

The Imagined National Identity of The North and South During the Civil War, as Expressed Through War-Songs

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Abstract: *During the American Civil War, a major means of communicating national concepts was through song, due to its role as a form of popular entertainment, combined with low literacy rates. And during the American Civil War, war-songs in particular acted as important phenomena which expressed and developed the national identities of the Union and Confederacy. As the war progressed, the concepts in the war-songs developed alongside the zeitgeist of the war, portraying the American experience during this time by the soldiers in both the North and South. Because of this, war-songs contributed to the development of the Confederate and Union national identities during the Civil War. This essay seeks to understand this effect and analyze the ways in which war-songs affected the early American nationalism. Specifically, the popular war-songs of the beginning, middle, and end of the Civil War are analyzed in this essay to understand how national identity was developed and expressed through the medium of music. The basis of this paper is formed in the idea that the creation of a nation comes from how a social group forms an imagined community that is connected across space and time by shared media and culture, as set forth in Benedict Anderson's book, *Imagined Communities*. While Anderson does not refer to music specifically as a means of developing an imagined community, this essay seeks to show how music played a major role in the establishment of a national conception in America during the Civil War, one that has even persisted to the modern day.*

Keywords: Imagined community, civil war, war songs, nationalism, national identity.

Introduction

On October 28, 2017, thousands of right-wing nationalists descended upon Charlottesville, Virginia, and wreaked havoc in an attempt to preserve a Confederate statue, and their national conception (Heim, 2017). Even over one hundred and fifty years after the end of the civil war, the remnants of Confederate cultural identity remain entrenched in Americans' social and political life, leading to such things as the deadly Charlot-

tesville riots. This event, and the events that followed were in no small part derived from the Confederate national identity and imagined community that was created in part by the war-songs of the American Civil War.

The American Civil War was characterized by the soldiers' general perception and, as with all beliefs, they changed over time. War-songs sung by soldiers at the onset of the civil war differed in subject and tone greatly and dramatically from those at the end of the war, each reflecting upon the spirit of the times. The first civil war songs were brimming with patriotism and an indomitable spirit of justice for their cause, yet as the death tolls grew higher and the war prolonged, the songs of the soldiers lost their original luster and shine. Replacing the songs that praised the heroic values of war were songs that mourned the tragic loss of life. As the reality of war changes, so does the art. A central feature, however, of both early and late war-songs was the portrayal of the American experience that went hand-in-hand with the creation of a national identity.

While prominent during the civil war, the creation of the American national identity portrayed through song is nothing new to the American experience. In fact, early in the founding of the nation's history, hymns were used to help rationalize and form the idea of an imagined national identity. Well before the civil war, during "1760 to 1798, many Americans experienced profound transformations of national identity..." with "the melody of 'God Save the King'... widely used in dozens of lyrical variations to express, in different ways, what it meant to be an American" (Branham, 1999, p. 18). Due to the unhomogenized nature of American immigration that resulted in the country being populated by persons of different ethnic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds, the American national identity became structured around ideals rather than language or ethnicity. To convey the ideals which formed the national identity, the American people took to the use of music to articulate what it is to be American. Using songs, war-songs especially, Americans created a common national identity and an imagined community bound by shared values, symbols, and ideals. As historian Robert Branham explains "national songs often make

explicit claims about the nation through lyrical stipulations of ‘national character,’ ‘shared’ history, geography, people(s), or principle used to define the nation and set it apart from others” (Branham, 1999, p. 19). While this is most definitely expressed in the early American songs, such as “America,” a derivative of “God Save the King,” it often made an appearance in the war-songs of the civil war, especially the early songs of the period.

An important type of war-song during the American Civil War was the battle hymn. This was due in no small part to the prevalence of religious imagery in songs being an important feature of American music before the civil war, starting with the Second Great Awakening (Spann, 2013, 77). Naturally, as the civil war began, more music was produced with the war as its main subject matter, likely due to the importance of the war as a significant cultural event of the era. The religiosity of the Second Great Awakening in terms of music did not disappear, but rather it blended with the war-songs, resulting in the creation of American battle hymns. This phenomenon was not one restricted to specific geographies, but rather it was adopted by most Americans in the creation of their war-songs, this led to the Union and Confederacy having similar songs, especially during the early stages of the war. The reason why battle hymns and other war-songs were so persuasive in creating a national identity was because of widespread illiteracy among Americans during the 1860s. The lower literacy rates meant that “hearing and/or memorizing a song was much easier than attempting to read a newspaper or trying to understand an eloquent speech. Music was effective since all classes of Americans could participate in it” (Spann, 2013, 77). The American identities of both the Unionists and Confederates were created in the streets among soldiers and common folk by singing their songs.

This essay addresses the creation and conception of the Northern and Southern nationalities as expressed through war-songs during the civil war. At the beginning of the war, the songs were developed alongside the national concepts, and since they were still developing, they were indefinite. The North built their imagined nation upon their general beliefs of freedom and the preservation of the Union. The South, on the

other hand, conceptualized their nation upon preservation of their traditional sociological systems, with justification from God, all revolving around their claim to have the freedom to own slaves. The middle of the war presents the North's wish to progress past the war with a preserved Union, whereas the South's goal was to persist with their antebellum social system. At the end of the war, in the North, the songs and the national concepts evolved around a more definite ideal of freedom that arose from the North winning the war, and the emancipation of the slaves. In the South, their national identity became closely intertwined with the preservation of their historical practices and their ties to the land. After the war ended, the national identities did not disappear, but rather they persisted under the veneer of a unified imagined national identity. The Southern concepts did not disappear after they lost the war, but rather they continued to be embodied even in present-day.

This paper forms its basis on the principles set forth in Benedict Anderson's book, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Essentially, the book shows the creation of a nation as a social group that people imagine themselves in based upon a shared culture and media. Drawn from this is the concept of nationhood as a cultural artefact created by media that affects a people. This nation is an imagined political community formed around shared cultural roots. Print media effectively created communities that had the same conceptions and connections across space and time. Anderson argues that through the use of books and newspapers, people across long distances were able to connect with one another and imagine themselves in the same positions. This turned a people into a homogenized unit that formed the basis for the creation of nations. I argue that a similar process occurred with the use of music during the American Civil War, helping to create separate Southern and Northern nations. Effectively, music during the American Civil War served to influence the creation of imagined political communities that were connected across space and time, thus forming the basis of nationhood.

The Beginning of the War

Early Northern Songs

One of the first and most prominent war-songs of the civil war in the North was the 1862 song, "The Battle Cry of Freedom," by George Root. This song was quickly adopted by the North and became a prominent part of their shared culture and national identity. The chorus of the song is: "The Union forever, Hurrah! Boys, hurrah! Down with the traitors, Up with the stars; While we rally 'round the flag boys, Rally once again, Shouting the battle cry of Freedom" (Root, 1862). The song harkens to the American flag as a symbol of national identity for the North and gives purpose to the war. By doing so, the song seeks to legitimize the Northern position as being true and proper successors to the American spirit of freedom. The American flag was, since its inception, a strong symbol for freedom, and the song seeks to foster the national spirit of freedom. Additionally, the idea of freedom as an integral principle is exemplified in the claims that the Union, will "fill our vacant ranks with a million free men more," and later on in the song that "although they may be poor, not a man shall be a slave" (Root, 1862). The song presents itself as being for freedom and against slavery, which becomes a common value of the North. It also presents an important anti-slavery sentiment that forms an essential basis for antagonism against the Confederacy.

One of the more significant lines of "The Battle Cry of Freedom" comes in the call "down with the traitors" as a part of the refrain. This serves to characterize the Union's animosity toward the South by viewing them as reprehensible traitors to the country. The Union seeks to legitimize themselves as having the true American national identity by characterizing the South as anti-American traitors. By establishing the South as traitors, the North affirms their position as being the dominant cultural force in the formerly unified United States. While legitimizing their own position, they delegitimize the South, denying them the status of a separate state, or even another national conception, and relegating them to the ignoble role of traitors.

Regional differences were subordinate to the overall cultural and civic identity found in the North. War music was a significant feature of the Northern national identity and played a

role in its creation in part by placing a focus on a shared American culture, despite the diversity of population and geography. "The Battle Cry of Freedom," calls soldiers to "rally from the hillside," and "gather from the plain" in order to "rally round the flag," and to "[shout] the battle cry of Freedom" (Root, 1862). Soldiers from the American plains, which refers to the Midwest, share the same identity as those in hilly regions, such as the New England area. In the song, the speaker claims that the North "will welcome to [their] numbers the loyal, true and brave," "from the East and from the West" (Root, 1862). Rather than being just the North, the Union instead forms their identity based upon being loyal to the United States, which includes the newly acquired Western territories.

Early Southern Songs

The song most characteristic of the Southern mentality, written at the beginning of the war, and known as the de facto anthem of the Confederacy, was "God Save the South," by George Miles, under the pseudonym Earnest Halphin in 1861. Akin to the Union, the creation of the Southern national identity was predicated upon their notions of freedom. In "God Save the South," the speaker declares, "now that war is nigh, now that we arm to die, chanting our battle cry 'Freedom or death...' God be our shield at, home or afield" (Halphin, 1861). The Southern effort characterizes their justice as being predicated upon freedom from Northern institutions, and the ironic freedom to hold slaves. They also present their freedoms and social system as being protected and supported by God. The war became expressed by Southerners as a fight for their perceived freedom. They connected their own conflict to that of the founding fathers and saw themselves as the true successors to the national identity created during the Revolutionary War.

In "God Save the South," the singer equates the North's stance on slavery as evidence of supposed ignoring of State's Rights, while simultaneously leaving slavery as a subject only slightly touched upon. In "God Save the South," the only reference to slavery is in regard to the Southern fear that the North would institute a sort of slavery upon them while freeing the

former slaves. The song directly declares this by stating the North would “fetter the free man to ransom the slave” (Halphin, 1861). The common use of ransom refers to the release of a prisoner for a payment; however, in this context, the term ransom could also be used in the biblical sense. The biblical meaning of ransom is deliverance from one’s punishment for their sin, often used in terms of referring to Jesus paying a ransom for the sins of humanity, so as to allow them to ascend to Heaven. This meaning seems to be the most likely because of Southern belief that slaves were in such a position due to their sinful nature. Through this, Southerners tried to establish that they had justice in keeping slaves, as they argued it was condoned by God.

In the Southern national conception slavery is treated as a God given right, and that any means to frustrate such a right equates to taking away freedom. Essentially, Southerners claimed that their system of slavery was allowed, or even morally just, and any attempt by the North to stop this institution would strip Southerners of their freedom and lead to a sort of slavery being levied upon them. When the North supposedly tried to take away the South’s freedom, it was immoral and unjust, unlike when Southerners took freedom away from their slaves.

The only real mention to slavery is shrouded in religious imagery and allusions to freedom, which shows how Southerners tied the moral justification of slavery with divine right. The Southern defense of slavery and their contrarian attitude toward the freedom of slaves shows how they attributed the peculiar institution to a natural social order, with the implicit meaning being that it was something heavenly ordained.

The South justified the war, and in part based their identity upon, their belief that they were the just party in the civil war. By chanting the sentiment that the war was one of Northern aggression, Southerners retained their sense of being just, and were able to make moralistic claims to the legitimacy of their position. Evidence of this lies in the lines found in “God Save the South:” “God made the right stronger than might,/ millions would trample us down in their pride./ Lay Thou their legions

low, roll back the ruthless foe,/ let the proud spoiler know God's on our side" (Halphin, 1861). In the song, the Confederates play the role of the invaded party by characterizing the North as pridefully and ruthlessly suppressing the South with their superior numbers. The imagined moral authority that was established in their songs became a defining part of the Confederate mentality.

The Southern battle cry of "Freedom or Death" bears a striking resemblance to the phrase "Give me liberty or give me death," by the famous Virginian and Founding Father, Patrick Henry. This is used to further connect the Southern effort with that of the Revolutionary War heroes in order to strengthen the claim that their national identity is the legitimate view of America. The song's author, George Miles, directly states: "rebels before, our fathers of yore./ Rebel's the righteous name Washington bore./ Why, then be ours the same, the name that he snatched from shame" (Halphin, 1861). By admitting themselves to be rebels, the Confederate identity became that of the 'noble rebel,' like George Washington, for they viewed the United States as created by a noble rebellion. By leaning heavily upon the idea of the succession of the spirit of the Founding Fathers, the South also legitimizes their position and delegitimizes that of the North. Typically, rebel is a pejorative title levied upon a group, but by seizing it for themselves and connecting it to the founding of the United States they were able to shift it into being a positive title. The term rebel in this context has the underlying notion of the American tradition of revolting against unjust authority. Thus, by the Southern national identity adopting the term rebel they are able to seize moral legitimacy for their position. This legitimacy is based off of their ties to traditional American values found in both the North and the South, that of being rebellious against unjust authority.

In essence, the Southern national identity was antithetical to the ideas of enlightenment. Rejecting the Northern structure of government and ideas of egalitarianism, the Southern national identity was rooted in the 'peculiar institution,' forming a feudalistic based society and culture. The Southern imagined community was based around the principles that their rights

were God given, and that society was organized by divine right, rather than by natural law. While natural law declares all men certain rights, the idea of God's will in the South declares the natural order. The natural order in question is the quasi-feudalistic system that was instituted with the 'peculiar institution' of slavery (Zafirovski, 2007, 397). In such a system, the class structure was in a specific order and was not to be shaken; there were elites who had power, poor who did not, and slaves who had less than that.

The Southern national conception of freedom was one where Southerners had the freedom to keep their feudalistic order in place. Notably, it was a rejection of the enlightenment principles of freedom that were adopted by the North; nonetheless, it was how Southerners created their national perception of freedom. This is a contradiction because, while many of the founders were agrarians who owned slaves, they were neither feudalistic nor anti-enlightenment. In fact, a major basis in the founding of the United States was to create a system that moved away from a feudalistic sort of society, by adopting enlightenment principles.

The Middle of the War

Ideologies of Conflict

A pertinent case study of ideology during the middle of the war was seen in Northern occupied New Orleans where the Northern and Southern musical cultures and identities came into direct conflict. Music in occupied New Orleans was not limited to just the prohibited Southern songs of rebellion, for the occupying Northern forces brought with them their own music that they continued to play. After New Orleans was under occupation, "members of the Twenty-sixth Massachusetts Infantry band... formed outside the Charles Hotel to entertain—or perhaps to taunt—the local civilians;" when the band "played The Red White & Blue and the Star Spangled banner the crowd was very quiet[,] but when they struck up Yankey Doodly [sic] there was a great commotion in the crowd," with a soldier hearing "one man [say] that he had rather given one

thousand dollars than to had that d---d tune played in the city" (Davis, 2020, 380). Southern citizens still viewed themselves as being a part of the Confederacy, even after they were reabsorbed into the Union. But despite the separate imagined communities, both Northerners and Southerners accepted songs like the "Star Spangled Banner," and "The Red White and Blue," because they represented a shared pan-United States culture and identity. "Yanky Doodly," however, was representative of the North, and the Northern cultural identity. As a result, it was seen as the North imposing their own culture and identity upon the South.

In 1862 after the Union forces had reclaimed the city of New Orleans from the Confederacy, pro-Confederate songs were commonly sung by citizens. However, the Union wished to suppress the use of secessionist music due to it being a form of cultural resistance against the Northern identity and governance brought by the Union soldiers (Coleman, 2020, 75). As a part of this cultural conflict, Northern soldiers used their music to bring their culture to the Southerners as an act of cultural war where both North and South were vying for cultural dominance. By bringing their music to the South, the Union entered a campaign of displacing the dominant views in the South, but Southerners attempted to frustrate Northern efforts. Through the medium of music, Southern citizens rejected the Union, singing songs that affirmed Southern identity over that of the North. Effectively, during the middle section of the war, the United States was locked in a cultural war as well as a physical one.

Musical resistance against the North also provided a proximate cause for the Union to ban the singing of secessionist songs, which did nothing more than increase the impact that the songs had upon the mentality of the South. As explained by historian Billy Coleman, when the Union banned Southerners from singing the songs that affirmed Southern cultural identity, it served as a "confirmation of their belief that the federal government was a threat to their personal liberty and the so-called southern way of life" (Coleman, 2020, 75). Southerners saw their arrest for singing rebel music as an abridgement of

their rights, indicative of Northern oppression. Because of this, the North's ban on the singing of rebel music solidified pro-Confederate songs as an important tool to fight back against the North.

Ideologies of Similarity

In April of 1863, the Southern and Northern armies met in Virginia near the Rappahannock River, and the soldiers, rather than meeting one another with gunfire, bombarded one another with song. A Confederate officer's letter, as explained by James Davis, described how in April of 1863, Confederate and Union soldiers approached one another at the river, where the Union army band began to play a concert for the soldiers, first playing "Dixie," followed by "Yankee Doodle," then ending with "Home, Sweet Home" (Davis, 2018, 489). The Union band started with "Dixie," a Southern song that was essential to the Southern identity, so naturally the Confederates cheered on the band. The Confederate soldiers then listened through "Yankee Doodle," and then after, they heard a unifying song in the form of "Home Sweet Home."

The Union band was not opposed to the Southern musical culture, as they knew the song "Dixie" well enough to have Southerners be roused to cheer on a Northern band in the midst of war. Such voluntary adoption of Southern music shows that during this period of the war, Union and Confederate troops acknowledged and accepted the other side's culture more than before, even if the citizenry did not. The most important part of the concert came from the playing of "Home, Sweet Home." After the Union's band played "Home, Sweet Home" for the soldiers, both sides erupted in cheers; it was not just the North or South cheering for their national music, but Americans cheering for their own music. "Home, Sweet Home" was more than just a Confederate or Union song, it was one that all Americans identified with. It served to form the basis for a mutual wish to reach a time without war, even though both sides viewed it differently. The Confederates wanted a return to antebellum times, or a society that mirrored one before the war, but the Unionists wanted to move forward and progress to a new societal order

based around their new industrializing society. Instead of being a solution to conflict, the concert was but a mutually agreed upon means to very different ends, that did not serve to end the conflict, but rather to momentarily mask it.

Ideologies of Potential Armistice

The 1823 song by John Howard Payne, "Home, Sweet Home" symbolized the common feelings among the soldiers during the middle of the civil war and resonated with their circumstances. No longer were soldiers truly invested in the war, for once they saw the death and destruction and they wanted a return to normalcy. Thus, the song tells of how the speaker will return "to thee, [they will] return O verburdened [sic] with care, The heart's dearest solace will smile on [them] there" (Payne, 1823). The deepest desires mentioned in the song are not to win the war, nor do they have anything to do with any lofty ideals of freedom; the deepest desire is to simply return home safe and sound. This shift was antithetical to the patriotism of before; the songs express something personal to the singer's mentality rather than purporting the view of the state. While the song on *prima facie* talks about a person's wish to return home, it was also metaphorical, insofar as the home referred to a return to a place of normalcy. As the war dragged on, spirits were low, and the soldiers reached a point in their collective consciousness where they no longer wanted war. In place of war the soldiery longed for a return to the normalcy of peace.

"When This Cruel War is Over," published in 1863 by Sawyer & Thompson, and written by Charles Carroll Sawyer, also quickly became an important piece to both Northerners and Southerners. While the song is of Northern origin, and expresses Unionist imagery, it was still adopted by both sides in the war (Ziff, 1956, 9). It presented a serious shift from the previous era of the war when it was near unthinkable for there to be a shared musical culture due to the overt nationalistic patriotism presented in songs. Yet, "When This Cruel War is Over" provides a significant shift from earlier patriotism that can even be seen in how the song is presented. Instead of being sung from the perspective of the soldier, it is from a wife or fiancée of a

soldier. This clearly delineates a shift from the traditional more masculine role of the singer espousing sentiments of a war of virtue and freedom, to a more feminine role lamenting the tragedy of the war.

Mid-war songs focused on the physical realities of the division, and more importantly on the physical reality that was the toll of war. Many of the same songs of this period were used by both the Union and Confederacy, with the occasional word change, especially the prewar and sentimental songs (Moseley, 1991, 45). The songs of this period reestablish the sort of melancholy found in "Home, Sweet Home," that being the homesickness of fighting in a land alien to them; the Northerners were in a different land with people antagonistic to them, and the Southerners had witnessed their land become alienated as it was torn apart by war.

Stuck in the sentimentality of the past, both the North and the South were not looking to a future in their songs, but rather a sort of return to their own homes like nothing happened. But their imagined concepts of home were vastly different from each other's. While the Southern home was one of their traditional social order, the North's was a more progressive industrializing social order. This was underscored by how they were longing for a time without war, yet they mourned over the possibility that such a national unity would never come about. As the war reached its zenith, the songs of the time experienced a sort of fusion between ideals and reality, with the focus being on the horror that was the reality of war. When the soldiers grieved, and they realized what the war has brought, they no longer espoused the same patriotism from before, as their focus was simply upon an end to the suffering that the civil war brought.

Yet, even in "When This Cruel War is Over," patriotism and national identity seep into the overall theme. The speaker in the song admits that despite the likely death to her fiancé or husband: "our country called you, darling, angels cheer your way; while our nation's sons are fighting, we can only pray, nobly strike for God and liberty, let all nations see how we love our starry banner, emblem of the free" (Sawyer, 1863). After de-

scribing how the death of the soldier would be a lonely one away from home and family, the speaker reaffirms that participation in the conflict is still necessary. While “When This Cruel War is Over” mentions the patriotic values, it only does so in passing, unlike the early songs of the civil war where the soldier is portrayed as fighting a nearly holy war for freedom and other such indefinite values. It represents the shift away from patriotism as a major theme that marks the middle of the civil war. The song still references patriotism as it is merely a shift away from it as a major theme, not a complete eschewal of patriotic notions.

Ideologies of Sentimentality

Sentimental songs also played an important role in the overall evolution of the similar national cultures in both the South and the North. These songs “not only [grabbed] the hearts of a sentimental audience, but they also reflect ‘strength and moral fortitude in a nation’” (Davis, 2018, 498). Both citizen and soldier sang and identified with these songs. For just as soldiers saw themselves dying, their families imagined the very same fear. This spirit of fear and despondency about how the war was progressing only created more ambivalence about the conflict. While this feeling did not result in the end of the war, it did work to further the feelings of unity between the North and South, predicated upon the shared notion of wishing to reach a time without war, as well as based upon the shared experience of the death and destruction that the civil war wrought around them.

By the middle of the war, the imagined communities formed by shared cultural experiences of the American peoples were being applied to both the North and South. Although the opposing soldiers were obligated to fight, the intermixing of the cultural identities of both the Confederates and the Unionists through the lens of music created a different perspective than at the beginning of the war. The middle of the war gave rise to the concept of the war being “brother against brother,” yet the differences between the Northern and Southern ideologies were still present. Both Confederate and Unionists could agree

that they wanted an end to the war and a return to their own metaphorical homes, yet they were still deeply divided on what it represented.

The End of the War

Late Union Songs

According to the letters of Colonel Stephen Clark, in March of 1865, Union and Confederate troops engaged at the Battle of Dinwiddie Court House, and as the two sides clashed, the Union band played a rousing performance of "The Star-Spangled Banner," while the Confederates responded with "Dixie" (Davis, 2020, 380). By this point in time, the national identities of the North and South had already been well established in both the intangible ideas, and the physical realities of the conflict. As mentioned by Wardrop, "the civil war soldier was moved by music as emotional truth and accepted the value of that feeling as a kind of lulling" (Wardrop, 2016, 51). Music acted upon the soldier's mind by filling them with the truth of their position, and it afforded them extra confidence in battle based upon their imagined moral superiority. Their nationalism and patriotism were stirred, and then they went to fight for their imagined community.

An archetypical song for this period in the North was "Marching Through Georgia" written by Henry Clay Work in 1865. "Marching Through Georgia" shows the physical realities that are based upon the previously hazy ideas presented in songs of the early war. By 1864, the Federal war effort had reached its height, resulting in a constant attack upon the weakening Confederacy (Robertson, 1963, 25). "Marching Through Georgia" was fully representative of the evolution from early war patriotism and the melancholy of the mid war period as expressed in how the chorus of the song goes: "Hurrah! Hurrah! We bring the Jubilee. / Hurrah! Hurrah! The flag that makes you free, / So we sang the chorus from Atlanta to the sea, / While we were marching through Georgia" (Work, 1865). This song describes how the war effort was no longer the stalemate that existed during the middle stage of the war. While the North was

winning the war, the songs reflected the spirit of the Union's conquest over the South unlike the sentimentalism of before. During the North's celebration of their impending military victory over the South, they began to impose their will and their culture upon the nearly defeated Confederates.

While a central focus of "Marching Through Georgia" is the physical reality of the Union troops capturing the South, it also puts heavy focus on the idea of the Union bringing freedom to the South. The singer claims that when the Union captures the South, they are in fact liberating it. For as they march through Georgia, they claim that they do so with the flag of freedom on their side and are met by celebration and jubilee for their efforts in bringing the Northern national concepts. This is evidenced in freedom being given to slaves, as indicated by the term "Jubilee" which is used to refer to the day African Americans received their freedom from slavery. Effectively, the freedom that they bring comes in the form of breaking down the old social order and imposing a Northern societal structure upon the South during their conquest. Additionally, the song also contains a religious connotation with Jubilee in the biblical sense, which refers to the beginning of an end of a cycle and the beginning of freedom (Pacomio). Essentially, the North is declaring that by bringing themselves and the Northern flag, they are bringing freedom and by that, the Northern identity.

While "Marching Through Georgia" only specifically mentions Georgia, it is applicable to the entirety of the South. This is because the conditions mentioned in the song were the same throughout the rest of the Confederacy. Georgia merely represented a part of the South that was being subjugated by Northern soldiers. The very same phenomenon of bringing freedom and defeating the Confederacy, as expressed in "Marching Through Georgia," was what the North was bringing down upon the entirety of the South. The song and all its principles were not just based around Georgia, but rather were universal to the entirety of the South and the end stage of the civil war as a whole.

As part of the Northern subjugation of the South, the Union was assured of their own justice and brand of freedom, and

even that some Southerners supported them. In "Marching Through Georgia," the song declares that "Yes and there were Union men who wept with joyful/ tears,/ When they saw the honored flag they had not seen for years;/ Hardly could be restrained from breaking forth in/ cheers" (Work, 1865). Central to the North was their sense of righteousness in the conflict; they imagined themselves as being the true and proper bearers of freedom, and that even the rebellious South had supporters who would be roused to cheers and jubilation by their return to the Union. According to the song, the flag was an essential symbol in Union patriotism as it was key to representing the North and their ideals of freedom. They superimposed their concepts of national unity and freedom upon the South, and they portrayed it as if many Southerners were still in support of the Union and the flag. At its core, the Union's national conception was of its manifest destiny as the true bearers of the American nation, and thus they imposed their will upon the South.

While the North's express goal was bringing freedom to the slaves and restoring the Union, they were not free from the racism that permeated this period. The freedom of slaves was by no means solely predicated upon moralistic grounds, but rather it was an economic strategy to destabilize the South and to bolster the Union's industrializing infrastructure. In "Marching Through Georgia," the freedom of slaves is mentioned in the same breath as turkeys and potatoes. "How the darkeys shouted when they heard the joyful/ sound, / How the turkeys gobbled which our commissary found/ How the sweet potatoes even started from the ground" (Work, 1865). The freedom that the Northern army brought with them was one that reached the slaves, yet while this happened, slaves were still viewed as commodities. The indefinite rhetoric about freeing the slaves had become a reality, but Northerners viewed them almost no differently than Southerners did.

The anti-slavery positions of the North came from an economic stance to further their industrializing society rather than a moral position. With the reality of slaves being freed, the moralism of freeing slaves was dropped from the songs. After Lincoln freed the slaves in 1863, slavery became less im-

portant to the consciousness of the North, for Northern justice had been enacted, so naturally they turned their crusade for freedom down another path. As evidenced by the songs, specifically "Marching Through Georgia," freedom became more entrenched in the North bringing with them the Union, and the Northern way of life.

Late Southern Songs

Northern songs at the end of the war looked to the future, whereas, for the South they looked to the past. The North was constantly creating new songs that expressed their identity, while the South drew from and reused their early songs as a means of trying to preserve their past and tradition. According to Richard Brown, of *Century Magazine*, some Confederate and Union officers met in Richmond after the war, and the Northern band played some of the Union's songs at the behest of the former Southern officers. When the performance was over, a Confederate officer told the Union band: "if we had your songs, we would have whipped you out of your boots... We have no songs but *Bonnie Blue Flag* and *Dixie*" (White, 1944, 80-81). As the North was moving forward in both their economy and their culture, the South was desperately hanging on to the past.

The paramount concern of Southerners was to retain their identity as they saw their nation under attack. They saw the North attempt to impose its own cultural identity onto the South and they were afraid of losing their imagined community due to their identity being replaced. They desperately wished to hold on to their national identity and their traditional culture, which is why their songs appealed to their land and their traditional way of life. As they perceived their tradition and way of life under attack from the North through principles like abolition and industrialization, Southerners began to find ways to reaffirm their own identity, such as using older songs to reinforce their imagined national conceptions.

According to diaries and newspaper reports during the civil war, Southerners were often arrested between 1862 and 1863 for singing secessionist songs, and during the later stages of the war the songs were sung with the same intensity, but

fewer were arrested for it (Coleman, 2020, 80). The North saw themselves as not needing to worry about suppressing Southern culture because they were militarily suppressing secessionism. This was likely influenced by the Unionist conception of orthodoxy, where they sought to apply their values and culture to the entire United States with the belief that it would be accepted and adopted by all in the country. For example, in the song, "Marching Through Georgia," the singer tells of how the Union even has supporters in the South and will be greeted with cheers as they raze Georgia. However, the Southern resistance by means of music never truly ended even when the territories were conquered, and even when the South had nearly lost the war. As the Confederate cause was being disarmed by defeat, one of their only weapons left was song. By hanging on to their cultural and national identity they fought back against what they saw as the Union replacing the culture and imagined national conceptions of the South. Due to this it is no small wonder that the songs of the South did not change much as the war progressed, for the early songs acted as a touchstone to reaffirm their already established culture.

For example, "Dixie" was originally a minstrel song that was popular in both the North and South, yet by 1864 it was a thoroughly Southern song in the minds of Americans (Davis, 2018, 500). When the war entered its final stage in 1864, the song had become essential to Southern identity. From that point on, it became widely sung and regarded as being nearly the national anthem of the Confederacy, despite being written in 1859. The song had two different versions, both of them popular during the later stages of the war.

The original version to "Dixie" was, "Dixie's Land," which was a minstrel song written in 1859 by Dan Emmett, and there was a second version written by General Albert Pike, "Dixie to Arms" in 1861, both of which were commonly referred to as "Dixie." Both "Dixie's Land" and "Dixie to Arms" persisted throughout the war, yet they gained most recognition and had the most importance to the Southern national identity during the final years of the war. The opening lines to the song "Dixie's Land" are: "I wish I was in the land of cotton, / Old times

dar am [sic] not forgotten" (Emmett, 1860). Both versions of the song, while similar, have key differences in tone and subject matter. In "Dixie's Land" the song focuses on the land claims of Southerners as well as their perpetuation of tradition. However, in "Dixie to Arms" the tone is more overtly patriotic to the Southern cause with more heed being paid to their call to action against the North.

Southerners viewed themselves as being different from the rest of the Union, especially because they imagined themselves to be more in touch with tradition. This can be seen in how the song mentions how "old times there are not forgotten" (Emmett, 1860). Inherent to Southerners mentality, especially as the war ends, is this sense of tradition. As the Union armies closed upon the South, Southerners felt their culture and history being supplanted by that of the North. This supplantation of culture and identity resulted in Southerners trying even harder to hang on to their culture, which made songs like "Dixie's Land" even more impactful to their consciousness. It reaffirms that the South is their land, and that they practice the proper and traditional way of life. Essentially, the song reaffirms the South's legitimacy while simultaneously rejecting the North.

As Southerners made claims to their history, they also made claims to their land. The speaker in the song declares in the chorus that "Den [sic] I wish I were in Dixie, Hoo-ray! Hoo-ray!!/ In Dixie land, I'll take my stand to live and die in Dixie" (Emmett, 1860). The South became increasingly tied to their land as evidenced by their songs; an essential feature of their imagined community was that they were from the South. The song takes the Southern connection to their land and turns it into an essential feature of Southern identity. They take their stand and are willing to die for their culture and their national identity that was based around a sort of agrarian and feudal slave holding society and that was irrevocably tied to the land.

"Dixie to Arms" starts with: "Southrons, hear ye Country call ye! / Up! Lest worse than death befall you! / Let all hearts be now united! / To arms! To arms! To arms! In Dixie!" (Pike, 1861). It is an explicit declaration of a Southern country that goes along with the Southern nation. While "Dixie's Land" also

provides a unified Southern identity under their shared cultural notions, "Dixie to Arms" attempts to base their unification in their opposition to the North. It moves from ties to the land to perceived Northern aggression, and more than that, it provides a call to arms to fight against the North for the sake of their unified Southern culture. They simultaneously reject the Northern notion that they were part of the Union, while establishing the supremacy of Southern land and identity over the United States as a country. As such, their national music focused on their land claims and calls to action against the North.

Additionally, there is a line which equates the Northern victory over the South to a fate "worse than death," which refers to the view that a sort of slavery will be imposed upon the Southerners after the North wins the war. The Confederates feared that if the North were to win, they would be subjugated under the superior economic power of the North. Southerners ironically feared enslavement as an economic system of control; they saw the rising power of the North and their own dwindling power, and they feared they would become economically dependent and unfree. Effectively, the fear of slavery referred to how the lack of Southern power would result in a Northern cultural and political hegemony over the entire United States that would frustrate Southern interests.

The song also makes the statement, "Send them back your fierce defiance! / Stamp upon the cursed alliance!" with the "cursed alliance" in this context referring to the Union of states (Pike, 1861). And once again does the song establish that there is a definitive difference between the Northern and Southern countries. By referring to the Union as a "cursed alliance," it separates the United States into the Union and the Confederacy in the Southern identity. It was a break from the Northern notion that Southerners were simply traitors to the United States, for what the North saw as a country divided, the South saw as separate countries.

After the War

After the war ended, the South was economically, socially, and quite literally in ruins. Hundreds of thousands had

lost their lives, and war had ravaged the economy and infrastructure of the South. Effectively, Southerners were stuck in a prevailing sense of loss and melancholy. Following this was the North's imposition and implementation of Reconstruction. During Reconstruction, the North had effectively destroyed the Southern system of pseudo-feudalism by giving African Americans the right to vote, as well as requiring constitutional reform of the former Confederate states. Part of this disruption was that the wealthy Southerners who supported the Confederacy were not given a general pardon like some of the middle and working class, thus allowing the lower classes in Southern society to enjoy more political powers than before, while simultaneously denying the wealthy the privileges that they used to wield (Forner, 2020). All of this combined with the crushing defeat of the Southern troops led to a damaged Southern national rhetoric that affirmed their cultural stagnancy. Southern rhetoric retreated into the antebellum cultural norms and way of life as a way to deal with the damage inflicted upon their nation.

The Reconstruction era was a period where the Confederate ideology was lying buried just under the surface. With the fall of the Confederacy the Confederate supporters lost their identity, but their children did not. Soldiers during the war sent letters to their families, and these letters were filled with emotional familial affections, but also contained in them references to the patriotism of the day, with Confederate loyalist language (Marten, 1997, 272). Although the national identity of the original Confederacy was suppressed, they still passed their national ideals to their children. The antebellum national conceptions in the South also experienced a resurgence during this time as their imagined national identities were never truly destroyed. The feudalist ideology of old did not go away once slavery was outlawed, for the Southern upper class merely hired former slaves as sharecroppers or seasonal workers, with the old social order remaining the same. The Confederate identity never went away, since it was never destroyed, as its causes and perpetuations remained part of Southern cultural institutions. This was in no small part due to the weak nature of Reconstruction, and the removal of troops from the South in 1877, signaling a quick

end to Reconstruction after it had accomplished very little (Lusane, 2011). While the North tried to impose their culture onto the South, it never took hold, and Reconstruction failed, allowing the Confederate identity to perpetuate.

By the early twentieth century the spirit of the Confederacy was carried on by organizations such as The Sons and Daughters of Confederate Veterans, who established Confederate war monuments, and propagated the idea of the lost cause of the Confederacy. They perpetuated the Confederate mentality into later generations, carrying on from then to the civil Rights era, and even into modern times. By denying rights and perpetuating an unequal way of life, the subscribers to the Confederate identity did not simply allow their social order to falter without resistance. This took the form of refusing African Americans social rights on their own prerogative, even after segregation laws had been declared unconstitutional, as well as with illegal acts of violence from organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan. By denying political and social rights to African Americans they sought to perpetuate their old Confederate identity, and this has continued to our present.

The Confederate ideology has never gone away, it is simply buried shallow enough to resurface at points of tension. It reared its head again with the riots in Charlottesville over the removal of Confederate monuments, and with the recent attack on the Capitol Building. People marched through the Capitol Building carrying Confederate flags all while shouting neo-Confederate slogans. Despite one hundred and fifty years since the civil war has ended, the Confederate flag still waves over the South, with many still believing in what it stands for. Despite continued cultural pressure, the Southern stubborn resistance to change has persisted and carried the Confederate national conceptions to the modern age, with such beliefs being just as pervasive as they were when General Lee surrendered at the Appomattox Court House.

While the Southern nation has no country and has not had one for over one hundred and fifty years, their national identity has persisted. Even though the North and South are no longer at war, their cultural conflict remains, especially in the sphere

of music. The legacy of the South remains in Southern rock and roll, and country music, with how they perpetuate the Southern imagined community. In the 1960s especially, they deified the lost cause of the South and kept the spirit of the Southern battle-songs alive and well in the face of a changing era of civil rights. Throughout history, much has been forgotten, but the imagined community of the Confederacy has not yet been lost; despite continuously being suppressed, at every turn it continues to rear its head in American politics.

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