

own work relies on the conventional method of profiling authors one by one, as sovereign individuals relaying abstract concepts.

Tom Reinert, *University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*  
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*Fate of the Flesh: Secularization and Resurrection in the Seventeenth Century.*

Daniel Juan Gil.

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The rise of Cartesian thought and empirical reasoning in the seventeenth century established an ontological distinction between the body and the soul and solidified the place of the dualist body/soul model in theological debates. In this model, identity or selfhood resides in the soul—a disembodied entity that lives on after death—while the body is a mere vehicle for the soul, abandoned after death. Daniel Juan Gil traces the shift from a unified model to a dualist one in *Fate of the Flesh* by asking, What becomes of the abandoned flesh? By foregrounding the material body rather than the abstract, buffered self, and embracing the discourse of the resurrection wholly, the book departs from mainstream narratives, proposing instead that “the resurrection of the body and its flesh could be transformed into a powerful critical lever for oppositional thought and art in the seventeenth century” (5). Gil uses a range of texts to trace the dynamic between secularization and resurrection in the works of Donne, Herbert, Vaughan, and Jonson. Through a combination of formalist close reading and historicist analyses, he examines how each poet reconceptualizes the idea of the resurrection from an apocalyptic future to the current moment while using poetry as a mediating instrument to understand the self through the body.

Gil invokes Slavoj Žižek’s idea of “reinterpreting the world ‘through the lens of a “minor” conceptual apparatus” to challenge the general impulse to repudiate religious discourse—he uses resurrection as the conceptual apparatus that could undermine our “deepest assumptions about self, agency, and the world in this increasingly rationalized, digitized, and virtualized age” (xi). Further establishing his theoretical framework, he adapts Jane Bennett’s conceit that “vibrant matter [is] an onto-story that conjures a worldview in which stuff [is] imagined not as passive objects waiting for humans to use them but rather as having a kind of agency in their own right” (3). Gil argues that, with the advent of secularization, the resurrection of the body functions as an onto-story. He demonstrates this by showing how each poet uses formal techniques (and experimentation) to imbue the body with an independent agency. Challenging the label of metaphysical poetry—popularized by T. S. Eliot—Gil claims that since the poetry of Donne and his successors is driven by an impulse to create art as a social praxis, it is more aptly described as avant-garde.

*Fate of the Flesh* approaches each poet with a different lens: Donne through countersecularization; Herbert through avant-garde poetics; Vaughan through new materialism; Jonson through legal personhood. Beginning with Donne's religious prose, Gil examines how the poet was at the forefront of countersecularization, a term that "seeks to capture the way these poets do not pit some putative fundamentalism against emergent secular modernity but rather take up dialectic transformations within resurrection discourse itself as a lever for critiquing key elements of an emerging secular modernity" (18–19). Gil examines Donne's lyric to demonstrate how his formal experiments fuse analytical thinking with feeling, thus forcing a peculiar awareness onto the readers and setting the stage for Herbert. Herbert continues this project by using language to create an estranging effect to access an authentic self that transcends the socialized persona. Similarly, Vaughan uses poetry to remove readers from a language community and locate the self in the natural world. Finally, Jonson uses the stage to dramatize the severance of the self from the body.

Particularly innovative in linking contemporary zombie culture and its theological roots with early modern poetry, the epilogue shows, like the poets in this book, that "the zombie premise seems to inspire artists to develop distinct technical and formal approaches that push past simple representation" (188). Gil opens with a brief gesture toward George Romero's *Night of the Living Dead*, the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, and the Caribbean influence on zombie culture—which would have been an opportunity for a transhistorical and interdisciplinary examination of early modern poetics and the resurrection. However, the fascinating connection between zombies and early modern poetry is developed by analyzing Emmanuel Carrere's projects: *Les Revenants* and *The Kingdom*.

Overall, *Fate of the Flesh* is a vital addition to early modern scholarship on seventeenth-century poetry and a valuable resource for those interested in poetics, critical theory, and religious discourse.

Dina Alqassar, *University of Massachusetts Amherst*  
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*Staging Favorites: Theatrical Representations of Political Favoritism in the Early Modern Courts of Spain, France, and England.* Francisco Gómez Martos.

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Royal favorites rose to power more or less simultaneously in early modern Spain, France, and England. According to Francisco Gómez Martos, their avatars were protagonists of no fewer than 150 plays (113), set in remote times and places but relevant to contemporary local politics and cultural conditions. While this volume's