

CONCERNING THE PUBLICATION BY CARLOS
ORTIGOZA-VIEYRA, 'ANIQUILAMIENTO DEL
MÓVIL HONOR EN "ANTÍOCO Y SELEUCO"
DE MORETO RESPECTO "EL CASTIGO SIN
VENGANZA" DE LOPE' ¹

BRUNO SCARFE

La Trobe University

IN VIEW of the availability of Dr C. A. Jones' excellent edition of Lope de Vega's *El castigo sin venganza*,² and its affinity with Agustín Moreto's *Antíoco y Seleuco*,³ any work concerning itself with these two plays merits attention. This publication, *Aniquilamiento del móvil honor en 'Antíoco y Seleuco' de Moreto respecto 'El castigo sin venganza' de Lope*, was produced to coincide with the third centenary of Moreto's death, and it is fitting that greater study be made of Moreto's works than has been the case. It is particularly fortunate that in underlining Moreto's contribution to the development of so-called 'Golden Age' theatre, Lope's masterpiece should have been taken as a point of departure; for we cannot but improve our knowledge of Lope's dramatic priorities, social values and literary worth in examining the relationship between two plays on a similar theme.⁴ However, the very relevance of this publication to studies in Golden Age theatre makes imperative some comment on the premises, reliance on critics, arguments and conclusions used to claim for Moreto the 'aniquilamiento del móvil honor' in *Antíoco y Seleuco* in relation to Lope's *El castigo sin venganza*.

In brief, the author considers *El castigo sin venganza* 'como epítome de los dramas de honor del Siglo de Oro' (O.V., p. 13); Moreto, in his use of Lope's play, 'conscientemente la tomó para desorbitar los casos de honra, supervivencia caduca de un sistema ya momificado y estéril, y poner como eje al ser humano' (O.V., p. 40), resulting in the 'aniquilamiento del móvil honor' and the production of a play *Antíoco y Seleuco* that is 'perfectamente moderno' (O.V., p. 40). It seems inaccurate to describe Lope's play 'como epítome de los dramas de honor' just as it is to consider that the 'móvil honor' has been annihilated in Moreto's play. Yet these are minor objections if compared with the problems posed by the author's contempt for theatre concerned with honour.⁵ So

Agustín Moreto and Lope de Vega

it is necessary first to examine his attitude to honour, which serves as the premise for his publication, and then to suggest a more sympathetic interpretation of what honour signified and the rôle it played.

He opens with the statement:

Agustín Moreto heredó la comedia de Lope con estructura y forma fijas y era prácticamente inalterable. Dicho de otra manera, heredó una cárcel. El conflicto básico que movía la estructura interna era el del honor . . . (O.V., p.9)

No metaphor could express more clearly the author's attitude to honour than 'cárcel', a metaphor he uses repeatedly; he speaks of 'la tiranía del conflicto del honor' (O.V., p. 11), and says that Moreto's achievement lies in his having circumvented 'la cárcel lopesca del honor que aprisionó entre sus barras millares de comedias' (O.V., p. 26). He goes on to say:

La comedia nueva que creó y fijó Lope, tanto en obras serias como en las cómicas, encadenaba uno tras otro los 'casos de honra', y todos los dramaturgos contemporáneos de Lope, así como los que le siguieron, emplearon el móvil del honor como la fuerza interna y externa más importante en los personajes de sus dramas. (O.V., p. 9)

He insists on this view, saying 'el honor es el móvil dominante' (O.V., p. 10), and 'en la fórmula de la comedia creada por Lope nada podía existir de validez dramática que no se desarrollara dentro del sistema de casos de la honra' (O.V., pp. 10-11).

Developing this further on the same page, he says:

esperamos demostrar que Moreto deliberadamente aniquiló el conflicto del honor, es decir, lo desplazó de su epicentro, en busca de otras perspectivas y sondeos del alma humana para libertar la comedia del manido conflicto lopesco.

It is unfortunate that to underline Moreto's contribution to the theatre the author should find it necessary to condemn the concern with honour and overstate its influence, with the result that Lope's masterpiece is made to look unimaginative and cramped. The statement that startles most, however, comes towards the end:

Moreto efectivamente logra hacer, después de conocimiento profundo de la cárcel que aprisionaba a la comedia (caso concreto: *El castigo sin venganza*) una verdadera metamorfosis, en sentido estricto, en la que su crisálida (caso

concreto: *Antíoco y Seleuco*) es un teatro totalmente nuevo. Con sentido de justicia y en el campo de la crítica histórico-literaria, no nos parece un desatino decir que desde Naharro, Lope y Calderón, la comedia sería permaneció estacionaria (estado larvario), hasta que sufre la metamorfosis que logra Moreto (crisálida). (O.V., p. 38)

It appears that, owing to his interpretation of the meaning of honour and its rôle, the author wishes to revalue the history of the theatre of the period. Must we seriously believe that the theatre from Naharro to Calderón was immature and static, in grub state, and only gave sign under Moreto of the great things to come? (Perhaps the author would care to identify the truly great theatre which eventually found its wings). It is time the meaning of honour and its rôle in terms of this publication and the area it seeks to cover were revised.

'Honor' together with related words like 'honra', 'fama', 'decoro' etc. were drawcards to the wide but class- and morality-conscious public of the Golden Age dramatists.⁶ However, as with our use of the word 'sex', 'honour' etc. might or might not constitute an important ingredient in the entertainment, and certainly possessed a wide range of meanings and applications. The concern with honour dominates Lope's *Los Comendadores de Córdoba*,⁷ Calderón's *El médico de su honra*,⁸ and his *El Alcalde de Zalamea*; its rôle in Lope's *El caballero de Olmedo*, Calderón's *La vida es sueño* and Tirso's *El burlador de Sevilla* is a lesser one; and it yields place entirely to other factors in the *autos*, religious comedias—such as Tirso's *El condenado por desconfiado*—and certain historical plays such as Tirso's *La prudencia en la mujer*. So, while in some plays honour determines the action and constitutes the theme, in others it puts in a brief appearance—perhaps in a subplot or in the closing scenes; in a large body of plays it does not exist. The view held by Ortigoza-Vieyra that 'nada podía existir de validez dramática que no se desarrollara dentro del sistema de casos de la honra' is so exaggerated as to be untenable. What, we may ask next, are the applications of honour? In *Los Comendadores de Córdoba* and *El médico de su honra* it constitutes a legitimate and vital factor in the question of adultery, real in one case, suspected in the other.⁹ In *El Alcalde de Zalamea* it concerns the definition of moral dignity and probity, irrespective of class. In *Peribáñez y el Comendador de Ocaña*, *Fuenteovejuna* and *El mejor alcalde el Rey* its application concerns questions of social privilege and abuse of power. In *El caballero de Olmedo*

Agustín Moreto and Lope de Vega

it may be said to concern imprudent methods of courtship.¹⁰ In *La vida es sueño* the main function of honour is to provide the basis for one of the tests of Segismundo's new outlook on life, but is basically foreign to the main themes of predestination, free-will and reality. Similarly, in *El burlador de Sevilla*, the question of honour in the fields of sexual irresponsibility, social climbing and political favouritism is secondary to the religious theme of Don Juan's spiritual presumption. So we see a variety of applications of honour, which makes its description as a 'cárcel' unjust.

Yet even within the group of plays concerned with honour in the specialized sense of reputation in cases of adultery, real or suspected, dramatists' handling of the honour theme reveals great ingenuity and integrity in the face of pressure for support of popular values. Calderón provides an excellent example of this in *El médico de su honra* where he clearly upholds certain aspects of popular values, while simultaneously suggesting their danger and implying that popular solutions in such cases cannot be as clear-cut and satisfactory as public fancy supposes. Because of the relevance of Calderón's techniques in this play, discussed by Ortigoza-Vieyra, to Lope's *El castigo sin venganza*, it seems worth developing the foregoing observations even at risk of repeating in part the findings of a number of English Hispanists; for Ortigoza-Vieyra seems able to provide quotations but unable to appreciate fully their application.

The main aspect of popular values clearly upheld by Calderón in this play is the need for discreet conduct by a woman before marriage, avoiding secret emotional relations with men, and especially avoiding giving any man the idea he might succeed in an illicit courtship. It is made evident very early that Mencía has not followed these requirements of etiquette closely enough, but allowed herself to fall in love with the Infante (I/121-155 and I/565-574), and apparently gave him reason to believe his courtship might succeed—while realizing that for reasons of rank this was unlikely to lead to marriage (I/295-306). This need for discreet conduct is underlined when the Infante, Mencía's former suitor, refuses to forget the past and withdraw from her life now that she is married. He is responsible for one indiscretion after another, and Mencía must shoulder the blame until it culminates in her death. Calderón develops the theme of Mencía's share of the blame for the final tragedy in many ways: her willingness to go into details with Enrique on a future and unspecified occasion concerning the story of her marriage (behind her husband's back); her preparedness to talk to Enrique when he invades her home at

night, and to help him escape when Gutierre arrives; her trick to deceive her husband as to Enrique's identity. The most subtle device used by Calderón, however, is driving Mencía to spend an evening out in the garden exactly twenty-four hours after Enrique's abortive visit. This action by her, not explained explicitly, together with her addressing Gutierre in the dark as 'Tu Alteza', reveals Calderón's psychological perception in his portrayal of Mencía's subconsciousness. Trying to write to Enrique is a final admission of the personal relevance of the Infante to her married life, and is seen as such by her husband. So, one's past and one's past acquaintances are realities that will continue to exist, that cannot be suppressed, that interfere in one's apparently stable present and future. Hence a woman's need to restrict her contacts in a society where the family unit was sacred, and the woman's probity spelt the acceptability of the entire family and in particular the husband's good reputation. Calderón makes the same point in *A secreto agravio, secreta venganza* and *El pintor de su deshonra*.¹¹

The danger in popular values is expressed through the sympathetic description of Mencía, and the realization that she has not in fact been guilty of adultery; she is guilty of indiscretions amounting to folly after marriage, but hardly immorality. So Gutierre, misled by the cumulative weight of these indiscretions, is himself guilty of perpetrating a miscarriage of justice in killing her for adultery. Both Gutierre and Mencía are victims of the popular belief that appearances reflect realities and are therefore of extreme importance and reliability. The criticism of popular values is the stronger and subtler as Gutierre is shown to be a tormented man in love with his wife, wishing only to be happy with her; but in the face of the evidence of his wife's guilt he is overcome by the weight of social pressure and driven to look to his reputation. It is interesting to note that his love for her, well documented in the text, is not adequately reciprocated. This suggests that Calderón is also criticising the custom of allowing the father to decide whom his daughter should marry (I/569-572). (Casandra, in *El castigo sin venganza*, was also forced into marriage by her father). This factor, outside Mencía's control, and making it impossible for her to love Gutierre and confide her problems to him, contributes with other fateful circumstances to produce something of a tragedy of situation, inevitable, the fault of everyone in society but no individual in particular.

The fallacy of the popular solution, the *pundonor* solution, only reveals itself after careful examination. Honour required that Mencía be punished secretly, so that no admission be implied

Agustín Moreto and Lope de Vega

that dishonour had occurred (III/262-268). Gutierre fails in this, though he does not seem aware of his failure. The sign of the bloody hand, the survival of the barber, Coquín's knowledge, etc. etc. will serve as evidence of the existence of dishonour and the need to rectify this. Gutierre is made to marry Leonor; from previous developments, and from Gutierre's own words on accepting Leonor, we know that life only holds further apprehensions in store for him. It is ironical that Gutierre, who had been mistaken in his earlier supposition that Leonor was dishonourable, should feel competent to pronounce sentence on Mencía. Finally, through Gutierre's association with Pedro el Cruel, or Justiciero, and Pedro's imminent death at the hands of the Infante at Montiel, it may be inferred that Gutierre will be involved in the king's downfall and may perhaps be killed too. Even if he survives, it is obvious that the triumphant Infante will have every reason to try to punish Gutierre for his rôle in Mencía's death. Calderón uses the same technique of condemnation by association and innuendo at the close of *A secreto agravio, secreta venganza*.¹²

In summary, it is clear that Calderón has gone to great lengths in support of popular values, but has underlined the risks inherent in them by means of irony in the compulsory and 'successful' taking of the law into one's own hands as illustrated in the *pundonor* solution and the protagonist's tragic future.

In *El castigo sin venganza* Lope seems to agree with popular values, in that the immoral conduct of Federico and Casandra—not merely indiscreet and suspicious but obviously incestuous and adulterous—is punished by death.¹³ Where Lope can be compared very closely with the Calderón of *El médico de su honra* is in his criticism of the absence of public charity, the unsuitability of taking the law into one's own hands, and the uselessness of a *pundonor* solution.

With regard to criticism of public values in their lack of charity, Lope stresses the sympathetic nature of Federico and Casandra. He underlines Federico's plight as the motherless bastard son of the Duque de Ferrara, whose marriage to Casandra will deny Federico his long standing place of affection in his father's heart and also the social and political future he might have expected as heir, albeit illegitimate. Federico's complexes as bastard and stepson are frequently referred to in the course of the play. This prompts his obsessive interest in Casandra, then love. (The complicated and illicit nature of this love is nicely treated in 11.2576-2627.) Lope stresses Casandra's rights and claim to our sympathy by showing how the Duke neglects her to the point of insult, and

she is reduced to angry despair (11.996-1073, 1132-1133, 1135-1137, 1347-1385). Being of the same generation as Federico, what could be more reasonable than an alliance between the unstable and deprived Federico and the disillusioned Casandra? The tragedy lies in the extent of its development. One senses Lope's view that background and environmental factors bear a large share of the responsibility in this ultimate tragedy, and there should be some formula to allow for this.

Lope's dissatisfaction with the *pundonor* solution is developed through the unsympathetic nature of the Duke, absentee father and husband, whose life has been filled with a succession of women, and who has constantly refused to marry in order to remain free. This dissolute and absentee 'protagonist', surprisingly converted to a better life towards the end of the play, tries to 'preserve' his 'honour' by punishing Federico and Casandra for their moral irresponsibility. Lope's evaluation of such a solution could hardly be clearer. The executor of 'heaven's' justice (11.2834-2914), the Duke, is a hypocrite (1.2800) or—at best—a fanatic racked by pangs of belated concern for his duties as father, husband and head of state, making others pay for the crimes of his past. The *pundonor* solution is savagely indicted by Lope, and it is made obvious that he does not believe such solutions should be left to the offended, unworthy and prejudiced party. As for the futility of the *pundonor* solution, it is made clear that the crime of the incestuous and adulterous couple was no secret,¹⁴ and that in spite of all the Machiavellian cunning of the punishment and the wish that its true nature remain secret, too many people are familiar with the background of the killings for their true nature not to be surmised. The Duke has now lost his only son and heir, long loved by him (perhaps the Duke's conversion made Federico distasteful to him, reminding him of his libertine past?). The Duke has lost his first wife, married after years of hesitation and thought. He will probably now revert to his former life of debauchery in the midst of the political instability he himself predicted for a realm devoid of successor (11.669-685). As A. A. Parker states, 'His punishment, then, is failure, dishonour and the having to live on in the ruin he has created'.¹⁵

The parallels in the dramatists' techniques to satisfy popular values while at the same time censuring aspects of their application reveal great practical acumen as well as moral and intellectual integrity. It is hard to understand how Ortigoza-Vieyra can quote some of the factors listed with regard to *El médico de su honra* yet fail to see their relevance to *El castigo sin venganza*.

Agustín Moreto and Lope de Vega

It is even harder to understand how he can refer to such theatre as 'supervivencia caduca de un sistema ya momificado y estéril' and, with specific reference to *El castigo sin venganza*, say: 'tampoco es necesario insistir en la ortodoxia que dicha comedia representa en el sistema de la comedia' (O.V., p. 15). What could be less orthodox than these two plays? The more carefully and sympathetically one considers plays as varied as *Los Comendadores de Córdoba*, *Peribáñez y el Comendador de Ocaña*, *Fuenteovejuna*, *El mejor alcalde el Rey*, *El Alcalde de Zalamea*, etc., the less possible it becomes to speak of 'ortodoxia'.¹⁶

It may now be possible to consider what appear to be inaccuracies in the description of *El castigo sin venganza* as the 'építome de los dramas de honor del Siglo de Oro', and the statement that the 'móvil honor' has been annihilated by Moreto in *Antíoco y Seleuco*.

While Lope in *El castigo sin venganza*, and Calderón in *El médico de su honra* share techniques and values with regard to the treatment of cases of honour, this does not mean that both plays are concerned with honour to the same degree. In *El médico de su honra* concern for honour is paramount; in *El castigo sin venganza* it only comes to the fore in the last half of the last act.¹⁷ Because of its position at this stage of the play, it seems inappropriate to term it a 'móvil'. It seems, rather, to be an important and relevant, though ironic, dramatic device leading to the punishment by the Duke of Federico and Casandra. Lope appears to have provided a *pundonor* ending, unorthodox in that executor and punishment come in for criticism, to which only a very faint 'móvil honor' has led. An analysis of the principal conflict of the play, indeed of the principal characters, reveals that the body of the work concerns Federico and Casandra and the factors leading to their affair. Of major thematic importance are Federico's complex as bastard without a mother, and especially his awareness of the impossible nature of his love for Casandra in spite of the compatibility of their age and their mutual attraction;¹⁸ of equal thematic importance are Casandra's feelings on being neglected by her husband, who treats her as a piece of useful furniture, her desire to avenge herself on the Duke and, in common with Federico, that feeling of compatibility of age and mutual attraction (the latter mainly in 11.1479-1501, 1532-1591, 1811-1857, 1976-1998). Federico does most emphatically NOT develop notions of honour in the course of the play (would such notions be *vraisemblables* in a bastard? we are reminded of the tragic inappropriateness of the protagonist's sense of honour in *El Bus-*

cón); Federico is overwhelmingly concerned with the practical aspects of declaring, developing and satisfying his very real love in the face of the improbability that Casandra will react favourably. His total unconcern for honour is aided, presumably, by his father's notorious absences from home, culminating in his departure for the wars. Casandra does indeed refer to her 'honor' (meaning, perhaps, prudence and fear), but her main concern is a powerful sexual and emotional frustration, the desire for vengeance, and the rapid growth of interest in Federico. Lack of concern for honour by both Casandra and Federico, even in the special sense of loyalty to husband or father, can also be attributed to the cynicism of the Duke and his example. To have them suffer agonising internal conflicts of the sort seen in Antíoco and, to a lesser extent Estratónica, would be unrealistic in view of the totally different characters of the Duke and Seleuco, who is depicted categorically as the prudent statesman, a considerate husband and the perfect father.

If, then, the body of *El castigo sin venganza* is made up of studies in psychological motivation leading two people to incest and adultery, and the rôle of honour is remarkable for its absence there, we cannot speak of honour as a 'móvil', and it would require much more than an ironic *pundonor* solution to the play to make it the 'építome de los dramas de honor'.¹⁹

In *Antíoco y Seleuco* it is true that no kind of *pundonor* solution is to be found. Instead, high-minded selflessness on the part of Seleuco and Antíoco drives the distraught father, Seleuco, to marry a woman in whom he had no interest (with what consequences?) instead of the proposed consort Estratónica, whom he feels obliged to marry to his well-disciplined but love-sick son Antíoco. The ending is a happy one, and not at all the kind we would associate with a *drama de honor*. However, to speak of 'aniquilamiento del móvil honor' is a serious overstatement. If our author, speaking of 'honor' and 'honra', concedes that 'terminos tales como punto de honor, fama, nombre, linaje, opinión, pundonor, decoro, etc. también expresaban el mismo o parecido sentimiento' (O.V., p. 10), how can the many references in *Antíoco y Seleuco* to 'decoro' and 'razón', even 'ley de mi decoro', as well as the odd reference to 'delito', 'infamia', 'injuria', 'culpa', 'agravios', 'fama' and 'respeto' be reconciled to 'aniquilamiento del móvil honor'? It seems that the 'móvil honor' is present throughout the play, but owing to points discussed later it does not lead to a *pundonor* solution, whereas in *El castigo sin venganza* the 'móvil honor' is minor, perhaps insignificant for most of the work,

Agustín Moreto and Lope de Vega

but because of points already mentioned, and summarized in the following paragraph, it develops rapidly in the last few scenes to provide a *pundonor* solution, albeit unorthodox.

It appears that Lope, trying to cater successfully for a wide public, felt that the most effective way of gripping his audience's attention at the same time as developing its appreciation of the problems of life, of right and wrong, lay in depicting violations of accepted moral standards followed by the penalty accorded (justly or unjustly) to such violations. This made for a development and vigour evident in very varied situations and interaction between characters, leading in turn to dramatic events which could be counted on to startle and to convince with their verisimilitude—if one considers violations of moral standards to be *vraisemblables*. Thus, precisely because Federico and Casandra—and to some extent the Duke—have not been influenced effectively by a 'móvil honor', *El castigo sin venganza* requires a *pundonor* solution for them to be punished. Moreto, in *Antioco y Seleuco*, seems to believe in depicting self-control and the triumph of reason in human behaviour, in which case a reward and not a penalty is called for. While making for little action, this approach allows much opportunity for the soul-searching of internal conflicts where thought of sin and the possibility of dishonour are relied on to meet the audience's requirements. Thus the successful struggle to preserve honour, essential to the entire play, makes for a *drama de honor* where no *pundonor* solution is needed. As for the question of the relative efficacy and verisimilitude of Lope's and Moreto's methods, it all depends on one's view as to whether weakness or self-control predominates in real life. Does human nature violate moral standards more often than it respects them, and is punishment for crime more fascinating than reward for virtue? Perhaps any preference for one method over the other must depend ultimately on the dramatist's ability in handling psychological factors, situations, language, imagery and dramatic techniques. Lope's language and imagery in particular are of his best in this work. His use of classical and historical images is satisfying not only on aesthetic grounds, but particularly because of the practical contribution they make in terms of development of secondary meanings, innuendos and the subconsciousness of the characters using them. Moreto, on the other hand, would appeal to many for his more straight-forward diction.

It is, then, a dangerous oversimplification to contrast *El castigo sin venganza*, 'építome de los dramas de honor', with *Antioco y Seleuco* with its 'aniquilamiento del móvil honor'. Only if Moreto

had chosen to depict weak characters, victims of sin, led safely to forgiveness and the haven of happy marriage, could he be said to have met Lope's interpretation of life on Lope's terms; only then, where a *pundonor* solution might have been expected and was in fact dispensed with, could we start to feel that the 'móvil honor' and the development associated with it had been meaningfully reduced.

A distressing aspect of Ortigoza-Vieyra's work is the extensive use made of quotations from critics, in order to justify and develop the author's arguments. These quotations sometimes lead him to assume a point has been proved; at times the juxtaposition of conflicting quotations is used to demonstrate either that no certain conclusion can be reached—in which case the author feels free to leave the matter unsettled—or that one critic may be supposed to have corrected the other. One feels that however interesting many such quotations are, only a summary of them was required in the body of the text. What annoys, however, is the author's lack of detailed recourse to the texts of the plays under discussion. Closer study of them might have made him think twice about the usefulness and accuracy of these quotations. A few examples may serve to illustrate this, and remind one of the need to pay close attention to texts and the problems they present so as to make judicious use of the critics.

His quotations from the late R. Menéndez Pidal reflect Ortigoza-Vieyra's view of honour and of *El castigo sin venganza*. He quotes him as saying:

'El honor dramático . . . es el eje sobre el que se mueve no sólo el orbe cristiano, sino los orbes todos que forman el concierto del universo.'²⁰

The above is so hyperbolic and generalized as to be of no critical value. Another quotation from Menéndez Pidal:

'En un estudio antecedente sobre el concepto del honor en el teatro español, no me ocupé del principal drama, la más alta tragedia de Lope de Vega, *El castigo sin venganza*.'²¹

And another from him:

'*El castigo sin venganza* es sin disputa el mejor entre los dramas de honor del teatro español, y a pesar del arcaísmo de su catástrofe expiatoria, es una de las más altas concepciones del arte dramático universal.'²¹

These both imply that the concern of *El castigo sin venganza* is

Agustín Moreto and Lope de Vega

purely with honour, and tend to give the impression that it is a typical or orthodox *drama de honor* of great quality. Another quotation from Menéndez Pidal:

'. . . sólo en la tradicionalista España pudo darse en el siglo XVII esta supervivencia de viejas costumbres medievales, es cierto. Pero esto solo justifica que *El castigo sin venganza* no puede representarse hoy ante un público si no se refunde su final.' (O.V., pp. 39-40, and source as in note 21)

There is a pejorative ring to the phrase 'supervivencia de viejas costumbres medievales', supported by the terms 'arcaísmo' of the previous quotation, and all applied to the 'catástrofe expiatoria', the 'final'. It may well be that aspects of the apparent *pundonor* solution had their parallels in the Middle Ages, but it is undeniable that the ending suits the cynicism of the Duke, his reputation for immorality, his jealousy, his wounded but false sense of pride, as well as requirements of state. So the conclusion is true to the human elements provided, as well as to a Machiavellian concept of political conduct no more unknown in the twentieth century than in the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries. If the combination of convincing human and socio-political elements in the conclusion seems surprising today, this may be said to make for an unusual rather than an archaic ending. As for violence, it's all the rage. In summary, it is unfortunate that Ortigoza-Vieyra chose to quote Menéndez Pidal in his moments of literary vagueness, and in such a way as to imply that since *El castigo sin venganza* is a play obsessed with honour, and with an archaic conclusion, then *Antíoco y Seleuco* must be 'perfectamente moderno' and concerned with character studies of the genuine 'ser humano'.

On the question of the accuracy of the critics, a quotation from A. Reichenberger makes interesting reading in light of my analysis of *El castigo sin venganza*:

'. . . the play ends with the restoration of the Duke's honor accomplished in secrecy and brought about by his coldly ingenuous (*sic*) device of *castigo sin venganza*. The play, gripping as it is, ends—once more—with "order restored". It is not, therefore, a fully developed tragedy.'²²

The question of 'restoration', 'honour', 'secrecy' and 'order restored' has been dealt with above, in every case leading to conclusions diametrically opposed to A. Reichenberger's. The view that the work is not a fully developed tragedy ignores the tragic present and future of the Duke, considered by A. A. Parker to be the

'protagonist', ignores the tragic circumstances that lead to the assassination of both Federico and Casandra whom I would consider to be the principal characters, and—in general—ignores the tragic picture painted by Lope of the rôle of circumstances and fate in life. It is incredible that Ortigoza-Vieyra can quote first the views of A. A. Parker, demonstrated above to be in most cases closely in accordance with the evidence of the text, but then agree with those views presented in juxtaposition by A. Reichenberger, above, which are so much at variance with the facts.

The value, then, of this publication seems to lie principally in drawing attention to *Antíoco y Seleuco* in comparison with *El castigo sin venganza*, to Moreto as distinct from the already well-accepted Lope. It is useful for its summary of source materials used by Moreto, and the author's insistence on the value of a work irrespective of influences exercised by earlier ones. Even if we do not agree with the title of this publication, the author obliges us to consider both plays with care, and we can but conclude that Moreto developed a theme similar to Lope's with very different characteristics and values. The contrast is revealing, and stimulating in the observations it provokes. Finally, while I am not in agreement with Ortigoza-Vieyra's concept of the meaning and rôle of honour, it must be conceded that his forthright views prompt careful thinking on the whole subject.

NOTES

¹This is vol. III of Carlos Ortigoza-Vieyra's series *Los móviles de la comedia*, and was published at the author's expense in Bloomington, Indiana, 1969. The designation O.V. will precede all page references to this publication.

²C. A. Jones (ed.), *El castigo sin venganza*, (Pergamon, 1966). Its presence on the Spanish syllabus in a number of universities is one of the reasons prompting me to take Ortigoza-Vieyra's publication seriously. Line references are to this edition. His edition of Calderón de la Barca's *El médico de su honra*, (Clarendon, Oxford, 1961), is used for all act and line references to that play. I am indebted to him for a number of ideas expressed here.

³Agustín Moreto, *Antíoco y Seleuco*, in *Comedias escogidas de Don Agustín Moreto y Cabaña*, (ed.) L. Fernández-Guerra, (Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. XXXIX, Madrid, 1856).

⁴Ortigoza-Vieyra refers to studies by others—particularly that by F. P. Casa, *The dramatic craftsmanship of Moreto*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1966)—on the influence of the structure, language, etc. of *El castigo sin venganza* on Moreto's play.

⁵Ortigoza-Vieyra is far from being alone in feeling that the horizons

Agustín Moreto and Lope de Vega

suggested by the term 'honor' and words of similar meaning are limited. I have known many English-speaking students of Spanish react similarly at first, whereas students of Greek and Italian origin seem immediately aware of the wealth of real-life implications inherent in these words. To the English-speaking student it seems necessary to point out first that a *drama de honor* reflects closely a shocking and infrequent moment in the daily life of the period; the horror of the 'caso de honor' is in proportion to its rarity and sensational appeal. Second, that the preoccupation of the authors of the *dramas de honor* was as deep and critical when they handled their 'sensation' as the preoccupation of the modern intellectual, sociologist, psychologist, educationalist, etc. For our problems were, in varying degrees, theirs too. Some of the problems basic to a *drama de honor*, and explicitly or implicitly developed, concern the degree of supervision and discipline thought desirable in bringing up children—especially girls; the desirability or not of preserving the family unit; freedom of choice in marrying; the influence of illegitimacy on a child; the relevance of pre-marital attachments to a woman's married life, etc. etc. English-speaking students seem well prepared, on the other hand, to reach a proper understanding of 'honor' and 'honra' in the context of the struggle to assert the irrelevance of class distinctions and the iniquity of abuses of privilege in the face of the basic equality of rights of every individual. It is necessary to underline that the 'honor' of the *dramas de honor* is no less vital, and no less perceptively and critically handled, than the 'honor' of plays such as *El Alcalde de Zalamea*. It is amusing to observe the parallel between the reactions of English-speaking students of today to the question of relevance of the former 'honor', and the reactions—equally incomprehending—of literary critics of the past to that same 'honor'. While students should hardly be blamed for seeing with the eyes of the society in which they live, critics might be expected to study the texts with which they concern themselves a little more carefully.

'Very familiar are the lines from Lope de Vega's *Arte nuevo de hacer comedias en este tiempo*:

Los casos de la honra son mejores,
porque mueven con fuerza a toda gente.

Ortigoza-Vieyra quotes these, but—judging from the tenor of his remarks on honour—presumably feels that they reflect only a practical and material desire on Lope's part to make money, and not the possible realization of the wide significance of the honour theme as an end in itself.

⁷*Los Comendadores de Córdoba*: note the number of cases of dishonour, and the hyperbolic nature of the final massacre.

⁸*El médico de su honra*: the antiphonal and antithetic presentation and development of plot and subplot, with Leonor progressing from a state of apparent dishonour to one of honour and Gutierre progressing from a state of honour to one of apparent dishonour, concluding with their marriage, serves to emphasise the subtlety of the overall honour theme.

⁹*Los Comendadores de Córdoba*: it is most interesting to note how the husband's prolonged absence to participate in the famous siege of Granada is partly responsible for the sexual frustration which, coupled with an unusual degree of freedom of action, drives his wife and niece to indiscreet conduct at home. Lope does not develop this aspect of motivation. Had he done so, the wife would have become a more sympathetic character, the husband lacking in understanding, and the climax quite untenable.

Development of motivation had become a most important factor by the time Lope wrote *El castigo sin venganza*; this suggests a progression from an interest in producing plays where relatively orthodox dramatic situations and action predominate, to an awareness of the intrinsic interest of background factors, complex and human, that go to make up what may be only superficially 'orthodox' situations.

¹⁰Note R. D. F. Pring-Mill's introduction to *Lope de Vega (Five plays)*, translated by Jill Booty, (Hill & Wang, N.Y., 1961), in which he provides an excellent summary of conflicting interpretations of *Peribáñez y el Comendador de Ocaña*, *Fuenteovejuna*, *El caballero de Olmedo* and *El castigo sin venganza*.

¹¹In both plays a former suitor appears, and is responsible for the tragedy of the *drama de honor*. This suggests to me that the *dramas de honor* can be considered as tragic sequels to any *capa y espada* situation, where risks and indiscretions abound; but in a *capa y espada* play, these dangers usually resolve happily. The writer of the *drama de honor* seems to be asking the public to observe the dangers that will inevitably follow—particularly for the women involved—if the gambles of illicit flirtation and courtship fail. I see the *dramas de honor* as complementary to the *comedias de capa y espada*.

¹²Don Lope de Almeida, after killing his wife, offers his services to King Sebastian of Portugal:

Con vos iré, donde pueda
tener mi vida su fin,
si hay desdicha que fin tenga. (last scene)

Fernando de Herrera's *Canción*, called 'Por la Pérdida del Rei Don Sebastián' in Pacheco's edition, is evidence of the national interest in a defeat that saw the death of the cream of Portugal's aristocracy and, shortly after, Spanish intervention in Portuguese affairs. So Don Lope's closing lines would be far from metaphorical.

¹³R. D. F. Pring-Mill's analysis, in the work cited earlier, of the technical details of the deaths makes interesting reading. It remains difficult, however, to relate the manner of the killings to the exact degree of opprobrium in which Lope held the conduct of Federico and Casandra.

¹⁴Aurora, the Marqués, and an unknown outsider are familiar with Federico and Casandra's affair: probably Lucrecia and Batín too, if not other servants, have knowledge of it.

¹⁵O.V., p. 12, with ref. to A. A. Parker, *The approach to the Spanish drama of the Golden Age*, (Hispanic & Luso-Brazilian Councils, London, 1957).

¹⁶The very history of conflicts of interpretation in the case of a number of these, alluded to in note 10, certainly indicates that critics are having a hard time agreeing on basic points.

¹⁷While A. A. Parker in the work cited rightly states that the first scene is very relevant to the whole development of the play, and especially of the Duke's personal tragedy, there seems reason to feel that it is Federico and Casandra who dominate the action of the play. They begin to yield place to the Duke as a focus of attention from line 2488 onwards, and that is precisely the first moment at which the Duke considers the state of his honour. From this point to the end of the work, the theme of incest and adultery gives way ever more rapidly to an active honour theme, culminating within a few scenes in a *pundonor* 'solution'.

¹⁸A number of speeches and soliloquies of great artistry illustrate the

Agustín Moreto and Lope de Vega

essential nature of the theme of an impossible love, among them the following: 11.1453-1478, 1502-1531, 1797-1810, 1911-1975—the last listed comes fittingly as the consequence of the cue given by Casandra for Federico to declare himself once and for all; the cue was the tale of Antíoco, Seleuco and Estratónica, later used by Moreto.

¹⁹It might be said that the serious courtship of Federico and Casandra is limited to the second act, 11.994-2030. It is indeed in the course of that act that they declare themselves, and one must suppose that incest and adultery took place principally between acts II and III. However, it is clear that the theme of a growing interest, then love, begins at the moment of their first encounter; this is confirmed through the conversations between Lucrecia and Casandra, Batín and Federico at that stage. It is equally clear that this love is still a reality in the last act, when the Duke listens in to their revealing conversation, starting at line 2698 and ending at line 2775. It may be seen that the development of this affair spans the entire play in a way that is dramatically much more striking than the case of the Duke's 'honour', alluded to scathingly in the opening scenes of act I and only treated seriously by the Duke himself in the last scenes of act III.

²⁰O.V., p. 39, with ref. to Menéndez Pidal's essay 'Del honor en el teatro español', in *De Cervantes y Lope de Vega*.

²¹O.V., p. 12, with ref. to Menéndez Pidal's essay 'El castigo sin venganza. Un oscuro problema de honor', in *El P. las Casas y Vitoria con otros temas de los siglos XVI y XVII*.

²²O.V., p. 13, with ref. to A. Reichenberger's article 'The uniqueness of the comedia', in *Hispanic Review*, vol. XXVII (1959).