Grimley 2011).

All methods were designed to answer the main research questions to gain further understanding of how a cultural phenomenon develops in specific places across a landscape and how it diffuses through time. Furthermore, methods reveal in the research the impact of music upon the landscape and how it can be spatially identifiable across

given geographical scales. The entirety of the information will contribute to the geography of religion as it seeks to provide new insight into how cultural influences of place are imposed across a community.

Textual Analysis

The textual analysis of archival records held within local public and university libraries, special library collections, along with colonial and national archives, provide the historical information necessary regarding the spatial development of the Sacred Harp through time. The archives and special collections were able to facilitate in providing necessary primary documents to trace ideas of how colonial peoples saw themselves within their world and how ideas and cultural practices were embodied and diffused through time, and migrations across regions of the world. While the data gathered was crucial to the analysis it was also relatively limited. Given the rarity and the oral tradition of Sacred Harp and shape-notes, as a rural tradition the concept has been given little to no attention by scholars. The research thus further provides use to the historical and geographic record.

Cartographic Analysis

Cartography aids in representing the visual movement of Sacred Harp through time and the conditions of the tradition at present. The maps will emphasize the movement of a process or idea and reflect a way of thinking (Clifford and Valentine 2003). Lately in geographic research there has been an emphasis placed on how to map

southern culture (Alderman and Graves 2011). In keeping in step with this research, numerous maps will be consulted throughout the thesis. One map, a primary document, is the 1751 map drawn by Joshua Fry and Peter Jefferson describing the landscape from North Carolina to New England. This map is of grave importance as it displays the ‘Great Wagon Road’ used by the Ulster-Scots when they migrated south from Pennsylvania. In comparison other maps will be created based on research regarding the people that used shape-notes, where these people moved to, and the musical traditions they took with them. By using all of these maps together, the idea is to show how Sacred Harp moved from the north to the south based on the people that moved with the singing tradition and how that has impacted the landscape of the past through to the present.

Interviews

Informal interviews were conducted to gain a deeper understanding of the personal elements of the Sacred Harp. Since the Sacred Harp has survived because it has been passed down through families and individuals, there has been a small collection of materials saved regarding the music. Personal contact with professionals and people involved in the denominations has provided insight into how the practice was able to maintain itself throughout the century. The interviews focus on providing perspective into how the music survives and is practiced in the Sacred Harp community and in other churches today. Questions that were asked depended on the role and knowledge of the individual and their involvement with musical practices.

Participant Observation

Since the research utilizes humanistic, cultural, and historical approaches and perspectives, an important aspect of understanding the Sacred Harp and shape-note church communities is through personal participation in the tradition itself. Basic and genuine interaction with a culture allows the researcher the ability to immerse them in order to become better acquainted with the overall culture (Clifford and Valentine 2003). It has been observed that those who practice Sacred Harp welcome visitors and newcomers with an open and warmly hospitable atmosphere (Anderson and Powell 2006). Furthermore, there is a need in music geography to understand not only the lyrical foundation of a musical work but also its practice and performance place and characteristics (Anderson, Morton, & Revill 2005).

Sacred Harp personal observations were conducted at local North Carolina singings in the Triad area at the St. Anne's Episcopal Church in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Although the singing does not last all day like other singings located further south, the gathering nevertheless held a lot of the same impact. Receptions were warm and energetic as new faces emerged into the crowd. Fellow singers engaged in spirited conversations about life and the music.

Once it was time to begin the singing everyone became focused and excited with anticipation. A prayer is said to open the singing and the first leader steps into the hollow-square. In that moment the singing commences and it does not stop until the two hours have flown by. The music is sung with great gusto. And, while the congregation is small and little the music still fills the air with hardly any effort. It has long been

reported by other singers that if you can hear your partner, then you are not singing loud enough (Anderson & Powell 2006). This claim holds true as one's surrounding singers occasionally lean in to test this theory.

As the music is sung it is evident that it is an uplifting experience. There is a unique bond through the music where all of a sudden the sounds become one. This may have to deal with the fact that one can sing in a relative and comfortable pitch, comfortable to one's own capabilities of singing. The shape-notes are easy to catch on to and credibly fill their role as a quick means of musical theory education. In little to no time one finds oneself at pace with other singers as if they had been singing Sacred Harp all of their lives. The atmosphere at the conclusion of the singing is one of anticipation as the singers will gather together again next month to sing with all gusto and might they pose.

Another personal observation was likewise conducted to compare and contrast experiences. The second observation was a Sunday singing of shape-notes at an International Church of Christ. It was conducted to further understand other ways in which shape-notes survived into the present and are utilized by other churches. The Sunday singing was held at the Triangle Church of Christ in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. The hymnal being sung from was entitled *Songs of the Church*, and affectionately referred to by the congregation as the "Gold Book." This being the case since the hymnal is a yellow color.

All hymns were written using the shape-note system. However, unlike Sacred Harp, these hymns included all seven of the shape-notes rather than the four typically

used in Sacred Harp. The songs and hymns were many of the same within the *Sacred Harp*. Therefore this leads the author to the conclusion that while the Sacred Harp is a unique musical community in the South, many churches have similar roots and use many of the same techniques today. In conversations with other singers and experts in Church of Christ music, it is revealed that using shape-notes in hymnals and music was a common practice for the church, one that to many was simply the way it has always been done. Another hymnal for the International Churches of Christ was provided around the 1980s and 1990s and it replaced the “Gold Book.” While the new hymnal, *Songs of the Kingdom*, does not use the shape-notes system, rather the western European one, it still transferred many of the beloved songs of the “Gold Book.”

The singing itself was held in a circle rather than a square, but this still allowed for a group atmosphere. Singers were fairly familiar with all the hymns as they were songs that had been sung at numerous worship services and singing devotionals throughout time. The hymns were sung in the same manner as Sacred Harp, with tremendous determination to sing these hymns as best as they can. Given the enthusiasm for the music the atmosphere quickly lightened to enjoyment of the music being sung. As the hymns were sung if there were any issues or if people were having a difficult time understanding rhythm or pitch the song was slowed down and taken through its entirety, sometimes even two times. The intent was not only to teach a new song, but also to enjoy oneself while singing.

Both personal observations conducted convey that shape-note and Sacred Harp music remain an integral part of worshipping God in the Reformed Churches. It is clear

that the songs are an essential practice in worshipping God. As such, it is the continual practice and heart of the music that has allowed it to survive relatively unchanged from the colonial era to the present age.

CHAPTER IV

‘I’M GOING HOME’: A HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY OF THE SACRED HARP

[T]he rude and primitive singing in our old meeting house always excited me powerfully. It brought over me, like a presence, the sense of the infinite and the eternal, the yearning and the fear and the desire of the poor finite being, as if walking on air, with the final words of the psalm floating like an illuminated cloud around me.

Harriet Beecher Stowe (Fischer 1989: 124).

Developing the Core: The Psalters

The Psalter books of England are the core of Sacred Harp music. Although this appears to be a far-reaching claim, it is simply a matter of tracing the heritage as one would trace the lineage of a family. The Sacred Harp was born of the shape-note tradition of New England, which resulted from the Bay Psalm Book that was itself a consequence of the Psalters’ migration from the homeland of England.

Considering the Sacred Harp’s lineage, it is first appropriate to address the significance of the Psalter hymnals to the English and to include a brief theological explanation of the Psalms. The intent of this information is not to formulate a theological argument, but to give an appropriate context to the Psalms so the significance is better understood. Psalters are Psalms arranged for public worship or devotional purposes (Lingas 2007). The Psalms are a series of five distinct collections of sung poetic prayers (Coogan 2001; New International Version 2005). The word “psalm” developed from the Greek word “psalmos” and the Hebrew “mizmor” to indicate a song of prayer

accompanied by a string instrument (Knight 1982; Coogan 2001). Psalms are either addressed to God or they give details of God's will or purpose directed towards humans (Knight 1982). The Psalms are also joined together in five different sections with various authors, as they are compiled from songs and prayers that date back to the time of Moses (New International Version 2005). An example of an older psalm is "Moses and Miriam's Song," located in Exodus 15: 1-21 which praises God for deliverance across the Red Sea and the defeat of Pharaoh and his army (NIV 2005). Thus the five sections compose the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible, which contains and explains the law of the Hebrews (Coogan 2001).

The Ancient Greek lifestyle mimics our current culture today in the sense of its dualism, referring to the creation of divisional boundaries between what is divine and ruled by the gods, separate from humanity and mankind's capabilities (Knight 1982). In Hebraic philosophy, the psalms are known as the "hal-kul", meaning the unified whole, thus combining the soul, relationships, and the functioning of humanity as one (Knight 1982). For the Hebrews there was no division like that seen by the Greeks; the divine and humanity were whole and inseparable. This is significant to understand especially as the shape-note and Sacred Harp tradition evolved in America. The roots are biblically traditional and religiously focused.

Using psalters is a practice influenced by the Renaissance and expanded upon during the Reformation, for England at that time was under the reign of King Henry VIII of the Tudor Dynasty (Psalms, Grove: 2007). As stated in the first chapter, Henry VIII originally banned the Psalter books as forms of worship because of their Protestant

theological influences. It was during the reign of his sixth and final queen Catherine Parr that the Psalters began circulating in the now-Protestant England once again.

Sternhold, a member of the King's household, developed a new Psalter devoid of influence from the previous version of Coverdale's Psalter, which was upheld by reformists Martin Luther and John Calvin (Zim 1987). Sternhold's English Psalter was not published until after the death of Henry VIII, during the reign of his son Edward VI. Sternhold upheld that the Psalter was not meant to be a sacred volume of "moral antidotes to profane 'balettes of fylthyness'" as Coverdale claimed his version was (Zim 1987: 113). Rather its goal was to instruct and to be enjoyed by the elites as a source of guidance in all affairs both secular and spiritual (Zim 1987). Sternhold's Psalter underwent numerous revisions from the reign of Edward VI to that of his half-sister Queen Elizabeth I. During Elizabeth I's time on the throne, the psalms were published as an appendix or outside volume to be used in conjuncture with the Book of Common Prayer and the Bible during worship (Psalms, Grove 2007). With such an influence the Psalm tradition had the ability to be transferred along with the migration of the English people and to be freely incorporated into their own traditions in the American colonies.

Building the Network: English Emigration in the Atlantic World

Before cultural practices such as the Sacred Harp could emerge, the English first had to re-identify themselves as Americans. The English American colonies became the peripheral choice of flight for many seeking alternative lifestyles to those that Britain

provided. With the expansion of the British crown's rule across the Atlantic Ocean, an English Atlantic World emerged (Pestana 2009). The concept of Atlantic World History is a relatively new perspective within the historical scholastic community. Bernard Bailyn, a Professor Emeritus and Director of the International Seminar on the History of the Atlantic World at Harvard University, promotes a broadly inclusive concept of Atlantic History. This approach denotes Atlantic History as a "hemispheric 'community' with connecting elements "between European, North American, Caribbean, Latin American, and West African history." This is achieved through a network of analyses in comparative history; the "concept of 'systems'" coupled with the "the story of growth, change, and evanescence" (Bailyn 2005: 59-60).

An Atlantic perspective further provides a means to convey how "one portion of the globe developed within the context of a larger trading network" (Egerton 2011: 80). "Space and time, area and era, places and events" are common geographical and historical terms that are inseparable pairs (Meinig 1986: xv). Atlantic History tends to discount the importance of traditional historiography and discipline boundaries by deemphasizing political borders and seeking to illuminate innovative social and cultural perspectives of the early modern era (Bolster 2008). Overall, Atlantic History seeks to connect the links that formed and evolved over the period of 1492 to approximately 1800, revealing a community of exchange dependent on numerous places across the Atlantic Ocean. Although Geography and History at first appear to be an unlikely pair, they nevertheless provide perspectives to add scope to underlying human elements that factor within the analysis of uncovering processes through time. A primary concern of this

research lies with uncovering how and why the historical landscape of the Sacred Harp emerged as a consistent southern musical tradition.

The English entered the Age of Exploration for varying reasons. England sought to combat its rivals Portugal and more importantly Spain, and thus entered into the colonization of the New World (Murphy 2009, Pestana 2009). Once its colonies were established, England became the first Protestant nation to have a definitive presence within the Atlantic World (Pestana 2009). Colonies began to be utilized in efforts to seek more open life ways than the ones offered within the borders of the British Islands. The colonies saw their implementation underneath the Tudor Dynasty with the reign of Elizabeth I. However it is during the Stuart Dynasty and the reign of James I of England and Charles I that the colonies began to receive an increase in migrants (Games 1999). During the seventeenth century, the British Atlantic World included the present day New England region, parts of South Carolina, and a few Caribbean Islands, as illustrated in Figure 4.1 below. The Atlantic World was opening new charters and territories for the English to exploit and expand their empire upon a newer environment.

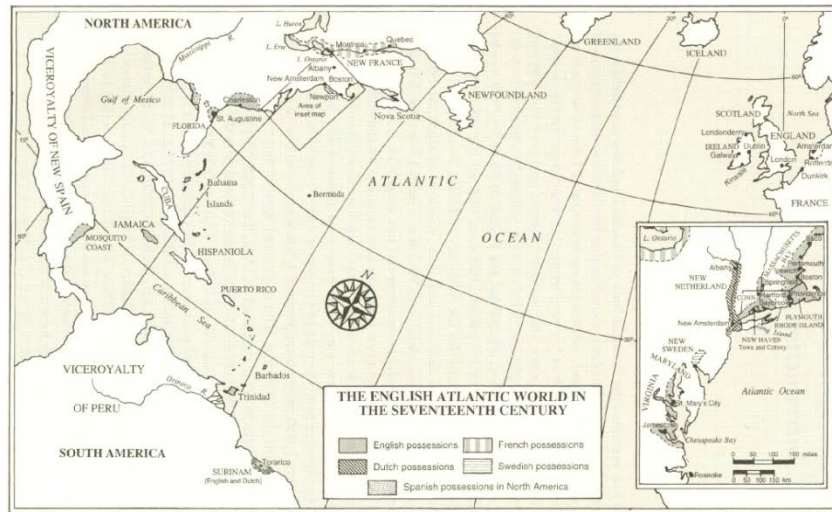


Figure 4.1. The English Atlantic World in the Seventeenth Century (Games 1999: 2)

The Separatists, or Puritans as they are referred to in America, became part of the Crown’s effort to cohesively unify the British nation. The Scottish royal family of the Stuarts experienced immense difficulty asserting their desired authority over Parliament and their subjects (Games 1999). Inevitably divisions began stirring, especially within the religious sector. Many migrants criticized the Church of England and separated themselves from its theology and practices (Pestana 2009). The Separatists sought solace from conditions they considered unbearable in England (Fischer 1989).

After the Protestant Reformation erupted in England, their Scottish neighbors to the north also underwent a Reformation that redefined social and religious structures that in turn profoundly influenced the Separatists. Unlike the Church of England, which maintained a hierarchical framework of church authority, the Scottish “did away with bishops and permanently eliminated church courts” (Pestana 2009: 45). The Scottish Reformation favored the theology of John Knox and John Calvin as part of an effort to

decentralize their religious organization by utilizing presbyters, or church elders, to preside over local congregations. This attempt was an effort to place more responsibility on preachers and gentry's elite (Pestana 2009). The Presbyterian denomination spread through Scotland and came into conflict with both Catholicism and the Church of England. Eventually, during the reign of Elizabeth I, the denomination settled into Scotland and the Northern Ireland region, particularly Ulster (Pestana 2009).

The Separatists similarly distrusted hierarchy within religion and, like the Presbyterians, endorsed a philosophy of tolerating little to no ruling elite (Woodard 2011). Favoring Calvinist theology towards covenant, election, grace and love, the Separatists sought a religion that began in the home and emphasized a united community (Fischer 1989). Being of like origins in Calvinist theology and bonded by disgruntled attitudes toward political policies, there remained an undertone of similarities between the Puritans and Ulster-Scots once they reached the American colonies. It was due to these foundational similarities that shape-note singings and the Sacred Harp found their cultural hearth in American musical traditions.

Charles I, 1600-1649, sought a regulatory monarchy with more control over Parliament, which increased political and religious strife in England and encouraged emigration elsewhere (Games 1999). The eleven years of Charles I reign were marked with "economic depression, epidemic disease, and so many sufferings that to John Winthrop it seemed as if the land itself had grown weary of her Inhabitants, so as man which is most precious of all the Creatures, is here more vile and base than the earth they tread upon'" (Fischer 1989: 16). Tensions between the Crown and Separatists

continually increased. Purging the Church of England of all Puritan members, and “stressing hierarchy in the church and valuing ritual over preaching” forcibly encouraged the Puritans to find new lifeway’s elsewhere (Fischer 1989; Games 1999: 18).

The emigration of the English from their homeland was a mass exodus specific to this Reformation era. Around 1635, the majority of the thousands of emigrants journeying to the American colonies were bound for Virginia, with 4, 878 recorded in English port registers (Games 1999: 20-21). The second place of destination for 2,009 migrants was New England (Games 1999: 21). For eleven years, what is now termed the ‘Great Migration’ of Puritans saw close to 80, 000 English men, women, and children spread outward from their core English communities (Fischer 1989). Approximately 21, 000 Puritans eventually traveled to the New England colony to establish a new home (Fischer 1989: 16). With this shift of population the Massachusetts Bay and New England colonies became a breeding area for a new truly American population (Fischer 1989).

The Great Migration was the catalyst that opened the Atlantic World. As Games (1999:134) describes this period “the puritan exodus from England was a true diaspora”. The new religious identities of the Presbyterians and Puritans became fully realized as the refugee individuals, families and entire groups came to create and intensify interconnections across the Atlantic region. Being extricated from their traditional lifestyle and placed in a vast and unfamiliar region, English migrants created a new identity (Meinig 1986). This effect was profoundly obvious with the creation of the local political system. Although still ruled by the Crown, the Puritans nevertheless sought the opportunity to rule themselves with their own type of government, which they did when

they re-established the town meetings of East Anglia (Fischer 1989; Woodard 2011). Further inspired by Dutch republicanism, the Puritans selected men to run local affairs and strongly participated in the local government meetings (Woodard 2011). The presence and participation of Puritans in these events were so strong that their influence is still felt in the current political counties of New England (Fischer 1989). Puritans discovered ways to create their own identities while they maintained their origins as Englishmen.

Although the New World provided opportunities for new beginnings, which the colonists took advantage of politically, they also kept a lot of their Old World affiliations with them, written upon the landscape as names from their homeland. The vast majority of immigrants came from the east of England, with great diversity originating from different counties and parishes of England (Fischer 1989). Naturally, in an effort to make the new colony appear as familiar as possible, names of England were imprinted on the new Puritan landscape giving city names Englishmen would recognize, including Ipswich, Cambridge, Springfield, Manchester, Salisbury, Boston, Lancaster, Gloucester, and Northampton (Fischer 1989:38). The cartography of John Smith's map of New England implies an open land with recognizable names such as "Cambridge," "Oxford," and "Ipswich" (Bruckner 2011: 76). It was a propagandist effort to depict the New World as open, yet familiar (personable observation, DeWitt Museum 2012). The Puritans sought freedom of practice, but not freedom from the known and comfortable. This explains why they used items such as Psalm books to implement a sense of continuity from one region to the next.

Puritans found significant safety in their worship style. They stripped everything bare and concentrated solely on the words being preached. The main sermon was the most important element of the worship service on Sunday, and everyone in the town gathered to be at the meetinghouse for it. At the end of each Sunday a psalm was sung. Emphasis once again was placed on the words and not on the music or instrumental accompaniments (Fischer 1989). This is an account of the result of psalm singing in the Puritan church:

The psalm would be begun with a line by a member of the congregation. Then each individual 'took the run of the tune,' without any designated common tempo, pitch or scale. One observer wrote in 1720, '...everyone sang as best pleased himself.' Another described the effect as a 'horrid medley of confused and disorderly noises.' Strangers were astounded by the noise, which carried miles across the quiet countryside. But New Englanders were deeply moved by this 'rote singing' as it was called, and strenuously resisted efforts to improve it (Fischer 1989: 123-124).

The tradition of psalmody was thereby established in New England, and the seed for Sacred Harp was planted and grew in the northern American colonies.

From Psalms to the Sacred Harp

Sacred Harp eventually evolved from the tradition that the Puritans established in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Chapter one in this thesis covered the history of how the psalmody institutions' efforts came to the attention of tanner William Billings, and how educator Lowell Mason aided the introduction of shape-note concepts to the public school system. The shape-note tradition arrived in the South with the advent of the Second Great Awakening, beginning in the 1800s.

The Awakenings facilitated the dispersion of Protestantism through the colonies and the emergence of new denominations as well. This formed the setting in which the shape-note singing tradition prospered. The Awakenings occurred at a turbulent time for the colonies when they were discovering their identities as separate from their European homelands, particularly Britain (Marty 2008). At the time of Revolution and when the Church of England was at its peak strength, the evangelical leaders of the Great Awakening utilized the Congregational churches to their fullest potential (Ward 2008; Marty 2008). Evangelical dissension occurred in the Stone-Campbell Movement. Seeking to regain primitive Christian practices, the movement sought to implement only the scriptural teachings of the New Testament (Stanback 2005). This resulted in the creation of a strong Baptist denominational presence (Drummond 1989). The Disciples of Christ, Churches of Christ, and International Churches of Christ also emerged from this period. The goal of this movement was primitive Christianity, drawing inspiration only from Biblical text (Stanback 2005).

A common thread through these churches during the Great Awakening was their use of the primitive musical practices of the Puritans. Thus they adapted themselves to the shape-note tradition. Hymnals and tune books began to reflect the doctrine of a particular religious sect as denominations defined themselves (Bealle 1997). Churches adopted versions of singing schools, integrating shape note use into worship services on Sundays in an effort to utilize “greater truths” for creating better-rounded individuals (Sabbath Singing Schools 1832). Schools were based on eighteenth and nineteenth century designs, and could last anywhere from a few hours to a week depending upon the

turnout of pupils. They focused on the “fundamentals of music reading, solmization, shape-notes, and congregational hymn-leading” (Drummond 1988: 31-32). Evangelical preachers used musical messages to their advantage as a thriving part of camp meetings during the Awakenings (Bealle 1997). With the dominance of the Great Awakening traveling throughout rural counties, singing schools and reformed denominations gradually became heavily prevalent in the South. Once established, singing schools occurred in meetings on the fourth or fifth Sunday of every month (Stevenson 1931). This became a practice that Sacred Harp incorporated and when Sacred Harp singings occurred.

The influence of the hymns upon the above mentioned denominations was significant, as many of the old shape-note hymnals once practiced in the tents at revival meetings are still in practice at present in these church congregations. Figures below demonstrate this concept as they compare the overlapping usage of the Sacred Harp, Primitive Baptist, and International Churches of Christ songs in practice. The research does not point to the theory used within the songs. Although there are minute differences that exist between style and lyrics, the intent and usage of the songs remains the same. This is the focus of this point. The songs selected below illustrate the continuity of hymns throughout time. A few songs changed compositionally in their theory. However, their practice and intent as hymns during worship or Sacred Harp singings remain the same.

385 What a Fellowship

A/C3

1. What a fel-low-ship, what a joy di-vine, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms;
 2. O how sweet to walk in this pil-grim way, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms;
 3. What have I to dread, what have I to fear, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms?

What a bless-ed-ness, what a peace is mine, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms.
 O how bright the path grows from day to day, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms.
 I have bless-ed peace with my Lord so near, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms.

Lean-ing, lean-ing, safe and se-cure from all a-larms;
 Lean-ing on Je-sus, lean-ing on Je-sus, safe and se-cure from all a-larms;

Lean-ing, lean-ing, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms.
 Lean-ing on Je-sus, lean-ing on Je-sus, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms.

WORDS: Elisha A. Hoffman, 1887
 MUSIC: Anthony J. Showalter, 1887

Figure 4.2 “What a Fellowship”
 (Songs of the Kingdom 1999: 385)

426 Leaning On The Everlasting Arms

E. A. Hoffman 1828-1909 A. J. Showalter 1858-1924

1. What a fel-low-ship, what a joy di-vine, Lean-ing on the ev-er-
 2. O how sweet to walk in this pil-grim way, Lean-ing on the ev-er-
 3. What have I to dread, what have I to fear, Lean-ing on the ev-er-
 last-ing arms. What a bless-ed-ness, what a peace is mine, Lean-ing
 last-ing arms. O how bright the path grows from day to day, Lean-ing
 last-ing arms? I have bless-ed-peace with my Lord so near, Lean-ing

CHORUS
 on the ev-er-last-ing arms, Lean-ing, lean-ing on
 the ev-er-last-ing arms, Lean-ing on Je-sus, lean-ing on
 Je-sus, Lean-ing on Je-sus, Lean-ing on Je-sus,
 lean-ing on Je-sus, Lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms.
 lean-ing on Je-sus, Lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms.

Example 48. “Leaning on the Everlasting Arms,” OSH 11,
 No. 426.

Figure 4.3 “Leaning on the Everlasting Arms”
 in *A Portion for the Singers*
 (Drummond 1988: 289-290)

“What a Fellowship” and “Leaning on the Everlasting Arms,” use identical lyrics. “Leaning on the Everlasting Arms” is sung in Primitive Baptist worship services and is commonly represented in shape-note form. The International Churches of Christ (ICOC) utilize the western European notation in their songwriting. Although these forms reflect differences in musical theory, the hymns stayed the same.

“Idumea” remains relatively the same song as used in Primitive Baptist music. It is within this hymn that one can visualize the impact that Sacred Harp has had upon Primitive Baptist music (Drummond 1989).

184

Idumea. S. M.

1. And am I born to die? To lay this bod - y down?
 2. Waked by the trump - et's sound, I from the grave shall rise,
 3. How shall I leave the tomb? With tri - umph or re - gret?
 4. I must from God be driv'n, Or with my Sav - iour dwell;

And must this trem-bling spir - it fly In - to a world un - known. known.
 To see the Judge with glo - ry crowned, And view the flam - ing skies. skies.
 A fear - ful or a joy - ful doom? A curse or bless - ing meet? meet?
 Must come at His com - mand to heav'n, Or else de - part—to hell. hell.

Figure 4.4 "Idumea" in *A Portion for the Singers* (Drummond 1988: 248)

"A time to be born and a time to die." -- Ecc. 3:2.

Ananias Davisson, 1816.

A Minor Charles Wesley, 1763. Ananias Davissón, 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 4.5 “Idumea” in *The Sacred Harp* 1991 Edition (McGraw 1991: 47)

WONDROUS CROSS. L.M.D.
"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross. . ." -- Gal. 6:14.

447

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Figure 4.6 “Wondrous Cross L.M.D” in *The Sacred Harp 1991 Edition* (McGraw 1991: 447)

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross 382

F/F

1. When I sur - vey the won - drous cross On which the prince of glo - ry died,
 2. For - bid it, Lord, that I should boast, Save in the death of Christ, my Lord;
 3. See, from His head, His hands, His feet, Sor - row and love, flow min - gled down;
 4. Were the whole realm of na - ture mine, That were a pres - ent far too small;

My rich - est gain I count but loss, And pour con - tempt on all my pride.
 All the vain things that charm me most, I sac - ri - fice them to His blood.
 Did e'er such love and sor - row meet, Or thorns com - pose so rich a crown?
 Love, so a - maz - ing, so di - vine, De - mands my soul, my life, my all.

WORDS: Isaac Watts, 1707

MUSIC: Gregorian chant; arr. Lowell Mason, 1824

Figure 4.7 “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross” (*Songs of the Kingdom* 1999: 382)

In regard to the “Wondrous Cross” hymn, the Sacred Harp hymn and the ICOC hymn are the same lyrically. Written by Isaac Watts, the Sacred Harp hymn was composed by another author than the ICOC hymn, conveying the difference in song writing. However, all of these hymns demonstrate a continuity of tradition that extends from shape-note to Sacred Harp, and even into present Christian denominations.

Building on a strong folk and shape-note presence contained within the South through the singing schools, and the push for revival in Western European music with the “Better Music Movement” in the North, Sacred Harp emerged, grew and prospered in a new southern homeland. The arrival of B.F. White’s the Sacred Harp and the Southern Harmony and Christian Harmony all vied for dominance in the late 1800s. Gradually the

Sacred Harp became the chosen hymnal of Sacred Harp singings in the South, due to its rapid acceptance in states from Georgia to Texas, while Christian Harmony remained significant only in the Carolinas (Jackson 1944). The families and religious traditions of the South occupied a tradition within the confines of the southern states (Jackson 1944; Anderson & Powell 2006). These circumstances eventually made sacred harp synonymous solely with the South, which came to view the northern practicing population as the outsiders (Anderson & Powell 2006; Clawson 2011).

The Sacred Harp has grown through tumultuous times in American History, rising from great upheavals and uncertainties. Gradually and through the efforts of individuals, the singing tradition was utilized throughout history and revitalized itself in new cultural ways. Eventually the shape-notes and psalmody that commenced in the New England colonies slowly filtered southward towards more rural surroundings. It is in the most basic of communal life ways and churches where the shape-note tradition was preserved and the Sacred Harp evolved from a simple environment. Basic is the musical form, and basic the musical practices stayed and endured.

CHAPTER V

SHAPE-NOTES AND SACRED HARP: A GEOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVE

Think of the past as space expanding infinitely beyond our vision . . . Then we choose a prospect. The higher it is, the wider and hazier our view. Now we map what we see, marking some features, ignoring others, altering an unknown territory into a finite collection of landmarks made meaningful through their connections. History is not the past, but a map of the past drawn from a particular point of view to be useful to the modern traveler.

Henry Glassie (Meinig 1986: vii).

Shape-Notes in the Atlantic World

Geography provides a unique perspective throughout this research, offering an opportunity to incorporate how a narrative of Sacred Harp music was built, its varied scales and spaces, and uncovering how geographic realities facilitated change through historical time (Meinig 1986; Mayhew 2010). As established in earlier chapters, the Sacred Harp's evolution began in Britain and slowly matriculated into the South and southern culture. However, shape-notes had to first reach American soil through means of transit. This is where the Atlantic perspective becomes critical to the overall perspective, refining the geographical understandings of the imperial structures and production zones within the Great European cultural realm (Meinig 1986; Zelinsky 1992). By combining basic cultural geographic concepts developed by Wilbur Zelinsky and the historical geographic perspective of D.W. Meinig, a richer image develops in context. Zelinsky proposed five basic processes for studying America's cultural

development, of which three are the most meaningful. These include: 1) “the importation of selected individuals and, hence, selected cultural traits,” 2) “Long distance transfer of people and their cultural freight,” and 3) “The local evolution of American culture.” (Zelinsky 1992: 5-6). D.W. Meinig emphasized the recognition of significant pairs of “homeland and colonies,” “innovation and diffusion” (Meinig 1986: 258). These perspectives comprise the basics of this analysis. Since there is no foundation for studying Sacred Harp through a geographical lens, it is essential to establish a basic framework.

It is necessary to delineate the spatial variables that are interworking within the Atlantic World in order to convey the geographic processes that allowed the psalters and shape-notes to mature into Sacred Harp. Figure 5.1 presents a graphical representation of the implementation of this musical practice from its core moving towards its periphery. This illustration also serves as one of the main methodological representations of the evolution of Sacred Harp throughout this research.

Beginning in the core, the center of this cultural development is located in England’s eastern region. The region of East England serves as the base for all commercial, economic, social, and political systems for the Puritan culture, marking it as the force behind all movement of Puritans from England (Meinig 1986). East England was the main source of people and religious ideologies (Fischer 1989; Games 1999). The core developed the means for this tradition to expand. During the time of exploration and colonization for the British around the 1600s, Puritans pushed across the Atlantic Ocean focused on settlement in a new land.

It is crucial to understand the Atlantic Ocean's significance. Given the distance and limited means of communication, the state of the colonies was left to the consideration of the people themselves. The English Crown relinquished a massive amount of political control in the hope that the trading companies of colonial governors would deal with the issues that arose, alleviating stress on the crown. The periphery of the American colonies thus held an opportunity for independence from the beginning. Unique American processes and cultural practices such as Sacred Harp took advantage of the lack of British oversight (MacMillan 2011). The Atlantic served as a means of transportation, but also provided a boundary causing a division between the American colonies and the European center.

From their European centers the Puritans and the Scots-Irish directly migrated into the New England colony. Following their establishment in the New World they moved around the cities, spreading out across the region (Meinig 1986: 94). In regard to its European roots, the colonies lay on the peripheral reach of the European system. It is in the interior of the Americas that the tradition begins to adapt itself into a new identity.

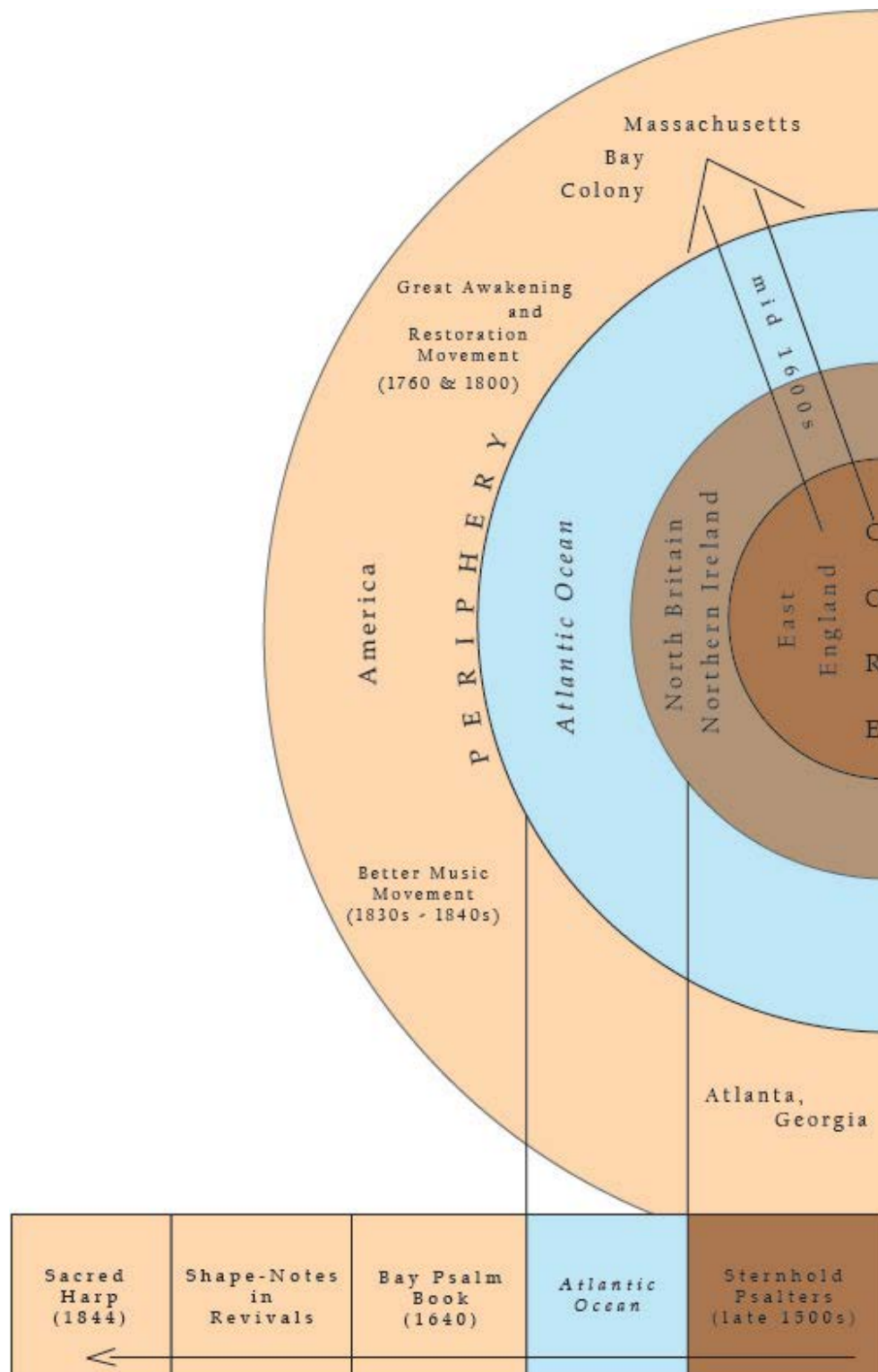


Figure 5.1 Core and Periphery

Since the purpose of this analysis is to emphasize the geographic, the diagram, Table 5.1 and Figure 5.2, convey the reaches to which this musical tradition evolved and expanded through its environments. These diagrams are historical geographical methods developed by DW Meinig to analyze the geographical evolution of America. Meinig's methods are applied in this research to examine and illustrate the historical cultural geographic evolution of Sacred Harp. The table is an effort to simplify the movements of the music through space and time due to the complexities of the diffusion of shape-note music into the Sacred Harp. Although this diagram could never truly convey the intricacies of the music, it nevertheless illustrates the intent of the analysis. Also Figure 5.2 displays the diffusion of Sacred Harp through time and place. This table is taken in comparison with Table 5.1 to show that the diffusion and adaption of the Sacred Harp was primed for the South given the pushes from England and New England towards the South. Thus a new and old musical concept merged together to create a new form of music.

America					
Production Hinterland	Backcountry	Outposts	Frontier Entrepot	Colony	Colonial Port
Atlanta Georgia ●	Carolinas ●	Appalachia ●	Philadelphia Pennsylvania ●	Massachusetts Bay ●	Boston ●
Deep South States		Great Awakenings Stone Campbell Movement	Scots-Irish		Puritans
<i>Sacred Harp</i>	<i>Christian Harmony</i>	<i>Shape-Note Hymns</i>		<i>Bay Psalm Book</i>	
Methodist	Church of Christ	Primitive Baptist	Presbyterian	Puritan	

Europe				
Atlantic Ocean	Outport	Atlantic Port	Hinterland	Center
Atlantic Voyage ●	Belfast Ireland ●	Liverpool Plymouth ●	North Britain Scotland ●	East Anglia ●
	Ulster-Scots	Belfast	Borderlands	
			<i>Sternhold Psalters</i>	
	Presbyterians	Methodist	Presbyterians	Separatists

Table 5.1 The Geographical Adaption and Evolution of Sacred Harp

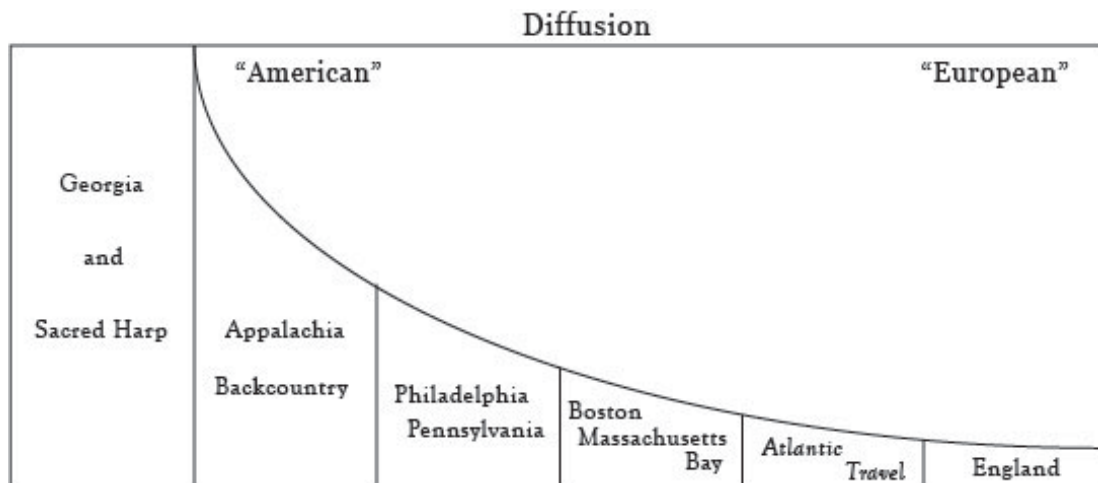


Figure 5.2 Diffusion

The Scots-Irish

Up till now, the emphasis of this research has been placed on the Puritans and their significance. Indeed it was their presence that solidified and fosters the shape-note tradition and eventual Sacred Harp. However, while the Puritans produced the necessary environment, which in turn fostered the creation processes allowing Sacred Harp to arise, the Scots-Irish and their American, descendants are the ones to retain the music as it migrates within America. Similar to the Puritans, the Scots-Irish also have a similar religious theological background, of Calvinism (Hunt et. al. 2003) that in conjuncture with settlement patterns of the American backcountry and emphasis of family units, foster the Sacred Harp tradition and keep it rich to the present day. The Scots-Irish are thus an immigration class that is essential to this research as well.

The Scots-Irish are a culture born of English severe determination to expand and solidify economic assets outside the immediate borders of its physical island. The story

of the Scots-Irish presence in the Americas begins with the English conquest of Ireland in the sixteenth-century. Seeing the Irish as a band of “stubborn barbarians,” the English took hold of the island nation and imposed Protestant settlers from England and Scotland to a Roman Catholic Ireland in an effort to politically control the Irish people after the conquest (Taylor 2001). Due to the militant actions of the British during this time, intense controversies reigned throughout the northern Irish region between working class and landlords (Griffin 2001). As a direct result, the “Ulster Scots,” began to emigrate towards the Americas around the late 1600s and early 1700s (Fischer 1989; Griffin 2001).

The Ulster-Scots engaged in a mass migration towards the Americas. Although the rhythm of immigrants arrived in waves throughout the eighteenth century, the volume of peoples entering the Americas was rather substantial. Scholars estimate that from 1718-1775, 114,000 immigrants came to the Americas. After these years the numbers only continued to exponentially rise to an estimated 400, 000 people by the year 1733. Despite the mass amounts of people depicted in these numbers, scholars acknowledge that they are only a mere estimate; the numbers most likely were more (Fischer 1989: 608-609). The Ulster-Scots would become as significant as the Puritans in their presence in the Americas.

Settlement patterns of these folk are critical to understand. The Ulster-Scots would become the American Scots-Irish that would mainly settle the backcountry (Griffin 2001). It is in the backcountry where Sacred Harp truly takes root, and travels to eventually emerge in Georgia. The destination of choice for the Scots-Irish became

Pennsylvania. However upon their arrival and with the extensive numbers that came with them, they were redirected to backcountry and borderland areas where settlements were sparse and rural (Griffin 2001). The Scots-Irish migrated and settled in family units (Fischer 1989). Gradually the Scots-Irish were forced into the southern backcountry, where their cultural influence extends 800 miles from Pennsylvania to Georgia. Also included are hundreds of miles west of the Piedmont plateau to the Mississippi River (Fischer 1989: 635-638). The geographical extent to which the Scots-Irish settled along the Appalachia backcountry is illustrated in Figure 5.4.

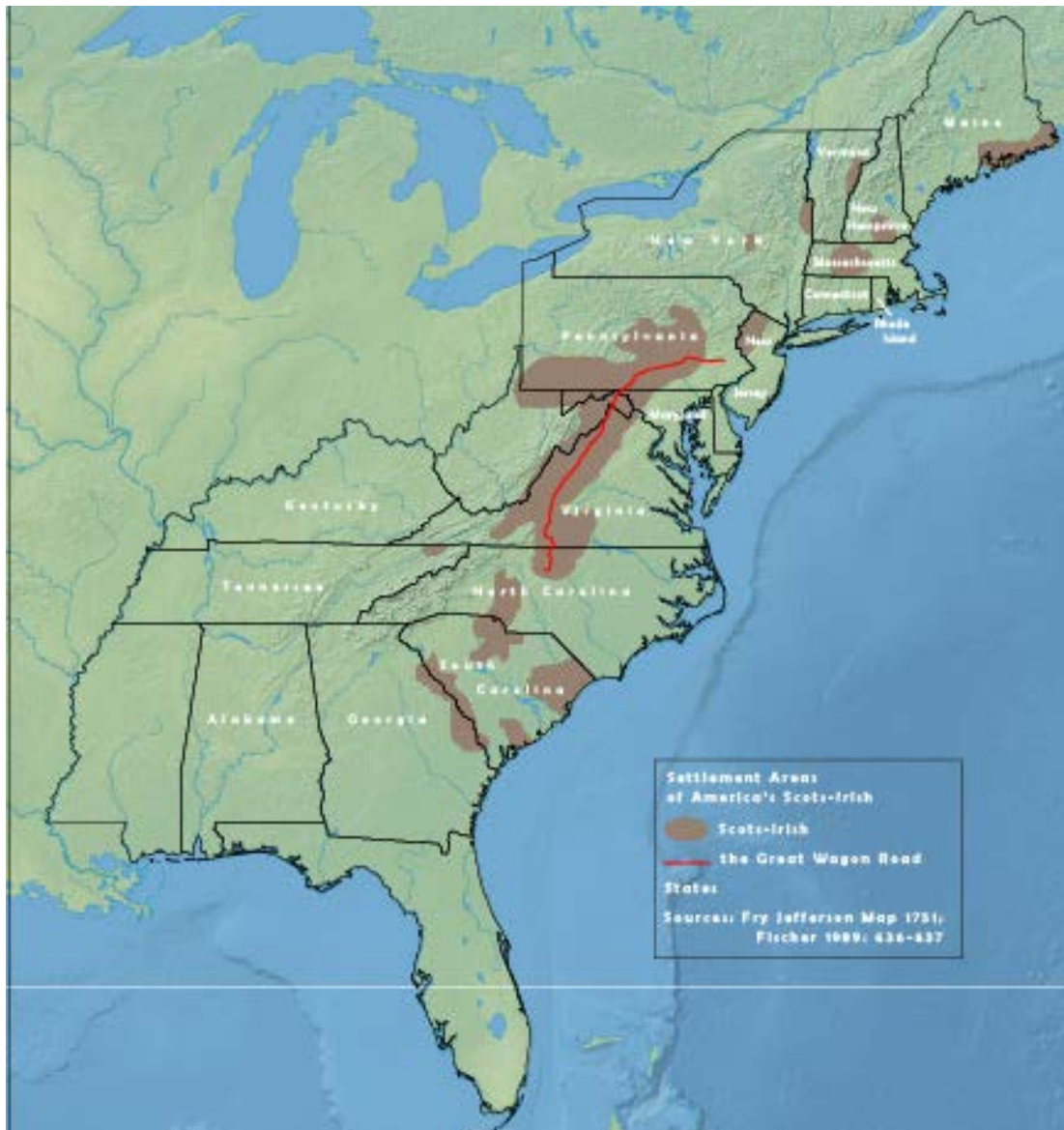


Figure 5.3 Settlement of Scots-Irish in America

These lands and settlement patterns held tight their traditions and life ways, and in turn created the roadway necessary for the movement of music throughout the backcountry. It is in these seemingly rugged woods and rural countryside where Sacred Harp would find its safe haven and home.

New England and Pennsylvania

America's new identity came as a result of the Revolutionary War and political independence from the British Crown. With a new identity America could now develop its own cultural styles influenced by the old, but grown into a new cultural system, thus allowing the seed for Sacred Harps to be planted. Yet Sacred Harp still faced growing challenges. During the 1800s, shape-notes became an outdated use of learning music. The catalyst encouraging dispersion from the New England homeland was the "Better Music Boosters." The institutions that adopted shape-note music were the singing schools. The Great Awakenings spurred their transfer along the backcountry infrastructure on the Great Wagon Road.

After its implementation in the United States, shape-notes grew into a solid tradition in New England. The publication of William Little and William Smith's *The Easy Instructor* in 1802 reaffirmed the usage of shape-notes and American hymns that were active during the Revolution, and reflected the musical culture of eighteenth century New England. Utilized for their ease of reading and understanding, each sound in the musical scale is allotted a corresponding shape to make reading music easier; there was "nothing inherently unscientific about shape notes" (Bealle 1997: 1-2). The music was one that was familiar to the common man.

With the solidification of shape-notes as the dominant form of church music there needed to be a way to instruct the masses, hence the singing school materialized. Established as a practice to be regularly hosted by churches, it eventual spread to be an outside force (Drummond 1989; Bealle 1997). Singings schools therefore became a

public means for musical education. Composers began advertising themselves as singing schoolteachers, giving musicians such as William Billings the opportunity to arise (Barbour 1960; Bealle 1989).

The singing school started a prominent practicing tradition that is still utilized today. Church congregations actively participate in singing schools. This is commonplace in an effort to increase understanding of music to lead the congregation with a better heart, especially in the Primitive Baptist denomination (Drummond 1989). Churches of Christ and International Churches of Christ regularly hold singing devotionals as well. During the mid to late 1900s some Churches of Christ regularly held singing devotionals every fifth Sunday (personal communication 2012). During some conventions of Sacred Harp, it is not uncommon for a singer to teach the concept of shape notes briefly before the singing for the day commences. Also, throughout the official minutes reported, Sacred Harp singings are commonly referred to in official documents as “classes” (Caudle et. al. 2011: 55-56). This indicates the value of singings as a learning tool, its primary function within musical education. Singing Schools and singing devotionals are just another way of practicing a form of Sacred Harp music. All of these traditions draw upon reading and singing shape-notes.

Singing schools were the main driving force behind musical education during the eighteenth to nineteenth century. Given the frequent and effective use, singing schools and their hymns were renewed in the backcountry during revivals of the Great Awakenings. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the first Great Awakening created the precedence for the revivals of the Second Great Awakening in the early 19th century.

With the Stone-Campbell/ Restoration Movement, a return to first century Christianity practices was attempted. The churches arose from the backwoods of areas such as Kentucky (Stanback 2005). Part of the meetings involved music as a fundamental experience. Given the rural setting and lack of musical training, the simplified shape-note hymns were chosen to allow music to add a further zeal to the message of the revival preacher (Bealle 1989). Once lodged into the backcountry, shape-notes eased there way further south with the Methodist, Primitive Baptists, and Churches of Christ.

The final catalyst encouraging the spreading of the shape-note tradition was the “Better Music” movement. Prompted by musician Lowell Mason, it was an effort to establish a reformed and modern standard of musical practices in church music (Broyles 1985; Anderson & Powell 2006). Mason, a strict Puritan, aspired to implement the enthusiasm of music and education of the Germans into and English system (Broyles 1985). Eventually, Mason’s enthusiasm for education accumulated into the Boston Academy founded in 1832, and strenuously advocated for the acceptance of music into the public school system. Given Mason’s European influences the practice became Western European as it is known today (Broyles 1985; Anderson & Powell 2006). The “Better Music” movement successfully became part of a progressive New England society. Thereafter, the shape-notes that traditionally defined music education would move into the peripheral American backcountry.

Shape-notes continued to spread through rural areas and church congregations along with the shifting population moving into the rural interior. Internal migration among territories was not uncommon. Settlers often moved for different reasons.

Frequently in the second or third generation they moved ever-greater distances from their traditional family core in search of land in more remote areas. Internal migrants used their connections back home to foster new roadways and lines of communication (Games 1999). This allowed maintenance of a semblance of internal structure as they spread out across the backcountry.

The Great Wagon Road would become the predominant roadway facilitating the movement of new homesteaders. The Great Wagon Road is located on the Fry-Jefferson Map of 1751 (Figure 5.5 below). This map is significant primarily for its illustration of the infrastructure of primary and secondary roadways connecting the colonies. The dominant function of this map is for war, due to the detailed depiction of roadways for moving supplies and soldiers quickly and efficiently. Demarcated below in red, the Great Wagon Road stretched from Philadelphia to the Yadkin River Valley of North Carolina. This road thus became the main highway for backcountry movement.



Figure 5.4 The Fry-Jefferson Map 1751 (the Great Wagon Road in red)

English Puritans moved to the backcountry of New England, especially to the area of Pennsylvania (Games 1999). However, migrants in the backcountry were primarily of Scots-Irish descent, and secondarily English. Given the increasing amounts of Scots-Irish relocating to Pennsylvania, their significantly different culture was forced out of Philadelphia the moment they arrived (Griffin 2001). Through utilizing the Great Wagon Road, the Scots-Irish settled the rural country of the Appalachian Mountains, branching off the road as they proceeded south and southwest (Fischer 1989). Consequently the Scots-Irish Protestant traditions were key to promoting the survival of shape-notes and nourishing it into Sacred Harp.

The South and Sacred Harp

The Great Wagon Road expedited shape-notes and singing schools toward the southern states. Given the dominant presence of the Scots-Irish cultural ways, the priorities of family and community solidified traditions that allowed Sacred Harp to emerge and retain its tradition within the South. The core of Sacred Harp developed in Georgia. Since the colonial period the elites that controlled the government and society were Virginians and the Charlestonian families of South Carolina. The Deep South and Greater Appalachia regions were considered rural; its inhabitants were backwards and stuck in the past (Woodard 2011). Such attitudes added to the evolving circumstances as to why Sacred Harp was able to evolve in this region.

The rural South practiced a unique and distinctive cultural system. Based on the Scots-Irish that settled the area, the emphasis of their lifestyle became self-reliant, extended families and clans (Woodard 2011). The family structure can be described as similar to the core and periphery model. In the innermost core were the immediate and extended family members. Beyond this layer lay kin that spanned four generations. The outermost circle was the clan (Fischer 1989).

The second basis of community was the church congregation. The most prevalent denominations were Methodist and Presbyterian, in keeping with the tradition of the North Britain and Scots-Irish settlers (Fischer 1989). The secondary denominations were the Churches of Christ and Primitive Baptists. These denominations later became accepted due to their lack of emphasis toward hierarchy and organized religion (Fischer

1989; Drummond 1989; Stanback 2005; personal communication 2012). The focus of the southern life ways was upon family and community based on church congregations.

This system is inherent when the Sacred Harp is observed. It is not a coincidence that Sacred Harp emerged from rural Georgia. The singing schools that filtered from New England on the backs of the Great Awakenings were implemented and prominent in the South up until the 1930s (Stevenson 1931). Also continually practiced was fifth Sunday singing devotionals of the Churches of Christ (Stevenson 1931; personal communication 2012). Benjamin Franklin White, the author of *The Sacred Harp*, was a Georgia singing school composer. In an effort to aid his students, White utilized shape-note hymns and their practices. To distinguish his from other hymnologies, White named his hymnal after God's instrument of the voice, the Sacred Harp (for an example of the original songbook see Figure 5.6) (White & King 1860; Jackson 1944).

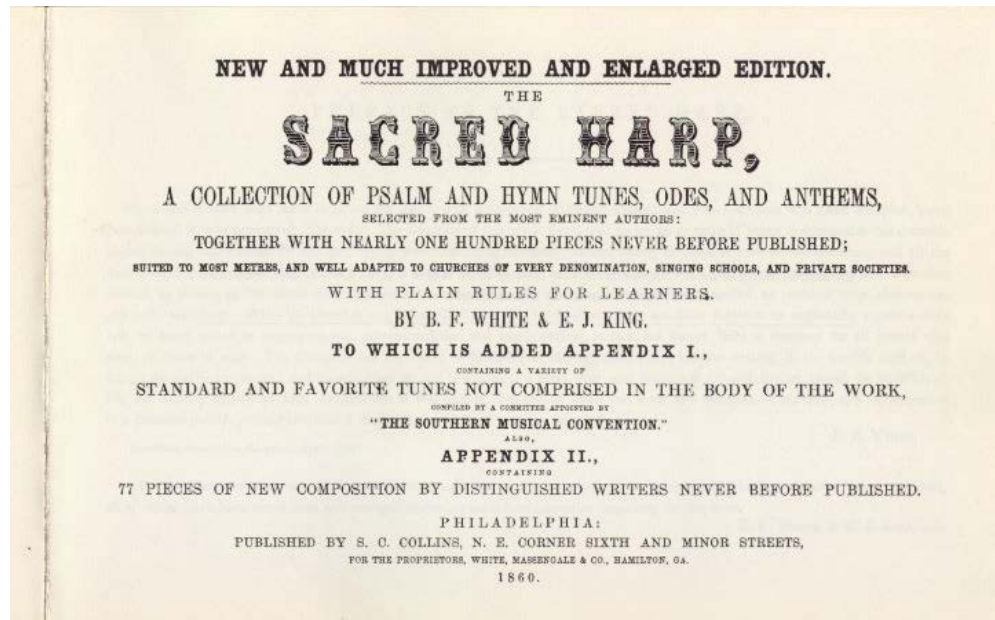


Figure 5.6 The Original Sacred Harp

The Sacred Harp hymnal was an immediate success, quickly adopted into church congregations and Sunday singings (Jackson 1944). As the *Sacred Harp* gradually became more of a common practice, singing families began to embrace and create the framework, which would keep the music practice alive. Embracing their Scots-Irish roots, these singing families became the community of Sacred Harp (Clawson 2011; Webb 2010). Today they are the central figures of the Sacred Harp singing community. The family is the most crucial part of Sacred Harp. During singings children sit on the laps of their parents or grandparents and either read or sing along with the music.

Sacred Harp retains the same Scots-Irish demographic that it did back in the 1800s. The poor of the northern British and Irish borderlands, the Scots-Irish belonged to working class society (Fischer 1989). Currently, this affiliation has not changed. On the way into singings, the cars commonly seen are those of Ford, Chevy, and Dodge. Among

the makes are pickup trucks and family sedans. The music is still of the common people and the “blue-collar” demographic. It is from this history that Sacred Harp thrives and continues to be honored through its loved practiced today.

At present the vast majority of Sacred Harp singers acknowledge the South as their regional core. Many singers view the South as the homeland of Sacred Harp (Miller 2008). If a singer has not practiced a consecutive amount of years in the South at singings, and is from an outside area such as the North, they are viewed as a distant cousin (Miller 2008; Clawson 2011), someone that is accepted but has a more foreign understanding in regards to proper tradition and beliefs that accompany Sacred Harp practices (NPR 2003). It is evident that the South is solidified as the Sacred Harp’s geographic singing core.

CHAPTER VI

THE “SACRED” OF SACRED HARP: THE RELIGION AND NATURE INSIDE THE MUSIC

Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord.

Ephesians 5: 19

Sacred Harp is a community identified around a common religious practice of a specific type of music. It is a practice that has continually adapted to its space through time and found a unique cultural identity in the American South. The opportunity geography provides Sacred Harp is its ability to define its religious practice according to its time and space. The music itself provides a unique perspective to religious geography as the physical environment represented in the lyrics of the hymns demonstrates that the nature surrounding man is divinely created.

Untangling the “Sacred” of Sacred Harp

Sacred Harp is a cultural geographic entity, which demonstrates a religious geography as well. There is a significance that lies within the ways a religious practice is distributed across a geographic space (Ivakhiv 2006), and the Sacred Harp is no exception. As previously demonstrated in preceding chapters, the Sacred Harp was born

of a Christian tradition. It has remarkably been kept inside of the church as well.

Gathered from the official reported Minutes of Sacred Harp singings for the year 2010-2011, Figure 6.1 reflects the extent to which Sacred Harp is still largely practiced within a church (Caudle, Ivey, Aldridge, and Sheppard 2011). Out of a total 205 singings that occurred, 156 of them were conducted on church properties. The primary denominations of those churches are Primitive Baptist, Baptist, or Methodist. This indicates that the denominations that originally started Sacred Harp singings are still maintaining the tradition.

Singing Locations	Total
Primitive Baptist Church	52
Baptist Church	34
Methodist Church	24
University/School	19
State Building	12
Friends	10
Personal Home	10
Culture Center	8
Episcopal Church	5
Church of Christ	4
Lutheran Church	4
Non-Denominational	4
Presbyterian Church	4
Chapel	3
Catholic Church	2
Cemetery	2
Christian Church	2
Congregational Church	2
Universalist Church	2
7th Day Adventist	1
Other	1
Total Singings: 205	
Churches: 156	
Non-Church: 49	

Table 6.1 Table of Singing Locations and Totals
(Highlighted Red shows singings that are not held
inside a church)
(Caudle, Ivey, Aldridge, and Sheppard 2011)

When Sacred Harp is practiced, it reflects the worship attitude of Christianity and its values (NPR 2003). The majority of southern singings that occur are exercised in churches (Figure 6.2 Dot Density Map). The churches largely echo the previous mentioned Protestant presence in the American colonies and their fight to integrate into a cohesive community of shared values and beliefs. Largely, the east coast was settled of those of Anglo-Celtic origins. The 2010 census reveals this to be fact as vast amounts of

peoples across the nation still identify English, Irish, Scottish, and Scots-Irish as an ancestry groups (Census 2010). Although these numbers represent the entire country they nevertheless predominate in the Eastern region of the United States. As such the influence between demographic and Sacred Harp is discernible and realized.

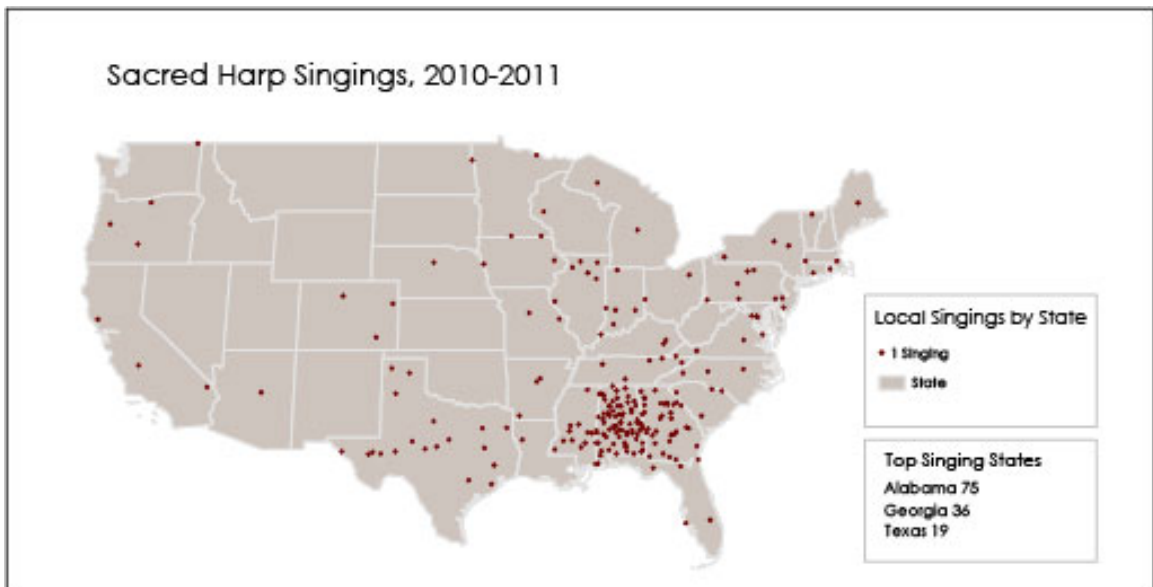


Figure 6.1 Dot Density of Sacred Harp Singings, 2010-2011, spots are randomized (Caudle, Ivey, Aldridge, Sheppard 2011)

Anglo-Celtic Ancestry	
English	26, 873, 899
Irish	35, 664, 132
Scottish	5, 684, 133
Scots-Irish	3, 437, 965

Table 6.2 Anglo-Celtic Ancestry Group (Census 2010)

The churches in which house the Sacred Harp practice provide the research into a glimpse of how effective the community is in sharing a collective belief system.

Community and place are intricately woven together to accommodate a space where both flourish dependent upon one another (Tuan 2009). The Sacred Harp community sees itself as a collective group with a shared history and a common bond of heritage and love of this type of music. The repetitive use of Sacred Harp through its history to its present represents an identifiable community that has interacted with its space in identifiable ways (Ivakhiv 2006). The practice is easy to identify as most singings, meetings, or conventions are held on specific Sundays within the year, usually falling on the first Sunday or fifth Sunday of the month (Caudle et. al. 2011).

Many Sacred Harp singers view the singing of the music as a form of worship. One of Sacred Harp's unique qualities is that most of the singings occur in local congregations, where singing families especially have grown (Miller 2008; NPR 2003). In many cases the church congregation gathers at the singings, as well as numerous visitors and singers that travel to these destinations (Anderson & Powell 2006). The message is certainly in the attire worn to the singings as well, where the preferable dress is "Sunday Best" (NPR 2003; Anderson & Powell 2006). Singers view this as a serious practice that preserves traditions, reflects beliefs, and brings one another into a common identifiable space.

Churches and Architecture

Churches are part of the human environment that is constructed in order to represent a connection between the divine and human on Earth. In order to embody a divine entity, a sacred structure is erected in an effort to promote spiritual devotion within humans (Tuan 2009). The Roman Catholic Church implemented the initial way during the medieval era through constructing cathedrals (Scott 2003). Once they were raised and consecrated by the proper clerical officials, cathedrals were deemed a sacred architectural feature. Since they are location-specific, churches and cathedrals can be spatially analyzed for their religious cultural values (Tuan 2009).

The principal concept to be addressed is the contrast between a Catholic Cathedral and Protestant Church in regard to practicing the Sacred Harp. As mentioned in Table 6.1 above, the prevailing majority of Sacred Harp is practiced inside a Protestant church. Therefore, the question that arises concerns the spatial difference between a cathedral and a church and how this relates to the musical practice.

The answer lies within the plans for the space itself - the floor plans. A cathedral is constructed to invite a heavenly image on Earth, to bring the laity and clergy alike into contact with God (Scott 2003). However, while the laity can appreciate and be inside the cathedral, it is meant for the clergy only to commune with God. The layout of a cathedral is designed to represent the cross. At the head of the cross is the “Choir” in which the mass is held, and a “choir screen” would shield common eyes from the inner sanctum of the choir where mass would be held (see Figure 6.5). Figure 6.4 represents a typical

cathedral floor plan; with a red line demarcating where the choir screen would typically be enforcing that those at the head of the cross would be the only ones in direct contact with God. Although mass would be heard routinely, the gate effectively would close off the unworthy, thereby establishing a barrier between man and God.

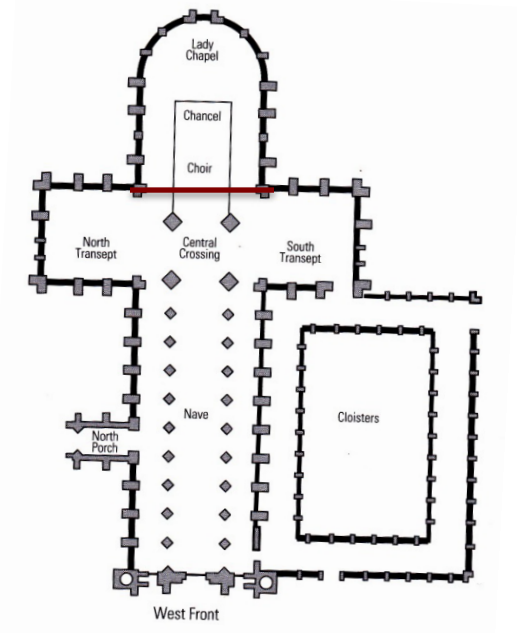


Figure 6.2 A typical cathedral floor plan



Figure 6.3 Canterbury Cathedral Choir (Scott 2003: 18)

The Protestant Reformation revolutionized church architecture along with its doctrine. The Protestants refocused their efforts on a personal and individual connection with God that, similar to the Catholics, became represented in their architecture as well. The cultural landscape of Catholicism emphasized their presence and control over the area. A cathedral was visible and large in size as the Catholic Church placed a great amount of worth on the visual beauty of their sacred buildings (Murphy 2009). Protestant churches in contrast were quite different. Although during the Renaissance

through Baroque periods of architecture were marked with their glorious features, the churches tended to take on a more rectangular and inclusive floor plan.

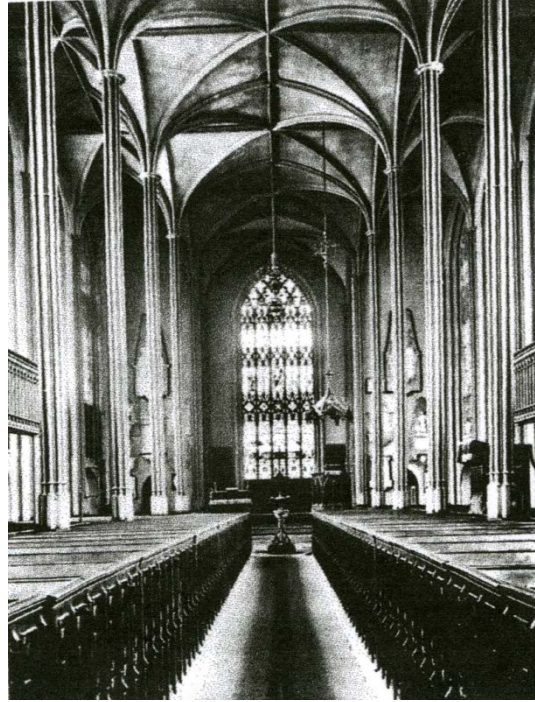


Figure 6.4 Tetbury Church, Gloucestershire, England (Rebuilt 1777-81), (Fletcher 1987)

Once transferred to America, the Protestant churches maintained a humble architectural reference. Often built with local materials, the churches were simple, mainly rectangular in design emphasizing togetherness (Fletcher 1987). These are the churches that Sacred Harp is mainly practiced in today - rural churches with small but close-knit congregations. An example of such a church is the O’Kelly Church of Christ Chapel located in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Although it is not a church where Sacred Harp singings are held, it is fundamentally a similar floor plan to that used by churches practicing Sacred Harp.



Figure 6.7 O'Kelly Church of Christ Chapel exterior, Chapel Hill, NC



Figure 6.8 O'Kelly Church of Christ Chapel interior. Photographs taken by author January 17, 2012

The Protestant church was an integrated part of society and became an essential part of the townscape, integrating itself into the importance of society. A part of the town square, the church became the essential fabric of daily human activity and interaction. The importance of the churches role in the community became essential to the Sacred Harp. With the community oriented around their church congregations already and close family ties, the cohesion fostered provided the Sacred Harp with a continual demographic in which their participants were able to continually enact singings through generations.

Sacred Harp and Ecomusicology

Music is a cultural object that has the capability to reflect various aspects of the society in which it is created. The emerging field of ecomusicology is a subfield within musicology that analyzes the impact of places and the physical environment on compositions and the writers themselves. Ecomusicology engages in musicology, the history of music, by seeking to understand music and musical communities that use the image of the human-environment relationship through lyrics or theory (Allen 2011). A part of the field is an effort to unpack musical narratives and uncover “the ideological basis, through historical study and analysis, upon which conventional ideas of music and landscape are built” (Grimley 2011: 395). Ecomusicology thus provides Geography with the capability of understanding a new human-environment relationship and how it is significant to a place or spatial community.

It has been shown that Sacred Harp is a practicing music community that can be mapped and is spatial identifiable, even through the historical record. George Revill (2005) proposes the thesis that folk music can be understood geographically because it is a static tradition that encapsulates a place and its identity. Sacred Harp music is such a musical routine, marked by tradition that has been relatively uninterrupted within its place, as previously explained. It should be clearly understood that Sacred Harp is not a folk music; rather it is a form of sacred or church music. Revill’s thesis applies to this research as the Sacred Harp society is a bounded group of people in a static space in which the long-term engagement of the same people with the same music has created a permanent presence upon the landscape (Revill 2005).

Due to the Sacred Harp's permanence upon the southern and cultural landscape of America, it is a useful tool for analyzing one way in which Christianity is perceived and exercised by worshipers. The research represented is not a theological study. However, there will be a few elements of biblical scriptures and theological interpretations to express clarity of the significance of Christian doctrine to Sacred Harp hymnal lyrics.

Sacred Harp is an enduring form of music, and the places written within the lyrics convey the significance not only of the music itself, but also the significance of the landscape as the object of composition and performance. In *The Sounds of Place*, Denise Von Glahn (2003) explores how one discovers their sense of place through music. Von Glahn asserts that "in addition to locating us in the cosmos, place tells us who we are" (Von Glahn 2003: 2). While her work emphasizes titles of compositions and how they are meaningful to the composer based on the places they are written about or composed in, Von Glahn's thesis of the importance of place should be noted. Titles carry significance, as do the places mentioned in the pieces themselves. The selected hymns discussed below will illustrate how physical place is important to the singer, and how nature is represented as a sacred landscape.

Sacred Harp singers view their practice as a form of Christian worship. In the truest sense of the word "sacred", the songs from Sacred Harp carry out the Latin root meaning of "a general sense of restriction". This still means the practice is set apart, and thus has a limited access to others outside of the identified group (Tuan 2009). It is not uncommon for Sacred Harp singers to be wanderers, as many travel from one singing to the next. By journeying from singings, singers enjoy the travel and a common bond

between themselves and others at their destinations. Since all have a similar link they assemble a group that is inclusive, while having an identity that is exclusive as well, thus making the group meaningful to those who are a part of it.

There are places that connect Sacred Harp together. But unique to Sacred Harp is the way it portrays the human interaction with the environment. Through nature and order Sacred Harp offers a unique perspective on how to define a sacred space. In Revelation, the final chapter of the Bible, the apostle John describes how the process of natural order is formed under God's control. Jerusalem, the Holy City, becomes a bride being presented to her husband (Rev. 21:2). This passage symbolically represents a dream of the Jews for the restoration of Jerusalem in glory as the holiest of cities (Barclay 2004). Tuan takes this scripture in his analysis and describes how Jerusalem represents order. Yet it is an order that has lost its power, thus changing the way in which a sacred space is defined. This shifts the theory that a church was a sacred space for Christianity, to the individual and their natural environment (Tuan 2009). Tuan's thesis in *Religion: From Place to Placelessness* emphasizes that religion is no longer structuralized in churches, temples, synagogues, etc.; rather it's the individual's belief system and customs that is changing religion and thus the geography of religion. The crucial part of Tuan's thesis applies to the Sacred Harp, as a critique of using order in the natural environment is a spiritual channel for individuals to commune with God on a personal level.

The Sacred Harp is all about a sacred connection to its community and an individual's spiritual well being. This happens in two ways: 1) traveling to visit and participate in different singings, and 2) through the physical environment. The Sacred

Harp hymns and a group of singers personify a wandering traveler's spirit. In the chapter entitled "A History and Geography of Northern Soul" in *The Place of Music* (1998), the authors analyze the historical geography of Northern English music. The relationship between music's place and identity are inseparable. Neighborhoods and communities are created through travel and attachment to spaces (Hollows and Milestone 1998). Travel, place, and identity are likewise crucial to the Sacred Harp scene. It is a music that is built on movement and travel as it evolved throughout time. The music itself even represents this tradition.

Singers are always searching and moving to connect with their fellow singers, whether it is through local singings or conventions. The songs continually reference traveling and moving to get to one's destination. The "Bound for Canaan" hymn describes those reasons. An individual can possess a strong aspiration to voyage with their captain, as one of his soldiers (McGraw 1991: 82). The refrain emphasizes three times, "I'm on my way to Canaan, I'm on my way to Canaan, I'm on my way to Canaan, to the New Jerusalem" (McGraw 1991: 82). Geographer Adrian Ivakhiv (2006) explains that this represents one of two different reasons: 1) a physical journey and involvement in a diaspora community, and 2) it is the community of the afterlife for which they long for and desire. A strong longing lies within this hymn as it places the singer into the circumstances of the person inside of the song.

The interconnection between nature and music through its literature demonstrates how close Sacred Harp singing, as well as the individual singing it, can become to their natural environment. Engaging in a lyrical analysis as it pertains to the practice and

sound of music reveals the cultural emotional attachment of the music as it is meant to here and be practiced (Anderson, Morton, & Revill 2005). Partly this begins with the composers of Sacred Harp. Some are noted for writing their tunes outdoors and seeking inspiration in the fields and in turn utilize the sounds they here from animals or nature in their hymns (Anderson & Powell 2006). Out of all the hymns collected in the 1991 edition of *the Sacred Harp*, Rivers or Water references are mention the most, reoccurring 12 times through the text; and Mountains, Fields, and Sky are the second most recognized term with 10 references (Table 6.3). Of these terms, the two that will be analyzed in further detail are the rivers and the mountains.

Nature Term	Times Repeated
Apple Tree	2
Banks	3
Clouds	4
Corn	4
Dawn	2
Dust	3
Fields	10
Flowers	3
Fruit	9
Grass	4
Hills	6
Lily of the Valley	4
Living Green	5
Midnight	2
Moon	7
Morning	2
Mountain	10
Plains	7
Rain	2
Rivers	12
Rock	3
Rose	4
Sea	7
Showers	5
Sky	10
Snow	2
Spring	3
Star	7
Storm	2
Sun	6
Tempests	5
Valleys	2
Waves	4
Wind(s)	5

Table 6.3 Nature Terms Repeated in Hymns

Nature in *The Sacred Harp* utilizes numerous undertones to determine what is deemed sacred throughout its hymns. While the music is written for the individual voice and how it is the most sacred of instruments, it also relates to sacred places in the natural environment. The Christian church has always consistently concluded that God created all living entities. It was God's first act to provide the stage in which all life would be carried out through time (Oden 1992). The field of ecomusicology provides the theoretical perspective on how music connects to nature. While man has socially constructed nature itself, the Sacred Harp is exemplarily of how place and the nature are essential to understanding the significance of its enchanting songs.

Rivers represent a renewal of life and way of passage in the Sacred Harp singing tradition. The song "Sweet Rivers" (McGraw 1991: 61) details how the river characterizes redeeming oneself and love, and escaping across its borders to a land in which there will be no pain. Upon reaching these shores of Canaan along the Jordan River, the song believes, all "troubles will be o'er" and the soul will endlessly drink and feast in this "unbounded sea" (McGraw 1991: 61). The banks of the Jordan River are thus being described as a plentiful land that thrives on the resources the river provides. Furthermore the river is representing God's Spirit. Water and its movement across landscape is a symbol indicative of "cleansing, reviving, and refreshing, without which life does not long continue. Water is considered a 'perfect, gladsome, simple material substance, pure in itself' that 'supplied a worthy vehicle of God'" within Christian theology (Oden 1992: 534).

A river's value does not cease with its ability provide people with a resource. A river can also serve as a physical boundary separating one land from the other. The rivers being represented in the hymns also serve as the barrier separating life and death from one another. The song "Jordan (First)" (McGraw 1991: 66) also highlights the bountiful blessings and promises that God is on the side of the living, whereas the cold flood represents death being on the other side. The two total realms are divided and separated from the other by the rivers boundary. The ecology of the river represented in the singing is coming to life as the lyrics are being personified in the hymns. Water and rivers provide a renewal and regeneration of one's soul. Through rivers the embodiment of the Spirit is transported, whether as a resource or a boundary it is an essential means of life full of dualistic meaning of life and spiritual survival on the land.

Rivers, as resources and living entities in the physical world, are quintessential to survival. However, mountains convey God's sheer strength and dominant presence on Earth in the Sacred Harp. The mountains and their ranges are indicative of power throughout the world. This is why they are normally given such ultimate power and authority in religions (Lane 2001). Mountains are God's seats of power. The apostle John in Revelation speaks about how he was carried to the seat of God's power on a mountain "great and high" (Rev. 21: 10). Furthermore, mountains are also critical places in that they are the location of an event of critical importance in the Christian tradition (Kinnard 2011). Examples within the Christian tradition would be Moses receiving the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai (Exodus 20: 1-21). Another example would be Mount Zion, which is located in Jerusalem, in the "Old City," known also as the Mount

of Olives. In biblical teachings this is the mountain where King David defeated his treasonous son Absalom, who was raising an insurrection against him. David would journey up this mountain to flee from his son and gain the resolve to confront him (2 Samuel 15). Due to Sacred Harp singers having a Christian background, most would be familiar with this tale and its importance in the story of King David. Thus the song “Mount Zion” allows for the singer to establish a spiritual connection to the mountain itself.

The song “Mount Zion” uses its significance and prevalence in biblical teachings to represent the transition point of death and the pathway towards heaven. The hymn sings “the hill of Zion yields a thousand sacred sweets before we reach the heavenly fields, or walk the golden streets” (McGraw 1991: 220-221). Zion becomes the starting point of the promises of heaven to come. The continuing part of the journey instructs the wanderer to sing out the song to allow for “every tear to be dry” because now they are “marching through Immanuel’s ground to fairer worlds on high” (McGraw 1991: 220-221). The mountain therefore comes to represent the pinnacle of making it to the highest point of one’s spiritual life and gaining access into heaven.

In a geographical context, Sacred Harp offers ecomusicology an additional way to study how humans connect with their personal religious beliefs and with each other through location and place. Nature is a profound component that provides a link from the human world into the sacred. Music is representative of landscape because it is symbolically composed of its place (Grimley 2011). Place study, location, and

understanding natures integrated meanings in the world, reveal ways in which people consider areas sacred for their spirituality.

CHAPTER VII

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Sacred Harp from a Geographical Perspective

Sacred Harp has long been a musical tradition identified with the southern region of America. This research analyzes how and why this happened and in what ways regional, historical and cultural geography impacted the decision of Sacred Harp to eventually settle in the South. As discussed in previous chapters, the literature on Sacred Harp even as a history of the music has been varied and discontinuous. This research seeks to provide further analysis on the topic of how Sacred Harp historically evolved as a direct result of the regional environments it evolved from through a geographic perspective. In addition, a historical geographic lens is applied to convey the geographical processes at work over time that allowed for the conditions of the Sacred Harp to emerge. Lastly, in order to further identify sacred and spiritual landscapes of the Sacred Harp in the environment, a new approach of ecomusicology was employed to uncover human-environment interaction in music. Several basic questions framed this geographical study. They are summarized below with the corresponding questions and discussion.

Academic work regarding the geography of religion as it pertains to cultural geography exists, but is sparse and varied. As such there are a few classical approaches that were utilized through the research as well as new techniques from other fields that

utilize geography without even realizing its potential. The research combines the efforts of Brace, Bailey, and Harvey (2006) to spatially analyze the Methodist community of Plymouth, England, as a particular religious denomination affecting its regional landscape over time, with Zelinsky's method of tracking the cultural evolution of an event through time. The Sacred Harp evolved into its own practice, cultural group and spaces. Much of the research conducted on Sacred Harp largely deals with its efforts to maintain a presence in music history through an ethnographic study. The research conducted throughout this thesis sought to provide a new perspective to the already existing literature. Coupled with applying ecomusicology as a methodological tool for further understanding the impact of the human-environment interaction. The ecomusicology method provides an ability to further add to sacred landscape concepts about how they are determined and affiliated with religious practices. This research adds to the scholastic record by conveying how a cultural item is developed by its environment and is representative of it. The following sections discuss the conclusions in greater detail.

Research Questions Conclusions

- i. *How and why has Sacred Harp evolved as a cultural event through time and space (Zelinsky 1992)?*

Sacred Harp migrated through time along with British cultural groups that immigrated and settled the American colonies. Beginning in England, the psalter hymnals became an integrated part of Anglican worship as the Separatists moved to the Americas and brought along their psalter exercises. Here is the first step in the diffusion process for Sacred Harp's emergence. The core of the music lay in East England. Through the transatlantic process it took on a new form in the American colonies when the Puritans reformed it in order to place their own doctrinal emphasis on it. Since the *Bay Psalm Book* shape-notes and its corresponding hymns arose in the church congregations throughout New England. It is evident through the continual emphasis placed on maintaining this music that it was deemed a significant form of worship practice.

Following the Puritans settlement in New England they then spread themselves and their culture across the surrounding hinterland of the Massachusetts Bay colony. From there shape-note hymns became a part of backcountry churches and were adopted by the Scots-Irish in Appalachia. Once the Scot-Irish became involved, their life ways and social structure pushed shape-notes into a close-together group. Always practiced and emphasized as the dominant form of worship music, shape-notes were adopted into a specific regional cultural practice yet again.

Sacred Harp was born out of Scots-Irish traditions in the South. Once it reached the southern states it was rapidly accepted and widely used throughout church services and singing devotionals on occasional Sundays. The Sacred Harp was a cultural event that is steeped in the every day life of people. As a fundamental part of worship services

in church it is a tool used for practicing one's religion as well. It is a tradition that evolved over time to correspond to its environment. This progressive movement allows for the study of the spatial aspect of Sacred Harp to further understand how integrated and a part of the southern culture Sacred Harp was and currently is.

ii. What is the regional evolution of Sacred Harp as an American culture specific to the South?

Once the tradition became integrated into rural church congregations it easily became associated with the family structure of southern life. Based on Scots-Irish traditions of tight family ties, "singing families" as they were known became the force that held Sacred Harp in place. Normally associated at first with a specific congregation, they eventually spread out across the southern states as transportation and movement became more readily accessible. These families today are still looked to in the community for preserving and continuing the Sacred Harp traditions. Family in general is essential for keeping the Sacred Harp vibrant. Many families participate in these singings together. This is evident by the various generations one sees when they attend these singings (personal observations). Many parents and grandparents teach their kids to read and sing the music at very young ages as the kids are placed on the adults lap and the adult helps the child follow along during the singing. The South's close-knit communities and church congregations aid in maintaining the Sacred Harp. It is a constant that is always reinforced with others that practice the Sacred Harp as the South is reasserted as this music's homeland.

iii. *What is sacred in the Sacred Harp, and how is it identifiable as a geography of religion?*

The Sacred Harp is a sacred landscape due to its growth through the Protestant Christian denominations. Sacred Harp is largely identified with the churches in which it is still practiced. The vast majority of singers share a common belief system that the music is a form of worship to God. Protestant church architecture to this day still reflects the coherent idea of Sacred Harp as a collective group exercise that reinforces ones ties to their community. The practice and the lyrics of the hymns in Sacred Harp likewise emphasize this significance. Since the Sacred Harp as a musical practice remained largely static, it is the perfect subject for spatial analysis. The music became so interwoven in the culture of the South that the churches and the music are all a significant part of southern lives and a fundamental way of deeming the sacred landscape of the churches that are scattered throughout the region.

iv. *How is the physical environment utilized and represented as a space within the practices of Sacred Harp?*

Ecomusicology is a clear method of choice to further analyze how the environment is utilized and represented by humans. Always in intimate contact with the planet, humans have always sought ways to understand their surroundings. Ecomusicology is a means for studying how this is carried out in music. In the Sacred Harp, nature is a divinely created entity. It is the stage that was first created for life and history to be carried out. Hymns convey the importance of rivers, water and mountains

to humans as they represent either renewal or power of God himself. The human-environment connection is further understood because one can begin to understand how cultures throughout time have interposed these thoughts on the landscape, making it essential and important to their belief systems.

Sacred Harp is a music that is a fundamental part of the people that participate in singing it. The music has progressed through turbulent times of American history. However, it has always been moving seeking a homeland where it has the capabilities of thriving. From England to New England and to the South, shape-notes eventually were able to form themselves into the Sacred Harp. Given the movement southward and the adoption of the music by the Scots-Irish demographic, the South became the core of the Sacred Harp. By applying geographical methods a greater understanding can be reached regarding humans' impressions upon the landscape around them. The environment created these sacred spaces and fostered a religious viewpoint of the world. Music is a channel for representing this phenomenon. The Sacred Harp found its way into the religious geographical realm and is exercised as a music that is in tune and keeps tempo with its environment.

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