

## THE DEVIL AS A DRAMATIC FIGURE IN THE SPANISH RELIGIOUS DRAMA BEFORE LOPE DE VEGA

WHILE many Spanish plays of the sixteenth century have recently been published, comparatively little attention has been paid to some of the characters which constantly appear in these plays. In the drama of the sixteenth century we find many characters which were developed by the more skilful dramatists of the following century and a study of these earlier plays is necessary to a complete understanding of the more finished products. It is the purpose of this article to study the Devil as a dramatic figure in the Spanish religious drama before Lope de Vega. Appended is a list of the plays which were accessible to me in which the Devil appears, and they are grouped for the sake of convenience into Mysteries, Plays on the Lives of Saints, and Moralities.

### MYSTERIES

- I. *Aucto del Peccado de Adan*, pub. by Leo Rouanet, *Colección de Autos, Farsas y Coloquios del siglo XVI*, 1901, vol. ii, p. 133.
- II. *Aucto de la Prevaricacion de Nuestro Padre Adan*, Rouanet, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 167.
- III. *Auto de Cain y Abel*, Rouanet, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 150.
- IV. *Victoria de Christo, aucto tercero* by Bartolomé Palau, Rouanet, *op. cit.*, vol. iv, p. 383.
- V. *Victoria de Christo, aucto quinto* by Bartolomé Palau, Rouanet, *op. cit.*, vol. iv, p. 393.
- VI. *Aucto de la Paciencia de Job*, Rouanet, *op. cit.*, vol. iv, p. 105.
- VII. *Farsa de los Doctores* by Diego Sánchez de Badajoz. Pub. by Barrantes in vol. xii of the *Libros de Antaño*, p. 53.
- VIII. *Aucto de la Resurrecion de Nuestro Señor*, Rouanet, *op. cit.*, vol. iv, p. 66.
- IX. *Aucto de la Redencion del Genero Humano*: Rouanet, *op. cit.*, vol. iv, p. 47.

PLAYS ON LIVES OF SAINTS

- X. *Auto de Sanct Christoval*, Rouanet, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 451.  
XI. *Auto de un Milagro de Sancto Andres*, Rouanet, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 468.  
XII. *Auto del Martyrio de Sancta Barbara*, Rouanet, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 78.  
XIII. *Farsa de Santa Barbara* by Diego Sánchez de Badajoz. Pub. by Barrantes in vol. xi of the *Libros de Antaño*, p. 205.

MORALITY PLAYS

- XIV. *Auto de Acusacion contra el Genero Humano*, Rouanet, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 449.  
XV. *Farsa Sacramental de la Residencia del Hombre*, Rouanet, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 152.  
XVI. *Auto de la Residencia del Hombre*, Rouanet, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 330.  
XVII. *Auto de los Hierros de Adan*, Rouanet, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 216.  
XVIII. *Auto de la Culpa y Captividad*, Rouanet, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 243.  
XIX. *Auto de la Verdad y la Mentira*, Rouanet, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 421.  
XX. *Farsa Sacramental llamada Desafio del Hombre*, Rouanet, *op. cit.*, vol. iii, p. 513.  
XXI. *Farsa del Sacramento llamada la Esposa de los Cantares*, Rouanet, *op. cit.*, vol. iii, p. 212.  
XXII. *El Paraiso y el Infierno*, pub. by Gallardo, *Ensayo de una biblioteca de libros raros y curiosos*, vol. i, col. 980.  
XXIII. *Auto da Barca da Gloria* by Gil Vicente. Ed. of Lisbon, 1852, vol. i, p. 270. (The other religious plays by Gil Vicente in which the Devil appears have not been included in this list as they are written in Portuguese.)  
XXIV. *Los Desposorios de Cristo* by Joan Timoneda. Pub. by Pedroso in *Biblioteca de Autores españoles*, vol. lviii, p. 104.  
XXV. *Parabola Coenae*. Pub. by Pedroso in *Biblioteca de Autores españoles*, vol. lviii, p. 122.  
XXVI. *Las Cortes de la Muerte* by Michael de Carvajal and Luis

Hurtado. Pub. in *Biblioteca de Autores españoles*, vol. xxxv, p. 1.

XXVII. *Farsa Militar* by Diego Sánchez de Badajoz. Pub. by Barrantes in vol. xi of the *Libros de Antaño*, p. 353.

In the Mystery plays, the Devil usually appears only in certain scenes which correspond to the Scriptural narrative or to the accounts found in the Apocryphal Gospels. The Devil of the Spanish drama was a creation, not of the people, but of theology, and the authors of the early Spanish plays followed their sources closely.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of these plays was to teach sacred history and the doctrines of the Church, and although comic scenes were occasionally introduced to amuse the audience, the general tone was serious. The fall of Lucifer,<sup>2</sup> which was a popular subject for representation in medieval literature, is not found in any of the Spanish plays which I have examined, although it is frequently alluded to, and is the cause of the Devil's relentless hatred of mankind. For example, in (XXVII), p. 358, Lucifer says:

Yo, Lucifer, alanzado  
De aquella divina corte,  
De tanta gloria privado,  
Venido á tan mal estado,  
No hay virtud que me soporte.

In (I) and (II) the Devil appears as a serpent in the scene of the temptation and fall of Adam and Eve, according to the Scriptural account. In (III) and (IV) the Devil appears as the instigator of the murder of Abel. The introduction of the Devil in this scene is doubtless due to the medieval idea which considered him

<sup>1</sup>The Devil as a dramatic figure in other literatures has been studied in the following monographs and articles. H. Wieck, *Die Teufel auf der mittelalterlichen Mystereibühne Frankreichs*, Leipzig, 1887; Weinhold, *Ueber das Komische im altdeutschen Schauspiel*, pub. in *Gösche Jahrbuch für Literaturgeschichte*, Vol. I, p. 18; L. Cushman, *The Devil and the Vice in the English Dramatic Literature before Shakespeare*, Halle, 1900. References may also be found in D'Ancona, *Origini del teatro italiano*, Vol. I, pp. 526-35 and Petit de Julleville, *Les Mystères*, Vol. I, p. 271 ff. For the general subject of the Devil, see Gustave Roskoff, *Geschichte des Teufels*, Leipzig, 1869.

<sup>2</sup>A play entitled *La soberbia y caída de Lucifer* was represented at Seville in 1561. See José Sanchez Arjona, *El Teatro en Sevilla en los siglos XVI y XVII*, p. 315.

responsible for all the evil actions of man. The appearance of the Devil in (VI), in which he puts to the test the patience of Job, follows the Scriptural narrative. The quarrel between the Devil and the Bobo in (VII) was introduced merely for comic effect. The temptation of Christ offered a good Devil-scene, but I have not been able to see any early Spanish play on that subject. A play entitled *La Tentación de Cristo* was represented at Gerona in 1473<sup>3</sup> and Vasco Díaz Tanco wrote an auto entitled *La Tentación en el desierto*.<sup>4</sup> In (VIII) the Devil was introduced simply for comic effect. The well known theme of the Harrowing of Hell is represented in (IX), and relates the descent of Christ to Hell, the release of the damned souls and the binding of Satan. This theme, which is based on an interpretation of Psalm XXIV, 7-10 is found in the *Descensus Christi ad Inferos*, a work dating probably from the third century, and is also contained in the Apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus.

In (X) the author follows the story of St. Christopher as it appears in the *Legenda Aurea* of Jacobus de Voragine. The theme treated in (XI) is taken from the same source.<sup>5</sup> In (XIII) the Devil and an angel dispute for the soul of Santa Bárbara before the tribunal of God.

No. XIV treats the so-called *Processus Satanas* theme, a popular allegory in nearly all the literatures of Europe. Here the Devil appears as the accuser of mankind before God. After twice postponing the hearing, the case is tried, and the Virgin Mary appears as man's advocate. The Devil objects that she is a woman and therefore has no standing in court, and also that her relationship with the Judge, Christ, makes her participation in the suit unfair. The Judge refuses to sustain these objections and the case proceeds. It ends with a formal sentence in favour of mankind, which is read by St. John, Clerk of the court. This play followed closely the version of the *Processus Satanas* attributed to Bartolus entitled *Tractatus questionis ventilate coram domino nostro Jesu Christo* etc.

In (XV) and (XVI) we have a variant of the same theme. In

<sup>3</sup> Milá y Fontanals, *Orígenes del teatro catalán*, p. 210.

<sup>4</sup> Gallardo, *Ensayo de una biblioteca de libros raros y curiosos*, Vol. II, col. 785.

<sup>5</sup> Rouanet, *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 206.

these plays, Hombre is summoned for trial by Conciencia before Justicia. He is defended by Ángel de la Guarda, while Lucifer, Mundo and Carne appear as witnesses against him. In (XVII) Sabiduría, wishing to relieve Adam and his sons, offers to lead them to God. Ynorancia is guided by la Fe, Deseo by Esperança, Voluntad by Caridad and Trabajo by Sabiduría herself. The procession is halted by Herror, "que es el Demonio." The sons of Adam, supported by their guardians, refuse to recognize the commands of Herror, and Misericordia announces that Adam is released from his bonds through the birth of Christ. In (XVIII) Culpa and Captividad play the part of Devils although they are not specifically named so. They place in Hell two pilgrims and other characters who are released by Libertad. In (XIX) Verdad is about to be vanquished by Demonio, Malicia and Mentira when she is saved by the intervention of Justicia. In (XX) Lucifer sends Sobervia and Mentira to bear a challenge to Mankind. The latter, aided by Iglesia, Horación and Penitencia, defeats Lucifer. In (XXI) the Devil tries to prevent the marriage of Alma with Christ, but disappears at a word from the latter. In (XXII) and (XXIII) the Devils appear as boatmen to carry the souls of the damned to Hell. The function of the Devil in (XXIV) and (XXV) is to carry off to Hell one who had incurred divine displeasure. In (XXVI) Satanas appears as the procurator of Hell at the Cortes of Death. In (XXVII) Lucifer, Mundo and Carne tempt Fraile to forsake his holy life, but are driven away by an angel.

In marked contrast with the French religious plays in which the Devil appears under a great variety of names, the names of the Devils are restricted in the Spanish drama.<sup>6</sup> In many plays simply the word "demonio" or "diablo" is used. I have noted the following proper names: from the Old Testament, Asmodeo; from the Apocalypse, Lucifer; from the New Testament, Satan, Bercebu, Belial; from Greek mythology, Cancerolro (Cerberus), Caron. Of these, by far the most frequently used are Satan and Lucifer. Lucifer and Satan are frequently accompanied by Carne and Mundo and by the Vices, such as Gula, Avaricia, Malicia, Mentira and Culpa. Lucifer and Satan are represented as the rulers of Hell

<sup>6</sup> Wieck, *op. cit.*, mentions 72 names of Devils in the French religious plays.

with multitudes of devils at their command in order to contrast with God and his hosts of angels. In (I) Asmodeo addresses Lucifer (ll. 262-3) as:

Grande enperador Satan  
del negro rrey no perdido.<sup>7</sup>

This is a typical case of the confusion in the names of the devils. In (XIV), ll. 21-22, Lucifer addresses Satan and Caron as:

Capitanes ynfernales  
de mi arte y del ynfierno.

In (XXVI), p. 5, we find Satan accompanied by his lawyer, Lutero, "fuente de las herejías:"

*Satanás.*

Como fué tan gran letrado,  
Llévole por abogado  
De los pleitos del infierno.  
Hacémosle cortesía  
Con Mahoma y sus iguales,  
Y así tiene monarquía  
En el infierno y valía  
Por sus letras infernales.

*Outfit.* One of the earliest descriptions of a play in which devils occupy a prominent part is quoted by Schack as follows:

Operae credo pretium erit, si spectacula quaedam in honorem regis Philipi Perpigniani edita narravero. Quae profecto magnificentiam Barcinonum superarunt. Repraesentabantur rariae ex veteri et novo testamento historiae, Christi passio et pleraque alia, paradisus et infernus, mero artificio constructa, in quibus innumerae machinae et papyro ita artificiose factae, ut intuentes fallerent verae quae bombardae crederentur. Paradisus autem, et qui in illo erant angeli infernum oppugnabant: Angeli candidis, Daemones auro argenteos intertextis bissinisque et sericeis induti erant vestibus; accensae vero machinae maximo sonitu innumeras evocaverunt machinulas, quas fuscas appellant, quae plures decem millibus feruntur, et nulla erat quae fulmen et creditum horrendum non ederet, ita ut omnia ardere coelumque, terram et aëra concuti et a sedibus commovere crederes. Cessante vero strepitu et disperso in nubila fumo, stupor quidam

<sup>7</sup> Cf. with this Dante, *Inferno*, XXXIV, 28, where Lucifer is called *Lo imperador del doloroso regno*.

omnium mentes occupavit, cum ex tanto apparatu totque ingentibus machinis neque rotarum neque conceptaculorum ullae apparent reliquae, sed omnia evanuisse viderentur.<sup>8</sup>

These plays were represented in the year 1500, and it is evident that the stage machinery used at that time in Catalonia was complicated and doubtless effective.

Neither the stage directions nor the dialogue offer very definite information concerning the appearance of the devils. They were frequently represented as being black.<sup>9</sup> In (XVII), ll. 570-74, Ynorancia thus addresses Herror:

Vellaco, moço de espuelas,  
andrajo de cachivache,  
negro como el azavache,  
que os quebrantare las muelas;  
vala el diablo al moarrache!

In (XV), ll. 236-37, Hombre exclaims on the appearance of Lucifer, Carne and Mundo:

Ojo! y que negra gente  
asoma por la ladera.

In (XVIII), ll. 401-6, Bobo warns his father against Captividad:

Guarda que os engañara  
qual otra negra presona,  
qu'es un diablo tesona.  
Aguarda, padre, aguarda,  
porque os engarrafara  
el salvajon.

In (VI), ll. 321-4, when Satan asks Bobo to enter his service, the latter replies:

Y diga, señor, do naçio?  
*Satan* Porque lo preguntas? Parezcote mal?  
*Bobo* Ni aun muy bien tanpoco. Quemado venis  
del sol o del ayre.

<sup>8</sup> *Historia de la literatura y del arte dramático en España*, Vol. I, pp. 326-27.

<sup>9</sup> The idea that the Devil was black goes back at least to the fourth century. See Roskoff, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 284.

In the same play, there is another allusion to the color of the Devil. Satan addresses Bobo as *hermano*, and Bobo replies, ll. 332-35:

Mi hermano soys vos? Si tal a parido  
mi madre, yo muera vestido y calçado!  
Mi madre hera blanca, vos soys tapetado;  
la otra rredonda, vos boquicunplido.

In the contract for the representation of the *Auto de Job* (not the play published by M. Rouanet), dated March 2, 1592, the devil's costume is described as follows: "el demonio principal con una tunicela de tafetan negro, cota, faldin y calçadilla y los otros tres demonios con tres ropas largas muy bien pintadas de bocas."<sup>10</sup>

It appears that occasionally the devil was represented as a dragon. In (XIV), l. 703, Nuestra Señora refers to Satan as *este dragon*. In (VIII), ll. 1082-1086, San Pedro exclaims on seeing Lucifer:

Ao! cata la tarasca  
que anda por los oteros!  
Mas, que mala cara añasca!  
Dios! que pape mas corderos  
que diez lobos, segun tasca.

The Devil was also sometimes represented with horns, tail and cloven foot. In (XVIII), ll. 183-85, the Bobo cries on seeing Captividad:

O Dios, y que salvajon!  
Que barvaça trae el alimañon!  
paresce cola de aca.

In (XIX), ll. 331-2, Bobo says of Demonio:

Cuernos tiene, en buena fee;  
pardios, paresçe mochuelo;

and again in the same play, ll. 354-5, Bobo exclaims at the sight of Demonio:

<sup>10</sup> Pérez Pastor, *Nuevos datos acerca del histrionismo español en los siglos XVI y XVII*, p. 29.

Pardios, que tiene mi aguelo  
cuernos y pata hendida.

In (VI), ll. 337-40 Bobo says to Satan:

*Bobo.* Mas creo que soys hijo de gato rrabon.

*Satan.* Como, mancebo?

*Bobo.* Gran cola es aquesa!  
Dezi, vuestra guespeda a sido traviesa?  
Los cuernos os puso. Que largos que son!

In (VIII), ll. 1087-1101, some of the Saints make fun of the appearance of the Devil:

*Santo Tomas* Ora, dezi, pesi al moro  
con tan mala catadura,  
que diabros de figura!  
que trae rrabo como toro,  
y ensomo la cornadura.

*San Juan* Soys camello, o ansaron,  
o llobaça, o papagayo?  
Soys elefante, o lechon?  
Balga el diablo tal ensayo!  
Soys buitre, o camaleon?

*San Felipe* Dome a Dios si en su manera  
No me semeja a la rrasa  
porcaço de panadera,  
o monaço, o duende casa,  
o espantajo de higuera!

In order to serve his evil designs, the devil frequently adopted a disguise. As in the Scriptural account, he appears as a serpent while tempting Eve. In (I) the stage direction reads: *Entra Lucifer en abitto de sierpe*. In (X) the devil enters *en abitto de caçador*. In (XI) one devil appears as a page and the other as a young girl to lead a Bishop into sin. In (XXI) the devil appears *en abitto de rrufian*.

It is likely that the devil sometimes wore a mask. In (XVII), l. 501, he is addressed as *cara de perro*. In (VI), ll. 316-7, he is represented as very thin and wearing a visor:

*Bobo.* muy çanquivano y angosto venis.  
Alçad un poquito, señor, la visera.

In (IX), l. 418, the devils were armed with large clubs.

The devils sometimes gave vent to their anger by uttering loud cries or roars like a bull. In (VI), ll. 602-6, the Bobo describes as follows how he had escaped from the clutches of the Devil:

El, quando me vido tan determinado,  
despidese luego con unos bufidos,  
como los osos qu'estan ya metidos  
so duros cordeles, con maña caçados,  
o como los toros que en lid van vençidos.

In (XIII), p. 212, the Devil flees in fear, shouting *Bu, bu, bu, bu*. In (VII), p. 73, the Pastor attacks the Devil, who, finding himself defeated, shouts:

*Diablo.* U u u u u u.

*Pastor.* ¿Ya perro dañado aullas?  
Pensais de aventar las grullas;  
Pues no me espantarás tú.

*Diablo.* Bu, bu, bu, bu, bu, bu, bu.  
(Aqui arremete y lo ase por los cuernos.)

*Pastor.* Sois toro, dad acá el cuerno  
Que ya nació Dios Eterno,  
No me espanto ya de mu.

In (XXVII), p. 404, when the Fraile has escaped from the Devil through the intercession of the Angel, we have the following stage direction: (*Vanse huyendo dando alaridos el Diablo, y el Mundo y la Carne*).

The following passages from (I) will show that trumpets were sometimes used to add to the uproar created by the devils, and that their appearance was followed by smoke and stench, the latter to contrast with the odour of sanctity of the righteous.<sup>11</sup>

L. 242ff., Lucifer expresses thus his joy over the fall of Man:

Ynfemales moradores  
de la eterna escuridad,  
ya es vencida humanidad:  
con espantables clamores  
la vitoria çelebrad.

<sup>11</sup> The stench emitted by the devils was a common attribute. See Roskoff, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 156.

Toquense mis ynstrumentos  
de boçinas y alaridos,  
dense tan grandes aullidos  
que tienblen los firmamentos  
del ynfierno con jemidos.

Levantense mis pendones,  
haganse grandes ogueras,  
y al poner de mis vanderas  
se ençiendan fuertes tiçones  
por buardas y troneras.

In the same play, l. 297ff., Asmodeo exclaims:

Pues, prinçipes ynfernales,  
hazed grandes sentimientos:  
toquen, toquen ynstrumentos  
de alaridos y atabales;  
anden açervos tormentos.

Abivense los tiçones,  
crezca el humo y el hedor  
con boz de horrible dolor,  
y las çelestes cançiones  
buelvan en triste clamor.

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*(To be continued)*

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