

Antonio Enríquez Gómez: Alias Fernando de Zárate

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THE POLEMIC SURROUNDING the identity of the late Golden Age playwright, Fernando de Zárate, began in the middle of the nineteenth century when the Spanish critic, Adolfo de Castro, reported that some plays of another dramatist, Antonio Enríquez Gómez, had been circulated under Zárate's name.¹ Although such attribution is not unusual in the history of seventeenth-century dramatic literature, further investigation by Castro convinced him that there was in fact no such person as Fernando de Zárate. This name, he concluded, was an alias assumed by Enríquez after he had been forced to flee Spain as a result of religious persecution. Castro's statements were controversial, since there had long been established a sketchy though accepted biography of Enríquez Gómez, and, although little was known of Zárate's life, there was no reason to believe that these two writers were other than separate and distinct personages, each with a respectably large literary production.

Castro's conclusion rests principally on a discovery that he made from an eighteenth-century *Index*, in an entry prohibiting a play attributed to Zárate with the notation, "Don Fernando de Zárate. (Es Antonio Enríquez Gómez)." ² "He is Antonio Enríquez Gómez." Since it was known that about 1636 the *converso* Enríquez fled to France a step ahead of the Inquisition, Castro theorized that the alias was used to permit publication of his plays after he was obliged to leave the country. By the time of his self-exile Enríquez was already a moderately successful dramatist, but his flight, tantamount

¹ Castro's remarks are contained in his introduction to *Poetas líricos de los siglos XVI y XVII*, Biblioteca de Autores Españoles (Madrid, 1951) 42:xxxix-xci.

² Castro is not specific about which *Index* or what date. Barrera y Leirado in his *Catálogo del teatro antiguo español* (Madrid, 1860) finds the entry in the *Index novissimus* (1747). The play was "El capellán de la Virgen, San Ildefonso," a work by Lope. All translations from Spanish in this paper are my own.

to an admission of guilt, would have made it difficult for his works to be produced in Spain. If it were not Enríquez who first assumed the *nom de plume* Zárate, Castro reasoned that perhaps the Spanish publishers chose it for him to evade the censorship of the Inquisition.

For Castro further proof concerning the true identity of Zárate resulted when he compared the works of these "two" authors: "El estilo que se ve en las obras impresas con uno y otro nombre no puede ser más parecido." "The style that one observes in the works printed under one or the other name could not be more similar.' Another similarity which he found revealing was Zárate's use of the topic of Heraclitus and Democritus in his play, *Los filósofos de Grecia*, and which is also very prominent in Enríquez's poetic works, the *Academias morales*, and in his picaresque *Siglo pitagórico*. Completely convinced by his findings, Castro felt no hesitation whatsoever in stating that the best works of Enríquez were those produced under the alias Zárate. Even later, when his theory came under attack from many other critics, Castro clung stubbornly to his conclusion.³

Castro's findings immediately produced a storm of rebuttal. Quick to refute them was the eminent dramatic critic, historian, and author, Ramón de Mesonero Romanos. In 1858 Mesonero rejected point by point Castro's findings and thus established the basis for arguments against the alias theory that were to prevail for the next century.⁴ First, Mesonero absolutely denied that the writings of Zárate and Enríquez were at all alike, especially with regard to style: "Pero si . . . quisiéramos prescindir de él [Zárate] y reunir en común repertorio el de ambos autores, nos encontraríamos con tan diversa índole, tan distintos estilos, que no parece posible que sean obra de una misma mano." 'But if . . . we should forget Zárate's existence and group in a common repertoire the works of both authors, we would find such diverse natures and such different styles that it would not seem possible that they' were the work of the same person.' Furthermore, when he investigated the question of thematic materials in more detail, he found that Enríquez, whom he regarded as a crypto-Jew, showed great affection for the ancient Hebrew history of the Old Testament as befitted his *converso* status while, in

³ Barrera p. 139, comments on Castro's stubbornness: "El erudito gaditano Castro quien contestó . . . con una carta en que obstinadamente reproducía su opinión, sin presentar otra prueba que el mismo consabido párrafo del Índice expurgatorio." "The erudite scholar from Cadiz who replied with a letter obstinately repeating his opinion, without presenting any other proof than the very same paragraph from the *Index*."

⁴ Ramón de Mesonero Romanos, *Dramáticos posteriores a Lope de Vega Carpio*, Biblioteca de Autores Españoles (Madrid, 1951) 47:xxxii-xxxiv.

all things, Zárate could not have been more orthodox Catholic and more *castizo*. He characterized Zárate's works as:

composiciones . . . 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 hasta tal punto, que hubiera tenido necesidad de adoptar distinto nombre.

[compositions revealing the author's profound Christianity which would be impossible to conceive of from one of a different faith, not even if he had feigned his forgotten religion to the point of assuming an alias.]

Faced with this disparity, Mesonero refused to believe that Zárate's sincerity of faith could be the dissimulation of a fugitive Judaizer such as Enríquez.

Another objection to Castro's theory was provided for Mesonero by none other than Enríquez himself in the introduction to his heroic poem, *Sansón Nazareno* (Rouen, 1656). The author included a list of titles of his total dramatic production to date, twenty-two plays, only one of which, according to Mesonero, had ever been attributed to Zárate.⁵ Even though the exact date of Enríquez's death had not yet been established, it was assumed to be about 1660, when the author would have been about sixty. Naturally, Mesonero felt that to add to this 1656 list some thirty additional works by Zárate would be stretching credibility, as they would have been produced in the space of about four years.

Finally, as to the relative merit of the two authors' works, there was no doubt in Mesonero's mind that the Christian, ultra-Spanish Zárate was greatly superior to the exiled Judaizer, Enríquez: "De Zárate podría llenar aquí algunos pliegos con citas de trozos excelentes, pinturas animadas, cuentos y diálogos altamente cómicos, chistes agudos y oportunos, y de Enríquez apenas hallaría un rasgo solo que presentar." 'From Zárate one could fill several pages citing excellent passages, animated portraits, highly comic stories and dialogues, sharp and opportune jests, but from Enríquez one could scarcely find anything at all to compliment.'

Since, according to Mesonero, neither in plot, form, versification, language, nor thought were these two sets of plays alike, he concluded that one could not possibly have been an alias of the other. As for the *Index* entry, so important to Castro's arguments, Mesonero theorized that the phrase "que es Antonio Enríquez Gómez," 'who is Antonio Enríquez Gómez' was error and should have read "que

⁵ This was the play "A lo que obligan los celos," which Mesonero incorrectly believed was the prohibited work mentioned in the *Index*.

es de Antonio Enríquez Gómez,"⁶ 'that is by Antonio Enríquez Gómez.'

Another critic to involve himself in the question was Alberto de la Barrera y Leirado. In 1860 he published his well-known *Catálogo bibliográfico y biográfico* in which he followed and enlarged upon Mesonero's account of the Zárate-Enríquez matter. Certainly one of the arguments which tended to support Castro was the absence of any record of Zárate's existence other than the plays printed under his name in the late seventeenth-century collections of *comedias*. Mesonero had already admitted that this paucity of data was difficult to explain: "Para . . . acreditar la existencia del otro poeta [Zárate] . . . nos faltan absolutamente las pruebas, no hallando la más mínima noticia de él en ninguno de los biógrafos ni poetas contemporáneos." 'In order to . . . verify the existence of the other poet [Zárate] . . . we lack entirely any proof, finding not the slightest mention of him by any of the contemporary biographers or poets.' Barrera then attacked this problem and after a diligent search was able to report the existence of at least three autograph manuscripts of Zárate, two of them dated Seville, 1660. According to Barrera's investigations the plays of Zárate began to appear in print in the year 1660 and continued until 1678.⁷ Assuming as did Mesonero that Enríquez did not live much past sixty, Barrera concluded that the chronology of the Zárate plays indicated that this name could not have been Enríquez's alias but rather the actual name of a later playwright. The date 1660 is quite significant, for in April of that year (the very month of one of the manuscripts found by Barrera) Antonio Enríquez Gómez was burned in effigy in a great Auto-da-fe in Seville. At that time all the previous biographies reported him as living in Amsterdam among that city's large colony of Portuguese and Spanish Jews. In fact, his celebrated remark upon being informed of the events in Seville—"Ahí me las den todas"⁸—had been repeated so often by biographers that it seemed the one fact definitely known of Enríquez's life. How then, Barrera asks, are we to imagine that one man could be in two places at the same time; or that Enríquez, disguised as Zárate, would be rash enough to be in Seville in April,

⁶ Then the entry would be correct, as "A lo que obligan los celos" is by Enríquez. Barrera, however, notes that the play prohibited was "El capellán de la Virgen;" see above, n. 2.

⁷ Barrera, p. 138. The first work appears in *Parte catorce*, and then off and on to *Parte cuarenta y cuatro*.

⁸ The phrase is a play on its literal meaning—"Let them give me everything there [in Spain]"—and its idiomatic meaning—"I could not care less."

1660, at the very time of the Auto-da-fe?

Barrera's findings, added to those of Mesonero, were sufficient to convince everyone of the impossibility of Castro's statements. Subsequent works by Menéndez y Pelayo, Vergara y Martín and Díaz de Escobar—as well as by the Jewish historians Kayserling, Graetz, and Roth—all supported directly or indirectly the existence of two distinct writers.⁹ For the next century the entire question was considered settled and the theory of Castro regarding the alias was relegated to footnotes.

Recently, however, the reopening of the matter has been necessitated by the historical and genealogical research into the *marranos* by the late I. S. Révah. After years of investigations in European archives Révah assembled a complete and revisionist biography of Enríquez.¹⁰ From his findings emerges a dramatic tale even more fascinating than had been supposed. His most startling discovery was that Enríquez had indeed returned clandestinely to Spain about the year 1649. He had, in fact, settled in Seville, where he lived for perhaps as long as eleven years under the alias Zárata until his apprehension by the Inquisition on 21 September 1661. Contrary to all previous assumptions, it is entirely possible that Enríquez may have actually witnessed his own execution in the great Auto of the previous year. According to Révah's sources, Enríquez died in the prison of the Inquisition on 19 March 1663, reconciled to the Christian faith, and was interred in the church of Santa Ana de Triana. My own investigation of the Inquisitional papers of the Archivo Histórico Nacional in Madrid confirmed Enríquez's use of the alias Zárata.¹¹

⁹ Menéndez y Pelayo, *Historia de los heterodoxos españoles* (Madrid, 1956). Gabriel María Vergara y Martín, *Ensayo de una colección bibliográfico-biográfica de noticias referentes a la provincia de Segovia* (1903). N. Díaz de Escobar, "Poetas dramáticos del siglo XVII, Antonio Enríquez Gómez," *Academia de la historia* 88 (1926): 834-44. Meyer Kayserling, *Sephardim* (Leipzig, 1859). H. Gratez, *Volkstümliche Geschichte der Juden* (Leipzig, 1923). Cecil Roth, "Les Marranes à Rouen," *Revue des Etudes Juives* 88 (1929): 113-55.

¹⁰ "Un pamphlet contre l'inquisition d'Antonio Enríquez Gómez," *Revue des Etudes Juives* 131 (1962): 81-168.

¹¹ Révah does not reveal where he found the documentation for Enríquez's biography. These sources were to have been published in subsequent articles but this work was interrupted by M. Révah's death. I presume that his colleagues will eventually publish this information. I found that the files of the Archivo Histórico Nacional (Madrid), Sección Inquisición, contain three entries for Enríquez: *legajo* 3,658, number 16; *leg.* 2,067, no. 25; *leg.* 1,872, no. 35. These pertain to lengthy legal proceedings—one instituted before his exile to obtain money confiscated by the Inquisition from his mother's estate; and another after his death instituted by his son-in-law, Constantino Ortiz de Urbina, again to recover confiscated assets. The documents after his death consistently refer to him as Antonio Enríquez Gómez alias Fernando de Zárata.

As a result of Révah's findings the majority of the investigators most recently involved with Enríquez have accepted without question his authorship of the Zárate plays. Both Julio Caro Baroja, the eminent authority on the *marranos*, and C. H. Rose, the author of the most current works on Enríquez, do not hesitate to ascribe the Zárate plays to him. However, not all are fully satisfied. The *Encyclopaedia Judaica Jerusalem*, although citing Révah's work, only mentions the alias as a possibility. García Valdecasas rejects the identification, finding the 1860 Barrera arguments still very convincing; but later in the same work his rejection is made to seem less categorical than it first appears.¹²

The principal historical objections to Enríquez's authorship are concerned with such interrelated problems as: the reasons for Enríquez's return to Spain; the religious sincerity of each set of plays; the disparity of theme; the dissimilarities of language, style, versification; the autograph MSS of Zárate; the chronology of the Zárate plays.

Enríquez's daring but foolhardy return to Spain must be understood from either one or a combination of three powerful motives—materialism, art, and sentiment. As to the first, thanks to Révah, we know that in France as well as in Spain he continued the family business of silk merchandizing. Révah believes that Enríquez retained commercial ties with Spain by his use of aliases, perhaps working through his son-in-law in Madrid, who may have been his Spanish agent. Enríquez also had business connections in the New World by means of relatives in Lima, and he was awaiting the arrival of funds from America at the time of his arrest. With respect to artistic motive, the Iberian environment was a psychological necessity. As Enríquez, it seems, wrote only in Spanish, only there could the work of such a prolific author be widely disseminated and, above all, appreciated. Both Rose and García Valdecasas have emphasized the prominent theme in Enríquez's works of the exile's longing to return to his native land. Although a common element in any literature of exile, for Enríquez such longings were more than idle sentiments: they were statements of intent. Even a cursory reading of critical material on Enríquez reveals that over the years investigators, especially in the nineteenth century, have usually been favorable or

¹² See J. Caro Baroja, *Inquisición, brujería y criptojudaismo* (Barcelona, 1974), pp. 150-55; C. H. Rose, "Antonio Enríquez Gómez and the Literature of Exile," *Romanische Forschungen* 85 (1973): 63-77; *Encyclopedia Judaica* (New York, 1971), 7:770; J. G. García Valdecasas Andrada V., *Las "Academias morales" de Antonio Enríquez Gómez* (Seville, 1971), pp. 11-36.

pejorative depending upon whether they believed that he was Jew or Christian. The Catholic Spanish critics who considered him Jewish have tended to denigrate his works—the irony being, of course, that at the same time they exalted those of the supposedly Christian Zárate. Jewish writers, on the other hand, have generally overpraised Enríquez, Graetz going so far as to refer to him as the Jewish Calderón. Today the question of his faith is still the subject of discussion and interpretation. Révah considers him a Jew in spite of his final reconciliation with the church: “Antonio Enríquez Gómez était, comme son père et son grand-père, un crypto-Juif.”¹³ ‘Antonio Enríquez Gómez was, as his father and his grandfather, a crypto-Jew.’ But after carefully examining his poetic works, the *Academias morales*, García Valdecasas thinks otherwise and points out that one looks in vain for heretical statements in all his literary production, even that produced in exile. The surprising leniency of the Inquisition after his capture (even after he had been burned in effigy), the apparent sincerity of his deathbed confession, and his interment in consecrated ground indicate to García Valdecasas not a Judaizer but an authentic Christian. Nevertheless, Valdecasas admits the possibility of a youthful flirtation with heterodoxy, citing a passage from the *Academias morales* which he believes to be autobiographical: “Es un cristiano auténtico aunque nuevo, pues considera pecado grave sus devaneos juveniles con la heterodoxia.”¹⁴ ‘He is a true though recent Christian, but considers his youthful flirtations with heterodoxy a grave sin.’

Whatever the final outcome of his personal religious conflict, Enríquez must have wavered between the two faiths, each exerting powerful claims on him. He was, Caro Baroja writes, caught by circumstances between two fires, forced into exile from his ancestral land by the machinations of his own *converso* brethren, harboring resentment against his own heritage.¹⁵ Conversely, hounded by the Inquisition, he could be expected to question the worth of Christianity. Yet in exile he refrained from attacking the Church other than to criticize the Inquisition. This containment may reflect either religious indecision, or a fear of jeopardizing his eventual return to his beloved homeland, or the natural attitude of a true Christian.

¹³ Révah, p. 83.

¹⁴ García Valdecasas, p. 75.

¹⁵ Caro Baroja, pp. 59–62. He has some interesting things to say about the enmity between authentic *conversos* and the *marranos* in Rouen. This rivalry reaching back to their commercial correspondents in Madrid is probably the reason for Enríquez's flight from Spain.

The objection to Enríquez's authorship which is based on disparity of themes is naturally bound up with the problem of the religious sincerity of the author. The selection of Old Testament topics per se does not prove the author's Jewishness, even though Menéndez y Pelayo flatly states, "Conócese, por lo demás, la sangre judaica de Enríquez en su declarada afición a las historias del Viejo Testamento, que llenan la mitad de su teatro."¹⁶ 'Moreover, one recognizes Enríquez's Jewish heritage in his declared affection for the Old Testament stories which comprise half his theatrical works.' One may well suppose that during his youth his *converso* heritage would make these themes attractive as a rebellious self-affirmation in the face of generations of persecution and discrimination. The strongly *castizo* themes of his Zárate period may be explained by one of two contradictory possibilities: that their marked Christian orientation reflects the sincerity of the author's return to the national religion, the religion which he and the other *conversos* had at least outwardly professed in Spain for more than a century and then even afterwards while in exile in France; or that the overwhelming orthodoxy of the Zárate plays is mere dissimulation. Since critics before Révah did not know of Enríquez's return to Spain they rightly assumed that the many differences separating the two figures was proof enough of their individual identities. The truth of the matter, however, is that regardless of whether he was genuinely Christian or not these differences must be the result of the conscious effort of a man wishing to assume a new identity. Once he had returned to Spain as Zárate it would be inconceivable for him to have chosen anything but orthodox themes, just as to avoid discovery he must have made some effort to change his old style of writing.

For the same reason one cannot place much faith in the autograph manuscript that Barrera felt proved the existence of Fernando de Zárate. Most certainly he would not have signed these works with his true name. As far as I have been able to determine, one hundred years after Barrera reported these few autographs, they remain the only evidence of Zárate's existence, thus corroborating rather than negating Enríquez's authorship. Moreover, the two dated manuscripts are those of Seville, 1660, a year in which Enríquez was alive and free.

The final objection to Zárate's true identity concerns the chronology of the plays written under this name. Mesonero and Barrera report some thirty known plays written under the name Fernando

¹⁶ Menéndez y Pelayo, p. 260.

de Zárate or Fernando de Zárate y Castronovo. Barrera and others justifiably find it hard to believe that Enríquez could have produced these works in the four short years following publication in the *Sansón Nazareno* (1656) of the titles of his plays to that date. But, as Révah shows, by the year 1656 Enríquez had already been living clandestinely in Spain perhaps for seven years. With the approximate date of his return to Spain thus established and the date of his arrest definitely known to be five years after the publication of this list, it is possible that the thirty or so Zárate plays could have been written over twelve years, rather than four or five. Even if Enríquez had written as few as three plays a year during this period (a number which seems not at all excessive considering the author's prior production), he could have easily accomplished the number of plays ascribed to Fernando de Zárate.

The question then arises, why did he have this list published in France? First, one must assume that he wished to gain his just recognition for the dramatic works produced under his true name, as he could not be sure that he would ever be given credit for the numerous other Zárate plays. The list not only accomplished this purpose, but threw investigators off his track as well. To this end he not only succeeded for a considerable period of time as regards the Holy Office, but managed also to confuse literary historians for years to come.

The fact that the Zárate plays began to appear in the *Partes* shortly before his death and continued for several years afterwards reveals nothing about the actual dates of their composition. The dates of the first printings of the Zárate plays do not constitute a reliable argument for the existence of the playwright, as the general practice of the time was to sell the compositions outright to the publishers. Obviously it is to the publishers who owned the Zárate plays, not the dramatist, that one must look for the solution. The publishers would have had little reason not to publish the available works as long as they were not prohibited and as long as they continued to be popular. Given the habitual secrecy shrouding the inquisitional proceedings, the publishers themselves may not have known the true identity of Fernando de Zárate.

A reevaluation of the objections to Enríquez's authorship of the Zárate plays thus offers no serious obstacle to the finding that these names belong to the same person. Surprisingly enough, the theory advanced by Castro on the basis of admittedly very scanty evidence has been proved correct after a century of vigorous and cogent re-

jection by the most prominent literary historians. Even the ultimate argument concerning the dissimilarity of worth of the two series of plays cannot be taken seriously into account because not all critics agree. While the Zárate plays are acknowledged as Enríquez's by such experts as Caro Baroja and C. H. Rose, the consequences of the authorship have only begun to be appreciated. What remains is nothing less than his elevation in literary rank.¹⁷

Certainly, the poet's life proves to be tremendously more fascinating than anything previously imagined; his perilous return to Spain confirms the sincerity of the exile's lamentations. In spite of the much-criticised baroque ornamentation that clothes his work, the incorporated themes and emotions must be viewed as more than mere facile exercises of empty virtuosity—as in, for example, his dramatization of the life of a fellow wanderer, Fernán Méndez Pinto:

que yo de todo contento,
 en el diuino holocausto,
 inuocando à aquel Señor
 que rige los Orbes sacros,
 darê el alma en el martirio,
 cessando tantos trabajos;
 pues con vna sola vida,
 desventuras, males, daños,
 tormentos, persecuciones,
 desdichas, fuertes, naufragios,
 dolores, penas, rigores,
 acabarán, pues es llano,
 que solo la muerte ha sido
 aliuio de vn desdichado.

[for I, completely content,
 in the divine holocaust
 invoking that Divinity
 that governs the Sacred Orbs,
 will render up my soul in martyrdom,
 putting an end to so many travails;
 for with one single life,
 miseries, evils, injuries,

¹⁷ Outside of the recent edition of the two parts of "Fernán Méndez Pinto" by Cohen, Rogers, and Rose, Harvard Texts from the Romance Languages, no. 5, 1974, and those plays in the Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, few works of Enríquez are available today. However, Professor Charles Amiel of the Collège de France has indicated to me that he is and has for some time been in the process of preparing editions of several of Enríquez's works.

torments, persecutions,
calamities, misfortunes, shipwrecks,
sorrows, pain and cruelty
will end, for it is plain
that only death has even brought
alleviation for a luckless wretch.]¹⁸

Moreover, the addition of the Zárate works to his account also greatly enhances Enríquez's reputation as a playwright, as these plays have long been admired for "la agudeza y variedad de los planes o intrigas cómicas . . . su robusta elocución y estilo castizo, su gracejo y donosura."¹⁹ ". . . their subtlety and variety of comic intrigues . . . their robust elocution and pure style, their wittiness and grace.' And finally, in terms of the quantity and variety of production, incorporation of the Zárate plays with Enríquez's theater, prose, and poetry certainly places him among the most prolific and versatile authors of the age. Whether one approaches this tragic figure from an historical, religious, sociological, or literary point of view, he emerges as one of the most fascinating figures of an extremely complex and interesting era.

¹⁸ Cohen, Rogers, and Rose, part 1, verses 2263-76. The "fuertes" in line 2272 is confusing although correct according to this edition. "Suertes" seems a plausible correction.

¹⁹ Mesonero Romanos, p. xxxiii.