


failure as a means of advancing a political theory of what he refers to as the “postliberal,” a late stage of governance in which the technology of the state becomes separated from the people “over whom it is supposed to preside” (141).

As suggested by the groupings outlined above, taken together, the volume’s individual chapters do speak to each other on the subjects of aesthetics, form, and philosophy, and the Introduction and Afterword both work toward creating a sense of coherence by drawing connections between and across chapters. Nevertheless, if the volume has a weakness, it is that the generic diversity and methodological open-endedness of its organizing principles make some chapters fit together more naturally than others. As the sole chapter focusing on a seventeenth-century work, and one of only two that look at drama, Laura Francis’ bright and innovative reading of the *Duchess of Malfi* (1612) as a “particularly baroque testing ground” for the new technologies of the period feels like it would be better placed in a study of early modern science (16). Additionally, Deven Parker’s straightforwardly historicist reading of Maria Edgeworth’s “Lame Jervas” as a nationalistic defense of “Britain’s imperial stability and technological superiority at a time when neither was certain” feels somewhat out of place among the more theory-oriented chapters that surround it but would fit well into a study of technology’s role in the history of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century nationalism (124). But this criticism is as much as anything an indication that there is more work to be done in the area; as an early entry in the field, *British Literature and Technology, 1660–1830* has much to offer readers interested in the social history of technology and in literature and science studies more broadly.

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## Anne, Lady Halkett; Suzanne Trill, ed. *A True Account of My Life and Selected Meditations*

**The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe: The Toronto Series, 87. Toronto: Iter Press, 2022. Pp. 408. \$69.95 (cloth).**

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Anne, Lady Halkett, played an important role in key episodes in the British Civil Wars, or War of Three Kingdoms, in the mid-seventeenth century. Suzanne Trill suggests that Halkett was a “she-intelligencer,” or royalist spy (24). The most famous of her covert activities was her involvement in the escape of Prince James (later James II) in 1648, and Halkett’s autobiographical description of this episode has been much reproduced in anthologies. Beyond this, Lady Halkett remains little known to the wider public. This edition aims to bring Lady Halkett’s dramatic memoir and insightful meditations to the attention of a larger audience. Trill edits Halkett’s *True Account of My Life* directly from the manuscript of this texts held by the British Library (Additional MS 32376). Trill also includes in this edition forty-four of Halkett’s meditations reproduced from manuscripts held in the National Library of Scotland (MSS 6489–6502). Halkett’s meditations provide additional autobiographical reflections and important insights into Halkett’s spiritual practices, experiences, and

beliefs. The meditations engage in a dialogue with Halkett's memoirs allowing a more considered understanding of Halkett's motivations and emotions. They also provide a greater understanding of her moral framework and sense of the spiritual as an integral part of her lived experience. Halkett had a keen sense of the providential guiding and protecting her, what Trill describes as Halkett's "providential imagination" (29). The inclusion of the meditations helps the reader to place the events and actions in Halkett's memoirs within Halkett's more complex understanding of her existence that is not always apparent in the memoirs.

The memoirs on their own are dynamic and adventurous, romantic, and sometimes comic. The form at times appears to draw upon the discourse found in drama or fictional prose narratives of the period: Halkett's romantic adventures, her engagement in political intrigue, and her adventures facing off threatening soldiers, tending to the wounded, and providing comfort to the indigent. Halkett presents these episodes in heightened rhetorical color in the memoirs. The meditations, with their more reflective register, help to ground these adventures in the lived experiences of this seventeenth-century woman. Anne, Lady Halkett, lived on the fringes of the English and Scottish aristocracy during a time of crisis. The shifting political and social landscape heightened her vulnerability but also provided opportunities for her to enact services that enabled her to retain her sense of her social position, albeit at times quite tentatively. Trill's introduction provides a thorough grounding for the memoirs and meditations. She provides additional contextual information that helps the reader navigate Halkett's version of the events of her life that are at times complicated by Halkett's discursive evasions and what Trill describes as the "vagaries of chronology" and her use of "prolepsis and flashbacks" (25). Trill's extensive scholarship on Halkett is evident in the introduction to this volume and is itself an important contribution to scholarship on Halkett, early modern autobiography, and culture.

This is a modern spelling edition that provides accessibility to a wide audience, while at the same time retaining the vocabulary, discursive structures, and imagery of the original manuscript texts. Trill's extensive footnoting, grounded in extensive research and understanding of the culture, guides inexperienced readers of seventeenth-century texts through the memoirs and meditations. The footnotes also provide information of value to scholars, and this attention to readers new to early modern texts, as well as scholars of the period, adds additional value to this edition.

This volume also brings together scholarship related to Halkett's textual productions, including detailed notes on the condition of the texts, dating, and relationship to other texts authored by Halkett and others. An incredibly useful description and list of Halkett's manuscripts appears in Appendix 4, providing a valuable guide for those wishing to pursue further research on Halkett. The introduction, notes, and appendices also provide an important narrative of Halkett's literary production, its life, and its afterlife. This provides insight into the ways in which early modern women valued, approached, and organized their writing. It also makes clear Halkett wrote not only for personal reasons, but also considered the potential value in her writing for a larger audience.

Lady Halkett's memoir is compelling. It gives us details about important contemporary events, and the people involved in these events, from the perspective of a woman who lived on the margins but was also deeply involved in the political and religious controversies and crises of the times. Halkett's meditations provide additional insight into her life, her sense of the providential shared by many in the culture, and the emotional realities of seventeenth-century life which included navigating often highly contradictory sets of cultural beliefs and standards.

Suzanne Trill's editorial expertise and detailed scholarship have produced an edition of Anne, Lady Halkett's work that will not only attract new readers, but also stimulate additional research on this important writer of the seventeenth century.