

**Updates to the liner notes of the CD
A Twentieth-Century Sephardi Troubadour:
The Historical Recordings of Haim Effendi of Turkey
(January 2010)**

Introduction, pp. 8-9

A story running in the family recounts that Haim was once “summoned” by Sultan Abdul Hamid to sing at his court and that it was feared he would never return. Thought to be dead, upon his release and return to public life Effendi recorded a song titled *La mintira de la muerte* (“The lie about the death”), in which he stated that he was still alive. The song, thought to be Haim Effendi's own composition, was actually composed by Dr. Maimon Levy, who evidently wrote it under similar circumstances. Levy's song was written in Egypt before or on 1883 according to a testimony by Isaac Algazi and was published by Victor Levy in the *Lunario israelitico* 5688 (Istanbul 1927. We thank Dov Hacoen for referring us to this source. See, Havassy, in preparation). No copy of the recording of *La mintira de la muerte* is known to us. The song is known, though, in various oral versions. Here is the opening stanza, found in the Sene collection (Havassy 2007, ES 072):

Esta carta vos escribo	I write to you this letter
por decirvos que está vivo,	to tell you that I am alive,
y por preva que está sano	and as a proof that I am healthy
vo la escribo con mi mano.	I write it with my own hand.

CD 3, no. 11: *La paloma/Cuando salí de la Havana* (p. 48)

Two additional stanzas of this song appear in Spanish sources, including in early commercial recordings. Notice that the second of these stanzas appears to be the source for Haim Effendi's final stanza in his recording. He changed “el curita” (the priest) for “el haham” (the rabbi)

El día nos casemos ¡Válgame Dios!
En la semana que hay ir me hace reir
Desde la Iglesia juntitos, que sí señor,
Nos iremos a dormir, allá voy yo.

Cuando el curita nos eche la bendición
En la Iglesia Catedral allá voy yo
Yo te daré la manita con mucho amor
Y el cura dos hisopazos que sí señor.

References

Havassy, Rivka, in preparation. "From Written Text to Folk Song: On some aspects of the Ladino *Cancionero* on the Eve of Modern Era".