

ANTONIO ENRIQUEZ GOMEZ'S HONOR TRAGEDY  
*A LO QUE OBLIGA EL HONOR*

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Lope's pronouncement concerning honor topics--«los casos de la honra son mejores, / porque mueven con fuerza a toda gente»--has certainly been borne out by audience as well as critical interest.(1) The three wife-murder plays of Calderón continue to intrigue and, perhaps more than any other type, are the most consistently studied works of the Golden-Age *comedia*.(2) During the course of Calderonian investigation some mention is usually made of other honor tragedies, but to date little attention has been paid to *A lo que obliga el honor*, an excellent work of Calderón's contemporary, Antonio Enríquez Gómez (1600-1663).(3)

Until fairly recently prejudicial comments of nineteenth-century critics have contributed in large measure to the obscurity of Enríquez's dramatic works. Although each year brings more critical study to bear on this author, the most comprehensive work still remains that of Amador de los Ríos.(4) However, with Révah's biography of Enríquez and his findings concerning the use of the pseudonym, Fernando de Zárate, there has been a renewal of interest not only in the *comedia* of this fascinating author but also in his prose and poetry.(5)

Of the twenty-two *comedias* acknowledged by Enríquez *A lo que obliga el honor* has received the most comment.(6) Both Besso and De los Ríos discuss it, if only superficially,(7) and Mesonero Romanos found it worthy of inclusion in his *Dramáticos posteriores a Lope de Vega*. Although Menéndez y Pelayo's distaste for Enríquez's «Jewishness» is obvious throughout his comments on the dramatist, he also cites *A lo que obliga el honor* as one of «sus dos mejores o menos malas comedias.»(8) But in any case, for Menéndez *A lo que obliga el honor* was only very inferior imitation of Calderón.

The question of who imitated whom is far from certain. Interestingly enough, De los Ríos was convinced that Enríquez's work came first and provided the topic for Calderón.(9) But his reasons were based on a mistaken idea that Enríquez was twenty years older than Calderón when, in fact, both poets were born in the same year, 1600. Nevertheless, it is possible that *A lo que obliga el honor* did come first. The lack of definite dates of composition for the *comedias* of both poets is the stumbling block.

That Calderón might have found inspiration in the work of a *Converso*, although anathema to Spanish critics of the past century, is a very real possibility. In a recent article on the two parts of the *Hija del aire*, Constance Rose very convincingly makes a case for Enríquez's authorship of the second part and suggests that Calderón wrote a first part only after the second had

been composed.(10) If Rose is correct concerning Enríquez's authorship of the second part of the *Hija del aire* it seems as likely that Calderón drew upon Enríquez as Enríquez upon Calderón with regard to the topic of wife-murder.(11) Regardless of its genesis, *A lo que obliga el honor* does demonstrate some similarities to the *Médico de su honra* and *A secreto agravio*, but nothing to make acceptable Menéndez y Pelayo's remarks as to the «servillismo con que pisa las huellas de su predecesor [Calderón].(12) The principal similarity is, of course, that a wife is murdered by a husband who feels himself dishonored by the compromising advances of her former suitor.

Unlike Calderón, who returned to the theme for three plays, this work of Enríquez represents something of an anomaly within his production, whether under his true name or as Zárate. Not all of the twenty-two plays listed in the introduction to the *Sansón nazareno* have survived, but of those I have been able to examine no other involves the murder of a wife by her husband.(13) While some statements by Enríquez do not rule out such an act, a striking feature of his other plays is the extreme reluctance to shed blood of wrongdoers, much less extract bloody vengeance for honor's sake.(14) Even the cases of treason against the crown are treated with an admirable tolerance and forgiveness.(15) In general, it would seem that the tragic mode did not suit Enríquez's temperament in spite of the fact that his own life bordered on the tragic.

*A lo que obliga el honor* opens with a scene between don Enrique Saldaña and his king, Alfonso XI.(16) For his many services to the crown the king wishes to reward Enrique by marrying him to Elvira de Liarte. As opposed to the three Calderonian plays, Enrique is not happy at the thought of marriage and certainly has no sympathy with what he feels are the foolish rituals of courting. The stiff veteran soldier regards these amorous pursuits as nothing less than signs of the decadence of the times--«Y está el tiempo tan cansado/ Y tan caduco este siglo»(p. 501,b)--but, since the king insists, he dutifully acquiesces.(17)

The following scene between Elvira and Prince Pedro introduces the potential conflict. We learn that they have been secretly in love for the past two years. But while she does love Pedro, Elvira fears that their love is impossible because of the difference in status; she cannot hope to become Queen of Spain. Also she is piqued at the amorous interest in the prince of another lady, doña María de Padilla. To underscore this jealousy, doña María appears just in time to interrupt a formal declaration of marital intent by the prince. This interruption is decisive, for had Pedro been allowed to continue, his promise would perhaps have given Elvira the courage needed to avoid the impending match with Enrique.

The ensuing dialogue between the two rivals for the prince is a comic masterpiece. Their antipathy is cleverly indicated by a rapid series of compliments ill-disguising the double intentions of the remarks. In this scene as in other plays Enríquez reveals his fascination in portraying the classic feminine «cattiness».(18)

The appearance of the king and Enrique terminates this confrontation.

While the *gracioso*, Limón, comments on Enrique's ill-humor, the king takes Elvira aside and reveals his intentions to her. Because of her hesitation and excuses to delay the wedding, the king suspects that it is not to her liking. Wishing to be fair he gives her a chance to state whether she has another lover. It seems that she is on the point of revealing him when he adds, «Si le tenéis, dezdlo, que os prometo/ De casaros con él, si él os merece» (p. 503, b). The king's remark on worthiness, made more in a spirit of gallantry than seriousness, touches Elvira's fears of inequality. Instead of telling the truth she sets in motion a fateful chain of actions with the reply, «Señor, no tengo amor, ni lo he tenido»(p. 503, b).

In the following scene the distraught Elvira informs Pedro of the king's decision. At this point, as in all wife-murder plays, the imagery involves the antithetic linking of marriage and the death of their hopes. Pedro threatens to stop the marriage by killing Enrique but Elvira is fatalistically resigned to their lot and reminds him that his obligation to the state is greater than their personal interest:

Nací, sí para perderos.  
Arriésguese un alma sola,  
Piérdase un solo sugeto,  
Acábese un solo gusto,  
Sepúltese un solo riesgo,  
Y no alborote una vida  
Toda la quietud de un reino.(p. 504,a)

To lessen his grief and to avoid an act that would compromise them both she urges him to accept the situation and look for solace to someone else, even to her rival, María.

From this dramatic juxtapositioning of marriage and death we pass to a comic scene between Limón and Elvira's maid, Leonor, in which marriage is also the topic. Leonor proposes that they marry but Limón will have none of it, describing marriage as an inferno of boredom and disputes with in-laws. Instead Limón offers himself as her lover but with no illusions as to his eventual faithlessness, «Que quiero lazo romper/ Quando a mí se me antojare» (p. 504,c). Such an insulting proposal is indignantly rejected by Leonor who will settle for nothing less than marriage.

In the final scenes of Act I all the motifs signaling the dire consequences of this mismatch are brought out. Although it is obvious that neither Pedro, Elvira nor Enrique are happy at the prospect each bows to the king's will. Enrique accepts with the statement to the king, «Mirad que vos me casáis» (p. 505,a). This fixing of the prime responsibility for the match will be echoed throughout the work, for it is the king who has promoted the marriage and certified that Elvira has no other pretender. As Elvira goes to take Enrique's hand she stumbles and falls symbolizing her fall from love and happiness and also her fall from truth. This is but the first of a series of images of falling that foretell the manner of her eventual death.

The final moments between Pedro and Elvira are related simply but

with a sad, tender beauty. Elvira, it seems, is resigned to her fate even if the prince cannot yet fully accept or understand it.

Pedro: ¿Y mi amor, Elvira hermosa?  
Elvira: Vuestro amor fue como el mío  
Salió luz y murió sombra.  
Pedro: ¿Y mi dichosa esperanza?  
Elvira: Fue estrella y acabó en rosa.  
Pedro: ¿Y mi voluntad rendida?  
Elvira: Descanso tomará en otra.(p. 505,b)

Elvira's lines ending this act reflect at the same time her pain and a spirit of foreboding:

.....Adios:  
Que mis ojos van agora .  
A distilar poco a poco  
El corazón, que se ahoga  
En un diluvio de agravios,  
Que anuncian trágica historia.(p. 505,b)

The banter between Leonor and Limón that opens Act II concerns the polite but distant relationship of Elvira and Enrique. Limón notes the great difference between the arranged marriage of the nobility and that of commoners; his master, he says, «Enamora a lo señor/ Que es un amor sin amor»(p. 505,c). Although Leonor swears that their marriage will be different, Limón still rejects the notion and launches into a cynical speech on the worthlessness of women *in toto*:

Porque todas las mujeres  
Carecen de condición  
Si es altiva, es intratable;  
Si es necia, es impertinente;  
Si es hermosa, nada siente;  
. . . . .  
De modo, que es, en rigor,  
Si lo quieres entender,  
Para un hombre la mujer,  
La ninguna la mejor.(p. 506,a)

Leonor who wishes to respond to this medieval diatribe with her catalog of masculine failings is cut short and never does have the opportunity to reply.

The negativism with regard to women and especially to marriage in this and other works has prompted some critics to view them as expressions of the author's own misogamy.(19) Indeed Rose has found that Enriquez often speaks through the *gracioso*,(20) and it is tempting to speculate that the similarity of the protagonist's name, Enrique, to Enriquez may be more

than coincidence. Here, however, we should take Limón's statements with a grain of salt. In view of the many more lasting marriages and faithful women in the majority of his plays, this supposed hostility on the part of the dramatist seems greatly exaggerated. In *A lo que obliga el honor* a more serious criticism is directed against loveless, arranged marriages which can lead to unhappiness and even tragedy as in the play. Elvira's lament underscores this observation:

Que no hay mejor sepultura  
Para una mujer de ingenio  
Que un matrimonio forzado  
Y un aborrecido dueño. (p. 504,a)

The central incident of the second act involves the prince's efforts to gauge the strength of Elvira's love. Unable to believe that all is finished between them he gains entry into the house just a step ahead of Enrique who is returning home from the palace. The sight of a figure entering his house begins the long nightmare of doubt that forms this tragedy.

As the astonished and outraged Elvira is strenuously rejecting Pedro's advances, Enrique enters the house. In a blind panic Elvira and Leonor hide the prince in an alcove behind a curtain. When Enrique arrives he sends the women out of the room on the pretext that he has some work to do. After a suspenseful search of the apartments he discovers to his horror that there is indeed an intruder, a royal prince. Pedro invents a weak explanation for his presence and, to make matters worse, proclaims Elvira's innocence. The shock and difficulty of the situation find expression in Enrique's lengthy aside which begins with a lament on having been forced to marry:

Quien se casa a su pesar,  
Cuando a este lance llegó,  
Lo mismo que receló,  
Llega sin alma a mirar. (p. 508,b)

His initial astonishment soon gives way to thoughts on how to handle the situation. As violence is clearly out of the question Enrique resolves to act prudently:

Perderme tan a la clara  
Será temeraria acción;  
Válgame aquí la razón  
Saquemos fuerzas del ser. (p. 508,b)

When he does find his voice, Enrique's response to the prince is delivered with withering sarcasm:

Señor, estaba dudando  
Si puede la magestad

**Ser ilusión soberana  
Y en muchas partes estar.(p. 508, b-c)**

In veiled terms he rebukes the prince for his presence and gives him to understand that he does not believe a word of his excuse. To avoid further scandal Enrique lets the prince out of the house by a side door, but not without a warning:

**Agradezco el juramento,  
y os agradeciera más  
No hallaros aquí escondido  
· · · · ·  
Y advertid que os vine hallar  
En esta cuadra escondido,  
Para que sepáis de hoy más  
Que no os habéis de esconder  
Cuando me venís a honrar.(p. 508,c)**

The prince, realizing the dubiousness of his position, represses his wrathful nature and makes an inglorious and hasty exit.

Throughout this terrible experience Enrique's emotions progress from disbelief to fear for honor, to astonishment at the identity of the intruder, to offense and to self-pity: «Cielos, en tanto desmayo/ ¿No habrá para un triste un rayo/ Antes que amanezca el día»(p. 508,b). But despite an instinctual desire for vengeance Enrique is a reasonable and just man whom age and experience have matured. This reason is expressed in legal imagery: «Juez soy de mi honor, el pleito empieza»(p. 508,c). However incriminating the evidence may seem, he is determined to be fair--«No se ha de echar la firma rigurosa/ Sin haberse probado la bajeza»(p. 508,c).

To test Elvira, Enrique takes the prince's place in the darkened alcove after announcing that he is going to another part of the house. We note in this stratagem a certain retribution in that the shock he received on discovering the prince will now be Elvira's when she discovers Enrique in the hiding place. When Elvira returns to release the figure she assumes to be the prince, Enrique is dismayed to learn by her words that they were once romantically involved. Nevertheless he finds admirable and believable Elvira's spirited denunciation of the prince's conduct. Elvira declares her honor to be as firm as her husband's. She even goes so far as to threaten to demand justice from the king if the prince will not listen to reason.

Enrique is convinced of her innocence and especially touched when Elvira says that she will denounce Pedro's presence to her husband in whom she proclaims complete faith:

**Que aunque lo oiga mi esposo, es tan honrado  
Que sabiendo quien soy y lo que he sido  
Crédito me dará, como entendido.(p. 509,b)**

In The final moments of this dramatically effective act Elvira discovers to her horror that the figure is her husband. But all is well, as he declares in a moving speech that begins:

No se oponen los errores,  
Los olvidos, las tinieblas  
A tanta luz invencible,  
A tanta pura inocencia.(p. 509,b)

In fact the crisis has completely changed Enrique's attitude toward his wife. Because of her purity and spirit his former coldness melts into a loving attitude completely new to him. For her part, Elvira is moved by Enrique's new-found tenderness and his expressions of trust and confidence. This experience brings them together for the first time into a situation with potential for what could be a true husband-wife relationship. The act ends with a return to the judicial imagery as Enrique declares in an aside:

La probanza deste pleito  
Honor, ha sido tan buena,  
Que el juez os asegura  
De su mano la sentencia.(p. 509,c)

The clandestine visit of the prince is more reminiscent of *A secreto agravio* than the other two Calderonian honor tragedies although the husband's testing of the wife recalls the *Médico de su honra*. Regardless of these similarities, we see that Enríquez's handling of the scene is quite different, especially as Enrique emerges convinced of Elvira's innocence and their marriage is actually strengthened. At the end of Act II, even though the seed of suspicion has been planted, there is still the chance that a tragedy will be averted.

The euphoria of the last scene of the second act quickly fades away in the third. The prince attempts to solace himself with doña María but is brusquely rebuffed because María knows that Elvira still loves him. True love is not so quickly snuffed, as María well knows:

Que el amor, si es verdadero,  
Es, como el alma, inmortal  
Que en entrando en la materia,  
Sin la muerte no se va.(p. 506,c)

It is this scene that provides the answer to María's place in the play. At the outset she seems a rather gratuitous figure, principally included to do entertaining battle with Elvira. Her function, however, is much more serious; she is the catalyst of the tragedy. At the same time she stimulates Elvira's jealousy, raises the prince's hopes and thus makes impossible their break. In this scene, as Elvira observes María and the prince together her jealousy begins to rise to the surface. Even though she told herself and

**Pedro that she has ceded her position to María, in her heart she cannot accept this match with her rival:**

**Ya murieron las cenizas  
Deste amor, ya se apagaron;  
Pero si el Príncipe envía  
A despertar mi cuidado  
¿Cómo con doña María?  
Pero ¿Qué digo? ¡Ay pasión mía!  
Y ¡cómo os ha despertado  
Del sueño por mi desdicha!(p. 510,b)**

**From this moment of weakness the stage is irrevocably set for her destruction. Though Elvira continues to reject Pedro, his desire and the doubt planted by María encourage him in his resolve to possess Elvira. Enrique is heartsick as he sees the lovers in conversation and overhears the prince's determination:**

**Y pues mi loca pasión  
Tanto me aflige, seré  
César o nada; que así  
He de morir o vencer.(p. 511,b)**

**The security Enrique felt in Elvira's constancy is now seriously in doubt. He concludes that given the prince's resolve it is only a question of time before the matter becomes public or that the prince gains his objective, either of which would be fatal for his honor.**

**Like don Sancho of Tirso's *Celoso prudente* the principal target of Enrique's anger is the king who arranged the marriage:**

**El rey quiso darme honor;  
Pero no advirtió que cuando  
Su amor me fue levantando,  
Mi honor, sin hacer estruendo,  
Iba al abismo muriendo.(p. 511b)**

**Enrique compares him to a doctor (perhaps borrowing from Calderón) whose matrimonial medicine has brought ill in place of good. His anguished and vengeful meditations are partially overheard by the king who wishes to know the cause of his troubles. Enrique, unable to contain his bitterness, blurts out «Fuiстеis vos»(p. 511,c) and then informs the king of the entire situation.**

**Among the several fine scenes of this *comedia* this one between the, desperate vassal and his king is one of the most memorable. Enrique's frustration is scarcely to be contained even before the benevolent monarch who has been his mentor and friend. Because the king is at once the promoter of the marriage, the father of the offending party and the supreme justiciar, Enrique charges him with the settling of the problem in the**

**strongest possible terms:**

**Pues vos fuisteis el autor  
Desta, por mi mal, borrasca,  
Desta, por mi mal, fortuna,  
Ultima y solá desgracia,  
Remedialda si podéis.(p. 512,a)**

**The consequences of the king's failure to act before the matter becomes public will be dire, and the agitated Enrique cannot promise to be responsible for his actions, as he implies in a dark threat:**

**Pues cuando el fuego se enciende  
Para abrasar una casa  
Tan presto postra un tabique  
Como la almena más alta.(p. 512,a)**

**Although the king tries to assuage his fears with words of praise for Elvira's steadfastness, Enrique's injury is too deep to be smoothed over. The king's solution is to separate the prince and Elvira until he can arrange a marriage for his son. Enrique agrees to retire immediately with his wife to his country estate. Unfortunately a servant informs the prince of the hasty departure and he follows completely determined to have his way:**

**Don Pedro el Cruel me llaman,  
Soy príncipe, tengo amor,  
Y si Enrique es noble  
Primero he nacido yo.(p. 512,c)**

**For Elvira the hasty flight to the country is a confirmation of her worst fears. Her feelings of guilt and suspicion of Enrique's intentions increase and, in spite of the beauties of the spot, she cannot rid herself of her presentiment of doom. She asks Leonor, «¿Qué fortuna es ésta» to which Leonor replies darkly:**

**Señora, si el mundo todo  
Es una comedia, donde  
El tiempo, poeta heroico,  
Trágicos fines admite,  
No menos intenta loco  
Atropellar inocencias  
Con escándalos notorios.»(p. 512,c)**

**The shock of Pedro's sudden appearance causes her to faint. When Enrique pulls out her handkerchief to revive her he discovers a letter she has written to Pedro. As in the majority of wife-murder plays, the interception of the wife's indiscreet letter is the final straw. Elvira's letter**

clearly reveals her love and her abiding jealousy of María. Even though she seems to beg Pedro to desist, her words do not ring true. Again the images of death are strong--«Yo voy a morir por vos»(p. 513,b)--but now they are prophetic rather than metaphoric.

For Enrique the letter destroys all hope. Though earlier he felt that their mutual respect (if not love) and Elvira's firmness would be proof against the prince, he no longer has any illusions. Furthermore, the prince's arrival indicates that the king has no more control over his son than Pedro has over his own desires. For Enrique it is painfully obvious that Elvira must die:

Muera, muera este prodigio  
De belleza; y desde el globo  
De la hermosura soberbia,  
De la vanidad del solio,  
Baje, baje deshaciendo  
El aire caliginoso.(p. 513,b)

The motif of falling introduced in Act I when Elvira trips now clearly symbolizes her fall from an honorable state.(21) The fall is finally actualized as Enrique leads Elvira to a precipice from which he does not seem to push her but rather places her in such a precarious spot that she cannot but fall. As she slips from the cliff she calls to him in a progression of address--«Señor, Señor ... Enrique, esposo»(pp. 513,c-514,a). The reservation of *esposo* to the final moment reflects the difficulty she has had in considering him as her husband. Only in the final moments of her life does the title occur to her; but it is too late.

Enrique's response to her cry is «No te puedo socorrer»(p. 513,c). He has tried and failed principally because she was not strong enough to save herself, perhaps relying too much on Enrique's continued forgiveness. The line recalls Elvira's statement to Pedro in the beginning of Act III: «Arded, corazón, arded/ Que yo no os puedo valer»(p. 511,a) which is overheard by Enrique and repeated in his soliloquy with ominous and real meaning:

Muy cerca estáis [honor] de caer  
Ya sois de Elvira enemigo.  
Pues dijo, hablando conmigo  
«Que yo no os puedo valer»(p. 511,b)

The *comedia* is quickly terminated after this climactic moment. The king arrives a moment too late to avert what he feared would happen when he discovered the prince's absence. As in other honor tragedies he absolves Enrique of any wrongdoing. The feeling of loss and horror is accentuated more by a lack of dialogue than an abundance. The prince, clearly overwhelmed by the event, has only these few lines before he rushes off the stage: «Perdonadme; que el dolor,/ el angustia, el sentimiento/ Me va acabando la vida»(p. 514,a-b). Enrique's grief is extreme as he views the broken body of the lovely girl whom he reluctantly married then grew to love:

Volved los ojos, mirad  
Apagado el mejor cielo,  
Sin luz el mayor planeta  
Eclipsados los luceros  
Sin esperanza el amor  
Ella sin alma y yo muerto.(p. 514,b)

Although the king suggests the possibility of a second marriage, the topic is not pursued. The stark tragic nature of the scene is finally alleviated by a brief comic interchange between the servants. But it is Enrique who ends the work with an ambiguous reference to the reality of the play:

Y el poeta, dando fin  
A este trágico suceso  
De *A lo que obliga el honor*  
Que os lo da por verdadero.(p. 514,c)

As in all of Enríquez's drama, the feminine figures are interesting and strong characterizations. Doña María, for example, is a perfect example of an Enríquez heroine in her pride and especially her forcefulness. In spite of her adversary relationship to Elvira, María's spirit makes her a rather sympathetic figure. Even though she is romantically interested in the prince, her lecture to him in Act II makes it plain that she has no intention of taking second place to anyone. (We also recall Leonor's refusal to accept second best from Limón.) One cannot help but admire a lady who does not hesitate to speak her mind even to a prince who styles himself «the Cruel»:

Porque soy doña María  
De Padilla, tan señora  
De gozar mi propio día.  
Que otra puede ser aurora,  
Mas no sol [Elvira], por vida mía;  
Que quien a mí me ha de amar,  
Tan liberal y firme ha de ser  
Que ni al sol ha de mirar;  
Y si no, busque mujer  
Que pueda su amor llevar.(p. 510,b)

The interaction of María and Elvira is one of the most interesting and original aspects of the play. Although doña Mencía demonstrates a similar jealousy of Leonor in the *Médico de su honra*, its consequences are not as important as far as Mencía is concerned. Enríquez in centering the jealousy about the lover rather than the husband makes it a principal element in bringing about her tragedy as Enrique himself recognizes in his final soliloquy:

Celos de doña María

Arruinaron este escollo,  
Derribaron este alcázar,  
Deslucieron este adorno,  
Mancharon esta pureza,  
Y ajaron este pimpollo.(p. 513,b)

Likewise the prince regards her jealousy as the surest proof of her eventual capitulation: «Que si no me tiene amor,/ Va celosa, y es mujer»(p. 511,b).

With this jealousy motive Enríquez has added a very effective aspect to the heroine's dilemma. *A lo que obliga el honor* is as much a tragedy of jealousy as it is of love, for while Elvira gives evidence of being strong enough to resist the prince's advances, the thought of him in María's arms, even though she has suggested it, gnaws at her ceaselessly until it undermines her resolve and jeopardizes her honor and Enrique's.

Another interesting element in the play is the choice of Pedro as the suitor rather than a king, as he appears in the *Médico de su honra*. Pedro's stubbornness, fiery temper and selfish insistence on gratifying personal desire accord very well with the black legend which has developed about this figure. Not only does his personality seem more apt for the part, but given his ill-fated end at Montiel there is no doubt that he will eventually pay for this and other sins.

By making Pedro the suitor the king's role is also altered to that of a kindly, well-meaning, father figure who is quite actively involved in the events of the play. Throughout the work we are reminded that his misguided attempt to reward has brought about the tragedy, a fact that he himself acknowledges at the last: «... yo acerté tan mal/ En aqueste casamiento.» (p. 514,c)

In *A lo que obliga el honor* the presentation and development of character of the three principals is exceptionally noteworthy. Prince Pedro, while perhaps the least developed, is not unidimensional. The tenderness, constancy and faithfulness he demonstrates in his first scene with Elvira shades into anger and frustration at the injustice of losing her. His impetuous nature is only suppressed with difficulty during the engagement ceremony by his desire to avoid hurting Elvira's reputation in creating a scandal. Even his persistence as regards her is not entirely his fault. As befits the true lover, he finds it difficult to believe that all is over between them; hence his disastrous attempt to visit her. For a time her strong rejection plus his embarrassment at the hands of Enrique do seem to deter him. To his credit, even though he does not particularly seem to care for María, he does try to turn his attentions to her. It is really Elvira's inability to give him up to María that determines his course. Faced with actions that belie Elvira's repeated rejections he resolves to end the confusion at whatever the cost.

This tragedy of honor is shared equally between Elvira and Enrique even though it seems that her weakness is the principal cause. But even her first misstep--the lie to the king--is understandable. Her lie is plausible, even natural, considering the unlikeliness of her marriage to the prince and

given her desire to gratify the wishes of a kindly monarch. In other Enríquez plays stronger heroines will speak their minds as does María concerning their desires but in this instance the avoidance of tragedy is not the plan.(22) As much as in any Calderón honor tragedy the dilemma between love and honor is the crux of this drama. However, in *A lo que obliga el honor* the situation is more complex. The initial loveless state of the marriage on both sides adds a tension not present in any Calderonian play. Then too, Elvira's choice is made more difficult by her jealousy of María. Finally, although she has been absolved of blame in the first incident there are lingering suspicions as to Enrique's love and forgiveness.

While Enrique's drama is particularly moving, his dilemma does not monopolize the work to the extent that Casa finds in Calderón.(23) His tragedy, in addition to the question of honor, has another dimension in that from a gruff soldier who displays distrust and almost fear of women he is suddenly won over to Elvira. Her first rejection of the prince is so impressive in its nobility and faith in him that he quite succumbs to this woman. The reproaches he had prepared to lash out at her melt away:

Pero ¿qué digo? ¿qué hablo?  
Iba a decir con soberbia  
Una tirana venganza:  
Y el alma, como discreta,  
Apelando al tribunal  
De vuestra rara belleza,  
Lo que perdió de atrevida,  
Lo ganó de inteligencia.(p. 509,c)

His new-found captivation with Elvira as a woman and wife makes more intense his struggle to avoid her destruction. Even though he learns that she lied to the king, Enrique is willing to overlook it because he comes to love her so much. In fact, from the first incident involving the prince's presence in his house, Enrique allows her every opportunity to establish her innocence and accords her the benefit of every doubt in spite of the growing danger to his reputation. Rather than immediately assume the position of executioner he appeals the case to the king in the hope that he can control the prince. At his point Enrique assumes that all that is needed is to have the prince desist in his advances. The flight to the country is Enrique's last hope but the events there convince him that the king cannot control the prince and worse, Elvira cannot suppress her jealous passion.

The ambiguousness of Enrique's participation in her death reflects his reluctance to kill the only woman he has ever really loved. His return to a solitary existence is bitter and seemingly not to be softened by thoughts of other marriages or even consolation at having cleared his honor.

In spite of a few technical weaknesses (notably the overuse of the eavesdropper) and a certain tendency to overdo symbols and images of fatalism, a careful reading of *A lo que obliga el honor* shows none of the general debility and Calderonian servility of which it has been accused.

Quite the contrary, the *comedia* is well-developed, well-delineated and constructed with a fine sense of dramatic effect.

*A lo que obliga el honor* is indeed the best of Enríquez Gómez's work and perhaps shows more care in its composition than the majority of his plays. It is notably less digressive than others whose acts often include monstrously long rhetorical passages of upwards of two hundred lines. The plot is also unified around a central action which is often not the case in an Enríquez play.<sup>(24)</sup> But the most impressive aspect is the artistry with which the dramatist presents and develops the characters. The evolution particularly of Enrique from the solitary soldier to the caring husband and finally to the avenged *hidalgo* once again alone with his honor is a work of considerable talent. Whether or not Enríquez was inspired to this composition by Calderón, Lope or Tirso, the result is a play which can stand entirely on its own merit and deserves more attention.

#### NOTES

1. Lope de Vega, *Arte nuevo de hacer comedias, La discreta enamorada* (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1967), p. 18.
2. For example the Spring, 1977 issue of the *Bulletin of the Comediantes* (vol. 29, no. 1) contains Frances Exum's «¿Yo a un vasallo ...?» Prince Henry's Role in Calderón's *El Médico de su honra*; and another comprehensive article by Frank P. Casa, «Honor and the Wife-Killers of Calderón».
3. Apparently the first known printing of this *comedia* is that in Enríquez Gómez's *Academias morales de las musas* (Bordeaux: Pedro de la Court, 1642). This popular work saw six more Spanish editions between 1642 and 1734. *A lo que obliga el honor* is included in R. Mesonero Romanos, *Dramáticos posteriores a Lope de Vega* (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, 1951), 47, pp. 501-14.
4. José Amador de los Ríos, *Estudios históricos, políticos y literarios sobre los judíos de España* (Madrid, 1848), pp. 533-69.
5. I. S. Révah, «Un pamphlet contre l'Inquisition d'Antonio Enríquez Gómez: la seconde partie de la *Política angélica*,» *Revue des Etudes Juives*, 131 (1962), pp. 81-168; Constance Rose, «Antonio Enríquez Gómez and the Literature of Exile,» *Romanische Forschungen*, 85 (1974), pp. 63-77; David Gitlitz, «La angustia vital de ser negro, tema de un drama de Fernando de Zúrate,» *Segismundo*, 2 (1975), pp. 65-85; Constance Rose, «Who wrote the *Segunda Parte* of *La hija del aire*,» *Revue Belge de Philosophie et d'Histoire*, 54 (1976), pp. 797-822.
6. The list of his *comedias* is found in the prologue to his *Sansón nazareno* (Rohan: Maurry, 1656).
7. H. V. Besso, *Dramatic Literature of the Sephardic Jews of Amsterdam in the XVIIth and XVIIIth Centuries* (New York: The Hispanic Institute, 1947), pp. 64-66; De los Ríos, pp. 559-65.
8. M. Menéndez y Pelayo, *Historia de los heterodoxos españoles* (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1956), 2, p. 260. The other play is *Celos no ofenden al sol*, also found in the BAE, vol. 47.

9. De los Ríos, pp. 558-59.
10. Rose, «Who Wrote the *Segunda Parte* of *La hija del aire*»; see note 5.
11. Enríquez's prologue to the *Sansón nazareno* singles out many contemporary dramatists for praise, Calderón included: «D. Pedro Calderón, por las trazas se llevó el Teatro.»
12. Menéndez y Pelayo, p. 260.
13. Of the twenty-two titles in this listing I have located fourteen still in existence. Of these fourteen I have been able to collect copies of ten.
14. The possibility of wife-murder for honor's sake is mentioned in his *Vida de d. Gregorio Guadaña* in *La novela picaresca española* (Madrid: Aguilar, 1966), 1711: «Vuestra hermana no es vuestra esposa, para que os obligue la verdadera honra a lavar con sangre el agravio cometido.»
15. For examples see *Engañar para reinar, A lo que obligan los celos* and *Celos no ofenden al sol*.
16. All citations from the play are taken from the BAE, vol. 47. I have compared this printing with a *suelta* (Salamanca: Francisco Diego de Torres, n.d.) and found little difference except that the minor character, Felix, listed in the BAE as *Criado* should be *caballero*. To avoid unnecessary footnotes I have incorporated page and column (a, b, or c) at the end of each quote.
17. Enríquez's Quevedoesque disenchantment with the times is very strongly expressed in his *Torre de Babilonia* (Rohan: Maurry, 1649) and his *Siglo pitagórico y vida de d. Gregorio Guadaña* (Rohan: Maurry, 1644).
18. Two other examples are the jealous queen's dialogue with Rosaura in *Celos no ofenden al sol* and doña Elvira's comments on the *tapada* in *Contra el amor no hay engaños*.
19. De los Ríos, p. 566, cites another example in Julio's satire on married life in *Celos no ofenden al sol*. He does, however, exaggerate the anti-marriage sentiment of Enríquez when he states that it exists «en casi todas sus producciones.»
20. Rose, «Who wrote the *Segunda Parte* of *La hija del aire*,» p. 822, note 57.
21. Rose, «Who wrote the *Segunda Parte* of *La hija del aire*,» notes several examples of the motif of falling in other Enríquez works.
22. Juana of *Contra el amor no hay engaños* rejects a suitor thus:

y no os espantéis, Señor  
que desta suerte os responda:  
que si todas las mujeres  
hablaran en esta forma  
ni se perdieran las vidas  
ni se acabaran las honras,  
que verdades no admitidas  
muy brevemente se lloran.

23. Casa, p. 19, «... the author's [Calderón's] marginal interest in the woman's dilemma and his greater concern for the reaction of the husband.»
24. *La prudente Abigail* and *Las soberbias de Nembrod* are examples of plays that seem to meander through several competing actions.