Much of the scholarly research regarding music in a black religious context is limited to spirituals and contemporary gospel, largely neglecting the shape-note singing tradition. As African American participation in shape-note singing declines due to social change and an aging population base, it is vital that shape-note literature and practices be included in the study of traditions that make up the landscape of African American choral practice in the United States. The following article will discuss the African American practice of shape-note singing (specifically seven-shape gospel singing) and highlight the author's visit to two singing conventions that represent remaining strongholds of this tradition in the United States.

# AFRICAN AMERICAN PRACTICE OF SHAPE-NOTE SINGING IN THE UNITED STATES

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### Early Shape-Note Development

In 1801, William Little and William Smith's *The Easy Instructor,* or a *New Method of Teaching Sacred Harmony, containing the Rudiment of Music on an Improved Plan, wherein the Naming and Timing the notes are familiared to the weakest capacity,*[1] was introduced as an innovative teaching method in which pitch and solmization were combined into one readily assessable notation system using only four shapes.[2] *The Easy Instructor* taught singers how to identify scale degrees without needing to understand how a key signature might alter an individual pitch. In this system, four different shapes corresponded with the four syllables that identified pitch relation for the singers. (Figure 1)

In the 1840s and well into the 1850s, white settlers moved from Georgia into southeast Alabama, spreading the shape-note tradition as they traveled and establishing singing schools and church services in local communities.[3] In 1844, B. F. White (1800-1879) and E. J. King (1821-1844) published *The Sacred Harp,*[4] a tunebook rooted in Little and Smith's four-shape shape-note notation introduced half a century prior.[5] Slave owners often brought their slaves to revivals (camp meetings), where the slaves more than likely heard the music of *The Sacred Harp.*[6] These camp meetings were the only truly integrated events in the United States at this time.

After the end of the Civil War in 1865, *The Sacred Harp* became a significant source of religious musical material in the African American community in the southern United States.[7] In northern and southern Alabama, cross-cultural integration between black and white cultures was continuous during the post-war period when African Americans were cautiously free. After Jim Crow laws were enacted, most activities where both whites and blacks participated were segregated; there were, however, integrated *Sacred Harp* singings sponsored by both communities.[8]

The Henry County Convention, established in 1880; the Dale County Colored Musical Institute, established circa 1900; and the Alabama and Florida State Union Singing Convention, established circa 1922, entrenched *Sacred Harp* singing in the African American community and encouraged compositional and arranging interests among participants.[9] Conventions continue today to serve as the structural backbone of shape-note singings in the black community. Churches and state conventions depend on printed song books, teach the rudiments, and schedule small singings that progress to the larger convention singings generally held at the same time each year.[10] The author's personal experience attending two major shape-note conventions is discussed later in this article.

With the continued improvement of music skills during the early decades of the twentieth century, the Dale County Musical Institute facilitated the publication of Judge Jackson's *The Colored Sacred Harp* in 1932.[11] At first, Jackson approached the publishers of tune books directed to white convention singers for help, but he was denied the opportunity. His entrepreneurial drive led him to self-publish a compilation featuring thirty African American composers of *Sacred Harp*-inspired tunes, including Judge Jackson, Lillie Jackson, Herbert H. Woods, and Bishop J. D. Walker.[12] Walker championed the intermingling of white and black singers for the purpose of praising God in song via shape-note singing:

> "We ask your cooperation both white and colored to help us place this book in every home. That we may learn thousands of people especially the youth how to praise God in singing. See Psalms of David 81:1-4."[13]

Included in *The Colored Sacred Harp* is "Eternal Truth Thy Word" by B. F. Faust, a white banker supportive of African American business and church activities in the area;[14] he personally contributed between $1,000 and $1,500 toward efforts to complete the compilation.[15] Compositions by African Americans were not sanctioned in white *Sacred Harp* publications until 1992, when the Cooper edition accepted Judge Jackson's "My Mother's Gone" (519b).[16] Influenced by the Sacred Harp traditions stemming from Kentucky and Tennessee, African Americans in northern Alabama continue to use Thomas J. Denson's 1936 revisions of White's *Sacred Harp.* Those in southern Alabama, via influence from Florida and Georgia *Sacred Harp* traditions, embraced the Cooper

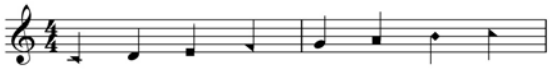

**Figure 1:** Four-shape notation

Revisions.[17, 18]

### Transition to a Seven-Shape System

Although four-shape shape-note singing was the preference for those involved in the shape-note tradition, the landscape of shape-note notation was changed in 1846 when Jesse Aiken published the first seven-shape shape-note tunebook, *Christian Minstrel.* Aiken's system was modeled after the European-based seven-note system

(doremi). (Figure 2)

The seven-note tradition was most likely introduced into the black community via the use of Christian Harmony.[19] After 1873, all other seven-note systems vanished from usage, and Aiken's system was favored universally by publishers of seven-shape shape-note tunebooks.[20]

### Tunebook Publication

By the 1930s, there were over twenty-nine seven-shape gospel companies publishing tunebooks in the southern United States.[21] It was common to find hymnals and tunebooks notated in seven shapes in black churches, particularly Church of God in Christ, Methodist, and Baptist denominations. This practice of singing from seven-shape tunebooks in choir practice and church services in the African American church flourished from the 1920s into the 1950s.[22] James D. Vaughan, Stamps-Baxter, and Ruebush-Kieffer were the leading publishers of seven-shape gospel tunebooks post World War II.[23] The companies fostered strong relationships with the communities and churches in which they held singing schools, using their own tunebooks as educational learning aids. On average, one to two new books were published per year and included popular songs and new tunes composed by singers of the seven-shape gospel tradition.[24]

The addition of new songs drove the sales of new books. Members of black singing conventions usually acquired books with the help of sponsors or from singing class monies. Because these classes were large and publishers gave discounts based on volume of purchases, the costs of books were kept low for participants. Vaughan and Stamps-Baxter books were popular among larger conventions that comprised several counties from several states; individual conventions (generally counties from one state) maintained some autonomy and could adopt any book of their choosing for singings.[25] As longtime singers died and the recruiting of new singers waned, the usage of older books increased and the funds for buying new books decreased. The age of the singers, their poorer vision, and deteriorating sight-reading abilities also contributed to the declining use of new books.[26]

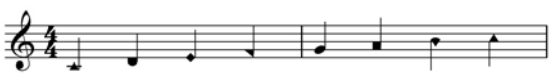

**Figure 2:** European-based seven-shape system

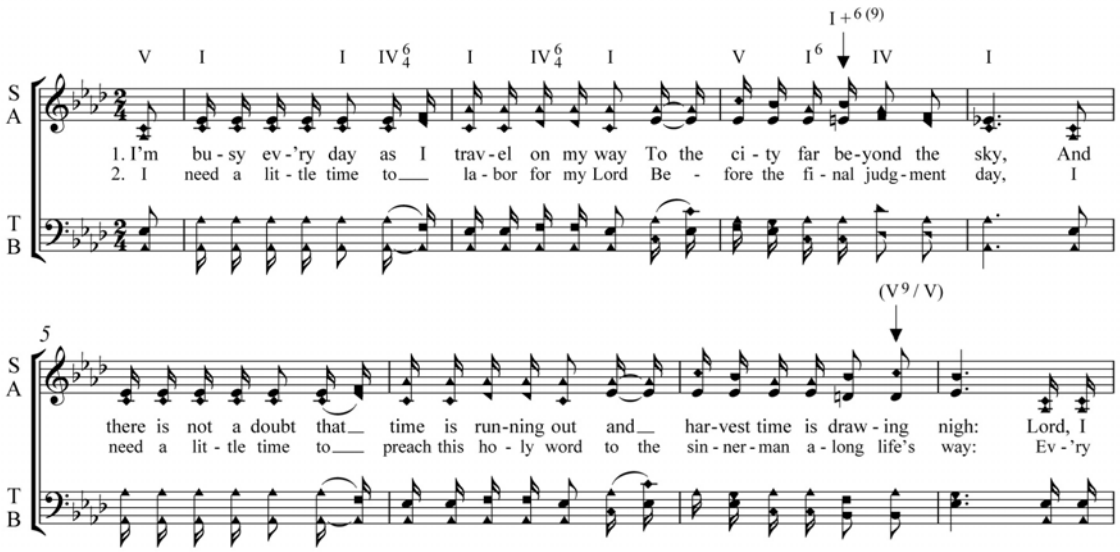


**Figure 3.** *Lord, Just Give Me a Little More Time*

### Seven-Shape Gospel Literature

Predominantly homophonic, call-and-response formal pattern, and an amalgamation of homophonic and polyphonic elements characterize the textures found in seven-shape gospel tunes. The first, exemplified in the popular tune "Lord Give Me Just a Little More Time,"[27] is predominately homophonic and homo-rhythmic. This piece is performed often and usually elicits an overwhelming emotional response of shouts and claps at the conclusion of its singing. Plagal progressions, altered chords, and extended harmonies represent the gospel music harmonic language that comprise seven-shape gospel tunes. (Figure 3)

The second identifying character is a call-and-response formal pattern, a prevalent attribute of musical practices in the black community. Tunes in this category are predominately polyphonic and begin with an anacrusis in the soprano or bass parts followed by repetition of the text delivered by the remaining parts. "It Won't Be Long"[28] is a popular representation of the second category. (Figure 4)

This piece is also representative of the rhythmic alterations that permeate African American seven-shape gospel singing. In figure 5, the top line represents what is printed in the score, and the bottom line is a transcription of the rhythmic improvisation heard during Alabama-Missis-

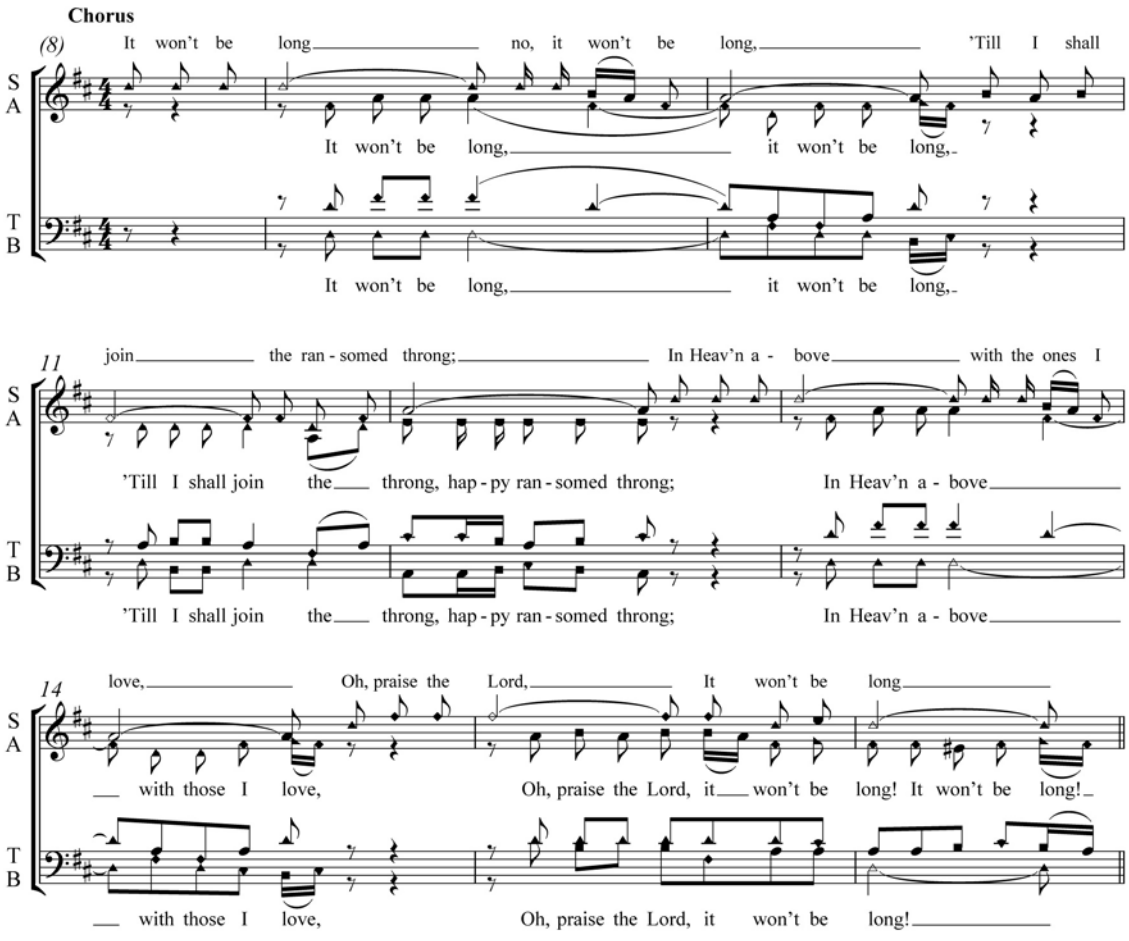


**Figure 4.** Charles W. Vaughan, *It Won't Be Long,* mm. 9 –16.

sippi-Georgia All-State Convention. These rhythmic improvisations tend to be more elaborate as the singers' emotional response to the music heightens.[29] (Figure 5)

The third style suggests an amalgamation of the homophonic and polyphonic textures. "I Am Not Alone"[30] is a tune from this category. The homophonic texture is usually present in the verses, while the chorus is delivered in a polyphonic manner. Anacruses are heard in both verses and choruses. The harmonic language of such tunes is most frequently cast in a major key; the harmony does not modulate. (Figure 6)

### Performance Style

Although white and black communities of seven-shape gospel singers share the same tunebooks, differences in performance style are most evident in deviations from the printed harmonic, melodic, and rhythmic elements added by black singers and their ritualistic, emotional response to communal singing. Not unlike their white counterparts, black seven-shape singers rely on compositions rooted in the white tradition and adjust the keys of tunes according to the comfort of those present during the singings; the exclusion of printed accidentals by black seven-shape gospel singers, however, creates a distinct aural experience. The musical structure is specified in the white tradition, but melodic embellishment is an expected feature in African American singings.[31]

Unlike the ornamentation practices found in the white shape-note tradition, there are typically a number of singers simultaneously embellishing melodic and non-melodic lines and adding improvised details during African American worship. Buell Cobb outlined two categories of ornamentation in the white practice of shape-note singing: 1) passing tones and anticipations and 2) ornamental flourishes of the melodic line.[32] George Pullen Jackson noted that black singers preferred more improvisatory elements than their white counterparts, freely altering and adding notes.[33] Melodic flourishes frequently occur at the end of phrases and final cadence points. The elaborateness of

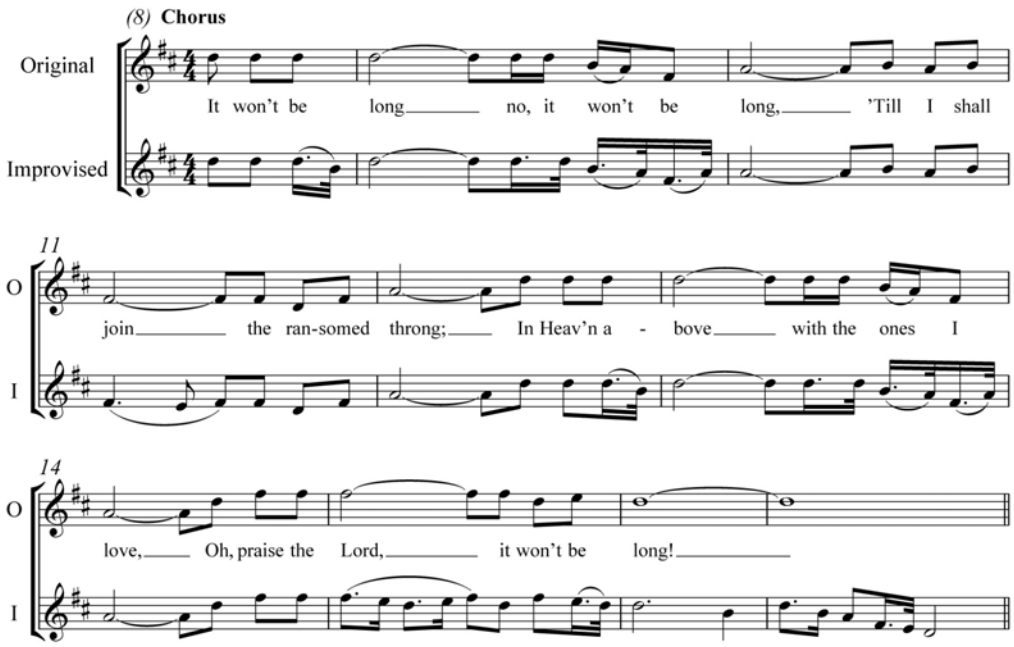


**Figure 5.** Charles W. Vaughan, *It Won't Be Long,* mm. 9 –16. Transcription of improvised performance

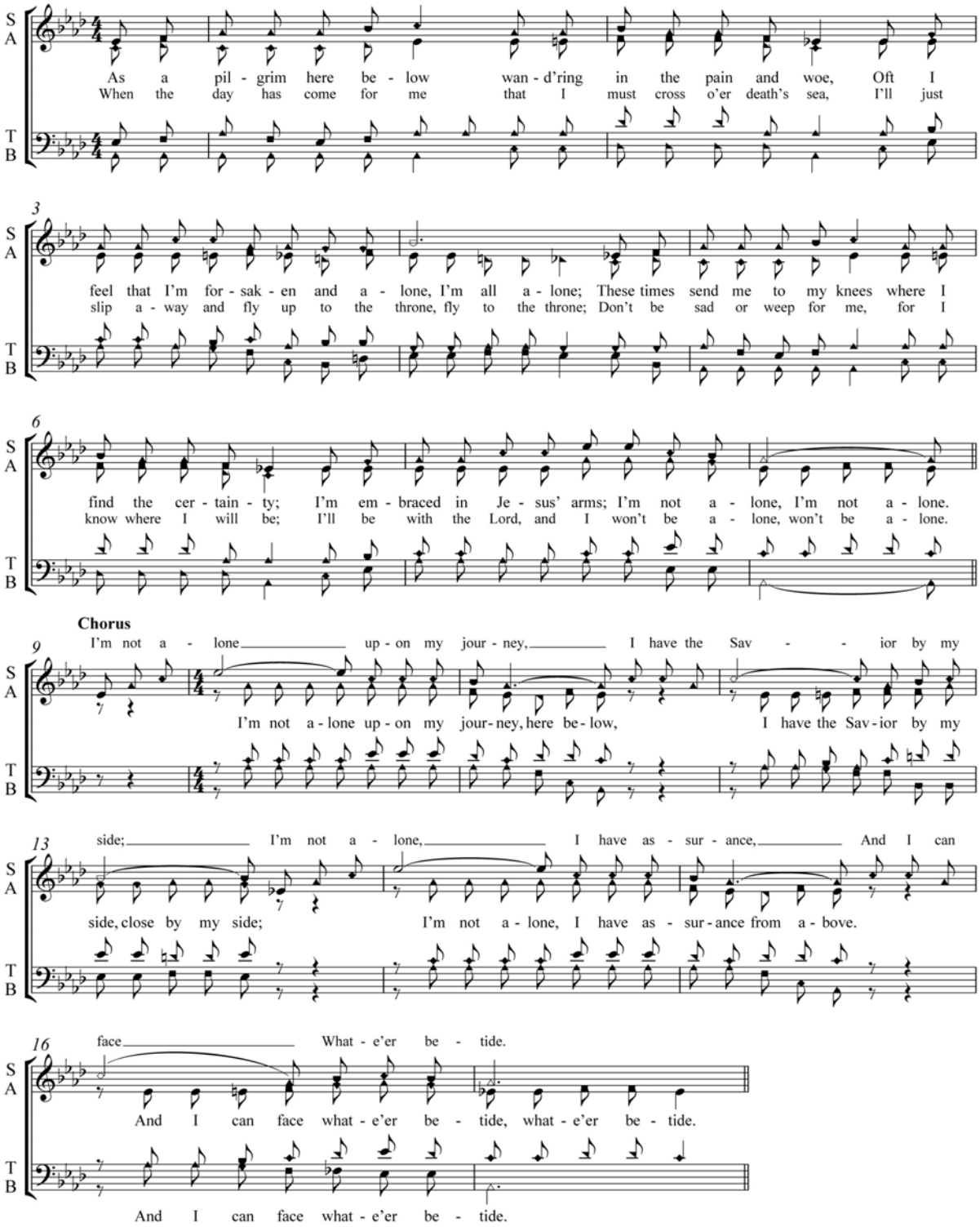


**Figure 6.** Alan Mahaffey, *I Am Not Alone.*

the flourishes depends on the tempo of the tune and the agility of the vocalists. It is not uncommon for rhythms to be swung in the seven-shape tradition. Rhythmic clapping and stomping are also staples of this tradition; they occur on beats two and four and become louder and more vigorous, eventually leading singers into a full body sway.[34]

African American seven-shape gospel singing represents a mixture of individual voices that weave in and out of the overall texture. Each voice has its own stylized characteristics fueled by the singer's personal response to the text. The mingling of meaningful texts and well-known melodies serves as a catalyst for emotional responses by singers such as screaming, wailing, and walking the floor. This propensity for intense emotional outbursts is a fundamental characteristic of seven-shape gospel singing, one that distinguishes it from the four-shape tradition of the *Sacred Harp*.[35] African American seven-shape gospel singing generally takes on a character akin to the charismatic black church revival in the South. While there is rhythmic vitality in the Sacred Harp singing, it is quite unlike the richness of rhythmic details and the infusion of shouting heard at the African American seven-shape shape-note singings.

Shouting, a standard of the black religious experience, is an intense form of spiritual expression and usually consists of a high degree of individual variation among vocal, physical, and emotional expressions.[36] In seven-shape gospel singing by African Americans, shouting results in the repetition of verses at a fevered pitch accompanied by clapping, stomping, and arm waving that create an overwhelming surge of energy throughout the room. This highpoint is usually followed by a slowing down of the tempo and reduction of shouting just before the final cadence. This final cadence, which is marked by an outpouring of melismatic vocalisms from the singers and thunderous applause at the conclusion of the tune.

### Current Practice and Repertoire of Shape-Note Singings

Singings are events where groups of people assemble to sing shape-note tunes. This term is used in black and white communities whether four- or seven-shape. There are no rehearsals, and the events are not considered performances. Singings generally occur at regular times determined by the participants. Visitors are welcomed to attend and are often encouraged to sing. The regional West Alabama Convention and the Alabama-Mississippi-Georgia All-State Convention represent two of the remaining strongholds for the current practice of seven-shape gospel singing in the African American community. The West Alabama singing convention uses *Mull's Singing Convention No. 5, Heavenly Highways Hymns, Singing Praise, Matches Grace*, and *Victory*.

This author attended the regional West Alabama Singing in 2012 and the Alabama-Mississippi-George All-State Convention and quickly became involved as a singer in this musical expression of community, faith, and perseverance. Both conventions are attended by local singers who still practice seven-shape gospel singing and by former residents who return from states outside of the region—e.g., Michigan, California, and Illinois. At the singings this author attended, there were fifteen to twenty singers at the West Alabama Convention and fifty to one hundred singers at the Alabama-Mississippi-Georgia All-State Convention. According to Elston Driver, former president of the West Alabama singing convention, these numbers are typical for both singings.

### Repertoire

African American seven-shape gospel singing repertoire tends be more limited than its white counterpart. Although both draw tunes from the same publishing resources—such as Stamps-Baxter, Vaughn & Co., and Ruebush-Kieffer—the existing tunes heard in African American shape-note singing are limited by song leader preferences, new book compilation trends, and insufficient education in reading shaped notation. The songs selected by the leaders during present-day singings have been passed down through generations and are usually well known among all singers in attendance. As a result, a convention like that in West Alabama has the benefit of the *Parker Book* at its singings. The *Parker Book* is not available for purchase. After attending the singings, This author was given a copy of this anthology with the most popular songs in the Alabama, Mississippi, and Georgia area. A by-product of this compilation is the reduction in the number of individual books singers have to carry to singings—a welcome benefit for the aging singers who represent the majority of participants. David Parker, the compiler of this book, describes it as follows:

> The songs in this book is [*sic*] intended to prolong the life of the Historical shape-note singing and to preserve the memory of those who gave a full measure of their love and devotion to the art of shape-note Singing and the uniting of people for the many reasons over the years, but most of all to sing God's praises in four part harmony shape-note music.[37]

Novices in the tradition learn the *doremi* method via "learning sheet" or by rote when singing classes are not available. These circumstances have limited the repertoire of the tradition to favorites, as new singers are only exposed to the most popular songs of their respective conventions. New books with new tunes continue to be published but are most readily embraced in the white gospel singing tradition.

### West Alabama Convention

The West Alabama convention began in 1917 and represents a collaboration of individual church choirs and community singing groups. Local singers lived and sang in a community, and they traveled to attend singings in other communities. Elston Driver explained how people traveled: "Mr. Alford Lacey had a flat-bed truck and would take people who didn't have no way of going."[38]

The West Alabama singing convention has also adopted the "modern" concert-style setting that emerged in the practices of black singers of four-shape shape-note singing from around the late 1950s. This style is characterized by the presence of non-shape singers who may choose to actively participate in leading or singing. A loose timeframe is established, but the singings can be longer or shorter in length according to the number of song leaders and how spirited the participants become throughout the evening. Unfortunately, over the last several decades the numbers of singings has dropped. Driver explained the decline of singings:

> "Back seventy years ago, when these conventions got started, everybody had enough people in their church to have their own singing class. We helped each other's singings throughout each convention. The West Alabama singing convention in Fayette started the first Sunday in April and went through the first Sunday in October, and then you skipped Sundays along the way due to losing host churches for some singings each month. As the years went on, singings continued to be dropped."[39]

### Leadership

The leadership roles during public singings can be categorized as executive, musical, financial, and religious. In the elected position of president in the West Alabama singing convention, Elston Driver determined the order of the song leaders and secured the host churches. He was responsible for keeping the convention connected to other seven-note gospel singing conventions in surrounding states. He also played an important role in keeping the tradition thriving in Alabama by inviting researchers to participate in documenting their singing activities.

As the most skilled male singer, Driver also took on the musical role for this organization and bore the responsibility for "pitching" each piece selected by song leaders. (Photo 1)

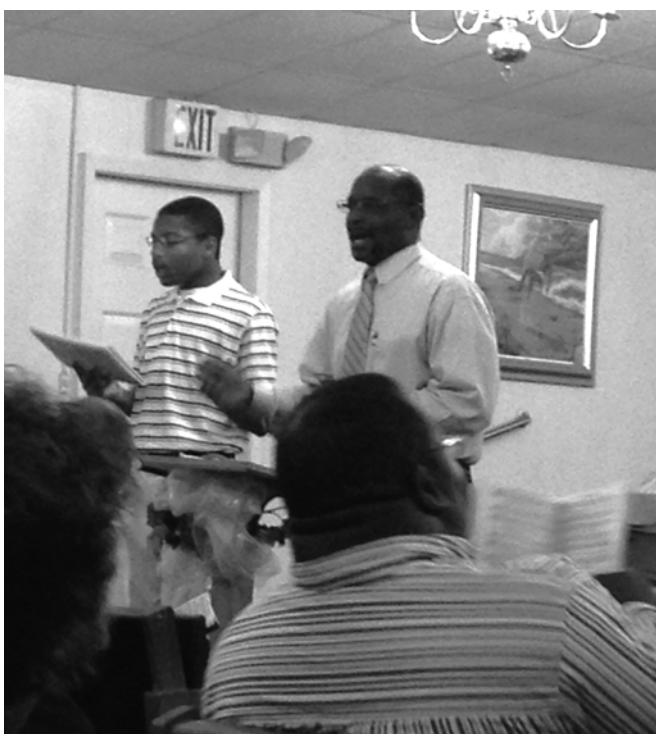


*Photo 1. Elston Driver and son representing the West Alabama Convention at the All-State Convention (October 19, 2012)*

The pitch chosen may have no relation to the printed page and may be moved higher or lower to accommodate the singers present that day. Anyone may lead a song. The leader usually sings the melody while he or she is standing in front of the group. Each song leader selects a song and decides whether he or she will "sing the music" and which stanzas to sing. In this particular convention, the process of singing the shape-note names before singing the actual song text is known as "singing the music." This practice helps singers learn the notes and rhythms for tunes that may be less familiar to the majority of singers on the day of the singing. A verse and chorus of the piece is sung using doremi syllables at a slow tempo to familiarize singers with the chosen tune. For more familiar songs, this process is usually omitted.

Two to three individuals selected by the president usually take on the financial role in the West Alabama public singings and are responsible for passing the collection plates during the singings. The pastor of the host church fulfills the religious role by offering an opening and closing prayer and an additional musical selection if he desires. This musical selection performed during the West Alabama public singings I attended was not in the seven-shape gospel repertoire. I learned that it is common for the host church to offer special music from outside of the shape-note singing tradition. This seems to be a method of acknowledging other black religious music traditions and also serves to showcase talented soloists from the host church. If the pastor declines to provide a musical selection, a member of the host congregation may offer an alternative.[40]

### Attire

The formal attire worn by the participants accentuates the importance of this event in the lives of these singers. The women, for example, wear their Sunday morning church hats.

This custom goes back to the times of slavery, when female slaves adorned themselves with scarves to achieve individuality and to show their respect for God by coming forth in their finest. Judith Lee speaks to the significance of this tradition in her article, "African-American Women and Church Hats, What's the Message?":

> For many of these women and their ancestors, dressing up for church was a way of sending the message; it's time to come from behind those domestic aprons and housedresses… Now that African American women have come so far through years of struggles, pain and suffering, part of the hat tradition sends a message of celebrating their confidence and independence."[41]

### Alabama-Mississippi-Georgia All-State Convention

In existence since 1967, the Alabama-Mississippi-Georgia All-State convention is an annual event that usually occurs over three days in the late summer or early fall[42] and includes public singings and official business meetings. During this convention, two delegates from each church or regional convention in attendance participate in the business meetings and the committee reports given throughout the day. Official business activities are kept to a minimum in order to allow time for singing. (Photo 2)

The year 2012 marked the forty-fifth annual session of the All-State Shape-Note and Sacred Harp Singing Convention: *Singing and Making Melody in Your Heart to the Lord.*[43] The naming of the singing is a practice taken up by Alabama-Mississippi-Georgia All-State Convention, and there is no evidence that suggests this is a standard practice throughout seven-shape tradition. The convention was held October 19-21, 2012, in Fayette, Alabama. Singers from the Canaan, East Union, West Alabama, and Alabama/Mississippi[44] singing conventions hosted the event; the host church was Shady Grove Baptist Church. The presence of singers from Detroit was interesting, and I was later informed that the singers were native Alabamans who migrated north and continue to participate.

The All-State Convention continues some traditions carried over from the four-shape tradition such as the opening and closing prayers; morning, evening, and night singings; and the taking of collection and "dinner on the grounds." It does, however, exhibit characteristics unique to seven-shape gospel singing. The performance of non-shape-note music (black gospel and spirituals) and special soloists are associated only with seven-shape gospel conventions in the African American community.[45] In

*Photo 2. Individual church performance at the Alabama-Mississippi-Georgia All State Convention (October 20, 2012)*

my experiences singing with white and black shape-note groups, I have only witnessed this at black seven-note gospel singings. Black gospel music has played a major role in influencing the decline of seven-shape shape-note gospel singing, and the mainstream emphasis on spirituals as the epitome of communal music making in the black community has led to an omission of black participation in seven-shape gospel singing.

### Decline in Practice

The move by younger churchgoers and clergy toward contemporary gospel music has led to the weakening of seven-shape gospel singings in most black churches. The youngest participants at the West Alabama and All-State singing conventions were the teenage son and daughter of a participating singer. Incorporating contemporary non-shape-note music during traditional singings is likely a useful strategy to recruit young singers to shape-note singings. Their presence speaks to the continued efforts to bring in new singers and the commitment of veteran singers to preserve the tradition.

Unfortunately, many younger pastors have elected not to sustain the seven-shape gospel singings that were important to their forefathers. This lack of interest has resulted in the decline in the number of shape-note singers in black churches; as a result, congregations are no longer willing to host singings or classes. The churches that continue to host singings usually comprise families with a strong history of singing who maintain an active presence in their respective churches. Many rural clergy used to preach on a "circuit of churches," leaving some Sundays with no church services or "off days." Four or five times a year, on the fifth Sunday of each month, an "off day" was available for substituting shape-note classes or for singings. On rare occasions a second or third Sunday might be available for

a shape-note singing after the worship service or Sunday school.[46] This practice of "off days" still exists in many present-day African American churches.

In recent times, contemporary solo gospel singers represent a meshing of pop, rhythm and blues, and gospel that has profoundly affected the buying and listening preferences of the growing youth consumer market. The emergence of these genres in the black church has resulted in increased use of instruments (electric and percussion), the incorporation of dance, and an emphasis on virtuosic soloists.[47] Churchgoers reared in the traditional black church believe the line between sacred and secular music has been blurred; they tend to favor more conservative participatory forms of worship such as seven-shape gospel singing. These members attribute the diminishing participation in seven-shape gospel singing to the rising popularity of the solo-driven, performance-based, contemporary black church worship.

## Conclusion

Shape-note singing and its role in white musical communities have been documented extensively as an enduring folk tradition in the United States.[48] This genre of song appeared in various tunebooks during the early nineteenth century and flourished as a style minimizing, to an important degree, the melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic compositional techniques that had become the accepted norms in Western European musical trends.[49] Historical musicologists and scholars of religious practices in the African American community have long concerned themselves with spirituals and contemporary gospel music and their roles in the religious experience of African Americans but have overlooked African American participation in shape-note singing. As the decline of this practice continues, the need to archive this musical tradition has become one of critical importance.

Though on the decline, seven-shape shape-note gospel singing continues to be a congregational practice in the African American community, and yet it has not been appropriately woven into the mainstream discussion of black music making in the United States. Acknowledging seven-shape gospel traditions in black communities broadens the scope of the prevailing scholarship concerning African American music practices. The intermingling of ritualistic characteristics associated with black church music and the distinct musical components of seven-shape shape-note gospel singing creates an evocative religious experience for singers and serves as a dynamic vehicle for spiritual and creative expression in the African American community. CJ

## Discography

African-American Note Choirs. *African-American Note Choirs of Alexander County,* North Carolina. CD Baby, 2006. CD.

*Traditional Musics of Alabama, Vol. 2: African American Seven-shapenote Singing.* Alabama Center for Traditional Culture's Millennium Series. CD.

## NOTES

[1] This book was dominated with tunes from New England repertoire (including some European anthems already printed in New England).

[2] David Alan Brock, "A Foundation for Defining Southern Shape-note Folk Hymnody from 1800 to 1859 as a Learned Compositional Style." (PhD diss., Claremont College, 1996), 34.

[3] Doris J. Dyen, "The Role of Shape-Note Singing in the Musical Culture of Black Communities in Southeast Alabama" (PhD diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign,1977), 119-120.

[4] Published in Philadelphia but compiled in Georgia by B. F. White.

[5] Sadly, King died only a few months before the final publication and was not able to see it completed.

[6] During the Second Awakening, a Christian revival movement, camp meetings were common and influential on the repertory included in *The Sacred Harp.*

[7] Barbara Hampton. "A Songbook by Nineteenth-Century African-Americans," *The Colored Sacred Harp: Wiregrass Sacred Harp Singers* (CD liner notes). New York: New World 804033, 1993.

[8] Ibid., 5.

[9] Ibid., 6.

[10] Sylvester Oliver, "American Music Traditions in Northeast Mississippi" (Phd dissertation, University of Memphis, 1996), 290.

[11] Hampton, "A Songbook by Nineteenth-Century African Americans," 6.

[12] Myrtice Jackson Collins and Marcia E. Hardney, "Take Note: African American Shape-Note Singing," 770.

[13] Buell E. Cobb, *The Sacred Harp: A Tradition and Its Music* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1978), 119.

[14] Hampton, "A Songbook by Nineteenth-Century African Americans," 8.

[15] Dyen, "The Role of Shape-note," 136.

[16] Jerrilyn McGregory, *Downhome Gospel: African American Spiritual Activism in Wiregrass Country* (University of Mississippi Press, 2010), 78.

[17] Dyen, *The Role of Shape-note,* 123. Coopers revision is associated with Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi and Texas; Jackson's publication is associated with southern Alabama; Denson's revision is used throughout the United States, in Canada, and the United Kingdom

[18] Hampton, "A Songbook by Nineteenth-Century African Americans," 5.

[19] Stephen L. Grauberger, *Traditional Musics of Alabama, Volume 2: African American Seven-shapenote Singing* (CD liner notes). Alabama Center for Traditional Culture, 2002.

[20] Brock, "A Foundation for Defining Southern Shape-note…," 49.

[21] Meredith Doster, "The Evolution Of Sacred Music And Its Rituals In Watauga County, North Carolina: A Comparison Of Congregational Song In Two Independent Missionary Baptist Churches" (master's thesis, Appalachian State University, 2010), 21.

[22] Grauberger, *Traditional Musics of Alabama, Volume 2: African American Seven-shapenote Singing*, 13.

[23] Doster, 22.

[24] Doris J. Dyen, "The Role of Shape-note Singing," 103.

[25] Grauberger, 13.

[26] Elston Driver, interview with the author.

[27] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YIGik9PBdtk

[28] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iCbOkOEmVus

[29] The manner in which I witnessed the song leader embellish the original melodic line.

[30] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8MFSpb_Cvp0

[31] Dyen, 103.

[32] Buell Cobb, *The Sacred Harp: A Tradition and Its Music* (University of Georgia Press, 2004), 42 – 43.

[33] George Pullen Jackson, *White and Negro Spirituals, Their Life Span and Kinship, Tracing 200 Years of Untrammeled Song Making and Singing Among Our Country Folk, with 116 Songs as Sung by Both Races.* J.J. Augustin, 1943, 251.

[34] As observed by the author.

[35] Grauberger, 15-17.

[36] For an in-depth discussion concerning the practice of shouting in the black church, see Marsha Natalie Taylor, "Shoutin'": The Dance of the Black Church (dissertation, Case Western Reserve University, 1997).

[37] David S. Parker, *Historical Gospel Shape-Note Singing* (unpublished manuscript), 2011.

[38] Elston Driver, interview with the author.

[39] Ibid.

[40] The Sunday, July 21, 2012, singing of the West Alabama Singing Convention was held at Temple Star in Crossville, Alabama (the home church for West Alabama Singing Convention president, Alford Lacey). The pastor declined to sing, and Alford Lacey's grandchildren provided a selection on behalf of the host church.

[41] Judith Lynn Lee, "African American Women and Church Hats, What's the Message?" *Call & Post,* April 25-May 1, 2012.

[42] Dyen, 152.

[43] This is the title given by the participants for this iteration AL-MS-GA All-State Convention. The singers use the term "Sacred Harp" in their program title and often refer to what they do as an extension of the Sacred Harp tradition, although they do not sing from the song books associated with the Sacred Harp tradition (e.g., Denson, Cooper, Missouri Harmony). The repertoire selected for singing was drawn exclusively from the seven-note gospel books, with most songs chosen from books published by Stamps-Baxter and James Vaughan publishing companies.

[44] The Alabama/Mississippi singing convention is composed of churches on the Alabama/Mississippi border that have combined due to declining participation in their individual singing conventions or churches.

[45] Dyen, 156.

[46] Grauberger, 8.

[47] Portia Maultsby, "The Impact of Gospel Music on the Secular Music Industry" in *From Jubilee to Hip Hop: Readings in African American Music,* edited by Lornell Kip (Prentice Hall, 2010), 173-175.

[48] For further discussion about this topic, see: Buell E. Cobb, *The Sacred Harp: A Tradition and its Music* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1978); Charles Linwood Ellington, *The Sacred Harp Tradition of the South: Its Origins and Evolution* (Ph.D., diss., Florida State University, 1970); Warren Steel, *Makers of the Sacred Harp* (University of Illinois Press, 2010); Curtis Leo Cheek, "The Singing School and Shape-Note Tradition: Residuals in Twentieth-Century American Hymnody" (Ph.D. diss. University of Southern California, 1968); Harry Eskew and James C. Downey, "Shape-note hymnody" in *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online,* http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/25584; Gilbert Chase, *America's Music: From the Pilgrims to the Present,* revised edition (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co. Inc., 1996).

[49] George Pullen Jackson, *White Spirituals in the Southern Uplands.* (1933), Reprint (New York: Dover Publications, 1965).