



Marrano Poets of the Seventeenth Century: An Anthology of the Poetry of Joao Pinto Delgado, Antonio Enriquez Gomez, and Miguel de Barrios (Littman Library of Jewish Civilization)

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The story of the Marranos (the Jewish converts to Christianity in Spain and Portugal) has long been a source of fascination for Jews interested in their heritage and for all those concerned with the struggle for freedom of conscience against authoritarianism. In this volume are presented the selected works of three Marrano poets, together with translations into English and explanatory notes. Each of the three poets is introduced with a biography and brief critical assessment. In a general introduction the editor explains the historical and literary background of their works and examines the inter-relationship between the Jewish and Christian cultural elements. Drawing on a wide range of published and manuscript sources, he gives a balanced picture of the Marranos and describes the process of Jewish re-education they had to undergo in order to reach their goal of integration with authentic Judaism in the Jewish communities outside the Iberian peninsula. The three poets-João Pinto Delgado, Antonio Enríquez Gómez, and Miguel de Barrios-are presented against this background as exemplifying three different 'paths to Judaism', which nonetheless have in common the dramatic experience of life under the Inquisition and the halfway house of the Marrano communities. Symbols of exile and insecurity abound. Each poet shares a sense of guilt over his past observance of Christianity and endeavours to reach out towards the authentic sources of the Jewish tradition, such as the Talmud and the rabbinic commentaries, to invest his writings with a greater cultural depth. The poems in this volume have been selected with the aim of giving a representative view of each individual poet's experience and particular literary talents. Through the translations and notes the general reader is provided with insight into their significance and purpose. The specialist reader, too, will gain from finding the writings of three little-known poets of similar background brought together for the first time and set in context. (PRINT ON DEMAND)

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