

# The Christian Plays of Antonio Enríquez Gómez

GLEN F. DILLE

*Bradley University, Peoria, Illinois*

Nineteenth-century literary historians consistently described Antonio Enríquez Gómez (1600–1663) as a minor dramatist who, because of his heterodoxy or because of court intrigue, was forced to flee Spain for France and later Amsterdam. Adolfo de Castro, Amador de los Ríos and Mesonero Romanos left little doubt but that Enríquez Gómez was at the least a Judaizer, and Menéndez Pelayo stated flatly 'murió judío en Amsterdam'.<sup>1</sup> But while these scholars agreed on Enríquez Gómez's Jewishness, or crypto-Jewishness, they vigorously debated a theory of Adolfo de Castro's that Enríquez Gómez also wrote a considerable number of plays under the name Fernando de Zárate y Castronovo. Even though Castro's argument was based on slender evidence, the vehemence of the opposition indicates that most Spanish scholars of the time were loath to concede anything at all to an author tainted by Judaism.

In his introduction to *Dramáticos posteriores a Lope de Vega Mesonero Romanos'* refutation of Castro sums up the prevailing opinion and illustrates the poor regard most nineteenth-century Spanish critics had for writers considered *marranos*.<sup>2</sup> Fundamentally, Mesonero Romanos' opposition to Castro's alias theory rests on the perceived heterodoxy of Enríquez Gómez's plays as opposed to the enthusiastic Christianity of the Zárate plays. Although he stopped short of identifying Enríquez Gómez as a *marrano*, Mesonero Romanos cites 'cierta predilección a ocuparse de la antigua historia hebraica', noting that 'no hay una sola [comedia] cuyo asunto sea tomado del Nuevo Testamento, de los misterios de la religión cristiana ni de la vida de los santos', whereas the *comedias* of Zárate are 'composiciones todas en que se revela la íntima creencia cristiana del autor'. The difference is quite clear—Enríquez Gómez is a Judaizer and as such should not be conceded any worth; thus his 'mal gusto y lenguaje afectado y sus resabios de extranjerismo'. But of the supposedly Old-Christian Zárate, Mesonero Romanos rhapsodizes, 'la agudeza de los planes o intrigas cómicas . . . su robusta elocución y estilo castizo, su gracejo y donosura . . .' This opposition—the eloquent, Spanish Old Christian versus the vulgar, affected heterodoxer—brings to mind Gilman's observation: 'The belief that only the caste of Old Christians was truly Spanish and truly honorable was so inrooted that it has endured over four centuries'.<sup>3</sup>

In the face of such formidable opposition Castro's theory was relegated to the footnotes for about a century until the pioneering archival research of I. S. Révah proved that Fernando de Zárate was indeed an alias that Antonio Enríquez Gómez assumed after his clandestine return to Spain in c. 1649. Moreover, Révah and later Charles Amiel and C. H. Rose have demythicized the biography of the dramatist to prove that Enríquez Gómez did not die a declared Jew in Amsterdam, but rather that, after eluding the Holy Office for about eleven years he was finally imprisoned in Seville where he died on 19 March 1663 after receiving the last rites of the Church.<sup>4</sup>

Révah, however, was in total agreement with nineteenth-century Spanish scholars

concerning Enríquez Gómez's Marranism. Writing of the author's early years in Madrid, Révah states: 'Antonio Enríquez Gómez était comme son père et son grand-père, un crypto-juif. Son marranisme ne devait pas s'étendre aux pratiques rituelles, car les 'Nouveaux-Chrétiens' de Madrid, étroitement surveillés, vivaient constamment à l'époque dans la crainte de l'arrestation'.<sup>5</sup> Révah took for granted that Enríquez Gómez's crypto-Judaism continued throughout the author's life, and subsequent investigators, taking their cue from Révah, have generally accepted it as fact, incorporating Enríquez Gómez into a 'canon' of Spanish Jewish authors.<sup>6</sup> There is, however, an obvious problem in this, for, while it is undeniably true that much of the author's work *qua* Enríquez Gómez has Marranistic qualities, his final works, the Zárate plays, do not follow suit. Ironically, in proving that Enríquez Gómez and Zárate were one and the same, Révah weakened the case for the playwright's lifelong Marranism, for the Zárate plays express such fervent Catholicism that scholars such as Mesonero Romanos categorically rejected their attribution to Enríquez Gómez.

Investigators convinced of Enríquez Gómez's lifelong Jewishness have based their contentions on the works produced during his middle years of French exile (c. 1636–1649) under his true name, and especially on those which contain ringing declarations of solidarity with Judaism as, for example, Samson's prayer at the climactic moment of his heroic poem, *Sansón nazareno*:

Dios de mis padres—dice—, Autor eterno,  
de los tres mundos soberanos Atlante,  
incircunscrito, santo y abeterno,  
Dios de Abrahán, tu verdadero amante,  
Dios de Isaac, cuyo altísimo gobierno  
en la divina Ley vive triunfante,  
Dios de Jacob, de bendiciones lleno,  
oye a Sansón, escucha al Nazareno.

. . . . .  
Yo muero por la Ley que tú escribiste,  
por los preceptos santos que mandaste,  
por el pueblo sagrado que escogiste  
y por los mandamientos que ordenaste;  
yo muero por la patria que me diste  
y por la gloria con que el pueblo honraste;  
muero por Israel, y lo primero  
por tu inefable Nombre verdadero.<sup>7</sup>

The same exalted tone is struck in another work in which the author seems even more openly to identify with Judaism, the 'Romance al divín mártir, Judá Creyente, martirizado en Valladolid por la Inquisición'. This poem was written to commemorate the execution in 1644 of Lope de Vera y Alarcón, an Old Christian who had embraced Judaism. The following excerpt is from the lengthy speech the victim pronounces from the stake:

¡naciones, yo soy hebreo!  
¡Judío soy, castellanos!  
la Ley de Mosseh confieso  
dada en el monte Sinai  
por el Autor de los cielos.  
¡Ea, antiocos [i. e. inquisitors] profanos,  
ejecutad el decreto  
de la vil Inquisición,  
tribunal de los infiernos!<sup>8</sup>

Amiel considers the 'Romance al divín mártir' as 'une des rares oeuvres sincères d'Antonio Enríquez Gómez que nous soient parvenues'.<sup>9</sup> But if we are to accept these sample passages as proof of Enríquez Gómez's sincere Judaism, what are we to make of the no less ringing declarations of Christianity that appear in the Zárate plays? Can we say that he was any less sincere in, for example, the following encomium of the Virgin Mary:

Salve MARIA, mar de gracia plena;  
salve entre Lirios candida Azuzena,  
Huerto de Gedeon, puro, y cerrado,  
sin mancha original de aquel pecado  
que redimio encarnado en vuestra Rosa  
el Clavel de Abeterno: Salve Esposa  
del que procede Espiritu Divino,  
de principio, y palabra en vn ser Trino.  
Salve, Hija del Padre,  
y del Hijo encreado digna Madre.  
Salve, Fuente, Cypres, Estrella, Guia,  
Salve digo otra vez, Ave Maria.<sup>10</sup>

or in the verses in which Saul proclaims his conversion to Christianity:

Christiano soy, la Fé de Christo sigo  
.....  
Arrepentido confieso,  
que aquel Nazareno Ilustre,  
hombre, y Dios es el Mesias  
de quien tantas beatitudes  
y soberanos Profetas  
Regias verdades incluyen.<sup>11</sup>

How then can we reconcile the zealous Christianity of these passages with the supposed enduring Marranism of Enríquez Gómez?

An obvious answer, and one that scholars interested in affirming his Marranism propose, is that the Christianity is as false as the Old-Christian identity the author adopted to write the plays and that, as Révah and Amiel insist, he was always at least a crypto-Jew.<sup>12</sup> However, I believe we can rule out a feigned Christianity for several reasons. First, as Mesonero Romanos himself noted, the Zárate plays are 'composiciones todas en que se revela la íntima creencia cristiana del autor, en términos que sería imposible concebir siquiera a otro de distinta fe, ni en el caso de haber disimulado o renegado la suya'.<sup>13</sup> While one could envisage one or two plays of a falsely orthodox stance, the fact remains that all the many Zárate plays are Christian in some degree. Bearing in mind that perspicacious nineteenth-century critics were totally convinced of the Christianity of the author of these plays, it is difficult to accept them all as false fronts put up to cover his true Marranism. Moreover, even the most careful and sceptical reading of the Zárate plays shows the impossibility of interpreting the many Catholic declarations of faith as any less sincere than those Judaic ones of *Sansón nazareno* or of the 'Romance al divín mártir'.

Secondly, one might also question why Enríquez Gómez writing as Zárate would choose to write on religious subjects at all if he were feigning Catholicism. In the twenty-two earlier plays written under his true name we see that it was his practice to ignore Christianity almost completely; he wrote either on Old Testament topics and avoided references to Christianity (a point that seems to confirm the Marranism of his

youth), or produced historical, heroic, or *capa y espada* plays. Since he was quite adept at these types of plays, he could have continued to produce them exclusively during his Zárate period and thus continue to avoid religious topics with which he was not in sympathy.

Discarding the possibility that the Christianity of the Zárate plays is a pose, we are left with the alternative that, at some point in his later life, Enríquez Gómez made an accommodation with Catholicism. In fact this may not have been such a radical decision for him since the extent of his involvement with Judaism in Spain or in France is not at all clear. In spite of the evidence of Marranism in his earlier plays, and particularly in the exile compositions, there is nothing to indicate that while in France he ever formally embraced Judaism or even seriously studied the religion even though he was in close contact with Judaizing friends and family.<sup>14</sup> Notwithstanding Menéndez Pelayo's affirmation that he died a Jew in Amsterdam, neither Révah's nor Amiel's investigations cite anything to indicate that Enríquez Gómez ever visited the haven of Amsterdam, where he might have set himself up as a practising Jew if he had so desired. To the contrary, Amiel's biographical data indicate that Enríquez Gómez apparently felt that his heterodoxy was not so serious that he could not square accounts with the Inquisition upon his return to Spain.<sup>15</sup>

The dramatist's road to his final Christianity was surely a slow process involving much uncertainty. However, based on what we now know, the one certainty is that at the moment of truth Enríquez Gómez died a Catholic, contrary to what the anti-Semitic, nineteenth-century scholars believed, and contrary to the modern view that he was a *marrano* throughout his life. His Christian death is ironic considering the fact that both Jewish literary historians and the older Spanish investigators were in agreement concerning his Jewishness for entirely opposite reasons—the Jewish historians wishing to claim him and the Catholics wishing to disclaim him. The problem in deciding what Enríquez Gómez actually *was* arises from looking for either/or labels that apply to the entire course of a human life disregarding the fact that the human mind is constantly subject to doubts and revision. Given the diversity of associations and settings that he experienced throughout his life, there is no reason to insist that the Enríquez Gómez of the period to c. 1636 would have thought and acted in the same manner as the Enríquez Gómez of the exile period (c. 1636–1649), or the mature Enríquez Gómez-Fernando de Zárate of the period of clandestine return to Spain (c. 1649–1661).<sup>16</sup>

Obviously, as evidenced by the Zárate plays, at some point during the eleven years before his arrest, the Christian half of his heritage (through the maternal line) began to manifest itself. The Zárate *comedias*, the product of this masquerade, are of a variety of types—*capa y espada* plays, historical dramas, and honour tragedy—but at least eleven are plays on religious topics. Considering here only the latter we find two general groups: those set in the biblical era—*La escala de la gracia*, *El médico pintor*, *San Lucas*, *El vaso y la piedra* and *La conversión de la Magdalena*—and those dealing with the lives of such saints as *El obispo de Crobia*, *San Estanislao*, *La defensora de la reina de Hungría*, *Santa Pelagia*, *San Antonio Abad*, *Mártir y rey de Sevilla*, *San Hermenegildo*, *Santa Taez* and *Las misas de S. Vicente Ferrer*.<sup>17</sup> The remainder of this article concerns these religious plays, and, in particular, those set in the biblical era. It is my view that their distinctive references to Jews, to Judaica and to Christianity show how Enríquez Gómez came finally to strike a balance between the two religions that had for so long exerted powerful influences upon his life.

*El vaso y la piedra* and *El médico pintor*, *San Lucas*, like many of the dramatist's works, tend towards the spectacular with complicated plots involving quite large casts, many scene changes and a great number of *tramoyas* of a miraculous nature.<sup>18</sup> The title *El vaso y la piedra* refers to St Peter (the rock) and to St Paul (the chalice), but there are

actually three plots intertwined—one concerning Saul's conversion from persecutor to Christian saint, another dealing with Mary Magdalene's conversion of the pagan monarchs of Marseilles, and the third, a contest between St Peter and Simon Magus to prove to the Emperor Nero which of them possesses true supernatural power. *El médico pintor* has a somewhat less complicated plot. The Jewish doctor, Luke, is intrigued with Jesus' power to effect miraculous cures and becomes a convert through St Peter. Because Luke is also a painter, he is commissioned to do portraits of Jesus and Mary, a task in which he is aided by divine intervention. Like *El vaso y la piedra*, *El médico pintor* ends with a contest of power: Luke brings down a pagan temple by invoking the Virgin Mary.

In both plays the topic of conversion is paramount, particularly in *El vaso y la piedra* in which practically the entire cast are either already converts—St Peter and St Mary Magdalene—or are converted during the play—Saul and the monarchs of Marseilles. Of these the Saul to Paul conversion is the most significant in terms of the dramatist's own religious evolution. In the play Saul is introduced as the Jewish agent of persecution of Christians which represents a significant reversal of the role associated with Saul in Enríquez Gómez's earlier Marranistic works in which Saul and 'los Saules' are code words for agents for the Inquisition.<sup>19</sup> In *El vaso y la piedra* special emphasis is devoted to Saul's conversion that is symbolized by his change of name ('Jesus mio, / si Saulo os persegua, si Saulo no os seguia, / ya Pablo os ama, sigue, adora y quiere' [77]). In this as in other works Enríquez Gómez finds a parallel to his own situation in which the adoption of the Old-Christian alias Zárte, in addition to being an expedient to avoid detection, also came to signal his return to Christianity.

Saul is not a villain merely because he is a Jew, but rather because he is an intolerant persecutor, and, for the playwright who experienced persecution first hand, this is the ultimate villainy. St Peter, of course, is also a convert from Judaism, a fact that Enríquez Gómez takes pains to underscore—'Es un Galileo / que de Iudio a Christiano / se passo en Ierusalen' (77). In fact, much of the play is concerned with ex-Jews patiently and lovingly instructing other Jews and pagans in the mysteries of Christianity. Particular attention is given in *El vaso y la piedra* to instruction in the Trinity, which is explained in detail in two instances, first by Mary Magdalene to the pagan monarchs of Marseilles, and later by St Peter who adduces the Trinity from two Old Testament sources (Genesis 18:1–2 and Isaiah 6:3) to refute Simon's claim to be the Messiah. The affirmation of Jesus as the true Messiah is made again and again in the sermons of Peter, Paul and Mary Magdalene, and is confirmed by no less than three miraculous appearances of Christ. The metaphor of spiritual rebirth in the acceptance of Jesus as the Saviour is actualized when Mary Magdalene brings back the Queen of Marseilles from the dead and it forms the basis of another scene in which the *gracioso* comically tries to raise a corpse in imitation of St Peter. However, the climactic moment of the theme of rebirth occurs in Act III when the Emperor Nero determines that the ultimate test of power between Simon and St Peter will be the raising of a corpse. Of course Simon's magic fails and it is St Peter's prayer that causes the body to rise and proclaim the divinity of Jesus: 'Ya la tengo por virtud / de Iesus el Nazareno / a quien conozco por Dios' (99). If one agrees that Enríquez Gómez identifies religiously with his creations, as most critics are inclined to do where the marranistic works are concerned, one would have to say that by the time he wrote *El vaso y la piedra* he had come to accept the Trinity and Jesus as the Messiah.

In *El médico pintor*, *San Lucas* the two principal motifs are, as the title indicates, healing and art. Healing is a metaphor whose tenor is salvation. Art is put to the service of religion to glorify the Church and to create the divine likenesses that convert pagans and destroy their heathen works. Luke, a renowned physician 'de Nación Hebrea', is called in to treat the pagan Infanta of Antioch who suffers a deep melancholia interrupted by periodic fits of rage. Before Luke can begin treatment, the Princess of Thebes arrives from

a visit to Jerusalem. As the princess recounts seeing Jesus in the Temple the infanta suffers a seizure occasioned by the violent reaction of the demon spirits within her to hearing the divine name. Later Luke marvels on the happenings and ponders the reports of wonderful cures that Jesus has effected, culminating in the most astonishing of all—that of bringing the dead back to life, a topic that, as we have seen, is central to *El vaso y la piedra*. By the second act Luke has taken the medicine of Christianity from Jesus (variously styled the 'médico maravilloso', 'divino Médico insigne', 'divino médico hebreo') and St Peter explains Luke's new mission as healer of souls:

Medico llegaste a ser  
corporal; pero otro grado  
te da el Señor Celestial,  
Medico Espiritual  
eres oy, el nuevo estado  
de gracia se te ha venido,  
por tu zelo, y tu humildad:  
las almas con la verdad  
del Maestro esclarecido  
JESVS, Hijo de David,  
has de curar . . . (13)

The medical imagery of the first part of the play is associated with Jesus. After Luke's conversion the art motif becomes dominant as St Peter commissions Luke to do portraits of Jesus and Mary. But it is Mary's portrait that occupies the dramatist's attention and once her likeness is produced with the help of some angelic intervention, Luke is charged to begin converting pagans: 'Con essa Imagen Sagrada / de MARIA, intacta Rosa, / obraràs las maravillas, / que los Profetas pregonan' (25). In a dramatic scene Luke calls down the destruction of the infanta's pagan temple, invoking the Virgin with a series of Old Testament epithets: 'Perla sin mancha, Sol de Nazareth, / Estèr Sagrada, destruicion de Amàn, / de Jesè planta, Antidoto de Adàn / Alva del dia que nació en Belen . . .' (29–30). With Luke's icon of Mary set up in place of the idol the infanta is exorcized of her demons and converts to Christianity with her subjects. The two motifs of medicine and art are recapitulated *a lo divino* at the play's end by the Virgin who proclaims Luke 'Evangelista sagrado, / Doctor, y Pintor Divino / . . . Doctor eres de las gentes' (32).

In spite of its initial attention to Jesus, *El médico pintor* is overwhelmingly concerned with exalting Mary and her Immaculate Conception.<sup>20</sup> Implicit in the story of her portrait and its power is a defence of the veneration of images which to Jews smacked of idolatry. But also implicit is the recognition of Jewish technical and artistic accomplishments glorified in the lengthy description of the Temple in Act I; and the recognition of Jewish scientific achievement exemplified by Luke's fame as a physician, a profession that had long been almost exclusively Jewish and *converso*.

Again one notes in *El médico pintor*, perhaps even more than in *El vaso y la piedra*, a dynamic and enthusiastic Christianity presented in such a way that there is scarcely a verse of the play in which the public is not faced with a reminder of its Judaic origins. For example, in the first act in the princess's lengthy description of Solomon's Temple, after detailing the magnificent rites, the priests' vestments and the wealth of silver and gold she recounts how Jesus entered the Temple and was instantly recognizable by his divine aura—'vn asombro / de deydad, vn Hombre, digo, / en todo maravilloso' (6). The juxtaposition of Solomon's Temple and Jesus underscores the parent-offspring connection that links Judaism and Christianity. This religious continuity is stressed further in Luke's soliloquy in which he becomes convinced that Jesus is indeed the son of God as prophesied in the Old Testament:

. . . yo he leído  
 a Daniel, y promete  
 a la venida de Christo,  
 del de que su profecia  
 llamo a voces al vngido,  
 Setenta semanas, estas,  
 segun nos dize el Levitico,  
 son de a siete anales: setenta  
 de a siete, segun lo escrito,  
 hazen años quatrocientos  
 y noventa, y esos mismos  
 has passado, desde el dia  
 que Daniel peregrino  
 profetizo la venida  
 hasta que viniessse Christo. (11)

Here, just as Enríquez Gómez re-focused and amplified his view of Saul in *El vaso y la piedra*, *El médico pintor*'s use of Daniel as foretelling the birth of Christ represents a re-thinking from the time he wrote the Marranistic 'Romance al divín mártir' which is also based heavily on Daniel, as Oelman points out, but in which the Messiah is yet to come.<sup>21</sup>

Compared with *El vaso y la piedra* and *El médico pintor*, *La escala de la gracia* is even more devoted to the spiritual world. The roles of the *graciosos*, rather prominent in the other plays, are minimized in favour of the divine, allegorical and saintly *dramatis personae*. The reduction of action produces scenes that are more tableau vivant than *comedia* and the play's focus is narrowed to the Virgin, relating the miraculous nature of her conception and birth to Anna and Joachim, and her election as mother of the Messiah. As in the other biblical plays, there is great stress on the linking of Judaism and Christianity, here evidenced by the play's title—in Mary will be explained and fulfilled Jacob's vision of the stairway (Gen. 28:12); Mary will be the *escala de la gracia*, the intermediary by which we may approach heaven.

In Act I Satan realizes that the Messianic prophecies in Daniel and Isaiah will be fulfilled with the birth of Mary and the subsequent birth of the Messiah. He thus enlists the aid of Original Sin to stop the process warning him 'à esta Doncella, su Hijo, / muriendo ha de redimir / la culpa del primer hombre, / y tu moriràs alli' (7). In Act II an angel explains how Mary is conceived without Original Sin and how she will be the sum total of all the illustrious heroines of the Old Testament. The litany of her virtues is very similar to that of *El médico pintor*. She is

la Perla, que ha concebido  
 Ana, Judith de la Gracia,  
 Esthèr del Pueblo escogido,  
 Delbora de la verdad,  
 Jaèl contra el enemigo,  
 Raquel del mejor Jacob,  
 y Reyna del Cielo Impyreo. (13)

The second act ends with the birth of Mary and Act III depicts her youth, ending with her presentation in the Temple and a vision of Grace enthroned at the top of Jacob's stairway.

In *La escala de la gracia* one notes particularly a resolution of Enríquez Gómez's long preoccupation with Original Sin. The topic is constant in his Marranistic writings, especially in those done in exile. As Oelman has noted, for the *converso* writer Original Sin becomes inextricably associated with the stigma of being born *converso* and thus

doomed to an existence as an outcast without hope of ever being fully accepted into the mainstream of society.<sup>22</sup> In this and other plays of the Zárata period one sees that Enríquez Gómez's confusion and pessimism as expressed in earlier works such as *La culpa del primer peregrino* (1644), *El siglo pitagórico* (1644), *La política angélica* (1647), *La torre de Babilonia* (1649) and *Sansón nazareno* (1656) give way to the bright message of hope and comfort through the Virgin and the Messiah.

The fourth biblical era play is *La conversión de la Magdalena*.<sup>23</sup> In spite of its first century A.D. setting, the *comedia* is much more akin to the *comedias de santos*, especially to *San Antonio Abad* and *Santa Tazé*, in that it is more concerned with the individual's interior struggle for salvation than with the saint's conversion of others. Even more tightly focused than *La escala de la gracia*, *La conversión* concentrates on the one story line of Mary Magdalene's path of abnegation after a life devoted to luxury and pleasure. After the vain and selfish courtesan attends a sermon of Jesus in the Temple, she passes through a period of temptation and penitence to her eventual glory as the symbol of how even the most confirmed sinner can hope for salvation. Because of the play's personal orientation, the cast of characters is very much reduced and, in spite of some of the usual *tramoyas*, the play's tone is calmer and more introspective than the other biblical era *comedias*.

No doubt because of her scandalous past, Enríquez Gómez does not take pains to stress Mary Magdalene's Jewishness as is the case with other figures such as Peter, Paul and Luke with more respectable backgrounds. Nevertheless, the dramatist once again establishes the Hebraic underpinnings of Christianity through the definition and description of Christian elements and figures in Old Testament terms as in, for example, the following portion of Mary Magdalene's paean to the Cross:

bara sagrada de el major aron,  
Rama inmortal del tronco de jese,  
Sacerdote mayor melchisedec,  
bellocino que bido Jedeon,  
contra el templo jentilico sanson,  
salvador de la nabe de noe . . . (Act III)

In general Mesonero Romanos was correct in pointing to the zealous Christianity of the biblical era *comedias* but, at the same time, he overlooked (as Enríquez Gómez intended) their subtle and persistent affirmation of the Jewishness of Jesus, his family, the Apostles and other followers. Most noteworthy is that even though the characters of these plays proclaim Christ as the Messiah, they do not stop being ethnic Jews. Luke, for example, announces 'yo soy Christiano, y de Christo / sigo la palabra' (27), but continues to identify himself as Hebrew—'Yo soy Lucas el Hebreo' (26).

With the exception of *Las misas de San Vicente*, his *comedias de santos* are not much concerned with Jews or Judaism. Only in *Las misas* does one find Jews mentioned because of St Vincent's fame in converting large numbers of them. But this is an aspect that is glossed over in four lines: 'Ha convertido a la Fe, / digno de inmortal renombre / mas de veinte mil Hebreos / en diferentes mansiones' (2). Given the saint's fame as the enemy of Judaism, one would expect the villains of this play to be Jews or crypto-Jews. However, as A. J. Cid has noted, even when he was successfully masquerading as an Old Christian, Enríquez Gómez refused to play the Jew baiter by expending on them the vituperation that was the standard dramatic treatment of Jews and, by extension, *conversos*.<sup>24</sup> Jews and their accomplishments are consistently presented in all his works in the most positive fashion as befits the worthy forebears of Christianity and the ancient monotheists who were the chosen people of God. As a result of his refusal to cast Jews as antagonists to his Christian heroes, Enríquez Gómez always casts pagan or Christian heretics as the villains—Nero and Simon Magus in *El vaso y la piedra*; pagan idolaters in *El médico*



*pintor*; and the arch-apostate, the Devil, in *La escala de la gracia*, in *La conversión de Magdalena*, as well as in almost all the *comedias de santos*. In *Las misas* the villains are the Devil and his dupe Muley, a 'negro turco'. With these two characters the playwright avoids negative presentations of Jews and substitutes instead a figure synonymous with evil and another who, being black and a renegade Christian, is excellent villain material.<sup>25</sup>

The Hebraic background of the Christianity in the *comedias de santos* is generally reduced to isolated passages in which Old Testament imagery adds weight to a description or a concept in the same fashion previously observed in the biblical era plays: as, for example, the following sonnet from *La defensora de la reina de Hungría* in which the queen declares her special devotion to the Immaculate Conception:

El día de la Limpia Concepcion  
obro misterio el Hijo de Eloin,  
empeçose la guerra de Cain,  
y fabrico su Templo Salomon.  
Libro el Señor su Alcaçar de Sion,  
vio su Perla la concha de Ioachim,  
reconocio su Reyna el Querubin,  
y el Bellocino intacto Gedeon.  
La vara echo raices en Iesse,  
y desta vara justa temblo Aman.  
Paro en Maria el Sol de Iosue.  
Pues sino le toco sombra de Adam,  
que mucho que mis ojos dieron fee  
de que en su día fueron al Iordan (175–76)

or in another passage from *El obispo de Crobia* in which St Stanislaus justifies his duty to admonish a wayward monarch by citing the actions of the prophets:

A David reprehendio Nathan,  
a Iosaphat Eliseo,  
a Elias el Rey Acab  
a Secteguias [Sedecías] Soberbio  
Geremias; el Bautista  
que clamaua en el Desierto,  
a Herodes: al Rey assa,  
a Ananias . . . (211v)

In general the saints plays are concerned with preaching to the sinner and particularly in instructing the unbeliever in Catholic doctrine with a zeal reminiscent of a convert. Each of the *comedias de santos* concentrates on a particular aspect of the religion. Saints Pelagia and Taz, because of their previous unsaintly life in the demimonde, are vitally involved in atonement. These two plays stress the importance of the Act of Contrition as exemplified by St Pelagia's prayer that ends: 'Peque, Señor Soberano! / misericordia Señor! / penitencia! penitencia!' (185). St Anthony of *San Antonio Abad* also preaches withdrawal from the world, but less for atonement than as an act of asceticism. In contrast, there is the militant Christianity of St Hermenegildo of *Mártir y rey de Sevilla*, a warrior prince who happily accepts martyrdom to affirm the Trinity and the divinity of Jesus denied by the official Arianism of his father's kingdom:

El Espiritu de Dios  
dice el Divino Profeta,  
que andaba sobre las aguas;

mira tres personas mismas  
 distintas, Criador, Palabra,  
 y Espiritu: luego en ellas,  
 siendo un Dios, siendo una Causa  
 incircumscripita, y eterna,  
 seran con toda igualdad,  
 como la Fe nos lo enseña,  
 Padre, Hijo, Espiritu Santo  
 tres Personas y una Essencia.  
 Esto creo, esto confieso  
 hasta morir. (26)

A comparison of the sample of St Hermenegildo's profession of faith with that of Samson's (previously cited) shows that Enríquez Gómez's style and tone have not much altered in the intervening years, nor has he altered his practice of looking to the Old Testament prophets as the ultimate source. The only difference is that whereas the sentiment expressed before looks no farther than the Old Testament, complete and sufficient in itself, in the Zárte plays the Old Testament is extrapolated to support Christianity.

In summary: obviously there is no infallible test one can apply to compare the sincerity of the Catholicism of the Zárte plays with that of the Marranism of the Enríquez Gómez compositions. I doubt, however, that one '-ism' is less sincere than the other, for, throughout his life, the author was constantly revealing his state of mind—telling the truth as he saw it at the particular moment. Thus, there were periods during his lifetime when circumstances and emotions inclined him toward Judaism (which he recorded with the obliqueness that prudence imposed) just as later in the Zárte plays we see an inclination towards Christianity. And, because he was caught between the pull of these two religions, it is no wonder that there are also passages in his works suggesting that at times he was confused about the truth of either.<sup>26</sup> In this regard A. J. Cid has commented: 'Entre una fe religiosa firme, el intento de síntesis con creencias distintas, el paso de una a otra, la simple indiferencia o, incluso, el ateísmo, cabían muchas posibilidades, incluso para el individuo del XVII español'.<sup>27</sup>

For the sake of brevity I have cited only two passages indicative of Enríquez Gómez's Marranistic period (the one from *Sansón nazareno* and the other from 'Romance al divín mártir'). It is probably unnecessary to establish the Marranism of his early and middle works as this has been accomplished by the majority of the studies on this author. Rather I have attempted to show how the Zárte plays document the final stage in the evolution of Enríquez Gómez's religious thinking. The reader will have already noted how similar in tone, vocabulary and imagery the Marranistic verses are compared to the several passages cited from the Zárte plays in which the same Hebraic figures and imagery are applied to the service of the Christian mysteries. The Zárte religious plays reveal an idealized Catholicism that is ardent, proselytizing and, most important, compassionate, a Catholicism that acknowledges the debt it owes to Judaism.

Through the seventeenth century, with the increasingly dismal situation of European Jewry, Messianic hopes were raised again and again. Enríquez Gómez appears to have been caught up in this expectation, for Dr Oelman has written that the writer returned to Spain a convinced Messianist.<sup>28</sup> It may be significant that the Cabalists, on the basis of the *Zohar*, predicted the event to happen in the year 1648, or about the time that Enríquez Gómez embarked on his hazardous return to Spain. The evidence of the Zárte plays seems to indicate that with the failure of this and other predicted Messiahs to materialize, Enríquez Gómez gradually came to accept Jesus Christ as that Messiah.

## NOTES

1 Adolfo de Castro, ed., *Poetas líricos de los siglos XVI y XVII*, II BAE, XLII (Madrid: Rivadeneyra, 1857), xxx–xxxiii, lxxix–xci. José Amador de los Ríos, *Estudios históricos, políticos y literarios sobre los judíos de España* (Madrid: 1848), 523–69. Ramón de Mesonero Romanos, ed., *Dramáticos posteriores a Lope de Vega*, I BAE, XLVII (Madrid: Rivadeneyra, 1858), xxxii–xxxiv. Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo, *Historia de los heterodoxos españoles* (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1956), II, 258–64.

2 Mesonero Romanos, xxxiii. The anti-Semitism of most nineteenth-century scholars is patent in their comments on works of authors considered Judaizers. The typical attitude is condescending at best, but usually disparaging.

3 Stephen Gilman, *The Spain of Fernando de Rojas* (Princeton: Princeton U.P., 1972), 27.

4 I. S. Révah, 'Un pamphlet contre l'Inquisition d'Antonio Enríquez Gómez: La seconde partie de *La política angélica* (Rouen, 1647)', *Revue des Études Juives*, CXXXI (1962), 81–168. Antonio Enríquez Gómez, *El siglo pitagórico y vida de don Gregorio Guadaña*, édition critique avec introduction et notes par Charles Amiel (Paris: Ediciones Hispanoamericanas, 1977). See also Constance H. Rose, 'Las comedias políticas de Enríquez Gómez', *Nuevo Hispanismo*, II (1982), 45–56, which firmly establishes Enríquez Gómez as the author of the Zárate works.

5 Révah, 'Un pamphlet', 83. Also, 'Comme nous le montrerons dans notre étude sur Antonio Enríquez Gómez et sa famille, à l'époque où il composait cette seconde partie de la *Política angélica* notre auteur était toujours un Judaisant et il le restera jusqu'à son entrée dans les cachots de l'Inquisition de Séville' (101).

6 In addition to the works cited in note 3 see also: Timothy Oelman, 'Antonio Enríquez Gómez's "Romance al divín mártir Judá Creyente"', *Journal of Jewish Studies*, XXVI (1975), 113–31; his *Marrano Poets of the Seventeenth Century* (Rutherford, N. J.: Fairleigh Dickinson Press, 1982); and his 'The Religious Views of Antonio Enríquez Gómez: Profile of a Marrano', *BHS*, LX (1983), 201–09; Judith Rauchwarger, 'Antonio Enríquez Gómez's *Epístolas Tres de Job*: A Matter of Racial Atavism', *Revue des Études Juives*, CXXXVIII (1979), 69–87; and Constance H. Rose, 'Antonio Enríquez Gómez and the Literature of Exile', *Romanische Forschungen*, LXXXV (1974), 63–77.

7 Oelman, *Marrano Poets*, 170–71.

8 Oelman, *Marrano Poets*, 190. This work apparently circulated only in manuscript for obvious reasons.

9 Amiel, *Siglo pitagórico*, xvii. Another work of Enríquez Gómez that appears to have circulated only in manuscript is 'La ynquisiçion de Luzifer y uisita de todos los diablos', portions of which have been edited by M. P. A. M. Kerkhof in *Sefarad*, XXXVIII (1978), 319–31.

10 *El médico pintor San Lucas: Comedia famosa de don Fernando de Zárate* (Sevilla: Francisco de Leefdael, n.d.), 21.

11 *El vaso y la piedra (Escogidas, Parte veinte, Madrid, 1668)*, 84, 85–86.

12 Recent work has tended to side-step the question of the Zárate plays. Révah and Amiel ignore it. Oelman, an acknowledged authority on Enríquez Gómez's Marranism, in his *Marrano Poets* was not ready to accept entirely the Enríquez Gómez-Zárate identification—'In Spain he took on the alias of Fernando de Zárate (identified by some with the fervent Catholic playwright of that name)' (139). In a later work Oelman seems to accept that Enríquez Gómez was the author of the Zárate plays but concludes 'I have yet to be convinced that all the Zárate plays are by our author', in 'The Religious Views', 207, note 2. Mesonero Romanos lists thirty-one plays to Zárate's credit but notes that there are some questions of attribution, as is the case with the majority of seventeenth-century playwrights. I believe that the Zárate plays cited in this article are the works of Enríquez Gómez.

13 Mesonero Romanos, *Dramáticos posteriores*, xxxiii.

14 Much has been made of Enríquez Gómez's paternal line of Judaizers; however, both his mother and wife were Old Christians and it seems reasonable to assume that they had some influence upon his life although any possible Christianizing element upon his life has generally been ignored. According to Jewish law Enríquez Gómez was not a Jew because his mother was a gentile, a distinction, of course, not recognized by Old Christians. One of the many ironies of his life thus was that he was persecuted for Judaizing without really being considered a Jew by other Jews.

15 See Amiel, *Siglo pitagórico*, xix, for an account of how Enríquez Gómez upon his clandestine return to Spain consulted his Old-Christian in-laws concerning the possibility of a voluntary presentation before the Inquisition.

16 Joseph Silverman criticizes this either/or approach in his introduction to J. V. Ricapito's *Bibliografía razonada y anotada de las obras maestras de la picaresca española* (Madrid: Castalia, 1980): 'Hoy en día un número nada despreciable de prestigiosos críticos han preferido adoptar para sus análisis literarios el exclusivismo de la vida mientras desoyen la voz de la literatura en su espléndida diversidad unitaria. Nada de lo uno y lo otro; hay que preferir lo uno o lo otro. A consecuencia de tal maniqueísmo crítico nos vemos obligados a escoger entre interpretaciones opuestas y apasionadamente reñidas de numerosas obras clásicas de la literatura española' (9–10).

17 I have not included *La culpa más provechosa y vida y muerte de Poncio Pilatos* even though A. J. Cid praised it highly in his 'Judaizantes y carreteros para un hombre de letras: A. Enríquez Gómez (1600–1663)', in *Homenaje a Julio Caro Baroja* (Madrid: Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, 1978) 271–300. This play is probably by Francisco de Villegas. Subsequent references to the Zárate religious plays are included in the text and refer to the following: *La escala de la gracia* (Madrid: Antonio Sanz, 1753), *El médico pintor, San Lucas* (see note 9), *El vaso y la piedra* (see note 10), *La conversión de la Magdalena* (MS. 16,732, Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid), *El obispo de Crobia, S. Estanislao* (*Escogidas, Parte quince*, Madrid, 1661), *La defensora de la reina de Hungría* (*Parte veinte y nueve*, 1668), *Santa Pelagia, La Margarita de los cielos, y más firme penitencia* (*Parte cuarenta y cuatro*, 1678). *San Antonio Abad* (*Escogidas, Parte treinta*, Madrid, 1668), *Mártir y rey de Sevilla, San Hermenegildo* (Valencia: Viuda de José de Orgá, 1763), *Santa Taz* (MS. 17,047, Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid), *Las misas de S. Vicente Ferrer* (U. N. Carolina suelta, TA 25, 8, n.p., n.d.).

18 N. D. Shergold's *A History of the Spanish Stage from Medieval Times until the End of the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), 372, 374–75, comments on Enríquez Gómez's delight in impressive stage effects, citing examples from five Zárate plays, among them *Las misas de S. Vicente Ferrer, S. Antonio Abad* and *Santa Pelagia*.

19 See J. García Valdecasas, *Las Academias morales de Antonio Enríquez Gómez* (Sevilla: Anales de la Universidad Hispalense, 1971), 79–80, 85.

20 The question of the Immaculate Conception of Mary was fiercely debated in the seventeenth century to the point of provoking violence between immaculatists and maculatists. Nancy K. Mayberry addresses the topic in a forthcoming essay 'Esther as a Pefiguration of the Immaculate Conception in Golden-Age Drama', which she kindly allowed me to read.

21 Oelman, 'Romance', 117–18.

22 Original Sin is a constant of Enríquez Gómez's exile literature, in which it is related to the persecution that New Christians suffered because of accident of birth. *La culpa del primer peregrino* (Rouen: Maurry, 1644) is his most extensive composition on the subject. Oelman writes 'The *converso* condition is epitomized by two poetic symbols: Original Sin (the stigma of birth) and that of the *peregrino*', 'The Religious Views', 204. The *peregrino* motif, so prevalent in Enríquez Gómez's exile compositions and in some of his earlier plays is notably absent in the Zárate plays.

23 In spite of the fact that Barrera lists a *suelta* of this play, I have only been able to identify the existence of two manuscript versions, *La gran comedia de la vida y muerte de la Madalena*, both in the Biblioteca Nacional (Madrid), nums. 16,955 and 16,732.

24 In 'Judaizantes y carreteros' (288) A. J. Cid writes 'La necesidad de ocultar su personalidad para Enríquez no incluía, como para otros, el oficiar de malsín contra los de su propia raza'.

25 For more on this play see my article, 'A Black Man's Dilemma in *Las misas de S. Vicente Ferrer*', *Romance Notes*, XII (1979), 387–91; and David Gitlitz, 'La angustia vital de ser negro: tema de un drama de Fernando de Zárate', *Segismundo*, XI (1975), 65–85.

26 The dilemma of the author's situation is expressed among other places, in the following lines from his *Culpa del primer peregrino*:

Si rezo, soy hipócrita de estado;  
Si no rezo, me llaman ateísta,  
y de cualquier suerte soy culpable.  
Si acuso al malo, dicen que me vengo,  
Si no lo acuso, cómplice me llaman,  
y todos dicen que verdad no tengo (114)

and in the *Política angélica*: 'El que padece inocente . . . se halla en el tormento, confiesa que es hereje, siendo cristiano; y muchas veces, con la desesperación, ni queda uno ni otro' (Révah, 'Un pamphlet', 122).

27 A. J. Cid, 'Judaizantes y carreteros', 201. Nevertheless, while he speculated on the possibility of a conversion to Christianity or at least synthesis, Cid bowed to Révah's conclusions and continues in the next paragraph 'por lo que ahora se sabe del último periodo de su vida . . . el judaísmo del autor parece haberse mantenido firme hasta el final' (291).

28 Oelman, 'Romance', 114, note 5. The publication of Oelman's thesis on *Sansón nazareno* and 'Romance al divín mártir' would make a valuable contribution to the study of Enríquez Gómez.