



The Poem of Queen Esther

Joao Pinto Delgado

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This is a translation of a Spanish poem by João Pinto Delgado (c. 1585-1653) that is based on the biblical book of Esther. His choice of subject here was not accidental; the murderous persecution of the biblical Jews by the Persian King Haman stands as an obvious analogue to their sufferings at the hands of the Inquisition. Today, it also resonates with the events of the Holocaust. At the same time, this virtually unknown work is an elegant piece of Renaissance writing that bears stylistic and thematic affinities to important poems of the English Renaissance, such as those of Spenser, Sidney, and Marlowe. Slavitt's skillful translation approximates the rhyme scheme of the original and wonderfully evokes the lavishness and sensuousness of Pinto Delgado's suave descriptions. Also included in this volume is a translation of Pinto Delgado's shorter poem *In Praise of the Lord*.

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