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Metrical Psalm-Singing and Emotion in Scottish Protestant Affective Piety, 1560–1650

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ABSTRACT

Psalm-singing was an emotional experience for early modern Scottish Protestants. This article explores the affective dimension of this practice. It identifies the experiences Scots had when they sang the metrical psalms, investigates why psalm-singing stimulated these emotional episodes, and situates the activity's role within the broader framework of Scottish Protestant introspective piety. The paper initially argues that many Scottish Protestants enjoyed psalm-singing. Particularly, listening to and singing the words and melodies of the psalms stimulated desired emotional experiences. The article's second part establishes that some Scottish Protestants approached psalm-singing as a form of prayer. Consequently, psalm-singing expressed lyrically and melodically the emotions – the speech of the soul to God in prayer – of the singer. The paper concludes that because psalm-singing evoked and expressed religious emotions, it constituted a core practice in Scottish Protestant piety.

KEYWORDS

Psalm-singing; prayer; emotion; affective piety; spiritual practices; Scottish Protestantism

Introduction

In 1564, the Church of Scotland published its first psalter. Furnished with metrical paraphrases of every psalm, set to one hundred and five tunes, the psalter provided music for the newly reformed Kirk. Every parish was required to purchase a copy so that it could be used to lead congregational singing in public worship. This novel religious music was well received by Scots, congregational psalm-singing quickly established as the mainstream musical culture of sacred spaces. New editions of the psalter had a popular market; schools were established to further their memorisation; and households were expected to learn and sing these memorable songs. By the 1630s, metrical psalm-singing had become so well-established in Scotland that the radical presbyterian minister David Calderwood (1575–1650) could plausibly argue that:

Both pastors and people be long custome, ar so acquainted with the psalmes and tunes therof; that as the pastors ar able to direct a psalme to be sung agreeable to the doctrine to be

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delivered, so he that taketh up the psalme is able to sing anie tune, and the people for the most part to follow him.¹

Historiographical scholarship has given much attention to the development of psalmody within Scotland. Gordon Munro and Timothy Duguid have both explored the liturgical development of congregational singing in Scottish public worship.² Musicologists, such as H. G. Farmer, Kenneth Elliott, and John Purser have examined the impact metrical psalmody had upon Scottish musical culture.³ In terms of the history of Scotland more broadly, Margo Todd, Jane Dawson, and others have convincingly argued that metrical psalm-singing played a vital role in the establishment of the Protestant faith.⁴ At the same time, Jamie Reid-Baxter has undertaken pioneering research which has shown how the psalms influenced the spiritual poetry and songs written by Scottish Protestants in their private piety.⁵ Considerable attention has been given to the study of the Wode Psalter, made accessible through ‘The Singing the Reformation’ project run by the University of Edinburgh.⁶

Jane Dawson has recently claimed that the ‘affective power of congregational psalm singing ... has been underestimated’, particularly in relation to ‘the creation of a Protestant religious culture in Scotland’.⁷ She draws attention to the role communal belonging played in generating a sense of collective solidarity in congregational psalm-singing as an area for further exploration. Moreover, scholars have argued that in France and England congregational psalm-singing was a marker of Protestant faith, an idea applicable to liturgical singing in Reformed Scotland.⁸ These are important observations, primarily concerned with the emotional effects of a religious activity undertaken by the whole community as an expression of unity and identity. Relatively untouched is psalm-singing’s intrinsic relationship with emotion in public worship and private devotion. Moreover, although authors have acknowledged that psalm-singing was an activity which of itself could evoke intense affective experiences, Dawson is right that historiography has generally not situated music’s experiential impact within the introspective piety of seventeenth-century Scottish Protestants. While Louise Yeoman and David Mullan have conducted extensive and instructive surveys of Scottish Protestant religious emotional culture(s), they leave unexplored the affective dimension of metrical psalm-singing and the activity’s role in the introspective piety of particularly zealous Scots.⁹ Furthermore, insights into the relationship between sacred song and religious emotion from studies focussed on the musical cultures of Renaissance humanism, continental Protestantism, and the English Atlantic world, have yet to be applied to the understanding of the Scottish religious context.¹⁰ Consequently, this paper explores some of the ways in

¹ *The Bannatyne Miscellany*, I, 234.

² Monro, “The Scottish Reformation”; Timothy Duguid, *Metrical Psalmody*.

³ Farmer, *History of Music*; Elliott, *History of Scottish Music*; Purser, “Early Modern Music.”

⁴ Todd, *Culture of Protestantism*, 24–83; Dawson, “Patterns of Worship,” 143; Reid-Baxter et al., *Jhone Angus*, 21.

⁵ Reid-Baxter, “Lyric Voice”; Reid-Baxter, “Apocalyptic Muse”; Reid-Baxter, “Robert Pont’s Psalm 83.”

⁶ Shire, *Song, Dance and Poetry*; Ross, *Musick Fyne*, 79–89; Monro, “Scottish Reformation,” 277–94; Reid-Baxter et al., *Jhone Angus*; “The Wode Psalter,” the Church Service Society, accessed 24/11/2020, <http://churchservicesociety.org/wode>.

⁷ Dawson, “The Word Did Everything,” 34.

⁸ Dawson, “The Word Did Everything,” 31–4; Pettegree, *Culture of Persuasion*, 40–75; Arten, “Singing as English Protestants,” 5–7.

⁹ Yeoman, “Heart-Work”; Mullan, *Narratives of the Religious Self*; Mullan, *Scottish Puritanism*.

¹⁰ Harrán, *Word-Tone Relations*; Kim, *Renaissance Ethics*; Oettinger, *Music as Propaganda*; Begbie, *Music, Modernity, and God*; Lambert, “In Corde lubilum”; Hobbs, “Martin Bucer and Music”; Scholes, *The Puritans and Music*; Temperley, *Music*

which metrical psalm-singing was experienced by Scottish Protestants within their emotional brand of spirituality. In so doing, the article will add to discussions about why psalm-singing was an important feature of early modern Scottish public and private devotions.

It is argued in this paper that Scottish Protestants, between 1560 and 1650, sang the psalms to stimulate and express their emotions.¹¹ Many Scots enjoyed signing the psalms. This was because, in part, the words and tunes Scots heard and sang evoked within them desired emotional experiences, most frequently joy and peace. However, ministers argued that psalms were not to be sung as a form of entertainment, but rather as an address to God. Thus, some particularly devoted Scots sang psalms as a kind of musical prayer which aroused and articulated their emotions, in conversation with God, lyrically and melodically. In all, then, the article attempts to identify the affective experiences Scottish Protestants had when they sang the psalms, why psalm-singing produced these emotions, and as such the role this activity played within the broader framework of Scottish Protestant piety.

The paper is, therefore, structured into two parts. The first part examines how and why psalm-singing evoked emotion in public and private worship. It engages with the ways in which the words and tunes that Scots sang and heard made them feel. Part two explores the Scottish Protestant understanding and practice of prayer, which sets the context for exploring why singing the psalms could constitute a mode of prayer, and as a result emotional expression, for Scottish Protestants. The paper will break new ground through its identification of psalm-singing as a musically augmented form of spiritual practices central to Scottish Protestant affective devotion. It advances the current understanding of Scottish Protestant emotional culture by discussing the practice of prayer, which has not been the focus of detailed discussion in relation to Scottish Protestantism. Moreover, the paper's methodology and findings provide new avenues for exploring the relationship of music and emotion in early modern religious traditions within and beyond Scotland. Most importantly, the paper's suggestion that psalm-singing evoked and expressed emotion explains why the practice became an integral part of public and private worship in early modern Scotland.

Psalm lyrics and tunes as emotional stimuli

On the 18th August 1633, zealous presbyterian Archibald Johnston of Wariston (*bap.*1611, *d.*1663), experienced a variety of emotions when singing the psalms in public worship.¹² He attended the administration of the Lord's Supper at Liberton Kirk, near Edinburgh. Following the sermon and a personal vow of repentance, he sang with the congregation Psalm 22, during which he found his heart 'melt lyk walter before God', a phrase used by Scottish Protestants to indicate that their tears were a manifestation of sincere contrition.¹³ After he had consumed the bread and wine, he heard

of the English Parish, vol. I; Le Huray, *Music and Reformation*; Quitslund, *The Reformation in Rhyme*; Marsh, *Music and Society*; Willis, *Church Music and Protestantism*; Goodman, "Seventeenth-Century Musical Piety"; Bertoglio, *Reforming Music*.

¹¹ These dates are indicative of the period in which a distinctively Scottish metrical psalmody flourished in public and private worship.

¹² Wariston, *Diary*, 121–5.

¹³ Hood, "Corporate Conversion Ceremonies," 34–5.

those around him at the table sing Psalm 103, prescribed by the *Book of Common Order* for this liturgical action.¹⁴ The song ‘wonderfully rejoyced my heart’. He and they then sang Psalm 23 ‘joyfully and confidently’. In the afternoon service, having received the elements again, Wariston and those with him sang Psalm 103 from verse 9, which ‘transported’ his soul ‘with assurance’. Following another sermon, Wariston sang with his congregation ‘most joyfullie’ Psalms 116 and 136, which ‘comforted me extraordinarily’. Each time Wariston sang a psalm in these services, it evoked in him a desired affective response appropriate to his present affective state. Singing Psalm 22 provided an emotional release for his feelings of guilt and remorse for his ‘sinnes’ and ‘spiritual wants’, these unwanted emotions transformed into humble penitence. Again, singing Psalm 103 after the Lord’s Supper strengthened the confidence Wariston had that God, in Christ, had been merciful to him. These feelings were emboldened by his singing of Psalms 116, 136, and 22, through which he found peace, strength, and joy.

Wariston’s experiences are indicative of why psalm-singing was central to public and private piety in early modern Scotland: its ability to evoke desired emotions in those who heard or sang the metrical psalms. Predominantly, Scottish Protestants sang psalms because they enjoyed it. Presbyterian minister Robert Blair (1593–1666) was one such example. Blair’s custom was to sing the psalms in private to ‘cheer up his heart’. His ‘reading, meditating, and singing of psalms’, especially Psalms 23, 33, and 71, gave Blair much ‘delight’ and ‘refreshed’ him.¹⁵ In his diary entry for 21st February 1632, Blair exclaimed ‘How joyfully did my soul sing in private to thee this morning!’¹⁶ Singing the metrical psalms was, then, an activity in which Blair found comfort and pleasure: it made him happy. Similarly, as a boy presbyterian minister James Melville (1556–1614) was ‘sa delyted’ in hearing the psalms being sung that he ‘lernit manie of the Psalmes and toones thair of in miter’. Drawing on his experience of psalm-singing as a ‘comfort’ throughout his life, he later commended the metrical psalms as ‘the maist pretious treasure of instruction and comfort of the saule’, as their ‘hymmick cohortationes’ bring ‘a glad and cheerefull equalibiliite to the mind’.¹⁷ Robert Rollock (1555–1599), first Principal of the University of Edinburgh, went so far as to argue that the evocation of joy was that the activity’s chief purpose, ‘to raise vp the heart of man to God that is ouer sad’. God had appointed the singing of psalms, canticles, and hymns as ‘the meanes’ through which ‘the heart is wakened and raised up to God’.¹⁸ It was because psalm-singing was thought to comfort singers and listeners, giving them peace of mind and an enjoyment of God, that presbyterian minister Samuel Rutherford (c.1600–1661) counselled a friend suffering from ‘melancholious thoughts’ that he should ‘make psalms of Christ praises’ and so ‘Make Christ your music and your song’ to relieve his anguish.¹⁹ That psalm-singing was intensely enjoyable was a view also articulated in the preface to the *Forme of Prayers* of the English Congregation in Geneva, printed in Scotland in 1562, which affirmed that the Holy Spirit uses the singing of psalms to ‘inflame the heart to call upon God, and praise him with a more fervent and lyvely zeale’.²⁰

¹⁴ Ritchie, ‘Dour-mongers,’ 178.

¹⁵ Blair, *Life*, 129.

¹⁶ Blair, *Life*, 131.

¹⁷ Melville, *Autobiography*, 22; Melville, *Spirituell Propine*, A3r-v.

¹⁸ Rollock, *Colossians*, 337.

¹⁹ Blair, *Life*, 129–31; Rutherford, *Letters*, No. 293.

²⁰ Knox, *Works*, IV, 164.

However, psalm-singing could evoke emotions other than peace and joy. As already discussed, Wariston was moved to tears of sorrow when he sang Psalm 22. Such an outpouring of contrition while listening to or singing psalms was not an isolated incident for Wariston. On one occasion, he sang in church Psalms 143 and 144, both of which caused him to cry.²¹ Another time, Wariston sang in public worship Psalm 77. During a period in which Wariston was experiencing doubts, anguish, and despair concerning his salvation, singing this metrical psalm made him cry excessively because his soul was ‘drowned in greif’.²² That he was left ‘dejected’ by singing the psalm Wariston interpreted as God’s answer to ‘on[e] pairt of my morning prayer’, as he had asked God to illuminate his knowledge of his spiritual condition and thereby stir up his emotions. That Wariston considered the sorrow elicited by singing Psalm 77 as a gift from God suggests that it was not, in his view, an unexpected or unwanted result. Rather, the singing of the psalm evoked an emotional reaction, in this case sorrow for sin, which furthered his relationship with God. Although psalm-singing was usually an enjoyable activity which comforted and delighted listeners and singers, that it could appropriately cause Wariston to lament suggests that its appeal lay in its ability to evoke emotions suitable to a variety of human experiences. Ministers, such as James Melville, encouraged their congregations to see sacred songs, particularly the psalms, as ‘meet medecines for your accustomed diseases, that maist and oftenest moueth and troubleth the weake flesh’, such as ‘seiknes and searnes of bodie, trouble and grieft of mind, losse of geare, death of the dearest’, and ‘how dangerous are the sinnes maist common amongst you’.²³ Taught that psalm-singing was a salve for the variety of hardships in life, most Scots, Calderwood claimed, had memorised psalms that ‘best serve for ther different disposition and case of conscience, and for the chainges of ther externall condition’.²⁴ Scots sang psalms, in public and private, because it was a means by which they could mobilise in themselves desired emotions which were responsive to their present situations. While singing psalms was an activity mostly aimed at evoking peace and joy, when suitable Scots sang psalms to arouse emotions like contrition and penitence.

A significant reason why singing the psalms could evoke emotions in those who heard or sung them was the lyrics of these sacred songs. The paraphrases used in the psalter were meant to be intelligible and comprehensible to ordinary people.²⁵ They consisted in vernacular texts set to melodies syllabically, each syllable sung to an individual note. The four-part harmonisations of the psalms, frequently sung in churches that had the support of a song school, commissioned in 1562 by Lord James Stewart (c.1531–1570), were ‘plane and dulce’, all the voices moving together in a homophonic block harmony.²⁶ However, some churches avoided harmony altogether for the sake of lyrical clarity, in 1583 the Perth kirk session instructing school master John Swinton to ‘keep only the tenor in the Psalm’.²⁷ The uncomplicated words, emphasised by the straightforward melodies and harmonies, made the lyrics clear and

²¹ Wariston, *Diary*, 194.

²² Wariston, *Diary*, 29.

²³ Melville, *Spirituell Propine*, 3v–4r.

²⁴ *The Bannatyne Miscellany*, I, 234.

²⁵ *The First Book of Discipline*, Article IX. The same was also expected in contemporaneous English public worship. See Temperley, *Music of the English Parish*, 40; Le Huray, *Music and Reformation*, 140.

²⁶ “Wode Partbook,” 167; Duguid, *Metrical Psalmody*, 223–6; Reid-Baxter et al., *Jhone Angus*, 36–7.

²⁷ Lawson, *The Book of Perth*, 152.

understandable to ordinary people.²⁸ This meant that the words of sung psalms could, in theory, emotionally stimulate those who heard them, regardless of educational ability, as they understood the meaning of what they were singing. Wariston was routinely struck by the words he heard being sung by others. On one occasion he heard his congregation sing Psalm 30. At verse 5, hearing the words ‘grips of greif and pangues ful sorre’ caused his heart to ‘melt’, his sorrow gushing out in sobs.²⁹ In another context Wariston heard his congregation sing Psalm 103 from verse 9, which he took as ‘ane oracle from heaven assuring me that God was wonderfully mynded for to delyver me and to blisse me’.³⁰ Later, hearing his congregation sing Psalm 51 ‘comforted him’.³¹ The reassurance that the words of psalms could bring was most powerfully felt by Mistress Rutherford (*fl.*1619), a zealous presbyterian Scotswoman. Following the death of her husband, Rutherford was brought to a state of ‘confusion and much greif all night’. The next morning, she was ‘like to be overcome with greif’. Yet, in public worship Rutherford heard Psalm 73:28 read by the reader before it was to be sung: ‘In God alone I put my trust, thy wonders will I tell’. This verse ‘brought the heart to be weel content with God alone and saw it mercy’.³² It was not only, however, when the words were heard that they moved Scottish Protestants. Sometimes, Wariston was emotionally affected by the lyrics he sang. At public worship on the 25th August 1633, Wariston and his congregation sang Psalm 91. He recorded that ‘the verry first words astonished me by Gods wonderful indulgence, for it on[e] of the most comfortable psalmes in al the book’.³³ Earlier in the year he sang Psalm 34 and when he ‘sau the promises therin contained’ it moved him to sing ‘cheerfully’.³⁴ In each of the above cases, it was the words which appear to have triggered emotional change.

The way in which Scottish Protestants listened to preaching elucidates why psalm lyrics could evoke powerful emotions. Following the reformation in Scotland, the sermon was the centre of ordinary public worship.³⁵ The minister’s exhortation, when empowered by the Holy Spirit, was expected to stir in listeners emotions crucial for the process of salvation.³⁶ Typically, preachers initially aimed to evoke contrition and repentance in their hearers through the ‘lash of the law’ or ‘lau-work’.³⁷ Rollock explained that this was a kind of preaching which sought to persuade the listener that they deserved damnation.³⁸ The minister would outline that God had promised that if a person perfectly obeys his will in thought, feeling, and action, then they would inherit eternal life, but if they fail they would merit eternal damnation.³⁹ Having set out the condition of salvation in the Covenant of Works, the preacher would then attempt to persuade his listeners that they had failed in their obligation and, as such,

²⁸ Reid-Baxter et al., *Jhone Angus*, 36; Begbie, *Music, Modernity, and God*, 21; Monro, “Scottish Reformation,” 274; Marsh, *Music and Society*, 416; Ritchie, “Dour-mongers,” 164; Elliott, *History of Scottish Music*, 30; Farmer, *History of Music*, 131.

²⁹ Wariston, *Diary*, 49.

³⁰ Wariston, *Diary*, 123.

³¹ Wariston, *Diary*, 154.

³² Mistress Rutherford, “Conversion Narrative,” 184–5.

³³ Wariston, *Diary*, 144.

³⁴ Wariston, *Diary*, 87–8.

³⁵ Dawson, “Patterns of Worship,” 141; Todd, *Culture of Protestantism*, 24–5.

³⁶ Dawson, “Patterns of Worship,” 144; Todd, *Culture of Protestantism*, 51–4; Gribben, “Preaching the Scottish Reformation,” 278.

³⁷ Yeoman, “Heart-Work,” 9, 21; Mullan, *Scottish Puritanism*, 52, 90–3.

³⁸ Rollock, *Effectual Calling*, 205.

³⁹ Brauer, “Types of Puritan Piety,” 45–7; Bozeman, *The Precisianist Strain*, 11; Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, 153.

were worthy of an eternity in hell. Once they had terrified their congregation with the impending wrath of God, the preacher sought to convince their hearers that God's unconditional love applied to them.⁴⁰ Rollock clarified that this preaching of the gospel consisted in an explication of God's second promise to humanity, the Covenant of Grace, that if an individual has faith in Jesus Christ, their sins will be forgiven, Christ's righteousness will be imputed to them, and they will receive eternal life.⁴¹ Thus, the minister would encourage his congregation to repent and believe in Christ for their salvation, an attempt to stimulate in his audience intense feelings of peace and joy.

Preaching was only able to evoke emotion if it was listened to in the right way. It was not enough, Rollock argued, to have the words of a sermon 'tinkling in the eare'. Instead, what was heard had to 'goe downe to the heart', the seat of the emotions.⁴² This was achieved by the listener when they applied the meaning of what was preached to their own life. That listeners were expected to seek out how the minister's words spoke into their situation was made explicit by Rollock in his explanation of how law-work evokes emotion. He argued that the preaching of the law is only effective when the hearer concludes from what they have heard 'I am accursed', which subsequently elicits a 'horror of the heart' at the prospect of facing God's judgement. Likewise, the preaching of the gospel has an impact upon the listener, argued Rollock, when they accepted from what they have heard that 'righteousnesse and life pertaineth unto me', a belief which evokes both 'unspeakable gladnesse' and the 'sorrow' of repentance.⁴³ Consequently, it was essential that congregations listened to sermons with attention to how what was preached was relevant to them, and so ministers encouraged their hearers to turn every doctrine they heard into a practical 'use' through a continual self-application of God's Word in order to evoke desired emotions.⁴⁴ When listeners heard sermons in this way, it was hoped that the experience would create in them 'heart-knowledge'. According to Blair, this was not a 'brain, frothy, foamy knowledge', a purely intellectual understanding of Christian doctrine. 'Spiritual knowledge is affectionate and practical', a subjective experience of objective truth that 'carries with it a stream and current of holy affections, and stirreth up to endeavours and earnestness in holy practice'.⁴⁵ Thus, preaching was thought to produce the cognitive, affective, and behavioural change integral to the process of salvation when listeners discerned, acknowledged, and applied the relevance of what they heard to themselves.

In much the same way, the lyrics of the metrical psalms evoked emotion when the singer or listener perceived the meaning of the words as they applied to their lives. When Mistress Rutherford heard Psalm 73:28, it seemed to speak into her current situation.⁴⁶ She heard the verse, 'In God alone I put my trust, thy wonders will I tell', as directing her to be 'content with God alone'. In so doing, the words she heard alleviated her grief because they helped her to accept the loss of her husband. She was able to be at

⁴⁰ Yeoman, "Heart-Work," 21; Mullan, *Scottish Puritanism*, 92.

⁴¹ Rollock, *Effectual Calling*, 206.

⁴² Rollock, *Colossians*, 331.

⁴³ Rollock, *Effectual Calling*, 205–6.

⁴⁴ Hunt, *Art of Hearing*, 81.

⁴⁵ Blair, *Life*, 23–4; Yeoman, "Heart-work," 133–5; Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, 127; Mullan, *Scottish Puritanism*, 87–8; Watkins, *The Puritan Experience*, 39.

⁴⁶ Mistress Rutherford, "Conversion Narrative," 184–5.

peace with her husband's death because, in this moment of clarity, the psalm lyrics had convinced her that the only thing she could trust in absolutely was God: nothing else should be relied upon as her ultimate source of comfort and joy, even her husband. Thus, though her husband was gone, the words of the psalm made her realise that she already had what she needed, God, and so they comforted her. Similarly, when Wariston listened to his congregation sing Psalm 30 from verse 5, the words 'Though grips of greif and pangues ful sorre, Schal lodge with me al night' caused him to sob because he perceived they were relevant to his current situation.⁴⁷ The night before, Wariston had 'wattred' his bed with tears, and 'groaned under the hoplesnes of thy delyverie'. Distracted at the prospect of damnation, the words of the psalm resonated with Wariston's own experience and so elicited from his sobs of sorrow. More positively, when he heard, and later sang, Psalm 103 from verse 9 after partaking in the Lord's Supper, the words 'wonderfully rejoiced Wariston' because he 'receaved' them 'as ane oracle from heaven assuring me that God was wonderfully mynded for to delyver me and to blisse me'.⁴⁸ The lyrics he heard were a 'divine oracle' which addressed his 'present trouble', his fear that because of his 'sinnes, abominations, and imperfections' the Lord would not be merciful to him. Verse 9, 'He chydes not us continually, Though we be full of stryfe', convinced Wariston that God would be merciful towards him and pardon his sins. Thus, Wariston heard the words of the psalm as addressing him, the text acknowledging his sin and yet encouraging him that God would save him. In so doing, the psalm's lyrics made Wariston feel assured of his salvation.

Nevertheless, it is important to avoid disassociating the affective power of the metrical paraphrases from another important dimension of psalm-singing: its musicality. Ministers recognised that the melodic dimension of psalm-singing gave it an advantage over listening to the spoken sermon or reading the bible because sung words were more able to evoke emotion. Melville, speaking from experience, argued that the 'measures of poesie & harmonie of musick', the words and tune of a psalm, 'sa delytes the mind, and sa helps the memorie very meikle, to embrace and keip fast the matter, and stirres up and sets the force of the soules affectiones towards God, in pleasand meditation therof'. The synthesis of verse and melody, Melville informed his congregation, 'imprinted in your memorie, with delyte and pleasure' the doctrine contained in the sacred song, causing the hearer to be 'moved and stirred up to grow in knowledge and feeling of true godliness'.⁴⁹ Melville's view was shared by John Calvin (1509–1564), who observed in the preface to the 1543 Psalter that a song 'pierces the heart much more strongly, and enters into it; in a like manner as through a funnel, the wine is poured into the vessel' when set to a melody.⁵⁰ When sung, the lyrics of the psalms seemed to Calvin and Melville to have more affective force than their spoken counterparts.

Moreover, the musical dimension of psalm-singing could evoke emotion in its own right. Rollock suggested that it was the 'melodie' and 'sweet harmonie' of the metrical psalms and sacred songs which 'serues to raise vp the heart to glorifie God'.⁵¹ Their

⁴⁷ Wariston, *Diary*, 49.

⁴⁸ Wariston, *Diary*, 122–4.

⁴⁹ Melville, *Spirituell Propine*, A2v.

⁵⁰ Calvin, "Foreword," 96.

⁵¹ Rollock, *Colossians*, 337.

tunes were, in other words, enjoyable to sing. Early modern Scotland was a musical society, within which, Melville observed, it was ‘custome’ for people to sing while they worked ‘to ease’ the ‘irksomnes of your labours’.⁵² Scots were typical, as across Europe ordinary and elite people loved to sing and perform music in domestic, commercial, and recreational contexts.⁵³ As most of the population could not read, songs were, for the most part, listened to and memorised by heart. Consequently, those with catchy, enjoyable, and as such memorable tunes were most popular. This was so much the case that many new ballads mainly consisted in setting new texts to much loved tunes in order to increase their recallability, appeal, and, as a result, their dissemination.⁵⁴ Thus, the success of a song depended less upon its lyrics, which were usually interchangeable with other texts, and more upon whether it had an enjoyable melody. Similarly, while the words of psalms could evoke emotion, many Scottish Protestants liked psalm-singing because they loved singing the psalm tunes. While psalm lyrics made an impact upon those who sought to apply the meaning of the words to their own lives, primarily the most devoted Protestants, singing the rousing tunes of the psalms was an activity which the religiously apathetic and zealous, theologically ignorant or educated, musically talented or not, could enjoy. The popularity of the ‘proper’ tunes, those melodies associated with a particular psalm, is indicated by the relative stability of Scottish Psalters. Between the eleven psalters published between 1564 and 1596 there were only twelve deviations in both proper and suggested tunes, far less than found in John Day’s metrical psalters.⁵⁵ Although there was some experimentation in tune suggestions between 1601 and 1614, from 1615 to 1650 Scottish Psalters returned to the melodies of the psalters from the sixteenth century, albeit with simplified rhythms.⁵⁶ The consistency of the tunes within the Scottish Psalter indicates that there was a market for these melodies in Scotland, so much so that printers discarded the changes to the music of Psalter and returned to original tune-text settings after 1615. Scottish Protestants enjoyed singing the traditional proper tunes of the Scottish Psalter, and this was a significant reason as to why psalm-singing became and remained central to public and private worship in early modern Scotland.

However, some ministers were concerned that many Scots primarily engaged in psalm-singing because they enjoyed the melodies they sang. Rollock observed that there were those who sing ‘Psalmes, Hymnes, and Canticles’ that aim ‘to please the eares of men’.⁵⁷ These ‘vaine singers’ sing the metrical psalms to ‘please’ and ‘pleasure’ themselves and the world. Such singers, thus, sang psalms because the music they performed made them and their listeners happy. Yet for Rollock, singing the psalms as a form of entertainment was only worthy of vehement condemnation: ‘Fie on thee, that shouldest please thy selfe, with the displeasure of thy Lord!’ Singing these songs for the reason of personal pleasure and not as a form of spiritual practice was, in his view, sinful, an egregious act of self-indulgence. He exhorted his congregation to sing psalms only to ‘please the eare of Iesus Christ’. When sung to ‘the pleasure of God’,

⁵² Melville, *Spirituell Propine*, A2r.

⁵³ Marsh, *Music and Society*, 270; Oettinger, *Music as Propaganda*, 19; Percy Scholes, *The Puritans and Music*, 117.

⁵⁴ Marsh, *Music and Society*, 234; Oettinger, *Music as Propaganda*, 25.

⁵⁵ Duguid, *Metrical Psalmody*, 144, 148.

⁵⁶ Duguid, *Metrical Psalmody*, 157–9.

⁵⁷ Rollock, *Colossians*, 338.

the psalms ‘giuest grace’ and ‘edifiest the hearer’, creating the heart knowledge essential to salvation. Consequently, the psalms always ought to be sung, Rollock contended, first and foremost as an address to Christ. When sung to Christ, the pleasure psalm-singing evoked was supposed to ‘raise vp the heart of man to God’.⁵⁸ Melville affirmed that God had given the psalms because they could bring forth in their singers a ‘haliness, whereby he might be reightly worshipped, and men made to atteine to that happines that is in the presence of his face’.⁵⁹ Calvin similarly argued that ‘we know by experience that singing has great force and vigour to move and inflame the hearts of men to invoke and praise God with a more vehement and ardent zeal’, while the preface to the 1562 *Forme of Prayers* suggested that the metrical psalms are a means by which ‘we may recjoyce and singe to the glorie of his name, recreation of our spirites, and profit of our selves’.⁶⁰ Ministers taught, therefore, that it was not enough for their congregations to enjoy singing the psalms or feel desired emotions in response to what they sang. Instead, the emotions evoked by the lyrical and musical qualities of sung psalms were supposed to augment the worship of God undertaken by singers and listeners in public or private. Psalm-singing’s ability to evoke emotion was, then, only of instrumental value within Scottish Protestant piety. Though Rollock’s exhortations suggest that many Scots sang the metrical psalms primarily because they liked their enjoyable melodies, the ultimate end of psalm-singing and its stimulation of the emotions, according to ministers, was that it provided a means by which a singer could *pray* to God if the psalm was sung as an address to Christ. That psalm-singing could be a kind of prayer will be the subject of discussion in the following section.

Psalm-singing as prayer

‘Prayers are after two maner of sortes ... wordes only, or else with songe joined ther-unto’.⁶¹ So declared the preface to the 1562 *Forme of Prayers*, echoing Calvin’s claim that there are two kinds of prayer in public worship: ‘ones with the word alone: the others with singing’.⁶² Scottish reformer John Knox (c.1514–1572) defined prayer as an ‘ernst and familiar talking with God’.⁶³ This definition of prayer as speech directed towards God became established as the mainstream position in British Protestantism during the early modern period, embraced by ministers such as James Melville.⁶⁴ Knox argued that the Psalms showed that such speech consisted in three kinds of address to God: a declaration of ‘our miseries’ and ‘exposition of our dolours’; a ‘desire of Gods defence’ and seeking after God’s ‘supporte and helpe’; and a ‘loving of his magnificent name’ by way of ‘laud and praise’.⁶⁵ Importantly, in each of Knox’s types of prayer conversation with God consisted in a kind of emotional attitude, whether that be sorrow, desire, or love. This idea was developed by episcopalian minister

⁵⁸ Rollock, *Colossians*, 337.

⁵⁹ Melville, *Spirituell Propine*, A2v.

⁶⁰ Calvin, “Foreword,” 94; Knox, *Works*, IV, 164–5.

⁶¹ Knox, *Works*, IV, 164.

⁶² Calvin, “Foreword,” 94; Begbie, *Music, Modernity, and God*, 14; Lambert, “In Corde lubilum,” 284; Kim, *Renaissance Ethics*, 67–82.

⁶³ Knox, *A Declaration of Prayer*, A2r–A2v.

⁶⁴ Ryrie, *Being Protestant*, 206–7; Melville, *Spirituell Propine*, 7.

⁶⁵ Knox, *Declaration of Prayer*, A2r.

William Struther (c.1578–1633), who claimed that the speech of prayer was not so much found ‘in our words, as our heart’.⁶⁶ His view was grounded in a dominant perspective in early modern thought articulated by Pierre de La Primaudaye (1546–1619):

And so we say, that there are two kindes of speech in man, one internall and of the minde, the other externall, which is pronounced, and is the messenger of the internall, that speaketh in the heart ... voices framed into words are signes and significations of the whole soule and minde, both generally and specially, namely of the fantasie and imagination of reason and judgement, of understanding & memory, of wil and affections ... We see then how the voice and speech of man lay open his whole heart, minde, and spirite.⁶⁷

The emotions, thus, were considered a kind language of the soul. Building upon this idea, minister William Narne (fl.1630) argued that it was through the ‘heart and affections’ that the soul ‘conferreth, and speaketh familiarly with his Creator’ in prayer.⁶⁸ Struther agreed that ‘the Lord careth not much for the cry of our flesh, but for the crie of our heart; For his eares are in our heart’; or as John Knox put it, God ‘knoweth the secretes off our hartes’.⁶⁹ While Struther acknowledged that verbal expression is important in public prayer so that others can ‘heare and follow us’, and in private prayer words ‘serve to hold our mindes constant’, he explained that if said without the inner speech of emotion, spoken prayers are ‘murmuring and fleshly reason, which God misregardeth’, for, as Knox remonstrated, such prayers are ‘dissimulation & lyes’, which are ‘always odious & hated’ by God. Consequently, the use of words in prayer must be motivated by and joined with sincere emotion, since affection was ‘the language of the holy Spirit’. As such, it was possible to pray without words, albeit this was discouraged by Knox, if one was consumed with emotion in relation to God, such as Wariston experienced when the ‘Sprit of God, with inenarrable expressions, spak in my saule to my God ... from the heart of my heart’.⁷⁰

However, the affections were considered by Scottish Protestants psychosomatic phenomena, and so while they constituted an inward language that spoke to God, emotional experiences necessarily had an external manifestation. For Struther, ‘the best language of the heart’ was the physiological manifestation of the affections: ‘groans and sighs’.⁷¹ Influenced by Paul’s claim that in prayer ‘the Spirit itself maketh request for us with sighs, which cannot be expressed’ and early modern physiological theories, Struther was typical of Scottish Protestants who believed that in prayer the faithful would, in the words of the *Scots Confession*, ‘groane in Gods presence’.⁷² Thus, particularly zealous Scottish Protestants, like Wariston and episcopalian theologian John Forbes of Corse (1593–1648), frequently prayed with ‘strong cryes and groans’.⁷³ These two men were also representative of fervent Scots when they interpreted their ‘tears’ as an expression of their emotional speech to God, Wariston explicitly drawing out the connection in his writing: ‘Heir my heart spak to God, quhyle my tears was the only outward

⁶⁶ Struther, *True Happiness*, 50.

⁶⁷ La Primaudaye, *The French Academie*, Kk2v–Kk3r.

⁶⁸ Narne, *The Pearl of Prayer*, 206–7.

⁶⁹ Struther, *True Happiness*, 50–2; Knox, *Declaration of Prayer*, A2v.

⁷⁰ Knox, *Declaration of Prayer*, A3r–A4r; Wariston, *Diary*, 221.

⁷¹ Struther, *True Happiness*, 51–2.

⁷² Romans 8:26; *The Confession of Fayth*, Article XIII; Craig, “Psalms, Groans and Dogwhippers,” 110; Hood, “Corporate Conversion Ceremonies,” 35–6.

⁷³ Wariston, *Diary*, 218–19; Forbes, *Diary*, 127–30, 132.

expression of my meaning to God or to myselth'. Ministers like Struther encouraged this view when they claimed that it was 'prayers, and teares' that are 'the Sacrifice of a contrite heart', the emotional attitude God responds to with mercy.⁷⁴ Thus, because prayer was primarily speech through the emotions, and the affections were considered psychosomatic phenomena, Scottish Protestants believed that the speech of the emotion to God in prayer would break out in physiological alteration and sonic emission, particularly groaning and crying.

It was within this devotional context that Scottish Protestants identified prayer as the heart singing to God. This was made clear by Rollock, who explained to his congregation that the 'instrument' for singing in public worship or private devotion is:

not with thy tongue; but it is with the heart, and with the affection of a well ruled heart ... let thy song rise, not from thy throte, but from the depth of thine heart, that is, from the affections set upon God.⁷⁵

The speech of the emotions to God, thus, was also characterised as the heart's singing of songs to God. Minister Samuel Rutherford frequently used this language with reference to his emotions. He declared that 'Christ should be our night-song and morning-song' and counselled that Christians should 'Make Christ your music and your song'. In both cases Rutherford used 'song' to refer to a person's ultimate love and enjoyment, indicated by his lament that 'there are few tongues to sing love-songs' of Christ, his desire to 'make a love song of Him [Christ]', and his eagerness to 'cast my love-songs of that matchless Lord Jesus' before God.⁷⁶ In all, Rutherford wanted his emotions, and those of his parishioners, to sing to God. Wariston characterised his emotions as singing to God in prayer, on one occasion finding that 'my verrie saule of my saule and the verrie heart of my heart sang prayse, honour, and glory for thos mercies' revealed in John 5. Another time, while Wariston travelled to church, his 'heart sang the 119 Ps.' – his emotions seemed to sing to God the words and melody of the psalm.⁷⁷ Consequently, prayer was considered to primarily consist in both the speech and the songs of the heart – the affections – as directed towards God.

When they expressed emotions directed towards God, metrical psalms were used in public worship and private devotion as a form of sung prayer, a verbal and musical expression of the heart's song 'to the Lord'.⁷⁸ The metrical psalms (and canticles sung to metrical psalm tunes) were primarily a vehicle by which Scottish Protestants could express their love for and gratitude to God in melodic praise.⁷⁹ On the 20th September 1636, Forbes was 'fearfullie terrified' by some of his 'former grievous sinnes', such as his 'unchristian disposition sometimes towards some of Gods dear servants'.⁸⁰ Forbes 'wept to God for pardon', and 'wressed' with his fears for twenty four hours, in which time the 'Lord had mercie upon me', so that in the morning and evening thereafter Forbes fell upon his face, confessed his sins to God, and pleaded for mercy. In response, the Lord 'answere me with the answer of mercie, peace & Grace' – Forbes's raging

⁷⁴ Struther, *Scotlands Warning*, 45; Simson, *A Sacred Septenarie*, 67; Hood, "Corporate Conversion Ceremonies," 34–5.

⁷⁵ Rollock, *Colossians*, 338.

⁷⁶ Rutherford, *Letters*, No. 88, No. 293, No. 179, No. 182, No. 285.

⁷⁷ Wariston, *Diary*, 216, 100.

⁷⁸ Rollock, *Colossians*, 338; Reid-Baxter, "Lyric Voice," 162–3; Hobbs, "Martin Bucer and Music," 163.

⁷⁹ Reid-Baxter, "Lyric Voice," 166.

⁸⁰ Forbes, *Diary*, 132–3.

emotion was calmed, and he was assured that he was saved. As an expression of his jubilation, Forbes ‘sang unto the Lord the words of the prophet Micah 7:18–20’. On another occasion Forbes, in his private devotion, decided to:

praise the Lord both with some of my accustomed songs of praise ... & also 138 Ps.: praising God for his unspeakable mercies, and praying for increass of grace and perfecting of his good work in me & for me.⁸¹

Robert Blair also used the singing of psalms to express his love and enjoyment of God. One evening he experienced a burning fever so powerful that he thought he was near death.⁸² However, Blair was not dismayed, for though his body suffered a ‘scorching fever’, simultaneously ‘the love of God’ was ‘burning more fervently in my soul’ and made him feel ‘no pain at all’. Though it was ‘not possible’ for tongue or pen to express the magnitude of the joy he experienced, he ‘sang to him’, the Lord, Psalm 16. He did so because ‘I felt within me that which his written in the end of the psalm’; the words expressed the overwhelming joy he was experiencing. Later in life, Blair wrote hymns as a way of expressing his thankfulness to God for the deliverance of his soul from periods of doubt and temptation.⁸³ In a similar vein to Blair’s near death singing, when Wariston thought he was on the verge of death, he began ‘to sing over (as if thou wer in the himist hour of thy lyfe) the 116 Psal. And to praise him for delyvering thy saule from death’.⁸⁴ On another occasion, Wariston was ‘forced to sing Haleluia unto God the Fayther for his love in pardoning, to the Son for his love in dying ... and to the Holy Sprite for his love’, which he wrote down so that he would be stimulated to ‘sing honour, praise, and glory to the al three’.⁸⁵ Wariston’s singing, thus, was an expression of his emotional adoration of Christ, and consequently it was a vocalisation of his soul’s prayer and praise to God.

The singing of metrical psalms could also be a medium by which Scots expressed their contrition for their sins and fear of God’s judgements.⁸⁶ In public worship, Wariston sang Psalms 38 and 39, which he judged were ‘most fitt for my present estaite’ given that he felt that the ‘heavie wrayth’ of God was upon him.⁸⁷ In another episode, Wariston judged that his singing of Psalm 78 was ‘very fitting to my estaite’ as he was experiencing a spiritual ‘deadnes, senslesnes, darknes’.⁸⁸ Struther encouraged his congregation to sing ‘Psalmes of Repentance’ in a public fast as a way of vocalising the ‘powring out of our verie heartes, as water before him’.⁸⁹ Usually, the ‘pouring’ of the heart as ‘water’ was a reference to tears, so by substituting weeping for singing penitential psalms, Struther was implying that sung songs, like sobbing, could express the soul’s prayer of repentance.

Metrical psalm singing expressed the song of the heart through the words that were sung. Just as verbal speech could convey the inner speech of the emotions, so too could the singing of a psalm paraphrase express the singer’s affections. Psalm singing offered

⁸¹ Forbes, *Diary*, 216.

⁸² Blair, *Life*, 17–18.

⁸³ Blair, *Life*, 120–31.

⁸⁴ Wariston, *Diary*, 44.

⁸⁵ Wariston, *Diary*, 66.

⁸⁶ Reid-Baxter, “Lyric Voice,” 166.

⁸⁷ Wariston, *Diary*, 180.

⁸⁸ Wariston, *Diary*, 237.

⁸⁹ Struther, *Scotlands Warning*, 66.

Scots the opportunity to become somebody else for the duration of the song: David.⁹⁰ The archetype of godliness in Reformed Protestant culture, David was presented in sermons and reformed iconography as the paragon of piety Scots should model their spirituality upon.⁹¹ David's intensely emotional experiences, expressed poetically in the psalms, were situated by ministers within the systematised sequence of affective changes which, for Scottish Protestants, constituted the processes of conversion and sanctification.⁹² This meant that David was the exemplary Reformed Protestant, and his words were interpreted as references to experiences that belonged to the Reformed Protestant scheme of redemption.⁹³ Thus, when Scottish Protestants sang the metrical psalms, they used David's biblical vocabulary to imaginatively express the songs of their heart to God, which consequently meant that they identified their affective experiences within the sequences of emotion prescribed for salvation in Scottish Protestant theology. In this way, metrical psalm-singing was a device through which Scots 'named' their emotions.⁹⁴ By using the language of the psalter to name, and as such categorise, their emotions, Scottish Protestants identified that their psychosomatic feelings with the godly forms of joy or anxiety expressed in the psalms. By extension, expression of emotion through psalm-singing also located the singer's emotions within the processes of conversion and sanctification as conceptualised by Reformed theologians. In so doing, psalm-singing differentiated the singer's religious emotions with those arising in other contexts.

The sung metrical psalm also expressed the song of the heart to God through the song's melody. Elizabethan divine Richard Hooker (1554–1600) was representative of early modern views when he argued that music had the 'admirable faculty' to express 'the very standing, rising and falling, the very steps and inflexions every way, the turns and variations of all passions whereunto the mind is subject'.⁹⁵ The ability of a tune to present an emotion via its melodic movement was informed by the ancient idea of musical 'modes'. A mode is a kind of musical scale which is associated with a set of melodic conventions, such as the range of pitches to be used and the relation of tones to one another.⁹⁶ There were seven ancient modes that a tune could be composed in, and each was thought to have the power to evoke a distinct set of emotions.⁹⁷ While they disagreed on the number and classification of the emotions expressed through modes, there was consensus among Renaissance humanists and early modern musical theorists that melodies could present and evoke particular sets of affective experiences.

It was with this understanding of music's ability to express emotion that the composers of the metrical psalms approached their task. Jeremy Begbie has identified that, within the Genevan Psalter, the natural speech patterns of the psalm paraphrases and the rhythm of the tunes to which they were set did not match. He has argued that the melody had a certain degree of rhythmic independence from its text because the composers of the metrical psalms wanted the melodies to express in a musical fashion what was

⁹⁰ Marsh, *Music and Society*, 285.

⁹¹ Hamling, *Decorating the 'Godly' Household*, 189–94, 229.

⁹² Bruce, *Sermons*, 345–68; Cowper, *Good Newses from Canaan*, A8v; Simson, *Sacred Septenarie*, 5; Struther, *True Happiness*, 1.

⁹³ Scholes, *The Puritans and Music*, 254.

⁹⁴ Rosenberg, "Reflexivity and Emotions," 4–7; Scheer, "A Bourdieuan Approach," 212.

⁹⁵ Hooker, *Laws of Ecclesiastical Politie*, 39.

⁹⁶ Kim, *Renaissance Ethics*, 35–52.

⁹⁷ Harrán, *Word-Tone Relations*, 92; Marsh, *Music and Society*, 52.

voiced through the words of the psalms.⁹⁸ To this end, the Scottish Psalter was initially published with one hundred and five distinct proper tunes, the most of any psalm-book in the English language up to that point, which allowed for the breadth of emotional expression found in the texts to be presented in the melodies that the paraphrases were set too.⁹⁹ The presentation of affective experience through the tunes was achieved by employing a variety of musical modes: twenty-one Dorian, six Phrygian, six Mixolydian, forty-nine major, and twenty-two minor tunes.¹⁰⁰ Psalm 100, for example, is a jubilant song of praise and thanksgiving, and as such has a rousing melody. More broadly, given their divine content the melodies have what Rollock described as a ‘gratiousnes, and gravitie, as might convey grace to the heart of the hearer’.¹⁰¹ In this view he was probably influenced by Calvin, who had previously instructed that the metrical psalm tunes should have gravity and dignity, befitting their subject matter.¹⁰² Thus, the proper tune melodies sung by congregations were a musical expression, and by extension identification or naming, of an emotional experience, which a singer could co-opt as a means of articulating melodically their prayers of emotion to God. It was in this musical capacity that sung tunes were like prayer-inspired groans, the non-verbal vocal manifestation of the songs of the heart. As previously discussed, the Scottish Psalter was remarkably consistent in its tune-text suggestions, and even with the introduction of ‘common tunes’, those melodies which could be sung to any paraphrase written in common metre (the majority), proper tunes were sung and remained popular in Scotland until 1650.¹⁰³ This indicates that the distinctive character of particular tunes remained important in Scottish Protestant piety because, beyond their enjoyability, they provided a melodic and non-verbal vehicle for the expression of a range of emotions to God.

While ministers encouraged, and some Scots approached, psalm-singing as a form of prayer, the activity was not always an expression of the singer’s emotion towards God. There were those who Rollock had called ‘vaine singers’, singing the psalms only for their own pleasure and, as such, did not seek to address God through the words or melody they sang.¹⁰⁴ Additionally, even those who sought to pray through psalm-singing occasionally found that how they felt did not match the emotional character of the songs they were singing. Wariston recorded that one time he and his congregation sang Psalms 4 and 22 in public worship. Though he was ‘affectionat and zealous’, he did not have the ‘abondance of tears’ he expected. That he did not cry in response to the words and tune he sang seemed to indicate to Wariston that he did not have the contrition expressed through the lyrics and tune of the psalm. Thus, that he lacked the emotion to sing the psalm sincerely ‘grieved me’.¹⁰⁵ Mistress Rutherford was even more distressed when she went through a period during which she would ‘not sing a psalm if my present case not be answerable to it’. This meant that when she ‘heard others sing’, she frequently did ‘not in truth joyn with it’. Rutherford was rebuked by a minister, who told her to sing because, ‘whither it answer my condition or not ... it

⁹⁸ Begbie, *Music, Modernity, and God*, 24.

⁹⁹ Ritchie, “Dour-mongers,” 165–6; Duguid, *Metrical Psalmody*, 89.

¹⁰⁰ Patrick, *Scottish Psalmody*, 71.

¹⁰¹ Rollock, *Colossians*, 337.

¹⁰² Begbie, *Music, Modernity, and God*, 25.

¹⁰³ Duguid, *Metrical Psalmody*, 171–8, 213–17.

¹⁰⁴ Rollock, *Colossians*, 338.

¹⁰⁵ Wariston, *Diary*, 96.

was the truth of God'. Consequently, she sang the psalms in public worship, but was 'oft wishing in my heart to be as was there expressed'.¹⁰⁶ Both Wariston and Rutherford believed that, on some occasions, what they sang did not express their emotional states. This caused them anxiety and sorrow, for they desired to pray to God through the psalms they sang, which could only be done if their emotions corresponded to the words and tune they sang. Thus, while zealous Scottish Protestants, encouraged by their ministers, aspired to pray to God through psalm-singing, sometimes they were unable to do so because of a disconnect between what they felt and what they sang.

Conclusion

This paper has argued that metrical psalm-singing was an important activity in Scottish Protestant affective piety between 1560 and 1650. It was an instrument which was valued and used for its experiential results. Psalm-singing, whether performed in a congregational or solitary context, had the power to both evoke and express emotions. Scottish Protestants recorded that they were emotionally stimulated by the words and melodies they sung and heard. Simultaneously, the lyrics and tunes Scots sang could articulate their emotions as a form of prayer to God. Thus, psalm-singing was a conduit for God to speak to the soul and for the soul to speak to God. This meant that singing's primary purpose in a devotional context was to mobilise emotions via the words and music the singer sang, and to express lyrically and melodically the singer's emotions as they related to God. Thus, psalm-singing was a practice which was integrated into the fundamental emotional processes which constituted Scottish Protestant introspective piety. It was a musically augmented form of two spiritual practices: listening to the Word of God to evoke desired emotions, and a prayerful expression of the songs of the heart. As such, the appeal of psalm-singing for many Scottish Protestants lay both in its aesthetic qualities and in its being a musical space in which God and the soul could engage in conversation and communion through the emotions. This explains why psalm-singing evoked intense affective experiences and situates the activity's significance firmly within the emotional piety of early modern Scottish Protestants.

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¹⁰⁶ Mistress Rutherford, "Conversion Narrative," 174.

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